

Network Fiber Buildout: Timelines and Potential Delays

START PROCESS

Note that there is significant variation in time frames as these will vary based on the size and scope of the project.

ASSESS Current and Future Needs



2 months to 1 year



- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Documentation of current infrastructure, carriers and billing must be available
 - Budgets may not go through entire planning process
 - E-Rate approval for owned fiber is uncertain

CONSIDER Owned/ Managed/IRU



2 months to 1 year



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Cost of service installation may drive total cost of ownership analysis

DEVELOP Statement of Work and Define Scope



4 - 12 weeks



- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Easements need to be in place
 - Network design strategy needs to be in place

DEVELOP Total Cost of Ownership Analysis over 20 Years



2 - 6 weeks



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Must include hardware costs
 - Must anticipate hardware costs in 20 years

DEVELOP Bid Matrix for Scoring Proposals



2 - 4 weeks



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Have the right team in place to ensure the bids are scored equally, through the same lens

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- The bid matrix needs to compensate for different approaches to bidding out the work or multiple scenarios in one bid.

COMPLETE E-Rate Form 470



2 weeks - 6 months (plus minimum 28 days posting)



- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Must stay in line with USAC and 470 bid process
 - Inadequate visibility for the posting may delay getting responses
 - Lack of educated vendors may impact the process
 - Walk-throughs and site visits can delay process if not planned for

IDENTIFY & COMPLY with State Procurement Rules (formal RFP?)



28 day posting



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Ensure providers survey areas for laying fiber

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Vendor obstruction

SELECT VENDOR



2 - 4 weeks (must be selected before 471 window closes)



- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Understanding vendor design proposals
 - Enlisting district executive support
 - Receiving board of trustees approval
 - Lack of knowledgeable technical staff on the review team

NEGOTIATE Contract



1 - 4 months



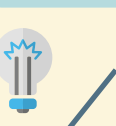
- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Ensure the contract includes an out-clause in case of e-rate non-approval

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Legal review of contracts, sub-contracts, and agreements with municipalities
 - Attorney agreement on terms and conditions

COMPLETE E-Rate Form 471



Post before USAC closes window



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Funding is not guaranteed
 - Only start construction if you can payout of pocket
 - Current deadline for special construction is 6/30 of each year

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Approval timeline may delay construction start
 - Extensions are not guaranteed

COMPLETE E-Rate Commitment Process



2 - 4 months (but can take up to a year or longer)



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Align contracts with vendors and timelines set forth in RFP
 - Build Project Charter and assign roles
 - Respond to E-Rate PIA questions

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Review process can be extremely long
 - In some cases the year funding was requested for will have passed prior to approval
 - May require an extension or duplicate filing

COMPLETE E-Rate Form 486



2 - 4 months



- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- USAC delays

SCHEDULE Work to be Done



2 months - 1 Year



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Assign resources and schedule implementation

IMPLEMENT Work to Build Out Fiber Network



16 - 36 months (timeframe varies depending on scope)



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Work around instructional schedules

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Municipality agreements such as right of ways, railway crossings, utility co-mingling, and staffing can be very time consuming
 - There may be unexpected costs for permits, fees, and surveys if agencies are not involved early on
 - Attorney agreement on terms and conditions

INVOICE and Pay Bills



Could be years



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Make sure to have a solid audit trail for all invoices

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Additional questions and audit errors can delay e-Rate payout indefinitely

COMPLETE E-Rate Form 472



No later than 120 days after the last date of service



- CONSIDERATIONS:**
- Don't purchase equipment until approval is received or money is set aside
 - May have to work with finance department to rationalize annual budgets when money isn't accrued in the expected year

- POTENTIAL DELAYS:**
- Rollover of staff at USAC
 - Rollover of staff in your
 - Your own organization
 - Extension request (you are only granted one)

Other Factors and issues to keep in mind:

Funding Expiration:

Some districts found that the review process was so slow that they weren't able to complete the project before their funding expired. This can be mitigated by preparing for the volume of questions that come out of the review process and prioritizing the review process to respond rapidly to questions.

Provider Obstruction:

Sometimes current service providers who cannot or will not provide fiber may implicitly or explicitly obstruct the process.

Right-of-Way Delays:

Some districts have been unable to get fiber built because they couldn't get the right-of-ways they needed.

Build-outs can be stalled after getting approvals but then running into this kind of delay. This can be mitigated by building community partnerships in advance.

Code 9 Complaints:

Districts may find that after they do their bids and all the paperwork that a disgruntled provider calls a code 9—a complaint alleging waste, fraud, or abuse. For some districts that has meant keeping careful documentation that the provider not only didn't bid, but doesn't have the physical capabilities to meet their needs.

Increased Budget Scrutiny:

Districts are finding increased scrutiny of fiber build options submitted to e-rate.

One found that although the district followed every rule and regulation in regards to the bid process, their funding request was denied for not choosing the lowest cost option, even though the calculators they used had concluded that they did.

Potential Loss of Funding:

Districts sometimes lose time or funding because they failed to follow state or district rules, fail to keep proper documentation, or are unable to explain their scoring matrix.