

Lodgepole Business Plan

Details of Proposed Project:

DTC is proposing a Broadband Fiber to the Premise build that will provide 201 locations in the Lodgepole area with broadband speed improvements up to **1Gbps symmetrical speeds with the potential to provide multi-gigabit service**. This grant opportunity and investment will allow residents in the project area the ability to upgrade to 1Gbps/1Gbps. The lack of access to reliable and fast internet impedes community members ability to access job opportunities, vital telehealth and healthcare needs, online educational resources, and furthers digital inequity for all affected.

DTC's fiber optic network and Calix XGS-PON platform will provide service to the project's locations with a scalable and upgradeable capacity meeting customers' demands and expectations for the foreseeable future. Through increased broadband speeds, the proposed project will provide access to residential locations allowing them to work from home, allow businesses reliable access to ecommerce opportunities, ensure children have access to online learning for K-12 and the ability to pursue higher education, and lastly, much needed reliable access to Telehealth which is crucial as we continue to face health management challenges due to Covid-19 and how its changed methods of healthcare.

DTC provides robust broadband with speeds up to 1Gbps/1Gbps ensuring customers have access to vital services and every opportunity in today's digital world. DTC is committed to bringing the power of fiber-enabled internet to our community.

Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Grant funding is needed to implement the proposed project because Dalton Telephone Company (DTC) cannot support the cost of the proposed project for the full amount of the capital. The total estimated project cost is \$1,584,126. DTC will contribute \$237,619 in matching funds equal to 15% of the total project cost. As such, DTC is requesting \$1,346,507 in grant funding from the State of Nebraska.

Given DTC's prior experience with broadband infrastructure and fiber deployment, DTC does not anticipate any legal challenges, zoning, right of way or permitting issues. DTC has completed projects previously requiring management in these areas and has not had any issues nor do they anticipate any with this proposed broadband infrastructure build. DTC has been in business since 1898 and will continue to support its customers well into the future. Given our extensive history, DTC has the experience and expertise to support and maintain this fiber to the premise infrastructure build over the long run.

Community Engagement:

DTC has multiple levels of marketing and outreach to the community of Dix. DTC's staff is involved throughout the community to gather support for this project and participate in community events. DTC's staff is in contact with community leaders and community support letters are being sent to psc.broadband@nebraska.gov.

Marketing efforts prior to construction consist of letters sent to households to inform them of the construction in their community and to “pardon the dust” while we complete the project.

Marketing efforts near completion/post completion consist of yard signs with DTC dba Highline contact information and internet advertising. DTC’s staff visit each home and place a door hanger with information about internet offerings and ways to sign up. DTC begins a direct mailing campaign with individual postcards sent to each home with information about internet offerings and ways to sign up.