

City of Columbia Council Work Session

Monday, August 15, 2022

Broadband Discussion



Broadband Discussion

The Broadband Business Planning Task Force was created by Resolution 49-19 that was adopted on April 14, 2019. The resolution contained five purposes of the Task Force:

- Review and evaluate current and possible future state and federal regulations governing broadband communications for municipalities.

Broadband Discussion

- Review Columbia's existing fiber optic system and service offerings to customers.
- Review the current offerings by incumbent service providers and any opportunities for public/private partnerships.
- Evaluate the feasibility of additional fiber optic deployment by the City.
- If fiber optic deployment is deemed feasible, formulate and recommend a Broadband Business Plan for the community.

Broadband Discussion

The Broadband Business Planning Task Force completed their work in March 2022 and provided a report to Council at the April 6, 2022 meeting. The report included the following recommendations to the Council:

- Promote the Affordable Connectivity Plan
- Formalize joint trenching and dig once policies/practice.

Broadband Discussion

- Complete the pending RFP to provide high-speed broadband services at subsidized rates to areas deemed underserved by the City.
- Evaluate City fees for equity across providers to ensure all types of providers are paying similar fees, such as similar pole attachment and permitting fees, and how those fees compare to other cities.

Broadband Discussion

- Monitor future third-party funding opportunities
- The City should consider a future review of the state of broadband deployment throughout the City. This review should ensure that the ongoing provider network expansion as presented to the Task Force occurs as planned and whether Columbia's broadband needs are being met.
- As part of the future review, the City should consider incorporating broadband-related access and adoption questions into the City's existing utilities survey, which is currently administered every two years.

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Broadband Grant Opportunities



Introduction

- Grant Administrator is in the process of evaluating potential grant opportunities.
- Many of the broadband grants are designed for service providers and therefore not applicable for the City of Columbia.

Introduction

- While the grant opportunities continually evolve, staff has identified two specific grants for Broadband:
 - Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant
 - Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant

- Grant Deadline: September 30, 2022
- Eligible Applicants:
 - (A) a State, political subdivision of a State, Tribal government, technology company, electric utility, utility cooperative, public utility district, telecommunications company, telecommunications cooperative, nonprofit foundation, nonprofit corporation, nonprofit institution, nonprofit association, regional planning council, Native entity, or economic development authority;
 - B) a partnership of two (2) or more entities described in (A)

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant

- Partners Need:
 - Is capable of carrying out the proposed project in a competent manner, including a plan to attract, train, or retain an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce; and, has the financial, managerial, technical, and operational capability to carry out the proposed project and operate the resulting middle mile broadband network.

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant

- Project Goals: Broadband infrastructure that does not connect directly to an end-user location, including an anchor institution
 - Underserved - Download speed of not less than 100 megabits per second and an upload speed of not less than 20 megabits per second
 - Unserved - Download speed of not less than 25 megabits per second and an upload speed of not less than 3 megabits per second

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant

- Project Period: 5 Years
- Budget: \$5 million to \$100 million
- Cost Sharing Match: 30% cost share match.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Grant Deadline: September 29, 2022
- Eligible Applicants:
 - (a) Corporations; (b) or partnerships; (c) Limited liability companies; (d) Nonprofit organizations; (e) Local Governments; (f) Rural electric cooperatives organized under chapter 394 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and their broadband affiliates; (g) Telephone cooperatives, as defined in § 386.020(55); and (h) Public-private partnerships, with private or nonprofit partners that are registered in this state.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Eligible Applicants, continued:
 - The Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) regulation requires that for as long as the SFRF-funded infrastructure is in use that provides service to households, the provider must participate in the Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) through the lifetime of the ACP, or otherwise provide access to a broad-based affordability program to low-income consumers in the proposed service area that provides benefits to households commensurate with those provided under the ACP.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Partners Need:
 - Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) guidance requires awarded applicants, or subrecipients, must offer at least one low-cost option without data usage caps and at speeds that are sufficient for a household with multiple users to simultaneously telework and engage in remote learning.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Project Goals: The project is designed to meet a critical need of the community to be served, as is related to access, affordability, reliability, and/or consistency.
- The project will serve one of the following areas:
 - a) An unserved area.
 - b) An underserved area, which is a project area without access to wireline or fixed wireless broadband internet service with speeds of at least 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Project Goals, continued:
 - The infrastructure is designed to deliver service that reliably meets or exceeds symmetrical download and upload speeds of 100 Mbps.
 - Last-mile connections— network infrastructure that carries signals from the network to and from the home or business; or Middle-mile connections that facilitate last-mile connections.
 - The project must be operational by September 30, 2026.

Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

- Project Period: 4 Years
- Budget: \$100,000 to \$10 million
- Cost Sharing Match: DED is not requiring applicants to provide a cost match. However prioritization will be given to projects for which the applicant is including a private funding match of at least 20%. Additional credit will be given to projects receiving local government funding. Credit will be provided on a graduated scale to applicants that exceed the 20% match prioritization.

Broadband Grant Opportunities

- Recommendations – Middle Mile Program
 - Longer Project Period – 5 Years
 - No set date to complete project
 - Guidelines give specifics on what is needed for and from partner
- Items from Partner
 - Resumes from Key Management Personnel
 - Organization Chart
 - Audited Financial Statements

Broadband Grant Opportunities

- Recommend partnering with local company to expand infrastructure to underserved areas.
- Budget for Project - \$10 Million
 - Amount will be revised after consultation with partner.

