

RFP 24-020
Broadband Expansion for Fort Bend County

Q&A

Question 1: In the scope of work you mention that you would like to prioritize the areas in Exhibit A in Phase 1. Can you provide the addresses of the areas/locations that are considered unserved/underserved in Needville, Kendleton, Simonton, and Thompsons?

Answer: Whereas we cannot provide a list of specific addresses, based on our survey data we can provide zip codes of areas that were deemed unserved/underserved; for example, 77441, 77461, 77476, 77469 and 77406.

Question 2: We are very interested in providing the county a solution for this RFP. However, due to the scope and request of the project, can you provide an extension for the submission of this project?

Answer: In an effort to maintain and meet required timelines, extensions are not allowed.

Question 3: Can the County help clarify how contractors should view “areas of need” as opposed to “priority areas”? Section 1.06 says “areas of need AND priority areas”, Section 2.0 asks applicants to focus on the priority areas only of Simonton, Kendleton, Thompsons, and Needville as a Phase 1, and states areas not specified as priority would be in a potential Phase 2. Are contractors limited to the city limits only of these towns, or can areas of need within the ETJ also be included, or is there a third possibility?

Answer: Respondents should view “areas of need “and “priority areas” synonymously. Respondents are not limited to those areas defined in the RFP but must focus on the areas identified in Exhibit A.

Question 4: Will specifically identifying information be provided giving address level data for those homes and businesses the County deems un or underserved?

Answer: Whereas we cannot provide a list of specific addresses based on our survey data we can provide zip codes of areas that were deemed unserved/underserved; for example, 77441, 77461, 77476, 77469 and 77406.

Question 5: How will the County assist with lowering the costs associated with constructing and operating the network? Working cost-saving mechanisms into the business case will allow the contractor's investment to go further and should be known in advance so they can be incorporated into the financial payback model.

- a. Will there be streamlined permitting assistance such as blanket permits permitting certain Right of Way work within particular parameters?

Answer: Installation of underground utilities within easements (outside of public right-of-way) do not require permitting with Fort Bend County. Permits will be required for all work within public right-of-way. In lieu of providing a bond for each individual permit, a perpetual bond can be established to streamline the process and reduce costs.

- b. Will plat maps of areas be provided without cost?

*Answer: Plats are filed with the County Clerk and may be downloaded at:
<https://ccweb.co.fort-bend.tx.us/RealEstate/SearchResults.aspx>.
Unofficial copies are free to download or a clean copy (without watermark) may be downloaded for \$1 per sheet.*

Question 6: The federal government's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) does not look as though it will be re-funded by Congress. As such, how does the county want to see applicants address the population rolling off ACP?

Answer: More than 22,000 County Residents benefit from the ACP. The county would like those residents and subsequent qualifying constituents to have access to a similar rate/discount.

Question 7: The date of expiry for ARPA funds is December 21, 2026. Is there a mechanism in place for an extension if builds contemplated under this RFP are not completed by that time due to issues out of the control of the contractor, such as permit wait times, inclement weather, supply chain?

Answer: Although the provisions of ARPA call for all funds to be committed and disbursed by December 2026, the County would use a re-characterization of the expenditure of these project funds should unforeseen delays occur.