Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: City of McAllen

Project Title: McAllen Broadband Infrastructure Program

Project Type: Middle Mile

_______________________ Executive Summary _____________________

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CITY OF MCALLEN BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

PROJECT DESCRIPTION The City of McAllen Broadband Infrastructure Program will expand broadband communication by constructing a Wi-Fi mesh network with a fiber-optic backbone targeted at increasing Internet accessibility for Public Safety and other city departments to promote and enhance services, safety, and efficiency to our constituents. Partnerships are also planned with local educational institutions and community service organizations to provide Internet access for enhanced educational services.

OPPORTUNITY The proposed system will enhance public safety efforts, support mobile city employees, and provide an avenue for those that are not able to afford broadband. With this broad exposure, the City hopes to solidify its position in the region as a progressive, safe, and economically stable region.

PROPOSED FUNDED SERVICE AREAS The City of McAllen is located along the lower Rio Grande Valley in South Texas and has a population of 135,000. The service area the City of McAllen proposes spans 29.2 square miles within the City’s corporate limits. Data is provided for the four phases that encompass the Broadband City Plan. Phase 4 is not included as a funding area under consideration due to construction timeframes placed on grant funding. Phase 1 - South McAllen Phase 2 - East McAllen Phase 3 - West McAllen Phase 4 - North McAllen

Total Square Miles: 12.4 7.9 8.9 11.2
Total population using the last decennial Census: 26,424 28,926 27,125 14,070
Total Number of Households: 7,451 10,216 8,072 4,416
Total Number of Businesses: 1,297 1,835 931 632
Total Number of Critical Sites: 18 8 17 4

PROPOSED SERVICES & APPLICATIONS

1. Video Surveillance - The city is currently undergoing a Video Surveillance project. In August 2009 it is expected the City Commission will award contract to a vendor. The installation of cameras in the Downtown area, along Bicentennial Boulevard, and in Municipal Park will use the broadband infrastructure currently under construction for the placement of wireless cameras.

2. Police & Fire Mobile Reporting - Mobile reporting is a critical function for public safety personnel and can enhance timely field reporting, improved live video streaming and GIS mapping.

3. Mobile Inspections - The City has over 90 mobile users that perform building, code, health, planning, engineering, and utility inspections. These essential services will use the city’s Accela Wireless product that was installed in November of 2007.

4. McAllen Independent School District - The city has partnered with the McAllen Independent School District (MISD) to provide free broadband access to our economically disadvantaged students. This program will begin in the South McAllen area and will provide laptops and broadband service to extend the educational experience to the home.

5. Boys & Girls Club of McAllen - With free broadband access, the center can attract more youth to the Boys and Girls Club facility and provide online affordable programs available to the center. The current connection speed experienced at the facility is inadequate and discourages broadband usage.

6. Quinta Mazatlan -
The Quinta Mazatlan World Birding Center plans to enrich the educational experience of patrons with the use of wireless devices on the trails for the recording of avian sightings. The center is known as an educational stop for students across the Rio Grande Valley. Due to limited funding there are no wireless components available at the center. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND INTERCONNECTION OBLIGATIONS The city is committed to supporting the NOFA’s position on network openness. The city plans to deploy an open network and will ensure that the network is used as a public service to the community for public safety, city services, and anchor institutions. The city in the future may open the network to “for profit” agencies and when granted, all entities will be eligible to interconnect to the network. Offering service to a 3rd Party is a strategic vision set forth by the City of McAllen Technology Committee. ORGANIZATION QUALIFICATIONS & READINESS The McAllen team, along with its business partners has the experience necessary for success. The following projects have provided the team with the expertise needed: • Fiber Expansion Project - The fiber team has constructed 16 miles of fiber in the city and connected 20 city facilities. This project will continue its course with the addition of 3 fiber-optic loops in each service area proposed. • Wi-Fi Mesh Downtown Project - The city performed a formalized test phase to try out Wi-Fi equipment in the summer of 2008. The team obtained hands-on experience on the deployment of wireless equipment. The city is installing 43 Cisco 1524 AP’s and has a target date for completion of December 2009. • Convention Center WI-Fi Project - The city installed a wireless network in the 148,000 sq. ft. facility for city use (VOIP phones, wireless credit card devices) and public use. Twenty-five access points are installed and another 5 are deployed outside. COST OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE The cost of the McAllen Broadband Infrastructure Program is estimated at $10,043,210.92. All pricing provided by INX, Inc. is using the State of Texas, Department of Information Resources (DIR) already negotiated pricing. Quantities estimated were based on the current Wi-Fi Downtown installation underway. Budget Per Phase PHASE 1 South McAllen $4,264,925.19 PHASE 2 East McAllen $2,717,170.08 PHASE 3 West McAllen $3,061,115.65 TOTAL $10,043,210.92 OVERALL SUBSCRIBER PROJECTIONS The City of McAllen projects to have over 2,685 users on the Broadband network system at completion of the three phases. This includes all Public Safety, City Employees, and Community Organizations. JOBS ESTIMATED TO BE CREATED Our business partner, INX, has plans of opening an office in McAllen which has been under discussion in the past 6 months and could be solidified if this program is approved. INX plans to initially staff 2-5 employees in McAllen. The implementation of the proposed Broadband network system will not only encourage economic growth in the area but increase demand for broadband hardware and resources to see the project through.