

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: Windstream Build Agreement

DATE OF MEETING: March 28, 2023

Work Session/Regular Session

BUDGET IMPACT:

FUNDING SOURCE:

- Annual
- Capital
- N/A
- SPLOST
- TSPLOST

COUNTY ACTION REQUESTED ON: Build Agreement with Windstream

HISTORY, FACTS AND ISSUES: On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was enacted and included funding for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). This funding was created to support governments across the country in their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Georgia Office of Planning and Budget decided to use a portion of their ARPA SLFRF allocation to create a competitive application process for Broadband Expansion Infrastructure. Lowndes County partnered with Windstream Georgia Communications, LLC to prepare an application for this funding, which resulted in Lowndes County receiving a grant award of \$21,783,961. The total project cost of \$39,420,865 will be comprised of the grant award from the State as well as \$17,636,904 in matching funds provided by Windstream.

The Broadband Expansion Infrastructure funding was created to address broadband needs in areas that are currently unserved or underserved. This project will provide many of our citizens with reliable internet access that delivers minimum speeds of 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload. This project will foster a better quality of life for many of our citizens with improved opportunities for remote learning, work from home options, economic expansion, and enhanced telemedicine. This project will provide symmetrical gigabit-speed broadband access to 16,193 residential locations and 1,434 business locations in Lowndes County and will cover approximately 96 percent of the unserved census blocks in Lowndes County.

Attached is a proposed Build Agreement between the County and Windstream Georgia Communications, LLC and Kinetic Fiber, LLC.

The County Attorney has reviewed the Agreement. It is ready for approval.

OPTIONS: 1. Approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the Build Agreement as presented.
2. Redirect

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Option 1

DEPARTMENT: Finance

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Stephanie Black

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: