

## **DIGITAL INCLUSION PLAN**

Accessibility, affordability, and literacy: three words that will guide rural Nebraska through the bridging of the digital divide. Nebraskans have long been promised broadband expansion and have seen some of this expansion. However, the reporting guidelines that have been historically established, tend to lead to inaccurate data regarding service and speed. Pinpoint aims to fix this through a robust product offering that will exceed the minimal requirements, and reach even the farthest outlying customer premise.

Additionally, Pinpoint will work to connect local organizations who serve our underserved populations, by establishing literacy programming that will be directed at senior citizens, low-income individuals and families, businesses, and our youth. These programs will teach customers about financial security, privacy concerns, social media platforms, as well as online business practices. Our goal is to teach each of these customer groups with specifically tailored messaging to effectively communicate the content and give actionable tools and guidance for them to better utilize the internet.

Being inclusive is paramount because the opportunities that this affords our residents are not only well needed, but transformational for our collective futures. Senior citizens will be better protected from scams, can become educated about how to utilize telehealth visits, and can also learn more about how to stay connected with family. Students will be shown the possibilities of the internet in rural areas, while learning to be smart and safe online. Businesses will be able to leverage their online presence towards new business ideas and growth, in conjunction with creating more opportunities for remote work.

To do this, we are already working with organizations in the area to establish meaningful relationships, set goals, and get to work on connecting rural Nebraska to help provide inclusive services which address our health, well-being, and economic vitality. Additionally, we will help those who are quarantined stay connected, help students who are out of school due to illness or lock down have devices so they can stay caught up, and teach businesses how to move sales online to limit further impact of COVID-19. Furthermore, we continue to help any low-income populations leverage available resources such as the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program and the Lifeline Program in order to better serve their needs.

Unlike previous efforts, our work will be grounded in a true desire to not only connect our unserved and underserved populations, but to also help these populations understand how to utilize broadband and augment it within their lives. Broadband can be transformational for our area, much like the railroad transforming rural communities more than a century ago. As we talk with our residents, there is a great excitement with the coming possibilities and increases to quality-of-life. The high speed, fiber based, broadband services that Pinpoint delivers has the capability to attract new families and businesses to our region, and will only serve as another valuable asset to the area, and will assist in further growth and development opportunities.