

South Carolina 2023 ARPA Grant Program Application CPF 1.0



Section 1.1 - Applicant Information

Legal Entity/Organization Name	Home Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a Home Telecom
Parent Organization	Home Telephone Company, Inc.
Entity Type (e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Corporation
Primary Contact Name	Jamie Peagler
Title	Executive Administrative Assistant
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	579 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone Number	843-761-9129
Email	Jamie.Peagler@hometelco.com

Section 1.2 - Project Name/Number

Project Number (Format XXX-XX)	HTC-04
Project Name	SC CPF-02
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	September 1, 2000
Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Submission	April 6, 2023
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.

Will all structures be served with the same technology type?

Estimated Miles of Fiber to be Installed

Estimated Percentage Underground

Estimated Percentage Aerial

Fiber to the Premises Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds 100/100 Mbps
Yes
86
98.00%
2.00%

Section 1.5 - Project Timeline
(Maximum Timeline Allotted is 24 months)

Project Start Date

Project Construction Activity Begins

Project Construction Activity Completion

November 17, 2023
March 1, 2024
October 31, 2025

Customer Premises

Initiation of Operations (premise installations begin)

Overall Project Completion Date

Will the project be completed within

24 months of official Notice to Proceed (NTP)?

July 15, 2024
October 31, 2025
Yes

Section 1.6 - ESA Project

Does this project include a Main Street Eligible Service Area?
(YES/NO)

No

Section 1.7 - 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)

What is the monthly cost of the plan?

Does the above speed tier include unlimited data? (YES/NO)

Is a Consumer-based Contract Required? (YES/NO)

Is the pricing fixed? (YES/NO)

If no, what's the duration?

100/100
\$59.95
Yes
No
Yes

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Section 2.1 - Project Construction Costs

Section 2.2 - In-kind Match (for Main Street Projects only)

Type	Description	Qty	Rate	Amount
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
In-Kind Match				
Total				\$ -

Total Project Cost and In-Kind Match	#REF!
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Section 2.3 - Funding Details

Description	Comment	Amount
South Carolina ARPA Broadband Grant Program Funds requested		\$ 4,730,689.60
Applicant-Provided Funding		\$ 2,547,594.40
Third-Party Funding Source (if applicable) - List Source		\$ -
In-Kind Match (for Main Street Projects only)		\$ -
Total Project Cost		\$ 7,277,984.00
Percentage Funds Requested from SC Broadband Office		65.00%
Percentage Funds from Applicant Match		35.00%
Percentage Funds from Third Party Funding Source		0.00%
Percentage Funds from In-Kind Match		0.00%

**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 (or its successor) for the life of ACP for the Project Area.

Agree

Applicant will provide at least one low-cost residential option without data usage caps at a minimum speed of 100/20 for a documented 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, including covered telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment provided or produced by entities owned or controlled by the People's Republic of China and telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

Agree

The Applicant, to the extent practicable and consistent with applicable law under the award, will provide a preference for the procurement or use of goods, products, or materials produced in the United States as described in 2 C.F.R. 200.322 and Executive Order 14005 Ensuring the Future is Made in All by All of America's Workers (January 25, 2021).

Agree

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

Agree

The Project includes pre-project Engineering uses or costs

Disagree

If Yes to above, the pre-development Engineering uses or costs will be (1) tied to an eligible broadband project or reasonably expected to lead to such a project; (2) necessary for the efficient and timely performance of eligible Projects; and (3) incurred after March 15, 2021, but prior to execution of the Grant Agreement.

Select one

Applicant will encourage its employees, contractors, and subcontractors to adopt and enforce on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for their employees when operating company-owned, rented or personally owned vehicles pursuant to Executive Order 13043, 62 FR 19217 (April 8, 1997).

Agree

Applicant will encourage its employees, contractors, and subcontractors to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving.

Agree

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 except item 1)

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.

Home proposes to expand its advanced Fiber-to-the-Premise network to unserved portions of Berkeley and Dorchester counties that are not provided for by any other funded project. The total estimated cost to build broadband within these areas is \$7.3 million. This project consists of approximately 86 miles of underground mainline fiber optic cables, installing approximately 86 miles of fiber optic service drops, all splicing, handholes, bores, and other ancillary construction, installation, and provisioning of the necessary fiber optic electronics needed to deliver up to 10 GBPS synchronous speeds.

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

The 69 census blocks proposed in this application are very rural, and in nearly every area i) the average commute time to work is 30 minutes, ii) the poverty level is 15% or greater, iii) nearly every school is a Title I school, and iv) only around 10% of residents have completed secondary education. Of these proposed census blocks, 27 are considered priority census blocks. One priority census block has a concentration of 20 or more K-12 students, 21 have no ISP provider at all, and 12 are located within a HUD Difficult Development area. 8 of the priority census blocks contain at least two of the aforementioned challenges. These census blocks represent 1,353 residents, businesses, and anchor institutions that would have access to broadband should Home's application be accepted. With fiber-to-the-premise technology, advanced broadband could assist these residents by allowing them to work from home (saving them time and money), provide quick and convenient access to telehealth, and enhance the education experience of students within these census blocks. Additionally, businesses within these communities will have a chance to thrive, and anchor institutions will be able to find resources at the click of a button to further cement their presence within the community.

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.

While we do not believe this to be an instance of "an area that is subject to an existing federal or state funding commitment for reliable speeds of 100/20 Mbps" or "additional broadband investment," Home is the recipient of ReConnect grants. The ReConnect boundaries are not defined by census blocks, so there are census blocks that are only partially funded by ReConnect. Additionally, ReConnect-1 also defines unserved at 10/1, which differs from the current 25/3 definition. There are areas within the ReConnect areas that do not qualify under the 10/1 definition, but would qualify under the 25/3 definition. This application is targeted to include only necessary construction to build broadband to areas that are not funded by ReConnect. While graphically the shapefiles appear to overlap, there will be no overlap in funding construction.

Describe your plans or programs you will implement to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal.

Home Telecom promotes the Affordable Connectivity Program and Lifeline to ensure our internet plans are even more accessible to those on a fixed or low income. One way Home ensures the program materials are reaching those in most need is with our partnership with Trident United Way. Trident United Way supports a large Food Share program in Berkeley County, SC, that was recently expanded. The Food Share program serves an average of 50 families per week. TUW has agreed to provide the Affordable Connectivity Program and Lifeline flyers in each food box provided to qualifying homes. In addition, Palmetto Care Connections has agreed to conduct training sessions on the ACP and Lifeline application process in various Berkeley County Community Centers. Home also has convenient resources to sign up for service with an address based online shop tool that makes it simple for residents to know what services are available at their address. Home Telecom also manages and promotes the GigUPTriCounty.com website that allows residents to express interest in better internet for their address. The information is stored and followed up with using the Salesforce CRM tool.

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

Home is part of the Lowcountry Digital Equity Coalition (LDEC) headed by Tri-County Cradle to Career with a purpose of making the internet accessible, increasing adoption, and keeping it affordable. Through this partnership (which includes roughly 20 other organizations throughout South Carolina), we are coming up with creative ways to tackle these issues, including partnering with the local libraries and creating an “Internet 101 Basics” video to circulate. Home has also partnered with the Berkeley County Chamber of Commerce to support their “Rural Initiative” program. In addition to Home Telecom, Berkeley Chamber has partnered with Google to provide hard-wired connections both indoor and outdoor, community Wi-Fi and computers to seven rural community centers throughout Berkeley County. Working along with other partners such as SC Digital Equity Group and major hospitals (Roper, Trident, and MUSC), the goal of the “Rural Initiative” is to educate rural residents by providing certified digital training classes and telehealth training to help residents learn how to use computers to find employment and access virtual healthcare. As part of the partnership with the Berkeley Chamber and the “Rural Initiative” program, Google will be holding Digital Certification programs for basic computer use. Depending upon the support needed, Home Telecom will either provide funding or additional training support such as how to use the computer to set up email, create a resume, apply for jobs, access healthcare via telehealth appointments, or take training classes for gainful employment.

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

Home Telecom has partnered with the Berkeley Chamber to provide free Wi-Fi and hard-wired connections for Telehealth purposes in five rural Berkeley County Community Centers for an unlimited amount of time:

- Cross Community Center- 1690 Old Hwy. 6, Cross, SC 29436
- Tri-Community Center- 1708 Poplar Hill Dr., Cross, SC 29436
- Alvin Recreation Center- 2191 Santee River Rd., St. Stephen, SC 29479
- Wassamassaw Recreation Center- 1023 Queenie Rd., Moncks Corner, SC 29461
- St. Stephen Library- 113 Ravenell Dr., St. Stephen, SC 29479
- Keith School- 1509 Clements Ferry Rd., Charleston, SC 29492

Home Telecom also provides free community Wi-Fi in various public parks for an unlimited amount of time – Nexton Square, Nexton Brown Family Park, Moncks Corner Recreational Facility, Daniel Island Governor’s Park, and Ashley Park in Summerville.

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 Area on the general affordability needs of the target markets.

Home consistently promotes the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and Lifeline, and recently simplified our website to make the sign-up process simpler to follow. With ACP and Lifeline combined, qualified residents can sign up for 100 Mbps for less than \$1.00. Trident United Way supports a large Food Share program in Berkeley County, SC that was recently expanded. The Food Share program serves an average of 50 families per week. TUW has agreed to provide the Affordable Connectivity Program and Lifeline flyers in each food box provided to qualifying homes. Palmetto Care Connections has agreed to conduct training sessions on the ACP and Lifeline application process in various Berkeley County Community Centers. In addition to this classroom-style training, Home Telecom provides the necessary materials to local libraries in Berkeley, Dorchester and Charleston counties for their staff to hold additional training classes to help residents apply for ACP.

What network resiliency strategies will be leveraged to ensure facilities remain operational?	
<p>Home’s FTTP access network uses a Passive Optical Network (PON) design with one fiber in the drop to the premise. The fiber network has splitters with a 1/32 split in the outside plant. Connectivity to the Internet is provided by three fully redundant tier one providers. This network is currently capable of providing 1 Gig/10 Gig speeds on the FTTP plant and has the ability to support more bandwidth by upgrading electronics as technology advances.</p> <p>Home’s core network is comprised of 44 Cisco ASR routers and 6 fully redundant rings, each comprised of redundant DWDM product architectures. Home’s Remote Offices are designed and equipped to support the operation of communications networks and includes HVAC equipment, standby generators with fuel for 24 hours of run time, and battery strings with at least 8 hours of reserve capacity. Thus, the network common equipment proposed in this undertaking will be powered so as to remain in service even when there is a complete failure of commercial power. The ONTs at customer sites can also be equipped with battery backup and will be operable for up to 8 hours during periods when commercial power services fail.</p> <p>Home provides voice service using 2 Metaswitch Class 5 Softswitches. For voice intraLATA and interLATA services, Home has direct trunks to multiple providers. The company has Feature Group C trunks to the AT&T Access Tandem in Charleston, SC.</p> <p>Home has a Video Head End located at its Moncks Corner central office and transports RF and IP video via dedicated fibers to each remote office. Local video is provided to the head end via direct fiber connections to five local TV stations. As a backup, local channels are also received “off-air” should a problem occur with the direct fiber feeds. The additional video feed to the head end is received from commercial satellite and terminates on our local satellite dish. The transport of video service over fiber will be facilitated through the use of video streaming technology.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	No
If no to above, explain.	
<p>As detailed throughout this application, Home Telecom’s project prioritizes investment in fiber-optic infrastructure and provides affordability options including the participation in ACP. However, Home Telecom is organized as a private ‘C’ corporation.</p>	
<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>	No
If yes to above, explain.	

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5.1 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Dorchester County Government
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Governmental Entity
Role within proposed project	Provided a letter of Support
Primary Contact Name	Jason Ward
Title	Dorchester County Administrator
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	201 Johnson Street St. George, SC 29477
Phone Number	843-832-0195
Email	JWalters@dorchestercountysc.gov

5.2 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Non-Profit
Role within proposed project	Non-Financial Partnership for Rural Initiative Program
Primary Contact Name	Elaine Morgan
Title	CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	P.O. Box 968 Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone Number	843-761-8238
Email	emorgan@bcoc.com

5.3 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Trident United Way
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Non-Profit
Role within proposed project	Non-Financial Partnership to Promote ACP
Primary Contact Name	David "DJ" Hampton, II
Title	President & CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	P.O. Box 63305, North Charleston, SC 29419
Phone Number	843-740-9000
Email	dhampton@tuw.org

5.4 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	Tri-County Cradle to Career
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Non-Profit
Role within proposed project	Non-Financial Partnership to Promote Digital Equity
Primary Contact Name	Phyllis Martin
Title	CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	2180 McMillan Ave #71544, North Charleston, SC 29415
Phone Number	843-732-8221
Email	phyllis@tricountycradletocareer.org

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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

Existing Fiber/Cable Lines

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

Main Street Work Plan

No

Any additional information evidencing community need for project

Yes