

**South Carolina 2022 ARPA Grant
Program
Application SFRF 1.0**



Section 1.1 - Applicant Information

Legal Entity/Organization Name	Palmetto Telephone Communications, LLC
Parent Organization	Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Corporation - Non-profit
Primary Contact Name	Jason J. Dandridge
Title	Chief Executive Officer
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	PO Drawer 1577, Walterboro, SC 29488
Phone Number	843-538-9331
Email	jason.dandridge@prtc.us
FCC Registration Number (FRN):	0003741386
Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number	07-909-5073
Registered in the System for Award Management (SAM)	Yes
SAM Number	NC37NEJLNU9
SC State Vendor Number	7000025358 and 7000127799

Section 1.2 - Project Name/Number

Project Number (Format XXX-XX)	PEC-24
Project Name	PalmettoLink - North

Section 1.3 - Broadband Service Provider Context

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission	August 27, 2014
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission	7/28/2022
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
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Section 1.5 - Proposed Broadband Pricing Tiers

Rates less than \$10/month (YES/NO)
 If yes to \$10 month plan what are the upload/download speeds
 Rates between \$10 - \$14.99 (YES/NO)
 If yes to \$10 - \$14.99 month plan what are the upload/download speeds
 Rates between \$15 - \$19.99 (YES/NO)
 If yes to \$15 - \$19.99 month plan what are the upload/download speeds
 Rates between \$20 - \$24.99 (YES/NO)
 If yes to \$20 - \$24.99 month plan what are the upload/download speeds
 Rates between \$25 - \$34.99 (YES/NO)
 If yes to \$25 - \$34.99 month plan what are the upload/download speeds

Do the above speed tiers include unlimited data? (YES/NO)
 Is a Consumer-based Contract Required? (YES/NO)
 Is the pricing fixed? (YES/NO)
 What's the duration of the pricing? (In Months)

No
No
No
No
No
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

Section 1.6 - Project Timeline
(Maximum Timeline Allotted is 24 months)

Project Start Date	January 1, 2023
Project Construction Activity Begins	January 1, 2023
Project Construction Activity Complete	December 31, 2024

Customer Premises	2406
<i>Installations Begin</i>	January 1, 2023
<i>Installations End</i>	December 31, 2024

Overall Project Completion Date	December 31, 2024
Will the project be completed within 24 months of official Notice to Proceed (NTP)?	Yes

Section 1.7 - Project Service Area Information

Estimated Miles of Fiber to be Installed	588
Estimated Percentage Underground	8.4%
Estimated Percentage Aerial	91.6%

Number of Counties to be Impacted	3
County Names	Allendale, Hampton, and Jasper

Total Number of Census Blocks with Concentrations of K-12	127
Total number of Census Blocks in DDA's	0
Total number of Census Blocks NOT in DDA or K-12 Concentration	109
Total Number of unserved 2020 Census Blocks part of Proposed Project	236

Total number of housing units served	2295
Total number of businesses served	110
Total number of other Public Facilities e.g. community centers, fire stations served	1
Total Structures Served	2406
Average Cost Per Structure Served	\$ 7,604.38

Does the applicant plan to serve every structure in the proposed project service area?	No
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If no, provide an explanation for why the Project will not Pass all Homes in the proposed project service area

The Project will serve 100% in Priority Census Blocks and at least 80% in Unserved Census Blocks in accordance with ORS guidelines.

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Section 2.2 - Funding Details

Description	Comment	Amount
South Carolina ARPA Broadband Grant Program Funds requested		\$ 9,148,068.00
Applicant-Provided Funding		\$ 337,392.00
Third-Party Funding Source (if applicable)		\$ 8,810,676.00
Total Project Cost		\$ 18,296,136.00
Percentage Funds Requested from SC Broadband Office		50%
Percentage Funds from Applicant Match		2%
Percentage Funds from Third Party Funding Source		48%

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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.

Agree

The Project will comply with the requirements set forth in ARPA, South Carolina Act No. ____ 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 March 3, 2021, and December 31, 2024 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

PalmettoLink is a partnership between Palmetto Telephone Cooperative (PTC) and Palmetto Electric Cooperative (PECI). PRTC/PTC has executed a Network Services Agreement with PECI to lease parts of a PECI dark fiber network to provide high-speed broadband services under the PalmettoLink brand name. PECI will continue to build-out its fiber network across its existing distribution infrastructure and beyond, to include many priority and underserved census blocks as identified by the ORS in rural Allendale, Hampton, and Jasper Counties. The fiber network will provide subscribers with access to advanced services including symmetrical high-speed broadband, telehealth, online education, economic development opportunities, and more. PTC will engage local leaders, some of which have written letters of support, to help promote the project in these areas that currently do not have access to broadband.

Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines."

PTC in partnership with PECI will expand broadband infrastructure to households, business, and communities in Jasper, Hampton and Allendale counties that are unserved or underserved by broadband services. All residents and businesses in this submitted Project Service Area will be served in a manner that is non-discriminatory, at speeds equal to or greater than the minimum required without additional construction or startup costs to the customer. This project area includes high-priority areas, and the census blocks are unserved according to the SC Broadband Office 3/2022 eligibility map. The minimum number or more of the housing units in the entire census block(s) in this application will be served. The housing units in the census block(s) have been identified to best of our ability. The infrastructure and associated equipment that will be deployed will be able to provide 1GB symmetrical speeds. This project does not overbuild another provider's existing wired broadband network. PTC will adhere to the SC Universal Service Broadband Requirement. This project will be completed by 12/31/2024. PTC will participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) for the life of the ACP program. PTC will provide affordable high-speed internet plan options. PTC will comply with all federal and state ARPA SFRF requirements, for which Grantees of public funds are responsible.

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.

To PTC's knowledge and according to the SC ORS Broadband office's maps, this proposed project is not in an area that is subject to an existing federal or state funding commitment for broadband investment and is considered unserved or underserved for broadband service.

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

PTC recognizes that broadband is a necessity and want to make sure that everyone no matter where they live have access to quality broadband service. PTC will work with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the local school districts to advertise broadband to low-income customers and households with students enrolled in grades K-12. PTC participates in the FCC's Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). These programs help make broadband affordable for customers by providing up to \$39.25 in credit per month . At the time of new service, customer service representatives inform customers and prospective customers about Lifeline and ACP. PTC has a strong relationship with local leaders and will work with them to address barriers that prevent customers from adopting broadband. PTC is committed to educating the community by offering a free computer class to customers who are not familiar with broadband and the apps that are available to them.

As part of the Project, explain how the Applicant will make efforts to increase digital literacy, for example, support through online training?

PRTC/PTC provided free face-to-face digital literacy classes in a classroom setting for several years. PTC ended the program due to lack of interest and participation. PTC will continue to promote and support digital literacy by informing residents of free online digital literacy curriculum. PTC will promote and provide the following URL: <https://www.learnmyway.com/> site. PTC has vetted the site and highly recommends it. An online class allows each person to choose the time and pace for which they learn.

As part of the Project, identify any areas that the Applicant would be willing to provide public Wi-Fi in a central or community location to improve access for all South Carolinians and for what period of time.

PTC will provide public Wi-Fi in the proposed service area in locations that will provide the most benefit to the residents of the area. PTC will work with local leaders to explore and find the best locations to deploy public Wi-Fi. (For example: Lake Warren State Park, rural fire departments, etc....)

List documents that demonstrate your organization currently has the necessary funds to complete this project/proposal. Attach documents to this proposal.

Please see the affidavit in the files named "PEC-23 - Section 4.1 - Affidavit Certifying Funds to complete Project" and "PEC-23 - Section 4 - Support for Funds to complete Project - PECI2" certifying PTC and PECI have the funds available to complete the project.

List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.	
No lease, franchise agreement or interconnection agreement is required to offer broadband service in the proposed project area. PTC will require railroad crossing permits and two SCDOT permits Permit # 253864 and Permit # 253824 for crossing near I-95. We maintain blanket Permits with SCDOT in Beaufort, Jasper, Hampton and Allendale Counties for Traffic Control During Utility Emergency Work or Routine Maintenance Operations, and for Utility Service Connections.	
Will the Project deliver broadband in the approved Project Service 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 Service Area on the general affordability needs of the target markets.	
PTC will promote lifeline and ACP programs through bill inserts, social media, and the local newspaper. PTC and PECI will work in conjunction with local government officials in the project service area to determine the best way PTC can meet the community needs and make the residents aware of the programs that will help make broadband 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.	

<p>If awarded, will the Grant funds be used to overbuild another existing broadband provider or to reimburse expenses related to overbuilding another broadband provider?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If yes to above, explain.</p>	
<p></p>	
<p>Is there an identified need in the Project Service Area for additional broadband infrastructure that is not met by existing federal or state funding commitments?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If so, explain whether service to households and businesses in the Project Service Area should require a holistic approach that provides service to a wider area in order to make ongoing service of certain households or businesses within the service area economical.</p>	
<p></p>	

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5.1 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Not-for-profit cooperative
Role within proposed project	Partner
Primary Contact Name	Berl Davis
Title	President/CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	4063 Grays Highway, Ridgeland, SC 29936
Phone Number	843-208-5500
Email	bdavis@palmetto.coop

5.2 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Congressman James Clyburn
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Individual
Role within proposed project	Endorser
Primary Contact Name	Congressman James Clyburn
Title	US House of Representative - Majority Whip
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	274 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20
Phone Number	202-225-3315
Email	kennedy.anderson@mail.house.gov

5.3 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Senator Margie Bright Matthews
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Individual
Role within proposed project	Endorser
Primary Contact Name	Senator Margie Bright Matthews
Title	Senator
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	PO Box 499, Walterboro, SC 29488
Phone Number	803-212-6088
Email	margiebrightmatthews@scsenate.gov

5.4 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Senator Tom Davis
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Individual
Role within proposed project	Endorser
Primary Contact Name	Senator Tom Davis
Title	Senator
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	PO Drawer 1107, Beaufort, SC 29901
Phone Number	843-524-6401
Email	tomdavis@scsenate.gov

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6.1 - Attachment Checklist

(Please attach the following items to application)

GIS Shapefiles

Proposed 2020 Census Blocks

Yes

Proposed Service Areas

Yes

Proposed Fiber/Cable Lines

Yes

Proposed Structures Served by Type

Yes

Proposed Network Junctions

Yes

6.2 Signed affidavit certifying grant application is complete and accurate

Yes

Partners for financial support related to proposed project or non-cash support provide associated documentation.

Yes

Letters of support evidencing community need and strategic partnerships

Yes

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

Yes

Certificates of Insurance

Yes

Certificates of Bonding, as described in CFR § 200.326 Bonding requirements.

Yes

Any additional information evidencing community need for project

No