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Organization:	Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Project Name:	Rio Grande Valley Fiber Network
Project Type:	Comprehensive Community Infrastructure
State:	Texas
Federal Award:	\$ 15,697,856

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Rio Grande Valley Fiber Optic Network is a public-private partnership that proposes to deploy a new 166-mile fiber network to help transform a region of southern Texas with chronically high unemployment, persistent poverty areas, and a large percentage of disadvantaged and minority populations. Valley Telephone Cooperative's **VTX Communications** proposes to improve existing service and increase dark fiber resources available to local anchor institutions. With day-to-day network management conducted by VTX, users plan to connect to one another, the public Internet, and to state and national research and education networks such as LEARN, Internet2, and National Lambda Rail. The project plans to connect 23 anchor institutions affiliated with the higher education community, significantly improving instruction, research, and health services in the region.

The Rio Grande Valley Fiber Network project proposes to:

- Spur affordable broadband access for local consumers and businesses, including as many as 117,000 households and 17,000 businesses, by enabling local Internet service providers to utilize the project's open network.
- Encompass 1,535 square miles of rural land on the U.S.-Mexico border over rocky, difficult terrain.
- Provide wholesale service of up to 1 Gbps to local broadband providers and anchor institutions.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

VTX Communications was founded in 1992 as the deregulated affiliate of Valley Telephone Cooperative and has provided intercity fiber-optic transport in South Texas since 1999. VTX has previously worked with the University of Texas on projects throughout the South Texas Region, and directly interconnects with over 30 telecom providers in San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Laredo, Harlingen, McAllen, Hidalgo, and the surrounding areas.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- The University of Texas Health Science Center
- The University of Texas at Brownsville
- Texas Southmost College
- The University of Texas Pan American
- South Texas College
- Texas State Technical College

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or press@ntia.doc.gov. For the general public, contact BTOP@ntia.doc.gov.

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