Q 07: Executive Summary

Dowling Park is an unincorporated community located in Suwannee County, in North Central Florida, 17 miles from the nearest towns. 1500 residents live in the Dowling Park area, including 850 [redacted] seniors, at the Advent Christian Village. The Village supports 100 low income apartments as well as multi-family rental apartments and private, single-family homes. Since the community is so remotely located, the Village has developed needed services in keeping with it's mission to "provide compassionate care and quality comprehensive services for senior adults, families with special needs, and children in a secure, supportive residential setting and in the surrounding communities."

Many Village residents and those living in the surrounding community are economically disadvantaged and, due to the remoteness of the area, they do not have access to public transportation, public libraries, schools or community colleges. Residents needing to access distant medical services and social events utilize Village Transportation [redacted]. In efforts to provide comprehensive services to the area, ACV also supports a Village Square with shops, grocery store, cafe, beauty shops, professional offices for a CPA and lawyer, and a bank. Through generous benevolence and capital campaign drives, more recent additions include a Certified Rural Medical Center, pharmacy, Wellness Community Center, and a Learning Center.

The Learning Center is equipped with 12 aged computers, which are available to residents, guests, employees, and those living in the Dowling Park Community. Classes in the existing computer labs include basic computer use and advance to include accessing on-line services such as banking, shopping, research, and continuing education enrollment. ACV has been a leader in anticipating service needs for senior adults, families with special needs and children for over 95 years, but it has been challenging to keep up with fast-changing computer technology. The Learning center was recently moved to a renovated, updated building, however economic restrictions prevented upgrading the computers and making the stations more accessible to the physically handicapped, including the hard of hearing and those with failing eyesight.

Suwannee County has recently obtained a grant to expand it's broadband internet service to remote areas, and with continuing economic hardships for community residents, ACV sees the broadband expansion as an opportunity to upgrade current technology and take a lead in preparing residents to utilize broadband internet services.

Access to an updated computer lab with broadband access would provide employees the link to further training on-line as well as college access. Seniors would have access to health resources and continuing education, as well as on-line services. They would also have a link to technologically savvy family and friends who live in other states. Since classes and equipment would be available to the entire community, as many as 1500 residents and 450 employees would have affordable access to broadband computers.

ACV employs a full time Management Information Technology technician who is familiar with broadband technology and computers, including managing company

equipment upgrades, software and hardware system maintenance, security/privacy installations and upgrades, and computer repair/maintenance. The Vice President of Member Services is committed to providing comprehensive educational opportunities to ACV residents, employees, and Dowling Park community residents.

Computers, monitors, keyboards, privacy screens, software, programs, installation, ergonomically correct work stations and chairs and miscellaneous other equipment are estimated to be under $30,000