

Project Information

Company: Charter Communications

Project Description

General Info

Project #:	139
Project Name:	Washington Parish
Total Project Cost:	9,920,383.00
Total project cost per prospective broadband recipient:	6,636.00
Infrastructure cost per prospective broadband recipient:	6,636.00
Number of households to be served:	1446
Number of businesses to be served:	49
GUMBO cost per prospective broadband recipient:	4,136.00
Number of GUMBO households to be served:	1446
Number of GUMBO businesses to be served:	49
General Location/Parishes:	Washington
Base Speed (Minimum Download/Upload):	200 Mbps x 10 Mbps (for Spectrum's standard tier s
Supported Scalability Speeds (Minimum Download/Upload):	Up to 1 Gbps downstream speeds, 500 Mbps upstream

Qualifications and Experience:

Provide the following details:

- Number of years the applicant has provided internet services;
- A history of the number of households and consumers, by year of service, to which the applicant has provided broadband internet access, as well as the current number of households to which broadband internet access (at least 25:3 Mbps) is offered;
- The number of completed internet service infrastructure projects funded, in part, through federal or state grant programs, prior to the date of application submittal;
- Whether the applicant has ever participated in an internet service infrastructure project funded, in part, through federal or state grant programs, and if so, for each project, the nature and impact of the project, the role of the applicant, the total cost of the project, and the dollar amount of federal or state grant funding;
- The number of penalties paid by the applicant, a subsidiary or affiliate of the applicant, or the holding company of the applicant, relative to internet service infrastructure projects funded, in part, through federal or state grant programs, prior to the date of application submittal; and
- The number of times the applicant, a subsidiary or affiliate of the applicant, or the holding company of the applicant has ever been a defendant in any federal or state criminal proceeding or civil litigation as a result of its participation in an internet service infrastructure project funded, in part, through federal or state grant programs, prior to the date of application submittal

See attached.

Financial Background:

- Provide five years of financial statements, pro forma statements, or financial audits to ensure financial and organizational strength regarding the ability of the applicant to successfully meet the terms of the grant requirements and the ability to meet the potential repayment of grant funds. If the applicant has been in business for less than five years, provide documentation for the number of years in business
- Indicate whether the applicant, a subsidiary or affiliate of the applicant, or the holding company of the applicant has ever filed for bankruptcy

Please see attached documents.

Partnerships:

Provide the identity of any partners or affiliates if the applicant is proposing a project for which the applicant affirms that a formalized agreement or letter of support exists between the provider and one or more unaffiliated partners where the partner is one of the following:

- a separate private provider of broadband service, requiring a formalized agreement; or
- a nonprofit or not-for-profit, or a for-profit subsidiary of either, and the applicant is:
 - being allowed access and use of the partner's infrastructure, on special terms and conditions designed to facilitate the provision of broadband services in unserved areas, requiring a formalized agreement;
 - utilizing a matching financial and/or in-kind contribution provided by one or more partners, requiring a formalized agreement; or
 - a parish, municipality, or school board, or any instrumentality thereof, may qualify as a nonprofit for the purposes of the GUMBO grant program. Letters of support by a parish, municipality, or school board, or any instrumentality thereof, supporting an application may be submitted as part of an application. A letter of support does not require a formalized agreement.
- Provide a brief narrative explaining how the partnership or affiliation will facilitate deployment and reduce cost per prospective broadband recipient. For applications or project areas where the nonprofit or not-for-profit partner provides only matching financial support, that information can be documented in the budget section within the relevant application or project area.

In addition to GUMBO grant funds, Charter intends to use private financial and operational resources to complete the work in the Project Area. Charter will work closely with the communities in the Project Area and will not require additional financial support or financial partnerships.

For work being performed by Hudson Initiative or Veterans Initiative qualified applicants or contractors, provide documentation and/or a formalized agreement.

Charter is proud to work with a number of diverse suppliers nationwide. Our business units and procurement team are actively searching for top quality diverse suppliers – including veteran and –service-disabled veteran suppliers -- who can support our business growth and innovation, enhance the quality, reach, and accessibility of our products and services, and contribute to our continued success. While our current contractors do not participate in the Hudson Initiative or Veterans Initiative, Charter is ready to connect with potential diverse suppliers through Charter's Supplier Diversity program.

Project Area

Assessment of the Current Level of Broadband Access in the Proposed Deployment Area

Describe the current level of service within the area and provide the data source or methodology used to capture this information. Raw data may be submitted as part of the assessment. If data is available to support differences between advertised and transmission speeds, applicants may also submit applications for areas where transmission speeds are less than 25:3 Mbps.

Using the FCC Form 477 Fixed Broadband Deployment Data, Charter has conducted a detailed survey to estimate all unserved and underserved locations in the Parish. We began this analysis by identifying all households currently not receiving the minimum FCC standard of broadband (25 Mbps download) as “unserved.” As stated in the interim final rule implementing the American Rescue Plan Act (the “Act”), eligible projects are expected to focus on locations that are unserved or underserved. The Act treats users as being unserved or underserved if they lack access to a wireline connection capable of reliably delivering at least minimum speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload. In alignment with the Act and the GUMBO Rules, Charter wants to ensure that broadband infrastructure is sufficient to enable Parish residents to meet household needs, including the ability to support the simultaneous use of work, education, and health applications. We understand that the Parish wants, and Charter would deliver, speeds that exceed the FCC minimum standard and the speeds specified in the Act. Through this analysis, we have identified a total of 1,495 locations in the Parish that require an infrastructure investment which will deliver up to 1 Gigabit broadband. See attached Maps of Unserved Analysis.

Services

Provide a description of service options to be provided:

Service Name	Upload/download speed	Date of 1st Availability	Data Cap	# of recipients	Price
Spectrum Internet Assist	30 Mbps/4 Mbps	estimated within 14 months	NA	1495	17.99
Spectrum Internet	200 Mbps/10 Mbps	estimated within 14 months	NA	1495	74.99
Spectrum Internet Ultra	400 Mbps/20 Mbps	estimated within 14 months	NA	1495	94.99
Spectrum Internet Gig	1000Mbps/ 500 Mbps	estimated within 14 months	NA	1495	134.99

Marketing

Provide documentation for applicant engagement to connect consumers with community education forums, multimedia advertising, and marketing programs.

Charter employs a variety of marketing and advertising tools to announce the availability of service in a new area, including e-mail, direct mailings, local/regional news publications, and/or television or other multimedia advertising. Attached are samples of such marketing that may be used in the Parish.

Adoption

Provide documentation that shows low-income household service offerings, digital equity or literacy support, or programs or partnerships to provide these services. The applicant should also indicate current participation in, or plans to, accept the federal Lifeline subsidy.

Charter has engaged in several initiatives and established numerous business practices that benefit the State of Louisiana, and demonstrate our commitment to the community. As described below, Charter has established several programs to provide low cost internet service particularly for students and remote learning, has assisted customers struggling to pay their bills for service, and supported communities in Louisiana by providing good paying jobs and long-term careers. To assist in closing the Digital Divide during the COVID pandemic, Charter participates in the federal Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program. The EBB currently provides a discount on internet service of up to \$50 per month to certain low-income households that meet the program's eligibility criteria. Charter also plans to implement the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP replaces the EBB on December 31, 2021 and will provide up to a \$30 monthly benefit so that eligible households can continue to receive access to low cost high-speed internet services on a longer-term basis. Charter also offers a low-cost broadband service to low-income students and seniors through our Spectrum Internet Assist (SIA) program. SIA provides high-speed broadband (30 Mbps/4 Mbps) at a rate of \$17.99 per month (plus \$5 per month for Wi-Fi service) to qualifying households of which at least one member is a recipient of (1) the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), (2) the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP, or (3) Supplemental Security Income (for applicants age 65+ only). Students or seniors in need of discounted service can apply online through the link above or contact us for assistance. In addition to our low cost programs for internet service, we have provided many struggling customers relief when they experience challenges in paying their broadband bills. When the pandemic first began, Charter signed on to the Federal Communications Commission's voluntary Keep Americans Connected Pledge ensuring customers who contacted us because of economic hardship due to COVID-19 would not be disconnected or charged late fees from mid-March through June 30, 2020. As the benefits of the Keep Americans Connected Pledge ended, we worked with struggling customers, bringing their accounts current, putting customers into payment plans, and forgiving over \$85 million in overdue balances. These efforts collectively reduced the financial burdens facing those most impacted by the pandemic and allowed them to remain connected to broadband services. We are also committed to improving the lives of Louisiana residents and those throughout the region. Some of our recent initiatives include: Stay Connected K-12 Program To help address the lack of Internet connectivity faced by some student households, through the new Stay Connected K-12 program, Charter is working directly with schools and school districts across its footprint to assist them in offering high-speed, cable broadband Internet access to students, educators, and staff in their homes. Charter is currently connecting thousands of students and educators through this program. This product offering helps to ensure that learning, teaching, and working are uninterrupted by giving schools and school districts the flexibility to add students to the program when needed, and provide much-needed in-home connectivity at speeds up to 50 Mbps/5 Mbps. To date, Charter has established such relationships with school districts in 19 states, including Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. More information is available at <https://enterprise.spectrum.com/services/industries/k-12/stay-connected.html>. Charter is interested in working with school districts within the Parish to implement this K-12 program. Adoption & Education Efforts To increase adoption and access to technology, Charter offers philanthropic support to community organizations through the Spectrum Digital Education Grant program. The Spectrum Digital Education Grant program is a \$7 million overall commitment, which provides computers, digital education classes and technology labs and has benefited more than 56,000 people across 17 states and Washington, D.C., since 2017. Bulk Rate Solution to Bridge Digital Divide Charter now also offers a bulk rate partnership opportunity for parishes, municipalities, housing authorities, or other local entities to identify homes in underserved areas and provide them with a heavily discounted bulk rate for Spectrum's Internet service

offering. Charter is willing to discuss this opportunity if the Parish is interested in exploring a bulk rate option.

Community Support

Evidence of support for the project from citizens, local government, businesses, and institutions in the community, including letters of correspondence from citizens, local government, businesses, and institutions in the community that supports the project

Please see attached.

Local Workforce

Documentation of a workforce plan prioritizing the hiring of local, Louisiana resident workers, to include a signed letter of intent with a post-secondary educational institution that is a member of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, containing an obligation upon the applicant, and contractors or subcontractors of the applicant, to put forth a good-faith effort to hire, when possible, recent graduates of broadband-related programs.

Charter offers Louisiana residents not only job prospects, but lifelong career opportunities with growth potential in numerous fields including sales, engineering, customer service, operations and technology. Charter is proud to employ approximately 270 workers in Louisiana. Wages and Benefits Charter's workforce is key to our long-term success and we're proud to invest in them. This commitment to our employees is why every employee already makes at least two times the federal minimum wage, and why Charter CEO Tom Rutledge announced we will permanently raising our minimum wage for all employees to \$20 per hour in 2022. We offer robust benefits, paid time off, company-paid retirement programs, and opportunities for advancement, because Charter is a company where our workers don't just do their jobs, they build careers. And when the lives of our employees are improved, they in turn improve the lives of the customers they serve. At Charter, we offer our employees:

- Robust health care
- Company-paid retirement programs
- At least 2x the federal minimum wage
- A \$20 minimum wage in 2022

Our \$20 minimum wage continues our commitment to our employees and our customers. After three companies came together to form Charter Spectrum, we started building for the long term. Nationally, we invested over \$30 billion in training, tools, trucks, test equipment, new call centers, network upgrades, buildings, labs, product development, set top boxes, Wi-Fi routers, modems, and news channels. We also brought work back from overseas, reduced our reliance on contractors, and hired locally. In addition to the benefits described above, we provided \$1.50 immediate increase during the COVID-19 pandemic for certain front-line workers.

Technical Report

Reporting Requirements

Explain in technical detail the technologies to be used in the proposed project and the broadband transmission speeds offered to prospective broadband recipients as a result of the project. If it would be impracticable, because of geography, topography, or excessive cost to design a broadband infrastructure project that would deliver 100:100 Mbps, the applicant must provide an explanation. Transmission speeds of 100:20 Mbps are the minimum allowable under this grant program.

As stated above, the Project will use Charter's FTTP EPON architecture, a standardized and mature model that is operated by Charter across the country, engineered and managed to meet 1 Gbps downstream speeds, 500 Mbps upstream speeds, and latency of well below 80 milliseconds, and with the ability to scale to higher performance specifications in the future as customer bandwidth needs evolve. Charter's FTTP EPON deployment is relevant and suitable for remote learning and remote working, offering very high bandwidth and low latency service attributes that accommodate numerous members of a household or small business simultaneously using bandwidth-intensive applications, such as video conferencing, telemedicine, video streaming, gaming, virtual or augmented reality sessions, and numerous other applications. New customers in the Project Area will have access to several internet speed options, including Charter's "Spectrum Internet" with a minimum speed of up to 200/10 Mbps and Charter's "Internet Gig" service at up to 1000/500 Mbps. Additional services that will be available to Charter Internet customers include, but are not limited to, anti-virus security protection and Advanced Home WiFi. As an added benefit of its FTTP network, Charter will also be in a position to offer competitive video and voice services in the grant area.

Explain the scalability of the broadband infrastructure to be deployed to meet future bandwidth needs.

Please see attached document regarding scalability.

Provide a proposed construction timeline and duration of the deployment project period. The deployment project period is the time from award of the grant agreement to the time that service is available to the targeted prospective broadband recipients under the grant. Describe estimated timeline, deployment roll-out and number of end-users to be served in each phase (10 percent, 35 percent, 60 percent, 85 percent, 100 percent).

Charter is prepared to deliver on this proposal in an expedited manner. With a dedicated broadband expansion team already in place and focused on growth throughout the state, we are well staffed and prepared to begin construction within 60 days of the date from which Charter obtains all permits necessary to complete construction of the entire Project Area. Once selected, Charter will work with the Parish and other key stakeholders to establish a comprehensive schedule of project events and deliverables along with delivery dates for each. Further, Charter is willing to commit to completion of the entirety of this project no later than 36 months, subject to excusable delay. "Excusable Delay" means a delay to the construction of the project that affects completion and is directly caused by (1) make-ready work that is not received by Charter within 45 days of Charter's submission of a completed application for utility pole attachments; or (2) any delay in receiving governmental, regulatory and third party permits, licenses and approvals, despite Charter's good faith efforts to secure timely approvals, or (3) pursuant to compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws. See attached Project Timeline. Our construction team would work closely with the Parish to ensure the project is completed as quickly and efficiently as possible to deliver 1 Gigabit service to 100% of the identified unserved locations in Washington Parish that are included in this Project.

☒ **Wired Infrastructure** ☐ **Fixed Wireless**

Wired Infrastructure Deployment Reporting Requirements

Describe the general design of the project and deployment plan and include the following:

- Explanation of the existing networks and equipment to be used for the project. If assets are owned by another entity, explain how they will be used for this project and, if applicable, provide a copy of the agreement between the applicant and the owner.
- Total number of miles of project infrastructure deployment, and the number of miles of project infrastructure deployment accounted for by preexisting infrastructure

- Detailed explanation of how the new or upgraded infrastructure will serve the prospective broadband recipients. In the case of the installation or upgrade of a specific site infrastructure, such as a point of presence or fiber hut (fiber), pedestal (cable), or a remote exchange/DSLAM (DSL), the applicant must include:
 - The number of prospective broadband recipients that will be served by that site infrastructure
 - The distance from the specific site infrastructure such as a POP, pedestal, or DSLAM to the end user(s) and the expected broadband speed that will be effectively delivered
- Detailed description of the design work needed for deployment, such as, but not limited to, pole work, acquiring or updating easements, and/or property acquisition.

Charter intends to use existing infrastructure to the extent feasible. For example, Charter will be using its existing headends and hub sites serving the Project area. Charter is also utilizing its existing middle-mile network and core backbone to reach the Project area. And, to the extent practical, Charter may lease circuits or fiber from existing providers in the area. Finally, where possible Charter will be utilizing existing pole and/or conduit agreements in the local public-rights-of-way.

Wired Assets

Existing Network	Existing Equipment	New/Upgraded Infrastructure	Installation Type	Num of Recipients	Avg Distance in Miles Between Prospective Recipients	Expected Speed
See attached						

Budget

Budget

The project budget should reflect all eligible project costs to be funded through the GUMBO Grant Program. Additionally, the project budget should include the minimum provider funding match of at least 20%, any local government funding match from a parish, municipality, and/or school board, or any instrumentality thereof, and the requested GUMBO Grant Program funding.

Please see attached document.

Proof of Funding Availability

Provide a signed letter of funding availability from each source of funds committed for the project. If loan or other grant funds are pledged, a loan/grant commitment letter from each source of funds must be included. Should an applicant be an awardee of Universal Service, Connect American Phase II, Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, or other federal or non-federal funds for the deployment of broadband service, the applicant shall attest as to whether or not the applicant's GUMBO application and associated project's buildout is dependent upon such awarded funds.

Please see attached letter.