City Utilities' experiences involving fiber developed in the late 80s' and broadband services in the mid 90s'. However, the fiber-to-the-customer active Ethernet transport to the community began in 2000 under SpringNet business operations. By any measurement this was a very early deployment of metro Ethernet services. Once the community and businesses began to fully adopt and implement these 'LAN extension cord' services, the demand has consistently challenged the business unit's capital budget authority. However, the economic condition of our nation has challenged the Utilities' financial picture over the last two years regarding the availability of capital funds. This project seeks to secure approximately 68% of the capital funding necessary to continue expanding this network. Outstanding requests for service and network upgrade requirements are necessary to address a growing bandwidth appetite and evolutionary feature capabilities needed by existing and new users of the broadband network. As reference, the Internet backhaul requirements to support this local broadband network have grown significantly since its inception. Initially, 45 Mbps of backhaul was necessary however, today that backhaul requirement is 2.6 Gbps. The SpringNet service territory is reflective of the municipal corporate limits of Springfield, Missouri. There are 186 community anchor institution sites that are currently participating in this network. The project represents several significant upgrades, including increasing the operating backbone to 10 Gbps, adding over 100 miles of additional fiber, connecting 34 additional community anchor institution sites, upgrading the network hardware to support IPv6 address and class of service requirements for voice and video packets, making reliability improvements, and most importantly, increasing the customer interface to 1 Gbps for symmetrical burstable Internet access and private networking needs. In addition to these benefits being realized by the community anchor institutions, existing and new third party service providers, last mile service providers, and local businesses will leverage these advancements within their business. SpringNet's broadband system is best described as an active Ethernet, partially meshed, local fiber network. It is a standard's based solution which is easily duplicated. The architectural design of the network and its daily operations adhere to the interconnection and non-discrimination requirements of the NOFA. This openness allows customers to attach any industry standard Ethernet network equipment to the network and operate with no intermediary equipment. This philosophy is continued through to its interconnection with upstream Internet providers. SpringNet services have achieved a value added position with the customer by openly adopting interconnection and non-discrimination philosophies. City Utilities' history should bring confidence to the evaluation of its project; 60+ years of experience being a provider of electric, natural gas and water services with a customer expectation of 'always on,' 23 years of fiber optic design, installation and plant operational experience, 13 years of successful business development
and business operations experience, and an existing customer base which is comprised of 29.5% community anchor institutions — the highest evaluation priority for BTOP CCI applications. Municipal utility ownership brings additional value to its project; cost based rate philosophies, a commitment to operational support, opportunity to incorporate the future needs of electric, natural gas and water service deliveries such as smart grid and automated metering infrastructure, existing relationships with the local Chamber of Commerce for economic development purposes, existing relationships with all the community anchor institutions as their traditional utility service provider, an ownership structure which promotes community focus, and brings to the project an existing service organization with unmatched readiness. City Utilities' accomplishments as detailed in the project are intended to demonstrate its comprehensive vantage point, as a multi-disciplined utility, for all of anchor institutions within the community it serves. The continued interest shown for SpringNet services; NetLink, LANLink, and collocation, during a protracted recessionary period supports the belief that advanced broadband capabilities assist in supporting economic growth and job creation. The overall cost of the project is $19,230,788. City Utilities is committed to this effort. It has previously invested $40+ million and is committing another $6.1 million of matching funds to meet the 30% target. An NTIA grant award to City Utilities is not just an investment; it’s an investment in an established organization with broadband experience and a well documented history of operating knowledge and innovation. The forecasted subscriber growth begins with an established based of community anchor institutions and businesses and grows between 2% and 5% annually after construction. The calculated estimated jobs are based on the methodology provided and indicated a total of 143 job years as a result of this project.