



May 14, 2021

Mr. Jim Stritzinger  
Broadband Project Administrator  
State of South Carolina  
Office of Regulatory Staff  
1401 Main Street, Suite 900  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Stritzinger:

Comporium is committed to bridging the digital divide within Kershaw County. We are excited to respond to the South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program application.

Please review the attached application which shares all the details. We are extremely excited about this project and look forward to the opportunity to work together as a partner and achieve success together. If you need clarification or further information concerning the application, please do not hesitate to contact me at [greg.lunsford@comporium.com](mailto:greg.lunsford@comporium.com).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Charles G. Lunsford'.

Charles G. Lunsford  
Vice President – Regulatory Affairs

Attachment



## APPLICATION

# South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

### Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization **Lancaster Telephone Company**

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) **0001-8892-45**

Primary Contact Name **Chris Moody**

Title **Regulatory Cost Analyst**

Mailing Address **330 East Black Street**

Phone Number **803-326-7255**

City, State, Zip **Rock Hill, SC 29730**

Email **chris.moody@comporium.com**

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### Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission **09/01/2000**

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission **04/05/2021**

Applicant and/or Project Partner has Experience:

- Delivering broadband service via fiber and/or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Delivering broadband service via fixed wireless infrastructure
- Building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

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### Project Area Information

#### Eligible County Impact

Counties  
(list)

Cities/Towns/Municipalities  
(list)

Households

Businesses

Health Care Facilities

Community Anchor Institutions

Educational Institutions

### Contiguous County Impact

Counties  
*(list)* Kershaw

Cities/Towns/Municipalities  
*(list)* Unincorporated Areas - Near Liberty Hill, SC.

Households 86

Businesses 0

Health Care Facilities 0

Community Anchor Institutions 0

Educational Institutions 0

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### Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds 1000/1000
- Hybrid fiber-coax (symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Hybrid fiber-coax (non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

### Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for wireline projects of at least 100/20 Mbps or fixed wireless at 50/5 Mbps or faster that will be offered to customers in the project area:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month    |   |

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### Project Timeline

Project Start Date 07/01/2021	Customer Premises
Project Construction Activity Begins 10/01/2021	<i>Installations Begin</i> 06/30/2022
Project Construction Activity Complete 09/30/2022	<i>Installations End</i> 10/31/2022
	Overall Project Completion Date 10/31/2022

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### Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost \$313,900	Average Cost per Location Served <i>(all locations or structures)</i> \$3,650
Upfront Cost Requirements \$0	
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises \$313,900	Average Cost per Housing Unit \$3,650
	Average Cost per Business \$3,650

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### Project Funding Information

South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program Funds requested (\$) \$156,950

Applicant-Provided Funding (\$) \$156,950

### Non-Public Funding

Amount (\$)

Source(s)

## Additional Information

- 1) Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

Please see attached .pdf file.

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

Please see attached .pdf file.

- 3) Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Please include letters of support from key community partners that indicate their awareness of your project.

Please see attached .pdf file.

- 4) Provide documents that demonstrate your organization currently has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

See attached bank letter.

- 5) List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

County Road Permits and/or SC Highway Permits will be obtained prior to construction being performed.

## Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to application:

- Map of project area (*PDF and Shapefile formats*)
- Letters of support evidencing community need and strategic partnerships
- Any additional information evidencing community need for project
- Most recent FCC Form 477 filing

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## Certification and Signature

**CERTIFICATION:** The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.

Signature:



**Print Name of Signatory:** Charles G. Lunsford

**Title of Signatory:** Vice President - Regulatory Affairs

**Date:** 05/14/2021

*All questions and completed applications should be submitted to [Broadband@ORS.SC.GOV](mailto:Broadband@ORS.SC.GOV)*

*Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.*



## Singleton Application Questions

### **Question 1) Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.**

Lancaster Telephone Company, an affiliate of Comporium, Inc, is an independent telecommunications company located in Lancaster, South Carolina. Lancaster Telephone serves voice, broadband, and video customers in Lancaster County and parts of Kershaw County and Chester County. It also offers wireless service in partnership with AT&T under a limited liability company arrangement. Lancaster Telephone Company offers Digital Subscriber Line, Cable Modem, and Fiber-To-The-Home to both residential and business customers. DSL has three speed tiers to choose from: Standard (Downstream / Upstream) - (7Mbps/1Mbps), Ultra (9Mbps/1Mbps), and Elite (11Mbps/1Mbps). Coax has four tiers: Standard (300Mbps/5Mbps), Ultra (600Mbps/10Mbps), Elite (750Mbps/20Mbps) and Zipstream (1000Mbps/35Mbps). The FTTH product has four speed tiers: Standard (300Mbps/300Mbps), Ultra(600Mbps/600Mbps), Elite (750Mbps/750Mbps) and Zipstream (1GB/1GB).

In addition to voice, broadband and video services, Lancaster Telephone Company offers Metro Ethernet services that provide customers a redundant and secure way to transfer mission-critical data. Lancaster Telephone Company's Metro Ethernet service is a high-speed (10 Mbps to 10 Gbps) packet-based service that provides the transmission of point-to-point LAN or WAN data between a customer's locations. Metro Ethernet circuits can also be ordered to provide dedicated bandwidth to the internet. Our Customer Network Operations Center offers technical support with proactive network monitoring of customer's Metro Ethernet circuits to ensure consistent, high-level performance. Lancaster Telephone Company's MPLS core network provides diverse and redundant IP routing that supports all of the customer facing services. Lancaster Telephone Company uses a variety of last mile technologies to serve customers including xDSL, Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH), and Hybrid Fiber Coax (HFC). Lancaster Telephone Company also operates a remote switch and has connections to Comporium, Inc. and one of its sister companies who provide equipment to operate voice, data, and video networks.

Lancaster Telephone has been deploying FTTH networks since 2005. The Lancaster Telephone Company's remote switch homes to the Comporium, Inc. owned Rock Hill Class 5 Switch. The voice traffic from the remotes, as identified in NECA Tariff No. 4, and all the data and video utilize the redundant fiber connections to the Rock Hill host switch, core broadband network, and video headend. The Comporium, Inc. network connects the voice and data traffic to the world. Leveraging these assets at the parent company level provides some economies of scale to Lancaster. Lancaster Telephone Company does perform its own customer service, and installation and repair. It has a business office within the city of Lancaster for its customers to purchase services. The University Place office is located near the University of South Carolina – Lancaster campus. This location is nestled in a busy shopping area for the community. Customers can come into any business offices to provision service, pay bills, or ask questions to available service representatives. Lancaster Telephone Company has a plant work center location that houses the Installation and Repair group. Each of Lancaster Telephone Company's 13 remote offices are designed and equipped to support the operation of communications networks. These remotes are equipped with sufficient battery backup in the event of an emergency.

## Singleton Application Questions

### **Question 2) Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines."**

Kershaw County is located 60 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina and 54 miles north of Columbia, SC. The county land area covers 740 square miles and has an estimated population of 65,592. Camden, the largest incorporated municipality is the county seat with a population of 7,196. Lugoff and Bethune are smaller towns in the county. Lugoff has a population of 7,434, while Bethune has a population of 350.

Kershaw County thrived economically for nearly 100 years due to the booming textile industry lead by Springs Industries. When the textile industry was at its peak Springs Industries employed many residents in Kershaw and the surrounding area. As globalization of the textile industry evolved, Springs Industries struggled to maintain a competitive advantage against overseas competitors. The company announced that all operations in the Kershaw area would cease and that all employees were laid off. Many employees had worked for the company for decades. This announcement was detrimental to the local economy of Kershaw County. Workers who had a specific skill set in textile manufacturing struggled to find similar jobs so geographically close to the community in which they have lived and worked for years. Although the mills closed over ten years ago, the economic impact is still being felt by those who worked there.

Kershaw County has experienced many economic challenges in recent years. The current unemployment rate within the county is 4.5%. 1,312 people are currently depending on unemployment assistance. Aside to those people who are unemployed, 9,184 individuals are living in poverty or 13.8%. Individuals who have experienced hardships rely on broadband to communicate, apply for unemployment, and search for jobs. Extending fiber into the most remote areas of the county will greatly assist these individuals by increasing their overall quality of life, and to lift them out of poverty.

Additional broadband can also help combat childhood poverty. The current poverty rate in the Kershaw School District is 61.42%. By adding additional high-speed broadband, this will allow students to complete assignments from home, assist in virtual learning, and increase the overall learning experience. Students who attend school virtually will greatly benefit from upgrading the current DSL infrastructure. Since the maximum DSL speed available to students is 11Mbps/1Mbps, virtual learning may be a challenge. The RBGP funding will allow the DSL infrastructure to be upgraded to fiber, greatly alleviating the risk of students not being able to complete assignments on time. This upgraded technology will keep students on pace with other counterparts across other areas of the state and not be left behind.

Each day 19,619 employees leave Kershaw County to work elsewhere. Broadband expansion into rural areas of the county could allow these individuals to work from home. This could also bolster economic development efforts for small businesses. Employees who used to commute to Lancaster, York, Mecklenburg, and Union Counties would have the ability to spend money at local restaurants, gyms, barber shops, gas stations, and retail stores. These funds would otherwise be leaving Kershaw County each day. Expanding fiber-based broadband access will also make Kershaw County more attractive to industry and to facilitate economic development. When county officials are trying to lure prospective industry, it will be easy to demonstrate the efforts of Comporium and its goal to connect



## Singleton Application Questions

rural areas with high-speed fiber. Companies will be more enticed to re-locate to these areas knowing that high-speed broadband is available to residences and businesses.

Due to the rurality of these locations, delivering high speed internet with speeds of 25/3 has been challenging. Receiving South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program funding would provide the company with the needed capital to deliver state-of-the-art fiber broadband to customers and businesses. Currently the broadband infrastructure in place that serves end user customers is Digital Subscriber Line, (DSL). DSL is offered to customers at three speed tiers: Standard (Downstream / Upstream) - (7Mbps/1Mbps), Ultra (9Mbps/1Mbps), and Elite (11Mbps/1Mbps). This proposal will provide five high speed fiber residential and four business speed tiers for customers to choose from:

Residential Broadband fiber offerings will consist of the following speeds and prices:

Fiber Residential Low-Moderate Income Package 100 Mbps x 20 Mbps = \$9.99 (\*With Lifeline Discount Applied)

Fiber Residential Package 1 300 Mbps x 300 Mbps = \$69.94

Fiber Residential Package 2 600 Mbps x 600 Mbps = \$79.94

Fiber Residential Package 3 750 Mbps x 750 Mbps = \$89.94

Zipstream Residential 1000 Mbps x 1000 Mbps = \$99.94

Business Broadband fiber offerings for locations will consist of the following speeds and prices:

Fiber Business Package 1 300 Mbps x 300 Mbps = \$84.98

Fiber Business Package 2 600 Mbps x 600 Mbps = \$154.98

Fiber Business Package 3 750 Mbps x 750 Mbps = \$204.98

Zipstream Business 1000 Mbps x 1000 Mbps = \$299.99

To encourage broadband adoption, Comporium will create a new low/moderate income package with speeds of 100 Mbps x 20 Mbps. The initial price point is \$19.24. This will be available to qualifying customers who participate in broadband Lifeline service. After applying the Lifeline discount of \$9.25, the rate will be \$9.99 per month for Lifeline customers within the grant areas. This new offering will help those in need during these difficult economic times.

A Wi-Fi access point will be installed at the Riverdeck Convenience Store in Kershaw County. This will allow those in the area who are underserved to have broadband at no charge. A letter from the store owner has been included in the application materials.

Comporium understands how beneficial this improved broadband offering will be to the residences and businesses in the Project Area. Therefore, we are committed to working as fast as possible to deliver these services if we are awarded this RBGP Grant. We have seen extended material lead times over the past six months, but we will work with our suppliers to obtain the material required for these overbuilds as soon as practical.

## Singleton Application Questions

The latest FCC 477 information has already been submitted to Jim Stritzinger. He asked that I put a note in the application regarding this.

The company commits that it will serve all residences and businesses within the application areas on a non-discriminatory basis. All locations will be able to obtain necessary speeds defined by the Rural Broadband Grant Program.

### **Question 3) Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Please include letters of support from key community partners that Community Adoption Strategy and Plan**

Lancaster Telephone Company is committed to assisting anyone in the proposed grant area with getting up to speed on digital literacy, especially those who have not previously had any Internet service and, as result, lack experience. Lancaster Telephone Company plans to provide free Internet access at various community centers, public gathering locations, and community anchor institutions (CAIs), along with informational posters, to allow residents to experience the capabilities of the new broadband connectivity available to them. Lancaster Telephone Company has committed to produce and distribute educational and promotional programs and materials to the community regarding their new broadband service. We also plan on organizing events within the community to raise awareness of the educational resources and opportunities found Online that will become available to them. The following actions will also be taken in these efforts:

**Press Release:** As soon as an award announcement has been finalized and signed by the ORS staff and the legal team of Lancaster Telephone Company a press release will be issued to local media outlets in Kershaw County. These types of media releases will be used first, to make residents and businesses aware of planned upgrades in underserved areas of the service territory.

**Direct Phone Calls:** Lancaster Telephone Company will generate a list of residential and business locations within the polygons that have been identified as underserved. Outbound phone calls will be made by the automated IVR (interactive voice response) system to notify customers upgrades are coming to their area.

**Email Marketing and Advertising Campaign:** Current DSL customers of Lancaster Telephone Company have an email address on file with the company. Comporium Marketing personnel will be able to compose an announcement email and send it directly to email addresses of residences and businesses who will benefit from the fiber expansion.

**Direct Mail Postcards:** Lancaster Telephone Company will implement a direct mail campaign to target locations within the underserved polygon to make them aware of the upgrades. These postcards will notify current DSL customers that their area has been identified and will be upgraded with newer fiber technologies.

**Community Engagement Events:** Lancaster Telephone Company will hold events at various locations in Kershaw County. These events will be open to the public, so that customers can come ask questions to staff. Lancaster Telephone Company will reach out to various homeowner association (HOA) groups to notify them when these events will take place. The HOA groups can then send an email broadcast out to all homeowners in subdivisions to make them aware of these events.

## Singleton Application Questions

### **Broadband User Training Plan**

Comporium will strive to train new customers by holding classes at local business offices. The company will also train customers at community centers where we will provide free Wi-Fi. New broadband users will be able to visit the Comporium website for a thorough frequently asked questions section that can assist users. Training videos will also be posted on our website to help with basic broadband questions. Broadband technical support can assist users with any broadband related question that they may have. New broadband users will have the ability to call or chat with broadband technical support. One important factor regarding Comporium broadband technical support is that all employees are all in house. This service is not outsourced. All employees work and live in the service areas.

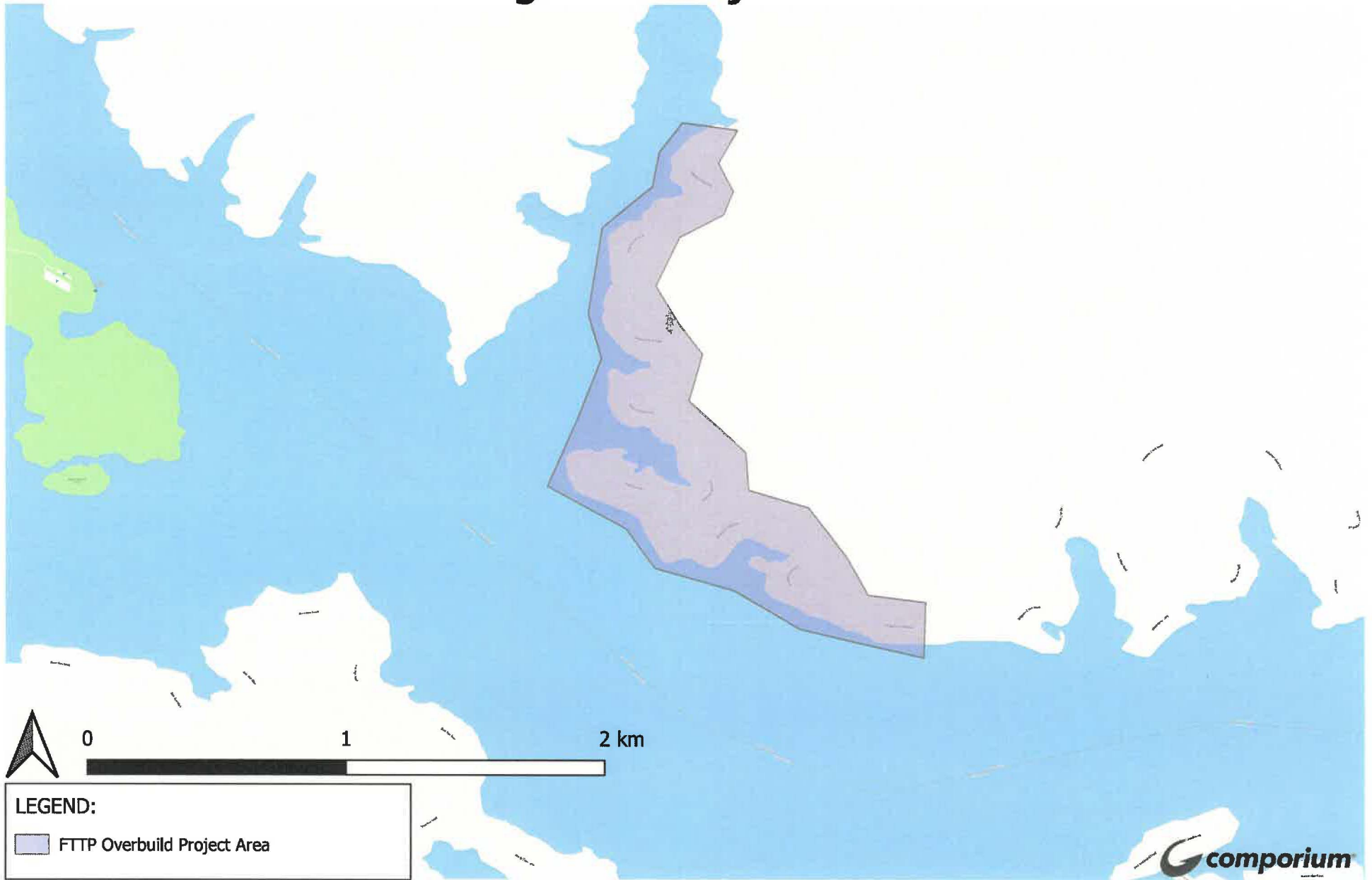
**Question 4) Provide documents that demonstrate your organization currently has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.**

See attached bank letter.

**Question 5) List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.**

County Road Permits and/or SC Highway Permits will be obtained prior to construction being performed.

# Singleton Project Area



**LEGEND:**

 FTP Overbuild Project Area

# Singleton WiFi Area

Target Area: River Deck Store and Grill



**LEGEND:**

 RBGP WiFi Access Point Coverage



# CUSTOMER EDUCATION

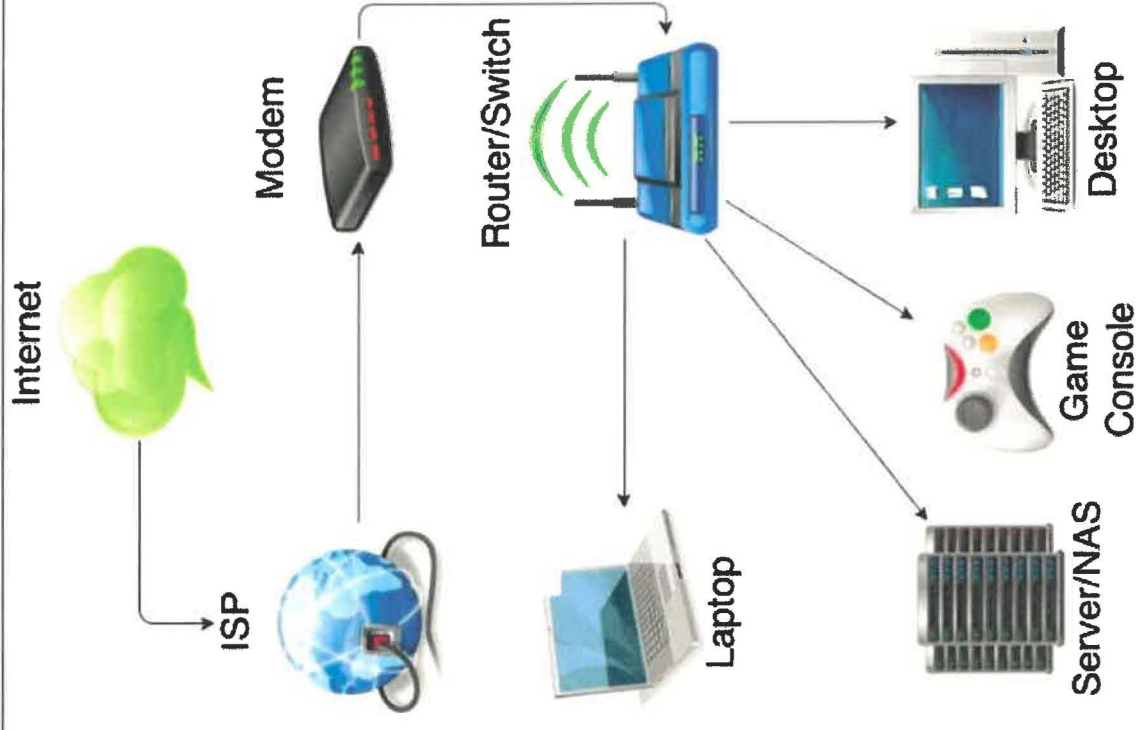
INTERNET SESSION



# HOW DOES THE INTERNET WORK??

## BASIC CONNECTION

- ISP Connection
- Modem at Customer location
- Switch/ Wi-Fi Router
- End-user Devices



## BANDWIDTH

The amount of data that can be carried in a given time period over a network. More technically, bandwidth is the width of the range of frequencies that an electronic signal occupies on a given transmission medium. In digital systems, bandwidth is usually expressed as bps, Kbps or Mbps. In analog systems, it's the number of cycles of change per second, or hertz.

## BROADBAND

A type of data transmission in which a single medium (wire) can carry several channels at once. Broadband is a term that is being used interchangeably with high-speed. More specifically, it describes a wideband high-speed data transmission that employs only one wire, which is able to carry multiple channels at once.



# EQUIPMENT

# HOW MUCH INTERNET SPEED DO I NEED?



**Social media**



**Streaming music**



**Streaming video**



**File download and storage**



**Online gaming**



**Online video chat**

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WIFI AND THE INTERNET?

I'm sure you've heard of the Internet... right?

Well, simply put, it's a big huge network that's changing humanity. Does that Jog your memory?

Now the real question is this: Do you know the difference between the *Internet* and your *WiFi network*?

If you don't, stay calm and I'll explain. If I can get you to remember one thing, it's this: *WiFi* and the *Internet* are two completely separate beasts. If you can remember that moving forward, then half of my job is done.

# SO, WIFI IS JUST A RADIO SIGNAL?

Here is the differentiating factor between the *Internet* and *WiFi*. If Internet allows you to access information from other computers across the world using a specific language (protocol), then **WiFi** is just a way of connecting to that wire in your living room wall and out to the Internet, wirelessly. receive information to and from another computer. Without that protocol, even if two computers were connected with a cable, they wouldn't be able to understand each other. Like speaking with someone in Chinese on the phone - the connection is there - but if you don't understand the language, then there's no way you'll ever be able communicate.



## 2.4 Ghz

The 2.4 GHz band is a pretty crowded place, because it's used by more than just Wi-Fi. Old cordless phones, garage door openers, baby monitors, and other devices tend to use the 2.4 GHz band. The longer waves used by the 2.4 GHz band are better suited to longer ranges and transmission through walls and solid objects. So it's arguably better if you need better range on your devices or you have a lot of walls or other objects in the areas where you need coverage. However, because so many devices use the 2.4 GHz band, the resulting congestion can cause dropped connections and slower-than-expected speeds.



## 5 Ghz

The 5 GHz band is much less congested, which means you will likely get more stable connections. You'll also see higher speeds. On the other hand, the shorter waves used by the 5 GHz band makes it less able to penetrate walls and solid objects. It's also got a shorter effective range than the 2.4 GHz band. Of course, you may also be able to mitigate that shorter range through the use of range extenders or mesh Wi-Fi systems, but that will mean a bigger investment.



**WiFi Problems?**



HACKERS

WIFI  
INTERFERENCE

LACK OF  
COVERAGE

# SAY GOODBYE TO DEAD ZONES WITH PREMIUM WIFI!

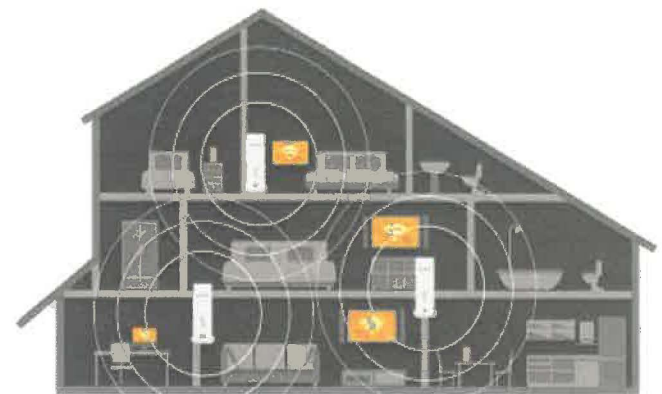
We know being able to enjoy your High Speed Internet from every corner of your home is important to you. Comporium Premium WiFi is the whole home solution for your wireless needs.

**Your Entire Home. Covered.** Connect to all of your devices, in every room.

**Professional Installation** Our technicians will personalize your installation according to your needs and the layout of your home.

**Easily Controlled.** See connected devices, test speeds and control settings right from the Premium WiFi app.

**Parental Controls.** Filter and manage content or set time limits on connected devices!





# EMAIL BASICS





## 5 WAYS TO STOP SPAM FROM INVADING YOUR EMAIL

- Train your filter
- Never respond to spam
- Hide your email address
- Use a third-party anti-spam filter
- Change your email address

# ONLINE SCAMS

- Money is Involved
- If It Sounds Too Good to Be True...
- Urgent! Act Now! Don't Wait!
- The Power of Fear
- We Need Some of Your Personal Information



# PASSWORD TIPS

1

Don't rely on passwords alone to protect anything you value. **Turn on multi-factor authentication wherever possible.**



2

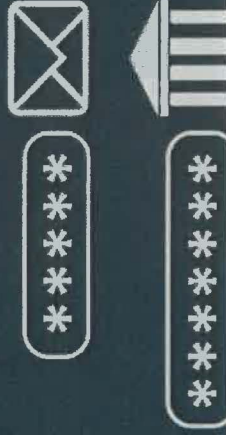
**Use a phrase with multiple words that you can picture in your head,** so it's difficult to guess but easy to remember.



Password:

3

Protect your most important accounts, like banking and primary email, by giving each a **unique passphrase.** A password manager can help.



# WHY TREND MICRO?



## ANTIVIRUS PROTECTION

Keep your computer safe and protected with your free download of Trend Micro. The best in Internet security, Trend Micro protects your computer from harmful viruses. Install Trend Micro by simply selecting 'Manage Anti-Virus Software' through 'My Account.'



QUESTIONS ???

RALPH NORMAN  
5TH DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA  
  
569 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4005  
(202) 225-5501  
  
454 S. ANDERSON ROAD  
SUITE 302B  
ROCK HILL, SC 29730

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4005

COMMITTEES  
COMMITTEE ON  
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM  
RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON ENVIRONMENT  
  
COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY

May 07, 2021

Mr. Jim Stritzinger  
Broadband Coordinator at SC Office of Regulatory Staff  
1401 Main Street, Suite 900  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Mr. Stritzinger:

I support the efforts of Comporium Communications to obtain South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant funding within Lancaster, Kershaw, and Chester Counties.

Many locations in these counties are underserved because of their rural nature. Individuals and businesses in such areas will greatly benefit from high-speed fiber technology. High-speed internet access will open doors of opportunity for economic development, virtual education, and telehealth options. Not only will the South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program assist in the recruitment of new industry, it will make existing businesses more competitive.

The company worked diligently and efficiently to deploy fiber-based broadband infrastructure using prior CARES funding. If awarded a grant through the South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program, I am confident Comporium will build on its previous success in rapid broadband deployment.

Thank you for your consideration on behalf of the citizens of Lancaster, Kershaw, and Chester Counties.

Sincerely,



Ralph Norman  
Member of Congress, SC-05

May 12, 2021

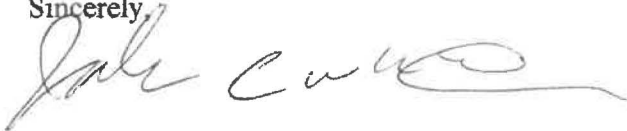
Mr. Jim Stritzinger  
Broadband Coordinator at SC Office of Regulatory Staff  
1401 Main Street, Suite 900  
Columbia, SC 29201

Re: Comporium – Wi-Fi Access

Dear Mr. Stritzinger:

Please be advised that I, John Warnock, owner of Riverdeck Store and Grill, am in discussions with Lancaster Telephone Company, dba Comporium Communications (“Comporium”) to install a Wi-Fi access point within Kershaw County. I fully support Comporium’s initiative to provide citizens with broadband access in a public area. Riverdeck Store and Grill will continue to work with Comporium to make a Wi-Fi access hotspot operational.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Warnock", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Warnock  
Owner, Riverdeck Store and Grill