

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska Public)	Application No. NUSF-92. _____
Service Commission, on its Own Motion)	
to Administer the Nebraska Universal)	
Service Fund Broadband Program:)	
Application from United States Cellular)	
Corporation.)	

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

United States Cellular Corporation (hereinafter referred to as “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 Commission Order entered in NUSF-92, Progression Order 14 on April 19, 2023.

U.S. Cellular respectfully files this Petition requesting NEBP support to bring improved wireless service to 10 rural areas in Nebraska that are presently unserved or underserved. The locations are identified on the map attached hereto as *Exhibit 1a* and would improve wireless voice and broadband service near the rural towns of **ALDA, BEAVER CROSSING, BEEMER, FIRTH, MEAD, MEMPHIS, MONROE, NAPONEE, NEHAWKA** and **RIVERDALE**. The approximate longitude and latitude coordinates of the sites are confidential and are included in *Confidential Exhibit 2*. In support of its Petition, U.S. Cellular 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. U.S. Cellular has been certified as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) annually by the Commission since 2007. The point of contact is:

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(773)399-7940
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2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS

U.S. Cellular’s Petition consists of bringing improved wireless voice and broadband service via 10 new towers distributed across U.S. Cellular’s service area in the state, as shown, and described, in *Exhibit 1a*. 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. All of these locations need improved wireless service, but absent NEBP support will not be prioritized for construction. *Exhibit 1b* is attached to illustrate the benefits that U.S. Cellular would provide to Nebraskans in the 10 project areas.

3. “UNSERVED” AND “UNDERSERVED” ANALYSIS

U.S. Cellular identified “served” areas by researching publicly available network coverage maps and historical NEBP awards. Further analysis included household density and identification of “unserved” candidate areas eligible for NEBP support under NEBP requirements. As a result of its review, U.S. Cellular believes all the projects are in underserved and/or unserved areas.

4. POLYGON SHAPE FILES

Confidential Exhibits 3a-3e provide the polygon shape files showing households where coverage will be delivered via the above-named towers. These exhibits are confidential and are being submitted electronically.

5. HOUSEHOLD AND TRAFFIC COUNT DATA

Confidential Exhibit 2 contains information on traffic count data. In addition, *Confidential Exhibit 4* provides census blocks and household coverage information for each site. These exhibits are confidential and are being submitted electronically.

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. U.S. Cellular has demonstrated a history of completing construction ahead of schedule; the five sites awarded in December 2021 are all on-track to be deployed this fall.

7. BUDGET

The proposed budget is included as a part of *Confidential Exhibit 2*. The budget includes estimated costs for construction of new towers.

8. LIST OF EQUIPMENT & USE OF PROHIBITED 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-manufactured network equipment, such as Huawei products 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 router or hotspot for use with laptops or other WiFi-connected devices; cellular-connected devices including smartphones and tablets do not require a router or hotspot. U.S. Cellular does not charge a subscriber line charge. U.S. Cellular is a Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Program ("ACP") provider in Nebraska.

10. SERVICE COMMITMENT

U.S. Cellular commits to ensuring that NUSF broadband service is offered 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 and is led by an experienced leadership team consisting of the following:

- Laurent Therivel, President and Chief Executive Officer
- Douglas W. Chambers, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
- Michael S. Irizarry, Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer
- Adriana Rios Welton, Head of Legal and Government 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>. Please see *Exhibit 5* for additional information on

U.S. Cellular's operations and investments in Nebraska.

12. TRUTH AND ACCURACY AFFIDAVIT

An Affidavit attesting to the accuracy of the information herein is attached as *Exhibit 6*.

13. FURTHER SATISFACTION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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

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

Conclusion

Constructing towers at the proposed locations will improve public safety and economic viability in rural areas where wireless service is presently inadequate. U.S. Cellular's

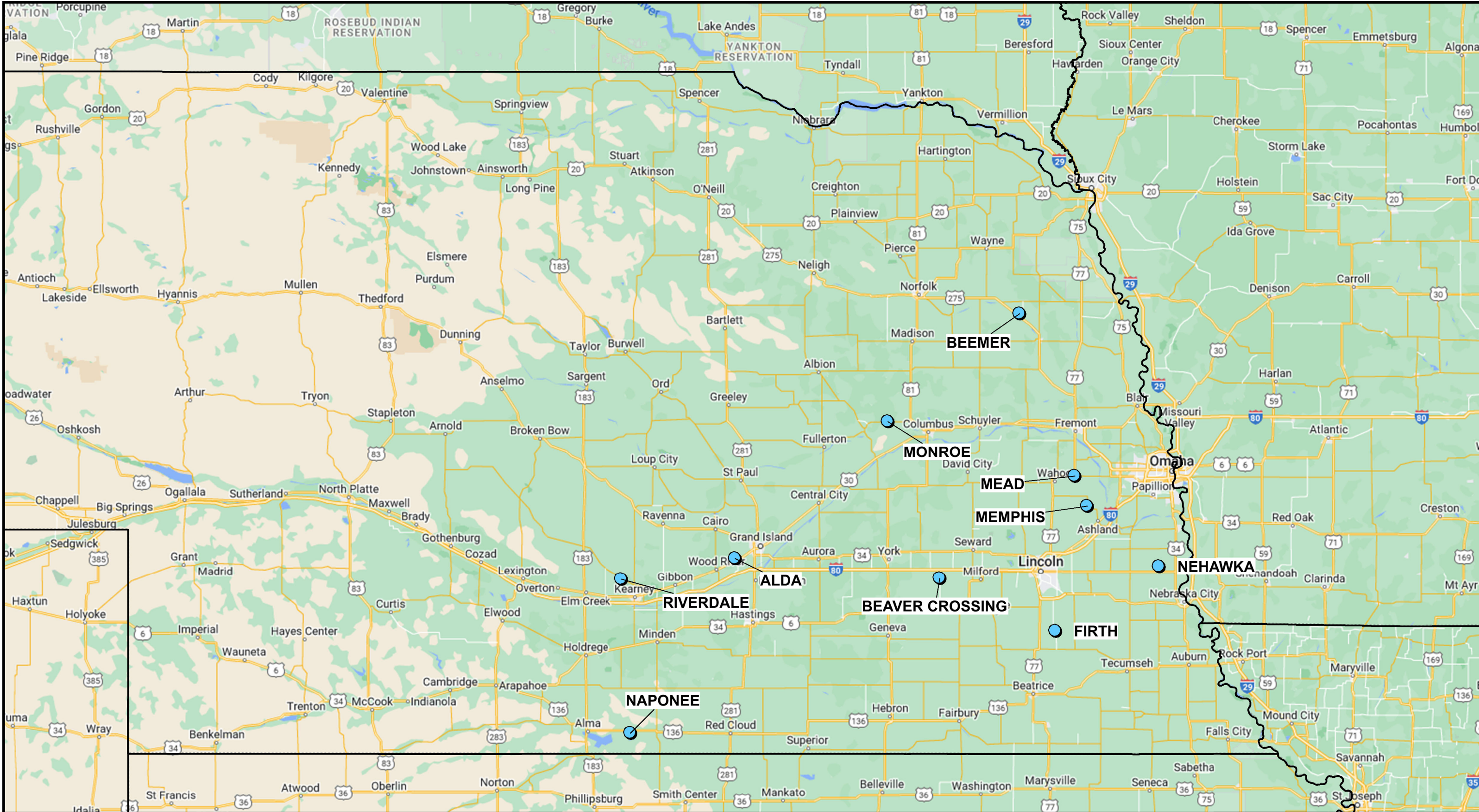
Petition meets all criteria and objectives and furthers the Commission's goal of making wireless voice and broadband service available statewide. U.S. Cellular respectfully requests the Commission enter an Order approving support for the projects described herein.

Respectfully submitted this 14th day of June, 2023.

United States Cellular Corporation

By: 
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Proposed Sites



LEGEND

● Proposed Sites

Notes:



File: ...



GIS Services
Data · Analytics · Mapping

EXHIBIT 1b: NUSF-92

The Need. Based on UScellular’s analysis, many citizens of rural Nebraska lack affordable access to wireless voice and data service. UScellular’s application proposes rural wireless deployment in the towns depicted in the attached map. These are some of the most rural areas of the state, lacking adequate wireless service. With help from the NUSF-92 program, these towns and the surrounding areas will greatly benefit from added connectivity, including both voice mobility and broadband.

The current lack of wireless service in these areas restricts economic and business development essential to population and community growth. It also hinders public safety, remote education opportunities, and emerging essentials such as telehealth.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for investment, creating urgency for innovative, fiscally responsible, and quick to deploy wireless improvement plans.

A Reliable Solution. At UScellular, our mission is based on connectivity. We have always focused on the needs of underserved and unserved areas in rural America. We provide 4G/LTE wireless technology and are nearing completion of a multi-year program to enable 5G wireless technology across Nebraska where it's economically feasible to do so. Through the NUSF-92 program, we will be able to provide the latest innovations in 5G including higher spectral efficiency, wider coverage, and voice service over 5G called “VoNR” in rural Nebraska. The towers proposed in this petition would have 5G Standalone and VoNR enabled.

Connectivity For All. Our technology, coupled with grant programs like NUSF-92 and in the future, BEAD, enables us to close the digital divide regardless of how geographically dispersed the population might be. Our solution begins with cell towers and then takes advantage of the benefits of wireless technology, including voice, fixed wireless service (internet in-the-home) and mobile broadband (internet outside-the-home and on-the-go).

KEY BENEFITS:

- Broadband & Mobility
- Fast to Deploy
- Improved Connectivity

The Benefits. By making this investment, the citizens of Nebraska will receive the dual benefit of both improved connectivity in-the-home and on-the-go. The combination of in-home connectivity and better cell coverage on-the-go will produce numerous lifestyle, public safety and economic development benefits for Nebraska.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UScellular Invested \$47.8 Million in its Nebraska Network in 2022

Omaha, Neb. (Feb. 8, 2023) – UScellular announced today that it made a \$47.8 million investment in its Nebraska network in 2022. This includes \$23.2 million in network upgrades and 5G modernizations that enhanced connectivity across the state and \$24.6 million in 5G spectrum that will bring additional customer benefits in future years and advances the company's multi-year 5G network strategy.

UScellular also provided \$32,600 in funding to non-profits and youth organizations across Nebraska, including \$30,000 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands, \$500 each to the Parent Child Center in Lexington and Prairie STEM in Gretna, \$9,800 in supplies to food-focused organizations and \$1,600 through its Community Connections program. Two Nebraska non-profits also received a combined \$1 million worth of hot spots and service to help youth connect to the Internet as part of the company's [After School Access Project](#).

"Whether we are building a new cell tower or donating a hot spot to help a student do their homework, we are investing in the future of Nebraska," said Brandi McCune, director of sales for UScellular in Nebraska. "We are committed to being a part of the communities we serve and ensuring our customers can connect to what matters most."

Additionally, to elevate the in-store shopping experience, UScellular invested \$606,000 in its Nebraska retail environments in 2022. This includes six new or upgraded stores that make shopping easy and fun. For more news and information about UScellular, please go to newsroom.uscellular.com.

About UScellular

UScellular is the fourth-largest full-service wireless carrier in the United States, providing national network coverage and industry-leading innovations designed to help customers stay connected to the things that matter most. The Chicago-based carrier provides a strong, reliable network supported by the latest technology and offers a wide range of communication services that enhance consumers' lives, increase the competitiveness of local businesses and improve the efficiency of government operations. Through its [After School Access Project](#), the company has pledged to provide hotspots and service to help up to 50,000 youth connect to reliable internet. Additionally, UScellular has price protected all of its plans, promising not to increase prices through at least the end of 2024. To learn more about UScellular, visit one of its retail stores or www.uscellular.com. To get the latest news, visit newsroom.uscellular.com.

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For more information, contact:
uscdlmediarelations@uscellular.com

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:

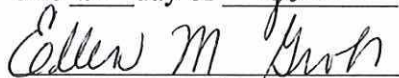
1. I am the Chief of Strategy, Partnerships and Towers, of United States Cellular Corporation, FCC service area number 379019.
2. I have read the foregoing Application seeking funding from the Nebraska Universal Service Fund Broadband Program and state the information provided herein is true and correct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



Michael A. Summerford

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 12th day of June, 2023.


_____, Notary Public
Cook County, Illinois



My Commission Expires 1/22/2025