

Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP)

**Request for Proposals (RFP) for Community Broadband
Assessment and Development of Regional Digital
Opportunity Plan for Southside and Piedmont Virginia**



April 17, 2023

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Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP) Regional Digital Planning Grant Work

Date: April 17, 2023
To: Prospective Bidder/Contractor
From: Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP)
RE: Request for Proposals (RFP) for Community Broadband Assessment and Development of Regional Digital Opportunity Plan for Southside and Piedmont Virginia

Purpose of RFP

Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP) was recently awarded grant funds from the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development's (DHCD) Broadband Office to complete planning work and put together a comprehensive Regional Digital Opportunity Plan for Southside and Piedmont Virginia. The Plan will cover 17 counties and three (3) cities in Virginia, including:

- Amelia County
- Amherst County
- Appomattox County
- Bedford County
- Buckingham County
- Campbell County
- Charlotte County
- Cumberland County
- Fluvanna County
- Halifax County
- Henry County
- Lunenburg County
- Mecklenburg County
- Nelson County
- Nottoway County
- Pittsylvania County
- Prince Edward County
- Danville City
- Lynchburg City
- Martinsville City

SERCAP is currently soliciting proposals for a qualified consulting or contracting firm to complete the required community broadband assessment, planning, and development work to meet the grant deliverables. ***Electronic proposals will be received until 12:00 Noon on Friday, April 28, 2023 via email to SERCAP's Director of Regional Programs, Amanda Kelley, at akelley@sercap.org. Please put Community Broadband Assessment and Digital Opportunity Plan in the Subject line of the email.***

The development of the Regional Digital Opportunity Plan for the Southside and Piedmont Virginia will consist of three primary phases: 1) Community Assessment and Research Phase, 2) Data Analysis Phase, and 3) Regional Digital Opportunity Plan Development Phase. Phases one (1) and two (2) must be completed by June 16, 2023, and Phase three (3) must be completed by July 14, 2023. This will provide SERCAP time to review the final plan prior to submitting to DHCD's Broadband Office. The final Regional Digital Opportunity Plan is due to the Broadband Office by August 1, 2023.

Required Scope of Work

Planning Grant Work:

1. Community Assessment and Research Phase

- a. **Survey Development, Disbursement, and Collection** – in collaboration with Consultant hired by DHCD, develop and finalize Community Survey on Access and Use of Broadband. The survey will focus on both current use and future needs.
- b. **Community Meetings/Focus Groups** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for planning and executing a minimum of six (6) Community Meetings and Focus Groups spread throughout the designated geographic region. These Community Meetings/Focus Groups will include: Community Leaders (Council/Board of Supervisor Members, Town Manager, County Administrators, County/Town/City Planners, etc.), Community Stakeholders, staff from Planning District Commissions (PDCs), staff from local Broadband Authorities, Community Spark-plugs, interested Community Members, and the general public.
- c. **Research** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for identifying, reviewing, and providing written summaries of existing Broadband Plans in the designated geographic region. Once selected, the Contractor/Consultant will be provided with a starting list of existing plans and Broadband Authorities to include in this research.
- d. **Kick-off and Monthly Planning Meetings** – the Contractor/Consultant will be expected to attend the initial Kick-off Meeting and all regularly scheduled Monthly Planning Meetings. These meetings can be conducted online via Zoom, Teams, etc.

2. Data Analysis Phase

- a. **Compile and analyze all Survey Data** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for compiling and analyzing all collected survey data. They will also be responsible for crafting a short summary document, that will provide a visual overview of the survey results.
- b. **Compile all notes from the Community Meetings/Focus Groups** – as with the survey data, the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for compiling all notes from the Community Meetings/Focus Groups, and summarizing that data – both quantitative and qualitative. Again, they will be responsible for providing a written summary of the data.

- c. **Compile All Research and Craft Summary Document/s** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for compiling the data collected from their research of the existing Broadband Plans. The will put together an overall summary document that can be combined with the survey and community meeting/focus group data to support a full Broadband Assessment of the area.

**All collected and analyzed data will be used to inform the final Regional Digital Opportunity Plan.*

3. Regional Digital Opportunity Plan Development Phase

- a. **Development of Written Regional Digital Opportunity Plan** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for pulling together all of the assessment and research results and developing a clear and implementable Regional Digital Opportunity Plan for the designated region. The plan will utilize the SMART methodology to ensure that it is:

- S** – Specific
- M** – Measurable
- A** – Achievable
- R** – Relevant
- T** – Timely/Time Specific

Utilizing the SMART methodology will provide a plan that makes sense and will be easy for the community/region to implement.

- b. **Desktop Publishing/Graphic Design** – the Contractor/Consultant will be responsible for working with SERCAP’s Planning & Development Team to complete the lay-out for the final plan utilizing a clean, professional design that follows SERCAP’s design style guide.

Once the Regional Digital Opportunity Plan is complete, SERCAP will be responsible for submitting the final document to DHCD’s Broadband Office by the August 1, 2023 deadline.

Proposal Requirements

Any interested firm that would like to be considered for this contract should submit their proposal to SERCAP by 12:00 Noon on Friday, April 28, 2023. Please put ***Community Broadband Assessment and Digital Opportunity Plan*** in the Subject line of the email.

All proposals should include:

1. Brief Description/History of the Contracting/Consulting Firm
2. Proposed Scope of Work
3. Overview of Qualifications, including:
 - a. Key Staff/Project Team – summary of qualifications – may attach individual resumes for Project Team Members, if desired
 - b. Overview of similar or related project work
 - c. List of Similar/Related Projects with completion dates
 - d. List of References
4. Proposed Timeline – assurance that all project work will be complete by Friday, July 14, 2023
5. Estimated Project Costs with Rationale

For questions regarding this RFP, please contact SERCAP's Director of Regional Programs, Amanda Kelley, at 540-345-1184 ext. 133 or via email at akelley@sercap.org.