ORS LAUNCHES BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS

COLUMBIA, SC –August 5, 2020– The South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) today launched the vendor application component of the broadband infrastructure development project, South Carolina's plan to increase broadband internet availability.

The ORS has posted on its website project guidelines and an application form for potential broadband service providers to apply for funding for projects that build broadband networks in unserved communities across South Carolina.

The guidelines on the website include project eligibility, vendor requirements, and specific criteria along with the application form itself. A map developed by Revolution D identifying Priority Program Target areas is also available on the website. Projects proposed in a Priority Program Target area are scored with higher points.

The South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program was created to provide high-speed broadband internet access to unserved South Carolinians who have been directly impacted by COVID-19. Impacted communities or households are those hindered in their ability to respond to the challenges of COVID-19 due to a lack of broadband (as defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) standard of 25/3 Mbps download/upload speeds), thus limiting access to online learning, healthcare via telehealth, and limiting one's ability to work from home.

The Infrastructure Program will use federal funds to provide financial assistance to install and deliver broadband infrastructure.

Act 142 allocated $50 million of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to the ORS for administering the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program to assist COVID-19 impacted individuals, families, and communities. Enhanced broadband infrastructure is an important tool for enabling South Carolinians to address the challenges resulting from this public health crisis.

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