

## RFP 24-017 Transport Telecommunication Services

### Questions & Answers

- 1) Have found some old documentation regarding these bid proposals by Cascade, but none I can find actually gave a cost in the proposals before the intent to award. What I am finding is statements such as "Cascade can provide pricing upon request. Pricing may vary on location and service type request." Is this acceptable until we know exactly where these services will be taken (A Location / Z Location) and can quote them appropriately?
  - a. The intent is to qualify vendors capable of providing Telecommunications Transport Services listed in 3.3, and ICN does not have specific A and Z locations, Pricing TBD would be an acceptable response.
- 2) I've been asked to get some technical specs for my boss so we can put together a bid for this project. I'm kind of new to this process so I apologize if my questions are in the document. After going over it I'm a little confused. In simple terms what are the end points and what type of service are you looking for? We shouldn't have any problems providing ETS and have dark fiber options available.
  - a. See section 3.2 Definitions of the Telecommunications Transport Services; the intent is for a bidder to identify the service they offer that fits the definition and respond with their service they are offering, and identify the other requirements listed in section 3.4. At this point in time, the end point locations are not identified; however, the bidder should provide pricing of the services that they would provide in the service areas that they serve if possible.
- 3) Are these bids just for the transport portion to the "Aggregated Interconnect" and not the connection from ICN Aggregated Interconnects to "ICN Authorized Users" or "ICN Customer Locations"?
  - a. The intent is to qualify vendors capable of providing Telecommunications Transport Service and pricing to connect ICN Authorized User or ICN Customer Location to the ICN Network. Connecting multiple Users or Locations to the ICN via Aggregated Interconnect is an acceptable method of Network to Network connectivity between the bidder's network and the ICN network. Pricing should include both.
- 4) Broadband is a Layer 3 transport that is often used as an alternative to Layer 2 transport. Broadband includes technologies such as cable, fiber, 4G/5G, fixed wireless (microwave), and satellite. Hughes typically deploys a managed router to provide secure VPN connection between the remote site and the State's data center. Many state agencies use broadband to connect their locations.

After review of the subject RFP, can you please explain why Layer 2 services are not included?

  - a. Please see section 3.2 Definitions; Layer 2 Ethernet Transport Service is listed. The only service ICN is requesting that is not listed in this section is Dark Fiber Lease Transport Service, which we feel is self-explanatory.
- 5) Is ICN expecting the pricing that is delivered to be "do not exceed" or "first and final"? Windstream would prefer "do not exceed" so that we would be able to offer discounts on specific solutions

when possible. (so our pricing would be such that we could not go over the price, but we could go under the price)

- a. The intention of this RFP is to qualify vendors capable of providing Telecommunications Transport Services at the Lowest Corresponding Price; it is the bidders responsibility to identify if the pricing provided in their response. Not to Exceed is an acceptable response. We will expect to receive the Lowest Corresponding Price when we request a bid for a specific service and specific locations.
- 6) What are the bandwidth requirements needed for Attachment # 4, ICN Interconnection Locations?
  - a. ICN is expecting bidders to provide the bandwidth options they offer for both End User/Customer locations and ICN Interconnection locations; we are not specifying a specific bandwidth requirement at this time.
- 7) For location DMACC-Ankeny Campus, 2006 S Ankeny Blvd, Ankeny, IA, can you please provide in which building you are needing the fiber services to be located?
  - a. ICN Fiber Optic Transport System (FOTS) room is located in Building 6 on the DMACC-Ankeny Campus location.
- 8) Will ICN accept partial price proposals?
  - a. ICN is expecting to receive complete pricing proposals. However, if vendor does not offer a service being requested within the RFP, vendor can indicate "NA".
- 9) Offeror provides services to many customers in Iowa. What if there is an instance or instances in which Offeror already provides services directly to one of or multiple of the ICN's customers?
  - a. The intent is to qualify vendors capable of providing Telecommunications Transport Service and pricing to connect ICN Authorized User or ICN Customer Location to the ICN Network. ICN's requirement is to receive the Lowest Corresponding Price for the bidder's services.
- 10) Offeror's General Liability General Aggregate policy has a limit of \$2 million. However, Offeror carries an Umbrella Policy which more than covers the \$1 million deficiency. Is this acceptable to the ICN?
  - a. That would be acceptable.
- 11) You are asking for "Aggregate Interconnect's" at the "ICN Aggregated Interconnect Locations". Per the definition of "Aggregate Interconnect" – Aggregate Interconnect- Shall mean a telecommunication transport service connection that connects the ICN transport network to the Vendor Transport next to aggregate multiple telecommunication transport service circuits to ICN customer locations. – Would we route these back to the current NNI we have with the ICN? If not, were would we connect to the ICN Network. We need to know this so we can accurately quote the Interconnect.
  - a. Aggregate Interconnection locations include sites where ICN has existing Network to Network Interconnection (NNI)'s with a number of telecom service providers. A bidder who has existing NNI's with the ICN can use these existing NNI's in their solution.

- 12) Optical Wave Transport Service: How do we address that we can provide this service in or to certain Aggregate Connection points, but will be limited and will be unable to provide pricing for such service without knowing where the other end of the service will be?
- a. The intent is to qualify vendors capable of providing Optical Wave Transport Services. Bidders who offer Optical Wave Transport Service should complete a Vendor Response form, Attachment #5 for any telecom transport service types they are offering, see section 3.4.1. At this point, end point locations are not identified.
- 13) MPLS Ethernet Transport Service: We do not offer MPLS as it was known, but offer a better version of this, Meshed WAN. Is this acceptable? If so, it is hard to quote any pricing without knowing the bandwidth and location of each end location.
- a. Please see the definition of MPLS Ethernet Transport Service. ICN will entertain a bidder's service offer that meets or exceeds the service as defined. It is the bidder's responsibility to submit documentation how their service meets or exceeds the requirements. The intent is to qualify vendor capable of providing Telecommunication Transport Services. At this point end point locations are not identified.
- 14) Dark Fiber: How do we address that we can provide this service, but will be limited and are unable to provide pricing for such service without knowing the address/location of both ends and how many fiber strands are requested?
- a. The intent is to qualify vendors capable of providing Dark Fiber Transport Service. The bidder should complete a Vendor Response form, Attachment #5 for any telecom transport service types they are offering, see section 3.4.1. At this point, end point locations are not identified.
- 15) Any specific minimum MTU that we need to be set for any double or triple tagging that ICN may do?
- a. See section 3.4 Other Requirements. The intent is for the vendor to provide the information on what IEEE and Industry Standards their service provides.
- 16) Any latency specifications that we need to be aware of?
- a. See section 3.4 Other Requirements. The intent is for the vendor to provide the information on what IEEE and Industry Standards their service provides.
- 17) In Chapter 3 – Technical Specifications; Section 3.1.2 (below), you are asking for pricing for these “interconnects” My question is, should there be an Attachment 5 for these locations or will the Ethernet Transport Attachment 5 suffice, as these ‘Interconnects’ will provide Ethernet transport from our network to yours?
- 3.1.2 ICN desires to connect to other telecom transport service providers with an Aggregation Interconnect fashion (an ICN network to Vendor network connection) where applicable. This Aggregation Interconnect will allow ICN to connect multiple authorized user locations, connected by Vendor telecommunication transport service, to the ICN network on a single telecommunication transport service. ICN will also desire individual point to point telecommunication transport service.
- a. It is not required to provide a separate Attachment 5 for Aggregation Interconnects. However, if the bidder has a separate price for an Aggregation Interconnect, this separate price should be identified.

- 18) Item 3.3.6 on page 10 of the RFP states: "Vendor must provide a minimum of three (3) financial references. "Could you please clarify what is meant by "financial references"?"
- a. List a minimum of 3 financial entities that you pay - example, other vendors, banking financial institutes etc.
- 19) In lieu of the sample agreement in Attachment 1 of the RFP; would ICN consider use of the already negotiated and available ICN Contract?
- a. Sample agreement in Attachment 1 is ICN's boiler plate for ICN's T's & C's. If a vendor has had a previous Agreement with the ICN, we can look at all ready negotiated language.
- 20) Will ICN allow the inclusion of the Vendor Service Schedules for terms that are specific to the Services being proposed?
- a. Vendor can submit them for ICN's consideration.
- 21) If request is for a new agreement and for clarification, will ICN consider respondent's standard master service agreement with the inclusion of applicable service schedules as the baseline for developing any contract between the parties?
- a. Vendor can submit for ICN's consideration, however the ICN T&C's will take precedence.
- 22) Is ICN amenable to negotiating additional or different terms and conditions after bid submission?
- a. Vendor should tell ICN what exceptions to terms and conditions that they take at the time of bid submission.
- 23) 7.1 Payment Terms: The Vendor shall identify services rendered and submit itemized invoices for amounts owed on a monthly basis. ICN shall pay all approved invoices in arrears and in conformance with Iowa Code. ICN may pay invoices in less than 60 days as provided in Iowa Code; however, an election to pay invoices in less than sixty (60) days shall not act as an implied waiver of Iowa Code. Any sums owed to ICN by the Vendor shall be itemized and deducted from the Vendor's invoice prior to submission. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, ICN shall have the right to dispute any invoice submitted for payment and withhold payment of any disputed amount if ICN believes the invoice is inaccurate or incorrect in any way. Please clarify as to what kind of sums might be itemized and deducted from the Lumen invoice prior to submission? Lumen is unsure as to what this refers to.
- a. If Vendor owes money to the ICN it should be applied to the Invoices, example could be taxes or fees not listed up front in cost of services that ICN wouldn't pay.