The proposed Southwest Ohio Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Project ('Southwest') will serve portions of six counties that have been bypassed by the major broadband communication companies. This has created a significant problem for the small and mid-sized cities along with the rural areas. The proposed service area cannot take full advantage of broadband to service K-12 schools, colleges and community colleges. Both the community anchor institutions and businesses are limited by the lack of broadband services, capacity and pricing. This leaves the Southwest service area at an economic disadvantage relative to areas with greater availability of broadband services. The Southwest project proposes to create a 166 mile fiber ring that would provide community anchor institutions with advanced broadband services at speeds up to 10 Gbps. In addition to the availability of high speed broadband services, dark fiber would be available throughout the ring for businesses and third-party providers to purchase. Services would also be delivered in the service area by a key partner, Cincinnati Bell Extended Territories, LLC. Southwest has selected the six county area in concert with the Clark State Community College, which is assigned by the State of Ohio to serve four of the six counties (Clark, Greene, Champaign and Logan). Clark State draws most of its students from the population of these four counties. Clark State is expanding its e-learning curriculum with a goal of 40% of student credit hours through distance learning. Currently Clark State is at 22%, and the Southwest project will help them meet this goal. In addition, the proposed network will serve two historically black colleges, Central State University and Wilberforce University, that are in Greene County. Both of these colleges currently have limited access to advanced network services. In addition, the following universities and colleges will be connected: University of Phoenix, Antioch College, Antioch University McGregor, Cedarville University, Urbana University, Edison Community College, Edison State Community College and Wittenberg University. The applicant is Avetec, a not for profit company, focused on research and community service that has built and currently operates a 19 mile fiber ring in Springfield. In addition to its Springfield fiber ring, Avetec operates a private research network called USA40Net which connects to Wright Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), Oak Ridge National Lab, Pacific Northwest National Labs and the Starlight Facility. Avetec is working with both private and public organizations to allow them access to world-class computing and research resources. Avetec has established an operational fiber connection with Cincinnati Bell in Cincinnati. As a result of this proposal, Avetec will establish a fiber connection and peering agreement with the Ohio Academic Research Network (OARnet). Avetec’s operational partner has been, and will be, Cincinnati Bell Extended Territories, LLC. Cincinnati Bell currently maintains, provisions and provides NOC services for the existing fiber network in return for the right to use existing fibers. This is the model that is being proposed in this application. Cincinnati Bell has
agreed to provide Southwest with maintenance for the entire route in exchange for the right to use twelve fibers. Cincinnati Bell’s fiber is connected at two points of presence also owned by Cincinnati Bell. Cincinnati Bell will deliver its full suite of telecommunication services via the fiber it receives from Avetec. Particular focus will be placed on connecting the Ohio Air National Guard Base to the network. The base is in a transition process and is handicapped by the lack of fiber optic connections. By providing connectivity to the network, WPAFB will be in a better position to ensure long-term sustainability. Approximately 130 jobs could be saved by modifying the IT communication infrastructure connecting the base. Avetec has been approached by units at WPAFB who want to establish off site/DR facilities at the geographically separate Ohio Air National Guard Base but are prevented due to no private fiber between the two facilities. Additionally, Avetec is working to connect Calamityville, the National Center for Medical Readiness, located at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. With the broadband connectivity resource, Calamityville will be able to move large datasets to national research centers to create valuable partnerships and meet their Homeland Security Presidential Directives. The proposed network would also deliver a fiber connection to the Champaign Telephone Company to enable a variety of communication providers access to enhanced service in Champaign County, via the Champaign Telephone network. The applicant has estimated that the total infrastructure cost of the proposed system will be $21,000,000.00. The number of expected subscribers is 1,370 businesses and 77 anchor institutions. The number of jobs to be created or saved is 130. The proposed service area includes 48,078 households and 5,481 businesses.