

Invest Newark
Municipal Fiber Infrastructure and Broadband Provision Services
Request for Qualifications

Frequently Asked Questions (as of 6/25/2025)

1. Can you provide clarification on the stipulations around pricing, term, and ownership applying to assets that the ISP finances?
 - a. Given the City currently owns the infrastructure, they would like a say in residential and business pricing. They currently lease a portion of their network to Invest Newark, who in turn works with several vendors to maintain the network and an ISP to provide direct service to residents. Current Newark Fiber pricing can be found on our website - <https://investnewark.org/newark-fiber/>
 - b. When it comes to assets that the ISP finances, that would need to be discussed.
2. Will the City entertain an Open Access operator-only model with multiple ISPs available for retail services?
 - a. Yes
3. Has the City worked with anyone on the capital side (outside of state/federal funding opportunities)?
 - a. We've had discussions, but no formal working relationship
4. Could new fiber financed be deeded to capital partner or at least secured via 20-yr IRUs?
 - a. We would need to review with the City's law department to confirm either way.
5. Can the contract term be lengthened or revenue-share guaranteed to support financing?
 - a. This sounds reasonable, so a proposed length of time in your response would be welcome so we can evaluate.
6. What is the average number of network outages per year
 - a. Full-network outages are not common
 - b. Smaller building specific outages due to equipment or small cabling issues are on average happening once every 2 weeks
7. Can you provide a log or summary of outages over the past 3 years, including cause, duration, and resolution time?
 - a. We do maintain a log of any outages but it does not contain, cause, duration, or resolution.
8. What are the average and total costs incurred per outage?
 - a. Inside-plant or equipment outages cost several hundred to several thousand to repair and upgrade
 - b. Underground or aerial outages can cost in upwards of \$20-100K per outage
9. How is network uptime currently measured and tracked?
 - a. It is monitored using various Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) tools.
10. Are there any existing service-level benchmarks for outage response, restoration times, or recurring issue thresholds?

- a. We have a 99.99% SLA uptime with our clients. Instances of non compliance with service standards may result in a bill credit to the customer.
11. Can you share all current rates charged to the City or Invest Newark by the current ISP or any existing vendor, broken out by service type (maintenance, NOC, subscriber support, construction)?
- a. Newark Fiber rates to customers can be found on our website here: newarkfiber.org
 - b. Repair and Maintenance rates vary by vendor but are on par with what Millennium charges for repair and maintenance under their contract.
12. Can you provide a copy of the current contract or SLA terms in place with the current operator?
- a. At this point, Invest Newark cannot share the current agreement with the ISP operator. Should Invest Newark and the City of Newark choose to proceed in discussions with a respondent, additional information may be shared.
13. Can you provide a breakdown of monthly revenue by customer type (residential, commercial, government)?
- a. At this point, under NDA, we are able to share a list of lit-buildings but not further detail on customer connections
14. What is the average revenue per user (ARPU) across Newark Fiber's customer base?
- a. \$436/month per customer
15. What is the customer churn rate over the past 24 months?
- a. Annual churn is 8-10% over the life of the program
16. What billing platform is currently used for Newark Fiber, and can that data be accessed for analysis? Is the platform owned by the City or the current Operator?
- a. Billing is currently run by our current ISP and cannot be accessed at this time.
17. Are there any known infrastructure issues or upcoming capital projects we should be aware of (e.g., manhole rehab, pole replacement)?
- a. No major OSP improvements planned. We are currently undertaking an assessment of all outdoor antenna equipment to determine which are in need of upgrades and license renewals.
 - b. We are in discussions with several developers for new connections, but those are 1+ year out.
18. Can you provide a detailed inventory of all active equipment in the field (switches, radios, ONTs, etc.)? Are they owned by the City or the Operator?
- a. This is currently being worked on by City of Newark and our current ISP. This cannot be shared before the RFQ submission deadline and will likely only be shared with the vendor the City and Invest Newark choose to discuss this project in more detail with.
19. Are there any fixed wireless assets we would be required to maintain or expand? If so, what bands and models are currently deployed?
- a. Yes - of the ~100 buildings connected to the Newark Fiber network, 80 are utilizing fixed wireless assets.

- b. Currently, the Newark Fiber system uses mostly Meraki equipment. We are beginning to transition to Cambium upon equipment refresh. Full list of equipment can be provided at a later date.
- 20. Will there be additional funding allocated to support future expansions or subsidized connectivity?
 - a. Currently, the City of Newark is not planning expansions to the network unless there is a large tenant requesting service whereby a service agreement warrants the capital expense with an expected payback within 3-5 years.
 - b. The City of Newark and Invest Newark regularly apply for state and federal resources to support with subsidized connectivity, but this is neither guaranteed or factored into operations and maintenance budgeting.
- 21. Are there performance penalties tied to the current operators SLA performance? How frequently have they been triggered and what was the penalty?
 - a. Performance issues in the past and currently are usually tied to equipment outages or other factors, which are the property of Invest Newark and the City of Newark.
- 22. Please share the the latest OSP assessment conducted, and results as accepted by the City.
 - a. Under NDA, we can share the current shapefiles and lit-building list.
- 23. Can we get a copy of the current fiber map and service locations?
 - a. Yes – with signed NDA
- 24. Regarding 1E of the Deliverables "Procurement strategy for continuing services agreements with a roster of qualified field services contractors." - Can we get an idea of what agreements are currently in place?
 - a. We currently have 3 vendors we use for operations and maintenance work. These were previously selected through a competitive public RFP process.
- 25. Where is the current NOC and can we see it?
 - a. 480 Clinton Ave and 255 Central Ave are our two NOCs. We cannot provide access at this time, but may provide access with respondents selected to move forward.
- 26. What do the current SLAs look like for the City and for other customers?
 - a. We have a 99.99% SLA uptime with our clients. Instances of noncompliance with service standards may result in a bill credit to the customer.
- 27. Regarding the \$1,000,000 in revenue, how much does the current OPEX eat up?
 - a. At this point, under NDA, we are able to share a list of lit-buildings but not further detail on customer connections, revenue by customer or our opex.
- 28. As the City is the owner, are the cost associated to repair and on-going maintenance a reimbursable item or are those amounts to be solely paid at selected firm/vendor expense?
 - a. Given this is a Request for Qualifications/Information and not a request for proposals, we seek guidance on what your organizations may recommend in such an operational structure. If your organization would propose a reimbursable model, or a retainer model or at vendor expense but revenue share model, we welcome that feedback. Responses to this RFQ will not be shared publicly.

29. Under the insurance section it states: Vendor must maintain appropriate insurance coverage for the network infrastructure. If the network is owned by the city but operated under a contracted firm/vendor why would firm/vendor need to bare the full insurance coverage?

- a. This is a reasonable question and one we will need to confirm with the City law department. Previous vendors that work on a City asset have typically needed full insurance coverage so are recommending that here. The City should/would maintain insurance for its infrastructure, but would expect any future vendor to maintain comparable coverage if given rights to maintain, operate, and scale the network. Formal reply would be from law department pending future discussions after the close of this RFQ.

30. Will our responses to the RFQ be shared publicly.

- a. No. Any information submitted for this Request for Qualifications will be kept confidential and only shared between Invest Newark and the City of Newark.