Telecommunications

With twenty-four Fortune 500 headquarters, NASA’s Johnson Space Center, thousands of multinational companies and the world’s largest medical center, the Houston region benefits from some of the most sophisticated and robust communications networks in the world.

- Historically, Texas’ second telephone exchange opened for business in Houston in 1879 and had 148 subscribers by 1883. The first private branch exchange switchboard in the nation was installed in Houston in 1882.

- Currently, the Texas Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has certified 305 Competitive Local Exchange Carriers to provide local phone service statewide or specifically within the Houston region. Principal among the Houston area’s local service providers are AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon with 100 percent coverage of the Houston region. Another major provider, Sprint, has 99.95 percent coverage in Houston. Coverage for all companies includes 3G and 4G network service.

- In 2018, AT&T announced that its 5G wireless technology was now live in parts of Houston. It was the first residential 5G broadband service to be provided in the nation. The company has invested nearly $1.5 billion in Houston wireless and wired networks from ’15 to ’18, in anticipation for 5G coverage. The investment also includes updates to improve reliability, speed and performance.

- The Texas PUC has also registered 244 Interexchange Carriers to provide long distance phone service for residents and businesses in Texas.

- Houston is served by seven area codes: 281, 346, 409, 713, 832, 936 and 979, four of which overlap.

- Over fifty cellular service providers offer mobile voice and data communications in the Houston MSA. Major cellular firms with a Houston presence include AT&T, Cricket, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon.

- The Houston region has an abundance of both lit and dark fiber installed throughout our major road and rail corridors.