

Johnson County, Iowa, re Broadband RFP that was issued Nov. 15, 2021

Dec. 2, 2021 Addendum 1 for Questions and Answers

- 1) What is driving the interest by the County to conduct the study? Is this a staff or county board-driven initiative? What are the key outcomes you hope to achieve from the study?
 - A key driver, as stated in the RFP, is we started writing an economic development plan and from the stakeholder comments, a main concern was having access to high-quality-broadband internet for work from home, educate from home and for conducting health-care from home. It was hard to do more than one of the above activities on the same broadband line.
 - We also learned that a lot of funding decisions are based on the Statewide Broadband Availability (Targeted Service Areas) Map, and we believe these aren't showing significant deficiencies that actually exist.
 - American Rescue Plan Act and Infrastructure monies may be available, and we want to be ready for opportunities.
 - Completing a study was staff-initiated but supported by the County board (elected officials), with interest from local economic development stakeholders such as the Iowa Area Economic Development group.

- 2) Is there a longer-term plan in place for Johnson County? Fundamentally, is this step one of a multi-step process that you envision? What is the ideal long-term outcome?
 - Yes, this is step one of a process to get actual improvements in broadband countywide and especially in the unincorporated areas. Depending on the results of the completed Scope of Work, different solutions may be needed.
 - The long-term ideal outcome is to improve broadband so all areas of the county have symmetrical service with speeds equal to or greater than 100 Mbps with a latency not to exceed 25 milliseconds and provided to the customer at an affordable cost – currently we project this not to exceed \$100 per month with a one-time installation fee not to exceed \$200.

- 3) If this is part of a longer-term plan to improve broadband, has the county considered how it might approach the solution (aka, publicly owned/operated infrastructure, public-private partnerships, etc.?)
 - As stated in the RFP, as of now, the County does not anticipate itself becoming a broadband service provider. However, we do want to partner with the existing providers to help them do what they can do. Potentially, we would pay for some of the infrastructure expansion.
 - The County's development ordinance *may* be revised to require cable being installed up to the public right-of-way. Sometimes this does happen at the developer's discretion; however this potentially would be a change in rules.
 - Approaches to the solution should otherwise be related to the findings of the Scope of Work.

- 4) The funding authorization indicated there may be other partners on the project. Is Johnson County sponsoring this as a standalone, or have you identified other communities/counties interested in participating?
 - At this time, the Scope of Work by the firm will be funded by Johnson County alone. We anticipate that the selected firm, in conjunction with County staff assistance, will need to coordinate with our municipalities and other local entities.
 - Once there are findings, the County might consider municipal partnerships but that is to be seen.

- 5) What is the County's budget for these services?
 - The budget will be determined based upon the services offered by the firm selected to do the project. At least \$50,000 has been budgeted; more may possibly be allocated.

- 6) Does Johnson County have non-disclosure agreements already in place with the broadband service providers, or will the contractor need to execute those agreements to obtain relevant data to prepare the map?
 - Johnson County does not have any non-disclosure agreements in place. Please be advised that Iowa's laws pertaining to Open Meetings and Open Records (Iowa Codes Sections 21 and 22) may be applicable.

- 7) In what format should the broadband map be delivered?
 - The map should be delivered in an electronic format appropriate to be viewed and manipulated using ESRI Mapping software that the County currently utilizes.