Request for Statements of Qualifications

TO:
Interested Architectural/Engineering Firms

FROM:
Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Owner/client

Kenneth Krebs
Owner/client representative

RE: Request for Statement of Qualifications
Your firm is invited to submit a Statement of Qualifications to become eligible for an interview for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) services for:

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative Rural Broadband Expansion Project

Attached to this memo are the following:
1) A list of information and materials that you should include with your Statement of Qualifications.
2) A Preliminary Scope of Services.
3) A Schedule of Activities for the selection process.
4) A Project Summary

Mail three (3) copies of your Statement of Qualifications to:

Kenneth Krebs
Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 200
Rio Grande, OH 45674

The deadline for submission is July 3, 2020

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Request for Statements of Qualifications

Statement of Qualifications Information and Materials

1) Firm name, address, telephone number and contact person.

2) A **one-page statement** of interest and qualifications for this project.

3) A **brief** (maximum two-page) project understanding description. Include any concerns regarding permits, schedule, site, etc.

4) Discussion of firm's specific abilities and expertise to provide the required professional services and qualifications related to project requirements, including project management skills and methodology to monitor project budgets.

5) Key personnel proposed as project team members, including detailed resumes. Clearly identify subconsultants, if proposed, with similar information.

6) Examples of specific knowledge, expertise and project management experience related to this type of project.

7) Descriptions of recent and related projects completed by the firm.

8) References of other owners for which the firm has provided similar professional services. Reference information **must** include:

a) name of owner
b) project name
c) brief description of firm's involvement
d) contact person
e) address
f) telephone number
g) firm's key personnel assigned to the referenced project

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Preliminary Scope of Services

1) Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Organization

2) Athens, Gallia, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, and Vinton Counties in Ohio
Project location

3) Kenneth W. Krebs
Representative

4) Other involved groups (e.g., boards, committees, or citizens groups)
Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission

5) Description of available and relevant studies, surveys and preliminary feasibility of work.
Funding for the project is committed and secured. An environmental review record is being completed at this time for the project.

6) Project description: intended size, function, capacity and general requirements (e.g., preliminary design/studies demolition, renovation, new construction, waste management, energy, land use and site selection considerations).
The Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative (BREC) plans to install 168.12 miles of 144 strand fiber along its existing electric service distribution system throughout eight counties in southeastern Appalachia Ohio to develop the "Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone". BREC will own and maintain the fiber while allowing Internet Service Providers (ISP) to access at least 800 drop sites to deliver high speed internet services in the remote unserved and underserved areas of Athens, Gallia, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs and Vinton Counties in Ohio. The expected date for availability to ISP is 2022. The "Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone" will promote economic growth and diversification throughout the region and will have a transformative impact toward the economic revitalization of coal-impacted communities.

7) Timeline: Award of A/E contract 08-28-2020
Commencement of design work 08-31-2020
Beginning of construction 04-01-2021
Planned project completion date 09-30-2022

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Schedule of Activities

The following schedule has been established for the:

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative Rural Broadband Expansion Project

Date	Description
06/01/2020	Mail requests for Statements of Qualifications (SOQs).
07/03/2020	SOQ due date.
07/17/2020	Review references and develop a short-list of firms to interview.
07/20/2020	Notify short-listed firms and the interview criteria.
08/03/2020	Interview short-listed firms.
08/14/2020	Review SOQs and interview notes. Rank firms.
08/28/2020	Negotiate and execute a contract with the selected firm.

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone
Project Summary

Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BREC) is a rural electric cooperative serving southeastern Appalachia Ohio. BREC is proposing to string 168.12 miles of 144 strand fiber on its own poles from its corporate office in Patriot, Ohio, to ten substations located throughout six counties in southeastern Appalachia Ohio to develop the "Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone". Creating a backbone of fiber in remote areas using BREC's electrical distribution system is a critical element to making a major broadband expansion logistically and economically feasible. Without the proposed "Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone", local communities and businesses will not be able to compete with those who have access to reliable high speed internet service and their ability to recover from the impacts of the job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries will be severely hindered.

BREC will own and maintain the fiber and enter into access agreements to at least 1,988 drop sites with ISPs who can offer high speed internet services to BREC members in the remote unserved and underserved areas of Gallia, Vinton, Meigs, Athens, Lawrence, and Jackson Counties.

Leveraging technology is essential for participating in society, democracy, and economy and advancing community and economic development. "Digital Equity" is a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity to keep pace with the rest of the nation. As the coal-related industries continue to decline, regional economic restructuring and recovery will be delayed if the impacted people remain isolated from or have limited access to opportunities that are only available online. Most of the workforce development initiatives, entrepreneurial support programs, and strategies to create industry clusters depend on the availability of high-speed internet and the use of online tools. Unfortunately, the target population is faced with significant barriers to online participation, such as speed, data caps, latency, reliability, expense etc. The "Southeast Ohio Broadband Backbone" will provide the critical infrastructure for these individuals to access these worthwhile programs.

BREC was formed as a non-profit utility because for-profit corporations could not justify making the high dollar investment to run electric lines through rural and remote areas. This same challenge applies to ISPs today because expanding into the "last mile" requires a major capital investment that exceeds the return. Without fixed broadband available in these areas, ISPs are faced with many challenges to deliver quality service. Serving the last mile requires the use of wireless equipment that sends and receives signals from a series of towers and water tanks in areas where fiber access points do not exist. This model is less reliable and results in multiple possible points of failure.

Through a series of planning meetings and an overall awareness of the lack of broadband infrastructure in the region, the BREC management team recognized the important role BREC could play in providing a "Broadband Backbone" to underserved communities throughout

southeastern Ohio by using its existing electrical distribution system, which already touches the most remote areas of southeast Ohio. As BREC prepared the plans to upgrade its electrical distribution system, the team collaborated with regional leaders and ISPs and agreed to install enough bandwidth to not only meet the needs of BREC's operations and smart grid strategy, but to also provide BREC members with high speed internet through ISPs.

BREC will manage the distribution system construction project, including the installation of the fiber, all appurtenances, and the drop sites. Installation of direct service from the drop site to the consumer, as well as delivery of internet service, will be the responsibility of the ISPs. BREC will maintain ownership of all fiber installed under this project and will enter into access agreements with partner ISPs for the drop sites. The ISPs will be responsible for providing internet service to the individual consumers. BREC will maintain exclusive use of a few strands of the fiber installed to support BREC operations, but could lease dark fiber to ISPs.

BREC is investing $2,247,000 in smart grid meters, circuit breakers, and digital relays/schemes as part of a $19M upgrade to its electrical distribution system and substations. By installing fiber to the substations and facilities BREC will be able to network the system to streamline load management, offer prepay options to BREC members, minimize outage time, decrease response time to outage alerts, secure facilities and reduce whole rate billing by controlling voltage. Technology upgrades to the distribution system will allow BREC to handle the increased use of digital and computerized equipment and the technology dependent on it. BREC will transition to automation to manage the increasing complexity and needs of our members in the 21st century. The digital technology will allow for two-way communication between BREC and its members. The smart grid will consist of controls, computers, automation, and new technologies and equipment working together to respond digitally to our quickly changing electrical demand.