

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** Community Wireless of Charlestown, LLC

**Project Title:** Connect Rural Americans with Community Wireless - Summer 2009

**Project Type:** Last Mile Non-Remote

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### **Executive Summary**

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Executive Summary: Community Wireless provides affordable, fixed-wireless, high-speed Internet service throughout Clark County, Indiana; Floyd County, Indiana; Harrison County, Indiana, and surrounding areas of these counties. In addition to Internet service, we also offer phone service via Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to anyone in the United States (US) and Canada. Our phone service includes unlimited calling to anywhere in the US and Canada with many calling features. These services and others are provided from our Network Operations Center (NOC) located in Charlestown, Indiana. Additionally, our NOC has a data center from which we monitor our network infrastructure, host websites, and provide our residential and commercial customers with a secure and fast connection to the Internet. The wireless Internet infrastructure consists of the Radio Frequency (RF) transmitters, receivers, and controllers that are deployed on water towers and communication towers throughout our Internet service area. In April 2005, Community Wireless received \$600,000 from a private investor and the president and sole owner of Community Wireless pledged his assets, including his house, as a personal guarantee. At that time, Community Wireless began operational startup activities which included NOC equipment installation, network deployment, and back office system configuration. In July 2005 Community Wireless began a controlled pilot program with a select group of customers to thoroughly test the network infrastructure and back office operations to ensure all aspects of the operation were tested before a mass offering was extended to the public. In August of 2005, Community Wireless received a \$200,000 technology grant from the City of Charlestown. By November 2005, we had entered our production phase of operations in which our services were offered to the public. However, to control the growth at a manageable level and to ensure a sustained quality of service, our marketing was still kept to a minimum (e.g. local paper, yard signs, vans, billboard, and a customer referral program). Since then, we have experienced a steady growth of customers and experience. Currently, we have nearly 1,200 residential and commercial customers and we are adding new customers daily. Community Wireless continues to expand its coverage area throughout the southern Indiana region. Our business model places emphasis on providing high-speed Internet service to the rural, unserved and underserved areas. Existing land-line Internet providers such as Insight Communications and AT&T find it cost prohibitive to deploy their infrastructure to these areas. Community Wireless's fixed-wireless is the most cost effective and economical technology to deploy and serve those areas. Community Wireless is committed to serving the community. As such, we provide free Internet service to the Charlestown public library and the North Clark County Outreach center. Furthermore, we provide free Internet service to three more libraries in Clark County. Another community benefit is through leasing tower space from municipal water companies throughout

southern Indiana from which they gain revenue and free Internet service for their primary office. Many individuals and their employers have benefited by enabling employees to work from home. These are only a few examples of how Community Wireless supports the State of Indiana's technology strategy to improve the quality of life and provide economic development opportunities for residential and commercial markets, and public sectors (e.g. municipal government, schools, libraries, hospitals, first response units, etc.).

Operational Scope: WISP activities consist of two (2) primary operational segments:

1. The Back Office Operations. Deploying, managing, and maintaining the back office operation. The primary activities include:
  - Develop and implement the operational, technical, and sales and marketing plans.
  - Sales and Marketing and General Administration
  - Subscriber/Member Sign-up
  - Subscriber Unit Installation
  - Telephone Support
  - Service Call Support
  - Web Page and Email
  - Hardware and Software
  - Work with the public, commercial, and residential segments of the community to leverage the network for initiatives such as economic development, better education opportunities, improving the quality of life, and the like.
2. The Network Operations Center (NOC): Deploying, managing, and maintaining the network infrastructure. This primarily consists of the data center, towers, transmitters, base station radios, and subscriber units. The primary activities include:
  - Network Design
  - Deployment of Base Station Radios
  - Subscriber Signal Analysis
  - Network Management/Tech Support
  - Network Operations Center (NOC) - Monitor the network infrastructure - Site visits to towers and other network infrastructures

Competitive Review and Opportunity: For a review of our competitors, other southern Indiana high-speed Internet service providers are listed below along with their technology and markets. Also provided is the basis for the opportunity for Community Wireless to service the southern Indiana region.

Competitive Review:

- Insight Communications, the local cable provider, provides cable modem service in the more densely populated areas of Clark County. Their cable service is required in order to obtain their Internet offering.
- AT&T, the local phone service provider, provides limited DSL service in Clark County.
- Cinergy Communications currently provide T-1 service to Henryville in conjunction with Verizon's DSL offering.

Opportunity

- Most southern Indiana rural commercial and residential markets are outside the service area of the aforementioned providers.
- Insight Communications, AT&T, and Cinergy Communications use a wired-based technology requiring cable and/or phone lines to be deployed. This is very expensive and a major contributor as to why their wired-based technologies have not been deployed in the more rural areas of southern Indiana.
- The unserved and underserved areas of southern Indiana contain sufficient demand and opportunity for Community Wireless.

Key Personnel Qualifications: Doug Pugh (Co-Founder) – President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Doug has been working in information technology for the last thirty-five years. Since completing his computer science studies from the Computer Programming Institute and Miami University Oxford, Doug began a career in information technology with emphasis in business systems and business development. In addition to serving as a company employee, Doug has been engaged as an independent consultant in various business and system initiatives. Throughout his career, Doug has assisted local and national companies in analyzing, designing, and implementing technical and non-technical solutions in the manufacturing, financial, and service and retail industries. He has worked for such companies as, GE Consulting, Brown & Williamson, Ford Motor Company, Citizens Fidelity (PNC), Kentucky Fried Chicken (Yum Brand) and Computer Horizons Consulting. Specific responsibilities that Doug has had throughout his career include: identifying strategic and tactical problem areas and identifying business impacts and resolutions. As President and CEO of Community Wireless, Doug

develops business strategies and provides the necessary leadership and direction for the company. Additionally, he is involved with various community leaders with emphasis on economic development and quality of life initiatives. Doug also works with other municipal entities such as libraries, water companies, and other civic groups to align our business strategies with community needs. Tim Carpenter (Co-Founder) – Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Tim has been working in the Information Technology (IT) field for thirty years, including eighteen years of management. His experience includes Fortune 500 companies in the communications, retail, manufacturing, logistics, and service industries. These companies include Time Warner Communications, Kentucky Fried Chicken (Yum Brand), StrideRite, Ford Kentucky Truck Plant, Humana, Waste Management, Boat America, and AnswerThink Consulting. Tim worked with Time-Warner Cable for ten years where he developed a thorough understanding of how information technology can be applied to the subscription-based service company. His extensive knowledge of operations, business systems, and research with such a company is vital to providing quality services to our Community Wireless customers as well as a vision and planning for the company's growth. His diverse IT background encompasses management, business analysis, systems analysis, and software development. Moreover, he has experience with a broad range of computer hardware / operating system platforms from micro to mainframe as well as a variety of ancillary technologies. Where applicable, Tim will incorporate into Community Wireless his experience with many business applications including customer relationship management; operations; accounting; payroll; human resources; accounts payable; purchasing; capital projects; fixed assets; warehouse management and distribution; inventory management; and real-time message processing. Tim attended the Ohio State University with a major in Computer Science and a minor in Mathematics. He has also completed courses at Rose College and the University of Louisville. As EVP/CTO, Tim is responsible for the overall management of the Network Operations Center (NOC) as well as providing a vision and plan for the company's future. With the fast-paced technology improvements, he must stay current on both existing technologies that are offered to our customers and the emerging technologies that could be offered at some point in the future.