

CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS OF WASHINGTON COMPANY, LLC
Washington State Universal Communications Service Program Annual Report
Pursuant to WAC 480-123-130(1)
February 9, 2024

This Washington State Universal Communications Service Program (the “Program”) annual report, filed by Consolidated Communications of Washington Company, LLC. d/b/a Consolidated Communications (“Consolidated”), is Consolidated’s final Program year annual report pursuant to the reporting requirements set forth by WAC 480-123-130 (1). On November 22, 2023, under Docket UT-230635, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (the “UTC”) granted Consolidated’s petition for Program funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, representing the final Program year authorized distribution under the Second Substitute Senate Bill (SSSB) 5511, as signed by the Governor on May 13, 2019. The grant amount of \$1,077,515 under UT-230635, was subject to the condition that Consolidated meet its broadband buildout obligation of 398 locations by the end of the Program, June 30, 2024, and if not met, Consolidated would return a prorated amount for the 2023 and 2024 Program distributions for the quantity of locations that fall short of 398 locations. Consolidated’s original obligation, as granted on November 24, 2020, under Docket UT-200696, was 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 has met its broadband buildout obligation, as detailed below.

Now, pursuant to WAC 480-123-130(1), Consolidated is filing its final Washington State Universal Communications Service Program Annual Report with the UTC on or before July 1st of the year following each calendar year in which Consolidated received support, which provides the following reporting requirements:

- 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, 2023, Consolidated had 5,519 residential access lines, 2,941 business access lines and 10,787 broadband connections/subscribers. On December 31, 2023, Consolidated had 4,923 residential access lines, 2,684 business access lines and 10,150 broadband connections/subscribers.

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

RESPONSE: On August 3, 2023, Consolidated filed its petition seeking State USF support for the final funding fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Subsequent to that filing date, to address clarifications in its petition and to update unsworn statements, Consolidated filed revised petitions on October 16 and 19, 2023 (collectively, the “Petition”). In the Petition, Consolidated indicated it had deployed broadband to 378 of its 398 UTC broadband location buildout obligation. Consolidated recognized in its Petition that 20 total locations still remained in need of buildout in order to meet Consolidated’s buildout obligation.

In Consolidated’s Petition, Consolidated indicated it recognized two broadband buildout project areas, totaling an estimated 24 additional locations, scheduled to be fully in place and operational mid Q4 2023. Consolidated, in this annual report filing, is now reporting the completion the required 20 locations needed to complete its obligation, along with an additional four (4) locations above 398, now totaling 402 total broadband buildout locations, all completed before the end of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

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Consolidated completed the following two projects using program support during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024:

Schnebly Road Project (11 locations deployed) – Consolidated completed this Ellensburg area project in Q4 2023. This rural area project, consisting of 11 locations, was previously fed by copper and beyond the footage distance necessary to receive 25 Mbps downstream / 3 Mbps upstream or better speeds. These 11 locations, upgraded from copper to a GPON fiber network, are now capable of receiving symmetrical speeds of at least 250 Mbps.

Fletcher Lane Project (13 location deployed) – Consolidated completed this Selah area project in Q4 2023. This 13-location project represents approximately 5,700 feet of buried conduit and distribution fiber to an existing remote that was upgraded with VDSL2 capability.

- 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: Please see Schedule A.

- 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: Consolidated can state that no consumer requests for basic telecommunications service were denied or not fulfilled.

- 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: Consolidated filed its Broadband Data Collection (BDC) submission with the WA UTC on September 21, 2023, under Docket UT-230043, in accordance with WAC 480-123-030(1)(g), for Consolidated Communications of Washington Company, LLC, with data as of June 30, 2023. Consolidated will file again under Docket UT-240058, with data filed March 1, 2024 (December 31, 2023 data) and September 1, 2024 (June 30, 2024).

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Redacted per WAC 480-07-160

- 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: Consolidated’s use of program funds to place new fiber and/or updated electronics in the identified projects areas, has resulted in making the network more reliable for customers and more efficient for the company’s Network Operations Centers. This increase in monitoring and managing the network has greatly increased the company’s operational efficiency.

- 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: In the FCC Public Notice, DA 22-1345, released December 19, 2022, it stated that Broadband providers no longer need to file broadband deployment data through FCC Form 477; FCC Form 477 subscription data must be filed in the Broadband Data Collection (BDC) system. Further, the UTC advised while the Form 477 system is now retired, the Form 477 voice and broadband subscribership data that is required under WAC 480-123-060(1)(i), is now required to be filed with the FCC via the BDC system.

Accordingly, Consolidated filed its voice and data subscribership data, for the period ending June 30, 2023, with the WA UTC on September 29, 2023, under Docket UT-230020, which now complies with WAC 480-123-030(1)(i). Further, Consolidated will file again under Docket UT-240062, with data filed March 1, 2024 (December 31, 2023 data) and September 1, 2024 (June 30, 2024).

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

RESPONSE: [REDACTED]

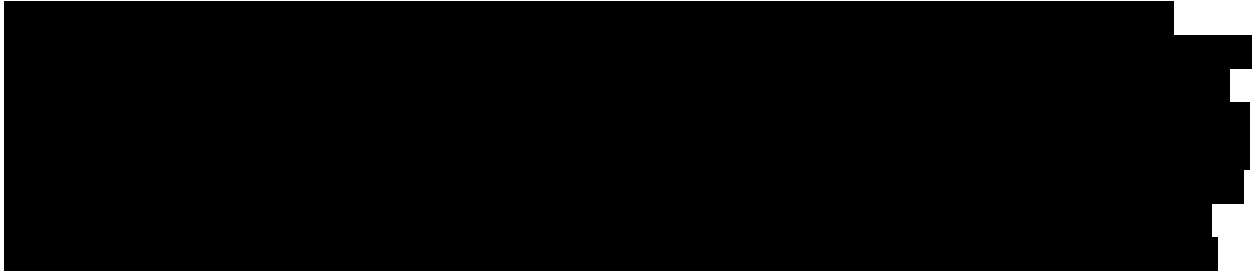
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- k) Any other information or reports the commission requires including, but not limited to, information the commission needs to provide a report to the legislature concerning the program.

RESPONSE:

Consolidated reminds the UTC of Docket UT-230882, filed by Consolidated on October 26, 2023, notifying the UTC of “Transfer of Direct Control of Consolidated Communications of Comerco Company and Indirect Control of Consolidated Communications of Washington Company, LLC.” Other than the aforementioned, Consolidated has no additional information to provide at this time, but commits to working with the UTC, as needed.

End of Annual Report.