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BID NOTICE

Carroll County Broadband Expansion Project

Request for Proposals

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners is currently accepting proposals from qualified Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for the Carroll County Broadband Expansion Project. The purpose of this project is to expand broadband access to unserved and underserved homes and businesses throughout identified areas of Carroll County, Ohio.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) documents may be viewed in their entirety and/or downloaded by visiting https://carrollcountyohio.us/PublicNotices .

Respondents intending to reply to the RFP must provide notice of intent no later than Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. EST via e-mail to Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com. Respondents will receive eligible Fabric IDs, H3R8 hex codes and a Word version of the RFP document.

Proposals will be accepted electronically in PDF format through Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. EST. Proposals shall be clearly labeled "Carroll County Broadband Expansion Project RFP," and submitted to Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com.

An optional virtual pre-bid conference will be held Friday, June 12, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) EDT. Questions regarding the RFP may be submitted to Sean O'Malley via e-mail. Only ISPs that have submitted a notice of intent to respond will receive pre-bid conference invitations and related question-and-answer communications.

The project is supported through funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission through a Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative grant.

All federal, state and local laws regarding competitive procurement, anti-competitive practices and conflict of interest shall apply to this Request for Proposals.

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any irregularities in proposals received, and accept the proposal or proposals deemed to be in the best interest of Carroll County. The Carroll County Board of Commissioners also reserves the right to accept portions of a proposal unless otherwise restricted by the respondent.

Contact: Sean O'Malley, Reid Consulting Group
Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com

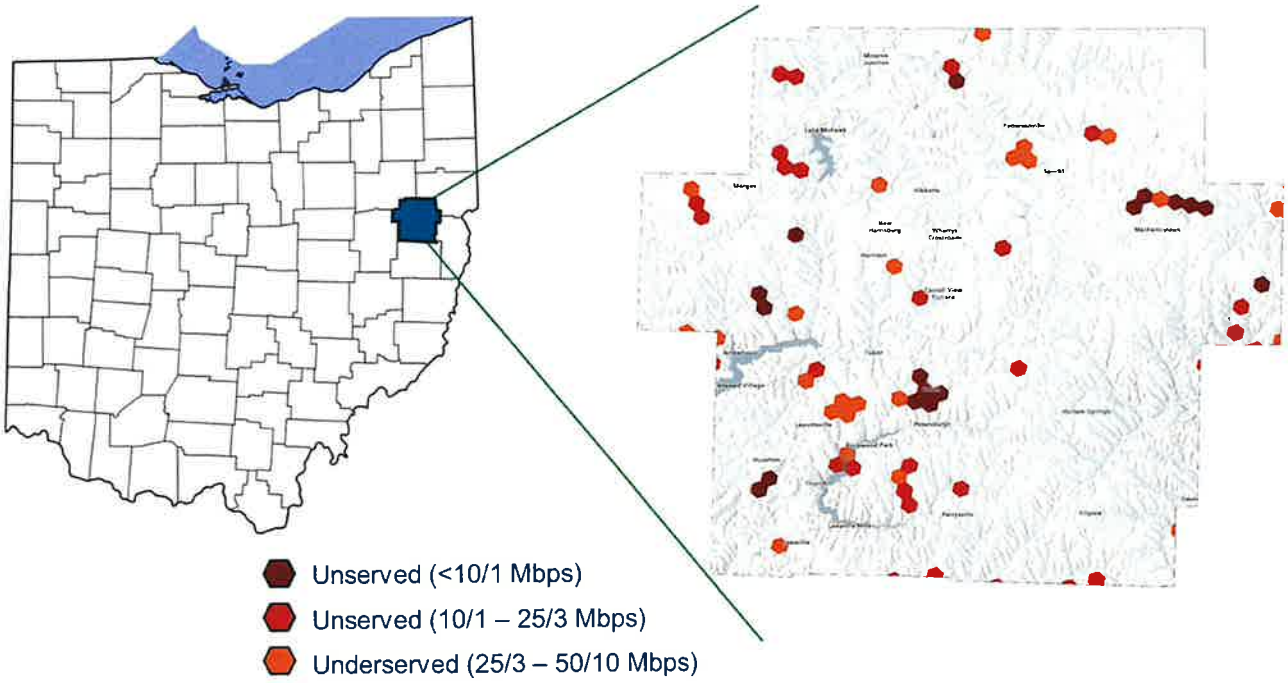
This notice is posted on Carroll County's internet site at https://carrollcountyohio.us/PublicNotices.
Bidders may access this Notice by typing in the address bar www.carrollcountyohio.us and clicking on the button titled "Public Notices" at the top of the page and scrolling down to the RFP notice.

Request for Proposals

Broadband Expansion

Overview of the Carroll County Opportunity

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners seeks proposals from qualified Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to expand broadband access to homes and businesses in unserved/underserved areas of Carroll County, Ohio. The Carroll County Broadband Task Force has identified 61 hexes (H3R8) which collectively contain a total of 236 eligible BSLs. ISPs are invited to respond with proposals for any or all of the identified hexes, while agreeing to serve all households within any given hex awarded. We anticipate making awards to multiple ISPs.



Opportunity Summary

$1.85 million in ARC BaaS grant funding
ISP Match = $825 thousand [Cash and/or In-Kind]
Yields a 2.2:1 grant-to-ISP match ratio

- ***No*** *prevailing wage requirement*
- ***No*** *environmental/historical review requirements*
- ***No*** *liens on network infrastructure*

The project is supported with a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) under their Broadband as a Service (BaaS) model. The BaaS model requires qualified ISPs to deploy and operate the network, yet the ISPs retain full ownership and title over the deployed network assets.

The ARC has awarded Carroll County $1.9M through a Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative grant. The selected ISP(s) are expected to provide, at a minimum, $825,000 in cash investment and/or in-kind match to meet the required 30% match of the ARC POWER award.

The ARC grant funding will be distributed based upon a mutually agreeable milestone schedule. The County is required by the ARC grant to distribute these funds over a seven-year period. Thus, we anticipate front-loading the payment schedule to reflect the magnitude and pace of broadband deployment, retaining a small percentage of the funds for phased distribution during the remainder of the period of performance.

On a mutually agreed upon interval, awardees will provide progress reports that include the list of Fabric IDs at which the broadband service has been made available. The list of Fabric IDs subscribing to the service shall also be provided, including the internet speed to which the location has subscribed.

Utilities information. Most utilities, electric and telecom, in the pertinent areas are above ground. Incumbent telecom providers include Frontier (Verizon), AT&T and Pattersonville Telephone Company. Electric utilities include Carroll Electric and American Electric Power (AEP). Multiple ISPs operate in surrounding areas of the County.

Calendar of Events

RFP Release: Carroll County is releasing this RFP on Wednesday, May 20, 2026.

ISP Notification to Carroll County of Intent to Respond: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Please e-mail Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, to express intent to respond to this RFP. We will confirm receipt and provide a list of the Fabric IDs and H3R8 hex codes of the eligible areas. We will also provide a Word version of this RFP.

Questions and Optional Pre-Bid Conference: Friday, June 12, 2026

Please e-mail Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com if you have questions about the RFP. An optional pre-bid Conference will be hosted virtually at 12 p.m. (Noon) EDT on Friday, June 12, 2026. Any substantive changes that arise from discussions with potential bidders will be communicated to all parties. ISPs must have provided a notice of intent to respond to receive pre-bid invitations and any distribution of questions and answers.

Submit RFP Responses: Wednesday, July 1, 2026

Carroll County requires responses be submitted by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, July 1, 2026, delivered via e-mail in PDF format to: Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com

Bid Opening: Thursday, July 2, 2026

Carroll County will open the bids at 9:00 a.m. EDT on Thursday, July 2, 2026. This will be done at office of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, 119 S. Lisbon Street, Suite 201, Carrollton, Ohio.

Scored Topics for Response by Internet Service Providers

[Respondents must respond in-line to each section using the Word version of this RFP.]

A. Business Profile

As a grantee of federal funds, the County must perform a risk analysis of the ISP to assess likelihood to succeed in providing affordable and reliable broadband service based on such factors as proximity of the BaaS footprint to current operations and experience operating at the scale sought by the County. The risk analysis will also include an assessment of the financial position of the ISP and its past performance with similar projects.

- Ownership Structure: Please recap the current ownership structure of your company and any substantive changes currently in progress.
- Contacts: Please provide names and contact information for those in your company who would lead the Carroll County project.
- Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) Status: Is your company designated as an ETC in the State of Ohio? ETC status is not required, but a response to this question is required.
- History: How long has your company been providing broadband services?
- Existing Facilities (including fiber infrastructure, POPs, offices, etc.):
  - Nationwide
  - In Ohio
  - In Carroll County
- Existing Employees:
  - Nationwide
  - In Ohio
  - In Carroll County
- Current Customer Counts in Ohio:
  - Residential Broadband
  - Business Broadband
  - Other

B. Geographic Extent and Pricing of Proposal

Please complete the following table for the hexes you propose to serve. Add rows as needed.

Hex ID [H3R8]	Proposed Technology	Cost for the Entire H3R8	Grant Support Requested	Cash ISP Match	In-Kind ISP Match
		$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$

- Are there additional unserved or underserved areas and/or locations in the county you propose serving as part of the proposed project? If so, please provide details.

C. Proposed Network Design

The County seeks one or more ISPs to provide services to underserved or unserved households and businesses. This RFP does not dictate which technologies or solutions the ISP respondent should use to deliver its broadband service but rather leaves it to the ISP to propose the technologies that are suitable for delivering the most robust broadband connections to our residents and businesses in the project areas.

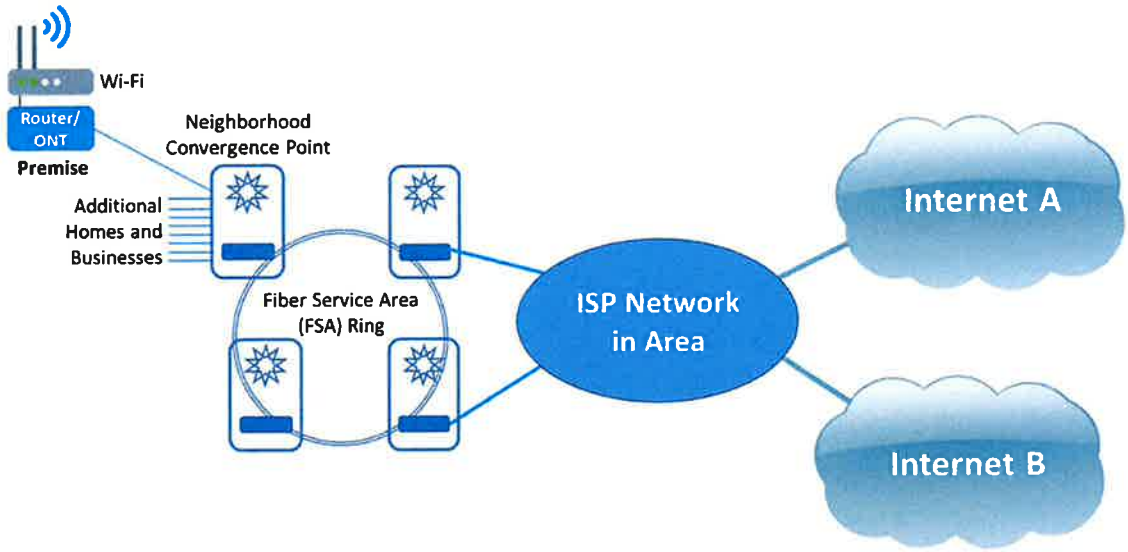
The high-speed broadband services available through this RFP should reliably meet or exceed a speed of 100/100 Mbps, or in cases where the symmetrical 100/100 Mbps service is not practical, provide a service designed to reliably meet or exceed 100/20 Mbps, and be scalable to 100/100 Mbps or higher. Latency must not exceed 100 milliseconds for any offered service to qualify for this project. Respondents must also commit to not imposing data caps, usage-based throttling or overage charges during the seven-year period of performance for the ARC grants. The proposed network must:

- Be available for subscription at every eligible home and business in the service area(s) such that installation may occur within ten days of an order being placed for service.
- Provision sufficient network capacity to accommodate growth in the number of households and businesses as well as increased data usage.

Overarching Network Design: In this section, Carroll County seeks information regarding the overarching principles you would use in designing the proposed network.

- Industry standards. Regardless of the technology or methods of deployment, the County requires compliance with all relevant industry standards such as the Rural Utility Services (RUS) standards and the National Electric Safety Code (NESC). Please explain variance of your implementation methodology with the expectations above.
- If proposing a fiber network:
  - County prefers that strand-counts and deployment architecture support a variety of Layer 2 technologies, e.g. PON and ActiveE.
  - Respondent must detail how it will provide robust services meeting the offered speeds when market penetration reaches 70% or higher.
- If proposing a fixed wireless network:
  - County requires detailed propagation studies demonstrating the ability to reach 100% of the unserved and underserved locations in the proposed hexes.
  - Respondent must detail how it will provide robust services meeting the offered speeds when market penetration reaches 70% or higher.
- If proposing an alternative technology: detail the technologies proposed and how the respondent intends to meet the speed/service requirements.
- For any proposed technology, please explain the design your company would deploy in the Carroll County areas including:
  - Backbone,
  - Initial technology(ies) for serving homes and small businesses,
  - Capacity for growth in bandwidth and/or network performance requirements, and
  - Connectivity to the Internet.

- Please illustrate your network architecture in simple terms. Figure 4 provides an example of the level of detail requested.



Note: While the example depicts a fiber network, the County is NOT dictating the technology to be utilized, but rather providing an example of the level of detail required in the response to the network architecture.

D. Residential and Small Business Services

In this section, Carroll County requests information regarding the services your company would offer to residential and small business locations and at what costs. Both short-term and long-term affordability are critical considerations.

- Provide service offerings and costs including a proposed low-income package using the following format. The low-income package needs to provide sufficient bandwidth that subscribers are not "second-class" broadband citizens. The County is NOT dictating the cost of the low-income package but does expect an attractive service offering for eligible households, generally defined as those with household income below 150% of poverty.
- Symmetric or near-symmetric service offerings will be scored higher than highly asymmetric packages.

Residential/Small Business Package	Download /Upload in Mbps	Latency in milliseconds	Install Charge	Monthly Cost	Term in Months
Low-Income					
Base					
Mid-Range					
Highest Speeds					
Telephone					
Video					
[Add rows as needed]					

For the residential and small business services offered in this section, please explain:

- Committed bandwidth capacity versus best-effort, i.e. the capacity guarantees you offer.
- Additional quality of service specifications to which you will adhere.
- Duration of pricing commitment.
- Requirement for consumer credit checks and/ordeposit.
- Willingness to participate in current and future federal, state and/or local broadband subsidies.
- Interval to install new orders to homes and businesses.
- Interval to resolve outages due to causes other than fiber cuts, lightning strikes, windstorms or power outages.
- Interval to resolve outages due to fiber cuts, lightning strikes or windstorms.
- Service credits for missing service level agreement thresholds.
- Turn-up process as network is beingdeployed.
- Duration of commitment to provide residential and small business services.

E. Enterprise Services

In this section, we request information regarding higher capacity services you will make available in the service areas to enterprise customers such as larger businesses, K-12 schools, health care facilities, etc.

Enterprise Packages	Download/Upload in Mbps	Latency in milliseconds	Install Charge	Monthly Cost	Term in Months
[Add rows as needed]					

For the enterprise services offered above, please explain:

- Committed bandwidth capacity versus best-effort, i.e. the capacity guarantees you offer.
- Additional quality of service specifications to which you will adhere.
- Describe how the ISP would provide data that demonstrates the network's performance to the required standards.

- Duration of pricing commitment.
- Triggers for escalation/reduction of costs to customers.
- Interval to install new orders for businesses.
- Interval to resolve outages due to causes other than fiber cuts, lightning strikes, windstorms or power outages.
- Interval to resolve outages due to fiber cuts, lightning strikes or windstorms.
- Service credits for missing service level agreement thresholds.

Scoring

Below is the matrix that the Carroll County evaluation team will utilize to score responses. Note that respondents who do not achieve the minimum score on any given section will be disqualified. Carroll County reserves the right to reject any or every bid.

Section	Maximum	Minimum
A. Business Profile	15	10
B. Geographic Extent and Pricing of Proposal	25	10
C. Proposed Network Design	25	15
D. Residential and Small Business Services	25	10
E. Enterprise Services	10	5
Totals	**100**	**50**

Additional Terms, Conditions, Limitations and Exceptions

1. The County will **NOT** own broadband infrastructure or any of the assets in the network but must ensure that the competitively selected ISP offers reasonably affordable and non-discriminatory broadband services to eligible residences and businesses.
2. Given the BaaS approach, the selected ISP will **NOT** be subject to Davis-Bacon Prevailing Wage Rates nor the Build America Buy America requirements.
3. Carroll County reserves the right to request clarification of any proposal after all proposals have been received.
4. Carroll County reserves the right to select elements from different individual proposals and to combine and consolidate them in any way that best serves Carroll County's interest.
5. This RFP does not commit Carroll County to issue an award or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP.
6. The proposals will become part of Carroll County's official files without any obligation on Carroll County's part.
7. ARC's financial assistance shall not be used to procure services, nor enter into a contract with a party, that uses covered telecommunications technology banned by Section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, Pub. Law 115- 232.
8. All proposals received and any or all supporting documentation are subject to the State of Ohio Public Records Act and the provisions of Ohio Law. The County will use reasonable due diligence where lawful to protect materials clearly marked by any Respondent as "proprietary," "trade secret "or "confidential". General technology approach or business model information does not constitute "proprietary," "trade secret" or "confidential" information.
9. Respondent(s) shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any official or employee of Carroll County.
10. Respondent(s) shall not collude in any manner, or engage in any practices, with any other Respondent(s) or Third Party, which may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. This is not intended to preclude subcontracts and joint ventures for the purposes of: (1) responding to this RFP, or (2) establishing a project team with the required experience and/or capability to provide the services specified herein. Conversely, Carroll County can combine or consolidate proposals, or portions thereof, for the purposes mentioned herein.
11. This RFP and the related responses of the selected Respondent may by reference become part of any formal agreement between the selected Respondent and Carroll County.
12. Carroll County and the selected Respondent may negotiate a contract or contracts based on Carroll County's compliance with Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR 200.317-327 and the ARC grant.

13. In the event an agreement cannot be reached with the selected Respondent, Carroll County reserves the right to select an alternative Respondent. The County reserves the right to negotiate with alternative Respondent(s) the exact terms and conditions of the contract.

14. Respondents, their authorized representatives, and their agents are responsible for obtaining, and will be deemed to have full knowledge of the conditions, requirements, and specifications of the RFP at the time a proposal is submitted to Carroll County.

15. Carroll County may terminate its review of a Respondent's proposal or an Awardees' performance under a contract in the event of a default by the Respondent or Awardee and a failure to cure such default after receiving notice of default from Carroll County. Default may result from the Respondent's or Awardee's failure to perform under the terms of the contract or from the Respondent or Awardee becoming insolvent, having a substantial portion of its assets assessed for the benefit of creditors, or having a receiver or trustee appointed.

16. Carroll County reserves the right to unilaterally disqualify any Respondent which, in the County's opinion, fails to provide information or data requested or who provides materially inaccurate or misleading information or data. Further, Carroll County reserves the right to unilaterally disqualify any Respondent based on any real or apparent conflict of interest that is disclosed by the proposal submitted or any other data or information available to Carroll County. This disqualification is at the sole discretion of Carroll County. By submission of a proposal hereunder, the Respondent waives any right to object now, or at any future time, before anybody or agency, including but not limited to, Carroll County's elected officials, officers, agents, or employees, or any court, as to the exercise by Carroll County of such right to disqualify or as to any disqualification by reason of real or apparent conflict of interest determined by Carroll County.