

GO VIRGINIA REGION 6
PAMUNKEYNET BUSINESS PLAN

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

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RESPONSES DUE: MARCH 7, 2019 AT 2:00PM EST

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Request for Qualifications
GO Virginia Region 6
PamunkeyNet Business Plan

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1. Overview of the Requirement

The Middle Peninsula Alliance is the one of GO Virginia Region 6's Regional Economic Development Organizations, with a mission to promote the assets of Virginia's Middle Peninsula by connecting people, ideas and resources to develop new opportunities and visibility for the MPA Region. The Middle Peninsula Alliance includes the Counties of Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, and Middlesex and the Towns of Tappahannock and West Point.

The MPA was awarded a GO Virginia Enhanced Capacity Grant in the spring of 2018 to create a business plan for PamunkeyNet, a company to be formed by the Pamunkey Tribe. The Pamunkey Tribe is Virginia's first federally-recognized Indian Tribe and as such, is committed to leveraging its unique position to address impediments to regional economic health and sustainability, including broadband access.

The business plan will create a sustainable business model for the PamunkeyNet business entity to provide last-mile broadband service to localities within the Region 6 footprint. Lack of affordable, business-level broadband service in Region 6 is a barrier to economic growth.

The Middle Peninsula Alliance is seeking responses from professional services firms with qualifications to create a business plan that reflects a sustainable business model for this to-be-launched last-mile internet service provider. The project is funded through a grant from GO Virginia and is ultimately intended to result in a business plan for a business line of the Pamunkey Tribe, which is based in King William County Virginia. This RFQ will result in identification of professional firms to which a formal Request for Proposals can be sent in early 2019.

2. Qualified responders shall have expertise in:

- Business plan development for last-mile broadband companies, including but not limited to:
 - Business environment analysis
 - Industry analysis
 - Competitive analysis
 - Market analysis
 - Marketing plan
 - Operations plan
 - Take rate expectations
 - Team, staffing and management plan

- Financial projections
 - Cash flow analysis
 - Rate structure
- existing and potential state, federal, private and non-profit resources
- Rural broadband last-mile solutions utilizing a variety of technologies
- Existing broadband infrastructure and providers, both middle mile and last mile, within Region 6 and the surrounding geographies
- Federal, state, local, private and non-profit resources available to support Native American Indian Tribal companies
- Scalable last-mile solutions in rural areas that foster innovation, drive job creation, stimulate economic growth, and serve new areas of development
- Leveraging any and all existing platforms that can reduce risk and maximize success in the business model, such as E-911 and Next Gen E911 systems. The MPA is agnostic as to the ultimate recommended broadband platform; all technologies will be considered, especially in unserved/underserved areas.
- deployment connectivity with existing business, educational, and health clusters, including existing and proposed commercial/industrial parks, in the member localities, as these result in creating capacity for business development and high-value job creation.

3. GO Virginia Project Background

In 2016, the Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia) was initiated by the Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC) and the Council on Virginia's Future to foster private-sector growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education, and government. Recognizing the harsh effect of deep federal budget cuts on a Virginia economy that is overly dependent on public-sector jobs, business leaders formed the GO Virginia campaign to work for regional cooperation on *private-sector growth, job creation, and career readiness*.

Bipartisan and business-led, the coalition favors state incentives to encourage effective collaboration among business, education, and government in each region, providing a framework for implementation of the private sector-focused strategies of leading business organizations and political leaders in both parties.

The mission of GO Virginia is to encourage collaboration among business, education, and government in each region, on activities that will enhance private sector growth and opportunity, economic competitiveness, and alignment of workforce development programs with the needs of the employers in the regions.

Mary Ball Washington GO Virginia Region 6 is one of nine GO Virginia Regions across Virginia that have been established to help generate new economic activity across the Commonwealth. As part of the GO Virginia initiative, each of the nine GO Virginia Regions has been charged to develop and implement an Economic Growth and Diversification Plan. These plans provide the strategic framework that each region uses to solicit and approve proposals for GO Virginia funded regional economic development projects. Region 6, also known as the Mary Ball Washington Regional Council, consists of the city of Fredericksburg; and the counties of Caroline, Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland.

The PamunkeyNet Project was awarded funding from Region 6 in the summer of 2018. It is not another study of the assets or technology or infrastructure for broadband in the Region; several such studies exist due to the efforts of local governments. Ultimately, the PamunkeyNet Project builds on previous studies and will result in final design of, and implementation of, a **sustainable business model** for high-speed broadband delivery to unserved, underserved areas and business-ready locations in Region 6. The business model shall take into account the service that other internet providers may be providing to these areas. The business model shall include recommendations for a deployment strategy for the technology infrastructure, focused on the geographies represented by the partners in this application.

This GO Virginia Project will leverage the unique asset of the federally-designated Pamunkey Indian tribe and capitalize recently-completed technical study of last-mile broadband deployment options in Virginia's Middle Peninsula, as well as any technical studies that have been recently completed for other localities in the Region which are partnering in this Application. The Project will identify and assess the relevance of existing broadband deployment models that are in operation (i.e. the KQVA.net in King & Queen County or other Gigabit fiber networks such as the King William Public School System and King William Admin/Courthouse with the Lumos Networks fiber backbone). The GO Virginia Project will create a sustainable business model for a new internet service provider; expanding robust and affordable broadband infrastructure across Virginia's Middle Peninsula, the George Washington Regional Commission, and the Northern Neck Regions; and assessing linkage with a proposed municipally-owned fiber ring in adjacent Hampton Roads.

The GO Virginia project shall ultimately incorporate recommendations for preferred infrastructure deployment that impacts the Region 6 priority clusters of Professional and Business Services; Information Technology; and Advanced Manufacturing and may include impacts to other sectors such as aquaculture and agriculture.

The results from the GO Virginia Project are intended to:

- Create a new business enterprise owned by the Pamunkey tribe (underway)
- Create a sustainable business model for the new business enterprise

- Identify and categorize a network of existing and new fiber, and wireless towers, throughout the Middle Peninsula, George Washington, and Northern Neck regions that will:
 - Create a high performance backbone between towers and local access radios on each tower to provide affordable business, residential, and institutional broadband Internet service.
 - Provide Gigabit fiber services on the Pamunkey Tribe reservation.
 - Identify and incorporate a fiber- and wireless-based Technology Corridor on Route 33 between Rappahannock Community College, a planned Telework Center, and the Middle Peninsula Regional Airport.
 - Identify and incorporate a Technology Corridor in Region 6 that leverages the dark fiber along Interstate 95 and is designed for linkage with the research and higher education assets of VIMS, Rappahannock Community College, Germanna Community College, the University of Mary Washington and Dahlgren, and connects with the MAREA-based cable in Hampton Roads and the internet epicenter in Ashburn, Virginia.

4. Request for Qualifications

4.1 Inquiries

All inquiries related to this RFQ are to be directed, in writing, to the contact person at the mailing address on the front cover of this RFQ. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

4.2 Closing Date

Five complete hard copies and one electronic copy of each response must be received before March 7, 2019 at 2PM EST by receipt required mail or certified mail, at the address on the front cover of this RFQ. Responses should not exceed 25 pages (excluding Supplemental Material as noted in Section 7). Responses shall not be sent by facsimile. Responses and their envelopes shall be clearly marked with the name and address of the respondent and the words "PamunkeyNet RFQ".

4.3 Late Responses

Late responses shall not be accepted. Any extensions to the due date will be announced from the MPA to all interested parties, not just to the requesting vendor, and will be posted on the MPA website.

4.4 Qualifications Review Committee

The PamunkeyNet RFQ Review Committee shall include, but is not limited to:

- Representative of the Board of the Middle Peninsula Alliance
- Representative of the Pamunkey Tribal Council
- Representative of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission
- Representative of the PamunkeyNet Advisory Committee
- Representative of the GO Virginia Region 6 Council

4.5 Review and Selection

The Qualifications Review Committee shall check responses against the mandatory criteria. Responses not meeting all mandatory criteria (Section 7) shall not be considered for review. Qualified respondents shall be provided with a copy of the RFP if one is issued. For the RFQ responders, interviews may be scheduled during the month of March, 2019.

4.6 Signed Responses

All responses must be signed by the chief executive officer of the responding firm. Electronic signatures will be accepted.

4.7 Acceptance of Responses

This RFQ is not a binding agreement to purchase goods or services. Responders to this RFQ are assessed in light of the qualification review criteria and, if chosen for the shortlist, will be contacted to submit for the RFP.

5. Services

This Request for Qualifications will lead to issuance of a **Request for Proposals** to develop the Business Plan that results in a sustainable business model for the new business enterprise. This Request for Qualifications shall in part be assessed based on the respondents' expertise, knowledge, and insight into the breadth of the business plan deliverables as it relates to the following areas:

- Geographic coverage
 - To incorporate geographic footprint coverage including each of the localities that supported the grant application.
 - To incorporate footprint coverage of:
 - a proposed Technology Corridor on Route 33 between Rappahannock Community College, a planned Telework Center, and the Middle Peninsula Regional Airport
 - a corridor in Region 6 that leverages the dark fiber along Interstate 95 and is designed for linkage with the research and higher education assets of VIMS, Rappahannock Community College, Germanna Community College, the University of Mary Washington and Dahlgren, and connects with the MAREA-based cable in Hampton Roads and the internet epicenter in Ashburn, Virginia.
 - the Pamunkey Tribal Reservation in King William County
- Business operations
 - Financial modeling to ensure sustainability, including identification of federal, state, private-sector and non-profit program resources that can support the PamunkeyNet business.
 - Management structure

- Human resource requirements
- Operational systems
- Market analysis
- Marketing strategy
- Infrastructure and technology
 - Review, assessment and connectivity of existing broadband plans and studies completed within the PamunkeyNet member localities in the Region 6 footprint.
 - Review, assessment and categorization of existing wireless and fiber throughout the Middle Peninsula, George Washington, and Northern Neck regions that have a high performance backbone between towers and local access systems.
 - Review, assessment and recommendations for leveraging existing broadband deployment platforms within the defined Region, with particular emphasis on public platforms (i.e. KQVA.net), E-911 systems, and platforms that utilize public/private partnerships.

6. Evaluation Criteria for the RFQ

Evaluation criteria will include:

- A. Minimum 5 years of experience in business planning including experience in sustainable business financing modelling
- B. Minimum 5 years of experience in the broadband field
- C. Minimum 3 years of experience with federal, state, NPO and private funding sources
- D. Minimum 3 years of experience and knowledge of Indian Tribal resources, focusing on broadband resource support
- E. Preferred: Experience and knowledge of rural broadband deployment
- F. Preferred: Experience and knowledge of the geography and broadband assets of Region 6
- G. Preferred: Experience and knowledge of Virginia's approach to broadband deployment and funding
- H. Preferred: Experience and knowledge of the Federal Government's approach to broadband
- I. Proven capacity to deliver project requirements on time and on budget as evidenced by similar project experience

7. Submission Requirements

At a minimum, applicants must submit the following. Items A-E shall not exceed 25 pages:

- A. A profile of the consultant or consultant team including those who will work directly and indirectly on the project.
 - a. Names, titles, addresses, phones and emails
 - b. Experience as it relates to this work.
- B. A letter outlining the consultant's proposed services and approach to the project based on the information provided in this document and consultant's previous experience.
- C. A general timeline and key activities that shall result in the completion of project deliverables.
- D. Project fee estimate.
- E. Three professional references for whom the consultant has performed similar work in the past five years (provide address, email and telephone numbers)
- F. Supplemental material that will help the selection team understand the consultant's or teams approach, previous outcomes, or expected deliverables.
- G. At least two sample written reports or evidence of similar project experience.

8. Conflict of Interest

The respondent shall disclose conflicts of interest, in writing, to the Qualifications Review Committee who will consider the nature of the respondent's responsibilities and the degree of potential or apparent conflict in deciding the course of action that the respondent needs to take to remedy the conflict of interest.

9. Limitations

The Middle Peninsula Alliance is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The MPA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. Firms/Individuals will not be compensated for time spent preparing responses to this RFQ. Questions regarding this RFQ shall be directed to Liz Povar, Principal Officer, Middle Peninsula Alliance; 804-399-8297; email is riverlinkllc@gmail.com

Responses are due **Thursday, March 7**, at 2:00 PM EST to the address listed below by receipt required mail or certified mail. Responses should not exceed 25 pages (excluding Supplemental Material as noted in Section 7). Responses shall not be sent by facsimile. Responses and their envelopes shall be clearly marked with the name and address of the respondent and the words "PamunkeyNet RFQ". :

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Qualified responders will be invited to respond to a **Request for Proposals**. The RFP will be issued on or about April 1, 2019 with responses due no later than April 30, 2019. The final contract is to be issued by June 1, 2019 with deliverables completed by

November 30, 2019. The Middle Peninsula Alliance intends to select one or more firms to provide these services and shall be guided by the competitive negotiation procedure defined in Section § 2.2-4302.2 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

This RFQ does not commit the Middle Peninsula Alliance to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal for this project, or to procure or contract for services.

The Middle Peninsula Alliance reserves the right to accept or reject any or all statements of qualifications received as a result of this request, to issue the RFP to any qualified firm, or to modify or cancel in part or in its entirety the RFQ if it is in the best interest of the Middle Peninsula Alliance and the Region 6 GO Virginia Council. If responses to the RFQ are deemed inadequate or unacceptable, the MPA reserves the right to initiate a second round RFQ.

The Middle Peninsula Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

Hubzone, minority, small, women-owned, disadvantaged, veteran-owned and service-disabled businesses are encouraged to submit a proposal.