

# City of Newark & Invest Newark

## ***Newark Fiber Now*** Request for Collaboration



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**Responses Due:** April 19, 2023

**For questions, please contact:**

Aaron Meyerson, Chief Innovation Economy Officer and Director of Broadband, Invest Newark

[ameyerson@investnewark.org](mailto:ameyerson@investnewark.org)

**City of Newark**  
**Newark Fiber Now**  
Request for Collaboration

**(1) Context**

Access to and adoption of broadband is now a requirement to engage in the economy of today and tomorrow. Newark’s neediest residents suffer negative consequences due to lack of internet access, which translates to a lack of access to education, a lack of equitable access to healthcare, and a lack of ability to safely maintain employment or keep businesses running.

Invest Newark is looking to quickly expand internet options to Newark residents living in all 5 wards by leveraging City real estate and the Newark Fiber network.

**(2) Citywide Broadband Goal**

The City of Newark (the “City”) has stated the goal of ensuring that every resident of the City has access to reliable, affordable (low or no cost) high-speed internet connectivity. The City has established December 31, 2025 as the target date to reach this goal.

Submitted proposals shall describe how Internet Service Provider(s) will provide affordable, high-speed, in-unit broadband services across the City, particularly to targeted areas. In addition to affordable and high-speed in-unit service and business access, Invest Newark seeks proposals that complement the in-unit service by providing common area and/or outdoor public Wi-Fi access.

**(3) Newark Fiber Now Objectives**

The objective of this Request for Collaboration (RFC) is to identify collaborative partnerships for deploying affordable, high-speed, and reliable internet service options that meet the needs of communities most burdened by the digital divide. Specifically, the City seeks to understand how it can leverage its physical assets, and the Newark Fiber network it owns, to increase broadband access citywide, particularly in historically underinvested communities with low rates of internet connection. The City welcomes proposals regarding a range of technologies and approaches, particularly where the respondent can describe the benefits of using a preferred technology. The City is investigating both short- and long-term solutions and invites project suggestions that could be quickly deployed in less than six months, in addition to projects that would require more than six months to deploy.

Anticipated installation commencement date: April 28, 2023.

RFC responses should prioritize the following broadband principles:

- **Equity and Inclusion**
  - **Economic Inclusivity** - Increase low and no-cost options for Newark Residents
    - Low-cost options in residential homes
    - Effectively no-cost in-home options for households eligible under the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
    - No-cost options in public spaces, parks, common spaces
  - **Marketplace inclusivity** - Increase competition and engage smaller ISPs, MWBEs and community partners
  - **Workforce Inclusivity** – Include workforce development plan to create jobs and training for Newark residents

- **Sustainability**
  - **Infrastructure sustainability** - *Technology deployments* are flexible and can support future technologies
  - **Operational sustainability** – *Business models* are based on industry-standard business assumptions, self-sustaining or have identified funding sources
  - **Technological sustainability** – *Speeds* offered should be fast, reliable and upgradable to support the needs of residents today and in the future

(4) **Target Populations** - Include but are not limited to:

- Communities in areas of the city with low rates of household broadband connection / adoption
- Low-income households
- Households who live in public housing
- Communities with a high population of immigrants and/or non-English speakers
- Individuals with disabilities
- Communities with limited internet service options / lack competition
- Neighborhood small businesses

(5) **Eligible Respondents**

Newark Fiber Now respondents should be able to deliver on the objective of this initiative (Section 3), be an existing FCC Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) vendor, and be able to satisfy the specifications and requirements (Section 7). Recommended respondents include, but are not limited to:

- *Internet Service Providers (ISPs)*: Those currently operating in Newark and potential new market entrants, including entities that are not traditional internet service providers but are interested in offering service under innovative business models;
- *Managed Service Providers (MSPs)*: Those who operate networks and provide service to residents and businesses by leveraging existing internet infrastructure or partner with construction entities to build networks;
- *Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-Profits*: Organizations with deep community relationships and trust with experience or interest in addressing Newark’s digital divide through digital literacy training, device distribution, and/or outreach and trust-building promoting affordable internet adoption; and

(6) **Instruction for Respondents**

Submissions must include the following:

- **Cover Page:**
  - Name of Organization
  - Name, Title, Email, and Phone Number of Contact Person
  - Date of Submission
- **Executive Summary:** 1-2-page executive summary including a description of your idea(s), description of your organization, any partners you plan to engage, a rough timeline and any other highlights.
- **Detailed Response to the Specifications and Requirements (Section 7)**

**(7) Newark Fiber Now RFC Specifications and Requirement Details** – Respondents should address the topics and questions below.

**Primary Program Requirements**

<b>Service Offerings</b>		
1	Speeds	The minimum deliverable service to end users for in-home service must be no less than a 200mbps symmetrical for any plan offered.
2	Service	Commitment to provide the same level of service (including without limitation customer service, response to service interruptions, preventative maintenance) that the partner provides retail customers located within Newark.
3	Technical	Please describe, in general terms, your technical approach and system architecture to deliver reliable, affordable (low or no cost) high-speed internet connectivity to city residents using a fixed location wireless service.
4	Public Wi-Fi	Please describe the technology and system architecture and targeted locations of the public Wi-Fi component of your proposal, if applicable.
<b>Affordability Standards</b>		
5	Affordability	<p><b>Minimum Affordability Standard</b> Any partner must be an Affordability Connectivity Program (ACP) provider. This RFC requires that an ACP Plan be offered at no cost to every eligible household.</p> <p><b>Middle Affordability Standard</b> A Middle Affordability Plan is defined as service provided to non ACP-eligible households at a maximum out-of-pocket cost to a participating household which does not exceed three (3) times the applicable ACP monthly reimbursement.</p>
<b>Community Engagement</b>		
6	Workforce Development / Local Hiring	<p>Your proposal must include a workforce development and/or local hiring plan that creates jobs and training for Newark residents and utilizes local MWBE businesses to the greatest extent possible. Please provide as much detail regarding the number of jobs to be created and the training programs that will be a part of your proposal.</p> <p><b><i>Submissions that do not include a workforce development and/or local hiring component will not be considered.</i></b></p>
7	Community Engagement	Please describe your community engagement activities to promote participation in this program and ACP
8	Partnerships	Please identify any partnerships or dependencies that your proposal calls for, if any
<b>Newark Asset Utilization</b>		
9	Newark Fiber	Please describe what, if any, access to Newark Fiber assets your proposal calls for. Newark Fiber Map available upon request and execution of non-disclosure agreement (NDA).
10	Newark Real Estate Assets	Please list the buildings and/or other assets your firm would require accessing in order to operate the network pursuant to your proposal. See Attachment A for a list of potentially accessible city real estate assets.

## Additional Proposal Requirements

Operations		
1	Business Model	Please describe the business model by which your company will operate the network, including, but not limited to, your revenue projections, up-take estimates, customer service budget, etc.
2	Timeline	Please provide a timeline of implementation of your proposal. If you are proposing to deploy Fixed Location Wireless at City-owned properties, denote which the prioritization and sequencing of properties you would request accessing, <i>i.e.</i> , where would you deploy Fixed Asset Wireless equipment first, second, etc.
3	Funding	<p>Please provide an estimate of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital costs of your proposal</li> <li>• Source of funds – please be as specific as you are able – identifying source, Federal, State, philanthropic, private, etc.</li> <li>• Operational budget</li> </ul> <p>Invest Newark will only engage collaborators that have the knowledge and ability to manage a network and budget necessary to provide service to residents.</p> <p><i>Note: Invest Newark does not plan, makes no promises, and undertakes no responsibility whatsoever to financially support respondents in any capacity or in any denomination beyond providing access to City real estate at no cost and fiber connections at below market rates, only if and to the extent available and permitted.. However, Invest Newark reserves the right to support specific respondents and/or specific projects with funds that meet the goals and objectives of this project along with the larger goals of Invest Newark and the City of Newark in regard to not only broadband expansion but also their broader mission to advance Newark’s global competitiveness by catalyzing equitable economic growth, generating jobs, and creating wealth and economic opportunities for Newarkers. Applications and negotiations for any such financial support shall be conducted outside of and completely apart from this RFC.</i></p>
4	Ongoing Repair & Maintenance	Please describe, in detail, the overall strategy for maintaining the built assets and customer accounts.
6	Reliability and Resiliency	<p>Please describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopted policies or plans to provide service during emergencies (e.g., weather- related or for other disastrous events).</li> <li>• Adopted procedures to ensure services continue during such emergencies (e.g., business continuity plans, etc.).</li> <li>• Infrastructure designed to withstand equipment failures, power outages, natural disasters, or manmade disasters, consistent with best practices, City guidelines or requirements, and applicable law.</li> </ul>
7	Net Neutrality	<p>Proposal must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network management practices that are consistent with the principles of net neutrality (e.g., no blocking, no throttling, no unreasonable</li> </ul>

		<p>discrimination in the transmittal of lawful internet traffic, no paid prioritization).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stated commitment to not block access to lawful websites administered by the City of Newark and to not unreasonably discriminate in transmitting lawful network traffic to lawful websites administered by the City of Newark.</li> </ul>
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**(8) Invest Newark Provided Support**

The City of Newark and/or Invest Newark will support the Newark Fiber Now collaboration by providing the following resources. These resources will be made available at the City’s discretion:

- 1Gb fiber hand-off at pre-determined locations for a below-market price (if requested by respondent)
  - Note: Dependent on fiber availability and capacity at location
- Newark Fiber route location map (if requested by respondent)
  - Note: Dependent on execution of non-disclosure agreement (NDA)
- Access to City Real Estate Assets
  - Note: Dependent on availability at the time of request and City agency permission
  - See Attachment A for a list of city real estate assets for consideration

**(9) Reporting Requirements**

The following information will be required on a regular basis. Reporting template will be provided to partners who execute agreements with Invest Newark.

**Report Outline**

- Monthly
  - Number of households connected
    - Total by service type (Minimum Affordability Standard and Middle Affordability Standard)
    - Total by service type by zip code
  - Speeds delivered via Minimum Affordability Standard and Middle Affordability Standard
    - Average speeds for each plan
  - Information on any outages and service performance
    - Resident customer service calls and response time (averages monthly)
  - Usage and performance metrics
- Annual
  - Community Engagement
    - Summary of community engagement activities conducted by participants in the prior year
  - MWBE Engagement
    - Hiring and/or workforce development engagement

**(10) Attachments**

- Attachment A: City real estate Asset List
- Attachment B: Non-Disclosure Agreement