

# South Carolina 2024 ARPA Grant Program

## Application SLFRF 3.0



### Section 1.1 - Applicant Information

Legal Entity/Organization Name	CarolinaConnect
Parent Organization	
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Cooperative
Primary Contact Name	Glenn Martin
Title	CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	PO Box 1667, Lexington SC 29071
Phone Number	8037853420
Email	Glenn.Martin@carolinaconnect.com
Secondary Contact Name	Lauren Walton
Title	Administrative Assistant
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	PO Box 417 , Aiken SC 29802
Phone Number	8036496245
Email	Lwalton@aikenco-op.org
FCC Registration Number (FRN):	25825207
Registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) - (Yes/No)	Yes
Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number	HDNAUL952PH9
Federal Tax ID Number	81-1529390
SC State Vendor Number	7000319695

## Section 1.2 - Project Name/Number

Project Number (Format XXX-XX)	AEC-C3
Project Name	Gaston
Project Priority (1-5, 1 serving as highest priority for applicant)	3

## Section 1.3 - Broadband Service Provider Context

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Submission	December 31, 2017
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Submission	2/23/2024
Applicant has experience delivering broadband service via fiber and/or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure (YES/NO)	Yes

## Section 1.4 - Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project service area. Projects must provide a minimum of 100/20 Mbps scalable to 100/100 Mbps. Applicant must explain in detail why the proposed project cannot provide 100/100 Mbps.	Fiber to the Premises Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds 100/100 Mbps
Will all structures be served with the same technology type?	Yes
Estimated Miles of Fiber to be Installed	109
Estimated Percentage Underground	5.00%
Estimated Percentage Aerial	95.00%

## Section 1.5 - Project Timeline

Project Start Date	August 1, 2024
Project Construction Activity Begins	October 1, 2024
Project Construction Activity Completion	August 1, 2025
<b>Customer Premises</b> <i>Initiation of Operations (premise installations begin)</i>	August 1, 2025
Overall Project Completion Date	November 30, 2025
Will the project be completed within 24 months of official Notice to Proceed (NTP)?	Yes

### **Section 1.6 - Low-Cost Plan**

**(Must be a minimum of 100/20 Mbps)**

What Download/Upload speed is offered in your low-cost residential plan? (Example 100/20)	350/350
What is the monthly cost of the plan?	\$ 59.95
Does the above speed tier include unlimited data? (YES/NO)	Yes
Is a Consumer-based Contract Required? (YES/NO)	No
Duration of Low-Cost Plan (Post Construction)	We have no plans to change the current pricing, with that being said, Carolina Connect/Aiken Electric will guarantee no price increase on this package through 01/01/2025.

### **Section 1.7 - Free Public Wi-Fi**

Will a new Free Public Wi-Fi location(s) be added? Free Public Wi-Fi is a location where anyone can access the Wi-Fi network at no cost 24/7, 365 days. Wi-Fi location needs to be in county or counties applied for.	No
If yes, how many locations will be added?	Select One
If yes, specify the duration the applicant will offer this service.	Select One

### **Section 1.8 - Network Resiliency**

**Indicate if any of the Network Resilient Items will be implemented in the project area.**

Ensure power redundancy with DC Battery/Diesel/Gas Generator Backup from temporary power loss at premise, Network Operations Center (NOC), and OLTs.	Will Implement
Ensure OLTs have divergent paths to redundant upstream equipment.	Will Implement
Configure OLTs on a fiber ring so the network may continue operation if fiber is cut and/or damaged.	Will Implement
Establish an Emergency Action Plan (EAP).	Will Implement
Conduct readiness drills and tabletop exercises leveraging the EAP, document lessons learned and update the EAP based upon findings.	Will Implement
Deploy facilities underground as opposed to aerial to minimize impacts of downed utility poles from hurricanes, tornadoes, and vehicle accidents occurring in rights of way.	Will NOT Implement
Diversify connectivity by including more than a single tier-one provider as an access point to the Internet through the ISP's network.	Will Implement
Maintain field service teams and spare equipment on standby before, during, and after major weather events and enact mutual assistance agreements, if appropriate.	Will Implement
Conduct regular site inspections for encroachments, damaged facilities, susceptible facilities or other threats through field reconnaissance and windshield surveys on facilities.	Will Implement
Elevate OLTs above base flood elevations in mapped floodplains and associated flood-prone areas.	Will Implement

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## Section 2.2 - Funding Details

Description	Comment	Amount
South Carolina ARPA Broadband Grant Program Funds requested		\$ 1,470,460.00
Applicant-Provided Funding		\$ 1,470,459.42
Third-Party Funding Source (if applicable)		\$ -
Total Project Cost		\$ 2,940,919.42
Percentage Funds Requested from SC Broadband Office		50%
Percentage Funds from Applicant Match		50%
Percentage Funds from Third Party Funding Source		0%

ADJUST APPLICANT  
PROVIDED FUNDING  
AMOUNT TO GET WHOLE  
PERCENTAGES ONLY

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## Section 3.1 Confirmations

Applicant participates in the Affordable Connective Program (ACP) and will participate in the ACP for the life of ACP for the Project Service Area.

Agree

Applicant will provide at least one low-cost option without data usage caps and at speeds sufficient for households with multiple users for a disclosed period of time.

Agree

The Project will comply with the requirements set forth in ARPA, South Carolina Act No. 244 of 2022, and other federal, state, and local laws, including environmental and permitting laws and regulations.

Agree

The Applicant will not use ARPA funds to procure or obtain certain telecom and video surveillance services or equipment as outlined in 2 CFR 200.216 and 2 CFR 200.471.

Agree

Applicant will not use ARPA funds to modernize cybersecurity for existing and new broadband networks.

Agree

Applicant will not procure telecommunications equipment or services from China.

Agree

The Project includes pre-project development uses or costs

Disagree

If Yes to above, the pre-development uses or costs will be (1) tied to an eligible broadband project or reasonably expected to lead to such a project; and (2) obligated within the period between Feb. 1, 2024, and December 31, 2026 and expended to cover such obligations by December 31, 2026.

Select one

Applicant will require its employees, contractors, and subcontractors to comply with the applicable requirements in the South Carolina Underground Facility Damage Prevention Act pursuant to Title 58, Chapter 36 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended.

Agree

Applicant affirms that it will consult with the SC Department of Transportation, electric utilities as well as local water sewer utilities as to any possible efficiencies that can be achieved with a “dig once” approach.

Agree

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## **4.1 - Additional Information**

(max 2000 character limit per item)

Provide a Summary Narrative that describes your project.

**This narrative must be unique for each project and discuss this project only. Refrain from discussing rates, structure counts, estimated dates, work that occurred in the past, or the Company's history of providing Broadband service. Limit 750 Characters.**

We will bring high-speed fiber-to-the-home internet service to areas near Gaston, SC that are currently unserved or underserved as quickly as possible. Our fiber lines will bring a minimum of 350Mbps/350Mbps to the homes in the proposed project area and give the residents access to high-speed internet that is required to fully participate in society. Our current internet plans offer up to 1Gbps symmetrical speeds.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines."  
**Refrain from discussing rates, structure counts, estimated dates, work that occurred in the past, or the Company's history of providing Broadband service. Limit 500 Characters (including spaces).**

Our proposal exceeds the needs of the community. The minimum required internet service speed is 100/20 Mbps download/upload speed per the Treasury definition of served and the Guidelines state that technology must be scalable to 100 Mbps symmetrical service. We propose to bring a minimum of 350 Mbps symmetrical speed service to the area with the use of fiber-to-the-home.

If the proposed Project is in an area that is subject to an existing federal or state funding commitment for reliable speeds of 100/20 Mbps, explain why there is an identified need for additional broadband investment that is not met by existing federal or state funding commitments.

No areas are included in existing federal or state funding commitments to our knowledge.

Describe any plans or programs you have developed and propose to implement to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal.

Residents will be contacted through various marketing techniques, for example mailers.

Describe your plans or programs you have developed and propose to implement to increase digital literacy, for example, support through online training, for this project?

Applicant frequently trains users how to do many online projects and connectivity products during installation and on the phone. During installation, users are given detailed instructions on how to use their equipment and technicians are willing to answer any questions the user may have.

Will the Project deliver broadband in the approved Project Area that meets or exceeds symmetrical download and upload speeds of 100/100 Mbps?

Yes

If no to above, explain and provide support demonstrating why the Project will not deliver such speeds and provide an affidavit that 100/100 Mbps symmetrical download/upload speeds are not practicable.

Explain how the Applicant will consult with the community in the Project Area on the general affordability needs of the target markets.

Through feedback from community residents, or package prices are reviewed and compared against other service provider packages in the area to ensure that our prices are affordable.

Will the Project (1) prioritize investments in fiber-optic infrastructure wherever feasible and focus on projects that deliver a physical broadband connection by prioritizing projects that achieve last mile connections or ensure funded middle mile projects have commitments in place to support new and/or improved last mile service; (2) include affordability options and shall participate in ACP for the life of ACP; and (3) prioritize support for local networks owned, operated, or affiliated with local governments, nonprofits, and cooperatives.

Yes

If no to above, explain.

If awarded, will the Grant funds be used to overbuild another existing broadband provider or to reimburse expenses related to overbuilding another broadband provider?

No

If yes to above, explain.



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## 5.1 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name  
Entity Type  
(e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)  
Role within proposed project  
Primary Contact Name  
Title  
Mailing Address City, State, Zip  
Phone Number  
Email


## 5.2 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name  
Entity Type  
(e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)  
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### **5.3 - Project Sponsors**

Entity Name  
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### **5.4 - Project Sponsors**

Entity Name  
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## **6.1 - Attachment Checklist**

(Please attach the following items to application)

### **GIS Shapefiles**

*Proposed 2020 Census Blocks*

Select one

*Proposed Fiber/Cable Lines*

Select one

*Proposed Structures Served by Type*

Select one

*Proposed Network Junctions*

Select one

Signed affidavit certifying grant application is complete and accurate

Select one

Proof of funding related to proposed project or non-cash support, provide associated documentation e.g. yearly financial reports, bank statement, etc.

Select one

Letters of support and strategic partnerships

Select one

Copies of Applicant's Current Fee Structure for all Internet Speed Tiers

Select one

Certificates of Insurance

Select one

Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Select one