Gates Mills Fiber-to-the-Premise RFP

The Village of Gates Mills seeks responses from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for deploying fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) to all homes and businesses in the Village. To qualify, respondents must construct and operate the network. Gates Mills is an affluent community with an average household income of over $200,000 per year located in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Gates Mills offers several incentives to respondents to facilitate implementation, including a streamlined permitting process and the possibility of Village financial contributions to capital costs.

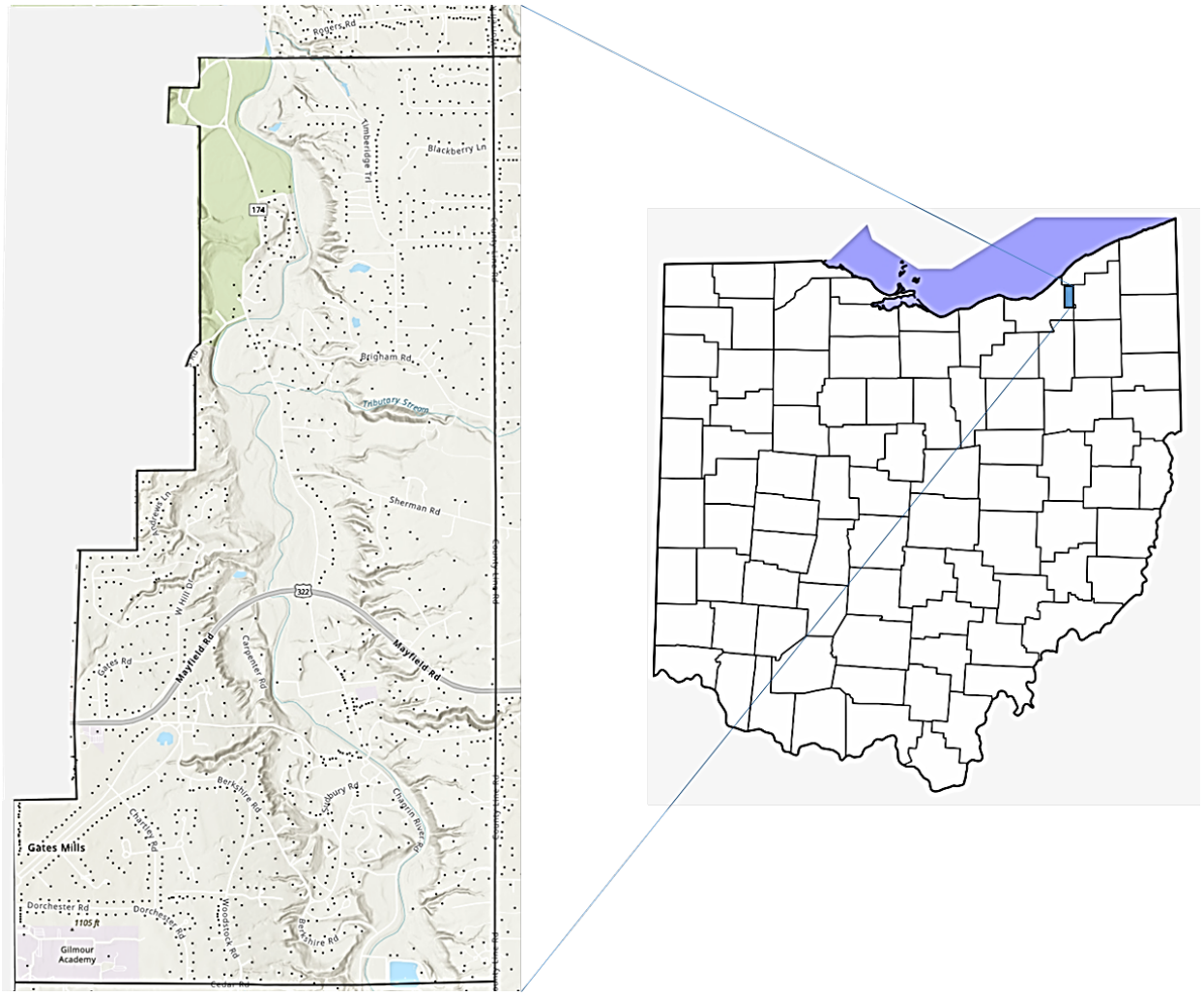

Figure 1: Gates Mills with surrounding locations visible.

The project area encompasses a total of 1,272 broadband serviceable locations (BSLs) requiring approximately 53.1 fiber miles to pass all locations. The Village itself has 1010 BSLs requiring approximately 48.1 miles of fiber. The 262 locations immediately north and east of the Village boundary are not required to be included in the project, but our planning studies indicate that the most efficient fiber routes would pass these extra locations.

RFP Process

Timeline

RFP Release: Gates Mills is releasing this RFP on May 13, 2024.

ISP Notification of Intent to Respond: Please e-mail Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com by **5:00 pm on May 24, 2024** to express intent to respond to this RFP. We will confirm receipt and provide a list of the Fabric IDs in the project area and anticipated fiber routes.

Questions: Please contact Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com if you have questions.

Submit RFP Responses: Gates Mills requires responses be **received by 5:00 pm on June 14, 2024**, delivered via e-mail in PDF format to Sean O'Malley at Sean@ReidConsultingGroup.com.

Definitions

Availability = Minimum percentage of time the service will be available and operating fully.

BSL = A Broadband Serviceable Location as designated by the FCC, typically a residence, business, or anchor institution.

Committed Information Rate (CIR) = The minimum speed a subscriber will encounter during normal operations. If a provider offers multiple speed tiers, a CIR should be identified for each tier. For example, the CIR for a 500 Mbps/500 Mbps package might be 400/400, while a gigabit package might have a CIR of 800/800.

Jitter – Maximum End-to-End = The variation in end-to-end delay in milliseconds between received packets of an IP or packet stream to/from a Gates Mills customer site to google.com or another customary reference server on the Internet outside of the ISP's network.

Latency – Maximum End-to-End = The "not to exceed" average round-trip transmission time in milliseconds to/from a Gates Mills customer site to google.com or another customary reference server on the Internet outside of the ISP's network.

Packet Delivery – Minimum = The guaranteed minimum percentage of packets delivered end-to-end using the ISP's service.

Physically Diverse Path = A secondary fiber path to a location that is physically separate from the primary path. The two paths must have zero (0) route miles in/on the same sheath, conduit, pole, or manhole, and a minimum geo-path separation of one hundred (100) feet along the route and twenty (20) feet at the facility entrance.

Service Level Agreement = The contractual commitments in the Gates Mills customer agreement related to ISP's performance, uptime, and service credits.

Tier 1 Internet = A network that can reach every other network on the Internet without purchasing IP transit or paying settlements.

Tier 2 Internet = A network that peers with some networks, but still purchases IP transit or pays settlements to reach at least some portion of the Internet**.**

Scored Topics for Response by Internet Service Providers

Each part of your RFP response should be prefaced by the relevant text from the sections below. A Word version of the RFP is available if you would like to respond inline. Otherwise, please copy/paste the relevant text from this document into each part of your response.

Business Profile

- Ownership Structure: Please outline the current ownership structure of your company and any substantive changes currently in progress.
- Credentials: Please include a resume for the team members who would lead the Gates Mills project.
- Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) Status: Is your company designated as an ETC in the State of Ohio? (ETC status is not required, but a response to this question is.)
- History: How long has your company been providing broadband services?
- References: Please provide three references highlighting your company's ability to successfully partner with communities to deploy broadband networks.
- Existing Facilities: Please describe your company's existing footprint, including fiber infrastructure, POPs, and offices:
  - Nationwide
  - In Ohio
  - In Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties combined.
- Existing Employees: Please identify the number of employees you have:
  - Nationwide
  - In Ohio
  - In Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties combined.
- Current Customer Counts: Please identify the number of customers you have:
  - Nationwide
    - Residential:
    - Business/Enterprise:
  - In Ohio
    - Residential:
    - Business/Enterprise:
  - In Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties combined
    - Residential:
    - Business/Enterprise:
- Agreements in neighboring communities for fiber-to-the-home deployments and related contingencies/dependencies:

Proposed Network Design

The Village seeks an ISP to provide a robust fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) network that:

- Passes every home and business in the service area, close enough to the premises to enable implementation within ten days of an order being placed for service.
- Provisions sufficient network capacity to deliver high performance services and accommodate growth in the number of connections as well as increased data usage in the future.

Network Architecture

Please explain the design your company would deploy in the Gates Mills area, including the following details:

- Passive Optical Network (PON) technology choice (Village preference: XGS-PON)
- Connectivity to the Internet (Village preference: physically diverse backhaul as illustrated in Figure 3.)
- Growth capacity:
  - Amount of additional fiber strands to support ActiveE or other non-PON connectivity.
  - Amount of additional fiber strands to support future needs as market penetration grows and/or additional households or businesses are added to the network.
  - Capacity for increase in bandwidth and/or network performance requirements.
- Please illustrate your network design in an approach similar to Figures 2 and 3 to identify:
  - Convergence points and interconnection of convergence points within the Village.
  - Splitter locations.
  - Connections to the Internet:
  - Will you offer Tier 1 or Tier 2 connectivity?
  - Do you propose physically redundant paths to the Internet and/or within the Village?

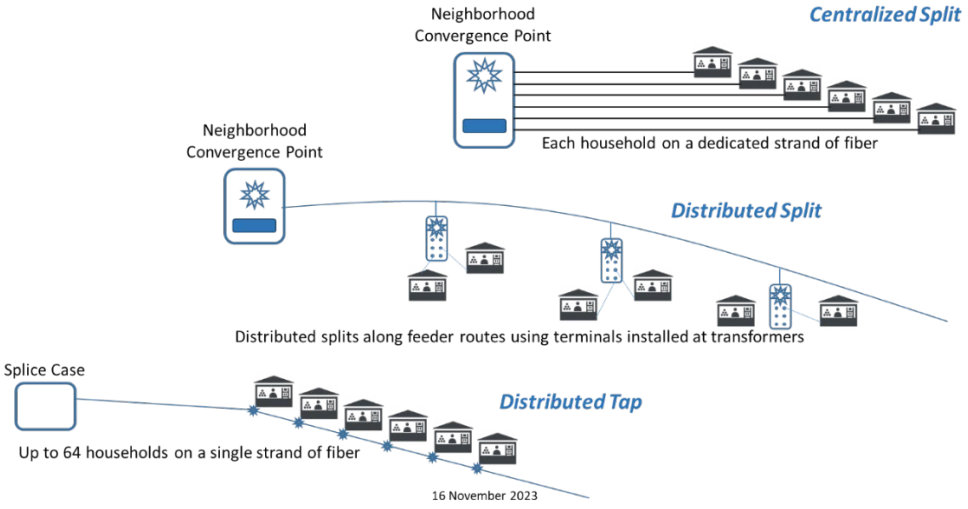

Figure 2 - Example of possible distribution approaches.

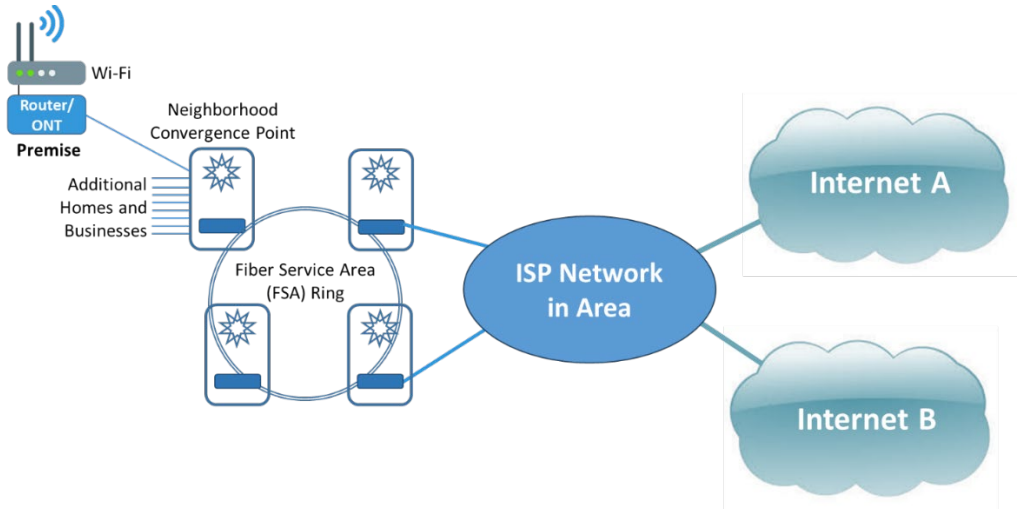

Figure 3 - Example of possible network architecture.

Customer Premise Equipment

Please describe on-premises technologies and placements:

- Is the ONT located outside or inside the premises?
- Where is the router located?
- Is a Wi-Fi appliance provided?
- How would you handle the potential need for a mesh network to reach an entire home?
- Please provide manufacturer and model of the ONT, router, Wi-Fi appliance (if applicable), and any other customer premise equipment you propose to deploy. Attaching cut sheets to your response would be helpful.

Operations and Customer Support

Please describe your help desk/customer support and network operations, including:

Help Desk

- Support services offered.
- Hours of operation.
- Methods of contact.
- Location(s) of your customer support staff.
- Number of communities served by your customer support operation.
- Response times for initial contact via: phone, email, chat, etc.
- Resolution times for installation.
- Resolution times for break-fix.

Operations

- Response times for network outages.
- Routine network monitoring capabilities and policies.
- Triggers for capacity upgrades within the Village infrastructure and for Internet connectivity.

Physical Deployment

The physical network design should take into consideration the following observations and expectations:

- Electric utilities. Most of the electrical plant in the service area is above ground and provided by Cleveland Electric Illuminating, a company owned by FirstEnergy Corporation.
- Underground construction. If the ISP proposes underground construction, which the Village prefers, then we anticipate installation via directional boring in conduit in compliance with all relevant industry standards including the National Electrical Safety Code as well as Village requirements. Please explain any variance of your implementation methodology from these expectations.
- Aerial construction. If the ISP proposes aerial construction, then we anticipate strand-and-lash construction in compliance with all relevant industry standards including the National Electrical Safety Code as well as Village requirements. Please explain any variance of your implementation methodology from these expectations.
- Likely mix of underground and aerial deployment. While the Village prefers 100% underground fiber implementation, we understand that a hybrid of underground and aerial deployment may be necessary due to terrain issues. Please explain your criteria for deciding between aerial and underground, and explain how you will handle unexpected challenges (e.g. encountering rock, underground infrastructure, etc.)

Streamlined Permitting

- The Village will collaborate with the selected ISP to review, revise and approve detailed construction plans.
- The Village will issue a blanket permit to the ISP for the entirety of the construction project. The ISP will report to the Village the areas and roads in which construction will occur during each week to be received no later than 8:00 a.m. on Monday of each week. Changes to schedules will be communicated with the designated Village personnel on a timely basis.

Easements

- We anticipate the distribution fiber that passes the BSLs will be installed primarily in Village rights-of-way.
- Approximately 3.1 miles of the distribution fiber will need to be placed on or near private roads, requiring easements from the landowners to be negotiated by the ISP.
- Drop fiber to reach homes and businesses will in most cases require crossing privately owned property. The ISP will negotiate required easements directly with the landowners.
- The ISP may elect to include easement language in the request for service from the property owner. If the drop crosses property owned by a party other than the subscriber, then the ISP will negotiate the required easements directly with the landowners.

Methods of Installation

- Distribution fiber to pass BSLs
  - Describe how you propose to construct the distribution fiber including underground, aerial, and hybrid solutions.
  - For underground segments, we believe that boring is most effective in minimizing impact on existing infrastructure and trees.
  - If proposing a hybrid of underground and aerial, describe the likely split and, if possible, identify the areas in which each method would be utilized and explain your reasoning for the split.
  - Describe methods you would utilize to minimize impact on existing infrastructure and trees.
- Drop fiber to BSLs
  - Existing utilities include a blend of underground and aerial for communications and power drops.
  - Describe how you propose to construct the drop fiber including underground, aerial, and hybrid solutions.
  - For underground segments, we believe that boring is most effective in minimizing impact on existing infrastructure and trees. However, for drop fiber it may make sense to plow the fiber into the ground where damage to existing infrastructure and/or trees would not occur.
  - If you are proposing a hybrid of underground and aerial, describe the likely split and, if possible, identify the areas in which each method would be utilized.
  - The method of drop fiber installation must be stipulated in the property easement.

Property Owner Communications and Relations

- Describe your method for communicating with property owners about the project schedule and service availability, e.g. by street, door hangers, in-person discussions, etc.
- How would you resolve issues with property owners, e.g. relating to damage to property?

Service Offerings

Residential and Small Business Services

In this section, Gates Mills requests information regarding the services your company would offer and at what costs. Symmetric or near-symmetric service offerings will be scored higher than highly asymmetric packages.

Residential/Small Business Package	Download /Upload in Mbps	Monthly Cost	Installation Cost	Term in Months
Base				
Mid-Range				
Highest				
Telephone				
Video				
[Add rows as needed]				

For the residential and small business services in this section, please describe:

- Cost to build drops (primarily underground)
- Term or package inducements to reduce or eliminate drop installation costs
- Availability
- Committed Information Rate (CIR)
- Jitter – Maximum End-to-End
- Latency – Maximum End-to-End
- Packet Delivery – Minimum
- Duration of pricing commitment and any cost escalation caps.
- Response time to install new service to homes and businesses passed.
- Interval to resolve outages due to causes other than fiber cuts, lightning strikes, windstorms, or power outages.
- Interval to resolve outages due to fiber cuts, lightning strikes, or windstorms.
- Service credits for missing service level agreement thresholds.
- Turn-up process as network is being constructed.
- Duration of your commitment to provide residential and small business services.

Enterprise Services

In this section, we request information regarding higher capacity services you will make available in the service areas to enterprise customers such as larger businesses, K-12 schools, health care facilities, etc.

Enterprise Packages	Download/Upload in Mbps	Latency in milliseconds	Install Charge	Monthly Cost	Term in Months
[Add rows as needed]					

For the enterprise services offered above, please explain:

- Cost to build drops (primarily underground)
- Term or package inducements to reduce or eliminate drop installation costs
- Availability
- Committed Information Rate
- Jitter – Maximum End-to-End
- Latency – Maximum End-to-End
- Packet Delivery – Minimum
- Duration of pricing commitment and any cost escalation caps.
- Response time to install new service to enterprises passed.
- Interval to resolve outages due to causes other than fiber cuts, lightning strikes, windstorms, or power outages.
- Interval to resolve outages due to fiber cuts, lightning strikes, or windstorms.
- Service credits for missing service level agreement thresholds.
- Duration of commitment to provide enterprise services.

Financial Participation by the Village

The Village may be willing to subsidize a portion of the capital costs to deploy fiber.

- Does your financial model for the Gates Mills project require capital funding from the Village? If so, what is the total project cost, and what portion do you propose to obtain from the Village?
- Are you requesting that the Village issue bonds to support the capital costs of the project? If so, what is the total build cost for the project?
- If the Village materially participates in funding the network build, we will require an abandonment clause in the event the ISP ceases operations.
- If the Village materially participates in funding the network build, we will require explanation of how the ISP will cover the likely negative cash flows during the early years of the deployment and operations of the network.

Additional Terms and Conditions

- The Village is not making any take-rate guarantees to the ISP.
- The Village understands that many fiber to the premise companies will sell their positions in a network to "cash out" of the project. What guarantees will you offer that the terms and conditions of this RFP and resulting contract will be honored by the acquiring ISP?

Scoring

Below is the matrix that the Gates Mills evaluation team will utilize to score responses. Note that respondents who do not achieve the minimum score on any given section will be disqualified. Gates Mills reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Section	Maximum	Minimum
A. Business Profile	20	10
B. Proposed Network Design and Deployment Plan	30	15
C. Service Offerings	30	15
D. Financial Participation by the Village	20	10
Totals	100	50