

**BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Nebraska Public )  
Service Commission, on its Own Motion )  
to Administer the Nebraska Universal )  
Service Fund Broadband Program: )  
Application to the Nebraska Broadband )  
Program Received from United States )  
Cellular Corporation. )

Application No. NUSF-92. 55

**RECEIVED**

JAN 17 2020

Nebraska  
Public Service Commission

**PETITION OF UNITED STATES CELLULAR CORPORATION REQUESTING  
SUPPORT FROM THE NEBRASKA UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND  
BROADBAND PROGRAM**

United States Cellular Corporation (hereinafter referred to as “USCC or U.S. Cellular”) by and through its counsel hereby submits this Petition to the Nebraska Public Service Commission (“Commission”) to receive support from the Nebraska Broadband Program (“NEBP”). This Petition is being submitted pursuant to the Orders entered in NUSF-92, Progression Order No. 9 on November 5 and 21, 2019.

USCC respectfully files this Petition requesting support to construct eleven (11) new towers that will bring wireless broadband to areas in rural Nebraska that are presently unserved or underserved. The locations are identified on the map attached hereto as *Exhibit 1* and would improve service near the towns of **Davenport, Deshler, Guide Rock, Hordville, Nemaha, Rulo, Seneca, Stockville, Stratton, Taylor and Wolbach**. The approximate longitude and latitude coordinates are confidential and are included in *Confidential Exhibit 2*. Collocation opportunities are a priority and will be investigated at every site before a new tower is constructed.

In support of its Petition, USCC submits the following:

## **1. APPLICANT**

The companies associated with this Petition are United States Cellular Corporation, d/b/a U.S. Cellular and its FCC licensed operation entities USCOC Nebraska/Kansas LLC and USCOC of Greater Iowa Inc. which will provide the broadband service to consumers proposed by this Petition. U.S. Cellular operates in predominantly rural states, including Nebraska. Its federal license does not include the panhandle of western Nebraska, but encompasses the remainder of the state. U.S. Cellular has been certified as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) annually by the Commission since 2007. The point of contact for this Petition is:

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United States Cellular Corporation  
8410 W. Bryn Mawr  
Chicago, IL 60631-3486  
(773)399-7940  
[stephanie.cassioppi@USCellular.com](mailto:stephanie.cassioppi@USCellular.com)

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS**

USCC’s Petition consists of bringing improved wireless broadband service via eleven (11) new towers distributed across the U.S. Cellular service area in the state, as shown in *Exhibit 1*. Each project is separate and can be funded at the Commission’s discretion. U.S. Cellular commits to meeting or exceeding broadband speeds required by the program at each location. A new tower is proposed at each site; however, as was indicated above, collocation opportunities will be explored at every location before a new tower is built. The locations identified in this application are not in U.S. Cellular’s current build plan. These locations need improved broadband service, but absent NEBP support, will not be prioritized for building. Since these sites are not in the company’s

build plan, the time and expense of required field work to identify potential collocation opportunities, and the finalization of collocation agreements has not been done. Finding technically acceptable collocation sites and negotiating collocation agreements takes time and were not able to be completed within the application window. U.S. Cellular prioritizes collocation opportunities as sensible and cost-effective business practices, and it commits to explore collocation opportunities for every site in this application if funding is granted.

### **3. “UNSERVED” AND “UNDERSERVED” ANALYSIS**

U.S. Cellular identified “served” areas by researching publicly available network coverage maps. As a result of its review, USCC believes all the projects herein are located in underserved and/or unserved areas.

### **4. POLYGON SHAPE FILES**

*Confidential Exhibit 3* provides the polygon shape files showing households where broadband coverage will be delivered via the above-named towers. This exhibit is confidential and is being submitted electronically.

### **5. HOUSEHOLD AND TRAFFIC COUNT DATA**

*Confidential Exhibit 2* contains information on traffic count data and household density. In addition, *Confidential Exhibit 4* provides census blocks and household coverage information for each site.

### **6. DEPLOYMENT TIMELINE**

U.S. Cellular commits to completing construction within 24 months from the date of Commission approval. Should any unforeseen consequences occur, such as delays

experienced due to weather, flooding, zoning or site acquisition, U.S. Cellular commits to keeping the Commission informed and to seek approval for extensions that exceed the 24-month timeline.

## **7. BUDGET**

The proposed budget is included as a part of the aforementioned *Confidential Exhibit 2*. The budget includes estimated costs for construction of new towers, as the sites are located in rural areas where U.S. Cellular has no current deployment plans. U.S. Cellular commits, as it has done in previous years, to fully investigate and take advantage of collocation opportunities at all of the proposed locations which would result in a decrease of the proposed expenditures.

## **8. LIST OF EQUIPMENT**

The list of equipment to be purchased and used in the construction and deployment of any sites awarded funding is contained in *Confidential Exhibit 2*. U.S. Cellular has never used Chinese equipment in its network and will not do so going forward.

## **9. RETAIL PRICING AND RATES**

Up-to-date retail pricing for U.S. Cellular can be found on U.S. Cellular's website at <http://www.uscellular.com>. Customers have the option to purchase a wireless modem for use on laptops, but a modem is not required to receive broadband service on wireless phones or tablets. USCC does not charge a subscriber line charge.

## **10. SERVICE COMMITMENT**

USCC commits to offering broadband service to all households within the coverage area for at least five (5) years.

## **11. FINANCIAL, TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE**

Originally formed as TDS Cellular Communications Company in 1983, the company changed its name to United States Cellular Corporation on January 26, 1984. The company is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. USCC's is led by an experienced leadership team consisting of the following:

- Kenneth R. Meyers, President and Chief Executive Officer
- Douglas W. Chambers, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
- Jay Ellison, Chief Operating Officer
- Michael S. Irizarry, Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer
- John C. Gockley, Senior Vice President, Legal and Regulatory Affairs

U.S. Cellular uses a state-of-the art mobile switching center in Omaha which has a full power back-up system for redundancy. Field teams are based in Nebraska enabling quick dispatch of personnel if on-site repair is required.

U.S. Cellular's financial qualifications, including its audited financial statements can be accessed at <http://www.investors.uscellular.com>.

## **12. FINANCIAL MATCH**

U.S. Cellular is pleased the Commission decided in its NUSF-92, P.O. 9 Order to maintain the voluntariness of the matching requirement, and also to increase the household density level of the program. The flexibility of the match is necessary as many of the towers in this application are not economically feasible to build without full NEBP funding. And as a result, a mandatory matching requirement would have precluded most of these towers from this application and would have left some of Nebraska's most rural areas unserved. While the match is voluntary, U.S. Cellular has nonetheless strived to include projects where a match could be offered so as to maximize NUSF support enabling more households to be served through the program. As a result, U.S. Cellular

will provide a twenty-five percent (25%) match to lower the costs of tower construction at Rulo and Nemaha. Full funding is being requested at the remaining sites.

### **13. TRUTH AND ACCURACY AFFIDAVIT**

An Affidavit attesting to the accuracy of the information herein is attached as *Exhibit 5*.

### **14. FURTHER SATISFACTION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In further support of its Petition U.S. Cellular states:

- a. USCC offers a voice grade service to customers and commits to continue to do so;
- b. USCC offers access to emergency services throughout its service area and commits to continue to do so;
- c. USCC commits to offering broadband service to all households within the coverage area for at least five (5) years;
- d. USCCSC commits to offer its services at reasonably comparable rates for comparable services in urban areas;
- e. USCC commits to provide broadband mapping data to the Commission and its vendors as requested;
- f. USCC commits to use support from the NEBP only for the purposes intended and which have been approved by the Commission;
- g. USCC commits to fulfill all reporting and audit requirements by the Commission related to the NEBP program; and
- h. USCC commits to abide by all applicable Commission Rules, Regulations and Orders, including requirements established in NUSF-92, as well as in in prior Dedicated Wireless Fund Orders pertaining to infrastructure sharing, roaming, Phase II 911 capability and reporting requirements

### **Conclusion**

Constructing towers at the proposed locations will improve public safety and economic viability in rural areas where broadband wireless service is presently inadequate.

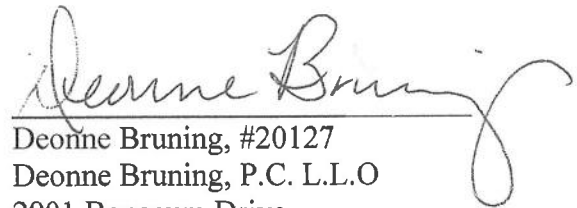
USCC's Petition meets the criteria and objectives of the NEBP and furthers the goal of

making broadband service available statewide as set forth in the Nebraska Telecommunications Universal Service Fund Act. USCC respectfully requests the Commission enter an Order approving it to receive support for the projects described in this Petition.

Respectfully submitted this 17th day of January, 2020.

United States Cellular Corporation

By:



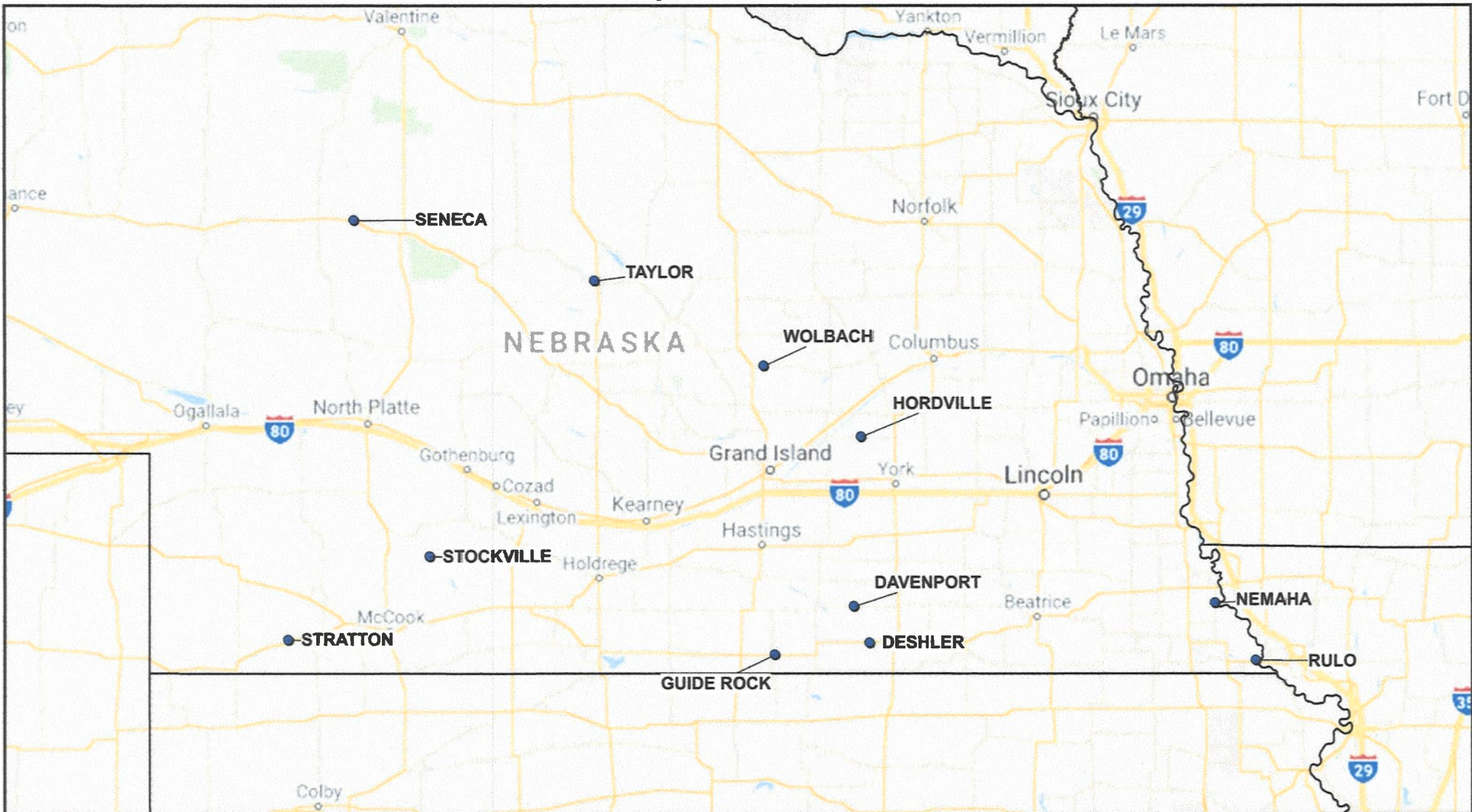
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# EXHIBIT 1

## MAP



# Proposed Sites



### LEGEND

● Proposed sites

Notes:



**GIS Services**  
Data Analytics Mapping

File: ...

# CONFIDENTIAL EXHIBIT 2

BUDGET / EQUIPMENT,  
TRAFFIC COUNTS,  
LONG/LAT COORDINATES  
(SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY)

# CONFIDENTIAL EXHIBIT 3

## SHAPE FILES (SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY)

# CONFIDENTIAL EXHIBIT 4

CENSUS BLOCKS  
(SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY)

**EXHIBIT 5**

**AFFIDAVIT**

**AFFIDAVIT OF UNITED STATES CELLULAR CORPORATION**

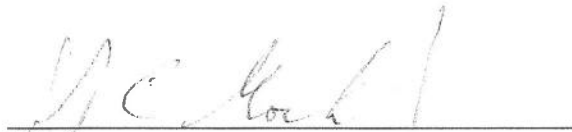
**Nebraska Broadband Program**

**NUSF-92**

STATE OF ILLINOIS    )  
                                  )    ss.  
COUNTY OF COOK    )

I, the undersigned, being duly sworn, state as follows:

1. I am the Senior Vice President, Legal and Regulatory Affairs, of United States Cellular Corporation, FCC service area number 379019.
2. I have read the foregoing Application seeking funding from the Nebraska Universal Service Fund Broadband Program and state the information provided herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John C. Gockley

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 13 day of January, 2020.

Karen F Wierer, Notary Public  
Cook County, Illinois

My Commission Expires 01/04/21

