RFP Title: Telecommunication Services at Buffalo & Erie County Library Locations
RFP Number: 26-5024
Question & Answer Period: November 02, 2026 – November 06, 2026
Questions Released: November 09, 2026
Authorized User: Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
1 Lafayette Square
Buffalo, NY 14203

A. Contract term, pricing & billing

Question	Answer
Would (the Library) look at a 36MO agreement for the initial term with 1 year extension options?	Yes. An addendum will be issued to allow proposals to include a 12-month OR 36-month initial contract term.
Section 8(a) establishes a 12-month initial contract term, while Section 11(d) permits cancellation with 30 days' written notice. To allow vendors to present competitive pricing while accounting for equipment, installation, and carrier commitments, please clarify the following: Hosted Voice Services: • Would the Library consider alternative contract terms of 24 or 36 months in exchange for reduced installation or recurring costs? • May vendors provide multiple pricing options, such as 12-month and 36-month terms, for comparison? • If the 30-day cancellation provision remains in effect, would the Library permit recovery of documented, unamortized equipment and installation costs in the event of early termination? Dedicated Connectivity Services: • If separate internet circuits are required, may these services be contracted under terms consistent with the underlying carrier's requirements, which may differ from the hosted voice agreement? • Would the Library permit applicable third-party carrier early termination charges to be passed through at cost if services are canceled before the carrier commitment expires?	Yes. An addendum will be issued to allow proposals to include a 12-month OR 36-month initial contract term. No, the Library will not permit recovery of documented, unamortized equipment and installation costs in the event of early termination. The Library prefers single source voice and data provider.
The cost criterion in Section 7(c) cites Section 9 for the contract term. Should vendors calculate total monthly cost over the 12-month Initial Term in Section 8?	Yes, that citation was written in error.
Are there contract end dates or early termination terms with Spectrum that affect the cutover schedule?	No

Question	Answer
Section 2d refers to "Section 9a for billing commencement," but Section 9a covers vendor information. When should billing begin: at contract signature, at cutover of each location, or at final acceptance?	At installation acceptance at each location.
Section 2(d) references Section 9(a) regarding billing commencement; however, Section 9(a) addresses vendor information. Could the Library clarify when recurring billing is expected to begin? • Upon contract execution; • As each location is successfully activated; or • Upon completion and acceptance of the full implementation?	See above.
Section 2(d) refers to Section 9a for billing commencement, which does not appear in the RFQ. Does billing begin at each site's cutover, or at acceptance of the full installation under Section 14?	See above.
Section 2d says to see Section 9a for when billing starts, but Section 9 is about vendor information. When should monthly billing start?	See above.
Please confirm that this is not a request for services provided on the NY OGS contract.	This is not through OGS.
Please confirm that the correct submission is RFP 26-5024 as stated on the cover page and not RFQ 26-5024 as stated on page 4 under Questions/Responses and that the email should use the RFP number as the subject on the email.	That is correct.

B. Dedicated data line / circuit requirement

Question	Answer
Can the phones use the internet line already at each branch? We would keep phone traffic on its own network segment and give it priority over other traffic. Or does the Library require a new, separate line at each branch?	Dedicated lines are preferred but the Library will accept piggy back on existing data lines.
Section 7e lists a dedicated data line at each location as mandatory. Under the partial award provisions in Sections 7f and 13, will the Library accept a voice-only proposal that runs over the existing Spectrum internet at each location, with the voice traffic separated and prioritized on that connection?	See above.

Question	Answer
The RFP specifies that the selected vendor must provide and install dedicated data lines for VoIP traffic. Does this require a separate physical internet circuit at each location, or would using the existing internet connections with dedicated voice VLANs, QoS, and appropriate security be acceptable?	See above.
Must this be a new private circuit at each location? Or would a voice-prioritized (QoS-managed) or SD-WAN connection over the Library's existing internet service meet the requirement?	See above.
Could you please clarify whether the Library requires a separate physical Internet circuit at each location specifically for VoIP services, or whether a dedicated voice VLAN with Quality of Service (QoS) over the existing Internet connection would be acceptable?	See above.
Section 1(d) and the Statement of Work call for a dedicated data line at each location. Would the Library accept voice traffic carried over its existing internet circuits on a dedicated, QoS-prioritized VLAN or SD-WAN path, or must each of the 36 locations receive a new, separate circuit?	See above.
Could the Library clarify which of the following configurations would satisfy the dedicated connectivity requirement? • Option A: A separate physical internet circuit dedicated exclusively to VoIP, with vendor-provided network equipment and connectivity to each telephone. • Option B: A separate physical internet circuit dedicated to VoIP that utilizes the Library's existing network infrastructure, with voice traffic appropriately segmented and managed. • Option C: Utilization of existing internet connectivity, with VoIP traffic logically separated through VLANs, QoS, and appropriate network security controls.	All options would satisfy the requirements. Options A and B are preferred.
Section 7(e) identifies dedicated connectivity as a mandatory requirement. Would the Library permit vendors to submit a fully compliant base proposal alongside an alternative, potentially lower-cost connectivity solution, without affecting eligibility for evaluation?	No.
Will the Library consider a proposal for voice service and phones only, with data lines provided separately?	Not sure
If a dedicated circuit is required, may the circuit be provided by a partner carrier and billed separately, or must every charge appear on the single master bill in Section 11b?	This should be included in the proposal.

Question	Answer
If separate Internet circuits are required, would the Library allow the selected vendor to use Spectrum or another qualified telecommunications provider to supply and maintain these circuits?	Yes.
If new dedicated circuits are required, may the selected vendor procure and manage connectivity through third-party carriers, such as Spectrum or Verizon, or must connectivity be provided directly through the hosted PBX provider's network?	Connectivity can be through any provider
Would the Library also consider a proposal that includes upgrading or replacing existing Internet services where necessary?	No
Could you please confirm whether the Library would accept [a] centralized cloud-based architecture, provided that each location has reliable Internet connectivity and meets the required network and security standards?	Yes
Does the dedicated data line requirement refer specifically to connectivity between each library location and the cloud-hosted VoIP platform, rather than private connections between the 36 buildings?	Connectivity between library and VoIP platform
Sections 1(d), 2(a), and 2(b) reference a dedicated data line at each library location. Is the dedicated connection intended exclusively for VoIP traffic, or is the selected vendor expected to provide connectivity for the Library's broader internet needs, including staff computers, public computers, and guest Wi-Fi?	Solely for the VoIP.
If dedicated connectivity is required exclusively for voice traffic, is the primary objective call quality, network security, traffic isolation, or another operational consideration?	Network security and traffic isolation
Does the Library intend to replace its existing Spectrum internet service?	No.
Section 1(e) indicates that only telephones would be located at the Library's facilities, while Section 2(a) references assistance with existing router and firewall configurations. Please clarify the intended architecture and whether additional on-site network equipment is anticipated.	Section 2(a) is intended for the vendor installation of dedicated network segment would require setup of their own network devices. The Library prefers that separate a network, solely for the VoIP phones are provided from the vendor.

Question	Answer
Does the Library require a newly installed dedicated voice circuit at each location, or will managed broadband/DIA services carrying prioritized VoIP traffic satisfy this requirement?	Dedicated circuit is preferred but managed broadband DIA is acceptable.

C. Existing internet service & network (Spectrum, bandwidth, WAN/SD-WAN, VLAN/QoS)

Question	Answer
Does each location currently have a Spectrum internet connection, and would those connections remain in place following the transition to a new phone provider?	All 36 branches are connected to the Central Library through a Private WAN. Internet provided by the Central Library.
Could you please confirm whether Spectrum provides Internet connectivity at all 36 locations and whether the Library intends to maintain these existing Internet services after implementing the new VoIP system?	All 36 branches are connected to the Central Library through a Private WAN. Internet provided by the Central Library.
Does each location have its own internet service today, and what is the typical bandwidth?	No, internet is provided by the Central Library. Total bandwidth is 600 Mbps
Is Spectrum the internet provider at all 36 locations? If possible, please share current bandwidth and the router/firewall make and model at each site.	All 36 branches are connected to the Central Library through a Private WAN. Internet provided by the Central Library.
What minimum bandwidth should vendors propose for each location?	Appropriate bandwidth for VoIP for 1-5 devices at each branch
If the requested connectivity is intended to support general internet traffic in addition to VoIP, could the Library provide existing bandwidth specifications or approximate utilization requirements by location?	This is only intended for VoIP.
Please provide the current internet connectivity type, bandwidth, and provider at each library location and indicate whether those services will remain in place following implementation.	Internet is provided by the Central Library. Total bandwidth is 600 Mbps. Will remain in place.
Do you have any secondary or tertiary internet providers?	No
Do you currently have SD WAN?	No

Question	Answer
Are the 36 locations interconnected through a private WAN or VPN, or does each location operate independently using its own internet connection?	All 36 branches are connected to the Central Library through a Private WAN. Internet provided by the Central Library.
Do you have the ability to set QOS & secondary a VLANs on your network?	Yes
Are the current phones on dedicated voice VLANs, or do they share the same network as computers? Would the Library's IT staff be available to assist with any required network or firewall changes?	Current phones are POTS. Library IT can assist with network changes.

D. On-site network infrastructure (PoE, cabling, switches, routers, firewalls)

Question	Answer
Do all locations currently have PoE switches with sufficient available ports and power capacity to support the phones? Is network cabling already available at each phone location?	No all existing phones are POTS lines. Networking is not currently available at each phone.
Are the 36 library locations currently equipped with Power over Ethernet (PoE) switches, available network ports, and Ethernet cabling to support the installation of new IP telephones? If additional PoE switches, network equipment, or cabling are required, should these items be included in the vendor's proposal, or would the Library provide the necessary infrastructure?	Phones are all POTS. Locations have regular network switches but not for phones. PoE ports would be needed as part of proposal.
Do the Library locations currently have network switches with available Power over Ethernet (PoE) ports and existing Ethernet cabling at the intended telephone locations?	No PoE and all phones would require installation of Ethernet cables.
Should vendors include additional switches, cabling, and related network equipment in their proposals?	Yes
What phones, routers and firewalls are in place at each location today? Do the locations have PoE network switches for the phones?	Phones are all POTS. Locations have regular network switches but not for phones.

E. Current phone system & equipment

Question	Answer
About how many calls or minutes does the Library use each month?	This information can be provided upon selection of proposal.
Can the network switches at each branch power desk phones (PoE)?	No PoE available
Does the Library use cordless phones now, or want them?	Some branches do. Dependent on branch.
We understand Spectrum is the current service provider. What phone system or hosted PBX platform is currently being used, and what makes and models of desk phones are installed?	No platform, currently all POTS. Branch phones are a mix of different brands and models. New hardware is needed.
Please indicate the current system & version, so we can see if we can allow ability to dial between current platform and the proposed solution so we can allow a better transition and allow you move over at your own pace.	All POTS currently
If you can list the makes & models of current phones, as we might be able to re-use the telephones or reflash them to basic SIP if they are a VOIP phone.	Branch phones are a mix of different brands and models, all POTS. New hardware is needed for VOIP
Could the Library provide the manufacturers and model numbers of its existing telephone equipment? • Would reuse of compatible IP telephones be acceptable? • Is the Library seeking to purchase new telephones outright, or would equipment rental or leasing options also be considered?	Branch phones are a mix of different brands and models. New hardware is needed. Purchase of devices would be preferred.
Could the Library provide an overview of the existing telephone and network environment?	Currently branches only have POTS phones. Network is not necessarily available at each phone. Branch phones are a mix of different brands and models. New hardware is needed. Central Library provides network service for branches
Does each location maintain its own Spectrum internet and telephone services, or are services consolidated through a shared account or network?	All 36 branches are connected to the Central Library through a Private WAN. Internet provided by the Central Library.
Are existing telephones connected through traditional analog lines, Spectrum-provided voice equipment, or an existing PBX platform?	No platform, currently all POTS.

Question	Answer
	Branch phones are a mix of different brands and models. New hardware is needed.
Can telephone numbers be migrated independently by location, or are there account-level dependencies requiring simultaneous migration?	Most can be migrated independently. Some branches use auto-attendant system
Please provide a list of the current telephone numbers you want to move from current system to new virtual VoIP.	This will be provided upon acceptance of the proposal.

F. Line counts, quantities & phone types

Question	Answer
Appendix A provides approximately 100 lines across the 36 locations. Does each line represent a physical telephone, or are some lines shared or used for other purposes?	Most lines are phone lines. Some are for alarm systems or faxes.
We need to know the number of telephones at each location & if it is a common area phone or desk phone? Please indicate the number of buttons/appearances required, any users that would require a desktop application or mobile application (as the license allows use of all 3).	Mix of both desk and common phones. Detailed list can be provided.
Could you provide an approximate breakdown of the phone types required? Specifically: • Executive/receptionist phones with expansion modules or sidecars • Professional desk phones with larger displays and additional programmable buttons • Basic desk phones • Conference phones	Phones should be standard professional phones with displays and additional buttons. Some branches may require basic wireless desk phones.
Appendix A identifies approximately 100 lines across 36 locations. Do these quantities represent physical telephone devices, user extensions, individual telephone numbers, or concurrent call paths?	Individual numbers
Should monthly per-line pricing be based on each physical telephone or extension?	One line with extensions would work for regular phone
Appendix A totals 97 lines across 36 locations, while Sections 1a, 2b and 7b state approximately 100. Should proposals price 97 or 100 phones and lines?	100, we plan on adding a few more lines.

Question	Answer
Appendix A quantities total 97 lines. Should vendors price 97 lines, or is another number expected?	100, we plan on adding a few more lines.
The Central Library at 1 Lafayette Square is not listed in Appendix A. Is it out of scope for this RFP?	Yes it is out of scope
Are new IP phones required for every line, or may any existing handsets be reused? Are cordless or conference phones needed at any location?	Will need new hardware. Cordless phones are branch dependent.
Could you please confirm whether each of the approximately 100 telephone lines has its own Direct Inward Dialing (DID) telephone number, or whether some of the lines share the same telephone number?	Each branch has different setup, some have auto attendants.
Do all users have a DID?	Depends on the branch
a. How many phone numbers does each branch have today? Please include main, direct, fax and toll-free numbers. b. Are any lines used for fax machines, alarms, elevators or other equipment? c. Would one main number per branch work, with an extension for each desk? We would keep any other numbers the Library uses.	Branches have 1-5 phones Yes there are lines for fax/alarms/elevators One line with extensions would work for regular phone

G. Analog, fax, alarm & special-purpose devices

Question	Answer
Are there any fax machines, elevator phones, paging systems, alarm systems, or other analog devices that need to be supported? If so, could you provide the approximate quantity and location of each?	Yes: 2 elevator phones, 4 fax machines, alarm system at every branch,
Do you need to support analog devices?	There will still be lines for elevators/alarms etc.
Do you current have any ATA adaptors or gateways for analogs that can re-used? If so, please indicate make & model?	Only currently for some fax machines. Phones are all POTS
Do you have any alarm lines or faxes? If so will you be required to keep them? (if yes, please indicate the number)	Yes

Question	Answer
Are any of the Appendix A lines used for fax, alarms or other devices that do not need a handset? Must any lines stay analog?	Yes, some lines need to remain for alarms and fax.
Are any existing telephone lines supporting fax machines, alarm systems, elevator emergency telephones, payment terminals, or other analog devices? If so, are these devices included in the quantities listed in Appendix A?	See above.
Would you be interested in EFAX? (having faxes sent & received with email)	No

H. Phone numbers, porting & carrier/billing contacts

Question	Answer
Would it be possible to obtain a list of phone numbers to be ported, including their assigned locations? Are there any existing numbers used exclusively for fax, alarms, or other specialized services?	Yes, we can provide a list as requested. Yes there are fax/alarm lines.
How many telephone numbers are in service in total, including main numbers, direct lines, fax, alarm, elevator and other special lines? Could you provide a current Spectrum bill or number list for each location?	I'm pretty sure the list is provided
Approximately how many telephone numbers will require porting, including main numbers, direct inward dial (DID) numbers, and fax numbers?	97
How many DIDs and toll-free numbers are in service? Are any of the approximately 100 lines used for fax, alarm, elevator, or other analog purposes that would need an ATA or POTS alternative?	Branches have direct phone lines. Some with auto-attendants. Yes some or for fax/alarm/elevator.
I noticed that Spectrum is listed in the RFP as the current telecommunications provider. Could you please confirm whether Spectrum provides all the existing telephone numbers across the 36 library locations, or whether other carriers are involved?	Spectrum provides all current lines

Question	Answer
Also, could you please let us know who within the Library is responsible for managing the telephone service billing and who would be able to provide copies of the current telephone bills when we begin the number-porting process?	Will provide later

I. Call routing, features & optional services

Question	Answer
Are there any complex call-routing requirements, such as auto attendants, call queues, shared extensions, receptionist groups, or call forwarding between locations? Or do most locations primarily require basic incoming and outgoing calling?	Currently some branches have auto attendants that would need to be maintained as a feature.
Do any locations share a main telephone number, centralized call routing, or an automated attendant?	Yes
Could the Library confirm which calling features are required as part of the proposed solution? Examples include voicemail and voicemail-to-email, automated attendants, location-specific or centralized call routing, call recording, overhead paging, cordless telephones, and conference-room telephones.	Auto-attendants, some cordless phones, voicemail.
Are there specific auto-attendant, hunt group, or after-hours routing requirements by branch, or should vendors propose a standard configuration?	Standard configuration.
Would you be interested in have callers be able to enter a zip code to find the nearest branch? With possibility to hear hours of operation & directions?	Not required for this proposal.
Would you be interested in having AI be able to answer inquiries 24x7x365?	No
Do you have any contact center applications? Would like them?	No

J. Installation, schedule & deployment approach

Question	Answer
Given that most locations have only 1–5 phones, would the Library consider a remote installation approach? We could ship fully preconfigured phones directly to each location, where a designated staff member or manager	This may be an acceptable solution. More detail required.

Question	Answer
would simply connect them to the existing network. Our technicians would remotely assist with installation, testing, and activation. This could substantially reduce installation costs.	
Would you be interested in having library staff place telephones if it can save on labor costs?	This is possible
Does the Library have central IT personnel or local technical resources who can assist with basic troubleshooting or equipment replacement when needed, with the provider handling advanced support remotely?	Yes
Is installation work permitted outside Library hours (before opening or after closing)?	Coordination would have to happen per branch.
The RFP specifies completion by January 31, 2027. Is this a firm requirement for all 36 locations, including any new data circuits?	Not sure
If the Library requires new dedicated Internet circuits at all 36 locations, would the Library consider extending the implementation deadline if the telecommunications carrier experiences delays in provisioning or installing these circuits?	Yes
Section 2(d) requires implementation to be completed by January 31, 2027. • Does the Library have a preferred installation or migration schedule? • If new physical circuits are required, would the Library consider a phased deployment in which telephone services are initially activated over existing connectivity, followed by migration to dedicated circuits as they become available? • Would reasonable extensions be considered for documented third-party carrier provisioning delays?	Schedule of installation can be discussed as part of proposal. Phased deployment is acceptable. Yes for extension considerations.
• Are there designated closure days or preferred maintenance windows for installation and telephone number migration? • Can vendors arrange after-hours or weekend access when necessary? • Is the selected vendor expected to physically install and connect all telephones, or will Library IT personnel assist with deployment of preconfigured equipment?	Schedule of installation can be discussed as part of proposal. Library IT can assist if necessary

Question	Answer
Would it be possible to conduct a site survey before submitting our proposal, or could the Library provide information regarding the existing telephone and network infrastructure at the 36 locations?	Yes
Would it be possible to schedule a meeting this month with the Library's management and IT team to review the project requirements for all 36 locations?	Yes
Will Library IT handle basic tasks, like adding users or swapping a broken phone with a spare? We would handle everything else, including outages and system issues. b. How quickly should we respond to an outage during open hours? Do you need support after hours?	Library IT can handle basic tasks Support during open hours should be ASAP

K. Vendor eligibility & support model

Question	Answer
Would the Library accept a vendor that provides remote technical support and system administration, with onsite installation and service performed by qualified technicians who can travel to the locations or are based locally?	Yes
Are there any specific onsite response time requirements that vendors must meet?	No
Would a qualified telecommunications company located in Queens be eligible to participate in this RFP, or does the Library require vendors to maintain a physical office in Buffalo or Erie County?	Preference will be provided to providers located within servicing distance of the Library in the event support is needed.

L. Performance reporting

Question	Answer
The RFP requests performance reports for each line. Are standard call-detail reports showing call activity, duration, missed calls, and usage sufficient, or are additional performance metrics required?	Standard call-detail reports showing call activity, duration, missed calls, and usage are sufficient
Section 12(d) requires comprehensive and actionable performance reports for each line.	Call volume, missed calls, call duration, and service availability. Basic reporting.

Question	Answer
Could the Library clarify the expected reporting metrics, level of detail, and reporting frequency? For example, should reports include call volume, missed calls, call duration, service availability, call quality, or other performance indicators?	
Are there specific metrics the Library expects in the per-line Performance Reports (e.g., call quality/MOS, jitter, packet loss, uptime)?	Call volume, missed calls, call duration, and service availability. Basic reporting.

M. Insurance, RFP document issues & Library feedback

Question	Answer
Could you clarify which insurance category applies to this project? If Category C is required, would the Library consider a lower professional liability limit, such as $1 million, or an alternative classification more appropriate for hosted telecommunications services?	Hosted telecommunications services are categorized under Category C (with Category A applying if physical installation or construction is required). Vendors are encouraged to submit their proposals using their current insurance limits. The Library will review current coverage levels during proposal evaluation and reserves the right to determine if an exception or alternative limit is acceptable for the final scope of work.
Which insurance category in Appendix B applies to this contract? If it is Professional Services, would the Library accept less than $5,000,000 in professional liability coverage?	See above
Which vendor classification (A through G) in Appendix B applies to this contract?	See above
Appendix B appears blank in the posted PDF. Could you please send the Library and Erie County Standard Insurance Requirements?	Insurance requirements can be found under "Additional Files" on the Erie County "Request for Proposals & Construction Bids" page.
Overall, is the Library satisfied with its current Spectrum phone service? Are there particular limitations, service issues, or improvements motivating this procurement that the Library would like vendors to address?	Overall fine but still on POTS looking to upgrade to VOIP