

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RURAL HEALTHCARE PILOT PROJECT**

**BROADBAND LINKS
WHITEFISH TO MISSOULA, MONTANA
HIEM-04 RFP**

Health Information Exchange of Montana, Inc.
Kip Smith, Executive Director
310 Sunnyview Lane
Kalispell, Montana 59901

September 2010

Project Introduction
Health Information Exchange of Montana, Inc.

The Health Information Exchange of Montana, Inc. (HIEM) is a rural health consortium of seven Northwest Montana healthcare organizations – five hospitals and two federally-funded Community Health Centers who have formally come together to address their shared unique geographic and technological challenges in order to exchange basic medical information and expand telehealth applications in northwest and north central Montana. It is a non-profit organization comprised solely of 501(c)(3) healthcare organizations and supported by dozens of affiliate partners within our service area, across our region and throughout Montana.

The HIEM requests proposals for a secure broadband network with connections among hospitals, clinics and health education institutions in the region. The network is intended to provide a reliable data transport platform for a wide variety of health-related applications, including rapid transfer of very large digital imaging files, exchange of electronic health records, and real-time high-quality videoconferencing for medical education, telemedicine consults and medical procedures.

Through this RFP, HIEM is seeking proposals for various connections between Whitefish and Missoula, Montana at a range of bandwidths and for various terms. The end points of these connections, their respective bandwidths and terms are specified in the Proposal Form below. Service to additional sites may be requested in subsequent requests for proposals. HIEM considers this RFP a short-term, temporary connectivity solution and anticipates a RFP for construction of a dedicated fiber network within the region to be posted in the near future.

HIEM does not require a responder to propose to provide the entire network. Given the number of different telecommunications carriers serving the region, it is unlikely that one provider would have the most cost-effective solution for every different location. HIEM seeks the most cost-effective proposals on a site-by-site basis and also invites alternative connectivity configurations from those specified below. The HIEM encourages free and open competition among Bidders. The Bidder's signature on a proposal in response to this RFP guarantees that the prices quoted have been established without collusion and without effort to preclude HIEM from obtaining the best possible connectivity.

1. General Information

- 1.1 The Health Information Exchange of Montana (HIEM) seeks proposals for dedicated point to point broadband links between Kalispell Regional Medical Center, Kalispell, Montana (KRMC) and the University of Montana, Missoula, Montana (UM); remote partner site locations to either the KRMC or UM hubs; and the BNSF Whitefish Fiber Building and North Valley Hospital, Whitefish as specified in the Proposal Form below.
- 1.2 This RFP provides a description of network access and transport services requested to and from each of the end-user points on the HIEM network. HIEM anticipates that different network vendors will provide the services to different geographic locations. This is not a single vendor procurement process. HIEM will select the most responsive vendor for each specific location to be served. Bidders must specify which sites they propose to serve and the terms of their proposal, including price, for each location.
- 1.3 HIEM will consider proposals that utilize fiber or microwave technologies or combinations of both.
- 1.4 The minimum requirement for connectivity at each end user site is 45MB per second, bi-directional; however HIEM desires a minimum 100MB connection wherever possible and anticipates that some end users may want to upgrade their capacity up to 1 Gigabit. The Bidder's proposal should address the timing, transport medium (fiber, copper, microwave, etc.), risk and cost implication of scalability, each in appropriate detail.
- 1.5 Bidders must terminate proposed connections inside the buildings at the specified demarcation locations as part of the normal installation. Confirmation of demarcation location details are the responsibility of the Bidder.
- 1.6 Bidders must provide all on-premise equipment required to affect the signal handoff and interconnection with other vendors and identify requirements for rack space and power supply at each demarcation location.
- 1.7 The HIEM is interested primarily in lease/contract pricing with a greater up-front payment and a lesser annual maintenance cost in order to comply with HIEM's plan for network sustainability. Bidders shall furnish a copy of their contract document reflecting this front-loaded cost approach and stipulate as to whether additional broadband capacity is available on the same route as part of the Bidder's proposal.
- 1.8 Proposed contracts shall not incorporate a termination liability agreement. There shall be no penalties to HIEM for early termination of services. During the period of the contract, HIEM may elect to continue service or terminate the service at any time without penalty. In the event of termination, HIEM shall pay only a pro-rated share for the month of the service termination.

- 1.9** While the HIEM anticipates proposals reflecting the connectivity configuration specified in the Proposal Form, Bidders are requested to propose alternatives to this configuration when they believe the alternative will be more cost-effective, while still meeting the network's intent.
- 1.10** Bidders must provide a price schedule that specifies the one-time construction and/or installation charges plus the monthly recurring costs for a two-year service period with two, two-year renewal options with price protection.
- 1.11** Proposals must contain a network diagram for each client site that is bid. Multiple sites that are interconnected should be diagramed together on the same network diagram.
- 1.12** Bidder must agree to provide service level agreements (SLA) for proposed connections that address the minimum network performance standards listed below:
- Network Reliability: 99.99%.
 - Latency: 120ms or less
 - Packet Loss: 0.3% or less
 - Jitter: 9ms or less
- 1.13** HIEM will consider geographic route-diversity from the remote partner site communities to the proposed hub connection point in addition to other evaluation criteria set forth in Section 2.6 of this document.
- 1.14** The Bidder must provide 24 hours/day, 7 days/week (24x7) response to trouble calls and repair service if required, at no additional cost to the HIEM. The Bidder's proposal must contain 24x7 service contact information and typical response time for trouble calls and repair service.
- 1.15** Bidders must agree to follow and comply with all administrative, invoicing and accounting processes and procedures that are necessary to comply with FCC and USAC requirements. These requirements include, but are not inclusive, to the submitting of detailed invoices in a timely manner.
- 1.16** Proposal Format. Bidders are required to submit the Proposal Form below setting forth their response to this RFP. Additional documentation, including any alternative connectivity configuration, should be attached to support the proposal and respond to RFP requirements.
- 1.17** RFP Process. The RFP process is open to all competitive offers from qualified Bidders (Bidders with SPIN numbers) including independent telephone companies, local exchange carriers, cable operators, cabling and construction contractors or others who are able to provide bids for the requested connectivity. These competitive offers will be judged by HIEM according to the criteria set forth in Section 2.6 of this document.

2.0 Administrative and Procedural Information

- 2.1 The Rural Health Care Pilot Program (“RHCPP”) of the Universal Service Fund is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (“USAC”) – as authorized by Congress and regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) – to encourage development of rural broadband networks to advance healthcare telecommunications capabilities and services to rural health care providers (“HCP”).
- 2.2 This project is subject to USAC procurement rules. Bidders must meet all USAC requirements. HIEM has submitted a USAC Form 465 to USAC who will review the documentation and will post the RFP on the USAC website. More information on bidding and posting rules can be found at <http://www.usac.org/rhc-pilot-program/tools/search-postings-2008.aspx>.
- 2.3 The following considerations apply to the proposal submission/review process:
- 2.3.1 Bidders interested in receiving any notices related to this RFP are invited to submit a letter of interest to the HIEM at the following email address:

kipsmith@krmc.org

Include the name of the firm, contact person, mailing address, telephone number, fax number and email address. The sole purpose of the letter of interest is to provide HIEM with a contact person to receive any notices related to the RFP. Submission of a letter of interest is not a requirement for submitting a proposal.

- 2.3.2 Bidders are expected to raise any questions, noted errors, discrepancies, ambiguities, exceptions, additions or deficiencies they have concerning this bid in writing to:

Kip Smith
Executive Director
Health Information Exchange of Montana
310 Sunnyview Lane
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-751-6687
kipsmith@krmc.org

Questions and answers will be emailed to all Bidders who have submitted a letter of interest throughout the bidding process per 2.3.1 above.

Any communications with HIEM or participating site staff members other than via the method described above should not be considered authoritative, are not binding on HIEM and may be disavowed without notice or explanation.

- 2.3.3 There will be no pre-offer conference.
 - 2.3.4 In the event it becomes necessary for HIEM to amend, add to or delete any part of this RFP, the amendment will be distributed to all Bidders who have submitted a letter of interest per 2.3.1 above.
 - 2.3.5 Three (3) copies of bid proposals must be received at the HIEM office (see address on page 5 of Proposal Form) no later than 4:00PM Mountain Time on the 28th calendar day following the day of posting of this RFP on the RHCPP website. Submitted responses must be accompanied by a CD-ROM electronic copy of any documents submitted in either .doc or .pdf format.
 - 2.3.6 Proposal receipt deadline is a mandatory requirement and is not subject to waiver by HIEM, unless the deadline is extended by HIEM for all interested Bidders. Accordingly, no bid proposals will be accepted after the date and time specified. A late bid proposal will be returned unopened to the Bidder.
 - 2.3.7 Electronically transmitted responses (fax, email, etc.) to this RFP will **not** be accepted.
 - 2.3.8 HIEM will not consider a proposal unless the Bidder is determined eligible by the Universal Service Administrative Company and holds a valid Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN).
 - 2.3.9 Bid proposals will be opened at 10:00AM Mountain Time the first working day following the receipt deadline. The bid proposals and the evaluation documents created by HIEM will remain confidential.
- 2.4 To be responsive to this RFP, proposals shall:
- 2.4.1 Specifically address all requested information and bid specifications included in this document.
 - 2.4.2 Include company name, contact person, address and contact information.
 - 2.4.3 Specify the number of calendar days required to deploy and make ready the network elements.
 - 2.4.4 Be valid for a period of 120 days from the date of submission.
 - 2.4.5 Include a signed vendor certification form (see page 8 below).

- 2.4.6 Include a signed Proposal Form (5 pages) with any additional attachments to support the proposal.
- 2.4.7 Include a copy of the Bidder's lease/contract form to support their proposal.
- 2.5 Under no circumstances will HIEM be responsible for any of the Bidder's costs or expenses incurred in submitting a proposal. Each prospective Bidder responding to this RFP does so solely at its own cost and expense.
- 2.6 Proposals will be evaluated and assigned points based on the judgment of reviewers as to how well the respondent meets each of the following criteria. The categories for evaluation are indicated below:
- Price (50 points)
 - Technology solution, route-diversity and scalability commitments (20 points)
 - Network performance standards (15 points)
 - Support and customer service (15 points)
- 2.7 HIEM reserves the right to:
- 2.7.1 Contact a Bidder after submission of bid proposals for the purpose of clarifying a bid proposal to ensure mutual understanding. This information may be used to evaluate the bid proposal.
- 2.7.2 Obtain information concerning any Bidder or any proposal from any source and to consider such information in evaluating the bid proposal.
- 2.7.3 Reject any response not in compliance with all FCC pilot project guidelines and procedures.
- 2.7.4 Reject any response not meeting or differing materially from the specifications set forth herein.
- 2.7.5 Waive any and all minor irregularities and informality in the response submitted when, in the opinion of HIEM, it is in its best interest to do so.
- 2.7.6 Consider the competency and responsibility of Bidders in making any award.
- 2.7.7 Reject a selected Bidder if within a reasonable time, determined solely at the discretion of HIEM, Bidder has not executed an agreement/contract.
- 2.7.8 Extend the deadline for submitting bids.
- 2.7.9 Seek other proposals, if deemed in the best interest by HIEM.
- 2.7.10 Reject all bids and seek other bids, if deemed in the best interest by HIEM.

Vendor Letterhead

Certification of [Vendor]

I, _____ [name of corporate officer], on behalf of _____ [Vendor name] (SPIN _____) certify and swear under the penalty of perjury, that to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, all federal Rural Health Care Pilot Program support provided to us will be used only for eligible Pilot Program purposes for which the support is intended, as described in the Pilot Program Order (WC Docket 02-60; FCC 07-498, released November 19, 2007), and consistent with related FCC orders, section 254(h)(2)(A) of the Telecommunications Act of 1934, as amended, and Parts 54.601 *et. seq.* of the FCC's rules.

_____ (signature)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

NOTARIZED BY: _____

**PROPOSAL FORM
BROADBAND LINK; KALISPELL TO MISSOULA, MT**

Bidder Organization: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email : _____

Item 1. Point to Point Connection Kalispell Regional Medical Center (KRMC) to University of Montana (UM):

KRMC	UM	Bandwidth	One Time Cost	Monthly Recurring Cost
Connection Location	Connection Location	MB		2 year contract
310 Sunnyview Lane Kalispell, MT 59901	32 Campus Drive Social Sciences Building Room 012 Missoula, MT 59812	100		
		200		
		300		
		400		
		500		
		600		
		700		
		800		
		900		
		1000		

Item 2. Partner Connections to either KRMC or UM

Partner Sites:	Hub Connection Point: Specify KRMC or UM?	MB	One Time Cost	Monthly Recurring Cost 2 year contract
Flathead Valley Community College 777 Grandview Drive Kalispell, MT 59901		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Polson Health (KRMC) 102 13 th Avenue East Polson, MT 59860		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
St. Luke Community Clinic 104 Rufus Lane Polson, MT 59860		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Salish Kootenai College 58138 US Highway 93 Charlot Building Pablo, MT 59855		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
St Luke Community Hospital 107 6 th Avenue SW Ronan, MT 59864		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
St. Luke Community Clinic 330 6 Tract Lane St. Ignatius, MT 59865		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Community Medical Center 2827 Fort Missoula Road Missoula, MT 59804		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		

Partner Sites:	Hub Connection Point: Specify KRMC or UM?	MB	One Time Cost	Monthly Recurring Cost 2 year contract
Community Physician Group 2827 Fort Missoula Road Missoula, MT 59804		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Community Physician Group – North 2230 North Reserve Street Missoula, MT 59804		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Community Physician Group – South 1211 South Reserve Street Missoula, MT 59804		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Community Physician Group – Stevensville 3800 East Side Highway Stevensville, MT 59870		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		
Community Medical Center – Palmer 2685 Palmer Street #D Missoula, MT 59808-1709		45		
		100		
		200		
		1000		
		Other		

Authorized Signature

Date

RETURN COMPLETED PROPOSAL FORM WITH ATTACHED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION TO:

HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE OF MONTANA, INC.
REFERENCE RFP-04
ATTENTION: KIP SMITH
310 SUNNYVIEW LANE
KALISPELL, MT 59901