Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: OPENBAND OF VIRGINIA, LLC

Project Title: Connect North Western Loudoun Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (Connect NoW)

Project Type: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure

_______________________ Executive Summary _________________________

OpenBand OpenBand of Virginia is pleased to propose 'Connect NoW', an ultra-high capacity, open-access, middle mile network in rural western Loudoun County, Virginia. Connect NoW meets and exceeds the expressed needs of Loudoun County, Virginia in its comments before the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Rural Utilities Service of April 13, 2009: 'A large part of the geographical area of the County has no broadband service, or at best only limited access to wireless service.' The County believes that the most cost-effective approach to extending broadband services to as many potential subscribers as possible is to build 'middle mile' fiber backbone networks. 'OpenBand's Connect NoW middle mile fiber ring is directly and precisely aligned with the County's on record objectives. The Connect NoW Proposed Funded Service Area includes the majority of census tracts in northwestern Loudoun County. The network extends from OpenBand's existing network infrastructure, which has primary points of presence in eastern Loudoun County, in high capacity, high density collocation centers offering access to regional, national and international carriers. From there, Connect NoW will extend its 'middle mile' ring north along Route 15 to the County's northern border, west to Lovettsville, south to Hamilton via Hillsboro, and then complete the ring by following Route 7 back to eastern Loudoun. The proposed route offers eight interconnection points in underserved rural western Loudoun County. Through partnership with Loudoun County, OpenBand will use conditioned interior space within select County facilities to accommodate the Connect NoW's network equipment. Use of this existing space will expedite network build-out while providing these underserved community anchors with premier network access. Connect NoW will pass 83 community anchor institutions. The project's fiber route and network access points are designed to directly connect 16 of these facilities. Since it is a middle mile solution traversing 150 square miles of the County, Connect NoW has the potential to impact a large number of the County's population with a projection of over 12,000 households and 750 businesses passed by the ring. Connect NoW will offer High capacity (1 Gbps+) circuits for high capacity transport/backhaul for continuity of operations; Private Wide Area Networks (WANs); managed network service; collaboration portals and Knowledge Management; telemedicine; distance learning; and other bandwidth intensive applications. In addition, Connect NoW will offer eight points of interconnection along within the Proposed Funded Service Area for community anchor institutions, last mile providers, wide area network customers, and will provide competitors access to or use of the system on a non-discriminatory basis at just and reasonable rates, terms, and conditions, to be mutually negotiated. Connect NoW middle mile services will rely on a newly constructed dedicated high-capacity fiber optic ring. OpenBand will allocate a share of the ring's capacity to deploy a
multiservice SONET network with 3 active access nodes throughout the target service area. The multiservice SONET network will deliver point-to-point connectivity ranging from DS-3 and OC-3 levels to Metro Ethernet with to 1Gbps throughput and beyond. In addition to delivering managed services based on the multi-service SONET network, OpenBand will allocate a share of the capacity to offer dark fiber leased services. OpenBand's active nodes throughout the Connect NoW ring will also allow for installation of signal amplification equipment that may be required by the dark fiber lease customers. However, both the technologies to be employed and the methodologies to build and manage Connect NoW are standard to OpenBand, as we became Loudoun County's first facilities-based Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) 'triple play' service provider in 2001 a full six years before any other service provider, offering 100Mbps bi-directional residential Internet, video, and voice in a package that is still unrivalled by any competition. OpenBand's management, engineering, and operations team has a 10 year track record in the County, and our 10,000 subscriber FTTP platform proves our ability to not only implement and operate Connect NoW but uniquely positions us to be a sustainable broadband service provider. Our proposal offers a 50-mile-long 'middle mile' ring at a total cost of $6,100,956 ($4,880,765 BTOP-funded) and passes over 20,000 potential end users, including residential, business and Government customers. In the design, engineering development and construction of the project, OpenBand estimates that in excess of 50 jobs will be created or saved. OpenBand and Connect NoW therefore offer a truly unique and discriminating value proposition: A middle mile network that directly supports the objectives and evaluation factors of the NOFA; that is directly aligned with OpenBand's core competencies; and that directly supports Loudoun County's objectives as recorded with the RUS and NTIA.