

COVER SHEET – AGENDA ITEM #R3, R4, R5

For Commission Meeting: November 19, 2018

- R3. Community Technology Needs Ascertainment - Key Questions
- R4. Community Technology Needs Ascertainment – Consultant RFP Scope of Work
- R5. Contingency Request - Community Needs Ascertainment

Committee Recommendation

The MHCRC Community Ascertainment Committee recommends approval of three items related to the upcoming community technology needs ascertainment:

- 1) The MHCRC adopt key research questions to guide the design and implementation of the Community Technology Needs and Interests Ascertainment;
- 2) The MHCRC authorize scopes of work for two separate, but related, consultant contracts; and
- 3) The MHCRC approve \$5,000 from FY18-19 contingency to support the ascertainment.

Background

The Comcast cable services franchise agreement expires December 31, 2021. The renewal process is extensive and generally entails the following key steps:

- Jan-March 2019 Comcast presents MHCRC with informal renewal proceedings request
- April 2019 MHCRC authorizes by resolution commencement of informal renewal proceedings
- Feb-Oct 2019 Community Technology Needs & Interests Ascertainment
 - Design and conduct ascertainment of community technology needs and interests
 - Analyze ascertainment results
 - Identify performance issues under current franchise
 - Develop ascertainment report
 - Develop a “Report to the Community”
- Oct-Dec 2019 Performance Review Under Current Franchise Term
 - Analyze and review compliance materials
 - Develop staff report on performance compliance
 - Identify performance issues and possible solutions

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|------------------------|---|
| Jan 2020-
June 2021 | Franchise Negotiations |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cable-related public benefits based on community needs • Conduct public hearing on draft cable-related public benefits and performance review issues • Issue MHCRC request for Renewal Proposal • Review/negotiate franchise agreement with Comcast |
| June-Dec 2021 | Action on Renewal Request |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct public hearing on draft franchise agreement (June 2021) • MHCRC action on draft franchise agreement and recommendation to the Jurisdictions (Sept 2021) • Jurisdiction action on franchise agreement (Oct-Dec 2021) |

Community Technology Needs & Interests Ascertainment

The MHCRC Community Needs Ascertainment Committee has been meeting since August to develop a framework for the 2019 ascertainment and related resource requirements. Although the primary purpose of the ascertainment relates to identifying public benefits for cable service franchise agreements (a mandate under federal law), the MHCRC recognizes that communications technology — including access, adoption, and utilization — is essential for creating and sustaining livable and equitable communities. Therefore, the Committee made a conscious decision to conduct an ascertainment that broadly captures technology needs and interests of the community, much like the 2009-2010 ascertainment. Findings from the ascertainment will provide guidance not only to the MHCRC and its Jurisdictions for cable franchise renewals, but also for other communications technology policy initiatives and decisions.

Additionally, to reflect the MHCRC’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Committee explored ways to ensure diverse stakeholder involvement and robust data with response rates that mirror the demographics of MHCRC jurisdictions and communities. Informed by the work of the Digital Inclusion Network (DIN), the Committee defined equity and inclusion as follows: Equity means everyone has sufficient access to, and understanding of, information and communications technologies, regardless of socioeconomic status, physical ability, language, race, gender, or any other characteristics that have been linked with unequal treatment and/or outcomes. Inclusion refers to the process, strategies and activities needed to reach the goal of equity.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The Committee developed the following key research questions to guide the design and implementation of the ascertainment:

1. What is the level of communications technology and services in our communities today?
2. What barriers are creating inequities for underserved communities?

3. What are our communities' communication technology needs and interests in the short-term: within 3 years?
4. What are our communities' communication technology needs and interests longer term: within 4 to 10 years?
5. What is the role of local government in meeting the communications technology-related needs of our communities?
6. What has been the impact within our communities of existing public benefit requirements of the cable franchise agreement?
7. How have our communities' access to communications technology changed in the past 10 years?

CONSULTANT SCOPE OF WORK

In developing the ascertainment framework recommended below, the Committee revisited learnings from the 2009-2010 ascertainment process, reviewed current research about meaningful community engagement, and explored what other organizations have done in this area.

The Committee recommends that the MHCRC authorize two separate, but closely related, request for proposals (RFP) scopes of work: an ascertainment consultant and a community engagement consultant. MHCRC staff will serve as the overall lead for the ascertainment, manage and oversee both contracts, coordinate the work between the two consultants, and collaborate on the ascertainment design and implementation.

(1) Ascertainment Consultant

The ascertainment consultant will design and implement a thorough and realistic ascertainment of the community's current and future communications technology needs and interests, including a scientifically valid survey of cable subscribers and non-cable households, and a variety of other data collection methods to engage MHCRC stakeholders including I-Net users, local governments, business owners, community media producers, etc. The ascertainment contractor will work with the MHCRC staff and the community engagement consultant to integrate culturally-responsive data collection methods and findings from underserved groups within the ascertainment.

The ascertainment consultant scope of work will include:

- Facilitate ascertainment planning discussions with the MHCRC staff and others identified by staff, as necessary, to refine ascertainment research questions, categories and elements.
- Participate in discussions with the MHCRC staff and the community engagement consultant to ensure cultural responsiveness within the development of the ascertainment design, data collection, and final report.
- Design an ascertainment process with a detailed implementation plan, which includes appropriate data collection and creative engagement strategies that anticipate and address potential cultural, economic, language or other barriers.
- Incorporate appropriate use of new media tools into the ascertainment engagement strategies and data collection methods (i.e. use of online surveys, blogs, social media, video, podcasting, texting, etc.).

- Produce the community needs ascertainment report to include: all ascertainment findings (including those from the community engagement consultant); an executive summary; documentation of the ascertainment process; and trending and data analysis.
- Present the needs ascertainment to the MHCRC.

(2) Community Engagement Consultant

The community engagement consultant will design and implement local, in-person data collection activities to engage underserved communities in the ascertainment, working in partnership with local, culture-specific organizations; this engagement will focus on racially and ethnically diverse communities, people with disabilities, and seniors. The community engagement contractor will also advise on issues of cultural responsiveness within the ascertainment and will work with the MHCRC staff and the ascertainment consultant to align data collection methods. Technology expertise is not a requirement for the community engagement consultant.

The community engagement consultant scope of work will include:

- Work with the MHCRC staff and ascertainment consultant to align data collection methods based on the ascertainment research questions.
- Advise the MHCRC staff on the cultural responsiveness of the ascertainment's overall data collection methods/instruments and final ascertainment report (to be developed by the ascertainment consultant).
- Identify emergent opportunities (e.g., local events) that can be leveraged within the design and/or implementation of data collection activities involving underserved groups.
- Create a detailed implementation plan for culturally-responsive data collection with underserved communities to ensure that the plan anticipates and addresses potential cultural, economic, language or other barriers. Anticipated plan activities include:
 - Recruit and manage contracts with an estimated 6-8 community organizations that will be partners in engaging racially and ethnically diverse groups, people with disabilities, and seniors.
 - Implement data collection activities such as interviews, focus groups, and/or other creative community gatherings, including translation interpretation as needed.
 - Conduct follow up session(s) to engage participants in providing input on draft ascertainment findings.
- Assist in raising awareness about the online survey (to be developed by the ascertainment consultant) and/or administering "online" survey at in-person gatherings.
- Write up the findings from all data collection activities, including analysis, and document the process; collaborate with the MHCRC staff on the final edit of the findings.
- Participate in the ascertainment report presentation to the MHCRC.

ASCERTAINMENT BUDGET

The following chart outlines the anticipated budget for the community technology needs ascertainment. The timing of the ascertainment coincides with the development of the second 3-year phase for the Digital Equity Action Plan of Multnomah County Library and the City of Portland. Based on the broader scope for ascertainment and its focus on underserved

communities, these entities have committed to combining funds to better support engagement with traditionally hard-to-reach communities. The budget reflects that resource commitment.

Resources		Totals
FY19 MHCRC Allocation	80,000	
FY19 MHCRC Contingency	5,000	
FY20 MHCRC Allocation	20,000	
Portland OCT --- DEAP Funds	15,000	
Mult. Co. Library	10,000	
		130,000
Expenses		
Ascertainment Consultant	90,000	
Community Engagement Consultant	30,000	
* Other Contract Support	10,000	
		130,000

*Other Contractors might include:

- Website refresh
- Online survey support
- Content development, videos
- Graphics

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