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Funding Opportunity: Broadband	Applicant Organization:
Technology Opportunities Program	NEBRASKALINK, LLC
Task: Submit Application - BTOP	Applicant Name: Gary Warren

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A. General Application Information

Applicant Information	
Name and Federal ID for Applicant	
DUNS Number	961773509
CCR # (CAGE)	5WZU0
Legal Business Name	NEBRASKALINK, LLC
Point of Contact (POC)	GARY WARREN 4026945101 Ext.
	gary.warren@hamiltontel.com
Alternate POC	DOUG EIDAHL 6059951777 Ext.
	doug.eidahl@vantagepnt.com
Electronic Business POC	GARY WARREN 4026945101 Ext. gary.warren@hamiltontel.com
Alternate Electronic Business POC	DOUG EIDAHL 6059951777 Ext. doug.eidahl@vantagepnt.com

Name and Contact Information of Person to be Contacted on Matters Involving this Application:	
Prefix	
First Name	Gary
Middle Name	
Last Name	Warren
Suffix	
Telephone Number	888-893-2185



ganization: NK, LLC
NK IIC
me: Gary Warren

Fax Number	402-694-5037
Email	gary.warren@hamiltontel.com
Title	Chairman

Additional Contact Information of Person to be Contacted on Matters Involving this Application:

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
Secondary Point of Contact	Doug , Eidahl	6059951750	doug.eidahl@va ntagepnt.com
Other Contact	Wendy, Harper	4024622554	wendy.harper@ vantagepnt.com

Environmental Point of Contact

Prefix:

Name: Weber, Nathan

Suffix:

Telephone Number: 6059951747 Title: Director of Engineering

Organization Classification	
Type of Organization	For-profit Entity
Is the organization a small business?	No
Does the organization meet the definition of a socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern?	No



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Authorized Organizational Representative	
AOR Name	WARREN, GARY
Result	Applicant Authorized

Project Title and Project Description

Project Title: Connecting Nebraska Communities -- A High-Speed Broadband Network for All of Nebraska

Project Description: Backed by 7 rural telcos and substantial community support, NebraskaLink will deploy a high-speed network across Nebraska. This network will directly connect to 101 institutions in multiple communities and bolster growth in economically distressed areas. The network will also interconnect with last mile providers, improving broadband for businesses, residents, and 425 other anchor institutions.

CCI Priority Checklist

The following items were selected from the CCI Priority Checklist:

- 1. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to community anchor institutions.
- 2. The project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure and has incorporated a public-private partnership among government, non-profit and for-profits entities, and other key community stakeholders.
- 3. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure in economically distressed areas.
- 4. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to community colleges.
- 5. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to public safety entities.
- 6. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure and either includes a Last Mile infrastructure component in unserved or underserved areas or has received commitments from one or more Last Mile broadband service providers to utilize the Middle Mile components. Any Last Mile components in rural areas do not exceed 20% of the total eligible costs of the project.
- 7. This project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure and the applicant has proposed to contribute 30 percent or more in non-federal cost match.

Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Components



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The following items were selected from the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Components:

Middle Mile

BIP Applicants

Have you also applied to BIP for funding in the sample proposed funded service area?

> No

If Yes, please provide the project title and Easygrants ID number:

Title of Joint BIP Application:

Easygrants ID:

Other Applications

Is this application being submitted in coordination with any other application being submitted during this round of funding?

> Yes

Easygrants ID	Project Title
73	Recovery Act-Project Connect South Dakota-Delivering 10 Megabit Connectivity for
	Community Anchor In

If YES, please explain any synergies and/or dependencies between this project and any other applications.

NebraskaLink, LLC's proposed network, if funded, will both receive and provide benefits by leveraging upon another Recovery Act award recipient's project from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Round 1. Specifically, there are many synergies that can arise through collaboration with South Dakota Network, LLC (SDN).

SDN, headquartered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, was awarded approximately \$20 million dollars from BTOP for "Project South Dakota – Delivering 10 Megabit Connectivity for Community Anchor Institutions". NebraskaLink and SDN have already discussed the numerous



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benefits that could flow from partnering once their networks are complete, and if NebraskaLink receives a Round 2 award, the two entities intend to interconnect as soon as possible so both parties and the customers and communities they serve will benefit from the collaboration of the state-wide networks. There are many benefits to interconnecting the two state-wide networks, such as enhancing and driving greater demand for broadband services through a more sustainable, redundant, and reliable Middle Mile network, providing economic growth, and stimulating job creation.

Moreover, this collaboration will expand the ability for Community Anchor Institutions (CAI) between and within the two states to interconnect with each other and expand the available resources for these institutions. For example, with the two networks interconnected, hospitals and medical facilities will be able to share access to critical patient information more quickly, manage resources to assist in providing more adequate care, enable timely transfer of medical information, and promote physician interaction through telehealth services. The collaboration will also allow for needed high speed service for the Indian Tribes to access the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) located in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The proposed NebraskaLink project, if funded, could connect up to 526 Nebraska CAIs with SDN, while SDN's 500+ South Dakota CAIs would obtain connectivity with their Nebraska-based counterparts through NebraskaLink. SDN has provided a letter of support for the NebraskaLink application; SDN endorses the stated benefits of this Nebraska statewide network and is eager for the interconnection of the two networks.

Individual Background Screening

Is the Applicant exempt from the Department of Commerce requirements regarding individual background screening in connection with any award resulting from this Application?

No, Applicant is subject to these requirements

If the answer to the above question is "No," please identify each key individual associated with the Applicant who would be required to complete Form CD-346, "Applicant for Funding Assistance," in connection with any award resulting from this Application:

Name	Title	Employer
Gary Warren	President of Services Corporation	Nedelco, Inc. d/b/a Hamilton
		Telecommunications



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Emory Graffis	General Manager	Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company
Shawn Hanson	President and General Manager	American Broadband
Bill Dendinger	CEO/General Manager	Hartelco
Gregg Ptacnik	Director of Operations	Great Plains Communications, Inc.
Charles Fast	Vice President	Consolidated Companies, Inc.
Andy Jader	Vice President - Administration	Nebraska Central Telephone Company
Mike Storjohann	Director of Enterprise Technology & Operations	American Broadband

B. Executive Summary, Project Purpose and Benefits

Essay Question

Executive Summary of the proposed project:

The State of Nebraska faces substantial challenges in upgrading its broadband infrastructure for participation in a world that is increasingly migrating to online civic, social, and economic interactions. Communities within Nebraska are spread across vast distances, and the population densities in most serving areas are dramatically low -- meaning communities are often isolated from one another and service providers can find it difficult, if not impossible, to justify the deployment of broadband over such great distances to serve relatively few customers.

To overcome this barrier to connections within and between communities, NebraskaLink, LLC proposes to deploy a high-speed fiber network across Nebraska. The NebraskaLink fiber network will benefit schools, community colleges, healthcare providers, public safety, and other government facilities across Nebraska. The network will connect directly to 101 community anchor institutions in nine Nebraska communities. NebraskaLink will also have the ability to



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interconnect with 3rd party last mile providers in these nine communities. Furthermore, NebraskaLink plans to interconnect with 3rd party last mile providers in 28 additional communities defined as Middle Mile Service Areas where they will not directly connect to community anchor institutions. These last mile connections will improve broadband services for businesses, residents, and 425 other anchor institutions.

NebraskaLink also plans to interconnect with the SDN Communications statewide fiber network in South Dakota in the near future. This will provide access to an additional 500 community anchor institutions on the SDN network. These interconnections will provide an even greater scale of further beneficial impacts to anchor institutions and end users within Nebraska and South Dakota.

Many of the tribal institutions in Nebraska have been searching for ways to address their lack of access to viable broadband services. For instance, the Omaha and Winnebago Reservations in northeastern Nebraska are served via a fiber ring. NebraskaLink will interconnect with this fiber ring providing more robust broadband access.

NebraskaLink will enable end users in the service areas to overcome the significant geographical distances that often act as barriers to access to the valuable information and resources available through the Internet.

Without funding for NebraskaLink's network, it is unlikely a network of this size, scale, redundancy, and reliability could be built. This is due to the significant costs involved in building a fiber ring in rural areas, where facilities must be built and connected over long distances. Moreover, economic conditions throughout Nebraska have stymied the necessary private investment to build a high capacity middle mile broadband network. Accordingly, the only reasonable way to bring the significant benefits of broadband to Nebraska in the foreseeable future is through funding assistance to construct NebraskaLink's proposed network.

A General Description of the Proposed Funded Service Areas

NebraskaLink will connect directly to community anchor institutions in the nine communities of Alliance, Chadron, Grand Island, Kearney, McCook, North Platte, O'Neill, Sidney, and Valentine.

Additionally, NebraskaLink will interconnect with numerous providers who offer last-mile broadband services. These additional service areas include Arlington, Arnold, Aurora, Blair,



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Bloomfield, Brady, Broken Bow, Clarks, Clearwater, Crofton, Dalton, Gordon, Grant, Herman, Hemingford, Jackson, Merna, Norfolk, Osmond, Paxton, Ponca, Ravenna, Sargent, Snyder, Tekamah, Walthill, Wausa, and Wauneta.

Number of Households and Businesses Passed

The following is a summary of the number of households and businesses passed by the proposed project.

Household Quantity Passed: 85,260 Business Quantity Passed: 8,049

Number of Community Anchor Institutions, Public Safety Entities, and Critical Community Organizations Passed and/or Involved with Project

NebraskaLink will directly connect to 101 institutions. The network will also interconnect with last mile providers, improving broadband for an additional 425 other anchor institutions located within the Middle Mile Proposed Funded Service Areas.

Proposed Services and Applications for the Proposed Funded Service Areas and Users The project will allow critical anchor institutions such as community colleges, public safety, libraries, medical and healthcare facilities, K-12 schools, other higher education, other government offices, and other community support organization to have choice of provider, increase in broadband speeds, ability to connect to other critical anchor institutions, and ability to use a redundant reliable broadband middle mile network.

At the directly connected CAIs, NebraskaLink will deploy CPE with the ability to interface to the customer on a DS-1 or an Ethernet basis and to connect to the electronics for that community via a 1 GbE connection. Essentially, this allows each CAI to receive services with up to 1 Gbps data rates.

The interconnections with existing last mile service providers will be conducted via 10 GbE or 1 GbE interfaces. Moreover, NebraskaLink can cost-effectively add 1 GbE interfaces at the interconnection point to increase the bandwidth being provided to the last mile service provider to greater than 1 Gbps.

Approach to Addressing the Non-discrimination and Interconnection Obligations



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The network would adhere to the principles contained in the FCC's Broadband policy statement (FCC 05-151 adopted August 5, 2005) as well as any subsequent rulings or statement(s). NebraskaLink will display its network management policies in a prominent location on its website and provide notice to customers about changes to such practices for the proposed funded facilities. NebraskaLink will also interconnect to the funded network where technically feasible without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated capacity limitations on reasonable rates and terms to be negotiated with requesting parties.

Type of Broadband System that will be Deployed

The proposed middle mile will provide a carrier-grade fiber network that will allow for a variety of interactive two-way broadband services and digital multimedia. The proposed system is a wireline fiber optic cable backbone that contains numerous components. These range from the fiber optic cable to the Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) electronics used to "light" the backbone fiber infrastructure. With regards to the fiber optic cable infrastructure, NebraskaLink will utilize a combination of newly constructed fiber optical cable that will be funded as part of this project, wavelength leases on existing DWDM routes, and leases for the 1550nm window on existing fiber optic cable plant. In addition to the equipment needed to light the fiber, NebraskaLink will provision add/drop equipment on these fiber components to enable interconnection and laterals into specific service areas. Of the 37 Middle Mile Service Areas identified in this application, NebraskaLink will construct fiber laterals in nine communities to directly connect to community anchor institutions and interconnect with last-mile service providers in an additional 28 service areas.

Qualifications of the Applicant that Demonstrate the Ability to Implement and Operate a Broadband Infrastructure, and/or be a Sustainable Broadband Services Provider NebraskaLink has been formed by 7 last mile telecommunications service providers that have been successfully operating for many years in Nebraska. These companies have a proven reputation of deploying applications that can reduce operating costs, increase services, improve customer satisfaction and increase revenue generation. NebraskaLink is led by experienced key staff that can manage their organization to successfully implement and operate the proposed broadband infrastructure.

The overall infrastructure cost of the broadband system is \$16,496,952.

The following is a summary of the Year 8 subscriber projections.



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Community Anchor Institutions: 52 Third Party Service Providers: 20

Other Customers Served by Third Party Service Providers: 56,301

The NebraskaLink project is estimated to create and save a significant number of jobs. These include "direct" jobs required for the construction of the outside plant network and installation of the network electronics. Moreover, based on the methodology prescribed by the Application Guide, it is estimated that this project would create a substantial amount of "indirect" and "induced" jobs.

Direct: 60 Indirect: 44 Induced: 58 Total: 162

Project purpose:

The NebraskaLink, LLC Broadband application supports the statutory objectives of BTOP in several respects. The State of Nebraska suffers from a lack of Middle Mile broadband transport facilities for linking critical anchor institutions such as community colleges, public safety, libraries, medical and healthcare facilities, K-12 schools, other higher education, other government offices, and other community support organizations across the state to one another and to locations beyond. The Internet Service Providers that serve these institutions (including the service providers who have come together to form NebraskaLink) lack affordable and/or sufficient bandwidth to achieve connections between their serving areas and to reach the Internet backbone, leaving many of these institutions and the surrounding communities increasingly unable to participate in a world in which civic and economic interactions migrate online with greater frequency. Broadband is the future and being able to obtain bandwidth at a competitive price is essential for the growth and sustainability of these institutions and the communities they serve. The proposed project will allow these institutions to have a choice of provider, and should indeed facilitate competition by providing more affordable and robust connections from these more isolated areas to Internet points of presence. The project will also promote increases in broadband speeds, enhance the ability to connect to other critical anchor institutions, enable a redundant reliable broadband Middle Mile network, and promote economic growth through higher-quality and more affordable broadband connections to the Internet. The project, if funded,



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will reach approximately 250 communities either directly through community anchor connections by NebraskaLink or indirectly through the interconnection points on the network.

NebraskaLink's proposed project will not only solve the concerns raised by the lack of affordable and reliable middle mile connections within Nebraska – it also demonstrates broader significance with other Recovery Act efforts by interconnecting with other state-wide networks as well. For example, South Dakota Network, LLC (SDN), has been in business for over 20 years and offers a state-of-the-art state-wide network in South Dakota with over 21,000 miles of fiber optics. SDN is a Round 1 NTIA BTOP broadband stimulus award recipient for a Middle Mile infrastructure project titled, "Project Connect South Dakota- Delivering 10 Megabit Connectivity for Community Anchor Institutions". As explained further elsewhere in this application, NebraskaLink and SDN have already commenced negotiations to link their two statewide networks as soon as possible. This collaboration will allow an abundance of Community Anchor Institutions in the two states to interconnect and be ready for what the future of broadband has to offer. For example, the Avera St. Anthony's Hospital in O'Neill, NE could be connected to the Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell, SD and to Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD as well as other locations. This would enable health care providers to access critical patient information more quickly while providing them with an abundance of resources and many other increased benefits critical to the adequate provision of healthcare. Similarly, the Omaha Tribe in Macy, NE could connect with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Aberdeen, SD via an Ethernet connection versus a lower bandwidth DS1s connection available today; this traffic would be interfaced to the NebraskaLink network at the Point of Interconnection in Walthill.

Thus, NebraskaLink's proposal addresses multiple BTOP statutory objectives. This proposal will allow for interconnections that upgrade not only connections for existing last-mile service providers, but its strategically located interconnection points also open the door for more efficient last-mile deployments throughout Nebraska. The proposed project will of course also provide broadband access and support to many critical anchor institutions. Indeed, there are 101 direct connections proposed in this project with the potential for hundreds more through the numerous interconnection points that have been designated. These connections will improve the access to and use of broadband services by public safety agencies and enhance the service for healthcare delivery and education, while stimulating the demand for broadband, economic growth, and job creation. For example, NebraskaLink looks forward to partnering with the Nebraska Library Commission in order to meet the necessary broadband needs of the NE



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Libraries as well as the Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council in order to leverage their expertise with respect to community needs for broadband services. We are committed to serving our Community Anchor Institutions with the broadband services they need at an affordable market price. By deploying a network that can be used by these institutions and also by any Internet Service Provider, NebraskaLink will be able to provide Nebraska with the high-quality broadband speeds and capabilities needed for today, tomorrow, and beyond. Finally, this project is estimated to create and save a significant number of jobs. These include "direct" jobs required for the construction of the project, as well as "indirect" jobs for NebraskaLink's suppliers and "induced" jobs as a result of the more robust economic activity enabled by the funded network. Thus, this Middle Mile expansion serves multiple BTOP purposes and is essential to the progress of Nebraska's citizens and the community anchor institutions that serve them. As demonstrated above, NebraskaLink's proposed project, if funded, will bring Broadband education, awareness, training and support to multiple anchor institutions; Improved access to and use of broadband by public safety entities; and stimulate demand for broadband, economic growth and job creation.

Recovery Act and Other Governmental Collaboration:

NebraskaLink's proposed network will leverage and promote the success of the NTIA BTOP Middle Mile grant of approximately \$20 million dollars to South Dakota Network, LLC (SDN) for its "Project South Dakota-Delivering 10 Megabit Connectivity for Community Anchor Institutions". The SDN project will upgrade an existing middle mile network to enable delivery of 10 Megabit service to all its end users and will also connect underserved communities in SD. It will assist with economic development, with over 500 community anchor institutions (CAIs) benefitting from the project. NebraskaLink and SDN have already discussed the numerous benefits that could flow from partnering, and if NebraskaLink receives a Round 2 award, the two entities intend to interconnect as soon as possible. This collaboration will expand the ability for CAIs between and within the two states to interconnect with each other and expand the available resources for these institutions. SDN has provided a letter of support for the NebraskaLink application and it agrees with the benefit of this state-wide network and is eager for the interconnection of the two networks. This collaboration will expand broadband growth, promote economic growth and civic engagement, and stimulate job creation. NebraskaLink has also received support letters from the Aurora Development Corporation and Elkhorn Valley Economical Development Council (Partner); Cities of Kearney, North Platte, Alliance, and Sidney; Keith County, and Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce. NebraskaLink will collaborate with economic development and city offices as much as possible in order to meet the expanding



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broadband needs for their communities. For example, the State of Nebraska is using Community Development Block Grants to create data center-ready business parks in three Nebraska locations; two of which, Kearney and Aurora, would connect to the proposed NebraskaLink network. These business parks are being purchased and developed by the community development organizations and local governments so businesses can be recruited to these areas. This will encourage job growth in Nebraska, and NebraskaLink stands ready to meet their broadband needs by offering a sustainable, reliable, and redundant broadband network. Finally, NebraskaLink is partnering with the Nebraska Library Commission to ensure the broadband needs of libraries in Nebraska are met. Public broadband access through libraries is imperative in stimulating broadband use by many who otherwise would be unable to afford and/or learn to make use of broadband connections. Thus, collaboration with local government and economic development offices and with other Recovery Act initiatives is a priority for and meaningful element of the NebraskaLink proposal.

Fit with BTOP CCI Priorities:

NebraskaLink, LLC's proposal to construct a middle mile network meets and/or exceeds all seven of the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) priorities. First, the project will deploy broadband infrastructure that will directly connect 101 community anchor institutions in nine communities of interest, including 33 schools, 3 libraries, 34 medical and healthcare providers, 9 community colleges, 4 other institutions of higher education, 8 public safety agencies, 1 other community support organization, and 9 other governmental facilities; moreover, NebraskaLink is partnering with the Nebraska Library Commission to see what can be done to meet the needs of additional libraries, and the network will pass and establish interconnection points near hundreds of other community anchors. Second, the project incorporates a public-private partnership in that the Nebraska Library Commission has been and will continue to be a valuable partner in assessing and advocating for the broadband needs of its member institutions. Also, NebraskaLink is partnering with the Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council (EVEDC) in order to leverage EVEDC's experience and expertise with respect to community needs for broadband services for industrial attraction and retention. Third, the project will deploy Middle Mile infrastructure in economically distressed areas. Based on the useful map link provided in the guidance to this BTOP essay questions, http://hepgis.fhwa.dot.gov/hepgis_v2/GeneralInfo/Map.aspx, Thurston County in Nebraska meets both qualifications of economically distressed of the listed criterion in regards to per capita income and the unemployment rate. Furthermore, eleven of the other counties with proposed service areas in this application meet at least one of the two criterions, specifically the per capita



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income requirement. With respect to the fourth and fifth BTOP CCI objectives, the project will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to numerous community colleges and public safety entities as described immediately above. Sixth, NebraskaLink has received commitments from twelve Last Mile broadband service providers to utilize the Middle Mile components that would be built by NebraskaLink if funded. Finally, NebraskaLink will contribute the 30% Non-federal cost match through a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. Each of these priorities is illustrated throughout this application.

Is the applicant seeking a waiver of the Buy American provision pursuant to section x.Q of the NOFA?

> No

Is the applicant deliquent on any federal debt?

> No

If Yes, justification for deliquency:

Are you seeking a waiver of any requirement set forth in the NOFA that is not mandated by statute or applicable law?

No

Is the applicant a current recipient of a grant or loan from RUS?

> No

C. Partners

Are you partnering with any other key institutions, organizations, or other entities for this project?

Yes

If YES, key partners are listed below:

Project Role: Other Name: Wagner, Rod Phone: 4024714001

Email: rod.wagner@nebraska.gov Address 1: 1200 N Street

Address 2: Suite 120

Address 3:



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City: Lincoln State: Nebraska Zip Code: 68508-2023

Organization: Nebraska Library Commission Organization Type: State or State Agency

Small business: No

Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No

Project Role: Other Name: Robinson, Arnie Phone: 4023711810

Email: arobinson@norfolkiron.com Address 1: 309 Madison Ave

Address 2: Address 3: City: Norfolk State: Nebraska Zip Code: 68701

Organization: Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council

Organization Type: Non-profit Corporation

Small business: No

Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No

Description of the involvement of the partners listed above in the project.

Partner #1

NebraskaLink, LLC is partnering with the Nebraska Library Commission, a government entity, in order to ensure the broadband requirements of Nebraska libraries are met. This collaboration is critical as public broadband access through libraries stimulates broadband use by many, including vulnerable populations, who otherwise would be unable to afford and/or learn to make use of broadband connections. Broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support are essential elements to bolster broadband adoption. These services are important to NebraskaLink in stimulating long-term demand and supporting a sustainable project, and they are the driving force behind this meaningful public-private partnership.

NebraskaLink, if funded, plans to directly connect to 3 public libraries in the 9 communities of interest. Furthermore, 34 of the 37 PFSAs have public libraries, most of which are served by the



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NebraskaLink member companies. Of the 270 libraries in Nebraska, 83 are located within the member companies' exchanges. Therefore, if one were to add the 9 communities of interest to this total, NebraskaLink and its member companies would enable improved broadband access for 92 public libraries across Nebraska.

The key details of the partnership between NebraskaLink and the Nebraska Library Commission ("NLC") are as follows:

- A. NebraskaLink will review the list of libraries that will be directly connected to the proposed network, if funded, and also other Nebraska libraries in the Middle Mile Service Areas or in certain nearby last mile areas.
- B. The NLC will provide input to NebraskaLink on where broadband access remains necessary for the public libraries.
- C. NebraskaLink and the NLC will identify those locations that may need higher bandwidth based upon their mission and demand.
- D. NebraskaLink and the NLC will consult on the kinds of broadband services that could be made available.

The two parties will continue to meet to identify and attempt to fulfill the broadband needs of the Nebraska libraries. This partnership is essential to meet the library system's broadband needs and to stimulate broadband growth. There are no financial arrangements between the two parties. A letter of support and commitment is included in the Government and Key Partnerships section of the Upload Section. NebraskaLink looks forward to its ongoing partnership with the Nebraska Library Commission.

Partner #2

NebraskaLink also has a second important partner with the Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council (EVEDC) which is a 3 county economic development organization, located in Norfolk, Nebraska. EVEDC has submitted a Letter Agreement with this application (located in the Government and Key Partnership section of the Upload Section) outlining this particular key partnership between EVEDC and NebraskaLink.

EVEDC supports 2 of the 37 service areas in this Application. EVEDC anticipates its communities will benefit from this partnership if the NebraskaLink project is funded, and it



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welcomes the availability of a reliable redundant network. As stated in the Letter Agreement, the objective of the integral partnership is to leverage the EVEDC's substantial experience and expertise with respect to community and industrial needs for broadband services and NebraskaLink's technological capabilities as a broadband provider.

The details of the partnership between NebraskaLink, LLC and EVEDC are as follows:

A. EVEDC will participate in planning meetings with respect to the project;

B. EVEDC will provide input on the needs of the community and its key anchor institutions with respect to broadband services during the Application process and throughout the life of the Project if an award is granted;

C. EVEDC will provide information, assistance and cooperation with NebraskaLink as needed for the Application and to comply with BTOP program requirements thereafter; and D. EVEDC will assist with the successful implementation and operation of the project if an award is granted to NebraskaLink.

This partnership is essential to the larger objectives of stimulating economic growth and promoting sustainable broadband services. There are no financial arrangements between the two parties. NebraskaLink looks forward to its ongoing partnership with EVEDC.

D. Congressional Districts

Applicant Headquarters

Nebraska

Project Service States

Nebraska

Project Service Areas

Nebraska - 3

Nebraska - 1



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Will any portion of your proposed project serve federally recognized tribal entities?

> Yes

Indicate each federally recognized tribal entity your proposed project will serve.

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska

Winnebago Tribal Council

Have you consulted with each of the federally recognized tribal entities identified above?

> Yes

E. Service Area Details

Is the applicant seeking a waiver for providing less than 100% coverage of a service area?

> No

Project Details

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Alliance

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 103

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 9,548
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 3,787
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 316



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Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 23
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 8
Median Income in the Service Area: 39,366

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Chadron

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 27

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 5,922
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 2,297
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 243

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 16
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 29,476

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 71

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Wauneta

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 1

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 780 Total Number of Households in Service Area: 343



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Total Number of Businesses in Service Area:

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: **Unemployment Rate in the Service Area:** 4 **Median Income in the Service Area:** 32.351

100 **Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50**

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Snyder

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area:

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,436 Total Number of Households in Service Area: 558 **Total Number of Businesses in Service Area:**

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 2 **Unemployment Rate in the Service Area:** 6 **Median Income in the Service Area:** 37,188

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 **Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband:** 66

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Sargent

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area:

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,204



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Total Number of Households in Service Area: 292 Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 25

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 8
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 30,677

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 56

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Paxton

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 1

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 958
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 371
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 25

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 5
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 6
Median Income in the Service Area: 32,325

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Ravenna

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 11



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Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,456
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 582
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 69

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 10
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,782

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 47

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Grand Island

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Non-Rural Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 103

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 46,116
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 17,664
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 1,682

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 57
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,044

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Kearney

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Non-Rural Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.



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Total Square Miles in Service Area: 57

Total Population in Proposed Service Area:30,268Total Number of Households in Service Area:11,427Total Number of Businesses in Service Area:1,214

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 60
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,782

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: McCook

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 31

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 8,367
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 3,516
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 394

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 22 Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5

Median Income in the Service Area: 32,293

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 47

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: North Platte

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Non-Rural Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.



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Total Square Miles in Service Area: 38

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 26,870
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 10,236
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 640

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 41
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,568

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Sidney

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 466

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 7,210
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 2,974
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 280

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 25
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 33,438

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: O'Neill

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served



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If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 40

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 4,346
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,995
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 217

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 23
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 32,021

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Aurora

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 25

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 4,476
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,750
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 204

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 12
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 40,277

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type:Middle MileService Area Name:Brady

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served



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If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 1

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 656
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 273
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 9

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 2
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,568

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 33

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Broken Bow

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 15

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 3,915
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,672
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 228

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 15
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 30,677

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 42

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Clarks

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural



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Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 1

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,183
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 510
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 26

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 5
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 34,961

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 39

Service Area Type:Middle MileService Area Name:Clearwater

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 2

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 838
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 326
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 17

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 4

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 3
Median Income in the Service Area: 30,708

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 45

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Dalton



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Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 121

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,170
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 498
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 7

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 2

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 33,438

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Grant

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 22

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,402
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 606
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 83

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 10 Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4

Median Income in the Service Area: 34,205

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 67

Service Area Type: Middle Mile



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Service Area Name: Hemingford

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 254

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,660
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 634
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 32

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area:

8

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area:

Median Income in the Service Area: 39,366

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Merna

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 105

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,204
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 459
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 17

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 4
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5

Median Income in the Service Area: 30,677



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Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Valentine

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 275

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 3,766
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,562
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 193

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 20
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 29,268

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 65

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Arlington

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 12

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,385
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 536
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 41

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 6
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 45,365



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Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Arnold

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 354

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,055
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 464
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 38

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 6
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 25,500

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 93

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Blair

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 31

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 8,162
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 3,129
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 391

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 21
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 6
Median Income in the Service Area: 41,214



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Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Bloomfield

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 11

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,219
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 560
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 62

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 9
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 25,435

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 78

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Herman

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 60

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,075
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 415
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 11

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 3 Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 6 Median Income in the Service Area: 38,750



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Service Area Type:Middle MileService Area Name:Jackson

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 134

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,840
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 663
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 27

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 4
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 50,833

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 63

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Norfolk

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 51

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 26,102
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 10,219
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 1,178

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 39

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 34,609



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Service Area Type: Middle Mile
Service Area Name: Osmond

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 65

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,188
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 469
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 49

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 7
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 27.120

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Ponca

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 395

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,431
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 593
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 38

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area:

7

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 31,750

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100

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Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 80

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Tekamah

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 164

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 2,917
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,174
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 73

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 10 Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 7

Median Income in the Service Area: 35,708

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 44

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Walthill

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 30

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,094
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 339
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 21

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area· 6

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 12 Median Income in the Service Area: 28,750



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Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Wausa

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 174

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,490
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 586
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 17

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 7

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5
Median Income in the Service Area: 36,477

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 80

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Crofton

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 408

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 1,931
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 747
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 45

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 11

Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 5



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Median Income in the Service Area: 30,667

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 55

Service Area Type: Middle Mile Service Area Name: Gordon

Rural Classification of the Last Mile Service Area: Rural

Service Status of the Last Mile Service Area: Served

If Service Status is "Underserved" please select at least one applicable option from this list.

Total Square Miles in Service Area: 343

Total Population in Proposed Service Area: 2,535
Total Number of Households in Service Area: 1,034
Total Number of Businesses in Service Area: 99

Total Number of Community Anchor Institutions and Public Safety Entities in Proposed Funded Service

Area: 10
Unemployment Rate in the Service Area: 4
Median Income in the Service Area: 27,896

Estimated Percentage of Households with Access to Broadband: 100 Estimated Percentage of Households Subscribing to Broadband: 50

F. Community Anchor Summary

Community Anchor Summary	
Schools (k-12)	33
Libraries	3
Medical and Healthcare Providers	34
Public Safety Entities	8
Community Colleges	9



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Public Housing	0
Other Institutions of Higher Education	4
Other Community Support Organization	1
Other Government Facilities	9
TOTAL COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS	101
Historically Black colleges and Universities	0
Tribal Colleges and Universities	0
Alaska Native Serving Institutions	0
Hispanic Serving Institutions	0
Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions	0
TOTAL MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS	0

G. Project Benefits

Demographics

Jobs	
How many direct jobs-years will be created from this project?	60
How many indirect jobs will be created from this project?	44
How many jobs will be induced from this project?	58



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Methodology used to estimate jobs:

The methodology described in "Estimates of Job Creation From The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009" from the Executive Office of the President, Council of Economic Advisers in May 2009 was utilized to estimate the number of jobs created and saved for this project.

"Direct" jobs required for the construction of the project were estimated based on the requirements of the project scope.

The remainder of the jobs were calculated based on 64% of the job-years representing "direct" and "indirect" effects and 36% of the job-years representing "induced" effects.

Project Impact:

The NebraskaLink fiber network will benefit schools, community colleges, healthcare providers, public safety, and other government facilities across Nebraska. The network will connect directly to 101 community anchor institutions in nine Nebraska communities, and will have the capability to interconnect with the last mile providers in 28 other communities. Many of these CAIs have expressed an interest in subscribing to the NebraskaLink network. These last mile connections will improve broadband services for businesses, residents, and 425 additional CAIs. NebraskaLink also will interconnect to an existing fiber network in Nebraska that will further benefit existing anchor institutions and other end users and plans to interconnect with the SDN Communications statewide fiber network in South Dakota in the near future. This will provide access to an additional 500 CAIs on the SDN network. These interconnections will provide an even greater scale of further beneficial impacts to anchor institutions and end users between and within Nebraska and South Dakota.

Access to NebraskaLink's Middle Mile broadband infrastructure will allow for greater opportunities in jobs, healthcare, education, and public safety, commercial and social endeavors. NebraskaLink will enable end users in the 37 service areas to overcome the significant geographical distances that often act as barriers and to access the valuable information and resources available on and through the Internet including access to research, distance learning, video and other tools. The combined population of the proposed funded service areas is 218,175, and for the reasons discussed above and in light of the fact that this network can be used by last mile providers to support improved broadband services, it is anticipated that nearly all of these end users will benefit directly or indirectly from this project.



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Support letters have been received from over 35 organizations expressing their interest in the project.

The Nebraska Library Commission has expressed significant support of the NebraskaLink project and is partnering with NebraskaLink in order to meet its mission to provide statewide promotion, development and coordination of library and information services. The Middle Mile project will allow Nebraska libraries, through the enhanced broadband capabilities, to access and deliver online library and information services more efficiently. Public broadband access through libraries is imperative as it enables broadband availability to many who otherwise would be unable to afford and/or learn to make use of broadband connections.

NebraskaLink will have direct connections to many educational facilities including 33 schools, 9 community colleges, and 4 other institutions of higher education. These entities have indicated that NebraskaLink would allow for the potential to share services, software and staff and to satisfy the ever-growing need for additional broadband based upon their forecasts. NebraskaLink would enable these educational facilities to increase efficiency and offer more robust educational services than are currently possible.

NebraskaLink also will enable health care providers to take advantage of E-Care, the electronic exchange of information, including data, images and video, that aids in practice of medicine, such as through video consultations and remote monitoring. Further, NebraskaLink will allow health providers to take advantage of the benefits of using electronic health records (EHRs), digital records of patient health information. E-Care and EHRs will play a key role in improving health and health care delivery by improving care quality and efficiency through the collection, presentation and exchange of health care information.

Specifically, healthcare providers in Nebraska have indicated that NebraskaLink will enable timely transfer of medical information and facilitate physician interaction through telehealth services with patients who are unable to travel the long distances in Nebraska between their homes and health care facilities. NebraskaLink will further allow for additional broadband intensive applications such as EHRs, web-portal applications for rural medical applications, remote patient in-home monitoring, real time video patient/specialty care, real time video urgent/emergent care and diagnostic review. Many Nebraska healthcare providers do not have the necessary network bandwidth, speed or quality to provide these E-Care and EHR solutions and applications.



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The demand by law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services for broadband services is growing rapidly. Due to the large geographical area served through many 911 centers in Nebraska, it is becoming increasingly important for all response agencies to be able to receive ever-increasing amounts of data quickly, efficiently and reliably. Public safety entities have indicated to NebraskaLink that they need broadband capabilities in many of their areas to allow first responders to send and receive critical voice, video and data to save lives, reduce injuries and prevent acts of crime and terror. Moreover, broadband will help public safety agencies ensure that Nebraska residents can access emergency services quickly, send and receive vital information, regardless of how it is transmitted, and notify residents about emergencies and disasters to ensure they receive information vital to their safety. NebraskaLink would enable these agencies to access archived call data and statistics which is critical to investigations and thus, the protection of the public. At the present time, some of these agencies only have access to this information by regular mail and occasionally by fax if needs are immediate. Not only will NebraskaLink project improve all public safety agency access to broadband services beyond currently available levels, but it also will provide redundant and reliable network options that currently are not available.

Because of the significant beneficial impact that this project will have on the area, many local governments and businesses have provided letters of support. For example, the State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development is providing incentives with the use of Community Development Block Grants to create "data center ready" business parks. Two of these data center parks are currently in planning stages by the communities of Aurora and Kearney. Both of these communities will be connected to the NebraskaLink project. NebraskaLink will have the ability to provide these centers with high bandwidth capacity and will help to maximize the job creation impact that these centers will have. Letters of support are included from:

- City of Kearney
- City of North Platte
- City of Alliance
- City of Sidney
- Keith County
- Five Points Bank
- Heritage Bank



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- Aurora Development Corporation
- Intellicom
- Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce
- Viaero Event Center
- FirsTier Bank

The Elkhorn Valley Econ Development Council (EVEDC) is also partnering with NebraskaLink for this project. The EVEDC anticipates that the project will benefit its three county community constituents and will utilize their experience and expertise with respect to community needs for broadband services for industrial attraction and retention. The letter of agreement between EVEDC and NebraskaLink is included with the application.

NebraskaLink's proposed network will both receive and provide benefits by leveraging upon another Recovery Act award recipient's project from BTOP Round 1. Specifically, South Dakota Network, LLC (SDN) was awarded a NTIA BTOP Middle Mile grant of approximately \$20 million dollars for its "Project South Dakota - Delivering 10 Megabit Connectivity for Community Anchor Institutions". This project will upgrade SDN's existing Middle Mile network to enable delivery of 10 Megabit per second service to all its end users. The project will also connect underserved communities in South Dakota and assist with economic development, while over 500 community anchor institutions (CAI) benefit from the project (existing and new). NebraskaLink and SDN have already discussed the numerous benefits that could flow from partnering once their networks are complete, and if NebraskaLink receives a Round 2 award, the two entities intend to interconnect as soon as possible so both parties will benefit from the collaboration of the state-wide networks. This collaboration will expand the ability for CAIs between and within the two states to interconnect with each other and expand the available resources for these institutions. SDN has provided a letter of support for the NebraskaLink application -- it agrees with the benefit of this state-wide network and is eager for the interconnection of the two networks. This collaboration will expand broadband growth, provide economic growth, and stimulate job creation.

Vulnerable Populations:

Based on the map link provided in the BTOP application guidance,

http://hepgis.fhwa.dot.gov/hepgis_v2/GeneralInfo/Map.aspx, Thurston County in Nebraska meets both qualifications of economically distressed of the listed criterion in regards to per capita income and the unemployment rate. Furthermore, eleven of the other counties with proposed



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service areas in this application meet at least one of the two criterions, specifically the per capita income requirement.

Several portions of the service area also have high percentages of Hispanic and American Indian populations.

Below is a summary of the communities with high percentages of minority residents.

Alliance, NE

American Indian: 3.4%

Hispanic: 8.9%

Chadron, NE

American Indian: 3.3%

Gordon, NE

American Indian: 15.4%

Grand Island, NE Hispanic: 22.3%

Hemingford, NE Hispanic: 6.8%

Kearney, NE Hispanic: 4.1%

Kilgore, NE

American Indian: 11.1%

Norfolk, NE Hispanic: 9.4%

North Platte, NE Hispanic: 6.7%



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Valentine, NE

American Indian: 5.8%

Walthill, NE

American Indian: 67.9%

Hispanic: 6.4%

Level of Need:

Based on the variety of institutions and the services they provide, NebraskaLink will address needs for nearly all the population of the area by providing robust and reliable broadband to these institutions. Specifically, the network will connect to 101 community anchor institutions directly in nine communities throughout the state. In the proposed network, NebraskaLink will have the capability to interconnect with the last mile providers in 28 additional communities, which will vastly improve broadband services for a large number of businesses, residents, and potentially another 425 anchor institutions. Therefore, NebraskaLink will provide direct and indirect connectivity to 526 community anchor institutions in the 37 total Middle Mile Service Areas. NebraskaLink will also interconnect with an existing fiber network in Nebraska and plans to interconnect with the SDN Communications statewide fiber network in South Dakota in the near future. These additional interconnections will address the level of need on an even greater scale impacting numerous other anchor institutions, businesses and residents throughout Nebraska and South Dakota.

In order to address the broadband needs of community anchor institutions, businesses and residents throughout NebraskaLink's network, the company will provide access to several major national carriers' Points of Presences (POPs) in Omaha for broadband services. Not only is the NebraskaLink backbone network architected as diversely routed, self-healing rings, but they also will employ redundant connections to the Omaha POPs if this project is funded. The redundant links to these POPs will provide all the communities connected to the NebraskaLink network with access to broadband at competitive rates, as well as a reliable, redundant and high capacity network that will allow these communities to access, use and benefit from the bandwidth intensive content and applications available on the Internet.

Anchor Educational Institutions: NebraskaLink will have direct connections to many educational institutions including schools, community colleges, and other institutions of higher learning. These entities have indicated that NebraskaLink would allow for the potential to share services,



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software and staff. For example, Chadron State College indicated that the NebraskaLink project could assist with their need for secondary connectivity throughout their campus in order to provide for redundancy and disaster recovery services that are not currently available from their existing service provider. Mid-Plains Community College also expressed that forecasts of broadband data volumes suggest that their institution will need additional bandwidth access in the future and that there are not current Middle Mile alternatives available to meet these needs. NebraskaLink would enable these educational facilities to increase efficiency and offer better educational services than are currently possible based on the existing broadband infrastructure.

Support letters are included from:

Schools

- Sidney Public Schools
- Educational Service Unit 10
- North Platte Catholic Schools
- North Platte Public Schools
- Valentine Community Schools
- McCook Public Schools
- O'Neill Public Schools
- O'Neill St. Mary's Catholic Schools

Community Colleges

- Western Nebraska Community College
- Northeast Community College
- Mid-Plains Community College
- Western Nebraska Community College
- Central Community College
- Nebraska Community College Association

Higher Education Institutions

- Chadron State College
- University of Nebraska Kearney
- University of Nebraska, Office of the President



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Nebraska Library Commission: The Nebraska Library Commission has expressed significant support of the NebraskaLink project and is partnering with NebraskaLink in order to meet its mission to provide statewide promotion, development and coordination of library and information services. The Middle Mile project will allow Nebraska libraries, through the enhanced broadband capabilities, to access and deliver online library and information services more efficiently. The existing broadband infrastructure in Nebraska does not allow Nebraska libraries to take advantage of the power and benefits of broadband because existing service providers throughout the state do not have adequate capacity or facilities to deliver these bandwidth intensive services and do not have the necessary capital to build such facilities. A partnership letter from the Nebraska Library Commission is included with the application.

Health Care Providers: NebraskaLink will enable health care providers to take advantage of E-Care and the electronic exchange of information, including data, images and video. These services both aid in the practice of medicine, such as through video consultations and remote monitoring. Further, NebraskaLink will allow health providers to take advantage of the benefits of using electronic health records (EHRs), digital records of patient health information. E-Care and EHRs will play a key role in improving health and health care delivery by improving care quality efficiency through the collection, presentation and exchange of health care information.

For example, Saint Francis Medical Center and St. Anthony Hospital have indicated that they will need additional bandwidth access and the reliability of fiber ring technology in order to provide more efficient and higher quality medical care for their patients, such as: (i) telehealth services for patients who are unable to travel long distances in Nebraska between their homes and health care facilities; (ii) remote patient in-home monitoring; (iii), real time video patient/specialty care; (iv) real time video urgent/emergent care; and (v) diagnostic review. NebraskaLink will enable timely transfer of medical information and allow health care providers, like Saint. Francis and St. Anthony, to facilitate physician/patient interaction through the above discussed bandwidth intensive services. These facilities do not currently have the network bandwidth, speed or quality to access and provide these important E-Care and EHR applications.

Support letters are included from:

- Valley Medical Management Services
- Plains Radiology Services
- Sidney Medical Associates



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- Memorial Health Center
- Kearney Clinic
- Great Plains Regional Medical Center
- Saint Francis Medical Center
- Community Hospital
- McCook Clinic
- Hillcrest Nursing Home
- Avera St. Anthony's Hospital
- Nebraska Hospital Association
- Willow Ridge Retirement Community

Public Safety Agencies: Public Safety entities have indicated to NebraskaLink that currently there are no alternative options for high-speed bandwidth. For example, Keith County in southwestern Nebraska has a 911 dispatch center with a service area that includes seven counties and currently operates non-redundant, two-way radio links between many of these counties. NebraskaLink would provide them with access to reliable, self-healing fiber rings to provide reliable and redundant public safety services that will help to protect the citizens of Nebraska communities.

Support letters are included from:

- Buffalo County Sheriff's Office
- City of McCook Fire Department
- McCook Police Department
- Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

Last Mile Providers: Last mile providers have also expressed that NebraskaLink will provide them with the ability to obtain needed broadband services at reasonable prices. For example, Consolidated Internet indicated to NebraskaLink that access to the Middle Mile project will reduce its Internet access cost by up to 66% - savings that will it will use to provide additional and more robust and affordable Internet services to various businesses and residents. Another company, Hamilton Wireless, Inc., indicated that their greatest barrier to providing service in new areas is the lack of affordable, redundant and reliable network services. Many last mile providers have committed to utilizing NebraskaLink due to the lack of feasible alternatives.



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Letters of commitment and/or support are included from:

- Hamilton Wireless, Inc.
- Hamilton.net, Inc.
- Arlington Telephone Company
- Blair Telephone Company
- Consolidated Internet
- Eastern Nebraska Telephone Company
- Great Plains Communications
- Hartelco
- HunTel CableVision
- Nebraska Central Telephone Company
- CenCom
- Rock County Telephone
- K & M Telephone Company
- Three River Telco
- Southeast Nebraska Communications
- BW Telcom
- Hershey Cooperative Telephone Company
- Mainstay Communications
- Pierce Telephone Co.
- Plainview Telephone Co.
- WesTel
- Glenwood Telephone Membership Corporation
- Diller Telephone Company

Tribal Institutions: For a long period of time, many of the tribal institutions in Nebraska have been searching for ways to address their lack of access to viable broadband services. For instance, the Omaha and Winnebago Reservations in northeastern Nebraska are served via a fiber ring. NebraskaLink will interconnect with this fiber ring providing more robust broadband access which generally will provide the residents on these reservations with access to potential jobs, education, health care and numerous other benefits that the Internet offers.

For example, the Ho-Chunk Community Development Corporation, which works with local communities and surrounding reservations for youth, housing, and commercial development, has indicated to NebraskaLink that their access to broadband is currently very limited. Providing



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Ho-Chuck with access to the NebraskaLink network will help them better raise the socioeconomic and education levels for children and adults in these communities by providing employment, expanding opportunities to own, manage and operate businesses in economically depressed areas, identifying and assembling public and private resources for community development and expanding housing opportunities for low-income persons and families. Additionally, organizations on various reservations have indicated a need for high speed broadband to connect with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Currently, they are only able to utilize a limited number of DS1s because there are no other feasible Middle Mile solutions. These links are expensive and do not provide the Ethernet capabilities that the tribal organizations need to take advantage of the limitless variety of beneficial, but bandwidth intensive, Internet applications and content. These service deficiencies would be addressed through NebraskaLink's planned future partnership with SDN Communications. SDN has fiber rings around the state of South Dakota that would be able to carry data traffic for the Omaha and Winnebago Reservations from the Point of Interconnection with NebraskaLink to the BIA office in Aberdeen, South Dakota. A support letter from SDN is included with the application.

Support letters are included from:

- Omaha Nation Public Schools
- Winnebago Public Schools
- Nebraska Indian Community College
- Omaha Tribal Court
- Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Tribal Council
- Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
- Ho-Chunk Community Development Corp
- Omaha Tribe Police Department
- Little Priest Tribal College

Without funding for NebraskaLink's network, it is unlikely that a network of this size, scale, redundancy, and reliability could be built in light of the significant costs of building a fiber ring in rural areas where facilities must be built and connected over long distances. Moreover, economic conditions throughout Nebraska have stymied the necessary private investment to build a high capacity Middle Mile broadband network. Accordingly, the only reasonable way to



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bring the significant benefits of broadband to Nebraska in the foreseeable future is with fund assistance.

H. Technology

Technology Type

Indicate the technology that will be used to deliver last mile services. The following items were selected:

Wireline - Fiber-optic Cable

Other:

Technology Questions

Methodology for Area Status:

The proposed Middle Mile project includes thirty-seven Middle Mile Service Areas. During the evaluation of these respective service areas, it was determined that none of the three factors that define an underserved area were met. Therefore, all thirty-seven Middle Mile Service Areas are deemed to be "served" with respect to last-mile services. It should be noted that NebraskaLink, LLC has received letters of commitment/support from 23 last-mile service providers throughout their proposed Middle Mile Service Areas. These letters of commitment/support are included in the Government and Key Partnerships attachment associated with this application. The fact NebraskaLink has received 23 letters of commitment/support from last-mile service providers implies although these thirty-seven Middle Mile Service Areas are considered to be "served" from a last-mile perspective, there is insufficient access to Middle Mile services in proposed funded service area.

Description of Network Openness:

In operating the funded network, NebraskaLink, LLC would adhere to the principles contained in the FCC's Broadband policy statement (FCC 05-151 adopted August 5, 2005) as well as any subsequent rulings or statement(s). NebraskaLink will not discriminate against or otherwise favor any lawful Internet applications or content over others.



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The funded network will be available to any and all end-users that subscribe to service(s) provided by NebraskaLink and also to any other interconnected middle mile or last mile service providers. NebraskaLink plans to display its Network Management Policies for the funded network in a prominent location on its website once these policies are finalized. All end-users will have the ability to review these policies at any time by downloading them from the website. In addition, NebraskaLink will provide notification to all of its customers and interconnected service providers of any changes to the Network Management Policies as they apply to the funded network via e-mail, letter, or other means to ensure reasonable notification of such changes.

NebraskaLink plans to utilize generally-accepted technical measures to provide acceptable service levels to all customers, such as caching and application-neutral bandwidth allocation, as well as measures to address and protect against unwanted and/or illegal traffic such as denial of service (DOS) attacks, Email spam, trojans, worms, viruses, illegal content, and any other harmful activities.

The funded network will not be a private network, as it will provide end-users and interconnected providers access to the World Wide Web through at least one interconnection (if not several redundant interconnections) to an Internet point of presence maintained by an upstream service provider.

The funded network also could be used to support managed services for businesses that span multiple locations. For example, community anchor institutions such as hospital systems, libraries, and school systems and multi-location businesses as well could use the network for transport between locations to perform day to day business and support important initiatives such as telemedicine and distance learning.

NebraskaLink plans to offer interconnection with the funded network, where technically feasible, without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated capacity limitations or exposing the network and any other users to security breaches, at reasonable, non-discriminatory rates. The terms and conditions of such interconnection will be negotiated in good faith with the requesting parties. With the negotiated interconnection agreement, NebraskaLink plans to provide the interconnected providers with the ability to connect to the public Internet, as well as provide physical interconnection for the exchange of traffic.

System Design:



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The proposed network for the NebraskaLink, LLC Middle Mile project is a fiber optic cable backbone that contains numerous components. These range from the fiber optic cable to the Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) electronics used to "light" the backbone fiber infrastructure. The system will also include fiber optic cable laterals to directly connect to 101 Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) in 9 cities, customer premises equipment (CPE) at the directly connected CAIs, Internet routers at multiple Points-of-Interconnection (POIs), and network management equipment for the provisioning, monitoring, and maintenance of the proposed network. Each of these items is essential for a carrier-class network that provides state-of-the-art broadband services to the targeted CAIs, businesses, and third party services providers.

This project will utilize newly constructed fiber optic cable funded as part of this project, wavelength leases on existing DWDM routes, and leases for the 1550nm window on existing dark fiber optic cable plant. In total, there will be approximately 452.75 miles of fiber optic cable construction funded as part of this project, 682 miles of wavelengths will be leased, and 844 miles of dark fiber "window" leases. The combination of the proposed fiber construction and existing facilities NebraskaLink will light and/or provision, will provide these locations with add/drop equipment for a fully diverse fiber ring architecture and a highly-reliable, carrier-class system.

The DWDM backbone network proposed for this network includes add/drop capabilities at 43 locations throughout the state. Please note that 6 of the add/drop terminal locations are not included as a Middle Mile Service Area. New equipment is included in the funding request for 23 of the proposed DWDM add/drop locations. The remaining 20 locations are existing, nonfunded sites to which NebraskaLink will gain access via a wavelength lease not included in the funding request.

The initial implementation will include one 10 Gigabit Ethernet (10GbE) wavelength with 10 Gigabit per second (Gbps) capacity and embedded Layer 2 Ethernet switching capabilities. In addition, the DWDM circuit cards provide the 10 GbE wavelength have protection switching capabilities on-board to provide automated rapid restoration of services in the event of a fiber cut or other single link failure. This essentially provides a system with 99.999% availability.

The Layer 2 Ethernet switching functionality allows for NebraskaLink to aggregate multiple Ethernet services in a single DWDM shelf without requiring external Ethernet switching



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hardware, making the network more cost-effective. Each subscriber on the system will be provided their own virtual private network, and their traffic will be logically separated from all other users on the network. In addition, NebraskaLink will have the ability to manage the quality of service on the system to ensure each circuit is receiving the appropriate amount of bandwidth.

The proposed DWDM backbone network has the ability to be upgraded in 10 Gbps increments to a total of 80 Gbps using only 2 fibers per span on the system. These cost-effective upgrades are performed with the addition of circuit cards in the DWDM electronics shelves.

For the 11 sites of Alliance, Angora, Brule, Chappell, Grand Island, Holdrege, Kearney, North Platte, O'Neill, Sidney, and Valentine, the proposed funding request includes deploying prefabricated buildings that will include the requisite DC power equipment and standby generators. These buildings will house DWDM electronics for the backbone network, as well as terminate the fiber optic cable for the backbone network and the fiber laterals to the CAIs (where applicable).

As for the direct laterals to CAIs in 9 communities, the fiber optic cable construction investment to connect to the CAIs is included in the proposed funding request. At these directly connected CAIs, NebraskaLink will also deploy CPE with the ability to interface to the customer on a DS-1 or an Ethernet basis and to connect to the DWDM backbone electronics for that community via an optical 1 GbE connection over dark fibers. Essentially, this allows each CAI to receive services with up to 1 Gbps data rates. The proposed funding request also includes DS-1/Ethernet Aggregation Equipment in each of these 9 offices.

NebraskaLink will interconnect with existing last mile service providers in the remaining 28 service areas and will collocate their backbone electronics in telephone central offices or other POIs in these 28 communities. This provides greater potential capacity to end-users of the incumbent last mile service providers in these communities. These interconnections will be conducted via 10 GbE or 1 GbE interfaces. Moreover, NebraskaLink can cost-effectively add 1 GbE interfaces at the interconnection point to increase the bandwidth being provided to the last mile service provider to greater than 1 Gbps. The proposed funding request also includes DS-1/Ethernet Aggregation Equipment in 26 of the 28 service areas.

At the Arlington and Herman locations, NebraskaLink will interconnect with a 3rd party last mile provider and lease capacity on two separate routes to a carrier hotel in Omaha, NE.



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NebraskaLink is requesting funding to purchase redundant, carrier-class Internet routers that will be collocated in each of the Arlington and Herman locations to interface with the respective last mile providers. The diverse routes that are not part of the funding request will be leased to the carrier hotel in Omaha will provide the primary Internet POIs for NebraskaLink. In addition, it will provide a POI for NebraskaLink to a variety of other carriers including AT&T, Cogent, Cox, Iowa Network Services, Level 3, Missouri Network Alliance, Network Nebraska, Qwest, Pinpoint, Sprint, SDN Communications (Round 1 BTOP awardee), and the State of Nebraska.

Is the applicant seeking a waiver pursuant to section IX.C of the NOFA so as to sell or lease portions of the award-funded broadband facilities during their life?

No

I. Project Budget

Project Budget		
	Federal Grant Request	Match
Last Mile	0	0
Middle Mile	11,547,866	4,949,086
Total	11,547,866	4,949,086

Project Budget Total: \$16,496,952

Match Percent: 30.0%

Projects Outside Recommended Funding Range:

Outside Leverage	Outside Leverage	
Applicant is providing matching funds of at least 20% towards the total eligible project costs?	Yes	
Matching cost detail	Cash \$3,326,041 In-kind \$1,623,045	



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	Total 30.0%
	NebraskaLink, LLC is submitting an application to NTIA under the BTOP program, and is requesting the project be funded with 70.0% BTOP grant funds with the remaining 30.0% being provided by NebraskaLink in a combination of equity and in kind match. The applicant has not sought funding sources outside of the BTOP program and will rely on company equity to maintain a positive cash flow throughout the term of the project. The in kind match of eligible costs has been calculated at the estimated depreciated value and the remainder of the match will come from NebraskaLink equity. The in kind value includes Network and Access Equipment (\$1,306,110), Buildings and Land (\$54,700), and Engineering/Professional Services (\$262,235) for an in kind total of \$1,623,045 or 9.84% of the project budget. The in kind match includes the applicable depreciation based on the timing of the grant funding and are eligible costs as identified by NTIA's in kind definition. The equity cash match of \$3,326,041 equals 20.16% of the project budget and will be applied to eligible
	costs as indicated in the project budget. Provided in the supplemental upload is the Board Resolution for commitment of this funding (Supplemental Board Resolution upload). Also provided is a copy of the template Subscription Agreement which each member company has signed and a letter of commitment from each member. These funds are committed with no risk of loss and will remain for the duration of the period pending any award.
Unjust enrichment	Refer to Historical Financial Statements upload. NebraskaLink, LLC has not applied for, nor is currently receiving, any additional Federal Support for non-recurring costs in the applicant's proposed funded service area.
Disclosure of federal and/or state funding sources	NebraskaLink, LLC has not received, nor requested, any other state or federal funding in relation to the proposed project.
Budget reasonableness	NebraskaLink has performed a thorough analysis of the proposed project to concisely represent the funds required to perform the objectives of this project and it is confident that the costs provided are accurate and reasonable. NebraskaLink provided the project plan to a



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licensed engineering firm for the preparation of fiber backbone and lateral layouts. Analysis was done to identify where existing fiber could be utilized to minimize the costs of the project and areas where new fiber was needed. The fiber was routed and sized to serve the proposed Community Anchor Institutions in the serving area.

Once the number of units was determined through tabbing the completed backbone layout, the engineers utilized recent OSP bids from similar geographic areas and terrain for the unit pricing structure of this application. During the cost estimate preparation process, each serving area and the services proposed for that area were evaluated to determine if it is necessary to add remote pre-fab huts. The cost of the hut includes the cement pad and ground field. Additional costs were included separately for batteries, powerboard, and cable racking.

The transport electronics proposed configuration was based upon the types of proposed services as well as the bandwidth capacity the network requires. Several vendors' typical planning pricing was utilized to calculate the transport electronics budget.

The NOC costs were also derived from current vendor pricing once the required NOC electronics were determined. This information was prepared by the experienced telecommunications professionals from the various companies that have formed NebraskaLink in conjunction with a licensed engineering firm.

It should also be noted that numerous vendors were contacted for their input regarding the project budget and to determine the best network configuration for the proposed system.

The final element required is the professional services to provided the project management, OSP inspection and staking services, and other consulting activities such as environmental report preparation and coordination. The costs for these services were provided by a professional engineering firm.



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NebraskaLink, LLC demonstrates a need for federal grant assistance from analysis of the proforma financial statements and Net Present Value (NPV). NebraskaLink is requesting federal grant assistance of \$11,547,866, which represents 70% of the project total of \$16,496,952. The Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of the project was -43.62% and a NPV calculated at \$(11,270,857), compared to the grant request of \$11,547,866. NebraskaLink will provide \$4,949,086 of its own equity an in kind match toward this project that combined represents its 30% share.

Due to the fact that NebraskaLink is a newly formed LLC, it has never applied for federal or any other type of grant assistance. The lack of existing financial performance makes it extremely difficult to obtain outside funding to complete a project of this scope. The applicant will incur significant start up costs and endure 7 years of net losses. It is projected that Cash flow from operations will not be positive until Year 5 indicating a severe strain on the limited resources of the applicant. Federal funding will allow the applicant to withstand the early losses and financial burden until the project has matured to become profitable. With a negative IRR of -43.62% and projected net losses totaling \$2,632,324 over its first six years the \$11,270,857 level of federal funding will be necessary in order to make this project viable.

This proposed project, if funded, will be very beneficial for the State of Nebraska and will be able to be a viable operation and support itself once the project matures from the early stages. Limitation of outside funding will make it impossible for the operation to reach its full potential. As the pro forma financials demonstrate, the operation is anticipated to get stronger as time moves on and as net income improves over the 8 Year period.

Without funding for NebraskaLink's proposed Middle Mile network, it is unlikely that a network of this size, scale, redundancy, and reliability could be built. Costs are significant when involved in building a fiber ring in rural areas, where facilities must be built and connected over hundreds of miles. If granted, this state-wide network will provide economic growth while stimulating demand for

Demonstration of need



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broadband access. The financial proformas, NPV, and IRR analysis provided in this application (Pro-forma Forecast upload section and
the Supplemental Upload – Depr-NPV-IRR upload) demonstrate the need for the financial assistance, while also illustrating that the project
would be a viable and sustainable project with such federal assistance.

Funds to States/Territories

States	Amount of Federal Grant Request
Nebraska	11,547,866

Funds to States/Territories Total: \$11,547,866

J. Historical Financials

Matching Funds			
	2007	2008	2009
Revenue	0	0	0
Expenditures	0	0	0
Net Assets	0	0	0
Change in Net Assets from Prior Year	0	0	0
Bond Rating (if applicable)			_

K. Project Readiness

BTOP Organizational Readiness

NebraskaLink's members are existing telecommunications carriers with extensive experience building, managing and operating robust and successful broadband networks. Together, these



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providers have been in business for over 642 years, with 64 collective years of experience in providing broadband services.

NebraskaLink was formed in 2010 to interconnect Nebraska communities, anchor institutions, and last-mile service provider networks across Nebraska with one another, communities of shared interest in other states, and the Internet. As a new organization, NebraskaLink has not officially hired anyone yet; however, the organization chart, attached to the application, illustrates several intended key hires and anticipated hire dates. While NebraskaLink ramps up, members of its board of directors and technical and steering committees will direct and manage the company on a day-to-day basis. As described in the 17 resumes attached to the application, these individuals have a collective 460 years (an average of 27 years per person) of telecom and broadband expertise that will be critical to the successful design, build, and operation of a robust, sustainable and scalable Middle Mile network. These individuals will oversee the building and operation of the network and will hire the most qualified employees. Also, to make efficient use of existing and proven resources and expertise, member companies will be retained for billing, provisioning, customer care, network management, IT, human resources and other tasks.

These member companies have always been ahead of the technology and not behind as they are known for several "firsts" in the state of Nebraska. The expertise of the member companies is evident from existing broadband projects. For instance, in 2004, 3 NebraskaLink member companies (Great Plains, Huntel and Northeast Nebraska) (GHN) built a successful and scalable 399 mile fiber optic ring used for Middle Mile transport applications in northeast Nebraska. This network already has been upgraded from SONET technology with Whiterock Network terminal electronics to DWDM technology using Cyan equipment in order to turn up three 10 Gb wavelengths around the ring. GHN capacity is currently expandable to 400 Gbps. The companies use their own technical resources to engineer, design, provision and maintain the network.

As further example, in 1982, Nedelco provisioned the first digital switch in Nebraska and by 1987, it had two fiber rings. Similarly, in 1980, Northeast Nebraska Telephone expanded its service to the first in Nebraska class 5 digital switch with two remotes and also installed fiber cable in the 1980s. Two of the member companies were also owner/members in the Omaha Cellular Limited Partnership which was responsible for the construction of CMRS mobile technology in the Omaha Metro area. The success and expertise of the entire NebraskaLink leadership is illustrated through the uploaded resumes.



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Construction and Vendor Contracts

For the Outside Plant (OSP) portion of the project, NebraskaLink, LLC will rely on a contractor to provide the materials and labor to construct the proposed fiber optic cable facilities. In addition, NebraskaLink will utilize an electronics vendor to deliver and commission the proposed electronics for the Middle Mile project. Finally, NebraskaLink will use internal resources, the equipment manufacturer, or a 3rd party to perform the physical installation of the electronics and miscellaneous materials. The electronics vendor will also be expected to provide training, warranty, technical support, and software upgrades.

NebraskaLink plans to use an expedited RFP process to select the contractors and vendors for the project with competitive proposals while adhering to 15 C.F.R. §§14.40–48. NebraskaLink intends to negotiate the final contract terms with the contractors and vendors. NebraskaLink has already completed the planning portion of the project.

Several OSP contractors and a DWDM electronics vendor have already reviewed the scope of work and have committed to provide the materials and labor necessary for the project to be substantially complete according to the proposed project timeline. NebraskaLink has received letters of support/commitment pertaining to the proposed project from these contractors and vendors. The support/commitment letters are attached in the Government and Key Partners upload.

Customer Base

NebraskaLink, LLC is a newly-formed entity owned by 7 last-mile telecommunications service providers that have been successfully operating for greater than 642 years combined. As a newly formed entity, NebraskaLink does not yet have any subscriber base of its own in the PSFA, however the 7 member companies provide service to approximately 200 of the 528 cities in NE. Of the 37 Middle Mile Service Areas that are identified in the Service Area Details portion of this application, NebraskaLink will construct fiber laterals in 9 communities to directly connect to 101 CAIs for the purpose of providing broadband services to these customers. These 9 communities are Alliance, Chadron, Grand Island, Kearney, McCook, North Platte, O'Neill, Sidney, and Valentine. In the remaining 28 Middle Mile Service Areas, NebraskaLink will interconnect with their members companies, as well as other telecommunications service providers who currently offer last-mile services. These 28 service areas include Arlington, Arnold, Aurora, Blair, Bloomfield, Brady, Broken Bow, Clarks, Clearwater, Crofton, Dalton,



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Gordon, Grant, Hemingford, Herman, Jackson, Merna, Norfolk, Osmond, Paxton, Ponca, Ravenna, Sargent, Snyder, Tekamah, Walthill, Wauneta, and Wausa. Details concerning the quantity of households, businesses, and community anchor institutions in each of these service areas can be found in the Service Area Details section of the application.

Licenses, Regulatory Approvals and Agreements

If the proposed project is awarded, NebraskaLink, LLC will apply for the following Licenses, Regulatory Approvals, and Agreements:

- 1. Section 64.1195 Registration to be filed with FCC (typically filed one week prior to providing service);
- 2. Designation of individual for service of process by the FCC (Section 1.47 and can be combined with FCC filing of FCC Form 499-A);
- 3. Section 255 designation of agent for service of process related to issues associated with American Disabilities Act;
- 4. Submission of applicable sections of FCC Form 499-A noting the beginning of service;
- 5. Compliance with the requirements of the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA) compliance issues once operations begin;
- 6. Registration with Nebraska Public Service Commission (NPSC) pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. sec. 86-125 enacted in 2007;
- 7. NebraskaLink already has in place the necessary fiber lease agreements to form the ring for this project. Specifically, NebraskaLink has a combined lease agreement for the dark fiber window that it will lease and light, as well as the wavelengths on which it will provision add/drop equipment to establish new interconnection points and form the new ring;
- 8. All necessary road and highway permits will be applied for contingent on award

SPIN Number

Not Applicable. NebraskaLink, LLC does not have a FCC Universal Service Fund Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN).

L. Environmental Questionnaire



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Project Description

NebraskaLink, LLC will proceed with the fiber optic cable construction project for several spans in order to create a Middle Mile transport backbone network within the State of Nebraska.

Electronic equipment necessary for this Middle Mile network will be placed in a number of existing telephone central office buildings throughout the state. The addition of this equipment will not require significant modifications to the existing buildings. NebraskaLink will also install equipment in 11 new prefabricated buildings.

NebraskaLink's plan is to install cable and conduit systems in both rural and urban areas using generally accepted construction practices. The construction primarily consists of burying cable in existing public ROW. The cable typically will be placed in parallel and in proximity to existing cables. All construction will be coordinated with the appropriate local, state, and federal government officials. All construction is required to be accomplished using established industry specifications and to conform to the applicable portions of the National Electrical Safety Code. Typical stream crossing will be accomplished the same construction methods as the rest of the project (i.e. direct buried, via plow insertion or directional bore). Utility construction typically falls under the Nation-wide Authorization, 33 CFR, Part 330, Appendix A, B(12). The company understands the conditions of the permit and its construction will meet those requirements.

Property Changes

NebraskaLink, LLC plans to bury approximately 452.75 miles of fiber cable for this proposed project, and the fiber optic cable will be placed in previously disturbed public right-of-way. It is our opinion the proposed construction will result in minimal disturbance of the environment. Future use of the land for agricultural purposes shall not be impaired. All excavated areas are required to be restored as nearly as possible to their original condition using generally accepted construction practices. This project is not located on land owned or managed by the federal government. This project does not require land to be cleared or fenced.

Buildings

This project will include the placement of pre-fabricated buildings at eleven locations including Alliance, Angora, Brule, Chappell, Grand Island, Holdrege, Kearney, North Platte, O'Neill, Sidney, and Valentine. These pre-fabricated buildings will be placed on private land acquired by NebraskaLink. NebraskaLink will obtain all required permits and follow all local ordinances for



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the construction of these buildings. The exact dimensions of the proposed pre-fabricated buildings have not been finalized at this time. It is anticipated the approximate size of the pre-fabricated buildings will be 12 feet by 20 feet.

In addition, electronics will be added to numerous existing buildings. This project will not include any external modifications to these existing buildings.

Wetlands

Wetlands are present in the area of construction. Per the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory website (http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/) these are temporary and seasonal wetlands. NebraskaLink, LLC will work with the US Fish and Wildlife Department to mitigate from any potential problems. Should this project be awarded, all recommendations from the US Fish and Wildlife Department will be followed prior and during construction.

All construction will follow roads and will stay within previously disturbed, existing right-of-way. Because construction will take place in existing road right-of-way, there will be minimal disturbance to the environment.

Critical Habitats

According to the US Fish and Wildlife website (http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/) the following species are living in the project area:

- Arctic Peregrine Falcon Recovery
- Black-Footed Ferret Endangered
- Topeka Shiner Endangered
- Blowout Penstemon Endangered
- Whooping Crane Endangered
- Piping Plover Endangered and Threatened
- Least Tern Endangered
- American Burying Beetle Endangered

Please see additional specie accounts in Environmental Questionnaire – Supplemental – Specie Accounts located in the Supplemental Information upload portion of the application.



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With regards to critical habitats, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service online critical habitat mapping tool was reviewed. It was determined approximately 11 miles of proposed fiber optic cable construction near Kearney, Nebraska, falls within an area designated as a critical habitat. All 11 miles of proposed fiber optic cable construction would involve the placement of cable in previously disturbed existing right-of-way along state highways. Specifically, the proposed route that falls within the area designated as critical habitat is described as follows:

- State Highway 44 in Kearney County from U Road to State Highway 50A
- State Highway 50A in Kearney County from State Highway 44 to State Highway 10
- State Highway 10 in Kearney County and Buffalo County from State Highway 50A to Interstate 80

NebraskaLink, LLC will work with the US Fish and Wildlife Department to ensure the proposed construction will have a minimum impact on the species living in this environment.

Floodplain

This project will include the placement of pre-fabricated buildings at eleven locations including Alliance, Angora, Brule, Chappell, Grand Island, Holdrege, Kearney, North Platte, O'Neill, Sidney, and Valentine. However, none of these new sites are being located within a floodplain.

The existing Central Offices are located in areas that are not listed as having any identified flood hazard areas. If it is determined a site or sites are required within floodplains areas, NebraskaLink, LLC will obtain the proper flood insurance.

Portions of the proposed fiber optic cable construction will be located within areas that are classified as 100-year or 500-year floodplains, as depicted by the dashed lines on the included FEMA FIRMettes. Please reference maps titled Environmental Questionnaire – Supplemental - Floodplain located in the Supplemental Information upload portion of the application.

Protected Land

The State Historical Society of Nebraska was contacted on February 1, 2010, regarding the proposed project. In a letter dated March 19, 2010 (see letter in Environmental Questionnaire – Supplemental – Agency Response Letters located in the Supplemental Information upload



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portion of the application), Jill E. Dolberg, Review and Compliance Coordinator of the State Historic Preservation Office states the following in response:

"We regret to inform you that a file review of this scope is far beyond our staffing capabilities to accommodate. We recommend that you or a group of your colleagues make an appointment to visit our office and review our maps and site files to determine potential effects of the project.

Our staff archeologist was able to put together a very preliminary list of archeological sites along your corridors, which I have included for your information."

NebraskaLink, LLC will continue to work with the NE SHPO office to gather their response and will follow their recommendations on cable placement or routing in order to avoid any potential harm to possible historic sites that are found.

Coastal Area

Coastal Areas: According to the Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management's website

(http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/consistency/welcome.html), the proposed project is not within the boundaries of a Coastal Zone Management Area (CZMA).

Brownfield

Brownfield: According to the Environmental Protection Agency's website (http://iaspub.epa.gov/Cleanups), the following brownfields are located within one mile of the proposed project sites:

Kohl Motors (Brownfields)

308 West First

Ogallala, NE 69153

Ogallala Ground Water Contamination (Superfund)

SW Corner of W 1st & C ST

Ogallala, NE 69153

• McCook Former Railroad Roundhouse (Brownfield)

109 Railroad Service Road

McCook, NE 69001

• Alliance Former Army Air Field (Brownfield)



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5631 Sarpy Road

Alliance, NE 69301

• Alliance Former Power Plant (Brownfield)

321 2ND Street

Alliance, NE 69301

• Eaton Corporation (Brownfield)

4200 Hwy. 30 E.

Kearney, NE 68847



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Uploads

The following pages contain the following uploads provided by the applicant:

Upload Name	File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
Service Offerings and Competitor Data	CCI Service Offerings and Competitor Data Attachment.xls	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Network Diagram	CCI Network Diagram.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/24/2010
Build Out Timeline	CCI Build-Out Timeline Attachment.doc	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
List of Community Anchors and Points of Interest	CCI Anchor Detail and POI Attachment.xls	Warren, Gary	03/25/2010
Management Team Resumes and Organization Chart	CCI Management Team and Organization Chart Attachment.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/25/2010
Government and Key Partnerships	Government and Key Partnerships.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Historical Financial Statements	Historical Financial Statements.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Budget Narrative	CCI Budget Narrative Attachment.docx	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010



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Detailed Budget	CCI Detailed Budget Attachment.xlsx	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Pro-forma Forecast	CCI Pro Forma Financial Projections Attachment.xls	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Subscriber Estimates	CCI Subscriber Estimates Attachment.xls	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Dashboard Metrics	CCI Key Metrics Dashboard Attachment.doc	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Service Area Data	Service Area Data.xls	Warren, Gary	03/22/2010
Network Maps	CCI Network Maps Infrastructure.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/24/2010
BTOP Certifications	CCI BTOP Certification Attachment.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/25/2010
SF-424 C and D	CCI SF 424 C and D Forms.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/25/2010
Supplemental Information	Environmental Questionnaire - Supplemental - Specie Accounts.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/24/2010



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Supplemental Information	Environmental Questionnaire - Supplemental - Maps.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/23/2010
Supplemental Information	Environmental Questionnaire - Supplemental - Floodplain.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/24/2010
Supplemental Information	Environmental Questionnaire - Supplemental - Agency Response Letters.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/24/2010
Supplemental Information	Supplemental-Section 18.3 Build-Out Timeline - Narrative.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/25/2010
Supplemental Information	Supplemental Upload - Depr-NPV-IRR.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Supplemental Information	Supplemental Upload - Board Resolution.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010
Supplemental Information	Supplemental Upload - Surveys.pdf	Warren, Gary	03/26/2010