

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
1	DT361	Greenwood 4

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson**

Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.**

Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620**

Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood**

Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood**

Project Area Map Code **Greenwood 4**

678 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

17 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date 8/24/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete 12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins 9/7/20	Project Completion Date 12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete 10/2/20	

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost \$654,490.00	Average Cost per Housing Unit \$450
Upfront Cost Requirements \$54,000	
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises \$600,490	Average Cost per Business \$600
Average Cost per Location Served \$770 <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$327,245.00	
Applicant-Provided Funding \$327,245.00	
Third-Party Funding	Amount 0
	Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
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b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. "The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase, Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

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c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Greenwood County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 50 school district has a 73.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 45 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an Internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical, Greenwood School District 50, College and County of Greenwood. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF pro-actively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculum's include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We pro-actively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and Internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this time-frame.
- We pro-actively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband Internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit Internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. *Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.*

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.



- Legend**
- Address Type**
- Residential
 - Commercial
 - Greenwood_Municipality
 - DT361_Construction_Link



Date: 8/12/2020

Exhibit B
GREENWOOD 4 DT361 SCORS MAP



Greenwood 4

Exhibit C

Project Designation	DT361
Project Area ORS Map Code	Greenwood 4

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 50
School District Poverty Level	73.91%
Rural / Urban	Both
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	695
(Residential)	678
(Businesses)	17
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	45

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	7.2
Estimated Construction Costs	\$446,400
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$54,000
Electronics and Equipment	\$34,750
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$119,340
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$770
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$654,490
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$327,245
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	8/24/2020
Begin Construction	9/7/2020
Complete Construction	10/2/2020
Begin Customer Installs	10/2/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

EXHIBIT D



Office of the Superintendent

glenns@gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable students in School district 50, who are in remote areas of the county, to have access to vital resources for distance learning. This will also enable residents who are working from home or need access to telehealth /on-line medical care. We understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Greenwood School District 50 has a poverty level of 72.26%.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the county. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Glenn", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent
1855 Calhoun Road
PO Box 248
Greenwood, SC 29648
Phone 864.941.5400
www.gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
2	DT289	Greenwood 4

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

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Project Area Information

County **Greenwood** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Greenwood 4**

581 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

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0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

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Total Project Cost \$771,000	Average Cost per Housing Unit \$450
Upfront Cost Requirements \$68,250	
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises \$702,750	Average Cost per Business \$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i> \$1,073	

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested **\$385,500**

Applicant-Provided Funding **\$385,500**

Third-Party Funding Amount **0**

Source(s) **Not Applicable**

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Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 50 school district has a 73.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 35 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical College, Greenwood School District 50, and the County of Greenwood. Please refer to Exhibit D.

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- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
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Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

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WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

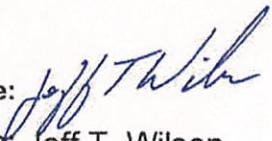
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signatory: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

GREENWOOD 4 DT289 SCORS MAP



- Legend**
- Address Type
 - Residential (black dot)
 - Commercial (yellow dot)
 - Greenwood_Municipality (purple outline)
 - DT289_Construction_Limit (green fill)



Date: 8/12/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	DT289
Project Area ORS Map Code	Greenwood 4

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 50
School District Poverty Level	73.91%
Rural / Urban	Both
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	618
(Residential)	581
(Businesses)	37
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	35

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	9.1
Estimated Construction Costs	\$564,200
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$68,250
Electronics and Equipment	\$30,900
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$107,650
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$1,073
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$771,000
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$385,500
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	9/7/2020
Begin Construction	9/28/2020
Complete Construction	10/30/2020
Begin Customer Installs	10/30/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks".

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

EXHIBIT D



Office of the Superintendent

glenns@gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable students in School district 50, who are in remote areas of the county, to have access to vital resources for distance learning. This will also enable residents who are working from home or need access to telehealth /on-line medical care. We understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Greenwood School District 50 has a poverty level of 72.26%.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the county. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Glenn", written over a white background.

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent
1855 Calhoun Road
PO Box 248
Greenwood, SC 29648
Phone 864.941.5400
www.gwd50.org

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
3	SG193	Greenwood 4

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Greenwood 4**

219 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

18 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Hybrid fiber-coax (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/5/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	10/26/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	11/30/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$451,400	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$44,250		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$407,150	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$1,767		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$225,700

Applicant-Provided Funding \$225,700

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. "The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase. Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

*Source: <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/digital/after-covid-19-250-billion-care-could-shift-telehealth#:~:text=Physicians%20and%20other%20health%20professionals,who%20used%20telehealth%20in%202019>.

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"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

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Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

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List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

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Please attach the following items to Application:

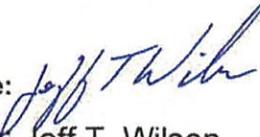
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. *Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.*

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

GREENWOOD 4 SG193 SCORS MAP



- Legend**
- Address Type
 - Commercial (Yellow dot)
 - Residential (Black dot)
 - Greenwood_Municipality (Green outline)
 - SG193_Construction_Limit (Green fill)



Date: 8/12/2020

Greenwood 4

Exhibit C

Project Designation	SG193
Project Area ORS Map Code	Greenwood 4

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 50
School District Poverty Level	73.91%
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	232
(Residential)	219
(Businesses)	18
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	27

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	5.9
Estimated Construction Costs	\$354,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$44,250
Electronics and Equipment	\$11,600
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$41,550
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$1,767
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$451,400
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$225,700
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/5/2020
Begin Construction	10/26/2020
Complete Construction	11/13/2020
Begin Customer Installs	11/13/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

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L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
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We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

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Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

EXHIBIT D



Office of the Superintendent

glenns@gwd50.org

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Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent

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Superintendent
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PO Box 248
Greenwood, SC 29648
Phone 864.941.5400
www.gwd50.org

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
4	SG481	Greenwood 2

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Greenwood 2**

220 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

16 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

1 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (25/3 Mbps or faster)

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/14/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	11/9/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	11/27/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$492,030	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$48,750		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$443,280	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$1,909		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$246,015

Applicant-Provided Funding \$246,015

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction. WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. *The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase. Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

*Source: <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/digital/after-covid-19-250-billion-care-could-shift-telehealth#:~:text=Physicians%20and%20other%20health%20professionals,who%20used%20telehealth%20in%202019.>

c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Greenwood County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 50 school district has a 73.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 27 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an Internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical College, Greenwood School District 50, and the County of Greenwood. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
- We proactively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband Internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit Internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

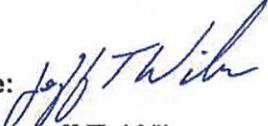
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

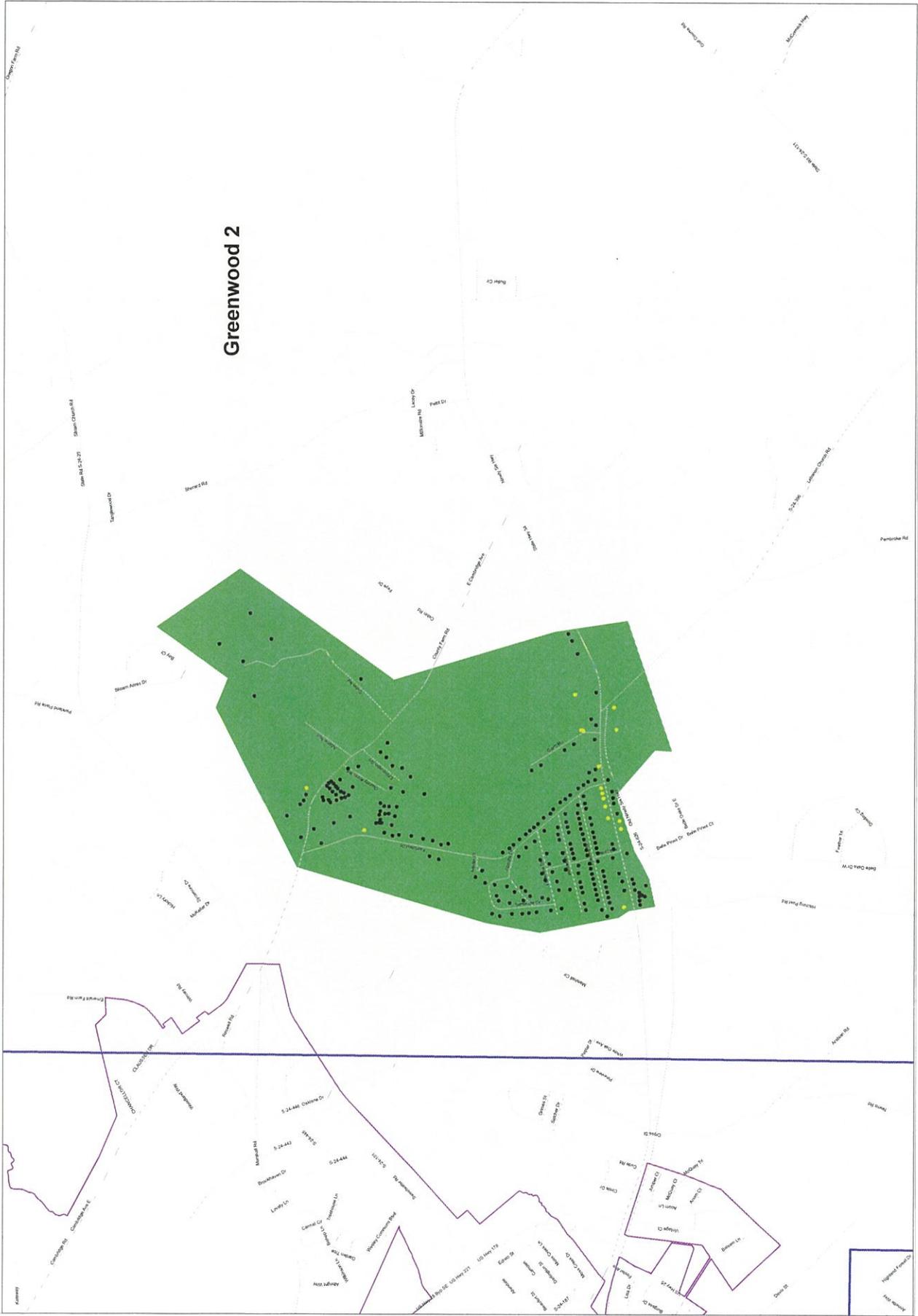
Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

GREENWOOD 2 SG481 SCORS MAP



- Legend**
- Address Type**
 - Residential
 - Commercial
 - Greenwood_Municipality
 - Construction_Limit



Date: 8/12/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	SG481
Project Area ORS Map Code	Greenwood 2

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 50
School District Poverty Level	73.91%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	236
(Residential)	220
(Businesses)	16
(Anchor Institutions)	1
Crowd Fiber Interests	27

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	6.5
Estimated Construction Costs	\$390,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$48,750
Electronics and Equipment	\$11,800
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$41,480
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$1,909
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$492,030
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$246,015
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/14/2020
Begin Construction	11/9/2020
Complete Construction	11/27/2020
Begin Customer Installs	11/27/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

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Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

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Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

EXHIBIT D



Office of the Superintendent

glenns@gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

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Phone 864.941.5400
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August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
5	TRLRD	Anderson 11

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Abbeville & Anderson** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Due West** Project Area Map Code **Anderson 11**

36 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

0 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
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- VDSL** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (25/3 Mbps or faster)

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	8/24/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	9/7/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	9/25/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$197,350	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$26,250		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$171,100	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$5,057		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$98,675

Applicant-Provided Funding \$98,675

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Abbeville and Anderson 2 County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
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c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Anderson County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Abbeville 60 school district has a 69.35% poverty level and Anderson 2 has a 64.47% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Anderson County. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
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- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
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Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

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No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

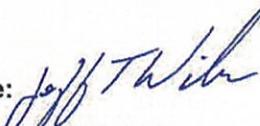
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. *Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.*

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

ANDERSON 11 TRLRD SCORES MAP



Legend
Address_Type
● Residential
■ Construction Limits



Date: 8/11/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	TRLRD
Project Area ORS Map Code	Anderson 11

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Due West
County	Abbeville & Anderson
School District	Abbeville & Anderson 2
School District Poverty Level	64.47%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	36
(Residential)	36
(Businesses)	0
(Anchor Institutions)	0

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	3.5
Estimated Construction Costs	\$154,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$26,250
Electronics and Equipment	\$1,800
Customer Installs (at 50% take rate)	\$15,300
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$5,057
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$197,350
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$98,675
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	8/24/2020
Begin Construction	9/7/2020
Complete Construction	9/25/2020
Begin Customer Installs	9/25/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020

Exhibit D



August 13, 2020

Chris Rozycki

Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

DEAR MR. ROZYCKI,

I wanted to reach out to you personally and offer my full support for WCTEL's efforts to bring broadband service to the Shirley's Store and Lake Secession communities. My County Council district covers the areas that would be served by the proposed projects.

In my opinion, getting broadband service as quickly as possible to these and other underserved areas of Anderson County must be a top priority for County Council going forward. If we have learned anything from the events of this year, it is that communities need reliable broadband infrastructure if they hope to survive and prosper. Communities that cannot provide residents with the ability to work from home, access remote learning opportunities, participate in telemedicine evaluations, engage in e-commerce, or manage a small business will not be able to attract the base of working families with children that any community needs to remain viable.

When completed, WCTEL's efforts will have a life-changing positive impact on the hundreds of persons residing in these predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. Perhaps most critically, area children attending Anderson School Districts One and Two will have full access to the educational opportunities they will need to participate in today's economy, freed forever of the tremendous competitive disadvantage they face in not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the prospect of bringing broadband to these areas and I stand ready to assist in any way possible. If I can ever be of assistance your office please contact me at (864) 844-1163.

SINCERELY,

Ray Graham

RAY GRAHAM | ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICT THREE

Tommy Dunn
Chairman, District 5

Craig Wooten
Council District 1

Ray Graham
Council District 3

Cindy Wilson
Council District 7

ANDERSON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

Brett Sanders
V. Chairman, District 4

Gracie Floyd
Council District 2

Jimmy Davis
Council District 6

Lacey Croegaert
Clerk to Council

Rusty Burns | County Administrator
rburns@andersoncountysc.org

Exhibit D



August 13, 2020

Chris Rozycki

Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

DEAR MR. ROZYCKI,

Please accept this letter as indication of our support for WCTEL's efforts to provide broadband service to the Iva-Lake Secession community in eastern Anderson County. This area is identified as the Anderson 11 priority area on the current S.C. Broadband Infrastructure map, and our local efforts have also identified this area as being underserved by broadband infrastructure.

These efforts will directly assist lower income residents in an identified area of need. The community is comprised mainly of Census Tract 117 Block Group 3, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has identified 53.8% of all residents as living in low-to-moderate income households. In addition, the area's median household income of \$42,500 is almost 11% lower than the countywide median income of \$47,900.

This project will also help our local efforts to encourage economic development in the community. Naturally, there is ample road infrastructure and land for smaller-scale manufacturing concerns that would benefit from broadband; however, this community is home to many local-source restaurants, U-pick farms, and other smaller businesses for which broadband would provide an economic lifeline through online transactions, sales, and advertising.

We consider your project to a high priority for Anderson County, and we are happy to offer our support for this and similar efforts in the community.

SINCERELY,

Rusty Burns

RUSTY BURNS | COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Tommy Dunn
Chairman, District 5

Craig Wooten
Council District 1

Ray Graham
Council District 3

Cindy Wilson
Council District 7

ANDERSON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

Brett Sanders
V. Chairman, District 4

Gracie Floyd
Council District 2

Jimmy Davis
Council District 6

Lacey Croegaert
Clerk to Council

Rusty Burns | County Administrator
rburns@andersoncountysc.org

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
6	FJ865	Laurens 14

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**
Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**
Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**
Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**
City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood** Rural or Urban **Rural**
Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Laurens 14**
408 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)
16 Number of Businesses in Project Area
0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area
0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area
0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Hybrid fiber-coax (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	9/7/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	9/28/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	11/13/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$1,181,150	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$120,750		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$1,060,400	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$2,613		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$590,575

Applicant-Provided Funding \$590,575

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

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Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 52 school district has a 62.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

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Attachments and Exhibits

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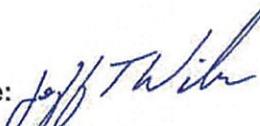
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit C

Project Designation	FJ865
Project Area ORS Map Code	Laurens 14

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 52
School District Poverty Level	62.91%
Rural / Urban	Both
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	424
(Residential)	408
(Businesses)	16
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	42

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	16.1
Estimated Construction Costs	\$966,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$120,750
Electronics and Equipment	\$21,200
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$73,200
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$2,613
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$1,181,150
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$590,575
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	9/7/2020
Begin Construction	9/28/2020
Complete Construction	11/13/2020
Begin Customer Installs	11/13/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020

Exhibit D



L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks".

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
7	FJ937	Laurens 14

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Laurens 14**

120 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

2 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (25/3 Mbps or faster)

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/14/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	11/2/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	11/20/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$263,230	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$26,250		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$236,980	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$1,986		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$131,615

Applicant-Provided Funding \$131,615

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.

- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. "The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase, Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

*Source: <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/digital/after-covid-19-250-billion-care-could-shift-telehealth#:~:text=Physicians%20and%20other%20health%20professionals,who%20used%20telehealth%20in%202019>.

c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Greenwood County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 52 school district has a 62.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 17 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an Internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical College and the County of Greenwood. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
- We proactively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband Internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit Internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF") for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

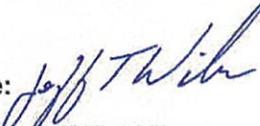
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Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signatory: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

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Exhibit C

Project Designation	FJ937
Project Area ORS Map Code	Laurens 14

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 52
School District Poverty Level	62.91%
Rural / Urban	Both
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	122
(Residential)	120
(Businesses)	2
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	17

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	3.5
Estimated Construction Costs	\$210,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$26,250
Electronics and Equipment	\$6,100
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$20,880
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$1,986
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$263,230
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$131,615
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/14/2020
Begin Construction	11/2/2020
Complete Construction	11/20/2020
Begin Customer Installs	11/20/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

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WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



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Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
8	FJ817	Laurens 14

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson**

Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.**

Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620**

Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Greenwood**

Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood**

Project Area Map Code **Laurens 14**

122 Number of Households in Project Area *(Target code)*

0 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

0 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Hybrid fiber-coax (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

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Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
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Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/14/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	11/16/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	12/18/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$337,340	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$34,500		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$302,840	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served (all locations or structures)	\$2,595		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$168,670

Applicant-Provided Funding \$168,670

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

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WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. *The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase, Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

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c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Greenwood County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 52 school district has a 62.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 30 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical College and Greenwood County. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
- We proactively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC (“WCF”) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

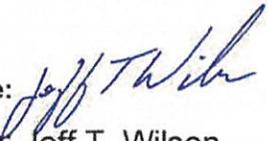
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

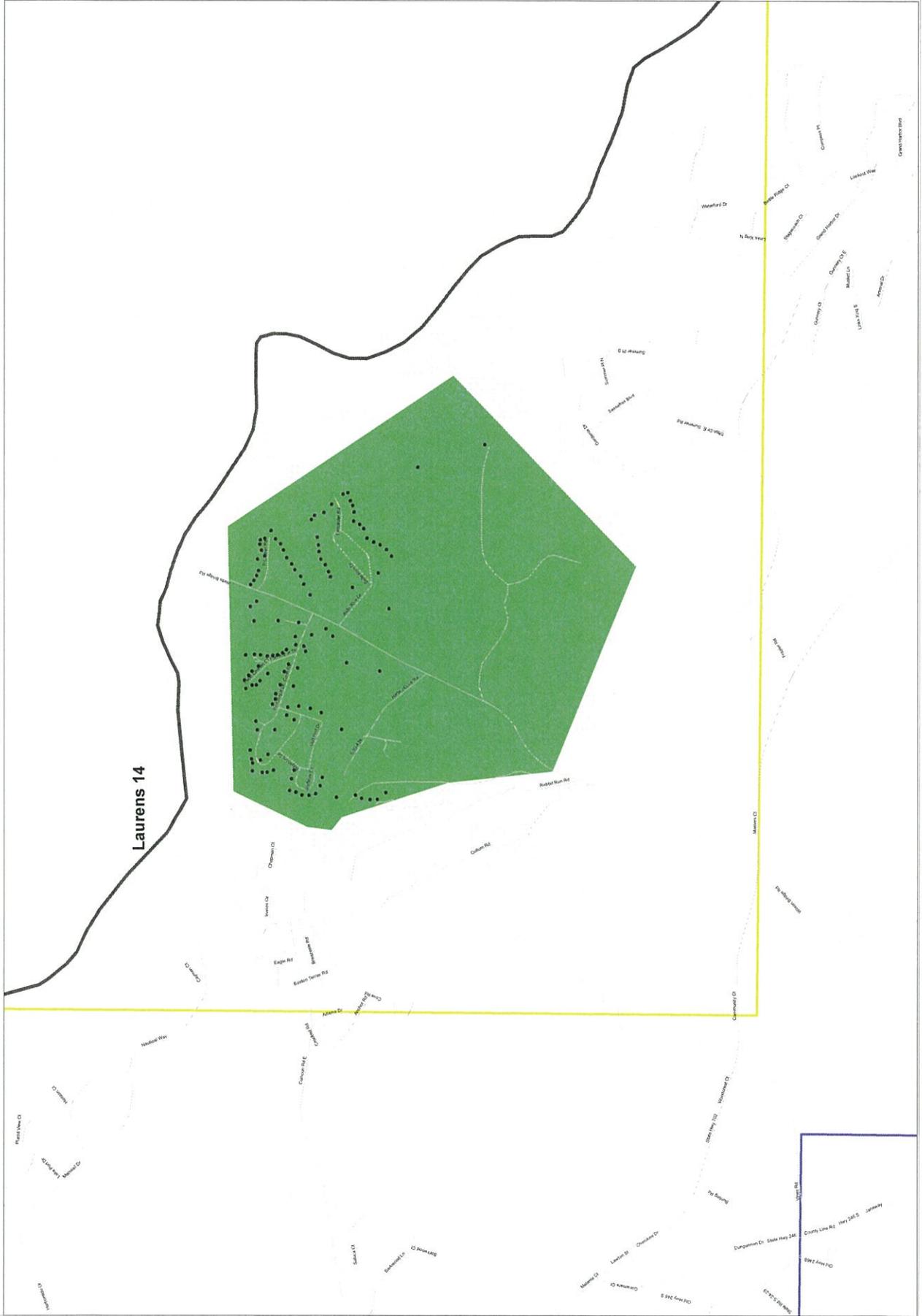
Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

LAURENS 14 FJ817 SCORS MAP



Legend
Address Type
• Residential
■ FJ817 Construction Limit



Date: 8/12/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	FJ817
Project Area ORS Map Code	Laurens 14

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Greenwood
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 52
School District Poverty Level	62.91%
Rural / Urban	Both
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	122
(Residential)	122
(Businesses)	0
(Anchor Institutions)	0
Crowd Fiber Interests	30

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	4.6
Estimated Construction Costs	\$276,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$34,500
Electronics and Equipment	\$6,100
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$20,740
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$2,595
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$337,340
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$168,670
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/14/2020
Begin Construction	11/16/2020
Complete Construction	12/18/2020
Begin Customer Installs	12/18/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks".

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
9	KWRD2	Anderson 10

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Abbeville** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Due West** Project Area Map Code **Anderson 10**

39 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

0 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

1 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Hybrid fiber-coax (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	9/7/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	9/28/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	10/9/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$147,875	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$18,750		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$129,125	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$3,351		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested \$73,938

Applicant-Provided Funding \$73,938

Third-Party Funding Amount 0

Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Abbeville County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

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Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Abbeville 60 school district has a 69.35% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

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"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Abbeville County. Please refer to Exhibit D.

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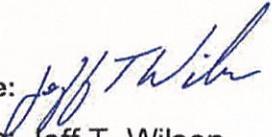
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. *Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.*

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

ANDERSON 10 KWRD2 SCORES MAP



Legend
Address_Ty
● Residential
■ Construction Limits



Date: 8/11/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	KWRD2
Project Area ORS Map Code	Anderson 10

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Due West
County	Abbeville
School District	Abbeville
School District Poverty Level	69.35%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	39
(Residential)	39
(Businesses)	0
(Anchor Institutions)	1

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	2.5
Estimated Construction Costs	\$110,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$18,750
Electronics and Equipment	\$1,950
Customer Installs (at 50% take rate)	\$17,175
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$3,351
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$147,875
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$73,938
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	9/7/2020
Begin Construction	9/28/2020
Complete Construction	10/9/2020
Begin Customer Installs	10/9/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020

Exhibit D



ABBEVILLE COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA

August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

This letter is in regards to WCTEL's efforts to provide broadband service to the Upper Abbeville County area. This will be a multi- county benefit as Anderson 10 is also located in the Abbeville County. This is a remote area of Abbeville County and broadband is critical for distance learning, working from home and on-line medical care.

Over the last few months, we have seen a bigger need for broadband in this area. Abbeville County school district has over 30% of its students participating in full time virtual school with the entire school district participating with virtual learning in some type of fashion. Driving to a WIFI hotspot is not always easy for a family, especially when trying to contact a doctor for a tele-med visit. If Covid-19 numbers increase the schools will have to return to online learning again. Many jobs will have to be done from home to keep companies running.

Having broadband internet in every portion of Abbeville County is of utmost importance to help keep our rural county growing for the future. Please help make it possible for WCTEL to be able to provide services to the Upper Abbeville County Region.

Sincerely,

Stephen Taylor
Assistant County Director
Economic Development Director

August 14, 2020
WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
10	BLJAY	Greenwood 1

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**

Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**

Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**

City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Hodges** Rural or Urban **Rural**

Nearest City/Town **Greenwood** Project Area Map Code **Greenwood 1**

64 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)

1 Number of Businesses in Project Area

0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area

1 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area

0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (25/3 Mbps or faster)

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	9/11/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	10/2/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	11/13/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$330,700	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$39,000		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$291,700	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$4,580		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested	\$165,350
Applicant-Provided Funding	\$165,350
Third-Party Funding	Amount 0
	Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Greenwood County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. *The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase, Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

*Source: <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/digital/after-covid-19-250-billion-care-could-shift-telehealth#:~:text=Physicians%20and%20other%20health%20professionals,who%20used%20telehealth%20in%202019.>

c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Greenwood County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Greenwood 50 school district has a 73.91% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The applicant has used crowd sourcing to determine interest in the service area and has identified 19 customers who are interested in purchasing services. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an Internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Piedmont Technical College, Greenwood School District 50, and the County of Greenwood. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer Literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
- We proactively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband Internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit Internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC (“WCF”) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

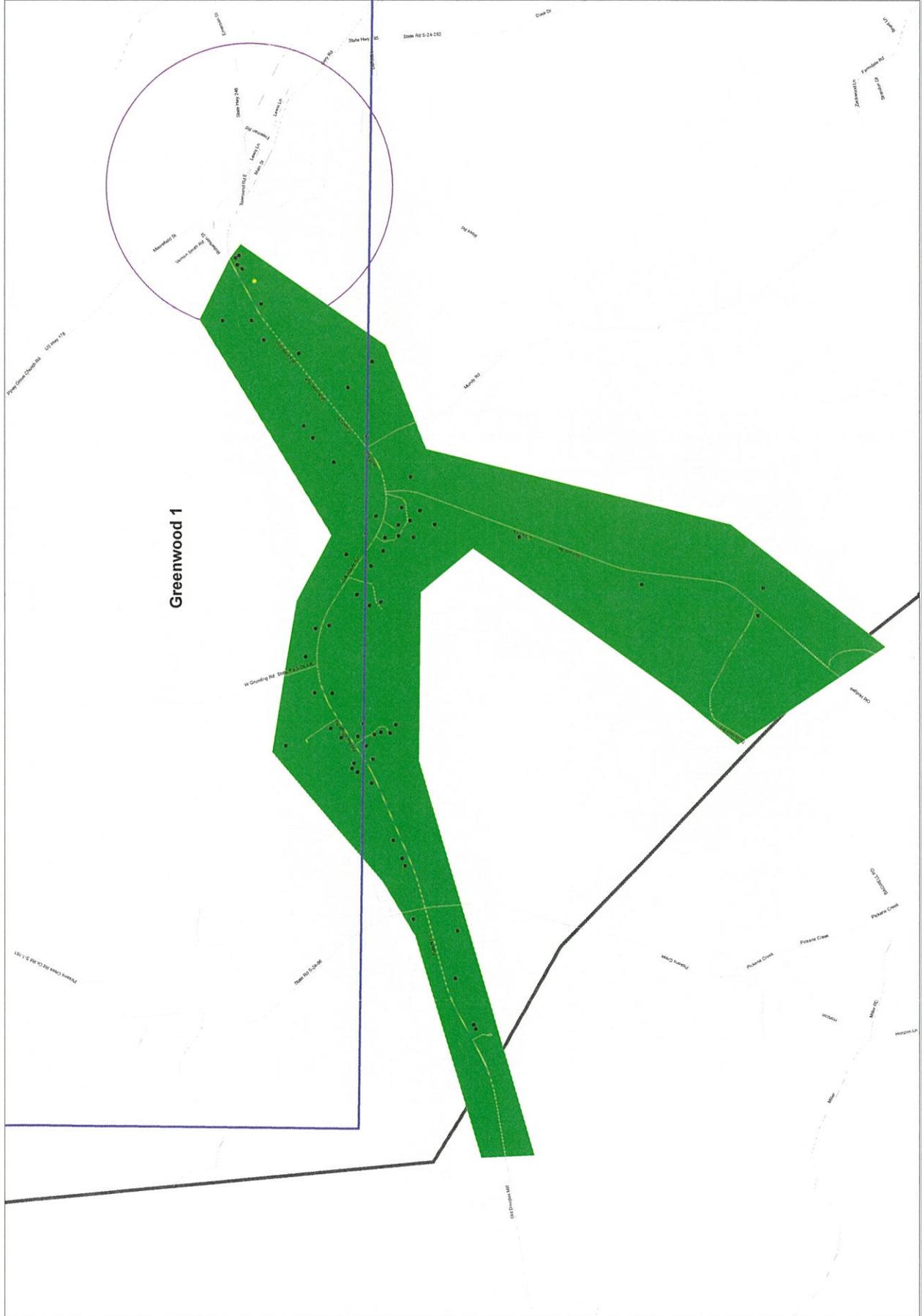
Renewal Terms. *Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.*

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

GREENWOOD 1 BL-JAY SCORS MAP



Date: 8/12/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	BLJAY
Project Area ORS Map Code	Greenwood 1

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Hodges
County	Greenwood
School District	Greenwood 50
School District Poverty Level	73.91%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	66
(Residential)	64
(Businesses)	1
(Anchor Institutions)	1
Crowd Fiber Interests	19

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	5.2
Estimated Construction Costs	\$260,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$39,000
Electronics and Equipment	\$3,300
Customer Installs (at 50% take rate)	\$28,400
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$4,580
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$330,700
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$165,350
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	9/11/2020
Begin Construction	10/2/2020
Complete Construction	11/13/2020
Begin Customer Installs	11/13/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020



Exhibit D

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D. • President

Phone: (864) 941-8301 • Email: brooks.rl@ptc.edu

August 13, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Piedmont Technical College fully supports WCTEL's application to secure CARES funding to bring broadband service to South Greenwood.

Greenwood County is part of Piedmont's 7-county service area and has the largest number of students enrolled here. The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for reliable broadband infrastructure available for all, so that students could continue classes online, faculty could deliver those classes, and staff could work remotely.

WCTEL's efforts will have a positive impact on the large number of residents in South Greenwood's predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. They will have full access to educational opportunities allowing them to participate in today's economy without disadvantage of not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the possibility of bringing broadband to this area and I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.
President

Exhibit D

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable residents in our remote areas of the county access to vital resources for distance learning, working from home, telehealth/on-line medical care for those that don't have traditional access to health care professionals. WE understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the County. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level
-

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our County works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Brown, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

EXHIBIT D



Office of the Superintendent

glenns@gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201
Broadband@ors.gov

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

Please accept this letter of support for WCFIBER's efforts to provide broadband service in the Program Target Areas identified by ORS as **Greenwood 2** and **Greenwood 4**. WCFIBER's participation in the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program will enable students in School district 50, who are in remote areas of the county, to have access to vital resources for distance learning. This will also enable residents who are working from home or need access to telehealth /on-line medical care. We understand the purpose for the program is to provide broadband internet access to unserved/underserved communities of South Carolina that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Greenwood School District 50 has a poverty level of 72.26%.

Upon WCFIBER being awarded a portion of the funding as part of the Broadband Infrastructure Program, WCFIBER's efforts will expand its service footprint to include remote areas of Greenwood County. These communities are low-income areas of need where in particular, our young children currently do not have access to the internet via any type of broadband networks that are readily available in other areas of the county. Of note, this expansion effort will provide service to:

- 1677 households that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 88 local businesses that currently do not have 25 x 3 broadband access;
- 608 students living at the poverty level

We consider this project critical for our residents of Greenwood County. The corona virus pandemic has changed the way our county works, learns, teaches, and receives medical care. WCFIBER can be part of the solution. We offer our support for this project and anything we can do to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Glenn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent

Dr. Steve Glenn
Superintendent
1855 Calhoun Road
PO Box 248
Greenwood, SC 29648
Phone 864.941.5400
www.gwd50.org

August 14, 2020

WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
11	KWRD3	Anderson 10

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**
Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**
Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**
Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**
City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Abbeville** Rural or Urban **Rural**
Nearest City/Town **Due West** Project Area Map Code **Anderson 10**
119 Number of Households in Project Area *(Target code)*
2 Number of Businesses in Project Area
0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area
3 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area
0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
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- VDSL (25/3 Mbps or faster)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

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- | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
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Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/7/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	11/2/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	12/18/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$394,375	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$48,750		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$345,625	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$2,817		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested	\$197,188
Applicant-Provided Funding	\$197,188
Third-Party Funding	Amount 0
	Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

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Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

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- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. "The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase, Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

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c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Abbeville County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Abbeville 60 school district has a 69.35% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free Internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered Internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

The applicant has partnered with schools in their service area to identify students who are low-income or otherwise eligible for a reduced rate Internet packages. WCF will offer broadband internet packages from 200 Mbps x 200 Mbps to 1 Gig Symmetrical. In addition to a \$9.99 per month package for low to moderate income households for 12 months. The speeds of both base packages are significantly higher than the FCC minimum broadband definition of 25 Mbps x 3 Mbps because WCF recognizes the need for an Internet package that can provide an exceptional experience for our customers. WCF does not believe in delivering the bare minimum.

"Everyone had to quickly adapt to online learning last spring. The situation presented both new challenges in delivering lessons and new insights into the disparities between students. While for many, virtual classes were less than ideal. Those students who had reliable internet access were better able to engage with online learning and had an advantage over those who did not. All educators want to give their students the best possible opportunities to learn and succeed, and by partnering with WCF we were able to help many students gain internet access and complete the semester without falling behind. But the benefits of gaining internet access went further than grades. I could also see how it impacted the students' mental health and wellbeing. Those unable to connect to their classes online very quickly became stressed, disheartened, and despondent. There were limited opportunities for them to connect with classmates and friends. Gaining internet access helped these students avoid feeling isolated and embarrassed about their family's finances." – Teacher at Greenwood High School

WCF has included letters of support from Abbeville County. Please refer to Exhibit D.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Use additional pages if necessary.

WCF proactively educates customers and residents in the communities we serve through in-person (prior to COVID) and virtual classes. Educational topics and curriculums include the following:

- A general "How to use" your broadband connection program, that we refer to as "TechLink" classes for the elderly that includes Social Media, Email, Online Shopping, Digital Photo Uploads and File Storage, Smart Phones, etc.
- Partnered with Adult Education (taught by an Adult Ed teacher facilitated by WCF) Computer literacy Classes, with a 3-month curriculum – Tablets were given to each participant that completed the class and had service from WCF.
- We proactively reached out to schools to find the areas with the most need for the locations of placing WiFi hot spots. We found that several consumers were logging in and utilizing the hot spots within the 20+ locations in our existing area. In addition, we reached out to schools to connect with those in the most need of assistance. For those in need we offered free installation and internet service during the pandemic through the July 31st time frame.
- We supply a monthly magazine that we dedicate a "tech page" to communicate with existing customers the resources that are available.
- We signed onto the "Keep America Connected" national pledge and went above and beyond with free upgrades, free service, and extended these offerings past the recommended date of June 30th to July 31st. We also did not impose any finance charges or disconnect fees during this timeframe.
- We proactively reached out to businesses during the pandemic as well, especially for those deemed "essential" to ensure they had the bandwidth they needed to continue to function and operate.
- WCF offers affordable broadband rates while providing some of the nation's fastest speeds (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps). Broadband Internet rates are competitively priced, and our areas demographic is taken into consideration. WCF's Gigabit Internet package is priced at \$80/month. It's important that WCF provide not only the fastest broadband options, but at an affordable price to strengthen communities and foster economic development.

Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

In Docket No. 2017-83-C, the Commission approved the Application of WC Fiber, LLC (“WCF”) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Provide Facilities-Based Local Exchange and Interexchange Internet Protocol (IP) Voice Services, and for Flexible Regulation of its Local Exchange Services and Alternative Regulation of its Interexchange Service Offerings within the State of South Carolina.

WCF will obtain any necessary permits for construction if it is awarded SC BIP funding.

WCF has state-wide franchise agreements for video services in place. However, at this time the proposed projects will focus on providing broadband services. If WCF decides to offer video in the future, it will make any necessary amendments to the state-wide franchise agreement.

No lease or interconnection agreement will be required to complete the proposed broadband project contained in this application. For its voice services, WCF uses an underlying carrier that provides number resources and interconnection services.

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

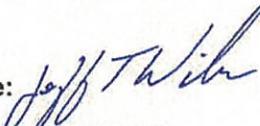
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signatory: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

Renewal Terms. Contingent upon extensions for the expenditure of CARES Act funds provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury and the State of South Carolina, this Agreement may be renewed as evidenced by written approval of both parties.

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

ANDERSON 10 KWRD3 SCORS MAP



Legend
Address Type
Commercial
Residential
Construction Limit



Date: 8/13/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	KWRD3
Project Area ORS Map Code	Anderson 10

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Due West
County	Abbeville
School District	Abbeville
School District Poverty Level	69.35%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	121
(Residential)	119
(Businesses)	2
(Anchor Institutions)	3

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	6.5
Estimated Construction Costs	\$286,000
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$48,750
Electronics and Equipment	\$6,050
Customer Installs (at 50% take rate)	\$53,575
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$2,817
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$394,375
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$197,188
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/7/2020
Begin Construction	11/2/2020
Complete Construction	12/18/2020
Begin Customer Installs	12/18/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020

Exhibit D



ABBEVILLE COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA

August 14, 2020

Mr. Chris Rozycki
Broadband Project Administrator
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC, 29201

Dear Mr. Rozycki:

This letter is in regards to WCTEL's efforts to provide broadband service to the Upper Abbeville County area. This will be a multi- county benefit as Anderson 10 is also located in the Abbeville County. This is a remote area of Abbeville County and broadband is critical for distance learning, working from home and on-line medical care.

Over the last few months, we have seen a bigger need for broadband in this area. Abbeville County school district has over 30% of its students participating in full time virtual school with the entire school district participating with virtual learning in some type of fashion. Driving to a WIFI hotspot is not always easy for a family, especially when trying to contact a doctor for a tele-med visit. If Covid-19 numbers increase the schools will have to return to online learning again. Many jobs will have to be done from home to keep companies running.

Having broadband internet in every portion of Abbeville County is of utmost importance to help keep our rural county growing for the future. Please help make it possible for WCTEL to be able to provide services to the Upper Abbeville County Region.

Sincerely,

Stephen Taylor
Assistant County Director
Economic Development Director

August 14, 2020

WC Fiber, LLC – SC BIP Applications

Priority	Project Designation	Project Area ORS Map Code
12	TRLRD2	Anderson 10

Exhibit A – Proof of Necessary Funds

Exhibit B – Map of Project Area (PDF)

Exhibit C – Project Details

Exhibit D – Letters of Support

APPLICATION

South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Project



Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **WC Fiber, LLC.**
Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0024824443**
Primary Contact Name **Jeff Wilson** Title **Chief Executive Officer**
Mailing Address **229 Hwy 28 S.** Phone Number **(864) 446-9251**
City, State, Zip **Abbeville, SC 29620** Email **jeff.wilson@wctel.com**

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **6/30/16**
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **2/13/20**

- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience delivering broadband service over fiber or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Applicant and/or project Partner has experience building and operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

County **Anderson** Rural or Urban **Rural**
Nearest City/Town **Belton** Project Area Map Code **Anderson 10**
155 Number of Households in Project Area (Target code)
6 Number of Businesses in Project Area
0 Number of Health Care Facilities in Project Area
3 Number of Community Anchor Points in Project Area
0 Number of Educational Institutions in Project Area

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds **200/200 Mbps**
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- VDSL** Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds (25/3 Mbps or faster)

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for broadband at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or faster will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline and Milestones

Project Start Date	10/4/20	Customer Premises Installations Complete	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Begins	11/2/20	Project Completion Date	12/18/20
Project Construction Activity Complete	12/18/20		

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost	\$711,210	Average Cost per Housing Unit	\$450
Upfront Cost Requirements	\$98,250		
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises	\$612,960	Average Cost per Business	\$600
Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i>	\$4,240		

Project Funding Information

South Carolina CARES Act Funding Requested	\$355,605
Applicant-Provided Funding	\$355,605
Third-Party Funding	Amount 0
	Source(s) Not Applicable

Additional Information

Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

WC Fiber, LLC ("WCF"), along with its parent West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("WCT") and its affiliate West Carolina Communications, LLC ("WCC") have been offering broadband services in South Carolina since 2000 and have been providing reliable telecommunications services in South Carolina since 1952. WCT is a South Carolina member-owned cooperative. WCT was one of the first rural telephone companies to provide high-speed DSL Internet service in South Carolina. By 2009, 95% of WCT's network was converted to a fiber optic network with the remaining 5% to be converted by the end of 2020. WCF began offering fiber-based broadband services beginning in 2015. WCF, WCT and WCC (collectively "WCTEL") have built and currently operate and maintain an all-fiber network which passes approximately 40,000 homes in South Carolina and 3,000 in Georgia. Currently, the network consists of more than 3,000 route miles of fiber and continues to expand to new areas every year. The total number of existing broadband customers is approximately 18,200 in South Carolina and 800 in Georgia.

The distribution network to the customer premise consists of fiber-to-the-premises using GPON technology. This network is provisioned with fully redundant ring topology using different fiber routes. The WAN network has three redundant routes to the Internet. Broadband network is connected to the Internet via (9) 10-Gig connections that connect to three hubs in Columbia, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Charlotte, NC.

WCF's ability to provide unmatched broadband service in rural areas can be attributed to its in-house Information Technology, networking systems, engineering, customer premise equipment, splicing and construction / construction management capabilities. WCF's employees have years of experience in successfully completing large-scale telecommunications and broadband construction.

WCT's service areas are considered rural which proves WCT has extensive experience serving rural communities. WCT was nationally recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural Community in 2017. This award is given to rural providers who lead and collaborate on broadband-enabled projects that improve economic development, provide technology for advancing education, enhance state-of-the-art health care through telemedicine, and more to ensure their rural communities continue to advance towards a future-proof sustainable infrastructure.

Describe how your proposal meets CARES objectives as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

COVID has disrupted our society in an unprecedented way. As we continue to recuperate from the impacts of COVID, WCF has recognized and responded to the need for increased broadband service in our surrounding areas that are under-served and unserved. WCF committed to the "Keep America Connected Pledge" and has continued to do so even past the pledge's date range of June 30, 2020. We have displayed our commitment to the communities and consumers we serve by ensuring access to reliable broadband connectivity to provide distance learning, telehealth and working from home.

a. Distance Learning- WCF partnered with Anderson County Schools educators to ensure students had and continue to have the necessary Internet connectivity to continue their studies during school closings and beyond. WCF implemented special programs to support remote learning for students in grades K-12 and college. Measures to address the educational and financial impact included:

- Offering free Internet service for 60 days to households in its service area with K-12 or college students who did not already have a WCF Internet subscription.
- Offering free Internet speed upgrades for 60 days to existing customers to ensure they had the necessary bandwidth to accommodate higher Internet usage in their homes during this time.
- WCF identified locations to provide free WiFi hotspots. These hotspots enabled students that did not otherwise have access to a broadband connection to complete schoolwork from the safety of their family vehicles. The WiFi hotspots were strategically located in partnership with school districts to designate which location would have the greatest impact to help students connect to fast, reliable broadband.

b. Telehealth – The Internet speeds that WCF offers (200 Mbps to 1 Gbps), will provide access to reliable Internet connections that will enable consumers to set up virtual/remote appointments with local hospitals, doctors and specialists across the country. The pandemic has caused health care providers to increase options for working and treating patients remotely to decrease the chances of exposure. "The American Medical Association reports that physicians and other health professionals are now seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via Telehealth than they did before the pandemic. The report notes that 46% of patients are now using Telehealth to replace canceled in-person visits, up from the just 11% of patients who used Telehealth in 2019. Our local hospitals have experienced the same increase. Tim Stewart, of Abbeville Medical Center states, "We have had a major increase in all aspects of Telehealth due to the Covid pandemic. Our doctors have been using it extensively to treat patients who are unable or unwilling to come into the office. WCFIBER was instrumental in providing a custom and robust professional system for the facility that has been critical to its operations success."

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c. Work from Home – WCF has been able to provide the Internet speeds needed from 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps and symmetrical (upload and download) to consumers who had to quickly adjust to working from home during the Covid pandemic. WCF's fiber optic infrastructure is a reliable and fast resource for consumers to connect quickly while ensuring that they can effectively and efficiently work from home. Area residents were able to maintain their jobs and continue to support their families by utilizing WCF's broadband accessibility. WCF will supply the same accessibility to the unserved and under-served areas of Anderson County.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines." Use additional pages if necessary.

The Anderson 2 school district has a 64.47% poverty level. WCF has a proven track record to meet the needs of unserved communities, as demonstrated by our efforts when pandemic first hit. In March, when the pandemic began, all of the rural schools in the area had to convert to online classes. Households served by WCF were well equipped to smoothly transition to the online learning environment. However, many students without WCF service were unable to attend their classes, submit their homework, and conduct research online at home due to insufficient internet access, speeds or the inability to afford internet service at their homes. At the start of the pandemic WCF was proactive in identifying the need for reliable, affordable Internet Access and took action by contacting schools to provide 23 WiFi hotspots in the areas of most need. Providing the WiFi hotspots ensured that all students had access to high speed Internet. These WiFi hotspots are on-going throughout the current service area. WCF also provided two months of free internet to any new customer, giving low income households an opportunity to learn and work from home. For the 60 days free, WCF offered internet plans, from 200 x 200 Mbps to 1 Gbps x 1 Gbps speed to choose from. WCF has no contract on Internet packages, allowing customers to purchase an affordable Internet package without being tied into a long-term commitment. WCF understands the increased demand for reliable Internet service and speeds that need to be provided to the community and will continue to provide services that exceeds consumers demands and needs.

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Provide documents to establish proof that your organization has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see Exhibit A.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

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Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to Application:

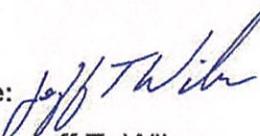
1. Map of Project Area (PDF and Shapefile formats)
2. Letters of support evidencing community need for project
3. Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.



Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable requirements and conditions contained in Subrecipient Agreement for Coronavirus Relief Funds

Signature: 

Print Name of Signature: Jeff T. Wilson

Title of Signatory: President

Date: 8/14/2020

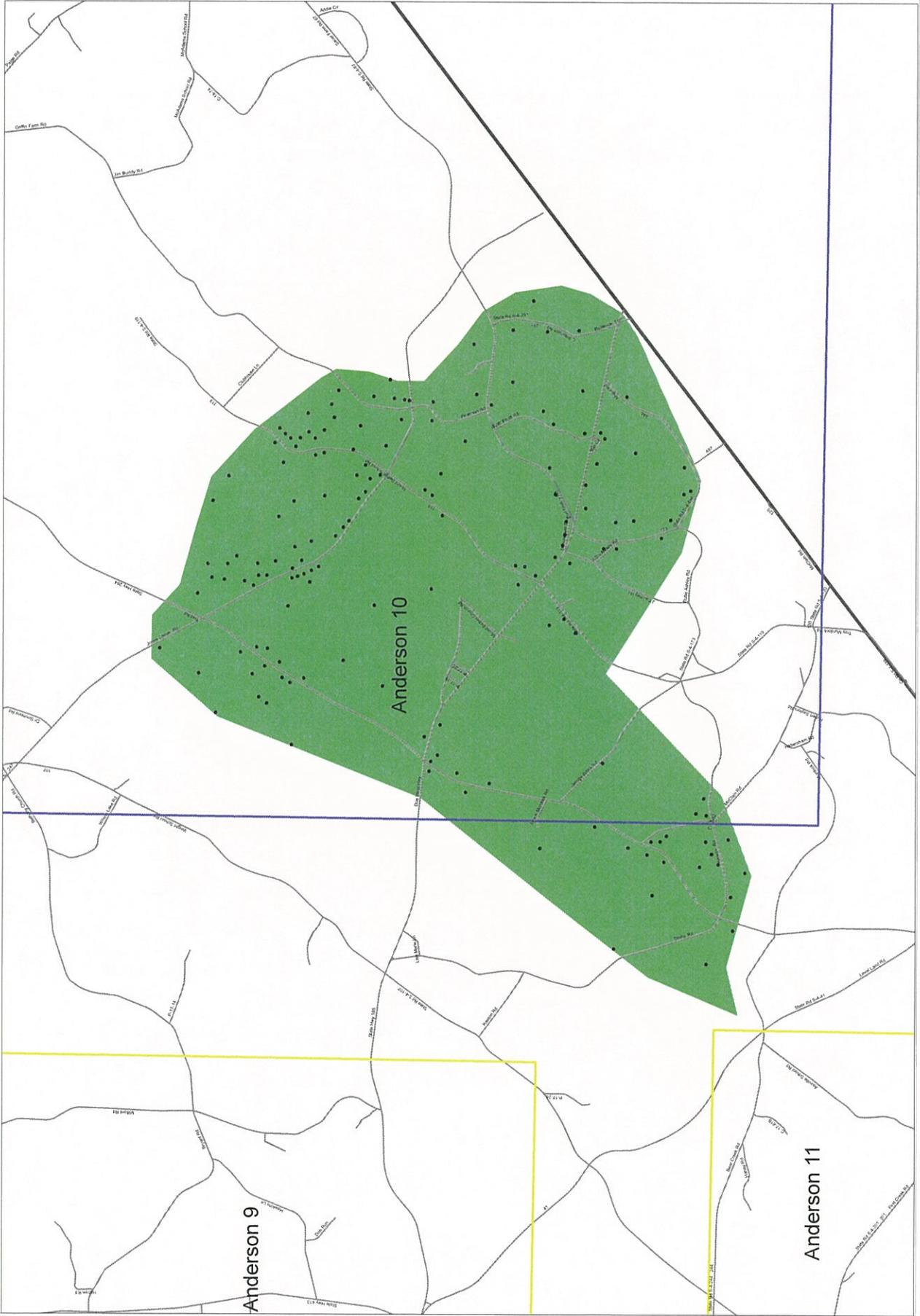
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All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.

Exhibit B

ANDERSON 10 TRLRD2 SCORS MAP



- Legend
- Address Points
 - Road Centerline
 - Construction Limit



Date: 8/13/2020

Exhibit C

Project Designation	TRLRD2
Project Area ORS Map Code	Anderson 10

General Information	
Nearest City / Town	Belton
County	Anderson
School District	Anderson 2
School District Poverty Level	64.47%
Rural / Urban	Rural
Total Potential Subscriber Locations	161
(Residential)	155
(Businesses)	6
(Anchor Institutions)	3

Construction Information and Costs	
Estimated Construction Route Miles	13.1
Estimated Construction Costs	\$576,400
Estimated Engineering Service Fees	\$98,250
Electronics and Equipment	\$8,050
Customer Installs (at 20% take rate)	\$28,510
Construction Cost per Location Passed	\$4,240
Cost per Residential Install	\$450
Cost per Business Install	\$600

Project Funding Summary	
Total Expected Project Cost	\$711,210
Requested CARES Funding Amount	\$355,605
Funding Amount from 3rd Party	\$0

Project Timeline & Milestones	
Prepare Construction Plans & Specs	10/4/2020
Begin Construction	11/2/2020
Complete Construction	12/18/2020
Begin Customer Installs	12/18/2020
Project Complete	12/18/2020

Exhibit D



August 13, 2020

Chris Rozycki

Broadband Project Administrator
State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201

DEAR MR. ROZYCKI,

I wanted to reach out to you personally and offer my full support for WCTEL's efforts to bring broadband service to the Shirley's Store and Lake Secession communities. My County Council district covers the areas that would be served by the proposed projects.

In my opinion, getting broadband service as quickly as possible to these and other underserved areas of Anderson County must be a top priority for County Council going forward. If we have learned anything from the events of this year, it is that communities need reliable broadband infrastructure if they hope to survive and prosper. Communities that cannot provide residents with the ability to work from home, access remote learning opportunities, participate in telemedicine evaluations, engage in e-commerce, or manage a small business will not be able to attract the base of working families with children that any community needs to remain viable.

When completed, WCTEL's efforts will have a life-changing positive impact on the hundreds of persons residing in these predominantly low-to-moderate income areas. Perhaps most critically, area children attending Anderson School Districts One and Two will have full access to the educational opportunities they will need to participate in today's economy, freed forever of the tremendous competitive disadvantage they face in not having at-home broadband access.

I am excited about the prospect of bringing broadband to these areas and I stand ready to assist in any way possible. If I can ever be of assistance your office please contact me at (864) 844-1163.

SINCERELY,

Ray Graham

RAY GRAHAM | ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICT THREE

Tommy Dunn
Chairman, District 5

Craig Wooten
Council District 1

Ray Graham
Council District 3

Cindy Wilson
Council District 7

ANDERSON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

Brett Sanders
V. Chairman, District 4

Gracie Floyd
Council District 2

Jimmy Davis
Council District 6

Lacey Croegaert
Clerk to Council

Rusty Burns | County Administrator
rburns@andersoncountysc.org