**Applicant: NE Colorado Cellular, Inc., d/b/a Viaero Wireless**

**Project: Franklin to Red Cloud**

**Attachment J: Digital Inclusion Plan**

Viaero Wireless provides Eastern Colorado, Nebraska, Western Kansas, and portions of Southeastern Wyoming with unparalleled wireless cellular coverage and broadband service to these rural states with 41 corporate locations, one online store and 16 authorized dealers. Viaero has grown organically from its inception to a present network that includes approximately 1000 towers and a growing number of wireless and broadband subscribers. In addition, Viaero has been constructing, deploying, and implementing fiber solutions across its network for the past 10 years, which is owned, operated, and managed internally through affiliates, giving Viaero an edge in the market.

When it comes to employment, education, health and entertainment, Viaero Wireless understands the necessity of providing high speed internet connections to its customers and the communities it serves. As larger carriers tend to focus their efforts on more urban areas, Viaero believes that the digital divide propagates social and economic inequality, and we want to ensure that everyone has access to quality coverage at a reasonable price. Accordingly, Viaero’s goal and mission is to serve the rural areas within its coverage area, and to provide these essential services to those residents that rely on connectivity for everyday functions.

**E-Rate & Emergency Connectivity Fund Service Provider**

Viaero serves as a Service Provider under the E-rate program and the Emergency Connectivity Fund, and provides telecommunications, internet access, and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries. Viaero recognizes the importance of the increasing demand for bandwidth in schools and libraries, allowing students and teachers the ability to access information, and aid in the development of life-long learning.

2020 posed new challenges to school districts, school staff, and students, in rural communities who lacked adequate internet access and the proper tools to continue to teach children remotely. With $7.17 billion available in funding through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) via the Emergency Connectivity Fund, Viaero was able to help schools and libraries dimmish the “Homework Gap” by providing Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers, and smart phones to school districts and students at a significantly reduced cost.

**Lifeline & Emergency Broadband Benefit**

Viaero Wireless is a participant in the Lifeline Program, which is a federal government program that assists qualifying eligible-income families with a discount on internet and telephone service, ensuring that consumers have adequate access to internet and telephone services. In addition, Viaero has also been active in the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program allowing eligible households to continue to utilize internet/broadband services at an affordable rate. This has been a significant benefit to residents of rural communities who would have otherwise lacked the ability to work remotely, receive critical health care services, attend classrooms virtually, and obtain other essential resources.

**Rural Access**

Viaero Wireless has one of the newest networks to be deployed in the Mid-Western United States. Our recently upgraded network spans Eastern Colorado, most of Nebraska, Northwest Kansas, and Southeast Wyoming, providing essential wireless and broadband services to the rural residents of these states.

Equipped with the most technologically advanced diverse networks ever deployed in rural America, Viaero’s technology consists of 4G/LTE HSPA+ Dual Carrier sites that can supply phones and tablets with the best internet speeds in the industry. At Viaero, we understand the importance of keeping up with technology, which is why we will be upgrading our equipment to ensure we are ready for the 5G deployment to these rural areas. Nearly the entire Viaero network consists of diverse paths to carry the traffic to the end user. This means fewer outages and shorter interruptions in service for our users.