

**STATE OF MAINE  
CONNECTME AUTHORITY  
REQUEST FOR A PROPOSAL (RFP)**

Request No.: RFP-CME-#18B-200902373 Date Issued: March 11, 2009

Name and Location of Project: Selection of a Provider for the Broadband Mapping and Inventory Project, for the ConnectME Authority.

**Questions and Answers by Section, where appropriate**

8. Description of Work to be Performed:

The assessment must incorporate all information that is necessary in order to satisfy the standards identified in the Broadband Data Improvement Act (PL 110-385), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), and subsequent rules and determinations of the Department of Agriculture – Rural Utilities Service (RUS), Department of Commerce – National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) related to that act.

A successful contractor must provide satisfactory services in a timely and cost efficient manner, including, but not limited to the following items:

- A. Create a geographic statewide inventory of “wired” (i.e. DSL, cable modem, fiber) and “fixed-wireless” high speed internet service to identify where current terrestrial broadband service and infrastructure exists and does not exist at a street-level of detail.
1. Do you require coverage statistics over the entire state including unpopulated areas or within a certain vicinity of state or county parks and roads? **The entire state is the subject of this project.**
  2. Is the task to identify and “map” the internet infrastructure that exists? **Yes.**
  3. Please clarify that the project does not include the choices that individual customers have made concerning which internet supplier they have chosen? **Yes.**
  4. How do you want coverage quantified, i.e. Number of homes & businesses passed, square mileage, footage etc.? **The question is unclear. If the data is street level we will be able to do the rest.**
  5. What are the “pertinent rules” adopted by RUS, NTIA, and FCC in connection with implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009? **The federal agencies have not yet adopted final rules.**

6. The NTIA\RUS\FCC seem to be planning to open up a comment period to the public regarding the official definition of terms such as “Unserved Markets” and “Under-served markets”. Will this project be delayed until those official definitions are standardized by the federal agencies? **No.**
7. The RFP asks that information [deliverables] should “comport to any pertinent rule adopted by RUS, NTIA, and FCC in connection with implementation of the ARRA.” In the event that rules adopted after the proposal submittal date impose additional costs for data development, processing, etc., on the consultant that could not be anticipated at the time of bid submittal, will the Authority accommodate the expense of meeting those additional requirements? **Yes, this can be negotiated.**
8. Do you anticipate that the federal agencies will require all broadband providers to inventory their systems to coincide with the new definitions? **It is unclear at this time the what federal agencies might do. We would hope there would be unified systems and definitions.**
9. Will there be a set definition for broadband? Upload\download\wireless\time of day congestion etc? **Yes, see Section 8A for the definition of broadband. The proposals can suggest the other definitions.**
10. Will the state be providing any data? **No, for broadband data – yes physical/geological data.**
11. Are internet access services with transmission speeds below 768 kbps, such as 512 kbps DSL lines, to be excluded from the broadband inventory? **Yes.**
12. Should data be collected include services with transmission speeds above the upper limit of "Tier 1"? **Yes.**
13. Should any area in which any service with "Tier 1" or higher transmission speeds be deemed to be served? **Yes, if terrestrial.**
14. Are the data to be collected and reported for availability of wireless broadband be restricted to terrestrial fixed wireless broadband services provider (assumed to mean WISPs) and not encompass mobile wireless broadband services providers (assumed to be cellular companies)? **Yes.**
15. Will the successful bidder, under a necessary and appropriate non-disclosure agreement, be allowed access to ConnectME Form 477 data? If so, will access be granted to the raw data as submitted, or will access be limited to aggregations above the Census Tract level? **Access will be limited at this time.**

16. In order to estimate the level of effort required to collect the requested information related to wired and fixed wireless high speed internet service and infrastructure, it is expected that meetings with state and local agencies will be required. For purposes of estimating the effort required, and establishing the level of detail as specified in Section 9 paragraph B, we have assumed that meetings at the County level will provide the level of granularity desired. **We do not believe that the Counties maintain useable data.** Please clarify if this is adequate, and provide any centralized sources of information that may be available related to this data gathering effort. **Broadband data will be provided by the service providers. ME OGIS will provide E911 road data.**
17. Can the Authority provide the type of data that is available from each Broadband provider in the State, the data availability (e.g., by street segment, address, etc.), and in what format (e.g., ESRI Shape file, tabular, etc.)? **The data type will likely vary by provider. The proposals should describe how to make the necessary conversion.**
18. Will it be acceptable to take the information provided by the various vendors/agencies and accept that it is accurate, or is there a need to confirm where service exists and the data throughput rates that are provided? To what degree are we required to physically confirm input we receive from telcos, cable companies and wireless services providers? **Proposals should describe how to confirm questionable data.**
19. Will the contractor be required to validate data reported by service providers?  
**Yes.**
20. Do you have legal authority to demand or require the providers to provide information? **Yes.**
21. How many providers are there in the state of Maine? **At least 30.**
22. Can you provide a list of the providers? **We have a list posted on our website, it might not be complete as new providers enter the market all the time.**
23. What information does ConnectME have now? Type of data. **FCC 477 data – which is not good enough for this.**
24. Will ConnectME or the PUC provide a detailed list of required information?  
**Yes.**
25. Is ConnectME going to provide the staff and infrastructure for managing and publishing (online) the mapped inventory, or are they looking for an outsourced and hosted solution moving forward? **MEGIS will host the map.**

26. Is the supplier required to interpret the current law concerning telecom as it relates to what data will be required to apply for Federal Stimulus funding?  
**Yes.**
27. Is correct to assume that all the data will be acquired and supplied to the contractor by the Connectme Authority (CA)? **Vendor will acquire the necessary data.**
28. If the format of the data to be acquired is as described in the form (Reference: Connectme Website: <http://www.maine.gov/connectme/DataRequest.htm> ) will the form be redesigned and expanded? **Data will not be sourced from this form.** In the case that the data is sourced from the Form mentioned at 2, the bidder will need to get actual street points served since the table only lists the town's Latitude & Longitude and GEOcode – which would not help us get street-address level broadband data. What is the expectation on how this will be accomplished? **Vendor will acquire the necessary data.**
29. Shall we assume that the project will progressively cover approximately 31,000 square miles being the area of the State of Maine? **I get 32,500 square miles, but yes that is the request.**
30. If the data supplied is traceable to the information on delivered service as declared by the ISPs operating in Maine, would there be a need to verify and validate the data for correctness? **Yes.**
31. If the data set must also include terrain corrected and building corrected transmission areas for fixed wireless, RF surveys will need to be conducted. No existing data is expected to be available as geographical data is not necessarily coincident with RF data. RF surveys are prerequisite to installation of wireless network and are always carried out by the BB provider intending to serve the area. How is this information to be provided in the dataset? **The proposal should describe how to provide the necessary data.**
32. Will/can the State compel non-regulated carriers such as cable companies and cellular companies to provide broadband coverage data? If not, are bidders expected to try to generate that data using other means? **The ConnectME Authority will work with the chosen vendor to obtain the cooperation of the broadband service providers. The vendor will also be expected to use other data sources as necessary.**
33. What data is currently missing in the ConnectME's Broadband availability map this mapping project is hoping to provide? **As described in the RFP, we need street-level detail information about the location and characteristics of broadband service in Maine.**

34. Will the State accept service area data gathered from broadband providers or is drive testing required (for wireless coverage)? **Drive testing may be necessary in some cases, or at least sampling. The data from the wireless providers has been problematic in the past.**
35. Pursuant to the Data Improvement Act (Public Act 110-835), does ConnectME Authority want:
- a. Geo-coding to the street segment level, homes, commercial building and entities targeted in the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) such as schools, medical healthcare facilities, and public safety agencies? **No, we are not asking for geocodes of buildings. We are asking respondents to take the E911 roads data and populate it to indicate the availability of broadband, and whether that is a cable, DSL, or fixed-wireless source, as described in Section 8.**
  - b. Census population/demographic data at the Block level integrated into the broadband map? **No, we can access this data on our end as needed.**
  - c. A survey of consumers, to establish the boundaries of un-served, under-served, and served areas at the street segment level? **Not at this time. We are primarily concerned with Sec. 106(e) of the Broadband Data Improvement Act, and more specifically, Sec. 106(e)(10).**
  - d. A field audit to validate provider-supplied broadband service data including location of terminating equipment, such as remote terminals, central offices and wireless towers, from which broadband service can be extended to un-served and under-served areas? **No. This is outside the scope of what is contained in the RFP.**
- B. In areas where current broadband infrastructure exists, identify, at a minimum, the transmission speeds, levels, and types, of service available.
1. Please clarify the meaning of the term “level” in the phrase “transmission speeds, levels, and types of service”. **This usually means pricing at different product offerings, usually by “speed.”**
  2. Does ConnectME Authority want this information suppressed if its display to the public would disclose the identity of the broadband provider? **We want the ability to suppress it or not.**
- C. In unserved areas, and to the extent possible, identify public and private infrastructure (towers, etc.) that could be utilized to provide broadband service.
1. Can you please describe section 8C in more detail? The RFP is not very specific. **There are towers, steeples, water tanks, etc., that could be used**

**for fixed-wireless infrastructure. Proposals should describe how to obtain and demonstrate this data.**

2. Will the CA or any other State body provide information on the Towers in unserved areas? **No.**
  3. In the unserved area what are the desired attributes of the towers? **Unknown.**
  4. Will the periodic updates be supplied by CA in the same format as the originally supplied data? How frequently is this updating to be carried out? **Yes, and least annually.**
  5. What is the preferred method CA anticipates will be used for updating the operational mapping application? **The state will manage the map using conventional ESRI GIS products.**
  6. Does the CA prefer the bidder to develop special software tools for data updating? **No.**
  7. Will the State accept FCC and other public tower data or is it expected that the Contractor will visually assess (e.g. drive and or fly) underserved areas of the state? **We would accept FCC tower data for the bulk of the information, but not the entirety. There are other tower providers, including the state.**
- D. Provide a GIS-ready dataset suitable for use and meeting accuracy standards suitable for 1:12,000-scale mapping. The dataset must include road segments coded as to their availability of DSL and/or cable internet, including transmission speeds and levels and types of service. The dataset must also include terrain-corrected and building-corrected transmission areas for fixed-wireless broadband providers (so that areas blocked from service by buildings, mountains, or hills are shown as not receiving service. The base data source for roads should be the State's E911 roads data, where available. The resulting dataset will need to be in the UTM coordinate system, zone 19N, NAD83. A raster product is acceptable as the deliverable, provided the pixel resolution is not greater than 2 meters and the format is either ESRI GRID or GeoTIFF. A vector product is acceptable provided that it is an ESRI shapefile. Information so provided should comport to any pertinent rule adopted by RUS, NTIA, and the FCC in connection with the implementation of the ARRA.

**Most questions for this section will be answered by the clarifications below:**

***CLARIFICATION ON E911 ROADS DATA: It is expected that the vendor use the E911 roads data as the primary data for coding 'wired' broadband availability (DSL and cable). At least preliminary E911 data is available for all organized towns in maine except two remote island towns, Isle Au Haut and Frenchboro. Such data are also available for all but 39 unorganized townships, and those 39 are in most remote, uninhabited parts of the state. If broadband is available in a***

***town with no E911 data, the vendor is expected to use Maine DOT roads data as a substitute. In very rare cases the vendor may find a road with wired broadband which is not mapped in either database. In that case the vendor should be prepared to digitize the road and make it clear in the final product that the road was digitized.***

***CLARIFICATION ON SCALE: The E911 roads data are based on 1:24,000 scale data. Where we expect 1:12,000 scale mapping is any situation where the vendor has to digitize a feature, such as the location of a radio tower. We do not expect the vendor to produce a 1:12,000 scale road layer for Maine.***

***CLARIFICATION ON BUILDINGS: In cities where wireless antennae provide service, it will be up to the vendor to gather data for building footprints and heights to model the distribution of wireless signal.***

***CLARIFICATION ON TERRAIN: Use of 10-meter USGS digital elevation models from the National Elevation dataset will suffice, provided the offset height of the antenna is included in the line-of-sight model.***

**Other questions for this section:**

1. Are wireless signal strengths required? **No.**
2. Will there be a format provided for the collection of data similar to that provided by the State of Maine in the Mar. 6, 2009 "Broadband Service Providers-Data Request", or will the State be looking for the Contractor (Bid grantee) to provide a suggested format? **If you mean how the data is collected, then yes proposal should provide format. If you mean GIS format, then ESRI.**
3. What data will be provided by the State to the award winner? All data available in MEGIS data catalog? **E911 roads can be downloaded from MEGIS, elevation data can be downloaded from USGS. We expect the vendor to acquire availability data from vendors and code the E911 roads to show availability.**
4. Will demographic data need to be added to the database? **No.**
5. How many miles of road does this RFP cover? **All of E911 dataset avail in MEGIS data catalog.**
6. Does the State know what files formats the Internet providers supply their data in? **Some, for example: shapefile and .dxf,; but not all.**
7. If not, will the State require providers to supply their data in a particular format? **We will request ESRI compatible data, but the chosen vendor may have to convert other formats including hard or paper copy.**

8. Will onsite field verifications be required of the data? **Yes.**
9. For 1:12000 scale mapping; what other inputs would the CA [Authority] approve/suggest to extract the vector layers; like landsat imagery or PAN Sharpened IKONOS/Geoeye imagery of the area? **Landsat or spot imagery is not suitable for 1:12,000 scale mapping. Aerial photos such as NAIP or those provided by the Maine Geolibrary (and distributed on the MEGIS website) are suitable for 1:12,000 scale mapping.**
10. Can we have a sample of the complete table of the data to be made available with all necessary fields available? How is linking of the table data to map to be done - will table data have GPS coordinates? In order to connect the table and map – could we know whether primary is defined? **No sample is available, proposal should describe solution.**
11. In the case of vector layers that are to be extracted to feature class, roads; building, how to categorize buildings - whether data specification is there? Then could the data specifications of a sample area be given to estimate the effort. **No roads should be extracted from imagery, the vendor must use the E911 roads data. Other features may be extracted from aerial orthophotos.**
12. In case of line of sight analysis, we need to have contour data? Does the CA approve a source for this data? Contour is required to generate the DEM (digital elevation model). This would enable analysis of the tower parameters. **We recommend using the 10-meter national elevation dataset from USGS.**
13. Does ConnectME propose any data sources (elevation model, building mass model) for meeting the requirement of mapping terrain- and building-corrected transmissions of fixed wireless providers? **No, the vendor will have to propose a source or solution.**
14. Is the user interface to the GIS to be a new solution to be hosted and managed by bidder or by the CA? **Neither the product is to be digital data.**
15. Is the bidder required to conduct any assessment of the accuracy of data provided? **Yes.**
16. Is the bidder required to physically survey territories where the data is disputable? **Yes.**
17. Is it assumed that original data compilation is needed for certain types of data? Is conflation and aggregation of existing data sets expected? **Yes, if necessary.**

18. Will the State provide the State's E911 roads data at no cost to the Contractor?  
**Yes.** Will it be the responsibility of the Contractor to provide the buildings database required to complete Task D, or will the State provide this at no cost?  
**Other than buildings database, the necessary GIS layers can be found here, <http://megis.maine.gov/catalog/>.**

E. The assessment and inventory must clearly incorporate mechanisms or processes for periodic updates to the dataset that will enable any subsequent operator or contractor to obtain and provide up to date information in the future.

1. Do we have to keep this information up-dated, i.e. as new subscribers come on line or are we taking a snap shot of a moment in time? **The initial project will be a “snapshot” and the vendor will propose a method to periodically update the information, at least annually.**

2. Does the ConnectME Authority expect the contractor to provide maintenance on the delivered broadband map? If so, for what period? **No, the State Office of GIS will provide “maintenance” and presentation of the map. We expect updated data and the bidder should include its proposal for that.**

F. Negotiate a confidential, non-disclosure agreement with providers.

1. This project will require cooperation from existing broadband and cellular providers. Will we get support from the state in approaching all the existing broadband providers in the state to consult with them as to the known extents and capabilities of their systems in order to make that process easier? **Yes.** The type of information required from these providers may be deemed proprietary or private. Our scope requires that we negotiate an NDA with the providers. Will the acquired information become public? **Some, but will not violate NDA.** Will we receive support from the state making it easier to gain entry to meetings with private and public entities such as counties, cities, and townships in order to more accurately perform the contract? In other words, will the state be requiring service and broadband providers to disclose this information to the winning bidder in a timely manner? **Yes.** Will the provider via the state be able to request to the service providers that the information provided be in a format created by provider or dictated by the state? **No – you may request a format but some data may have to be converted.**

2. How will the final results of the effort be used by the Authority and how will the State ensure the confidentiality, non-disclosure aspects of the data obtained by the contractor? **Chosen vendor will negotiate NDAs with providers. The Authority will adhere to the confidentiality requirements, following our statutory requirements.**

3. Can the Authority provide the names of the broadband service providers within the State along with a contact person that will be instrumental in negotiating the confidential, non-disclosure agreement? **The Authority will provide the first list, vendor will need to ensure list is complete.**
4. Our understanding is that the non-disclosures would be to limit disclosure of competitive information between the various providers. Will the state be one of the parties in the confidential, non-disclosure agreement? **The Authority will have access to all the data and will be able to protect the confidentiality.**
5. Does the state have a non-disclosure agreement that should be used as a baseline for this project? **No.**
6. Are there currently any agreements in place with service providers to provide their data? **No.**
7. Requirement F is to ‘negotiate a confidential, non-disclosure agreement with providers.’ What happens if one or more providers refuses? **The Authority will contact the provider.**
8. The RFP assumes that geographically detailed data on transmission speed, levels, and types will be available with appropriate NDA agreements from the Broadband providers. There are several scenarios by which this may prove difficult to impossible. Broadband providers may not have (some of) the required data. Broadband providers may not have data that meets the accuracy standards implied in the RFP. Broadband providers may refuse to share data necessary to create the desired spatial segmentation of roads and service areas. For any of these scenarios, what is the Authority’s response, especially with regard to its requirement of “satisfactory services”? **It is expected that the providers will be cooperative. The Authority will assist, if necessary to obtain the data.**
9. [Regarding] Section 41. Ownership of the RFP asserts broad claims and rights for the State and Federal Government and the Authority for the use of all data and products of the project. At the same time, the consultant is expected to acquire and incorporate into project deliverables proprietary and confidential information from broadband providers obtained under non-disclosure agreement. Please explain how the Authority plans to reconcile these conflicting requirements and assumptions, especially with regard to encouraging participation of broadband providers. **Proposals should describe the problem and suggest solutions, if necessary.**
10. What are the implications for disclosure of confidential information of the RFP requirement that project deliverables be “capable of supporting the application by any grantee in Maine for subsequent funds to enhance the broadband

infrastructure in Maine”? Please clarify how this requirement will be met without disclosing information obtained through NDA with private sector firms.

**Confidential information subject to the NDAs will not be made public.**

11. Will the State PUC assist the Contractor in obtaining the necessary co-operation from the service providers for this project? **No, but the ConnectME Authority will.**
12. Will ConnectME Authority provide a standard NDA to be executed by the broadband providers or will the contractor be expected to negotiate (potentially different) NDAs with each broadband provider? **No. The chosen vendor would be expected to negotiate uniform NDAs as necessary.**
13. If separate NDAs are to be signed, please confirm that the most restrictive NDA will govern the information that is made visible to the public. **See #12 above.**

Miscellaneous Questions.

1. Are joint ventures / partnerships allowed, which can combine & utilize the many different strengths & skills required to fulfill your requirements? **Yes**
2. Is a physical assessment of an area a requirement for wireline services? **The question is unclear.**
3. Is there compensation from the state for the grant writing work? **Not at this time.**
4. Does working as a vendor/contractor for one or more of the broadband providers constitute a conflict of interest? **No.** Please describe one or more scenarios that would be considered a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest. **Bidders should obtain legal advice regarding conflict of interest questions.**
5. If the project starts in June, what is the projected State of Maine completion date? **Proposal should provide schedule.**
6. When does the State expect completion of the project? **The schedule should be provided by bidder.**
7. There is a requirement for sufficient bonding or insurance coverage. What is the amount and type? **Depends on proposal and bid amount.** Will there be additional protection from the State from any legal action by providers? **No.**
8. Will any preference be given to Maine companies to complete this project? **No.**

9. When is this project to be completed? Is ConnectME interested in a phased approach? Can a bidder present a phased approach with costs attached to either phases and/or proposed deliverable options? **Yes.**
10. What is the definition of “independent contractor” in the context of this RFP (especially vis-à-vis the Authority)? **It is a non-state agency.**
11. What tie-in (if any) is envisioned to the Maine GeoLibrary? **No specific “tie-in,” the GeoLibrary is a source of GIS data sets.**
12. Who is the incumbent vendor that provides these services currently? Or is this a new requirement? **This is a new project.**
13. What is the expected term of the contract? **It depends on the proposals, but likely not longer than one year.**
14. What is the estimated value of the contract? Depends on the proposals. Or how much was budgeted for this program? **No budget has been set. It depends on the proposals.**
15. Is this project contingent upon receiving federal stimulus funds? **No.** If so, is the winning contractor expected to assist in developing an application for ARRA funds? **Possibly.** If so, is the contractor expected to assist without compensation? **No.**
16. Re: RFP Item 7: How soon would ConnectME Authority expect to receive the completed broadband map? **Proposals should indicate how long to completion. Within a year from contract signing would be the outside.**
17. The current administrator of the ConnectME Fund is Rolka Loube Saltzer Associates (RLSA). The administrator collects funds on behalf of the Authority and disburses funds to individuals, agencies or other entities as designated by the Authority. Would the ConnectME Authority consider it to be a conflict of interest if a principal of RLSA is a technical consultant on the contractor’s team? **No.**
18. Per the above RFP, do you know what the contract duration is anticipated to be? Additionally, will this be a term contract, or a firm fixed price contract, or another contract type all together? **We purposely did not specify a contract duration. We expect the responses will indicate how long it will take to conduct the project. Term or fixed price again, depends on the responses.**