

Uplink, LLC
Engineering

Request for Proposal
Clarksdale – CPF WIFI Project

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CEO

August 18, 2026

INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW, AND APPROACH

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Clarksdale CPF WIFI Project

Issued by: Uplink, LLC — 340 Hopson Street, Lyon, Mississippi 38645

Release Date: 8/18/2026 Questions Due: 8/25/2026 Proposal Due Date: 8/28/2026 Notice to Proceed: August 30, 2026

Procurement Method: Small Purchase under the Uplink, LLC Procurement Policy, Appendix 1. Estimated value is below the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (2 CFR 200.320(a)(2)).

Funding Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF), administered by the Office of Broadband Expansion and Accessibility of Mississippi (BEAM).

1. Introduction and Overview

Uplink, LLC is seeking proposals from qualified engineering firms to provide field work, engineering design, environmental assessment, site surveys, project management, and inspection services for the Clarksdale CPF WIFI Project.

The project includes approximately 5.65 miles (29,848 feet) of fiber, approximately 2,400 feet of drop, and the installation (site surveys) of eight (8) strategically placed WIFI access points in the City of Clarksdale, Coahoma County, Mississippi. Construction is predominantly underground, with approximately 2,161 feet of aerial construction requiring pole attachment. Four (4) access points are served by fiber drop. The remaining four (4) access points are pole-mounted and served by Tarana fixed wireless from Uplink's existing Clarksdale tower, which is fed by fiber under this project (Segment F). The tower is a fixed wireless radio site and is not itself an access point. The selected firm must remain engaged for the entire project lifecycle, providing full documentation to satisfy Capital Projects Fund (CPF) WIFI NOFO requirements and conducting final inspections at project completion.

RF design responsibility. Uplink will perform the Tarana fixed wireless RF link budget and path analysis in-house. The selected firm is not responsible for RF propagation design. The firm is responsible for physical site survey, mounting feasibility, and structural coordination at each access point.

Development of this solicitation. A scope-of-work template circulated among CPF WIFI subrecipients in Mississippi was reviewed by Uplink in preparing this document. Uplink independently developed the final scope of work, project area data, schedule, evaluation criteria, and respondent list set forth herein. No prospective respondent participated in, or received advance access to, the final content of this solicitation.

2. Project Summary

Scope of Work

Field Work & Design

- Conduct field surveys with accuracy of +/- 0.1' (preferably LiDAR-based).
- Verify existing infrastructure meetpoints, including the west route origin and the fiber feed to Uplink's Clarksdale tower (see Project Area).
- Prepare CAD-based designs for fiber construction that reflect the CPF WIFI build requirements and integrate existing designs, ensuring that fiber counts, pathways, and splice points are engineered to support long-term scalability and capacity needs.
- Deliverables must include: plans and specifications (CAD designs), bill of materials (Excel), addresses passed with lat/long, and KMZ of final route design.

- Uplink requires all as-builts to be uploaded into its mapping system (3GIS). Uplink will provide system access.

Permitting

- Secure and manage all required permits (MDOT, City of Clarksdale, Coahoma County, ROW, environmental, etc.).
- Prepare and submit pole attachment applications and make-ready packages to the pole owner for the aerial segment identified in the Project Area. Respondents must identify the pole owner, state their make-ready experience with that owner, and address the aerial segment specifically in their proposal.
- Evaluate the alternate buried route identified in the Project Area as a substitute for the aerial segment, and provide a recommendation with comparative cost and schedule.
- Confirm during survey whether any railroad crossings are required along the route, and if so, prepare the applicable crossing applications.

Environmental Review

- Complete environmental checklist for CPF.
- Coordinate with MDAH (SHPO), FEMA, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other agencies.
- Review EPA Envirofacts, MS Oil & Gas Board, and groundwater databases.
- Provide mitigation strategies for findings.
- Conduct Environmental Justice review for impacts on low-income/minority populations.

Site Surveys & WIFI Access Point Planning

- Conduct site surveys for placement of WIFI access points.
- Recommend placement considering coverage, safety, and aesthetics.
- Confirm mounting feasibility, structural adequacy, power availability, and site access at each location.

Project Management & Compliance

- Provide monthly progress updates to Uplink and CPF funding agency.
- Track compliance and reporting.
- Manage contractor procurement with all related reporting requirements. Uplink will control the procurement process and make the award decision.
- Project management of construction.
- Attend required funding agency meetings and update portals.
- Provide inspection services during and after construction, using in-house inspectors.

Project Area

The project includes approximately 5.65 miles (29,848 feet) of fiber, approximately 2,400 feet of drop, and eight (8) strategically placed WIFI access points in the City of Clarksdale, Coahoma County, Mississippi. Access point locations, the fiber route, and existing infrastructure are provided in Exhibit A (KMZ), issued with this RFP. Route lengths shown below are taken from the design KMZ and are approximate; respondents are responsible for field-verifying all quantities. Respondents are responsible for reviewing Exhibit A in full.

Eight (8) WIFI Access Points

#	Access Point Location	Latitude	Longitude	Feed
1	Lee Drive Fire Station	34.204525	-90.606270	Fiber drop
2	City Hall	34.203206	-90.576486	Fiber drop

#	Access Point Location	Latitude	Longitude	Feed
3	Central Fire Station	34.203193	-90.568656	Fiber drop
4	Sasse Street Fire Station	34.186714	-90.557202	Fiber drop
5	Yazoo Ave AP-2 — pole mounted	34.199606	-90.572713	Tarana fixed wireless
6	Pole Mounted WIFI Hotspot	34.204664	-90.571599	Tarana fixed wireless
7	Pole Mounted WIFI	34.204169	-90.574117	Tarana fixed wireless
8	Pole Mounted WIFI	34.203912	-90.575285	Tarana fixed wireless

Route Segments

Seg	Design Length	Type	From	To
A	5,153 ft	Buried	34.193366 / -90.601625	Lee Drive Fire Station
B	13,555 ft	Buried	34.200664 / -90.605300	City Hall area, 34.202446 / -90.575954
C	2,161 ft	AERIAL	City Hall area, 34.202493 / -90.575958	34.202166 / -90.570325
D	660 ft	Buried	34.202168 / -90.570325	Central Fire Station area
E	6,743 ft	Buried	Central Fire Station area	Sasse Street Fire Station
F	1,576 ft	Buried	34.200253 / -90.567157	Clarksdale tower (Tarana feed)
Drop	2,400 ft	Drop	Not shown in Exhibit A; respondents shall field-verify	
TOTAL	29,848 ft (5.65 mi) plus 2,400 ft drop			
Alt	2,821 ft	Buried alternate	City Hall area, 34.202449 / -90.575975	Central Fire Station area — alternate to Segments C + D

Known Site Conditions

Item	Location	Note to Respondents
Aerial segment — pole attachment	Segment C, 34.202493 / -90.575958 to 34.202166 / -90.570325	Approximately 2,161 feet of aerial construction in downtown Clarksdale. The pole owner is believed to be Clarksdale Public Utilities, the municipal electric utility. Respondents must confirm ownership, identify make-ready requirements, and state expected timeline. Pole attachment and make-ready are the controlling schedule risk on this project.
Alternate buried route	Segment Alt, 2,821 ft	An alternate buried route between the same endpoints as Segments C and D is shown in Exhibit A. Respondents shall evaluate this alternate against the aerial route and recommend one, with comparative cost and schedule. This alternate exists to remove pole make-ready from the critical path if necessary.
Segment B quantity discrepancy	Segment B	The design length shown for Segment B is 13,555 feet; the geometry in Exhibit A measures approximately 8,983 feet.

Item	Location	Note to Respondents
		Respondents shall field-verify this segment and state the quantity on which their price is based.
Clarksdale tower — Tarana host	34.200571 / -90.570901	Existing Uplink tower. Segment F provides the fiber feed. New Tarana fixed wireless equipment will be installed at this site to serve access points 5 through 8. The tower is a radio site, not an access point. Structural analysis for the new loading is a separately priced optional task.
Route origin — existing handhole	Segment A begins at 34.193366 / -90.601625	Existing Uplink handhole. This is the tie-in point for the project. Respondents shall confirm existing fiber count and splice requirements with Uplink during the question period.
Segment continuity	Segments A and B	As drawn in Exhibit A, Segment A terminates at Lee Drive Fire Station and Segment B begins approximately 1,440 feet away. Respondents shall field-verify continuity between these segments and state any assumed additional footage.

3. RFP Administration

Project Schedule

This project is governed by a federal deadline. CPF funds must be expended and the project substantially complete by December 31, 2026. This project is not covered by a period-of-performance extension. The following milestones will be established in the resulting contract.

#	Milestone
1	Notice to Proceed
2	Aerial route decision made; pole attachment applications and make-ready packages submitted
3	Field survey complete; preliminary route and access point siting delivered
4	MDOT right-of-way, City of Clarksdale, and Coahoma County permit applications submitted
5	Environmental review complete; CPF environmental checklist delivered
6	Final CAD design, bill of materials, and KMZ delivered
7	Construction start — segments not dependent on pole make-ready
8	Make-ready complete; aerial construction complete
9	Substantial completion — all eight access points delivering service
10	As-builts uploaded to 3GIS; final inspection complete
11	Final invoice submitted

Pole attachment and make-ready on the aerial segment are the controlling constraint on this project. Respondents should describe recent make-ready turnaround times they have achieved with municipal and investor-owned pole owners, and should state whether they recommend the buried alternate in order to remove make-ready from the critical path.

Submission Instructions

- Proposals must be submitted in PDF format by email to Brian Smith, brian@uplinkinternet.net.

Deadline

- All proposals must be received by August 28, 2026, 5pm central. Late submissions will not be considered.

Questions & Inquiries

- All questions must be submitted via email to Brian Smith, brian@uplinkinternet.net, by the questions deadline.
- Uplink will distribute all questions and answers in writing to every firm that received this RFP. No oral guidance is binding.

General Conditions

Uplink reserves the right to:

- Conduct discussions with vendors for clarification.
- Waive minor irregularities.
- Accept, reject, or negotiate proposals.
- Cancel or amend this RFP at any time.
- Select one, multiple, or no proposals.
- Award all, part, or none of the scope.
- Cancel an award if good faith negotiations are not completed within 15 days of award.

Contractor Requirements

- Must be properly licensed and registered in Mississippi.
- Payments will be made monthly against completed milestone deliverables, with 10% retainage released upon acceptance of as-builts and completion of final inspection. Final payment within 30 days of project completion and acceptance.
- Cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost and percentage-of-construction-cost pricing will not be accepted.
- Uplink may terminate for cause upon written notice and opportunity to cure, or for convenience upon 15 days' written notice, with payment for work satisfactorily performed through the termination date.

Federal Award Provisions

- Any resulting contract will incorporate the applicable provisions of Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200, including equal employment opportunity; Clean Air Act and Federal Water Pollution Control Act compliance; debarment and suspension; procurement of recovered materials; Build America, Buy America; and the prohibition on covered telecommunications equipment (Section 889).
- The firm shall retain all records relating to this contract for the period required by the CPF award and shall provide access to Uplink, BEAM, the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Treasury Office of Inspector General, the Comptroller General, and their authorized representatives.
- All deliverables — CAD files, KMZ, bill of materials, survey data, environmental record, permits, and as-builts — are the exclusive property of Uplink upon payment. The firm retains ownership of its pre-existing tools, templates, and methodologies.
- Consistent with 2 CFR 200.321, Uplink encourages participation by small businesses, minority business enterprises, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms. Respondents using subcontractors are asked to describe affirmative steps taken to solicit such firms.

4. Proposal Requirements

1. Complete all sections of the RFP response and include required attachments.
2. Demonstrate ability to satisfy CPF WIFI NOFO compliance requirements.
3. Provide detailed pricing by task (see pricing table below), plus an hourly rate schedule by labor category and reimbursable expense policy.

4. Demonstrate qualifications per the scoring rubric.
5. Provide a proposed project schedule showing the milestones above against the December 31, 2026 completion deadline, and state the approach to pole attachment, make-ready, and MDOT right-of-way permits, including a recommendation on the aerial route versus the buried alternate.
6. Provide a signed debarment certification and disclose any relationship, financial or otherwise, between the respondent (or its principals) and Uplink, its members, officers, or employees.

5. Scoring Rubric (100 Points)

Each criterion is scored 1–5 by each evaluator and weighted as shown. Price is not scored; consistent with 2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)(iv), engineering services are ranked on qualifications, with compensation negotiated with the highest-ranked firm.

Category	Points	Requirement
Environmental assessment experience	20	Demonstrated MDAH (SHPO), USFWS, and USACE coordination on completed projects
Fiber design and survey capability	20	Aerial and underground route design; LiDAR-based survey; CAD and KMZ deliverables
In-house inspectors on staff	20	Must provide inspection services; staffing available for this schedule
Federal grant compliance experience	15	CPF, ReConnect, BIP, BEAD or comparable; environmental, reporting, and reimbursement documentation
Pole attachment, make-ready, and MDOT permitting experience	15	Demonstrated make-ready packages and right-of-way permits; turnaround times achieved
Experience with WIFI site surveys	5	Prior project examples
Mississippi licensure and regional capacity	5	Licensed and registered in Mississippi; crew and inspector availability

6. Pricing Table

Provide a firm fixed price for each base task. Optional tasks are priced separately; Uplink may award them, retain them in-house, or omit them.

Base Scope

Task Description	Price
Fieldwork and Design	
Permitting (including pole attachment, make-ready, and MDOT ROW)	
Environmental Assessment	
Site Surveys for Access Point Placement	
Inspections	
As-Builts	
Base Scope Total	

Optional Scope

Task Description	Price
Construction Project Management	
Contractor Selection Process	
Network Testing	
Structural analysis — Clarksdale tower for Tarana loading	
Buried alternate route in lieu of Segments C and D (add/deduct)	

7. Proposal Submission Page

By signing below, the respondent certifies that the information submitted is accurate, that it can perform the scope of work described herein, and that it is not debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from participation in federal programs.

Firm Name and Address: _____

Mississippi License No.: _____ UEI: _____

Officer Name: _____

Signature of Officer: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit A — Clarksdale CPF WIFI Project KMZ (access point locations, fiber route, existing infrastructure)