



September 21, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission
ATTN: 1200 N St # 300
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Grant Application

NBBP Selection Committee:

On behalf of Gage Area Growth Enterprise (NGage), I write in support of Diller Telephone Company's application to the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program (NBBP). NGage has a unique perspective on Gage County as we work to improve the local and regional economic climate. While we have enjoyed significant public and private investment in our area, there remains a significant disparity in access to affordable high-speed internet in much of our region, particularly in western rural Gage County. Diller Telephone's planned investment leveraged with NBBP will help to close this gap.

Throughout the pandemic, we have seen location decisions for both businesses and individuals overlap more than ever, with companies following the workforce and the workforce following a quality of life that can be found in rural areas. With this trend comes a great deal of momentum in Gage County and the surrounding area. New businesses have opened, and long-established businesses have been shored up by a new generation of ownership. Our rural communities have enjoyed an influx of residents seeking the quality of life quintessential to rural Nebraska. If we wish to continue this trend and realize the potential for future growth and prosperity in our rural areas, we must continue investing in our people and our places.

Through NBBP, our partners will construct a fiber optic broadband project that will bring world-class internet to an additional 50 homes in western rural Gage County. This public private investment in our area will be critical if we wish to retain and recruit the talent that our primary employers so desperately need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Trevor Lee'.

Trevor Lee
Executive Director, NGage
trevorl@ngagegroup.org

