



Algoma District Community Network

Request for Expression of Interest

North Algoma Broadband, Cellular and Backbone Fill-in Project (ADnet 2008-1)

Issued by:
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1.0 Project Overview

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) is to solicit responses from Vendors who wish to provide one or more of the following services.

- a. **Project Broadband** - Terrestrial residential and commercial high-speed Internet service and/or broadband transport to the communities identified in Attachment 1.0 - Specific Areas of Interest.
- b. **Project Cellular 1** - Cellular sites to fill gaps in existing cellular coverage along the Hwy 101 corridor between Wawa and Chapleau in the area of the Shoals Provincial Park
- c. **Project Cellular 2** - Cellular sites to fill gaps in existing cellular coverage along the Hwy 631 corridor between Hwy 11/Hwy 631 intersection and Hwy 17 at White River
- d. **Project Backbone** – Improve backbone, including improved points-of-presence access (PoP) and broadband transport, to support improved terrestrial broadband and/or cellular backhaul capabilities for any or all of the following locations:
 - throughout the Hornepayne and Hwy 631 corridor;
 - the Dubreuilville and the Hwy 519 corridor;
 - and the Wawa to Chapleau Hwy 101 corridor; and the development of an enhanced Point of Presence (PoP) in Hornepayne

1.2 Meaning of Service Descriptions

In this REOI the terms high-speed, broadband and high-speed Internet are used interchangeably to describe services faster than dial-up. For the purpose of this REOI, residential service is defined as being a minimum of 1.5 Mbp/s down and 512 Kbp/s up as a baseline with the ability to offer a commercial “small business” package of 3 Mbp/s down 1 Mbp/s up.

1.3 Glossary of terms

- ‘Terrestrial services’ mean DSL, cable or wireless. It does not include satellite.
- ‘Broadband transport’ means the connectivity infrastructure that connects a local service hub to a major network access point. Typical examples are:
 - transport from a remote DSLAM to a Central Office,
 - installation of hardware/software commonly referred to as a Point of Presence (PoP) on an existing backbone route that will allow access to the network services,
 - backhaul transport from a wireless base station to an Internet PoP

- 'Public funding support' means the amount of funding that a private sector vendor would need to offset the capital costs associated with the provisioning of service. The simple formula to calculate the amount is Capital Costs minus Vendor Contribution = Public Funding Support. Public funding support will not normally exceed 75% of the project capital costs. All public funding support will eventually require detailed justification as indicated in Section 1.6 below.
- 'Open access' means that the successful vendor must allow access to the publically funded portions of the network by third party Alternate Broadband Service Providers (ABSP) in accordance with established regulations and procedures.

1.4 Goals

The goals of the REOI are:

- Identify Vendors who are interested in providing the services to the areas identified;
- Identify any need for and amount of any public funding support needed to provide the services to the areas identified;

1.5 Options

Vendors are only required to provide information on the individual projects where they are interested in providing service. Vendors may respond to 1, 2, 3 or 4 of the project areas. (Note: Vendors may also choose to reply to only part of Project Backbone necessary to support their response to the other projects.) Vendors may also indicate other areas, services, or localities of interest applicable to the region that are not indicated on the Spreadsheet A - Vendor Estimates for Projects of Interest

1.6 Follow-on Actions

Based on the responses to the REOI, qualifying Vendors may be asked to complete a detailed RFP and/or Business Plan for their identified interests. This information will form the basis for the submission of requests for funding support to federal and provincial government agencies.

1.7 Identified Challenges

1.7.1. General

The major challenges to providing the services in this region are:

- Significant distances between small, low-density pockets of population
- Competitive broadband service installed in the 'urban' communities within and surrounding the proposed service regions

- Difficulty in providing a solution that will offer all potential customers equal opportunity for high-speed Internet service
- Fluctuation in potential users due to seasonal residents, tourist traffic, and commercial transit traffic and weather conditions
- Limited electrical power access along the highway corridors

1.7.2. Specific Information

Each community area has specific challenges:

- Xplornet announced they will cease the provisioning of fixed wireless service to the Hornepayne and Wawa areas effective April 30, 2008
- There is limited terrestrial PoP and associated backbone access in and out of Hornepayne

1.8 Areas of Responsibility

The following table further defines the responsibilities of the Vendor and the potential customers in each community.

Responsibility	Definition	Vendor	Customer
Network	Engineering, furnishing, installation, operations, maintenance and ownership.	✓	
Customer premises equipment	Furnishing, installation, maintenance and ownership.	✓	✓
Management systems hardware and software	Engineering, furnishing, installation, operations, maintenance and ownership.	✓	
Central Services	Customer service, sales, marketing, billing, collections, accounting.	✓	

1.9 Overall Timeline

Approval of public funding and the execution of the necessary contracts may take up to one year from the REOI issue date.

Vendors should be prepared to have an initial operating capability within one year or less of contract signing and have the total project completed within two years of contract signing.

1.10 Expression of Interest Process and Vendor Submission Requirements

1.11 Submission and Contact Information

Summary of Key Dates

Intent to Submit deadline	May 02, 2008
Final date to submit questions via e-mail	May 12, 2008
Expression of Interest deadline:	May 16, 2008

1.12 Intent to Submit

Interested Vendors must submit the Intent to Submit notification by the date indicated in Section 1.11. Vendors must send an e-mail to the attention of the ADnet Project Contact in Section 1.12.2 with the following information:

- Name of Vendor's designated project contact for the purposes of this proposal.
- Contact information.
- A statement indicating their Intent to Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)

1.12.1. Questions about the Request for Expression of Interest and Project

Vendors with questions about the ROEI should forward them via email to the ADnet Project Contact. ADnet will remove all identifying marks from the e-mail and forward the original question, with an answer, to all Vendors who registered during the Intent to Submit process. ADnet will not respond to questions by telephone or in person.

1.12.2. ADnet Project Contact

Refer all questions, and send all proposal materials to:

ADnet
Attn: Wilf Lefresne
PO BOX 688
Thessalon, ON P0R 1L0

Email: adnetinfo@adnetalgoma.ca

1.12.3. Expression of Interest Submission Requirements

Vendors must submit two hard copies and one electronic copy of their Expression of Interest. The printed versions must be of letter quality, single-spaced and single-sided on standard letter size 8.5 x 11 inches paper, with margins no less than 1 inch. The size of type must be at least 12 points or 10 characters per inch.

An electronic copy is defined as an emailed version of the document in MS Word/Excel file formats. Other file formats will not be accepted. The electronic version may be supplied with the hard copies if it is burned on a good quality, multi-platform CD suitable for use with Windows platform.

2.0 Proposal Content

2.1 Format

Note: Failure to follow the Proposal Format may result in the disqualification of your proposal.

In order to ensure that there is uniformity to the proposals and to facilitate the comparison between Vendors, all proposals MUST contain the following content, organized according to the headings in this section.

General: The Vendor's name must appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page and each page should be numbered consecutively.

Cover Page – Containing legal name, address and contact information for the Vendor.

1. Executive Summary

- Maximum 1 page.
- Short summary, regions of interest, of the project cost, requested public assistance, and any value added the Vendor will bring to the project.

2. Vendor Estimates for Regions of Interest

- Completed Spreadsheet A – Vendor Estimates For Projects Of Interest
- Brief description of proposed services in each area
- Confirmation that the technology will be open access
- Additional information or notes outlining other projects in areas that would be complimentary or other additional enhanced service the vendor would propose to provide in the Regions of Interest.

3. Project Management

- Name of Vendor project management contact/s.

4. Official Signatures

Include a letter from the Vendor's signing authority approving the submission of the Expression of Interest and the content therein.

3.0 Next Steps

4.1 A completed REOI will qualify the Vendor to proceed to a detailed competitive selection process. The data provided in Spreadsheet A Vendor Estimates for Projects of Interest will be used by ADnet to begin framing up projects for government support. It is expected that this information will be fine tuned during the competitive selection process and then used for the final application for government support if necessary.

4.0 Claims

4.1 Ownership

All materials submitted in response to the REOI become the property of ADnet. Proposals and supporting materials will not be returned to Vendors, nor will ADnet consider any expenses that the Vendors may occur in preparing these proposals. All materials submitted will be kept confidential and only reviewed by ADnet and staff from the government funding agencies. This information will not be shared with other Vendors.

4.2 Rights to Reject

ADnet reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

4.3 Expenses

Vendors are responsible for all their expenses associated with the development and submission of the REOI.