

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Given the total scope of the Next Mile project we propose to accelerate the deployment of the fiber optic network in the first half of 2004. Such early deployment provides substantial advantages to the whole project by:

- Creating a highly visible early project success milestone and showcasing the project to both state agencies and local governments
- Demonstrating early in 2004 the Governor's commitment to rural Colorado and using the resulting visibility for the benefits of the entire project
- Providing an early proof-of-concept for the participation of local suppliers and the utilization of local resources as a replicable model for state-wide deployment
- Offering immediate communications benefits to participating counties
- Making a high-speed broadband network available for the data sharing development project already in the early phases
- Boosting the data sharing deployment phase of the project by creating positive excitement and participation by decision makers and stakeholders in the counties
- Providing personnel in participating counties with better communications to the project, motivating them and using their skills for the benefit of the project

We are proposing that ionSKY acts as DRG's Business and Technical Project Manager, thus freeing up DRG's resources for the complex tasks of coordinating the data sharing project among the various agencies of the State and the six counties. ionSKY would design the fiber optic network to perform to DRG's requirements, coordinate with the participating vendors and ensure compliance with specifications and project timelines.

ionSKY has the necessary experience, skills and resources to design, engineer, build, deliver and operate the required high-speed fiber broadband network solution between the six county courthouses, DRG and the State of Colorado. Additionally, we can build a redundant high-speed broadband delivery system to provide a fault tolerance of the fiber based system. To date ionSKY has already provided the vital information on the status of the fiber network as well as the solution for connectivity between CenturyTel LATA and Qwest LATA.

As an authorized MNT contractor, ionSKY has the know-how on providing connectivity through the MNT network in a cost-effective manner. We have enclosed a diagram A of network topology for the project as it would be typically designed by Qwest or other providers who are not offering any bandwidth aggregation. Such solutions require point-to-point connections between all participating nodes, driving up the cost of connectivity,