

South Carolina 2024 ARPA Grant Program Application SLFRF 3.0



Section 1.1 - Applicant Information

Legal Entity/Organization Name	ZITEL LLC
Parent Organization	
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	LLC
Primary Contact Name	Brandon Camden
Title	President
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	1123 Celebration Ave Suite 103, Moneta, VA, 24121
Phone Number	5403281970
Email	bcamden@zitel.com
Secondary Contact Name	Rodney Gray
Title	COO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	1123 Celebration Ave Suite 103, Moneta, VA, 24121
Phone Number	5403281970
Email	rgray@zitel.com
FCC Registration Number (FRN):	29764370
Registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) - (Yes/No)	Yes
Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number	DE18EXPGKKM6
Federal Tax ID Number	82-2700487
SC State Vendor Number	7000324906

Section 1.2 - Project Name/Number

Project Number (Format XXX-XX)	ZTL-32
Project Name	Berkley
Project Priority (1-5, 1 serving as highest priority for applicant)	2

Section 1.3 - Broadband Service Provider Context

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Submission	December 31, 2018
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Submission	31-Dec-23
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	201
Estimated Percentage Underground	74.00%
Estimated Percentage Aerial	26.00%

Section 1.5 - Project Timeline

Project Start Date	July 1, 2024
Project Construction Activity Begins	October 1, 2024
Project Construction Activity Completion	August 1, 2025

Customer Premises

<i>Initiation of Operations (premise installations begin)</i>	January 1, 2025
Overall Project Completion Date	December 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)	100/20
What is the monthly cost of the plan?	\$ 34.99
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)	24 Months

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.	Yes
If yes, how many locations will be added?	Select One
If yes, specify the duration the applicant will offer this service.	2 years

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. 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 Implement
Diversify connectivity by including more than a single tier-one provider as an access point to the Internet through the ISP's network. 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		\$ 5,915,915.92
Applicant-Provided Funding		\$ 3,943,943.95
Third-Party Funding Source (if applicable)		\$ -
Total Project Cost		\$ 9,859,859.87
Percentage Funds Requested from SC Broadband Office		60%
Percentage Funds from Applicant Match		40%
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.

This project was selected based on the geographic similarity to ZiTEL's home county of Bedford, VA. The rural area, we believe, fits perfectly with how we conduct business, our plans and install process are designed to keep the rural population and their needs in mind. We have a tailored process that is the best for this area. ZiTEL chose the Berkley area to build a footprint, as its demographic, economic and geographic make up closely resemble that of ZiTELs first rural build, the Smith Mountain Lake Areas of VA. ZiTEL believes this will give us an opportunity to have an advantage in how we build and deliver service to this area and allow us to duplicate our success in VA to SC

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).

Tele-Health will now be an option. Driving workforce opportunities and continuing education from home brings low income or home-bound into the world. Working remotely gives the citizens a competitive edge to apply for higher paying jobs around the world. Access to streaming media to put the world's entertainment at their fingertips. Families with k-12 children will have school choice, tools, and information available to them that was out of their reach and will close the digital divide.

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.

ZiTEL understands there is a small portion of this build that overlaps with an existing RDOF area. This area while mostly middle mile to get from one area of unserved addresses to another is important to the overall continuity of our build. The RDOF area is slated over six years to build and ZiTEL is prepared to provide service to these home within the next 12 to 16 months so the time to market is the ultimate need for the citizens in this area. Quality high speed broadband service is a utility that the people need now not in 4 to 6 years .

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

ZiTEL's involvement with the community where we have employees and offices is a strong point of who we are as a company. ZiTEL will provide a 15% discount for services to all 501.3c organizations that sign up for service within the grant footprint, all Volunteer EMS and Fire Stations, schools and churches fall into that category. ZiTEL will become a member of the civic and business organizations that are in the area, i.e., Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, etc., to promote the service and deliver news of the service to local businesses. During the duration of the project ZiTEL will post signs on all routes as construction continues and ZiTEL will also be placing advertising and notification door hangers on all eligible addresses along fiber routes as construction progresses. Door hangers serve two purposes for ZiTEL, first they notify citizens about the construction process coming and the work occurring in their front yard, as we place the hangers within 5 days of construction, and secondly, this is a form of grass roots marketing that in our opinion is the most effective way to notify citizens about the coming product and service and offers the greatest adoption rate.

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?

ZiTEL will provide free public Wi-Fi in and around our point of presence (PoP) locations that are co-located in Government Facilities like Whitesville Rural Volunteer Fire Department and Moncks Corner Fire Department for as long as that co-location partnership exists. ZiTEL will agree to hold 2 digital literacy training sessions, one at each of the PoP locations, open to the public, for a duration of 1 hour where we will explain what high-speed internet is, what the different bandwidths are, and we will explain the various technologies that can improve their lives by having access to broadband internet. We will also answer any questions that the public has. These meetings will occur within the final 6 months of the project in the Berkley Area. ZiTEL will also commit to maintaining links to online training to various organizations that provide free digital literacy training programs available to the general public, these links will be available within 3 months of beginning construction in the Berkley Area. ZiTEL will notify the South Carolina Broadband Office when the trainings have been scheduled and a copy of the agenda will be provided.

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.

Once awarded, ZiTEL will work closely with the Berkeley County Government and Moncks Corner Town Government to coordinate public meetings, meetings with HOAs and local businesses to inform the target markets of the affordability of our services and about the various options and packages we offer. ZiTEL will offer free installations and activation to all of the grant area. ZiTEL will implement a policy to offer a free 1000' drop to all residents in the grant area, and for those residents that have a drop greater in distance than 1000' we have a few low cost of only \$1.25 per foot above 1000 and those costs can be spread over monthly payments of 12/24 and 36 months. ZiTEL will offer various discounts to the local communities, for example we offer a 15% 501.3c discount to all non-profit organizations, which includes all Churches.

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.

Select one

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	Mears Group, Inc.
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Corporation
Role within proposed project	OSP - Constuction
Primary Contact Name	Ryan E McGee
Title	Constrator Relations Manager
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	300 West Mercer Street Dripping Springs, TX 78620
Phone Number	217-494-1476
Email	ryan.mcgee@mears.net

5.2 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Millennium Infrastructure Fund
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Corporation
Role within proposed project	Financial Backing
Primary Contact Name	KEVIN F. CZAICKI
Title	VP of Broadband Solutions
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	2121 HOBBS DR. DELAVAN, WI 53115
Phone Number	573.814.9714
Email	kevin.czaicki@mtpllc.us

5.3 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Millennium
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Corporation
Role within proposed project	Materials Management
Primary Contact Name	Joe Michael
Title	Market Manager
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	5831 Center Road Valley City, OH 44280
Phone Number	216.282.3700
Email	joe.michael@mtpllc.us

5.4 - 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	

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6.1 - Attachment Checklist

(Please attach the following items to application)

GIS Shapefiles

Proposed 2020 Census Blocks

Yes

Proposed Fiber/Cable Lines

Yes

Proposed Structures Served by Type

Yes

Proposed Network Junctions

Yes

Signed affidavit certifying grant application is complete and accurate

Yes

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

Yes

Letters of support and strategic partnerships

Yes

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

Yes

Certificates of Insurance

Yes

Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Yes