



BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM
OneTone Telecom

SUCCESS STORY

OneTone Telecom (OneTone) provides broadband internet service to Oconee County in the Upstate of South Carolina. OneTone provides broadband to county governments, law-enforcement facilities, schools, emergency services, enterprises, small businesses, and residential customers.

OneTone received over \$1 million in CARES Act funding for its project to help expand broadband infrastructure in South Carolina.

Impact to Community

With the high cost of fiber-optic construction and the limited access to wireless due to the terrain, expanding broadband has been difficult in Oconee County. Receiving CARES Act funding allowed OneTone to install infrastructure that delivers high-speed fiber broadband to customers. The CARES Act project installed fiber to the premises, providing a maximum speed of 1,000 Mbps/1,000 Mbps.

Access to high-speed broadband can benefit economic development. Companies looking to locate to the area now have access to fiber broadband. Small businesses now also have access to adequate broadband.

OneTone continues to provide free Wi-Fi at community centers and other locations while expanding broadband in Oconee County. The company is utilizing proper-owner associations, flyers, and door hangers to notify residents that broadband is available in the area.

AT A GLANCE

Number of Projects: 1

Total Project Cost: \$2,100,000

CARES Act Funding: \$1,050,000

Households Passed*: 1,584

Businesses Passed: 2

Technology deployed:
Fiber to premises

Minimum download/upload speeds:
1,000 Mbps/1,000 Mbps

**The residence or business is eligible to subscribe to services.*



“ Before, we had to use hotspots off our cell phones to connect to the internet. Our internet speed now is really good, especially for my son who is doing his schoolwork virtually. He was back in school full-time, but they cancelled his school for two weeks because of the number of COVID cases. Since his mother and I work and he doesn't have a cell phone, he wouldn't have been able to do his schoolwork without this project. Our speed is very fast now and he loves it. ”

*Samuel Harvey
Residential customer in Walhalla, SC*

Helping Consumers During COVID-19

With limited access to health-care facilities, many residents previously had to travel out of their immediate area to health-care centers. OneTone's CARES Act project allows residents the ability to perform virtual telehealth visits with health-care facilities and hospitals using high-speed internet, thereby reducing the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus to others.

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Many students in the Oconee County School District and nearby higher-education institutions are attending classes virtually. High-speed internet allows students to continue learning while at home.

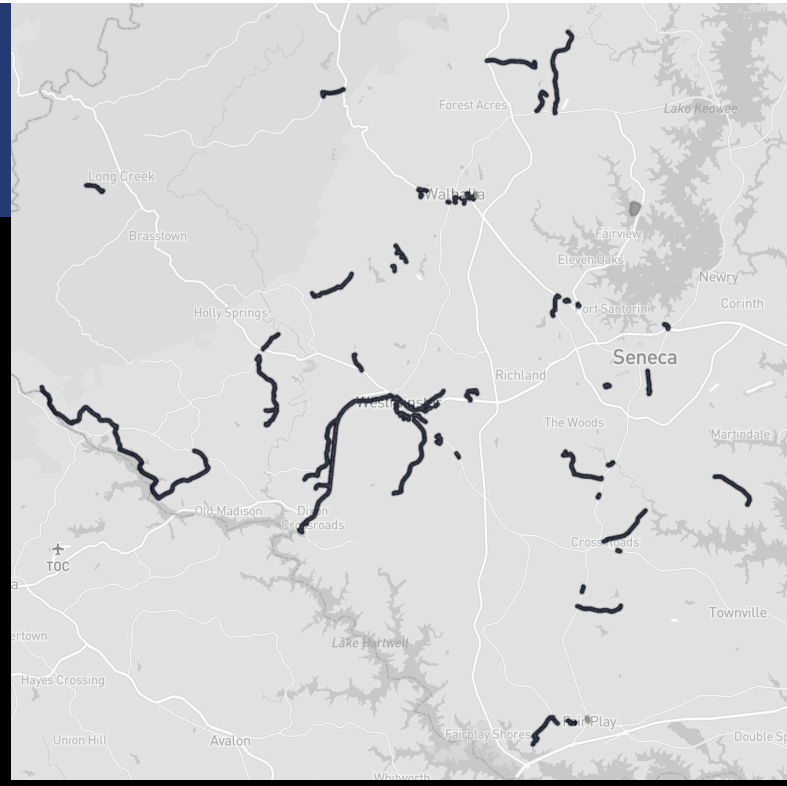
Many companies have required employees to work from home. Employees are now able to complete work previously hindered by the lack of broadband access. Additionally, these employees are able to share bandwidth with their children who may be attending school virtually.



Project Area

OneTone's project was completed in the following county:

- Oconee



Average Cost

The average cost is determined by taking the total cost of the project and dividing by the number of locations. This is the average cost based on the amount of CARES Act funding received and not what a consumer would pay.

Per Location Served: \$3,940

CARES Act

The South Carolina General Assembly passed Act 142 authorizing the ORS to expend up to \$50 million for broadband initiatives related to COVID-19. The expansion of broadband infrastructure emphasized services to rural communities and communities with a high prevalence of COVID-19 or with demographic characteristics consistent with risk factors for COVID-19.



About the Office of Regulatory Staff

The ORS represents consumers of investor-owned utilities in South Carolina before the PSC. The PSC is the state agency that sets utilities' rates. The ORS must look at the impact to the consumer and utilities' continued investment in reliable and high-quality services.

