FY 2018 Buncombe County Community Funding

Buncombe County
Project Name*

Sandy Mush Community Center: Connecting Sandy Mush

Amount Requested*

$14,400 ($7200/year for 2 year contract) Thus, we request the 1st $7200 payment in July 2017 and the 2nd $7200 payment in 2018.

Service Area*
 District 3

Which county sustainability goal aligns best with the goals of this project?*

Community: Equity in Access

• Ensure reliable access to information resources (i.e., broadband internet).

If applicable, select a second sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.

Community: Educational Resources that Meet the Needs of the Community

• Increase access to higher education.

• Increase parent and community involvement in the educational system and in the education of individual children.

If applicable, select a third sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.

Economic Development: Sustainable Localized Economy

• Support small business development.

Project Description

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The goal of the *Connecting Sandy Mush Project* is to provide reliable, high-speed, INTERNET to our rural, sparsely populated community, which currently does not have widely available access. This is an educational and economic necessity for our rural community.   A 2-year contract has been negotiated with AT&T Small Business Solutions for a dedicated fiber Managed Internet Service with 10Mbps symmetrical access with no data limits.   The Sandy Mush Community Center (SMCC) is requesting funding to pay the cost of the annual contract of $7200 per year, for 2 years, for a total of $14,400. The SMCC will cover the additional cost of taxes and fees, estimated at approximately 12%, and the additional charge for the management of the wi-fi with the best option still being investigated.

The SMCC BOD has allocated $5000 to procure the necessary equipment and materials to establish connectivity inside and outside the SMCC. This includes the electronics to support the Internet transmission and distribution, wiring for at least two hard-wired terminals inside the building, and up to three wireless access points to support connectivity both inside and outside the SMCC. Two access points will be installed on the two main levels of the building currently being utilized and an additional access point will serve as a hotspot to provide out of building access. We anticipate computer donations to assist those whom are unable to bring their own devices to connect to the Internet. We have community members with the technical expertise to assist with this project.

Once connected to the Internet, SMCC will provide regular open access hours with computer stations available to those who do not have their own laptop or device. Since a target focus for SMCC is education, we will have open hours during the

afternoon on weekdays, as well as weekend hours during the school year. SMCC will have volunteer community members providing assistance and resources during these open hours.   SMCC will base summer hours on community feedback. Additionally, SMCC will provide a hotspot for outside/after-hours access.

Key Points:

- **All community members, especially our children, will have access to a reliable, high speed Internet resource, no matter their income. This is a necessary resource to be able to obtain educational and economic goals.**

- **More community members will be able further their education and increase their economic opportunities, thereby increasing their family's standard of living.**

- **SMCC will provide consistent open hours for parents, students and community members to utilize and collaborate with the Internet, resources and knowledge.**

- **By providing this reliable, high speed Internet, SMCC will encourage small business development and collaboration within our community, thereby increasing the sustainability and profitability of small businesses in our community.**

How many people will this project serve?*

The Sandy Mush Community Center serves approximately 550 Buncombe County families with an estimated population of 1,500. All households receive information about programming at the community center and are invited to participate and utilize resources. Therefore, 100% of community members will have access to this high speed Internet resource at SMCC. By providing this quality, high speed Internet that everyone in our community may utilize, it will increase access to higher education, parental and community involvement in the education of our children, and provide support for small business development.

Describe the people this project will serve.*

Sandy Mush is a sparsely populated rural farming valley, surrounded by mountains with many coves within the valley. This presents a geographic and population challenge for acquiring affordable, high speed Internet. SMCC is committed to providing this service to all of our community members, one

specific target group will be our youth, with 20% age 17 or younger and with 7% age 18-21. Additionally, anecdotal evidence shows that there is a connectivity need in our adult population for those who want to continue their higher education and improve their career prospects. This 22-64 age group makes up 57% of our population. SMCC communication outreach will utilize PTO members, SMCC website, facebook, email and print newsletter, as well as our community sign. Additionally, word of mouth works very well in Sandy Mush.

What key steps will you take to achieve the results of this project?*

- Once funding is approved, SMCC will sign the 2 year contract with AT&T Small Business Solutions.

- AT&T will have SMCC connected with high speed Internet within 90 days. During that time, we will begin wiring for APs.

- Within one month of AT&T getting SMCC connected, we should be able to complete the interior connectivity and set up computer stations, as well as offer an outside wireless option.

- SMCC will open for community use on a regularly scheduled basis, as well as the after hours use of the outside hotspot.

Describe the evidence of success that backs this project's approach.*

Due to the current challenge of getting high speed, affordable Internet to the majority of our community, the best available model is for the SMCC to offer the Internet so that all community members will be able to access it. The Speed Matters Project of CWA notes these benefits that will apply to our project:

- Two-way, interactive video conferencing allows busy parents to confer with their students' teachers more frequently and conveniently.
- Fast connection speeds allow students to easily form online study groups and work on school projects both in face to face and virtual communities.
- Elementary and high school students with high speed Internet can access the resources of their school libraries remotely, including digital videos and high-volume data files.

- **Broadband brings the opportunity for direct access to education and health care for rural residents who are otherwise forced to travel long distances for college courses and medical treatment.**
- **High speed Internet provides rural residents access to global information and cultural resources.**
- **Affordable broadband enables historically urban businesses like graphic design, Web site design, and other creative industries to experience new life in rural settings while competing on the same level as city-based companies.**
- **Farmers gain real-time access to vital information such as crop prices or weather forecasts, and marketing opportunities through high-speed networks.**

Describe your data collection, tracking, and reporting procedures.*

The SMCC will keep a spreadsheet of daily use of SMCC Internet, with notations of specific subgroups: K-12 students, adult continuing ed and small business. We will ascertain if we have the capacity to track the outside wireless use. We will report this data to Buncombe County.

Explain your technological resources and capacity.*

Currently, SMCC is not connected to the Internet. We have, however, created a SMCC website and Facebook page and we do have a community monthly email newsletter. With SMCC Internet, we will have the ability to provide many more resources to our community. We have a variety of community volunteers with various expertise who help with technology. We should be able to track data and report the outcomes. www.sandymushcommunitycenter.org

Organizational Profile

How does the proposed project support your mission and strategic plan?*

SMCC updated the mission in 2016. SMCC reviews the strategic plan annually. This project directly relates to our goal of increasing educational opportunities.

The Sandy Mush Community Center is organized exclusively for charitable purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The purpose of the organization is community improvement and capacity building through goals including, but not limited to:

- **Strengthen the sense of community and awareness of community history and its agricultural heritage**

- **Increase educational and health and wellness opportunities**

- **Increase preservation efforts, including the historic Sandy Mush School and grounds**

- **Strengthen and support community organizations**

What expertise/accomplishments do you have that are relevant to the proposed project?*

Beginning in the fall of 2015, our community reorganized the SMCC, recruited a new active board, updated our bylaws and articles of incorporation, created a strong foundation for fundraising and started providing new events and programming for our community. In addition to our fundraising efforts, we are regularly renting SMCC which currently provides a steady income. We continue to recruit new community volunteers; we have 50+ volunteers providing approximately 3000 volunteer hours of service during the year. In addition to our library, beautification, building and events teams' efforts, the SMCC has successfully implemented two new programs this year:

- an early childhood/parent story time group which meets each Monday morning 10-12pm.

- the SMCC food pantry which is open the 2nd Friday of each month and is providing food for approximately 40 families.

Sandy Mush is a resourceful and dedicated community.

Describe partners that are critical to the success of your organization.*

SMCC is working with Sarah Estrella, Account Manager of AT&T Small Business Solutions, to obtain this managed Internet service. Since last year, Sarah has been working with SMCC on pricing and providing technical guidance. Per recommendation, we are also working with TSAChoices for equipment and technical guidance. Additionally, SMCC has community members with technical expertise who are able to provide guidance and some of the labor required to provide the appropriate connectivity to meet our objectives of wireless Internet inside and outside the SMCC, as well as ongoing maintenance. We have very resourceful and committed volunteers, working for the benefit of our Sandy Mush Community.

Financial Information

Nonprofit financial assurance requirements:

Financial statements, prepared using a recognizable basis of accounting (i.e., modified accrual) and IRS Form 990s must be submitted to Buncombe County annually.

- Organizations with annual revenues of $300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
- Those with revenues between $100,000 and $300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with SSARS 19.
- Those with revenues of less than $100,000 must submit non−disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with SSARS 19.

All financial statements must be reported on by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.
These requirements are considered minimum requirements. Organizations may submit a higher level of assurance than is required.

IRS Form 990 - Upload Here

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the 990 form you most recently completed.
File Size Limit: 10 MB

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

SMCC received 501c3 status in August, 2016. Our first 990 report is due on April 15, 2017 and will be filed by that date.

Financial Statements - Upload here

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements (audit, compilation or review).
File Size Limit: 12 MB

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

SMCC has balance statement, monthly financial reports approved by the BOD, and 2017 approved budget. The SMCC BOD will pursue a volunteer CPA to review records. I am including the 2017 approved budget, and a copy of our January 2017 Income/Expense Report (which also shows our final 2016 income/expense) and balance sheet. We will certainly work to provide everything the county needs to show our compliance.

Complete Budget Worksheet - Upload Here*

Download the budget form **Here.**

Complete the budget form for this project/program and the overall agency. Save it to your computer, then upload it by clicking Choose File.
File Size Limit: 3 MB

Budget Narrative*

Describe all differences between current year and proposed year. List all pending funding sources with expected date of notification. Please detail any other information that may help clarify the budget.

The SMCC fiscal year is the calendar year. 2016 was the first fully operational year since reorganizing in the 4th quarter of 2015. Thus, SMCC only had a projected budget for 2016. After a complete fiscal year of 2016 with monthly treasury reports and an annual income and expense report, SMCC did approve a 2017 budget which is attached, and it also reflects our total income and expense for 2016. Currently, we are using the 2017 budget numbers for the projected 2018 budget. SMCC current outstanding funding requests are this request for $14,400 and the $26,000 Safe & Healthy Building request submitted to Buncombe County at the end of our 2016 fiscal year. Please note there will be a difference in the organizational budget between the 2016 $26,000 funding request and this $14,400 funding request because we now have actual 2016 income/expense report numbers and the 2017 approved budget to utilize those accurate figures. Typically, we do not include funding requests/grants in our approved budget unless they have been confirmed, but we have added them to this report showing the funds spilt between 2017 and 2018 since our fiscal year is a calendar year unlike your July 2017-June 2018 budget year. Thus, you will note that this organizational budget includes the requested funds ($14,400 + 26,000), whereas our 2017 approved budget does not. These organizational budget numbers are the most up to date for SMCC.

What (if any) portion of requested funds will be used to support capital expenses?*

Capital projects are defined as those used to acquire or upgrade physical assets such as property, buildings, or equipment. Please detail.   **None.**

Employee Wages

Please provide information about the wage breakdowns of your employees. Living wage for Buncombe County has been identified as $11.00 per hour for employees <u>with</u> employer-provided health insurance and $12.50 per hour for employees <u>without</u>.

Employees with employer-provided health insurance*

List the number of employees in your organization <u>with</u> employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

$7.25 - $10.99 per hour

$11.00 - $14.99 per hour

$15.00 - $19.99 per hour

$20.00 - $24.99 per hour

$25.00 - $29.99 per hour

$30.00 - $34.99 per hour

$35.00 - $39.99 per hour

$40.00+ per hour

Character Limit: 1000

Employees without employer-provided health insurance*

List the number of employees in your organization <u>without</u> employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

$7.25 - $12.49 per hour
$12.50 - $14.99 per hour
$15.00 - $19.99 per hour
$20.00 - $24.99 per hour
$25.00 - $29.99 per hour
$30.00 - $34.99 per hour
$35.00 - $39.99 per hour
$40.00+ per hour

Character Limit: 1000