

# South Carolina 2024 ARPA Grant Program Application SLFRF 3.0



## 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
Secondary Contact Name	Melissa Flowers
Title	Staff Accountant
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	579 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone Number	843-761-9101
Email	Melissa.Flowers@hometelco.com
FCC Registration Number (FRN):	0020980116
Registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) - (Yes/No)	Yes
Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number	R4YZCGC7CJB8
Federal Tax ID Number	57-0339548
SC State Vendor Number	7000025359

## Section 1.2 - Project Name/Number

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

HTC-05	
SC ARPA-03	
	1

## Section 1.3 - Broadband Service Provider Context

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Submission  
 Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Submission  
 Applicant has experience delivering broadband service via fiber and/or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure (YES/NO)

	September 1, 2000
	1-Mar-24
	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	
No	
	74
	95.00%
	5.00%

## Section 1.5 - Project Timeline

Project Start Date  
 Project Construction Activity Begins  
 Project Construction Activity Completion

	June 30, 2024
	September 15, 2024
	November 1, 2025

### **Customer Premises**

*Initiation of Operations (premise installations begin)*

	February 1, 2025
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Overall Project Completion Date  
 Will the project be completed within 24 months of official Notice to Proceed (NTP)?

	June 30, 2026
	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)	100/100
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)	2 years

### **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?	1
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.	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 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		\$ 5,623,921.00
Applicant-Provided Funding		\$ 4,072,495.00
Third-Party Funding Source (if applicable)		\$ -
Total Project Cost		\$ 9,696,416.00
Percentage Funds Requested from SC Broadband Office		58%
Percentage Funds from Applicant Match		42%
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.**

Home proposes to expand its state-of-the-art broadband network to unserved and underserved portions of Berkeley and Dorchester Counties that do not currently meet the 100/20 standard or are funded by any other broadband grant project. Home will complete the project by utilizing both XGS-PON fiber technology and a Hi-Split, fiber-deep HFC network consisting of approximately 74 miles of new underground mainline fiber optic cables and upgrading its existing HFC infrastructure where needed. This hybrid network approach will result in a significantly lower cost per passing while providing the capability to deliver multi-GBPS synchronous speeds to more than 7,300 ARPA 3.0 eligible locations utilizing less than \$5.7 million in public funds.

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).**

ER overcrowding has been an issue for quite some time. MUSC cites part of the reason for overcrowding as an increase in elderly patients and disadvantaged patients without primary care and is reducing their patient load by utilizing telehealth. Telehealth doesn't only benefit hospitals. Patients with reliable broadband can use telehealth to access healthcare without leaving home or work, therefore alleviating some of the expenses of medical care including lost wages and transportation.

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 from the USDA and APRA 1.0 and Capital Project Fund grants from the ORS. ReConnect boundaries are not defined by census blocks, so there are census blocks that are only partially funded by ReConnect. Additionally, there are areas within ReConnect, ARPA 1.0, and CFP that did not previously qualify for funding as served as was defined as either 10/1 or 25/3 at the time these projects were awarded. This application is targeted to include only necessary construction to build broadband to areas not funded by other projects. While the shapefiles may appear to overlap graphically, there will be no overlap in funding construction.

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

Two pop-up events in high traffic areas will be implemented. Home has identified a rural local business as a likely candidate for an informational pop-up event within one month of Fiber being lit. Home has also begun discussions with a second rural local business regarding the second event within three months of Fiber being lit. It is Home's goal to provide a convenient location for residents to learn about the services coming to them and provide them with an incentive to acquire our services.

With less than 43% of the Cross, SC community holding a high school diploma (according 2021 US Census data), Home believes a core adoption target would be towards families with children less than 18 years old. Home will select two well-attended family-centric events (such as rural youth sporting events and local farms open to the public) and will have a staffed table there to discuss fiber internet with attendees. The ability to adequately access the resources students need online is crucial to being successful in the classroom. Home will take pictures to document the completion of each event.

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?

Home Telecom values digital literacy because it improves residents' lives. One program Home is excited to provide in partnership with Berkeley Electric Cooperative is Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) through AARP. This "train the trainer" program's purpose is to promote digital literacy by empowering senior adults to take advantage of the technology available today with tools and training. Once residents go through this program, they will understand how the internet opens doors for them. Home will schedule the first of two programs within 4 months of Fiber being lit in the area and will take pictures to document the successful completion of the program.

Since telehealth has increased in popularity due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Home will be working with Palmetto Care Connections to schedule two telehealth training courses that can be attended in-person at a community center or a public space within easy driving distance. This training will be scheduled within six months of Fiber being lit in the community. Home will take pictures to document the completion of this training.

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.

Leadership at Home Telecom keeps in close contact with our community leaders through shared organizations we are a part of, like the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce. We welcome feedback and encourage council members to bring anything of concern directly to us. At Home Telecom, we have appointed a Community Engagement Coordinator whose priority is to maintain and develop those community relations. As such, that employee will be contacting community leaders regularly (bi-monthly) to gain their feedback and keep them informed regarding our progress.

As a participant in the Affordable Connectivity Program, we've seen first-hand the need for affordable services. In fact, when we were informed of the directive to being "wind down" process for ACP, we started researching introducing a low-income internet offering in addition to our current Community Connect offer. We are committed to providing a replacement high speed internet plan to help with the impact felt by the removal of the ACP discount. We expect to have this low-income plan in place before construction begins for this grant.

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.

No

If no to above, explain.

As detailed throughout this application, Home Telecom's project prioritizes investment in fiber-optic infrastructure and provides affordability options including participation in the ACP. However, Home Telecom is organized as a private "C" corporation.

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	Berkeley Electric Cooperative
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Electric Cooperative
Role within proposed project	Partner
Primary Contact Name	Michael Fuller
Title	President & CEO
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	P.O. Box 1234 Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone Number	843-761-8200
Email	N/A

## 5.2 - Project Sponsors

Entity Name	South Carolina House of Representatives
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Governmental Entity
Role within proposed project	Supporter
Primary Contact Name	Joe A. Jefferson, Jr.
Title	State Representative, District No. 102
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	304-B Blatt Building
Phone Number	803-734-2936
Email	N/A

### **5.3 - Project Sponsors**

Entity Name	South Carolina Senate
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Governmental Entity
Role within proposed project	Supporter
Primary Contact Name	Lawrence K. Grooms
Title	State Senator, District No. 37
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	P.O. Box 142, Columbia, SC 29202
Phone Number	803-212-6400
Email	N/A

### **5.4 - Project Sponsors**

Entity Name	Berkeley County Government
Entity Type (.e.g. Corporation, non-profit, cooperative, governmental entity)	Governmental Entity
Role within proposed project	Supporter
Primary Contact Name	David Kornahrens
Title	Chief Information Officer
Mailing Address City, State, Zip	P.O. Box 6122, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone Number	843-719-4234
Email	DavidKornahrens@berkeleycountysc.gov

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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