

## Notice to Proposers

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS MADISON COUNTY BROADBAND INITIATIVE PHASE 2 FOR NORTHWEST MADISON COUNTY

The Madison County Board of Supervisors (the County) will be accepting Proposals for an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to provide broadband wireline service for the **Madison County Broadband Initiative Phase 2** in northwest Madison County.

Madison County will receive Proposals by electronic submission at <http://www.madison-co.com/bids> until **10:00 a.m. Central Standard Time on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 2025**.

Detailed information for interested respondents related to this Request for Proposals can be obtained from Madison County at <http://www.madison-co.com/bids> or by contacting Mr. Greg Higginbotham, County Administrator at [greg.higginbotham@madison-co.com](mailto:greg.higginbotham@madison-co.com) or 601-855-5502.

The County will evaluate submissions from qualified respondents and make its selection based on information that appears to best serve the interests of Madison County. Upon completing the selection process, contract negotiations will proceed with the most highly ranked respondent. If a contract cannot be negotiated with the most highly ranked respondent, negotiations will continue in order of ranking until a respondent agrees to and enters into an agreement satisfactory to Madison County.

Madison County will hold a Pre-Submission Conference at **2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on February 18, 2025** in the Board Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Madison County Office Complex, 125 West North Street, Canton, Mississippi 39046. Attendance at the Pre-Submission Conference is highly encouraged for all interested in submitting Proposals.

Any questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing and delivered via email to [greg.higginbotham@madison-co.com](mailto:greg.higginbotham@madison-co.com) with Madison County Broadband Initiative Phase 2 listed in the subject line. All questions will be responded to by Addendum. The deadline for submission of any questions to Madison County will be 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on February 25, 2025.

Publish:

February 6, 2025

February 13, 2025

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## **Definitions / Acronyms**

FTTH	Fiber to the Home
GPON	Gigabit Passive Optical Network
Mbps	Megabit per second
MCBOS	Madison County Board of Supervisors
RFP	Request for Proposal
ISP	Internet Service Provider

## I. RFP Timetable

MCBOS reserves the right to modify dates as needed. Timetable for the RFP is shown below:

First date of notice/distribution of RFP		February 6, 2025
Second date of notice/distribution of RFP		February 13, 2025
Pre-submission conference *	2pm CST	February 18, 2023
Questions submittal deadline	5pm CST	February 25, 2023
Answers to questions published	5pm CST	March 4, 2023
Proposal submission deadline	10am CST	March 13, 2025
Notification for presentations (if needed)		March 20, 2025
Notification of selected firm		April 7, 2025
Finalize Negotiation of MSA with selected firm deadline		May 5, 2025

\* The Pre-submission conference shall be held in the Board Room on the 1st floor of the Madison County Office Complex, 125 West North Street, Canton, Mississippi 39046 at 2:00 p.m. Attendance at the Pre-Submission Conference is not mandatory but is highly encouraged for all interested in submitting Proposals.

## II. Overview

### A. CLIENT PROFILE

#### i. Madison County Board of Supervisors

The Madison County Board of Supervisors (the "Board") is a statutorily created body that governs Madison County, Mississippi. The Board performs both judicial and executive functions under state law. The five-member Board is the chief policy making and administrative body or unit of the county. Each county is divided into five districts. Each district elects a supervisor who serves a four-year term (each, a "Supervisor"). While each Supervisor may handle some administrative duties in his or her district, the Board sets policy as a body. While each Supervisor represents his or her district, all of the members are expected to act for the good of the county as a whole.

#### ii. Point of Contact

All communications, including questions regarding interpretation of this RFP, additional information that respondents may request in preparing a proposal, and proposals must be submitted to:

**Name** Mr. Greg Higginbotham  
**Title** County Administrator  
**Address** Office of the County Administrator  
125 West North Street  
Canton, Mississippi 39046  
**Email** greg.higginbotham@madison-co.com  
**Phone number** 601-855-5502

In order to be included in any further communications from MCBOS regarding this RFP, each potential responder must submit a statement of intent via email, including:

- Internet Service Provider (ISP) name
- ISP location/address
- Name of contact person for the ISP
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Mailing Address
- “Intent to Respond to Madison County Broadband Initiative Phase 2 RFP” in the subject line of the email.

Failure to submit an intent to respond may result in not receiving notices and addenda from MCBOS related to this RFP.

Only written answers provided by MCBOS in response to a respondent’s questions will be considered official. Any oral response by MCBOS or it’s representatives or by any individual Supervisor will not be considered an official response. All questions received and associated responses shall be provided to all potential respondents.

### **iii. Vision**

The Madison County Board of Supervisors (“MCBOS”) is seeking proposals from qualified firms to partner with MCBOS to design, install, provide internet access, and network operations services for broadband wireline service for the Madison County Broadband Initiative Phase 2 in northwest Madison County.

The Coronavirus pandemic transformed the lives of many people with how they work, learn, and connect with others. Technology has played a major role in this transformation. Communities are quickly recognizing that without broadband connectivity they cannot effectively sustain or develop in education, job growth, or health care. Even in well-served areas by incumbent providers, newer technologies such as 5G wireless, IoT, and Smart-City applications will soon exceed the limits of many of today’s legacy networks. Rural communities without this infrastructure are at an even greater disadvantage.

The critical step in supporting the future ecosystem of these technologies is deploying a scalable, robust fiber-based broadband infrastructure.

The MCBOS has determined a critical need to expand Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) broadband service to the northwest portion of the county to provide a lasting positive impact on households in this rural area of Madison County.

**The MCBOS anticipates that expansion of Broadband access within the county will provide residents with greater access to education, medical care, and communication resources. Together, the availability of these benefits will create a more attractive living environment and lead to better quality of life and greater value of a residence for both the resident and the County.**

MCBOS will provide a copy of the Madison County Broadband Phase 2 Assessment that was developed by Waggoner Engineering. The MCBOS will also make available to interested ISPs the proposed conceptual design developed by Waggoner Engineering, Inc. for the proposed project area.

#### **iv. Local Information**

Madison County has the highest per capita income in the State of Mississippi and is the only county in Mississippi with a per capita income higher than the national average. However, the referenced planning area in northwest Madison County represents a rural part of the county that suffers from a severe lack of broadband access.

To understand the current state of high-speed internet service in the Phase 2 project area, Waggoner gathered public feedback, performed a Gap Analysis, assessed the regulatory environment, and provided recommendations.

Two surveys were conducted for to engage the public. The first was a General Public Survey to gather feedback on internet availability and connectivity and voluntary demographics. A total of 333 surveys were completed from May 29, 2024 through July 31, 2024. Of the surveys submitted, 131 were from residents within the Phase 2 area of Madison County. The second was the Community Partner Survey. The purpose of the survey was to understand partnering entities' current broadband planning, access, deployment, and digital access activities. One major broadband initiative and two community digital access activities were identified. The consensus of the survey is that 35% of respondents have no connection to high-speed internet at their residence. Of that 35%, 97% reported that the main reason they do not have internet at their residence is because an internet connection is not available. Of the remaining 65% that do have internet connection, 64% do not meet the minimum speed requirements set by the FCC in early 2024.

The Board expects expansion of Broadband access to underserved and unserved areas to be welcomed by residents. As benefits of the technology are known and communicated throughout the expected service area, service subscriptions by residents will increase.

The Phase 2 area of service referenced in the RFP (“planning area”) is divided into two sections, with the first starting at the intersection of Madison, Attala, and Leake County, following the south boundary to the intersection of MS 43, and continuing southwest to Honeysucker Rd. This boundary then follows MS 17 near Camden and extends northwest to US 51 and south to Bill Presley Rd. The second section starts at the intersection of Madison and Yazoo County and follows MS 16/ I-55 south to Heindl Rd and continues east towards King Ranch Road near the city of Canton municipal boundary. This section then follows MS 22 southwest, including Soldier Colony Road, near Catlett Road, before continuing along the Madison/Hinds County border back to the start location. The area described encompasses approximately 6,622 premises, with 1,765 of these identified as either underserved or unserved. See map in Appendix

**v. History of Project**

The Madison County Board of Supervisors (MCBOS) has identified the need for Fiber to the Premises (FTTP) broadband service to a largely rural area in the northwest portion of the county. In the board meeting held on April 2, 2024, the MCBOS authorized the engagement of Waggoner Engineering, Inc. to form a Program Delivery Team (PDT) for the purpose of extending broadband service. The team, comprised of Waggoner Engineering and Horrocks Engineering, launched the Madison County Broadband Phase 2 Initiative to deploy FTTP broadband to the specified area of the County.

The assessment performed by the PDT aimed to support the MCBOS by identifying, evaluating, and recommending the most effective solutions for delivering FTTP broadband service to the target area. This involved the various tasks designed to meet County initiatives and objectives of expanding internet access to underserved and unserved residents in the Phase 2 area.