



ATC Communications Digital Inclusion Plan

July 2024

Goal Statement or Vision Statement

ATC Communications is a rural broadband service provider and understands the uniqueness of rural Nebraska Communities. This unique lifestyle is proliferated with the spirit of neighborhood, community, and trust we are able to give each other. Challenges emerge and among them is access to services members of larger communities may take for granted. As a broadband provider, ATC is singularly capable of closing the gap for rural communities by offering reliable modern high speed internet services, making the services affordable for all members of the community.

Federal and State assistance exists for these cases:

- *USAC (Universal Services Administration Company) offers assistance to qualifying individuals to reduce the monthly service fees for broadband subscription by subsidizing one service per household.*
- *Nebraska's Public Service Commission offers additional support if they qualify for the federal subsidy.*
- *Affordable Connectivity Program provides eligible households with a discount on broadband service and connected devices.*

Discount Program Accessibility:

- *Federal and State subsidy programs may be difficult to find, even with an online search.*
- *Social workers may assist eligible applicants in enrollment.*
- *Service providers may have trained staff who assist customers with assistance programs.*

Most service providers do not offer assistance beyond these programs, however these programs alone may not be enough. Some larger Internet providers do, namely the biggest providers in the country, but these providers have zero investment in rural communities in Nebraska. ATC Communications will echo the initiative of the larger providers with a program to provide a dramatically discounted high-speed Internet service for those who need it most.

Actions, Strategies and Programs

Strategies and Programs that help those who don't have broadband at home

Existing Programs and Resources that ATC offers:

- Universal Services Administration Company – Lifeline Program + Nebraska PSC Contribution
- Affordable Connectivity Program

New Strategies, Actions and Programs to help those who don't have broadband at home

- ATC Communications Direct Discount – ATC will offer a reduced cost service plan.
 - When a potential customer qualifies for USAC Lifeline assistance
 - Supplies enrollment verification for the following programs:
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefits
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
 - Medicaid
 - National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

- Affordable Connectivity Program is offered to all customers requesting service.
 - Requirements
 - Income eligible requirement; or
 - Receiving federal assistance benefits
 - Benefits
 - Monthly credit toward Internet cost
 - Access to education, health, banking, entertainment, etc. information

Summary

ATC Communications will close the digital divide that segregates this rural area its neighbors. All homes and businesses in the rural project area will have access to high-speed broadband services on a network that has the future of broadband access in mind from conception. This proposal seeks to include all residents by offering premium connectivity for each location and low-cost service options for those in need.