



# Request for Information

This Request for Information (RFI) is made for research purposes only. Responses to this RFI are not offers and cannot be accepted by Dominion Energy Virginia (the “Company” or “Dominion”) to form a binding contract. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation for proposals. Your response to this notice will be treated as information only.

## **Respondents:**

Localities and local authorities interested in participating in the Company’s Rural Broadband Pilot Program and Non-Governmental Internet Service Providers interested in leveraging the Company’s Rural Broadband Pilot Program to bring Broadband (defined below) internet services to Unserved (defined below) communities.

## **Purpose:**

This announcement constitutes an RFI notice soliciting expressions of interest by localities in participating in the Dominion Rural Broadband Pilot Program – as well as non-governmental internet service providers (“ISPs”) interested in accessing middle-mile fiber made available by the Company for purposes of providing Broadband internet service to Unserved areas of the Company’s electric service territory.

The Company has used desktop resources to identify areas of the Company’s service territory considered Unserved; however, it seeks additional input through this RFI to confirm those areas and establish which are best suited to participate in the pilot.

The Company would also like input from interested respondents on the method to facilitate providing Broadband services and the technical requirements in doing so in the respective areas of the state.

While this is not a Request for Proposals (RFP) or solicitation for formal proposals, the information gathered through this RFI may be used to inform future RFPs and requests for authorization before the Virginia State Corporation Commission.

## **Overview:**

- The 2019 General Assembly of Virginia passed legislation (HB 2691 O’Quinn) establishing rural Broadband pilots under which the Company may submit one or more petitions to provide or make available Broadband capacity to nongovernmental Internet service providers in areas of the Commonwealth Unserved by Broadband.
- Under the pilot program, the Company must petition the State Corporation Commission of Virginia (SCC) for approval to make available unused fiber optic cable or portions of unused fiber optic cable to non-governmental ISPs that would then provide Broadband service to areas Unserved by Broadband.
- Any petition by the Company to provide Broadband capacity pursuant to a Pilot shall identify the non-governmental ISP to which the utility shall lease such capacity, together with the area to be served using such capacity.

- “Broadband”, as defined in the legislation, means internet access at speeds greater than 10 Mbps download speed and 1 Mbps upload speed.
- "Unserved by broadband", as defined in legislation, means a designated area in which less than 10 percent of residential and commercial units are capable of receiving Broadband service
- All costs associated with responding to this RFI will be the sole responsibility of the respondent. The Company will not be responsible for any costs incurred in furnishing responsive information to the Company or otherwise participating in this RFI process.

**Requested Information:**

1. From counties, cities, municipalities, or any other locality within the Company’s service territory interested in participating in the pilot:
  - a. Which area or locality are you responding on behalf of?
  - b. Please provide an overview of the Broadband availability for your specified area.
  - c. Can you identify portions of your locality that are considered Unserved?
  - d. Is your locality already working with a non-governmental ISP to expand Broadband coverage in your area? Have you applied for or been awarded any grant rewards associated with the provision of Broadband internet services?
  - e. Can you provide data to support the Broadband availability and level of service (Mbps)?
  - f. Are there one or more existing fiber providers at all of your key economic development sites? (business parks, industrial parks, technology parks)
  - g. Does your area or locality have publicly owned facilities or institutions that are considered Unserved?
2. From non-governmental ISPs interested in participating in the pilot:
  - a. Please provide a technical and physical description of your existing networks. If none are in Virginia, please specify the region in which the systems are located.
  - b. Which areas within Virginia are you most interested?
  - c. The Company may provide access points to the fiber itself and in some cases may provide access via an electronic handoff (Ethernet NNI or direct connection). Does your proposal require locations that are fiber-only access points and locations that are electronics/fiber access points? Describe your requirements for each type of access point.
  - d. For your proposal, how many dark fiber strands would you require at initial build out and how many would you desire for future growth?
  - e. What is the expected distance between fiber regeneration sites for your proposal and what are the variables if any?
  - f. At the electronic access points for multiple tenants, such as a carrier-neutral colocation facility, do you have any physical security requirements?
  - g. How much runtime is desired for battery and generator backup systems at electronic access points?
  - h. What is your typical current draw at electronic access points? Do you prefer AC or DC power?
  - i. How much rack space is typically required at electronic access points? Do you use 19” or 23” racks?
  - j. What service level agreement expectations do you have for fiber repair and modifications?

- k. Please provide a high level diagram showing the connectivity requirements needed as part of your proposal.
- l. Have you partnered with other electric utilities before to utilize their fiber network and who obtained the 3rd party rights to allow you to utilize their fiber/ROWs?
- m. Please describe the ISP services that you are able to provide.
- n. Any other information that may be relevant for the Company to consider.

**Submission Requirements:**

An electronic version (PDF or Microsoft Word format) should be provided to Dominion at the email addresses given below.

After reviewing responses Dominion may request additional information, or may schedule individual meetings with any respondent to gain additional information about the expression of interest.

Submissions should include more than general marketing content; in particular:

- 1. A cover letter
- 2. Acknowledgment of each item listed above in **Submission Guidelines**
- 3. Numbered responses to each item listed above in **Required Information**
- 4. Respondent's relevant history and capabilities
- 5. Outline of respondent's products or services
- 6. Relevant pricing estimates

**Questions and Point of Contact:**

[ruralbroadband@DominionEnergy.com](mailto:ruralbroadband@DominionEnergy.com)

**Submission Date:**

Electronic responses to this notice are requested to be emailed to the above contacts no later than Monday, September 9, 2019.

**Confidentiality:**

Dominion recognizes that certain information contained in responses submitted may be considered confidential and, as permitted by applicable law, will treat as confidential any information clearly labeled as such. If Dominion is formally requested and required by any regulatory or judicial authority, or is otherwise required by law, to disclose information with regard to a proposal, Dominion will disclose such information in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. All responses received may be held for an extended period of time or destroyed. In no case will any responses be returned to the originator.