

CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS OF WASHINGTON COMPANY, LLC
Washington State Universal Communications Service Program Annual Report
Pursuant to WAC 480-123-130(1)

Under Docket UT-200696, the Washington UTC (“UTC”), on November 24, 2020, granted the Petition for Funding (“Petition”) from the Washington State Universal Communications Service Program filed by Consolidated Communications of Washington Company, LLC. (“Consolidated”) that included a broadband deployment plan covering the entire 4 year funding period with the following elements:

1. Multiyear investment plan;
2. Specific project(s) that are projected to provide or enhance broadband services at speeds required by the commission or the Federal Communications Commission (currently 25/3 or better). Project information will include an estimated timeline, geographic location, number of locations passed, and up-load and download speeds;
3. A plan for maintenance of broadband services in the provider's service area;
4. A description for how the provider will enhance broadband services in its service area; and
5. Any supporting information that the commission requests to assist its review and analysis of the provider's broadband plan.

Pursuant to WAC 480-123-130(1), Consolidated must submit the following information and reports to the UTC on or before July 1st of the year following each calendar year in which Consolidated received support:

- a) The number of residential and business access lines and broadband connections served within the state of Washington for which the provider used program support during the preceding calendar year in the provision of basic telecommunications and broadband service (broken down to reflect beginning and end of year quantities);

RESPONSE: On January 1, 2020, Consolidated had 7,299 residential access lines, 5,761 business access lines and 12,071 DSL connections. On December 31, 2020, Consolidated had 6,778 residential access lines, 5,223 business access lines and 12,164 DSL connections.

- b) Detailed information on how the provider used program support during the preceding year to maintain, provide, or enhance telecommunications services;

RESPONSE: Consolidated’s Petition was filed, and subsequently granted by the UTC, pursuant to WAC 480-123-110(1)(j)(ii), which states that “the provider commits to the deployment of broadband to the number of locations the commission has determined by order. Such deployment obligations are in addition to any Federal Communications Commission deployment requirements.” Consolidated completed its broadband deployment obligations under the FCC’s CAF II program by reaching over 3,200 locations as of December 31, 2020, with broadband service meeting the required 10 Mbps downstream / 1 Mbps upstream or better service. Consolidated’s obligation under the granted Petition is to deploy broadband service capable of 25 Mbps downstream / 3 Mbps upstream or better speeds to no fewer than 398 new locations that were not supported by any other state or federal program. Consolidated must meet this obligation by the end of the programs build-out period in 2024. The details on Consolidated’s progress in meeting this obligation are provided in the response to item c), below.

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- c) Detailed information on how the provider used program support during the preceding year to meet the provider's broadband buildout requirement. Information must include location information in the same format that broadband specific location data is filed with the Federal Communications Commission or the Universal Service Administrative Company. If the data format or reporting data fields change, the providers and commission staff will work together to revise the requirements and format;

RESPONSE: Although no new service is available to customers as of June 30, 2021, Consolidated has made significant progress during the first half of 2021 on four of the projects identified in the Petition for Funding that was granted on November 24, 2020. In each instance, all engineering and design work has been completed, all necessary permits have been acquired, all internal work orders have been opened and any necessary contractors resources have been secured.

[REDACTED]

- d) A list with detailed information of all consumer requests for new basic telecommunications service in the area for which the provider received program support during the preceding year that the provider denied or did not fulfill for any reason;

RESPONSE: As stated in the response to item b), Consolidated received program support for “the deployment of broadband to the number of locations the commission has determined by order,” and not for the provision of basic telecommunications service. However, Consolidated can state that there were no consumer requests for basic telecommunications service that were denied or not fulfilled.

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- e) A sworn statement from a company officer of the provider certifying that, during the preceding year, the provider materially complied with all commission rules in chapter 480-120 WAC that are applicable to the provider and its provision of service within the area for which the provider received program support;

RESPONSE: Please see Exhibit 1

- f) A sworn statement by a company officer certifying that during the preceding year, the provider met the requirements of WAC 480-123-120(5) – the broadband deployment obligation;

RESPONSE: Please see Exhibit 1

- g) Broadband availability data as required by the commission;

RESPONSE: Please see the response to item c), above, and i), below.

- h) A report on operational efficiencies and business plan modifications for the area for which the provider receives program support during the preceding year that the provider has undertaken to transition or expand from primary provision of legacy voice telephone service to broadband service or otherwise reduce its reliance on support from the program, and whether and how disbursements from the program were used to accomplish such outcomes;

RESPONSE: As stated in the response to item b), Consolidated received program support for “the deployment of broadband to the number of locations the commission has determined by order,” and not for the provision of basic telecommunications service. Additionally, Consolidated did not receive any program support prior to the preceding year. As such, Consolidated has not relied on program support for the provision of legacy voice telephone service. However, by using program funds to place new fiber and updated electronics in the identified projects areas, Consolidated’s network becomes more reliable for customers and more efficient for the company’s Network Operations Center to monitor and manage.

- i) The provider's Form 477 Subscription Data at the census tract level on a Washington state basis that provides data in the same format and within fourteen calendar days of the dates the data is provided to the Federal Communications Commission;

RESPONSE: Consolidated submitted Form 477 data to the UTC in Docket UT-200002 on March 12, 2021, for the period ending December 31, 2020. Consolidated’s next submission will be on or before September 14, 2021, for the period ending June 30, 2021.

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- j) Detailed information on any other efforts the provider made to use program support to advance universal service and the public interest in Washington; and

RESPONSE: Consolidated continues to evaluate opportunities that would facilitate the deployment of additional high-speed broadband services in its Washington markets. Since funding for broadband deployment became available to states through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds that were part of the American Rescue Plan that was passed by Congress and signed by the President in March 2021, Consolidated has had several conversations with the Washington State Broadband Office, the Washington Independent Telecommunications Association and local government entities about possible public/private partnerships that would be eligible to receive such support. Additionally, as the White House and the Treasury work on the final guidance for how these funds should be distributed and used, Consolidated has met with representatives from each to discuss basic principles that should be consistently used at all levels of government. The results of these efforts should be known in the second half of 2021.

- k) Any other information or reports the commission requires including, but not limited to, information the commission needs to provide a report to the legislature concerning the program.

RESPONSE: Consolidated has no additional information to provide at this time, but commits to working with the UTC, as needed.