Applicant Name: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF

Project Title: Connecting Alabama: ASAP!

Project Type: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure

Executive Summary

The Connecting Alabama ASAP: Alabama Service Accessibility Program will provide access to more internet information, the use of educational applications such as Blackboard, online books, interactive collaboration between students, educational tools and databases which provide a much richer student experience. A. As an example, Alabama’s Black Belt includes some of the poorest counties in the United States. Along with high rates of poverty, the area is typified by declining populations, a primarily agricultural landscape with low-density settlement, high unemployment, and poor access to education and medical care, substandard housing and high rates of crime. Alabama as a whole is primarily rural with underserved communities across the State. B. & C. As an example, the racial makeup of the Black Belt region was 52.24% African American (307,734 people), 45.87% White (270,175 people), 0.25% Native American (1,472 people), 0.52% Asian (3,067 people), 0.03% Pacific Islander (153 people), 0.31% from other races (1,850 people), and 0.78% from two or more races (4,590 people). Hispanics or Latinos of any race were 1.09% of the population (6,404 people). The median income for a household in the Black Belt region was $27,130, and the median income for a family was $35,698. Males had a median income of $32,226 versus $22,021 for females. The per capita income for the region was $15,633. These income levels fall among the lowest in the nation. This middle-mile network will extend broadband to over 2900 anchor institution sites and last mile providers to reach 1,200,000 households and businesses.

D. Number of community anchor institutions passed and/or involved with project is over 2900. E. The ASAP Authority will provide high-availability, prioritized, State-wide Public Safety access at no monthly cost for service to Public Safety organizations for up to 20% of the overall network bandwidth available. The cost of the ASAP Public Safety service will be subsidized though the commercial sale of 80% of ASAP Middle-mile Network Services to local ISPs, service providers, Anchor institutions, and Government Agencies. As a middle-mile service provider, it is intended that local ISPs and businesses partner with the ASAP Authority to provide Last-Mile services to local businesses and consumers in rural communities. As part of the State of Alabama’s matching fund allocation, service subsidies will be offered to ISPs, and business institutions which offer free services to local, rural community centers. In addition, as part of the matching funds, the State will provide eligible students laptop computers with internet access. This program will qualify student eligibility based on proof of improved grades and educational performance though the use of computers at the rural community centers. The ASAP Authority Middle-mile broadband internet service will facilitate the infrastructure required for educational institutions for online collaboration, distance learning, conferencing, Blackboard, on-line books, etc. Business Broadband Services extended to rural communities via last-mile local ISPs, Community Cooperatives, and businesses will allow businesses to proliferate in rural communities and will allow rural workers to work...
remotely via business tele-working solutions. Healthcare institutions can utilize the services for tele-
medicine, e-records, and other new healthcare technologies. ASAP Authority Services will be made
available allocating 20% of the network under 3x tiers for Public Safety organizations for Critical, Multi-
media, and Data Exchange usage. Commercial services will be offered utilizing 80% of the network in 3x
tiers under premium, business, and economy service offerings. These packages will facilitate perfect
matches for all types of network traffic and applications prioritized to optimize network and application
performance and assure a positive user experience. F. Team ASAP’s Broadband Network is designed to
support net neutrality as defined and mandated by the FCC, by agreeing to not favor any lawful Internet
applications and content over others, connect to the public Internet directly or indirectly, and offer
interconnection, where technically feasible without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated
capacity limitations, at reasonable rates and terms. We will display our network management policies
prominently on our web page and advice customers of changes to policies. We will adhere to the Net
neutrality policies. To the extent technically feasible, each customer will treat its own operation on a
nondiscriminatory basis in relation to the technical and operational quality of services provided
(including, but not limited to, quality, availability and time of provision). Finally, we will treat the
prospective common carriers on a non- discriminatory basis. G. The ASAP team's goal is to build an
optical fiber backbone with IP/MPLS which will facilitate growth and expansion, extended to rural,
unserved and underserved areas utilizing the latest in long range, high speed wireless technologies such
as WiFi, WiMAX, LTE, 4G, and 3G. Team ASAP will build a core network of fiber optic rings for high
availability. We will leverage existing cell towers, water towers, buildings and other municipal structures
to extend the network to rural communities in underserved areas, and to support public safety
requirements which require total mobility, and connectivity, anywhere, anytime. The latest generation
of radios offer long range, low power systems with over 100mb of bandwidth to rural areas. H. ADECA
has embarked on several initiatives which have led to compiling a notable team of public and private
sector experts and advisors which assure the success of the project though the experience of the
advisors and partner organizations. The initiatives include: MyAlabama, ConnectingAlabama, and the
Alabama Broadband Initiative. The mission of the Alabama Broadband Initiative is to extend the benefits
of advanced broadband technology to every community in the state through collaborative partnerships
with governmental and private sector stakeholders. ADECA will establish a department to manage the
Alabama Public Safety and Rural Broadband initiative including, contracting, implementation,
operations, and sustainability of the network with the contracted assistance of experienced private
sector companies which have proven track records and assure the projects success. All professional
services and technology equipment will be subject to approved procurement processes to determine
best value. Private sector partners and advisors include: The team of Advisors which assure project
success include: ADECA, Commissioner-DOA, Commissioner-Conservation, Senator G. Dial-Rural Action
Commission, J. Walker-DHS, R. Fulmer-ASA, Dr. G. Fitch-Higher Education, Dr. J. Morton, Superintendent
of Education, Dr. Williamson, State Health Officer, Jim Burns CIO-State of Alabama, Senator Marsh-
Senate, Rep. Knight & P. Warren-Alabama House. The private advisors include Dr. Rayapati, a Prof. at UC
Berkley and wireless expert, Mr. Young former VP of SAIC's global telecom practice, C. Cory of
UABD/KDL a provide of wholesale fiber in Alabama, Irv Rodrigues with 30 years telecom ops and
managed services experience at Sprint, iPass, and SAVVIS, a team of network experts from HCL a global
systems integrator, ATSC public safety specialists, SAI, Cisco Systems, Motorola, & and UABD/KDL as
technology advisors. The Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) is a state-funded corporation founded in 1989 to operate the Alabama Supercomputer Center (ASC) and the Alabama Research and Education Network (AREN). The ASA is offers a high capacity State-wide Education Network, Connections for schools, Internet2, Managed Hosting, Internet Service, Distance Learning, Email/anti-spam, Network Management, Content Filtering, Help desk, Consultation and Design, and E-Rate expertise. The ASAP Team’s proposed Program Manager is Mr. Robert Young, Mr. Young was formerly the Executive VP and GM of the Global Telecommunications Group within SAIC, a fortune 200 company. Mr. Young was responsible for strategic direction, sales and marketing strategy, and acquisitions of new projects including the deployment and management of the communications infrastructure for the county of San Diego, Clark County, and LA County. Mr. Young’s cohesive corporate vision and plan led to numerous successful projects in SAIC’s federal and commercial telecommunications business with clients such as AT&T, BellSouth, SBC Qwest and Level3. i) Overall infrastructure cost of the broadband system is estimated at $130,000,000. j) This middle-mile project will enable anchor over 2900 institution locations and last mile providers which will provide total economic impact across a population base of 4,600,000 with est. penetration of 30% is expected to amount to 1,533,333.