Applicant Name: City of Washington

Public Notice Submissions

-----Service Area: Washington Georgia

Submitter: Windstream

Comment: Windstream's data strongly suggest that the proposed funded service area likely does not qualify as an underserved area. Windstream offers facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service (meeting the definition set forth in the Notice of Funds Availability) to some of the households in the proposed funded service area, and such households can readily subscribe to Windstream's broadband service upon request. Windstream also has reason to believe that competitive broadband offerings are available in exchanges overlapping the proposed funded service area. Given this information, agency officials should further investigate existing broadband offerings within the proposed funded service area, so that officials can be sure that the area, in fact, qualifies as underserved.

Windstream is a communications and entertainment company with more than 1 million broadband customers in 16 states. Investing more than $200 million in broadband deployment over the last several years, Windstream now offers approximately 89% of its 3 million voice customers access to quality and affordable broadband service.

The agencies define an “underserved area” as follows: “Underserved area means a proposed funded service area, composed of one or more contiguous census blocks meeting certain criteria that measure the availability of broadband service and the level of advertised broadband speeds. These criteria conform to the two distinct components of the Broadband Infrastructure category of eligible projects–Last Mile and Middle Mile. Specifically, a proposed funded service area may qualify as underserved for last mile projects if at least one of the following factors is met, though the presumption will be that more than one factor is present: 1. No more than 50 percent of the households in the proposed funded service area have access to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service at greater than the minimum broadband transmission speed (set forth in the definition of broadband above); 2. No fixed or mobile broadband service provider advertises broadband transmission speeds of at least three megabits per second ("mbps") downstream in the proposed funded service area; or 3. The rate of broadband subscribership for the proposed funded service area is 40 percent of households or less. A proposed funded service area may qualify as underserved for Middle Mile projects if one interconnection point
terminates in a proposed funded service area that qualifies as unserved or underserved for Last Mile projects.

Submitter: Wilkes Telephone & Electric Company

Comment: Wilkes Telephone & Electric Company is an established Eligible Telecommunications and ISP in the counties of Wilkes, Lincoln and Taliaferro, Georgia, inclusive of the City of Washington, GA. FTTH facilities are being constructed as an overbuild of existing copper facilities (construction began 2006) and all three counties will be constructed offering high speed broadband with advertised download speeds up to 10Mg-tiered offerings are available to allow consumers a financially affordable choice to fit their particular needs. Digital Telephone and video services are also deployed over FTTH delivery. The first leg of the City of Washington and some surrounding locations in Wilkes County have been completed and the remainder of the City of Washington is currently being designed with staking to begin November 2, 2009 for fiber deployment. Plans are for this project to be bid out by December 2009 for construction to begin first quarter 2010.