Attachment A

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CLECS' COLLOCATION AND BACKHAUL INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS

Introduction:

A CLEC seeking to enter the market using its own facilities must incur collocation and transport costs to "backhaul" traffic from an ILEC serving office where its customers' loops terminate to its own switch. In a recent filing, AT&T explained that the costs associated with collocation and backhaul average about $33,000 per month and that at least 18 DS3s in traffic volume is required to make such investment prudent. This document provides detailed information on how these figures were developed.

In simple terms, collocation costs arise from three key sources: (1) the backhaul facility, (2) the collocation space itself, and (3) the equipment placed within the collocation. The derivation of costs for each component is described below.

Backhaul Facilities:

Backhaul facilities comprise the largest component of a CLEC's infrastructure costs. These include the costs of deploying an interoffice fiber facility in a ring architecture. The absolute cost of such a ring is predominantly a function of the length of the fiber cable, the nature of the structure employed to support the cable (aerial/buried/underground) and the density zone where the fiber facility is deployed. The number of strands deployed impacts the carrier's costs to only a minor degree.[1]

The following table lists the key assumptions underlying AT&T's calculation of structure costs and identifies the HAI material discussing the derivation of the input cost:

Item	Aerial		Buried		U/G	ref (HAI 5.2)
Placement/ft		$	1.77	$	16.40	p.102
Added Sheathing/ft		$	0.20			p.102
Conduit				$	0.60	p.102
Pull Box (per ft, 1 per 2000 ft)				$	0.25	p.104
Poles (per ft, 1 per 150ft)	$ 2.78					pp.104-105
U/G excavation/restoration				$	23.74	p.140
Buried excavation/restoration		$	6.71			p.143
Total construction	$ 2.78	$	8.68	$	40.99	

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[1] In fact, the variable cost per fiber strand is $0.032/foot (See HAI 5.2 inputs, page 100) and the average cost of the cable (installation and engineering) is about $1.00 per foot. In sharp contrast, the cost of supporting structures for a cable can be as high as $45/foot (for buried cable) or $75/foot (for underground cable). For the purposes of analysis, although large quantities of dark strands would be deployed with the initial build, no cost of this dark capacity is attributed to the interoffice transport.

The buried and underground (U/G) placement costs in the above table are derived from the HAI model input data. They represent a weighted average of the four highest density zones in the model. These zones were selected because they are the zones covering more metropolitan areas, where CLEC facility construction is most likely to occur first. This is also consistent with the RBOCs' data on existing placements of fiber-based collocations.[2] The following weightings were applied by density zone:

Weighting Factor	
Density Zone	Weighting
0-5	0.00%
5-100	0.00%
100-200	0.00%
200-650	0.00%
650-850	0.00%
850-2250	65.00%
2250-5000	20.00%
5000-1000	10.00%
>10000	5.00%

The weighted unit costs were developed by multiplying the density zone weighting and the appropriate structure placement unit cost (note that the aerial placement was not a function of density zone). The placement unit costs employed and the resulting weighted averages are shown below:

Buried Excavation, Installation, and Restoration (p.143)		U/G Excavation, Installation, and Restoration (p.140)	
Density Zone	Cost/ft	Density Zone	Cost/ft
0-5	$ 1.77	0-5	$ 10.29
5-100	$ 1.77	5-100	$ 10.29
100-200	$ 1.77	100-200	$ 10.29
200-650	$ 1.93	200-650	$ 11.35
650-850	$ 2.17	650-850	$ 11.88
850-2250	$ 3.54	850-2250	$ 16.40
2250-5000	$ 4.27	2250-5000	$ 21.60
5000-1000	$ 13.00	5000-1000	$ 50.10
>10000	$ 45.00	>10000	$ 75.00

Minimum	$ 1.77	Minimum	$ 10.29
Maximum	$ 45.00	Maximum	$ 75.00
Employed	$ 6.71	Employed	$ 48.90

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[2] The RBOC UNE Fact Report (page III-2, Table I) shows that 13% of the RBOCs' wire centers have fiber collocators present. The cut off for the top 13% of RBOC offices is in the range of 36,000 lines. Given that loops are generally less than 3 miles in length, a central office service area will be about 27 square miles (or less in metropolitan areas). Thus the RBOCs' own data show that CLEC facility builds are occurring in areas where line density is no lower than 36,000/27, or no less than about 1,400 lines per square mile. Thus, using the entire 850-2250 line density zone is conservative.

Because structure proportions vary by density zone, it was necessary to establish the weighted average structure presence in order to develop a single weighted average unit cost. The structure proportion by density zone was obtained from HAI 5.2 inputs and are shown below:

Fiber Feeder Structure Proportions (HAI 5.2 p/59)			
density zone	aerial	Buried	U/G
0-5	35%	60%	5%
5-100	35%	60%	5%
100-200	35%	60%	5%
200-650	30%	60%	10%
650-850	30%	30%	40%
850-2250	20%	20%	60%
2250-5000	15%	10%	75%
5000-1000	10%	5%	85%
>10000	5%	5%	90%

These proportions were then multiplied by the above density zone weighting and yielded the following weighted presence of structures for the purposes of the study:

Weighted Structure Distribution			
Density Zone	Aerial	Buried	U/G
0-5	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
5-100	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
100-200	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
200-650	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
650-850	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
850-2250	13.0%	13.0%	39.0%
2250-5000	3.0%	2.0%	15.0%
5000-1000	1.0%	0.5%	8.5%
>10000	0.3%	0.3%	4.5%

Weighted	17.3%	15.8%	67.0%

The cost of the fiber cable placed within the structure was also derived from HAI inputs. Fiber feeder cost were used as a proxy (see HAI 5.2 inputs, page 100):

	Fixed (per cable)/foot		Variable
	Installation	Engineering	per strand
Buried	$ 0.970	$ 0.040	$ 0.030
Aerial	$ 0.880	$ 0.040	$ 0.037
Underground	$ 1.020	$ 0.040	$ 0.032

Finally, it was necessary to establish the lives for the various types of facility placement, the salvage and the annual maintenance cost in order to quantify the full cost of the conductor. These inputs are listed below, together with the source:

Item	Aerial	Buried	U/G	ref (HAI 5.2)
Life	26.14	26.45	25.91	p.129
Salvage	-17.5%	-8.6%	-14.6%	p.129
Maintenance	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	FCC Synthesis Model Input

In order to generate a single set of factors covering the three alternative structures, the individual results were combined as a weighted average. This was accomplished by weighting each unit cost and the salvage, life and maintenance factor by the proportion of structures in the density zones under consideration. This was done by using the weighted average structure distribution developed above.

The following elements were the resulting weighted element inputs:

Weighted Life	26.03
Weighted Salvage	-14.1%
Weighted Maintenance	0.67%
Total Installed Cost	$ 30.34 per foot
	$ 0.033 per strand per foot

In order to quantify the investment, the total length of cable and the total number of strands needed to be specified. For the analysis, an average span cost assignment equivalent to 8.94 miles was employed, based upon AT&T's experience.[3] Thus, the total assigned investment is $1.435 million per span.[4] The associated monthly maintenance expense is 0.67% of the investment amount assigned to the node divided by 12, or $798 per month per node.[5]

The monthly capital recovery was amortized over the life of the investment after the investment was grossed-up for the net salvage. A 14.24% cost of money was employed, which is very conservative, as it does not reflect the higher risk associated with the CLEC

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[3] By the end of 2001 AT&T had deployed 17,026 route miles of local fiber in which 1,905 spans were active (unique point pairs). Accordingly, the average route miles per active span in AT&T's network is 8.94 miles. While this does not mean that each physical segment is that length, it provides a reasonable means to allocate, among active uses, the cost of a shared facility.

[4] The calculation is (8.94*($30.34 + 2*.033)*5280) for a total of $1.435M.

[5] The calculation is ($1.435M*0.67%)/12.

operations (compared to the 10% cost of money assumed for the incumbents).[6] These factors yielded a monthly investment recovery cost of $19,937 for the facility.[7] The total monthly costs for the facility, including maintenance, is $20,806 per month. Another 5% was added to account for non-income tax coverage requirements for a total of $21,771 per month.

Collocation Space:

Collocation costs are simply the costs associated with renting and securing conditioned Central Office space within an ILEC office. The collocation space is the area where the CLEC places its transmission equipment and terminates its interoffice facility for cross-connection to other interoffice or loop facilities. The collocation costs are comprised of two main components: (1) the cost of initially preparing and securing the space, and (2) the on-going cost of renting the space (which not only includes the physical space but also heating, ventilation, air conditioning and power).

The space preparation cost is treated as an investment and recovered over the life of the equipment placed within the collocation. For the purposes of this analysis, 10.24 years was employed, which is the average useful life of digital circuit equipment (see HAI 5.2 inputs, page 129). The same cost of money and treatment of taxes employed for the facility analysis above was utilized here as well. Neither gross salvage nor cost of removal were assumed.

Because HAI inputs are oriented to ILEC operations, no collocation costs are reflected as cost inputs. Accordingly, internal estimates of collocation preparation costs were employed. Internal estimates indicated that the preparation costs are in the range of $200,000 to $250,000. This, in turn, yields a $3,488 monthly cost for the preparation alone.

The monthly physical collocation rental costs were developed from ILEC billing to AT&T. When analyzed on the LEC-LATA level, the average monthly expense was $4,083 although the true mean could be expected to lie anywhere in the range of $3,579 to $4,586 (at a 95% level of confidence). The average figure was employed for the analysis.[8] Accordingly, the monthly costs attributable to collocation in total were $7,950 per month after taking into account taxes other than income taxes.

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[6] For simplicity in the study, a pre-tax cost-of-money was employed. The figure is entirely consistent with the ILEC cost of money of 10.01% employed in the HAI model. The 14.24% cost of money is derived by the following equation: %debt*cost of debt+%equity*cost of equity/(1-effective income tax rate). In this instance the % debt was 45%, the cost of debt was 7.7%, the cost of equity was 11.9% and the effective income tax rate was 39.25%.

[7] The calculation was the EXCEL PMT function: @PMT((14.24%/12),(26.03*12),(($1.435M)*(1-(-14.1%)) . The multiplication by 1.1418 grosses the initial investment up for gross salvage less cost of removal which, in this case, is negative.

[8] As with other expense, this figure was increased by 5% to account for taxes other than income taxes.

Transmission Equipment:

When operating at the interoffice transport level, there is relatively little equipment placed within the collocation. The necessary equipment includes: optical path panels (to terminate and cross-connect the fiber facility), optical multiplexers, and power distribution (e.g., power filtering and fuses) equipment.

The optical path panel costs are described in HAI 5.2 inputs (p.97). The panels cost $1,000 each, and the cost of cross–connecting to the equipment is $60/strand. In this instance, 2 cross-connections are required per panel (one in and one out) and 2 panels are employed (one for each strand to assure no single point of failure). Accordingly, the capital investment for the panels is $2,240.

The HAI input lists the investment associated with an optical multiplexer (see page 96). The base unit cost is $40,000 (12 DS3 capacity) and the fully equipped unit cost is $50,000 (48 DS3s). Thus, the investment is $40,000, $43,333.33, $46,666.67 or $50,000 depending upon whether 12, 24, 36, or 48 DS3s are in service. This is the only aspect of the investment that is demand sensitive (i.e., if fewer than 48 DS3s are assumed) but this amounts to little more than $3 per DS3. Two multiplexers are assumed to provide redundancy and, as set forth in HAI 5.2 inputs, it is assumed that there is $1,760 invested to engineer, furnish and install each multiplexer and associated optical panel (see page 97). The total investment in the optical multiplexers (24 DS3s assumed) is $90,187.[9]

The installed cost of the last remaining equipment item – the battery distribution fuse bay (BFDB) – is estimated at $62,500.[10]

The total installed equipment cost is therefore $2,240 for the distribution panels, $90,187 for the multiplexers and $62,500 for the BFDB, yielding a total of $154,927. Amortizing this amount over the average useful life of circuit equipment, applying a 1.69% net salvage (HAI 5.2 p 130) and the same cost of money as above, yields an investment recovery cost of $2,443 per month. Maintenance costs are derived by applying a 2% annual maintenance factor (see FCC Synthesis Model for circuit equipment) to the $154,927 gross investment (with the result divided by 12), for a maintenance cost of $258 per month. Combining these two figures and providing for 5% non-income tax related costs yields a total cost of $2,836 per month.

Rationale for the 18 DS3 Minimum:

Adding all of the above figures yields a monthly average cost of $32,557. Given that the monthly costs of facility-based collocation are effectively insensitive to volume, the average unit cost is simply the $32,557 monthly figure divided by the number of DS3s in service.

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[9] 2*(43,333.33+1760)

[10] This is an internal estimate, because there is no equivalent identified in the HAI inputs.

Assuming that unbundled transport is not available as an unbundled network element, and in the absence of market-based competition for connectivity between the necessary points, a CLEC's only practical alternative to building its own facilities is to use ILEC special access service. In today's market, given the continuing imposition of use and commingling restrictions, this special access would be likely be bought under a term plan of either three or five years. Assuming that the special access interoffice mileage would be equivalent to the average span, then a comparison of alternatives is possible. Note, however, that this is *not* a comparison between actual ILEC costs for existing transport facilities and anticipated CLEC costs for new construction. Rather, it is a comparison between anticipated CLEC construction costs and ILEC special access rates, which are admittedly well above the ILEC's costs.

AT&T's experience is that a DS3 interoffice facility plus one channel termination[11] will cost approximately $2,363 per month under a 36-month term agreement and $1,780 per month under a 60-month term agreement. Thus, at least 14 DS3 would be required to break-even compared to a 36-month term special access rate and at least 18 DS3s would be required compared to a 60-month term special access rate. Given that the collocation was assumed to have a 10-year useful life, comparison to the 60-month term agreement was judged most relevant, making the 18 DS3 figure the appropriate comparison.

In fact, AT&T has demonstrated that special access is priced (exorbitantly) well above economic cost. Further, AT&T has demonstrated that a carrier cannot viably enter a local market on a facilities-basis if it incurs costs for a key input that are well above the cost that the ILEC itself incurs for that input. Given that the ILEC's economic costs of transport are in the range of half to two-thirds of prevailing special access rates, then 28 to 36 DS3s would be required to "prove-in" a transport facilities build if the competitive carrier were to achieve cost parity with the ILEC.[12]

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[11] If a facility is not build, not only is the interoffice transport required but a connection from the final LSO to the switch location (i.e., a high capacity channel term or entrance facility) is also required.

[12] If the unit cost alternative were 50% to 67% lower, then the revised break-even point is simply the originally calculated break-even point divided by the preceding price ratio.