

Applicant Information

Company Name	COMPORIUM, INC
Address	330, East Black Street Rock Hill, SC 29730
Website	www.comporium.com
Federal Tax ID	
DUNS #	009862665
System Award Management (SAM.Gov) ID	DMALANWXKK55

Authorized Representative		Authorized Representative (Alternative)	
Full Name	Charles Gregory Lunsford	Full Name	David Christopher Moody
Contact Title	Vice President - Regulatory Affairs	Contact Title	Regulatory Cost Analyst
Phone Number	8033267170	Phone Number	8033267255
E-Mail	greg.lunsford@comporium.com	E-Mail	chris.moody@comporium.com

Grant Administrator & Company Name(if applicable):
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Full Name	
Contact Title	
Telephone	
E-Mail	
Website	
Federal Tax ID	
Address	

Project Information

Project Title	Union County GREAT Grant		
Project Cost	\$923,504		
County	Union	Tier #	003
Estimated # of Households with improved access			146
Estimated # of businesses with improved access			8
Base Speed - Minimum Download/Upload			Greater than 100:100 Mbps

Project Description (provide a brief summary of the project)

Comporium, Inc. has identified pockets of DSL that lack 25Mbps/3Mbps speeds within remote areas of Union County. The proposed project area is completely contained within Census Blocks that are listed as “FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload” in the NC GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool. These areas qualify for GREAT Grant Program funding by the American Rescue Plan Act. Comporium, Inc. will upgrade the identified DSL areas with high-speed Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH). This high-speed fiber infrastructure will introduce residential and business locations with up to one gigabit per second symmetrical speeds.

Comporium, Inc. identified a proposed funding service area (PFSA) that lacks sufficient broadband service. The proposed funding service area will pass 146 residential locations and 8 business locations, for a total of 154 locations. Nearly 19 miles of new fiber will be constructed throughout underserved areas of Union County. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$923,504, with an approximate cost per location of \$5,997.

Has the applicant entered into a partnership for this project as defined in S.L. 2019-230?

Yes

Checklist Details

1) Statement of Qualifications (Please provide a detailed description of qualifications and experience with the deployment of broadband):

Company History & Background:

Comporium, Inc. started as Rock Hill Telephone Company in 1894 to provide telephone service to the Rock Hill, South Carolina community. It has grown to a multifaceted corporation that still includes the local Rock Hill Telephone company, but also is the parent company of five additional regulated local exchange companies and 16 non-regulated entities which include broadband, cable TV, long distance, CLECs, directory, operator services, mobile, realty, and insurance. Within the state of South Carolina, The Comporium companies serve portions of York, Lancaster, Chester, Kershaw, Aiken, Calhoun, Edgefield, Lexington, Orangeburg, Saluda, Spartanburg, and Cherokee Counties. Within the state of North Carolina, The Comporium companies serve Transylvania County, along with portions of Mecklenburg County and Union County. Comporium, Inc. also operates as a competitive local exchange company (CLEC) in portions of the Carolinas, including Union County. As of the end of February 2022, the company's fiber-optic facilities pass by 2,400 homes within Union County in North Carolina.

Checklist Details

Current Broadband Network and Infrastructure:

Comporium, Inc. offers Fiber-To-The-Home to both residential and business customers. The Fiber-To-The-Home product has a variety of speed tiers to suit every consumer's needs, including our flagship service, Zipstream (1Gbps/1Gbps). Zipstream customers get access to a robust path to the internet backbone that can carry large amounts of data. In addition to voice, broadband, video and security services, Comporium, Inc. offers Metro Ethernet services that provide businesses a redundant and secure way to transfer mission-critical data. Comporium, Inc.'s Metro Ethernet service is a high-speed (10 Mbps to 10 Gbps) packet-based service that provides the transmission of point-to-point LAN or WAN data between a customer's locations. Metro Ethernet circuits can also be ordered to provide dedicated bandwidth to the internet. Our Customer Network Operations Center offers technical support with proactive network monitoring of Metro Ethernet circuits to ensure consistent, high-level performance. Comporium, Inc.'s MPLS core network provides diverse and redundant IP routing that supports all services. Comporium, Inc. solely relies on Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) last mile technologies to serve customers within Union County. Comporium, Inc. provides equipment to operate voice, data, and video networks. Comporium, Inc. performs its own customer service, and has many business office locations for customers to visit and provision services. Comporium, Inc. also has a plant work center location that houses its installation and repair group along with its facilities and construction group. Each of Comporium, Inc.'s 25 remote offices are designed and equipped to support the operation of communications networks. These remotes are equipped with battery and power generation backup in the event of an emergency.

Further Broadband Needs:

Union County has experienced many economic challenges in recent years. Aside to those people who are unemployed, 16,678, or 7.0%, individuals are living in poverty. Individuals who have experienced hardships rely on broadband to communicate, apply for unemployment, and search for jobs. Extending fiber into the most remote areas of the county will greatly assist these individuals by increasing their overall quality of life, and to lift them out of poverty.

Additional broadband can also help combat childhood poverty. The current poverty rate in the Union County School District is 23.98%. Some the elementary schools have a poverty rate over 50%. By adding additional high-speed broadband, this will allow students to complete assignments from home, assist in virtual learning, and enhance the overall learning experience. Students who attend school virtually will benefit from upgrading the current DSL infrastructure. Since the maximum DSL speed available to students is 11Mbps/1Mbps, virtual learning likely is a challenge. GREAT Grant funding will allow the DSL infrastructure to be upgraded to fiber, alleviating the risk of students not being able to complete assignments. This upgraded technology will keep these Union County students on pace with their counterparts across other areas of the state and not be left behind.

Each day many employees leave Union County to work elsewhere. Broadband expansion into rural areas of the county could allow these individuals to work from home. This could also bolster economic development efforts for small businesses. Employees who used to commute to Mecklenburg County, York County, Lancaster County, and Cabarrus County, would have the ability to spend money at local restaurants, gyms, barber shops, gas stations, and retail stores. These funds would otherwise be leaving Union County each day. Expanding fiber-based broadband access will also make Union County more attractive to industry and to facilitate economic development. When county officials are trying to lure prospective industry, it will be easy to demonstrate the efforts of Comporium and its goal to connect rural areas with high-speed fiber. Companies will be more enticed to relocate to these areas knowing that high-speed broadband is available to residences and businesses.

2) Assessment of the current level of broadband access in the proposed deployment area – supporting data may be uploaded if applicable:

When assessing a target deployment area within Union County, Comporium, Inc. utilized the GREAT Grant Mapping tool to determine where areas of need for 25/3 broadband currently does not exist. The proposed project area is completely contained within Census Blocks that are listed as "FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload" within the NC GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool. Comporium also completed site visits to verify that there were no facility deployments other than traditional telephone copper cables visible within the proposed project area.

3)Description of Proposed Services, Advertised Speeds, and Pricing Structure for proposed broadband recipients in the eligible project area:

Comporium, Inc. dba Comporium, will provide five broadband speed tiers for residential customers and four broadband speed tiers for business customers to choose from. Comporium, Inc. will also provide residential and business telephone, video, and security using the new broadband infrastructure. Comporium, Inc. will offer Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) participation within its Union County operating areas.

Residential Broadband fiber offerings for GREAT Grant locations will consist of the following speeds and prices:

ACP Essential 100Mbps x 100Mbps = \$30 (Free for ACP-eligible subscribers)
Non-ACP Essential 100Mbps x 100Mbps=\$49.94
Fiber Residential Standard Package 400Mbps x 400Mbps = \$72.94
Fiber Residential Ultra Package 600Mbps x 600Mbps = \$82.94
Fiber Residential Elite Package 750Mbps x 750Mbps = \$92.94
Zipstream Residential 1000Mbps x 1000Mbps = \$102.94

Business Broadband fiber offerings for GREAT Grant locations will consist of the following speeds and prices:

Fiber Business Package 1 400Mbps x 400Mbps = \$84.98
Fiber Business Package 2 600Mbps x 600Mbps = \$154.98
Fiber Business Package 3 750Mbps x 750Mbps = \$204.98
Zipstream Business 1000Mbps x 1000Mbps = \$299.99

4) Description of Adoption Plan:

Comporium, Inc. has experience in marketing new and upgraded broadband offerings to residential and business customers within Union County. As previously mentioned, over the last five years Comporium, Inc. has passed over 2,400 new locations with fiber. The company plans to incorporate the following methods into the GREAT Grant adoption plan.

Press Release: As soon as an award announcement has been finalized and signed by the GREAT Grant staff and the legal team of Comporium, Inc. a press

Checklist Details

release will be issued to local media outlets in Union County. These types of media releases will be used first, to make residents and businesses aware of planned upgrades in underserved areas of the service territory.

Direct Mail Postcards: Comporium, Inc. will implement a direct mail campaign to target locations within the underserved polygon to make them aware of the fiber network expansion. These postcards will notify residents and businesses that fiber-optic based communications services including internet service is available in their area.

Right of Way Signage: Comporium will develop signage to post along the main arteries and intersections of the targeted area of eligible residents.

Construction signage: While our construction crews are working, we will have them use A-frame signage to describe the purpose of their activities in that area.

Mailbox newspaper slot notices: Notices to residents may also be left in the newspaper slots, where available, (not in the mailboxes) at each location.

By checking the appropriate box, you will upload the following documents:

5) Description of Project Area, Identification of locations to be served, relevant maps and mapping files:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6) If submitting other data sources, including field data, to identify unserved locations (households and businesses) outside of the fully unserved census blocks provided on the NC One Map, please provide a narrative describing your methodology for determining the proposed funding area is unserved and eligible for funding in this round.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7) Excel Spreadsheet (NO PDF) that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates. Please provide an explanation of how you estimated the costs:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8) Please provide your methodology or explanation of how you calculated cost per location (Households/Businesses):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9) Proof of Financial Solvency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10) Technical Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11) Evidence of Support for the Project (i.e. Letter of Support)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12) Evidence or proof a partnership based on the definition in the guidance document and the authorizing legislation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SCORING

The GREAT Program is a competitive grant program. Applications shall be scored based upon a system that awards a single point for criteria considered to be the minimum level for the provision of broadband service, with additional points awarded to criteria that exceed minimum levels. Applications receiving the highest score shall receive priority status for the awarding of grants.

The tool below is being provided to Applicants so that they may estimate their score to determine estimated match requirements. All final and official scores will be determined by the BIO during the review process.

	Reviewer	Score
a1) Partnership - One point shall be given for a proposed partnership that will make available existing infrastructure that has been installed for the partner's enterprise, non-consumer broadband purposes, or any other property, buildings, or structures owned by the partner, for a proposed project.	Choose One	0
a2) Partnership - A county or nonprofit entity that proposes to provide a financial match shall be given one point. Notwithstanding Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, or any provision of law to the contrary, a county may use unrestricted general funds or federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 1) funds allocated to it for the purpose of improving broadband infrastructure for a financial match.	Choose One	0
a3) Partnership - An applicant shall receive two additional points for a proposed partnership where the county's financial match is comprised entirely from federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 2) funds intended for broadband infrastructure.	Choose One	0
b) Unserved Households(HH) – Using most recent FCC Data or other information or supporting data, estimated number of unserved households within the eligible county (TIER ONE)	500 or Less	1
c) Unserved Households (HH) to be Served – Using most recent FCC Data or other information supporting data, the percentage of the total unserved households with the eligible project area	Less than 15%	1

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d) Unserved Business – Using most recent FCC Data or other information by NC BIO, provide broadband service to unserved business within eligible county (TIER ONE) and project area (Documentation)	1 and 4	1
e1) Piedmont or Coastal Plain Region	Choose One	
e2) Mountain Region	Choose One	
f) Base Speed – Min Download : Upload	100:20 Mbps to 100:100 Mbps	1.00
Total Score		3
g) Community Broadband Plan defined by NCBIO	No	0
h1) For counties that received an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) or more directly from the federal government, the following points shall be added to the application score:	Choose One	
h2) For counties that (i) received less than an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) directly from the federal government from the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 2) and (ii) are providing a portion of a project's matching funds using the entirety of the federal funds the county received, together with any other unrestricted general fund monies, if needed, the following points shall be added to the application score:	Choose One	
i1) Are the matching funds partially comprised of ARPA funds a county received directly from US Treasury?	Choose One	
i2) Are the matching funds entirely comprised of ARPA funds a county received directly from US Treasury?	Choose One	
Final Score		3

List all expenses related to the project, the amount of each expense, and the corresponding funding source(s) in the table below. The table should include all of the eligible costs such as: installation, acquiring or updating easements, equipment, fiber, construction, backhaul infrastructure for the end user, and testing costs. Ineligible costs should not be included in the project budget. The table should clearly show all planned expenditures and all funding sources for the project.

Reviewer Score:	3	Matching Requirement (%):	50%
Based on your scoring matrix, Your minimum match requirements:			\$0
Total Project Cost:	\$923,504	Grant Amount Requested (\$):	\$0

Please indicate which documents were submitted with your application, by checking the appropriate box.

~ Reference guidelines booklet for document details ~

1) Excel Spreadsheet (NO PDF) that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates. Please provide an explanation of how you estimated the costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) What is the total cost per location for the project? Please provide your methodology or explanation of how you calculated cost per location (Households/Businesses)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Proof of Financial Solvency	<input type="checkbox"/>

Project Expense	GREAT Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Easements (one-time fees)			0
Materials (fiber, equipment, etc.)			0
Construction/Installation			0
Testing			0
Engineering			0
Lease/Collocation Fees (one-time fees)			0
Other 1			0
Other 2			0
Other 3			0
Total Eligible Project Cost			0

Company Certifications

1 Overdue Tax Debts	Does the Company or the Related Member(s) currently have any overdue tax debts with any City, Town or County in, or with the State of North Carolina?	No
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NC DIT GREAT Program

Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Program

2	Occupational Safety and Health Act Violations	Does the Company, or the Related Member(s) have any citation under the Occupational Safety and Health Act that have become a final order within the past three years for willful serious violations or for failing to abate serious violations?	No
3	Loan Defaults	Is the Company, or the Related Member(s) currently in default on any loan or grant previously made by the State of North Carolina?	No
4	Incentive History	Has the Company, or Related Member(s) ever defaulted on an economic development grant or incentive or been sued by a grantor with respect to an economic development grant or incentive from the State of North Carolina?	No
5	Creditor Losses, Litigation, Government Investigations	Has any member of management or any principal of the Company, or the Related Member(s) been involved in a financial reorganization, a bankruptcy, or other situation that led to losses by creditors or bond buyers, investor lawsuits, or government investigation alleging fraud or impropriety?	No
6	Pending or Threatened Litigation	Is the Company, or Related Member(s) subject to any claim, suit, action, proceeding, or government investigation that is pending or threatened that, individually or in the aggregate, would reasonably be expected to have a material adverse effect on the proposed grantee's finances or operations or the ability to conduct the proposed project, or that would reasonably be expected to impact the NC DIT's decision to award a grant?	No

Internet Service Provider (ISP) Certification and Attestation

The attached statements and exhibits are hereby made part of this application, and the undersigned representative of the applicant certifies that the information in this application and the attached statements and exhibits are true, correct, and complete to the best of the signatory's knowledge and belief. The signatory further certifies:

1. as Authorized Representative, the signatory has been authorized to file this application by formal action of the governing body;
2. agrees that if a grant is awarded, the applicant will provide proper and timely submittal of all documentation requested by the Grantor Agency;
3. that the applicant has substantially complied with or will comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances as applicable to this project;
4. that the applicant certifies the financial and organizational strength regarding the ability to successfully meet the terms of the grant requirements and the ability to meet the potential for repayment of grant funds; and
5. attests that the proposed project area is eligible.

Authorized Representative

Name:	Charles Gregory Lunsford	Title:	Vice President - Regulatory Affairs	Date:	05/04/2022
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