

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: chebeague.net, Inc.

Project Title: Chebeague Island Broadband Initiative

Project Type: Last Mile Remote

Executive Summary

8. Executive Summary of Project for BIP and BTOP: [Three Page Limit] a) Opportunity the proposed system seeks to address. Chebeague Island is a small town and island community located about ten miles from Portland. Despite proximity to Maine's largest city, Chebeague did not have access to broadband Internet services until chebeague.net, Inc. (the applicant) began service delivery in 2006 as a community enterprise. While generally successful, chebeague.net, Inc. has found it difficult to (a) reach several areas of the Island, (b) provide sufficient bandwidth to serve the more densely populated portion of the Island, and (c) provide sufficient bandwidth for emerging Internet applications, such as VOIP and streaming video. The opportunity is to reach the unserved areas of Chebeague Island while improving service to the remaining underserved population. b) A general description of the proposed funded service areas (location, number of communities, etc.) Located in Casco Bay, Maine, Chebeague Island is the newest town in Maine, incorporated on July 1, 2007. In addition to Chebeague Island, the town includes several mostly uninhabited smaller islands. The Town of Chebeague Island comprises all of the proposed funded service area. c) Number of households and businesses passed. Chebeague Island is home to about 350 year round residents living in about 150 households plus another estimated 1500 seasonal residents in 350 households. There are approximately 30 businesses on the Island, mostly home-based, ranging from a 21-room inn to a ferry company to a working farm. In addition, about 35 lobster boats fish from Chebeague Island. d) Number of community anchor institutions, public safety entities, and critical community organizations passed and/or involved with project (e.g., health care, education, libraries, etc.). Chebeague Island has twelve 501(c)(3) organizations including an assisted living facility, church, historical society, and others, most of which receive free Internet and e-mail service from chebeague.net, Inc., as does the Town itself, along with fire, rescue and public safety. The school and library receive separate Internet service through the Maine State Library Network. If they were not so served, chebeague.net, Inc. would do so at no cost. e) Proposed services and applications for the proposed funded service areas and users. Currently, service is provided by four T1 lines located at three points around the Island and distributed by 900 MHz wireless transmitters augmented by four backhauled. The system would benefit greatly from the following: 1. A central transmission tower in the middle of the Island 2. A tower at the west end of the Island, replacing a rickety, potentially unsafe tower 3. Updated high capacity base stations (CCUs) able to carry up to 13.5 Mbps 4. Updated end-user modems (EUMs) to handle faster speeds This will enable us to reach unserved areas of the Island and to increase Internet downstream speeds to uniformly exceed 768 kbps at all locations around the Island with more bandwidth available to customers. f) Approach to addressing the non-discrimination and interconnection obligations Per Section V(C)(2)(c) of the Notice of Funds Availability, chebeague.net, Inc.

intends to fully comply with the stipulations regarding non-discrimination and interconnection obligations, including the Federal Communications Commission's Internet Policy Statement. g) Type of broadband system that will be deployed (network type and technology standard). chebeague.net, Inc. will build upon its existing network of wireless 900 MHz delivery of Internet signal from wired T1 lines with bandwidth supplied by Great Works Internet (GWI) of Biddeford, Maine. The system will augment the 3000 series equipment from Vecima Waverider with the higher capacity 8000 series. h) Qualifications of the applicant that demonstrate the ability to implement and operate a broadband infrastructure, and/or be a sustainable broadband services provider. chebeague.net, Inc. was organized in September, 2006 as a Maine S-Corporation with investments from fourteen Chebeague Island residents totaling \$78,000. The Corporation was formed as a community enterprise with the sole purpose of providing broadband Internet service to Chebeague Island. The funds raised were used to create the initial infrastructure and to demonstrate technological and management viability. With the assistance of a \$75,000 grant from the ConnectME Authority in 2007-08, chebeague.net, Inc. realized its goal of providing broadband Internet service to the Island. The objective has never been to create a highly profitable company but, rather, to provide the services that island residents need to thrive in the modern electronic world. chebeague.net, Inc. currently has over 160 paying subscribers, plus it provides free service to government and non-profit entities. i) Overall infrastructure cost of the broadband system. We are requesting \$198,470 to build out the chebeague.net, Inc. system as follows: Towers \$57,000 Network and Access Equipment 10,270 Customer Premise Equipment 121,200 Engineering/Professional Services 10,000 TOTAL \$198,470 j) Overall expected subscriber projections for the project. We would expect to upgrade many of our current customers, plus the Island non-profits, and add an additional 140 customers for a total of 300 installations. k) Number of jobs estimated to be created or saved as result of this project. chebeague.net, Inc. currently employs two salaried managers and two part-time installers. In addition to saving those jobs, we would expect to create two new jobs to install and maintain the build-out.