

CHEROKEE NATION REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROJECT: WIRELESS INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER



CHEROKEE NATION PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

**CHEROKEE NATION
P.O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74465
(918) 453-5000**

**CHEROKEE NATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PROJECT: WIRELESS INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER OPERATOR**

INTRODUCTION:

The Cherokee Nation is the federally recognized government of the Cherokee people and thereby has sovereign status granted by treaty and law. Tribal sovereignty is the right to self-governance. The seat of tribal government is the W.W. Keeler Complex near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, capital of the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee Nation (hereinafter “Nation”) Reservation covers 14 counties in Northeast Oklahoma. The Cherokee Nation Tribal Government employs approximately 5,000 individuals located at approximately 150 work locations throughout the area with the bulk located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

The Cherokee Nation is the largest tribe in the United States with more than 460,000 tribal citizens worldwide. More than 141,000 Cherokee Nation citizens reside within the reservation. Services provided include health and human services, education, employment, housing, economic and infrastructure development, environmental protection and more.

The Nation is requesting sealed proposals from interested, qualified companies to provide services as outlined in this RFP. Complete information regarding the scope of work and specifications are provided in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

The Nation will be accepting sealed proposals from Indian and Non-Indian parties. Indian preference will be given only to responding parties who provide proof of current certification from the Cherokee Nation Tribal Employments Office (TERO) located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, telephone number (918) 453-5000. Indian preference will be applied in accordance with current TERO legislation and the Nation’s Policy and Procedures. Proof of TERO certification must accompany and be included in proposal submittal.

MISSION:

The Cherokee Nation is committed to protecting our inherent sovereignty, preserving and promoting Cherokee culture, language and values, and improving the quality of life for the next seven generations of Cherokee Nation citizens.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The Cherokee Nation is constructing wireless network infrastructure consisting of 16 towers with fiber backhaul and fixed wireless network equipment for operation in partnership with an experienced wireless internet service provider (WISP).

The service timeframe will extend from date of award with an ending date based on sealed proposal timeline information. Complete information regarding the scope of work and specifications are provided in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

The Nation will be accepting proposals from Indian and Non-Indian parties. Indian preference will be given only to responding parties who provide proof of current certification from the

Cherokee Nation Tribal Employments Office (TERO) located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, telephone number (918) 453-5000. Indian preference will be applied in accordance with Cherokee Nation Acquisition Management Policy and Procedures. Proof of TERO certification must accompany and be included in proposal submittal.

General Information:

1. **Purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP):** The NATION, is soliciting detailed, proposals from contractors interested in providing services as outlined in this RFP for the NATION. The complete scope of work and specifications are included in this RFP.
2. **TERO CERTIFICATION & INFORMATION:** Indian preference will be given only to responding parties who provide proof of current certification from the Cherokee Nation Tribal Employments Office (TERO) located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, telephone number (918) 453-5000. Proof of TERO certification must accompany and be included in proposal submittal.

Please direct any questions for Cherokee Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office (T.E.R.O.) in written format by deadline, **September 12, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT** to shelly-mcclain@cherokee.org as specified in this RFP. These questions will be addressed by TERO and included in any addendum issued by **September 18, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT**.

3. **Conflict of Interest and Restrictions:** If any contractor, contractor's employee, subcontractor, or any individual working on the proposed contract may have a possible conflict of interest that may affect the objectivity, analysis, and/or performance of the contract, it shall be declared in writing and submitted to Cherokee Nation Purchasing (Attn: Shelly McClain) no later than **September 12, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT**. The NATION will determine in writing if the conflict is significant and material and if so, may eliminate the contractor from submitting a proposal.
4. **Verbal Instructions:** Interested parties shall not initiate or execute any negotiation, decision, or action arising from any verbal discussion with any Cherokee Nation employee. Only written communications from the designated Contact Person at Cherokee Nation may be considered a duly authorized expression on behalf of the NATION regarding this RFP. Additionally, only written communications from interested parties are recognized as duly authorized expressions on behalf of the vendor. The same instructions shall apply to any subsequent award and agreement communications.
5. **Contact Person:** Any additional information required or questions regarding this RFP should be submitted, by specified deadline, in written format only to Shelly McClain at shelly-mcclain@cherokee.org.
6. **Contractor's Review and Questions:** Contractor's should carefully review this RFP for errors, questionable or objectionable materials, and items requiring clarification. Contractor's shall put these comments and/or questions in writing and submit them to the Cherokee Purchasing Department (Attn: Shelly McClain) no later than **September 12, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT** at the email previously listed.

7. **Addendum to the RFP:** The NATION reserves the right to issue written addendums to revise or clarify the RFP, respond to questions, and/or extend the due date of proposals. Any and all such interpretations and any supplemental instructions will be in the form of written addenda, and will be issued and posted to the bid website www.cherokeebids.org by **September 18, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT**. No interpretation of the proposal specifications will be made to any interested party orally. Failure to receive any issued addendum or interpretation shall not relieve responding party from any obligation contained in submitted proposal. All addenda so issued shall become part of the contract documents.
8. **Deadline for Receipt of Proposals:** Sealed proposals must be received by Cherokee Nation Purchasing Department, Shelly McClain, no later than **September 26, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT** to be eligible for award. Proposals received after this deadline will not be accepted and will not be considered for award. No responding party may withdraw their proposal within 90 day after sealed proposal due date. Sealed proposals are to be sent by carrier (or hand delivered) to: Cherokee Nation Purchasing Department, Attn: Shelly McClain, 17665 S. Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464. Submittals must be sealed and clearly marked **Sealed Proposal – WISP – DO NOT OPEN**. Sealed responses are to include one (1) clearly marked single-sided original and two (2) USB drives.
9. **Cancellation of the RFP:** The NATION retains the right to cancel, modify or amend the RFP process at any time, at the NATION’s sole discretion. The NATION shall not be responsible for costs incurred by contractors for proposal preparation.
10. **Proposal Withdrawal and Correction:** A proposal may be corrected or withdrawn by a written request received prior to the date of opening proposals.
11. **Multiple Proposals:** The NATION shall not accept multiple proposals from the same contractor.
12. **Retention of Proposals:** All proposals and other material submitted become the NATION’s property and may be returned only at NATION’s option.
13. **Cost of Proposal Preparation:** Any and all costs incurred by a contractor in preparing and submitting a proposal are the contractor’s responsibility and shall not be charged to the NATION or reflected as an expense of the resulting contract.
14. **Delivery of Proposals:** NATION assumes no responsibility or liability for the transmission, delay, or delivery of proposals by either public or private carriers.
15. **Media Announcements:** Any and all media announcements pertaining to this RFP require the NATION’s prior written approval.
16. **Other Governmental Requirements:** It is the responsibility of the contractor to indicate within their proposal the applicability of any other federal, state, municipal, or other governmental statutes, regulations, ordinances, acts, and/or requirements.

- 17. Qualification of Responding Party:** The Nation may make such investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the responding party to perform the work. The responding party shall furnish to the Nation all such information and data for this purpose upon request. The Nation reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such responding party fails to satisfy the Nation such responding party is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work contemplated therein. Conditional proposals will not be accepted.
- 18. Binding Contract:** This RFP does not obligate the NATION or the selected contractor until a contract is signed and approved by both parties. If approved, it is effective from the date of final approval by the Contracting Officers. The NATION shall not be responsible for work done, even in good faith, prior to final approval of the proposed contract.
- 19. Concerns with the Special or General Provisions:** If a contractor has concerns with either the Special or General Provisions, they should put their comments and/or questions in writing and submit them to Cherokee Purchasing Department (Attn: Shelly McClain) no later than **September 12, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT.** This will allow time for an addendum to the RFP to be issued, if required, to all recipients of the initial RFP.

The NATION reserves the right to not award or to cancel the award of a contract to a contractor who will not agree to all of the Special or General Provisions of said contract. It is the intent of the NATION to utilize only the NATION'S terms and conditions for any subsequent agreement based on award from this RFP.

An award for this project will be made subject to available funding. Firms are cautioned that proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both a technical and cost standpoint.

- 20. Governing Laws and Contract:** The Cherokee Nation will make this RFP and the successful Contractor's proposal a part of the contract. This RFP and any subsequent contract and related documents shall be construed under the laws of the United States and where applicable, the Cherokee Nation. Nothing in this RFP, any subsequent documents or contract or related documents shall be construed as a waiver of limitation upon the Nation's sovereign immunity. To the extent this statement is found to be inconsistent with any other language in this RFP or any subsequent document or contract or related document, this statement shall control. This statement shall survive the completion or termination of any subsequent contract. In the event of any dispute which may affect this Agreement, the Contractor agrees the Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the United States, and where applicable, the laws of the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee Nation will make the final decision on the contract format to be utilized for any award(s) under this procurement. There will be no Arbitration, Mediations or Indemnification clauses, and the Nation will not waive sovereign immunity. By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the Contractor agrees to these terms and conditions.
- 21. Additional Terms and Conditions:** The NATION reserves the right to include additional terms and conditions during contract negotiations. However, these terms and conditions must

be within the scope of the original RFP and will be limited to price, clarification, definition, and administrative and legal requirements.

22. Contract Negotiations: Upon completion of the evaluation process, contract negotiations may commence. If the selected contractor fails to provide the necessary information for negotiations in a timely manner, negotiate in good faith, or cannot perform the contract for any reason, including completion of the project within the amount of funds available for the project and/or as proposed, the NATION may terminate negotiations and negotiate with the next highest ranked contractor, or terminate award of the contract. The NATION shall not be responsible for costs incurred by the contractor resulting from contract negotiations.

Terms and Conditions

Acceptance of Conditions Governing the Procurement: Vendors must indicate their acceptance of conditions governing this procurement in their cover letter.

Acceptance of Business Associate Agreement: Vendors must indicate willingness to establish agreement should it be necessary to access protected health information.

Incurring Cost: Any costs incurred by the vendor in preparation, transmittal, or presentation of any proposal, or material submitted in response to this RFP shall be borne solely by the vendor. The vendor is responsible for all costs associated with travel for on-site demonstrations upon the Nation's request.

Amended Proposals: Any vendor may submit an amended proposal before the deadline for receipt of proposals. Such amended proposals must be complete replacements for a previously submitted proposal and must be clearly identified as such in the transmittal letter.

Proposal Offer Firm: Responses to this RFP, including proposal prices, will be considered firm for 90 days after the date of receipt of the proposal.

Proprietary Information: Any restriction on any data included in any proposals must be clearly stated in the proposal itself. Each and every page of the proprietary material must be labeled or identified with the word "PROPRIETARY".

Vendor's Right to Withdraw Proposal: Vendors will be allowed to withdraw their proposals at any time prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals. The vendor must submit a written withdrawal request addressed to Shelly McClain, at shelly-mcclain@cherokee.org.

Location of Services: Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Term of Proposed Contract: NATION anticipates establishing a contract with a performance period ending in accordance with offer from successful party.

General Responsibility: The successful contractor will provide all necessary tools, equipment, parts, supplies, labor and supervision to develop and provide a video as outlined in this RFP scope of work.

Contractor's Compensation: Compensation to the contractor shall be based on specific price and/or rates identified in the Contractor's proposal, as negotiated, or if applicable. This shall include any proposed subcontractor pricing.

Subcontracts: Contractor is solely responsible for fulfillment of the contract terms. NATION will make payments only to the Contractor. Contractor must identify in response to this RFP any subcontractors that may perform services on the project. Except for those subcontractors identified by the Contractor in response to the RFP, Contractor shall not subcontract any portion of the services to be performed under this contract without prior written approval of NATION. The NATION reserves the right to approve or disapprove any subcontractors.

Contractor shall notify NATION no less than ten (10) days in advance of its desire to subcontract and include a copy of the proposed subcontract with the proposed subcontractor. Any subcontract must be in writing and contain provisions consistent with the Contractor's obligations pursuant to this contract.

Approval of any subcontract shall not obligate NATION the subcontractor against NATION or its agents, employees, representatives, directors, officers, successors or assigns.

The Cherokee Nation, in giving such acceptance, assumes no responsibility in connection with the terms of the subcontract and their performance will be the responsibility of the Contractor. All sums due to any suppliers must be paid or will be paid within ten (10) days of receipt of any money received from the Cherokee Nation under any executed Agreement.

Debarment, Suspension, Proposed Debarment, and Other Responsibility Matters: The responding party certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief that the person, the firm, or any of its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for the award of contracts by any Federal agency or Indian tribe. The bidder will also certify they have not, within a three-year period preceding this Request for Proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for: commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, Local or Tribal) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commissions of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsifications or destruction of records, making false statements, and are not presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated in this provision. The responding party certifies they have not, within a three-year period preceding this Request for Proposal, had one or more contracts terminated for default by a Federal, State, Local or Tribal agency.

Drug and Tobacco Free Workplace:

- Any Contractor performing work for the Cherokee Nation agrees to publish a statement notifying all employees, subcontractors, and other workers that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the Contractor's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against violators of such prohibition.
- The Nation will consider lack of enforcement or lax enforcement of the statement by Contractor a default of the contract.

- The Contractor further agrees to provide all persons engaged in performance of the contract with a copy of the statement.
- A copy of responding party's Drug Free Workplace statement shall be included with the proposal or else the successful responding party will be deemed to accept and agree to use the statement provided by Nation.
- The Contractor understands and recognizes that all Cherokee Nation buildings, whether leased or owned, and the grounds surrounding those facilities are considered by the Nation to be a tobacco free workplace. The Contractor will ensure all employees, subcontractors, and other workers will abide by this policy.

Indemnity and Insurance: The Cherokee Nation assumes no responsibility for negligent acts of either the offeror or their employees; therefore, the offeror is responsible for obtaining the insurance coverage the NATION considers appropriate. The offeror will keep harmless and indemnify the Cherokee Nation against any or all loss, cost, damage, claims, expense or liability for all acts related to quality care management and enforcement of this contract.

Following are the insurance requirements for this contract:

Indemnity and Insurance: The Cherokee Nation assumes no responsibility for negligent acts of either the offeror or their employees; therefore, the offeror is responsible for obtaining the insurance coverage the NATION considers appropriate. The offeror will keep harmless and indemnify the Cherokee Nation against any or all loss, cost, damage, claims, expense or liability for all acts related to quality care management and enforcement of this contract.

Following are the insurance requirements for this contract:

- General Liability, including premises/operations and products/completed operations
\$1,000,000 each occurrence/\$2,000,000 annual aggregate
Such policy will name Cherokee Nation as an additional insured and include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the Cherokee Nation.
- Automobile Liability, including hired and non-owned auto
\$1,000,000 combined single limit
Such policy will name Cherokee Nation as an additional insured and include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the Cherokee Nation.
- Workers' Compensation – statutory to the State of jurisdiction
Employers' Liability - \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000
Such policy will include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the Cherokee Nation
- Cyber Liability, including but not limited to Technology Errors & Omissions, Network Privacy and Security Liability, Breach Response, and Cyber Extortion.
\$2,000,000 per occurrence or claim/\$2,000,000 aggregate.
Coverage shall be sufficiently broad to respond to the duties and obligations as is undertaken by the contractor in this agreement and include a Waiver of Subrogation in favor of the Cherokee Nation.

All coverage will be written with an AM Best "A X" rated carrier. Contractor will provide a certificate of insurance to the Cherokee Nation, evidencing coverage outlined above.

Availability of Funds: Any contract awarded as a result of this RFP is contingent on the appropriation of funds. A contract award may be terminated or reduced in scope if sufficient appropriations or authorizations do not exist. This vendor will be notified in writing of such terminations. The vendor will accept, as final, the Nation's decision as to whether sufficient appropriations and authorizations are available.

Legal Review: The Nation requires that all vendors agree to be bound by the general requirements contained in this RFP. Any vendor concerns must be properly brought to the attention of Shelly McClain, Cherokee Nation Director of Procurement.

Governing Law: This RFP and subsequent agreements shall be governed by, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the United States, and where applicable, the laws of the Cherokee Nation.

Contract Terms and Conditions: The contract between the Cherokee Nation and the vendor will follow the standard format of the Cherokee Nation.

Vendor's Terms and Conditions: Vendors must submit with the proposal a complete set of any additional terms and conditions that they expect to have included in a contract negotiated with the Cherokee Nation.

Right to Waive Minor Irregularities: The proposal evaluation committee reserves the right to waive minor irregularities. This right is at the sole discretion of the proposal evaluation committee.

The Nation reserves the right to determine a proposal acceptable in terms of meeting RFP requirements. The Nation reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals received and to negotiate with offerors regarding the terms of their proposals or parts thereof. The Cherokee Nation reserves the right to award a contract in the best interests of the Cherokee Nation.

Ownership of Proposals: All documents submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of the Cherokee Nation. Responses received will be retained by the Purchasing Department.

Prompt Payment: If applicable, the successful firm agrees to pay all sums due to subcontractors, laborers and material suppliers within ten (10) days of receipt of payment by the Cherokee Nation.

Review of Proposals

1. **Proposal Format:** Sealed Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered, as long as one (1) clearly marked, single sided proposal and two (2) USB drives are physically received by Shelly McClain no later than **September 26, 2024 by 5:00 pm CT as outlined on page 4, section 8.**
2. **Table of Contents:** The proposal will have a table of contents with page numbers and pages numbered throughout the proposal (see specifics under Specifications Section).
3. **General Information:** Brief introduction which includes (see specifics under Specifications Section):
 - 1) The contractor's name and address;
 - 2) Statement that indicates the proposal is valid for at least 90 days from the proposal submission deadline;
 - 3) Statement that indicates the contractor's willingness to perform the services described in this RFP;
 - 4) Proof of any other licenses and/or registrations as required by this RFP.
 - 5) A statement that all staff and other resources which are required to perform the services described in this RFP will be made available by the organization over the life of any subsequent contract;
 - 6) Overview & Credentials of Staff that will be assigned to the project;
 - 7) Statement that the signatory has authority to bind the contractor; and
 - 8) Signature of authorized individual.
4. **Specific requirements:** Any requirements listed in the Specifications provided by the Nation in this RFP must be included in responses.
5. **Responsiveness:** Prior to evaluation, each proposal shall be reviewed to determine whether or not it is responsive. Nonresponsive proposals shall be eliminated and will not be evaluated. Factors that may result in a proposal being declared nonresponsive are:
 - a. Substantive and material conflicts of interest which were not declared and/or were declared and determined to be significant enough that the NATION requested the potential contractor not submit a proposal.
 - b. Substantive and material noncompliance to requirements of the RFP proposal submission guideline.
 - c. Not providing a price, if applicable.
6. **TERO CERTIFICATION:** Indian preference will be given only to responding parties who provide proof of current certification from the Cherokee Nation Tribal Employments Office (TERO) located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, telephone number (918) 453-5000. Indian preference will be applied in accordance with Cherokee Nation Policy and Procedures. Proof of TERO certification must accompany and be included in proposal submittal.

7. **Evaluation Process:** An evaluation committee consisting of NATION employees shall evaluate responsive proposals. Each proposal shall be independently evaluated by each member of the evaluation committee. The evaluation will be based on the evaluation factors and values stated in this RFP. Discussions, presentations, and/or site visits, if held, may result in individual evaluation committee members changing their scores. Evaluation factors not specified in this RFP may not be considered.

8. **Evaluation Factors:** The evaluation factors are listed below and must be clearly stated and addressed and stated in the sealed proposal.

<u>EVALUATION FACTORS</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
Firm Capacity	25
Previous Experience	25
Proposed Services	20
Proposed Operating & Revenue Model	20
Indian Preference – TERO Certification must accompany response	10
TOTAL	100

Overview of Opportunity

Cherokee Nation is constructing wireless network infrastructure consisting of 16 towers with fiber backhaul and fixed wireless network equipment for operation in partnership with an experienced wireless Internet service provider (WISP). When the network is complete, it will provide a fixed wireless infrastructure in the Cherokee Nation.

The towers will also be used to provide commercial collocation to wireless carriers and will have fiber backhaul constructed to the electric coop serving the respective local community.

Wireless Internet Service Provider and Strategic Partnership Goals

The goals of the Wireless Internet Service Provider (WISP) partnership are:

- 1) To deploy and operate a fixed wireless network serving the local communities with competitive Internet service offerings.
- 2) To establish independent ownership and governance of the fixed wireless network by the Cherokee Nation during the course of the partnership term.
- 3) To provide free and/or low-cost high-speed broadband service to anchor institutions within the local communities.
- 4) To provide technical training and local jobs for the local communities.

To accomplish these goals, Cherokee Nation (“Owner”) wishes to enter into a strategic partnership with an experienced WISP network operator (“Operator”) to provide comprehensive implementation services, operations, customer support, marketing, and sales functions for the fixed wireless network for a term of five years after completion of the wireless network infrastructure, which may be extended for an additional period at the option of the Owner. The strategic operating partnership must provide a clear path to accomplish the stated WISP partnership goals and be mutually beneficial to both partners. The Operator will provide all implementation, operations, customer support, marketing, and sales functions for the network in alignment with these goals. Members of the Owner communities will be employed and trained by the Operator where possible to provide local field services for service activation and support.

In this context, Cherokee Nation is soliciting proposals from qualified and experienced wireless network operators for this strategic partnership. The Owner is willing to entertain any operating and revenue model that accomplishes the stated goals. Examples include but are not limited to fee for service, wholesale capacity lease with per-community/subscriber access fee, and revenue sharing. The Owner will be responsible for all tower, fixed wireless equipment, and customer premise equipment capital investment in the venture. Potential Operators must submit proposals containing a detailed narrative with supporting diagrams and documentation describing the following:

1. The responsibilities of each partner.
2. The proposed network architecture including the preferred wireless technology, equipment manufacturers, hardware/software products, operating support systems, customer premise equipment, connectivity services required and any estimated costs required for equipment.
3. The proposed operation including its functional areas, staffing requirements, vendor roles, and contractor relationships.
4. The proposed broadband service types and data speeds to be offered.
5. The proposed marketing and sales strategy.
6. A financial model showing expected revenue growth and annual capex/opex requirements.
7. The proposed revenue model and benefits to both parties.
8. How the proposal accomplishes the WISP partnership goals listed above.
9. An estimated timeline for the network implementation from contract to go-live.

The Owner understands that in such a partnership, the ability to leverage existing vendors, processes, and staff experience will ensure the fastest time to turn-up for the network, the lowest operating cost for the system, and the highest service reliability for the Cherokee Nation communities. In this context, the Operator will be responsible for specifying, installing, and configuring all hardware/software required to successfully implement the WISP network in coordination with the Owner. Furthermore, the Operator will be responsible for incorporating all aspects of the WISP operation into their existing operational systems and processes. The Operator will be responsible for training members of the Cherokee Nation communities to provide local field services. The Owner intends to become operationally self-sufficient over the five-year term of the partnership agreement but may extend the contract term or procure selected services from the Operator beyond the agreement term.

Supporting Infrastructure Available to Operator

Each of the sixteen (16) Cherokee Nation communities contains a tower compound with a 10'x20' prefabricated communication shelter with utility power, a 50kW diesel generator, and inside plant suitable for equipment installation. 96-count fiber will be available to the local electric coop serving each community, providing access to both lit services and dark fiber for the Operator's preferred backhaul architecture. The Operator will work directly with each electric coop to activate the services and/or engineer the dark fiber meet points necessary to create their preferred physical/logical network architecture.

Tower construction will begin in late 2024, with the first tower being completed 16 weeks after construction commences. The remaining towers are scheduled to be completed in 24 weeks per the following schedule:

Week	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
GEO								
Foundation								
Tower Fab								
Site Work								
Tower Stack								
Shelter/Gen Set								
Gravel/Fence								

Cherokee Nation’s goal is to have their Partner selected by October 3, 2024 to begin contract negotiations and implementation planning.

Functional Areas of WISP Operations

Staffing and Training

The Operator will work with the Owner to recruit, train, and equip staff from the local communities where possible to provide local field services. The Operator will help create job descriptions, training curricula, and methods of procedure (MOP) to fill and support the local staff positions.

Network Engineering

The Operator will specify and manage the implementation of equipment for the WISP network. The Operator will work with the Owner to create a design and specifications for the necessary equipment and services to support a minimum of 25Mbps download and 3Mbps upload to the customers and assist in competitive procurement of the solution.

The Operator will advise the Owner on procuring critical spares and maintenance contracts for all equipment to provide the appropriate levels of support for hardware repair, software upgrades, and technical support.

Monitoring and Maintenance

The Operator will incorporate network monitoring, trouble management, and equipment maintenance for the WISP network into their existing network operating center (NOC) operations. The Owner field staff will assist with local maintenance tasks under direction of The Operator. The Operator will develop methods of procedure (MOPs) to govern and direct typical network maintenance events.

Order Management and Billing

The Operator will incorporate billing and service order management into their existing billing support and operating support systems (BSS/OSS). Ownership of all Cherokee Nation subscriber and service data will be retained by the Owner, and a method of network separation will be agreed to in the operating contract.

Customer and Technical Support

The Operator will provide customer service for the Cherokee Nation subscribers including billing, account and technical support within their normal business hours. The Operator and Owner will

establish a communication and escalation process for customer issues that need attention of CN personnel.

Tower and Shelter Facility Maintenance

The Operator will manage all tower and shelter facility maintenance for the Owner. The tower maintenance may be performed by the Operator or contracted to a 3rd party and must include all tasks required to maintain compliance with the FAA and FCC. The equipment shelters will require periodic inside plant service and generator testing which may be performed by the Operator directly or the local CN field service staff.

Field Services

The Operator will coordinate with the Owner in training community field service staff for local break/fix work and customer premise activities. The Operator will assist the Owner in procuring tools and test equipment to maintain operations of the shelter facilities, the WISP network, and the customer premise equipment.

Sales and Marketing

The Operator will provide marketing and sales support in the CN communities to make residents aware of the fixed wireless service and its competitive benefits in context of the operating partnership.

Regulatory Compliance

The Operator will provide the Owner with all information required to comply with federal grant regulatory requirements.

Proposal Schedule and Submission

Partnership proposals must be in narrative format with sufficient detail and supporting documentation as detailed above, describing the proposed operational structure, implementation of the WISP functional areas, and how the goals of the partnership will be addressed. Project information and Exhibits are included below for use in developing the operating partnership proposal. All proposals must be submitted as outlined in the RFP.

Bidders requiring additional information for creation of their proposal should make such requests by e-mail as outlined in the RFP. Requests for additional information and questions of clarification will be accepted and answers provided to all respondents per the published RFP schedule.

Exhibits

Exhibit A1 – Tower Locations and Estimated Coverage

Tower	Location	Height	CN Premises ¹	CBRS 3.5GHz ³	Unlicensed 5GHz ³
Belfonte-Nicut	35.561830, -94.560370	195	325		
Bell	35.716920, -94.610890	195	139		
Brent	35.377420, -94.798170	195	289		
Brushy	35.551000, -94.733940	195	363		
Chewey	36.117330, -94.744520	195	104		
Christie	35.950446, -94.690731	195	87		
Dry Creek	35.728633, -94.840737	195	390		
Eucha	36.392450, -94.879680	195	602		
Greasy	35.666340, -94.696170	195	339		
Kenwood ²	36.315479, -94.987350	300			
Marble City	35.579881, -94.821371	195	339		
Oak Hill-Piney	36.388710, -94.724340	195	944		
Oaks	36.165020, -94.863660	195	820		
Proctor	35.965343, -94.775305	195	235		
Tailholt	35.837579, -94.840672	195	420		
Vian	35.511230, -94.968080	195	503		

¹ Non-tribal premise counts are not included in the table above but will increase the overall premise counts available for wireless service around each tower.

² Kenwood tower premise counts were not available for inclusion in the RFP

³ Premise coverage at specific frequencies can be modeled after Operator selection.

Exhibit A2 – Tower and Shelter Specifications

1. Construction of galvanized steel towers.
2. Safe Climbing System for each tower.
3. All brackets and fixtures to attach antennae for up to 3 commercial carrier systems and one private LTE system.
4. Ground Clearing at the tower sites.
5. Soil testing for each location.
6. Shelter (10x20 Ft) for each tower site.
7. Transfer switch to go from Commercial A/C to generator and back.
8. Generator with the capacity (at least 50 Kw) to support all the above-listed systems per tower.
9. Fuel Tank with capacity to power generator for 72 hours per tower.
10. A 7-foot-high fence around the tower site with lockable access doors.
11. Electrical connections that can produce at least 50 Kw per tower.
12. Roads to access tower location if needed.
13. Testing all towers, including physical inspections, ground testing, security fencing, electrical connections, and generator operation.
14. Site security plan, including 24/7 monitoring of each site and interface to NOC systems.
15. Create As-Builts of all tower sites, including shelters, generators, fuel tanks and fencing.
16. An Ice bridge between the shelters and towers.
17. Restoration and cleaning of the tower site and adjacent areas, including replacing native foliage around tower foundations.