

§ 1738.213

date the Agency notifies the applicant that loan funds are available;

(iii) Detailed information showing that all households within the funded service area will be offered service at the broadband lending speed when the system is complete; and

(iv) Detailed information showing that construction of the proposed facilities will start within six months from the date the Agency notifies the borrower that loan funds are available.

(8) A depreciation schedule for all facilities financed with loan and non-loan funds;

(9) An environmental report prepared in accordance with 7 CFR part 1794; and

(10) Any other system requirements required by the Administrator through a notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) The network design must be prepared by a registered Professional Engineer with telecommunications experience or by qualified personnel on the applicant's staff. If the network design is prepared by the applicant's staff, the application must clearly demonstrate the staff's qualifications, experience, and ability to complete the network design. To be considered qualified, staff must have at least three years of experience in designing the type of broadband system proposed in the application.

(c) The Administrator may modify the requirements of this section for loans in underserved service areas.

§ 1738.213 Loan determination.

(a) If the application meets all statutory and regulatory requirements and the feasibility study demonstrates that the TIER requirement can be satisfied, the application will be submitted to the Agency's credit committees for consideration. Submission of the application to the Agency's credit committees does not guarantee that a loan will be approved. In making a loan determination, the Administrator shall consider the recommendations of the credit committees.

(b) The applicant will be notified of the Agency's decision in writing. If the Agency approves the loan, a loan offer will be extended. If the Agency does not approve the loan, a rejection letter will be sent to the applicant, and the

7 CFR Ch. XVII (1-1-12 Edition)

application will be returned with an explanation of the reasons for the rejection.

§§ 1738.214—1738.250 [Reserved]

Subpart F—Closing, Servicing, and Reporting

§ 1738.251 Loan offer and loan closing.

The Agency will notify the applicant of the loan offer, in writing, and the applicant will typically have 10 working days to accept the offer. If the applicant accepts the loan offer, a loan contract will be executed and sent to the applicant. The applicant must execute the loan contract and satisfy all conditions precedent to loan closing within the timeframe specified by the Agency which is typically 120 days from the date of the loan contract. If the conditions are not met within this timeframe, the loan offer will be terminated, unless the applicant requests and the Agency approves an extension. The Agency may approve such a request if the applicant has diligently sought to meet the conditions required for loan closing and has been unable to do so for reasons outside its control.

§ 1738.252 Construction.

(a) Construction paid for with broadband loan funds must comply with 7 CFR part 1788, 7 CFR part 1794, RUS Bulletin 1738-2 and any other guidance from the Agency.

(b) Upon notification by the Agency that an applicant has submitted all the required documentation and the application is considered complete for analysis (see § 1738.205), the applicant, at its own risk, may enter into an interim financing agreement with a third-party lender or use its own funds to start construction that is included in the loan application. For this construction to be eligible for reimbursement with loan funds, all construction procedures contained herein must be followed. The Agency's determination that an application is complete is not a commitment that a loan will be approved.

(c) The borrower must begin construction within six months from the date the Agency notifies the applicant that loan funds are available. This is the final step in closing the loan with

Rural Utilities Service, USDA

§ 1738.302

the applicant. If the borrower fails to begin construction, the Agency may cancel the loan.

(d) The build-out must be complete within three years from the day the Agency notifies the applicant that loan funds are available. Build-out is considered complete when the network design has been fully implemented, the service operations and management systems infrastructure is operational, and the borrower is ready to support the activation and commissioning of individual customers to the new system.

§ 1738.253 Servicing.

(a) Borrowers must make payments on the broadband loan as required in the note.

(b) Borrowers must comply with all terms, conditions, affirmative covenants, and negative covenants contained in the loan documents.

(c) In the event of default of any required payment or other term or condition:

(1) A late charge shall be charged on any payment not made in accordance with the terms of the note.

(2) The Agency may exercise the default remedies provided in the loan documents but is not required to do so.

(3) If the Agency chooses to not exercise its default remedies, it does not waive its right to do so in the future.

§ 1738.254 Accounting, reporting, and monitoring requirements.

(a) Borrowers must adopt a system of accounts for maintaining financial records acceptable to the Agency, as described in 7 CFR 1770, subpart B.

(b) Borrowers must submit annual audited financial statements along with a report on compliance and on internal control over financial reporting, and management letter in accordance with the requirements of 7 CFR part 1773. The Certified Public Accountant (CPA) conducting the annual audit is selected by the borrower and must be approved by RUS as set forth in 7 CFR 1773.4.

(c) Borrowers must comply with all reasonable Agency requests to support ongoing monitoring efforts. The Borrower shall afford RUS, through its representatives, reasonable oppor-

tunity, at all times during business hours and upon prior notice, to have access to and the right to inspect the Broadband System, and any other property encumbered by the Mortgage, and any or all books, records, accounts, invoices, contracts, leases, payrolls, timesheets, cancelled checks, statements, and other documents, electronic or paper of every kind belonging to or in the possession of the Borrower or in anyway pertaining to its property or business, including its subsidiaries, if any, and to make copies or extracts therefore.

(d) Borrowers records shall be retained and preserved in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR part 1770, subpart A.

§§ 1738.255—1738.300 [Reserved]

Subpart G—Loan Guarantee

§ 1738.301 General.

(a) Applicants wishing to obtain a loan guarantee for private financing are subject to the same requirements as direct loan borrowers with respect to:

(1) Loan purposes as described in subpart B;

(2) Eligible borrowers and eligible areas as described in subpart C;

(3) The loan terms described in subpart D, with the exception of the interest rates described in § 1738.152; and

(4) The application review and underwriting requirements in subpart E.

(b) The Agency will publish a notice annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER indicating any additional requirements, as well as the amount of funds available, if any, for loan guarantees.

§ 1738.302 Eligible guaranteed lenders.

To be eligible for a loan guarantee, a guaranteed lender must be:

(a) A financial institution in good standing that has been a concurrent lender with RUS; or

(b) A legally organized lending institution, such as commercial bank, trust company, mortgage banking firm, insurance company, or any other institutional investor authorized by law to loan money, which must be subject to credit examination and supervision by a Federal or State agency, unless the