



CONNECTING
WINDSOR-ESSEX

Request for Information:

**High Speed Communications Services,
Fibre Optic Construction and Installation Services**

December 2015

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Background Information

Connecting Windsor-Essex (CWE) is a group of public sector stakeholders consisting of:

- Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB)
- Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board (WECDSB)
- Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence (CSCProvidence)
- University of Windsor (UofW)
- St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology (SCC)
- The Corporation of the City of Windsor (CoW)
- The Corporation of the County of Essex (CoE)
- The Essex County Library (ECL)
- Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre (WECHC)
- Victorian Order of Nurses (VON)
- Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)
- Asthma Research Group Inc. (ARGI)

CWE may partner with other regional organizations, such as Chatham Kent Lambton Administrators Group (CKLAG) and Lambton College, in this RFI.

CWE began 20 years ago as an information technology project and has evolved into a technology information organization. Initially, the purpose was to build a high speed fibre optic network that would bring world-class connectivity to several of the region's leading institutions. Eventually, our services expanded to include the region's businesses and, especially in under-serviced rural areas, residents who wanted access to high-speed internet. Sites are spread throughout the City of Windsor and the County of Essex as well as Pelee Island.

Today, the organization has moved beyond the network itself and into the facilitation and development of applications that make fibre optic technology relevant to peoples' lives. To use an air travel metaphor, we've gone from building airports into managing air traffic networks and helping people learn how to navigate the globe. We work in several sectors— education, healthcare, municipalities, non-profits, businesses and the public at large – helping people use technology to connect better, to share ideas and resources more fluidly, and to streamline their operations by using smart technology. In our role as a catalyst for change, we've become a clearing house for ideas, technologies, and collaborative problem solving.

We work toward a future that delivers on technology's limitless promise and potential. With every new partnership and every new member engagement, we broaden our perspective and discover new opportunities. Being connected to a global network of innovators intensifies the exchange of ideas that will ultimately make our community a brilliant place in which to live and work.

Purpose of the RFI

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to determine service providers, vendors, contractors and other related companies that would be available to provide services to the Connecting-Windsor Essex consortium.

CWE is reviewing a broad strategy of potential solutions for the needs of their WAN communications. In preparation for a future WAN Services Request-For-Proposal (RFP), CWE is gathering information from potential service providers who may have offerings that could be utilized in the deployment of a shared WAN infrastructure for the group. CWE is exploring a wide range of WAN architectures and is reaching out to potential suppliers to ensure that any and all alternatives for service or construction of network infrastructure are taken into consideration.

The members' need for high speed communication infrastructure is critical to their operations and services. The goal of this RFI is to identify and qualify those companies that provide services that can be used for high speed connectivity between locations or that can assist the members in the building of infrastructure that can be utilized for high speed WAN connectivity. Reliability of services is critical to the operations of the WAN and we request that respondents include literature that speaks to their qualifications and the reliability of their product or service.

This RFI is an information gathering process only that will be used to identify future suppliers for the CWE group. It should not be considered as a solicitation for services or a purchase request. CWE is not responsible for any costs incurred by the respondents in the preparation of their submission and all documents submitted remain the property of CWE.

Scope

There are over 200 locations within the stakeholder group that require high performance network connectivity. Consideration for WAN connectivity is being reviewed in a broad sense in order to ensure that the stakeholder group is aware of all their options.

Key criteria that respondents to this RFI must consider for the WAN connectivity are:

- a) Must provide Gigabit or faster speeds. Members have high speed networking equipment and are currently utilizing 10Gbps speeds at some locations. Higher speeds will be a reality in the near future.
- b) Highly reliable infrastructure is required.
- c) The service or infrastructure should be designed to last 5-10 years (or more) and have the possibility of scaling in performance.
- d) This connectivity must be able to be utilized by the members with their existing network equipment and standards-based interfaces. Fibre optic or other connectivity should support Ethernet standards or interface with Ethernet switching equipment that all members utilize.

- e) Your offering should comprise one of:
 - i. A physical deployment that can be used with Ethernet-based switching equipment.
 - ii. A layer 2 switching deployment with point-to-point or multipoint Ethernet connectivity
 - iii. A layer 3 deployment that supports both IPv4 and IPv6 network connectivity
- f) The service or infrastructure can pertain to a portion or all of the geographic locations.

The group does not want to restrict the potential solution providers and their proposals any further than the criteria that is listed above. We would be interested in submissions of information from vendors offering any of the services listed below, but you are not limited to only these options if your company has other potential WAN solutions that the stakeholders could leverage.

Potential solution types we are interested in include:

- 1) Carrier-based WAN solutions for managed WAN services. These would include any layer 2, layer 3, MPLS or other WAN service that can be utilized by the members for interconnectivity of sites.
- 2) Unmanaged WAN services where a service provider or company deploys a network design to specification and then turns over the network infrastructure to the members for ongoing support and maintenance.
- 3) Fibre optic construction services for outdoor site-to-site fibre construction. Please elaborate as to whether your construction service includes construction on public rights-of-way as well as private property. Also please indicate if your organization has experience in the process of construction permits within the city and county regions.
- 4) Construction and project management services. This would include services involving the deployment of private infrastructure in the public rights-of-way, managing contractors, physical network design and municipal permitting.

Please feel free to include any literature, references or case studies that speak to solutions that you have deployed. Your submission can be brief, including only the required forms or you may provide detailed literature on your products and services.

Although the group is not requesting pricing in this RFI, if you could provide a *Pricing Model* for your services it would be helpful for the group to understand the service offering.

Future RFPs or RFQs

This RFI is just the first stage in a process that may include future RFPs and RFQs released by the CWE consortium. It is our intent that the responses to this RFI will aid the group in determining services available within the region and include them in any upcoming RFPs. Any future RFPs will be public tender documents, but our intent is to ensure that respondents to this RFI directly receive those bid documents that are relevant to their business.

Confidentiality

It is understood and agreed to that CWE and the Supplier would like to exchange certain information that may be considered confidential. To ensure the protection of such information and in consideration of the agreement to exchange said information, the parties agree as follows:

1. The confidential information disclosed by either party under this Agreement (“Confidential Information”) includes Technical and business information relating to Discloser’s proprietary ideas, patentable ideas, copyrights and/or trade secrets, existing and/or contemplated products and services, software, schematics, research and development, costs, profit and margin information, and financial projections, customers, marketing, and current or future business plans, regardless of whether such information is designated as “Confidential Information” at the time of its disclosure. Confidential Information shall also include, and the Recipient shall have a duty to protect, other confidential and/or sensitive information which is disclosed by Discloser in writing and marked as confidential (or with other similar designation) at the time of disclosure.
2. Recipient shall use the Confidential Information only for the purpose of evaluating potential business and investment relationships with Discloser.
3. Recipient shall limit disclosure of Confidential Information within its own organization to its directors, officers, partners and/or employees having a need to know and shall not disclose Confidential Information to any third party (whether an individual, corporation, or other entity) without the prior written consent of Discloser. Recipient shall have satisfied its obligations under this paragraph if it takes affirmative measures to ensure compliance with these confidentiality obligations by its employees, agents, consultants and others who are permitted access to or use of the Confidential Information.
4. This Agreement imposes no obligation upon Recipient with respect to any Confidential Information (a) that was in Recipient’s possession before receipt from Discloser; (b) is or becomes a matter of public knowledge through no fault of Recipient; (c) is rightfully received by Recipient from a third party not owing a duty of confidentiality to the Discloser; (d) is disclosed without a duty of confidentiality to a third party by, or with the authorization of, Discloser; or (e) is independently developed by Recipient.
5. Neither party has an obligation under this Agreement to purchase any service, goods, or intangibles from the other party.
6. If there is a breach or threatened breach of any provision of this Agreement, it is agreed and understood that Discloser shall have no adequate remedy in money or other damages and accordingly shall be entitled to injunctive relief; provided however, no specification in this Agreement of any particular remedy shall be construed as a waiver or prohibition of any other remedies in the event of a breach or threatened breach of this Agreement.

RFI procedure

CWE will remain open to responses to this RFI until February 1, 2016.

Any questions or concerns in regards to responding to the RFI may be directed to:

Bob Campbell
CEO, Connecting Windsor-Essex
Email: bob@cw-e.com
Phone: 519-564-1820

Please be aware that the group is not coordinating meetings with any potential suppliers during the process of the RFI. We are seeking high-level information business information from suppliers from which the group may purchase services. The group may request meetings following the RFI to gather more details or to learn more about the product and services that you offer.

Submissions for the RFI must contain the fully completed RFI submission form that follows this section of the document. We have kept the formal part of this response brief to simplify the submission process. In addition to our basic form, respondents are encouraged to include the following with their response package:

- i) Corporate Business Profile
- ii) Detailed description of relevant services you provide
- iii) Reference information to past jobs or accomplishments that relate to the services the group is requesting.

The additional information you provide can be in electronic and/or paper form.

Submissions should identified as below and sent to:

Connecting Windsor-Essex
RFI for WAN Services
Attn: Bob Campbell

Electronic submissions may be emailed to bob@cw-e.com

Paper submissions may be mailed to:
500 Ouellette Avenue, Suite 100
Windsor, Ontario
N9A 1B3

RFI Submission Form

Respondent's Business Information

Company Name _____
Address _____
City & Postal Code _____
Years in Business _____

Respondent's Contact Information

Primary Contact Name _____
Title _____
Phone _____
Email Address _____

Service Categories Offered

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Managed WAN Services | Yes | No |
| If Yes, list geographic regions where offered: _____ | | |
| 2. Unmanaged WAN Services | Yes | No |
| If Yes, list geographic regions where offered: _____ | | |
| 3. Fibre Optic Construction Services | Yes | No |
| If Yes, list geographic regions where offered: _____ | | |
| Do you perform work in Public Rights of Way: | | |
| | Yes | No |
| 4. Construction/Project Management Services | Yes | No |

For each service category where you responded 'Yes', please include as an attachment a synopsis of your service offerings for review.