



November 8, 2022

**Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC)
224 Dalton St., Ellijay, GA 30540**

**Request for Proposal (RFP) – FTTH Service Drops
Cherokee County, Georgia FTTH Project - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
Grant Award #GTA: GA-0005312 (Cherokee)**

We appreciate your interest in performing fiber optic construction services for Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC) in Ellijay, GA on the recent ARPA grant award for Cherokee County, Georgia FTTH Construction Project. Please carefully read the information in this notice in its entirety to gain a full understanding of what this RFP entails.

On February 1, 2022 Governor Brian P. Kemp, joined by members of the Broadband Infrastructure Committee and state leaders, announced almost \$408 million in awards which will provide communities, households, and businesses in 70 Georgia counties access to faster and more reliable broadband.

In response to proposals submitted in partnership with 4 different entities, ETC was chosen to receive ARPA grant funds in the following awards:

- **Georgia Telecommunications Association (GTA) - (Cherokee County)**
 - **The GTA and ETC are partnering to build approximately 21 miles of high-speed fiber optics to serve 385 customers in 14 unserved census block groups. Main-line construction on this project is expected to finish no later than December 31, 2023.**
- Development Authority of Dawson County
 - The Development Authority of Dawson County is partnering with ETC to build approximately 35 miles of high-speed fiber optics to serve 563 customers in 14 unserved census block groups. Main-line construction on this project is expected to finish no later than July 31, 2024.
- Fannin County Development Authority
 - The Fannin County Development Authority is partnering with ETC to build approximately 80 miles of high-speed fiber optics to serve 996 customers in 71 unserved census block groups. Main-line Construction on this project is expected to finish no later than December 31, 2024.
- Joint Development Authority of Gilmer and Pickens County
 - The Joint Development Authority of Gilmer and Pickens County is partnering with ETC to build approximately 574 miles of high-speed fiber optics to serve 4,259 customers in 334 unserved census block groups. It is expected that main-line construction on this project will be on-going for multiple years and must be completed prior to December 31, 2025.



******IMPORTANT NOTICE******

This Request for Proposal package is specific to only work to be performed in Cherokee County, Georgia under grant award #GTA: GA-0005312 (Cherokee). Separate RFP packages for the Dawson, Fannin and Gilmer/Pickens County awards will be distributed respectively.

Awards made from this RFP will cover Aerial and Buried Service Drop and Duct Installation.

ETC reserves the right to make awards from this RFP to multiple Contractors and will not necessarily award the entire project to any one Contractor.

RUS Form 773 Contracts will be issued, using the pricing submitted in this RFP response. The following contract details will apply:

- Performance bonds will **not** be required
- A COI listing ETC and the Engineer as an additional insured **will be** required
- Subcontractors are allowed, but will require written ETC approval in advance and must adhere to all provisions outlined within this RFP
- ETC will provide all material
- Invoices will be submitted monthly by email to Byers Engineering Staff

Responses to this RFP will be reviewed with multiple criteria to determine the “best value” for ETC including:

- 1. Unit Price(s)**
- 2. Prior Experience/References/Proposed Project Staff**
- 3. Availability and Achievement of Project Timeline**

An example of the Evaluation/Scoring Matrix is included in the Notice to Bidders.

In an effort to get construction started quickly on this award, engineering is underway but has not been completed. Construction will begin on most projects well before engineering for all individual service areas are complete.

In order to meet all public commitments for this Grant, all main-line construction must be completed prior to the end of 2023. It is anticipated that Service Drop Installations will continue through 2026.

An area map showing the Cherokee County ARPA service areas is included in the following pages. If desired, a ride-out of the project area with the Engineer can be scheduled.



Please refer any technical questions for this RFP to:

Marc Mercer at marc.mercer@byers.com.

Please submit your response to this RFP by email to the following:

Pam Hart at pamela.hart@byers.com.

Responses should be received no later than:

5:00 p.m. Friday, November 25, 2022

Please see attached Notice and Instructions to Bidders for more information.



INDEX TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

- Section 1 Notice and Instruction to Bidders
- Section 2 Location Map
- Section 3 General Notes
- Section 4 Bidder’s Qualifications
- Section 5 Unit Pricing Summary
- Section 6 Certification



SECTION 1: NOTICE AND INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

A. Notice

1. Ellijay Telephone Company (the “Owner”) will receive Proposals to furnish the necessary labor for FTTH Service Drops as a part of their Cherokee County ARPA Grant Award, GTA: GA-0005312 (Cherokee).
2. **Terms and Conditions:** All proposals and supporting materials as well as correspondence relating to this RFP become property of ETC when received. Any proprietary information contained in the Response should be so indicated. However, a general indication that the entire contents, or a major portion, of the proposal is proprietary will not be honored.

- a. All applicable State of Georgia and Federal laws, City and County ordinances, licenses and regulations of all agencies having jurisdiction shall apply to the Respondent and the development of the project throughout and are incorporated herein.
- b. ETC is a subrecipient of funding received by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, State Fiscal Recovery Funds, supported by the U.S. Department of the Treasury as part of the State of Georgia’s allocation of funds from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) established within 42 U.S.C.A. § 802 via the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (the “Act”).

The federal procurement standards for non-federal entities (NFE), like ETC and all subcontractors thereof, are described in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Part 200, sections 200.317-200.327. 2 C.F.R. § 200.327 states that “the non-federal entity's contracts must contain the applicable provisions described in Appendix II to this part.”

Therefore, ETC will require all contractors to adhere to Appendix II provisions (below), as applicable. The full Appendix can be accessed here:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/appendix-Appendix%20II%20to%20Part%20200/>. Additional provisions will be included in this contract to fulfill additional federal recommendations.

3. **Equal Business Opportunity:** ETC strongly encourages that all Respondents provide opportunities for diverse businesses, including Minority Business Enterprises (“MBEs”), Female Business Enterprises (“FBEs”), known collectively as “MFBEs”, and Small Business Enterprises (“SBEs”) as defined by the State of Georgia to participate as joint venture partners, contractors, subcontractors or mentor-protégé relations. It is a top priority throughout this RFP process to promote full and equal business opportunities for all persons and business entities conducting business with ETC.
4. **E-Verify:** Respondents must comply with the Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act, O.C.G.A. §13-10-90, et seq. All services physically performed within the State of Georgia must be



accompanied by proof of your registration with the E-Verify Program, as well as verification of your continuing and future participation in the E-Verify program established by the United States Department of Homeland Security. A completed E-Verify Contractor Affidavit must be submitted to ETC ([Appendix A-1](#)) during contract execution. To the extent there are subcontractors working on this contract, you are responsible for obtaining a fully signed and notarized subcontractor affidavit from those firms with whom you have entered into subcontracts ([Appendix A-2](#)). In turn, should there be second tier subcontractors on this project, you must require the subcontractors to obtain E-Verify Affidavits from those second-tier subcontractors.

5. **Evaluation & Acceptance:** Awards from this RFP will not be made based on lowest pricing alone. As a result, the Owner and their Engineer will require time to review the Qualifications, References, Personnel and Availability of each Bidder. The Owner reserves the right to not award to any respective bidder and/or to negotiate with multiple bidders as needed and will use their discretion in determining if any exceptions to their instructions in the RFP will be grounds for dismissal of the bid. An example of the Evaluation/Scoring Matrix to be used is included in the following pages.

ETC Evaluation/Scoring Matrix:

Criteria and Scoring Guidance to use In Rating Each Proposal Area

Criteria	Low 1	Med 2	High 3
Contract Price	Higher than expected pricing range for contracted project	Meets expected price range for contracted project	Lower than expected price range for contracted project
Experience with similar projects	(using evidence provided) Has done one, not quite like ours	Has done at least one very similar to ours	Has done several very similar to ours, successfully
Special Skills for this Area	Has people in training or experts are not available	Has small number of experts and they are available	Has many skilled experts for this area and they are available
Prior Experience in similar project with ETC	Less than 5 years experience providing services for ETC	5 Years of experience with ETC	Greater than 5 Years for experience with ETC
Achieving Project Timeline	Meets only a minimum set of requirements at highest priority	Meets all high priority and most second tier requirements	Meets all stated requirements, at all levels of priority



Weightings for each area, based on level of importance

Criteria	Weighting (distribute 100 points)
Contract Price	20
Experience with similar projects	10
Special Skills for this Area	10
Prior Experience in similar project with ETC	10
Achieving Project Timeline	50

B. Instructions

1. Qualifications and all supporting documents required must be submitted by email to:

Pam Hart at pamela.hart@byers.com

No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 25, 2022.

Proposals received after the time specified will not be considered.

2. **Questions or Concerns**

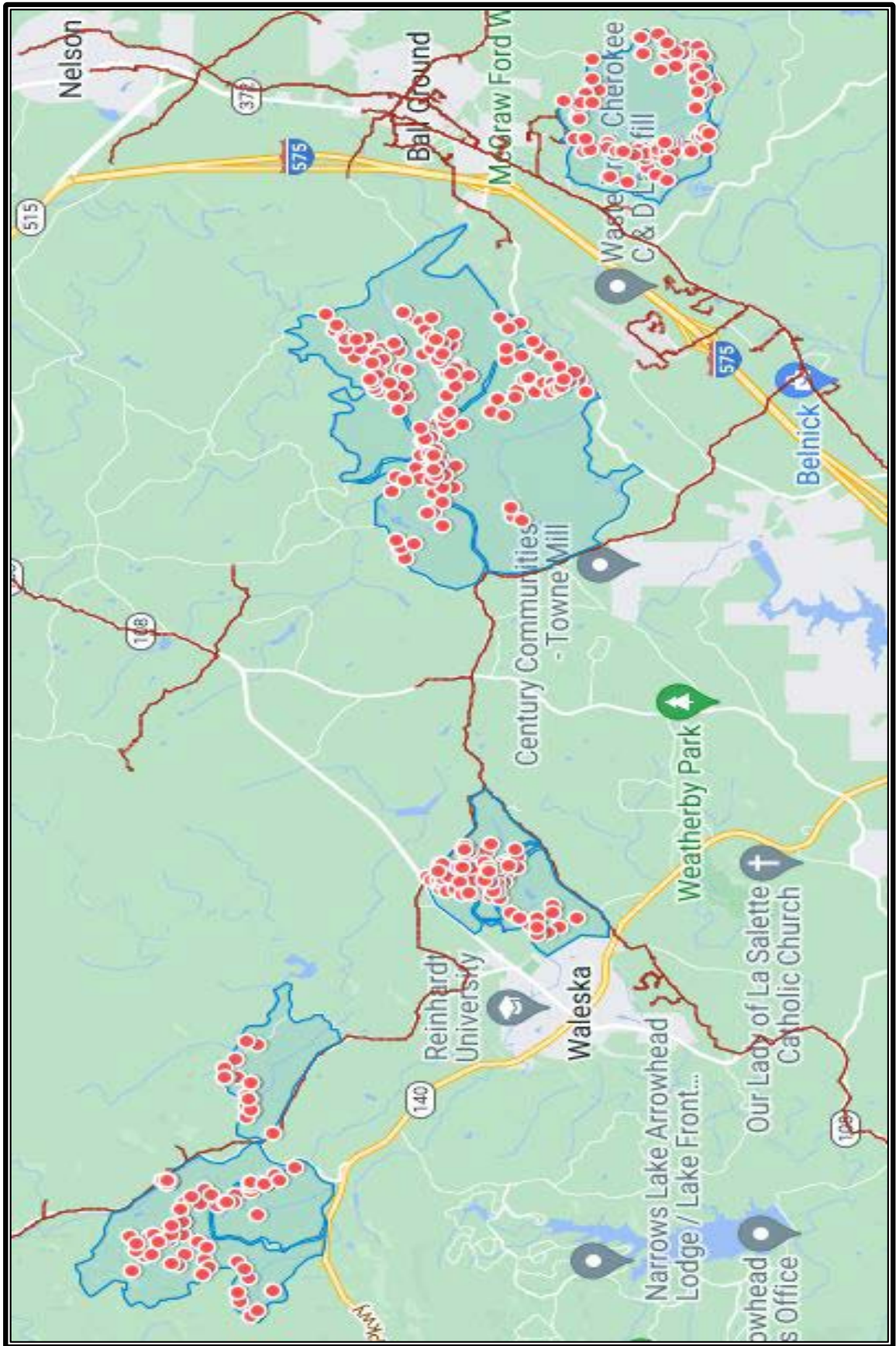
Any questions regarding technical information should be addressed to the Project Resident Engineer, Marc Mercer at marc.mercer@byers.com or (706) 499-3794.

Questions regarding clerical information or the process of bid submission should be addressed to the Engineer’s Contract Manager, Pam Hart at pamela.hart@byers.com or (864) 396-1064.

To review project specific drawings or for a joint ride-out of the project, contact Marc Mercer at marc.mercer@byers.com or (706) 499-3794.



SECTION 2: LOCATION MAP





SECTION 3: GENERAL NOTES

- The Contractor may be required to attend a monthly progress meeting held at ETC’s office to discuss production schedules, easements and problem areas. It will be mandatory that the Contractor’s Superintendent be present.
- The Contractor must have a current Certificate of Insurance (COI) with a minimum of \$2 Million Aggregate Coverage and \$1 Million Workers Compensation Coverage. Contractor shall include as co-insured (additional Insured) the Owner, and their personnel, and the Engineer and their personnel. Any added cost shall be included in the bid price. The description will include the project and the estimated time frame. Renewal COI’s will be provided to after expiration of the original COI.
- Subcontractors are allowed, although written requests and ETC advance approvals are required. Subcontractors will be required to adhere to all terms listed in the Notice section of this RFP.
- ETC will provide all required materials. Upon receiving the material, the Contractor should inspect all items for any potential defects and report to the Owner immediately upon finding any irregularities.
- Invoices should be submitted monthly by email to the Engineer for review and approval. The Contractor’s costs shall be detailed in a manner satisfactory to the Owner. Invoices that are found to be incorrect will be returned to Contractor. The Owner or Owner’s representative will not make any corrections or changes to a Contractor Invoice.
- The Contractor shall make available a local representative responsible for handling after hours and weekend trouble reports related to the Contractor’s activities.
- There shall be no cable placement when the Engineer is not on site, unless previously approved. When multiple crews are on the project, there shall be a competent foreman on site at all times for each crew.
- Pulling tension on fiber cable shall not exceed six hundred (600) pounds. Breakaway swivels must be used when pulling fiber cable.
- The contractor shall be responsible for labeling cables with appropriate color-coded tie wraps. Color indications shall be as follows:
 - **CO = Blue** - (Blue tie wraps shall be placed on cable that will enter the splice case from the C.O. or FDH side)
 - **FLD = Green** - (Green tie wraps shall be placed on the cable that will exit the splice case on the field side)
 - **Tap = Orange** - (Orange tie wraps shall be placed on the end of all cable taps)

Utilities:

- When applicable, Contractor must comply with Georgia PSC Large Project locate rules.
<http://georgia811.com/index.php/large-projects/>



- The Contractor is responsible for locating all underground utilities prior to construction to prevent service interruptions and unnecessary damages. The Engineer is not responsible for actual location of any underground utilities.
- Other utility lines are shown on construction sheets where they are assumed to be per the utility company at the time of staking. The Contractor is expected to coordinate with the utility company to verify the location of all utility lines and services to be paralleled or crossed during construction to prevent unnecessary damage.
- Repairs to other utilities such as water, sewer, gas, etc. must be approved by each authority.

List of Changes, Additions and Deletions

Changes and Additions to the Standard RUS Units

Refer to RUS Bulletin 1753F-153, RUS Form 515d - Specifications and Drawings for Service Installation at Customer Access Locations dated September 2001 and RUS Bulletin 1753F-150 RUS Form 515a - Specifications and Drawings for Construction of Direct Buried Plant dated September 2001 for all other units.

SERVICE DROP UNIT SECTION

Add: BD103 – Install Charles Industries Non-Louvered Vertical Plastic Pedestal 10" x 12" x 27" overall complete with stake, pea gravel, tags, numbering, ant/rat poison.

Add: BD109 – Install Charles Industries Louvered Low-Profile Housing 17" x 30" x 30" overall complete with stake, pea gravel, tags, numbering, ant/rat poison.

Add: BFO (x) – Consists of the labor required to place one linear foot of vacant pipe for the purpose of future fiber-optic drop placement. Work could include plowing, trenching, or hand-digging. Boring will be paid separately under the BM60 units and drop placement will be paid under the SEB () unit. **Example** BFO (1 x .75)

Add: BM60 (x) D – Consists of the labor required to place one linear foot of vacant plastic pipe for the purpose of future fiber-optic drop placement. Placement of pipe is via use of directional boring equipment. Drop placement will be paid under the SEBO () unit.
Example BM60 (1 x .75) D

Add: BM60 (x) S – Consists of the labor required to place one linear foot of vacant plastic pipe for the purpose of future fiber-optic drop placement. Placement of pipe is via use of pneumatic “missile” equipment and is commonly referred to as “Stitch Boring”. Drop placement will be paid under the SEBO () unit. **Example** BM60 (1 x .75) S



Add: SEA () – This unit includes all labor necessary to place one linear foot of aerial fiber optic service drop cable between aerial pole locations and the customer service entrance. Contractor must leave a coil of extra drop cable at each end sufficient in length for splicing. The number of fibers within the drop cable will be shown in parentheses. **Example** SEA (2FC)

Add: SEB () – This unit includes all labor necessary to place one linear foot of fiber optic service drop cable in a vacant buried pipe. All buried drop cable will be placed in pipe rather than direct buried. Unit will be compensated on a per foot basis. Contractor must leave a coil of extra drop cable at each end of the pipe that is of sufficient length for splicing. The number of fibers within the cable will be shown in parentheses. **Example** SEB (2FC)

Add: WK-1 – This unit includes all labor necessary to move and/or transfer an existing aerial or buried service drop wire. Unit will be compensated on a per drop basis.



Please use the space below to provide any other relevant information regarding the Bidder’s experience, qualifications, references, etc.

Project Staff

For consideration of this award, ETC requests that the winning Contractor must have a superintendent assigned to this project. The superintendent should be competent and have experience managing comparable projects.

If awarded the Construction Contract, the name of the construction superintendent to be placed in overall charge of the proposed construction is_____.

Please provide the names of foremen and/or other key personnel and brief summaries of their experience in the particular operation in which each will be in charge:



Please provide the following information as to what construction operations can be made available for this project and when they will be available.

Operation	Projected Date Available
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



SECTION 5: UNIT PRICING SUMMARY

CHEROKEE ARPA - SERVICE DROPS CONSTRUCTION UNIT LIST					
Unit Description	No. of Units	Labor	*Materials	Labor and Materials	Extended Price L&M
SEA	1				
SEB	1				
BD103	1				
BD109	1				
BFO (1 x .75)	1				
BFO (2 x .75)	1				
BFO (1 x 1)	1				
BM60(1 x .75)D	1				
BM60(2 x .75)D	1				
BM60(1 x 1)D	1				
BM60(1 x .75)S	1				
BM60(2 x .75)S	1				
BM60(1 x 1)S	1				
BM72	1				
BM73	1				
BM83	1				
NID	1				
WK-1	1				
				TOTAL	

**All Materials are being furnished by the Owner*



SECTION 6: CERTIFICATION

1. The Bidder hereby agrees that the filing of this Proposal shall constitute acceptance of all terms and conditions included in the RFP and certifies that he has read the entire Request for Proposal package for the Ellijay Telephone Company’s “ARPA - #GTA: GA-0005312 (Cherokee)” FTTH Service Drop Project.

2. The Bidder hereby agrees that he has thoroughly familiarized himself with the site conditions, as well as, the scope of the labor described and specified in the documents attached to and made a part of this Qualifications Proposal.

3. The Bidder hereby understands and agrees that the various units on which the bids are made in this Qualifications Proposal are as set out in the Description of Assembly Units and Construction Specifications attached hereto and made a part hereof, and the Owner may specify any number or combination of units that the Owner may deem necessary for the construction of the Project.

4. The attached price list reflects the comprehension of the details specified in this package. Any additional units will be priced competitively and in good faith. Approval must be received from the ETC before additional units are utilized.

5. The Bidder shall make his own determination as to the nature and extent of the utility facilities, including proposed adjustments, new facilities or temporary work to be performed by the utility owner or his representative; and as to whether or not any utility work is planned by the Owner in conjunction with the project construction. The Bidder shall consider in his Bid all of the permanent and temporary utility facilities in their present or relocated positions, whether or not specifically shown on the plans or covered in the Specifications. It will be the Bidder's responsibility to anticipate any additional costs to him resulting from such utility work and shall reflect these costs in his Bid for the various items in the Contract.

6. The Bidder hereby represents and warrants that all statements set forth herein are true and correct.

Contractor’s Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Authorized Agent’s Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____