

FMTC-I35, Inc. dba OmniTel Communications

FMTC-I35, Inc. FTTH Rural Broadband Expansion Project

Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Application

Supporting Letters and Documentation

September 13, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone : (515) 281-5503

Dear Chief Information Officer Annette Dunn,

I am writing in support of the Empower Rural Iowa - Broadband Grants Program Application for FMTC – I35, dba OmniTel Communications (OmniTel) to provide improved broadband services by means of a fiber infrastructure to areas in rural Iowa which includes portions of Madison and Warren Counties.

OmniTel is a well-established communications service provider within the State of Iowa and is known for its commitment to bringing advanced services to its customers. I am confident in OmniTel's capabilities of providing and enhancing broadband service for the unserved areas included in its application. With the financial assistance of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program, OmniTel will be able to provide high speed broadband service to the constituents residing in these areas. A fiber broadband network will provide local businesses and residents with opportunities for distance learning, working from home, improved e-commerce, tele-health services, and reliable connectivity to ever growing services. All of these applications, as well as future applications demand better, faster and more reliable broadband. The implementation of these network buildouts and improvements will allow for economic growth far into the future.

OmniTel is dedicated to ensuring those residing in their existing service territories have quality access to advanced broadband and communication services. I am confident they will bring the same level of service to the City of Oakland as well as rural Oakland and other unserved locations within Mills and Montgomery Counties.

I urge the Office of CIO to strongly consider OmniTel's application to assist with the improvement of broadband services to these areas.

Sincerely



Rep. Todd Prichard,
Iowa House District 52

September 13, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone: (515) 281-5503

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I urge the Office of CIO to strongly consider OmniTel's application to assist with the improvement of broadband services to these areas.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharon Steckman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sharon" being more prominent and the last name "Steckman" following in a similar style.

Sharon Steckman

Iowa Representative, House District 53

AMANDA RAGAN

STATE SENATOR

Twenty-seventh District

Butler, Cerro Gordo and

Franklin Counties

Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

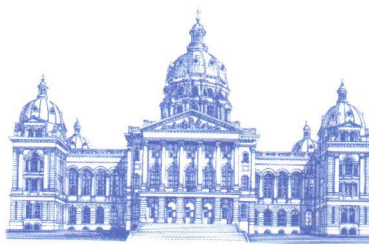
amanda.ragan@legis.iowa.gov

HOME ADDRESS

361 S. Pennsylvania Ave. 1-D

Mason City, IA 50401

H: (641) 424-0874

**The Senate**

State of Iowa

Eighty-eighth General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, IA 50319

MINORITY WHIP**COMMITTEES**

Agriculture
Appropriations
Human Resources
Rules and Administration
Veterans Affairs

Health and Human Services Appropriations
Subcommittee, *Ranking Member*

October 1, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa

Hoover State Office Building, Level B

1305 E. Walnut Street

Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 281-5503

Dear Chief Information Officer Annette Dunn,

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OmniTel is dedicated to ensuring those residing in their existing service territories have quality access to advanced broadband and communication services. I am confident they will bring the same level of service to the new opportunities.

I strongly urge the Office of CIO to approve OmniTel's application to assist with the improvement of broadband services to these areas.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amanda Ragan".

Senator Amanda Ragan

October 3, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa – Broadband Grant Program

Dear Chief Information Officer Annette Dunn and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of FMTC – I35, dba OmniTel Communications (OmniTel). As a resident of New Virginia, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application for OmniTel. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. OmniTel has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in OmniTel's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in rural New Virginia.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, OmniTel will be able to enhance our broadband connectivity with a fiber network design. This fiber build will enable us to overcome some geographical distances, empower us through information, and bring the world to us through a few simple strokes of a keyboard. As an unserved rural area with limited access to Internet services, we face many challenges including limited medical resources and distance between patients, physicians, specialists and facilities. Because of the rural nature of our area, our students do not receive equitable broadband resources as other students in more urban learning centers. We lack to ability to engage in distance learning, video and other tools that advanced broadband can bring to our students. Therefore, it is extremely important that broadband grant funding be obtained to provision for much needed broadband service to our area.

We strongly urge the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa fund this Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in OmniTel's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,



Teddy Rogers
19139 50th Ave.
New Virginia, IA 50210

October 3, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone: (515) 281-5503

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Sincerely,



Clair Thompson
19458 R45 Hwy
New Virginia, IA 50210

October 3, 2019

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1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
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Sincerely,



Mischelle Thompson
19458 R45 Hwy
New Virginia, IA 50210

October 3, 2019

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Sincerely,



Heather

Heather Vitzthum

3747 Roosevelt St

New Virginia, IA 50210

October 3, 2019

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Sincerely,



Brenda Freeman
3957 Roosevelt St.
New Virginia, IA 50210

October 3, 2019

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Sincerely,



Roger Strain
4658 Quebec St
New Virginia, IA 50210

March 07, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

In support of OmniTele Communications (previously Interstate 35 Communications), we are writing as a 45+ year customer – from both the residential and commercial sides. We feel fortunate to do so without any hesitation.

Some of those years encompassed that timeframe when we all were moving with incredible speed from a single household telephone and television set, to handheld global communication devices. We also feel fortunate to have made those technological changes under the wings of our local user-friendly “telephone office” down the street. It is a small office in south central rural Iowa, but one with big vision. Seemingly, it could have been relatively easy for us customers to feel lost or as if we were always running to catch-up within that wide world of communications “out there.” On the flip side, however, we have always considered it such a progressive company; one often leading the way, seamlessly ushering in big beneficial change.

Due to this company’s vision our community has had fiber optic in place for several years now, long before it became available even in many neighboring metro areas. We know firsthand of more than one party’s move from this community to much larger ones where the wait for slow internet was surprisingly long and frustrating.

Education here has been front and center. The company helps keep us current and abreast of change with its long-standing monthly newsletter. Additionally, back when many of us were wondering “What? How? But what if?” the local office held monthly classes to help customers learn, understand, apply and embrace new technology.

This office doesn’t operate on recorded messages or lengthy hold times. It has always been staffed with courteous, helpful, professional personnel. Regardless of question or complaint, customer service response is patient, TIMELY, informative and solution-based. This is true whether you’re dealing with its office personnel or one of its technicians working on-site at your residence or place of business.

We consider it our good fortune to have lived and worked for so long in a community where our technological advances have been in the hands of a small, independent, and extremely capable communications company that can handle it all.

Sincerely,



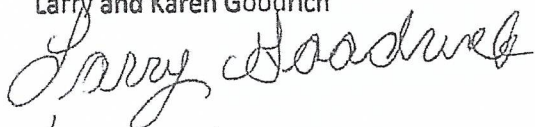
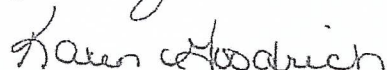
Carla and Dick Burhans

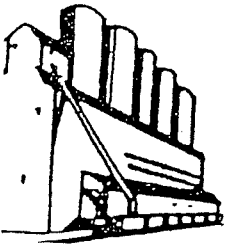
To whom it may concern,

We have been OmniTel Communications (formerly known as Interstate 35 Telephone Company) customers since 1978. We have only had positive experiences with our services, the office staff and the service technicians. If an issue did arise, it was resolved that day or the next day at the latest. OmniTel has always been very professional and treats customers with the utmost respect. They are flexible in scheduling and are a key business in our community. We have on numerous occasions told people how happy we have been with the level of service we get from OmniTel Communications.

Thank you,

Larry and Karen Goodrich

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Larry Goodrich".A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen Goodrich".



FARMERS FEED & GRAIN COMPANY, Inc.

FEED - GRAIN - FERTILIZER FOR FINE FARMERS
P.O. BOX 291 RICEVILLE, IOWA 50466

To Whom It May Concern:

Omni Tel Communications is a very important partner of my business. Without all the services they provide to me, I would not be able to operate my business. We use their phone, long distance, and High Speed internet each day our doors are open. The service they give is exceptional and appreciated. This is possible due to their employees or living in the communities they serve. Their response time is much quicker.

I look at Omni Tel Communications as a Leader in the Technology field and it doesn't hurt that they have been in business for over 100 years. They look for ways to get the latest technology to their customers. This has to be very difficult and a financial burden since this is done in many rural communities. With the internet being such an important part of every ones life we expect it to be reliable and we are always looking for more speed. I have businesses in more than one town so I depend on the High Speed Internet to communicate and do business. Looking at the markets and commodities, keeping up with the ethanol and LP gas world are just a few things I depend on the internet for. It is just a way of doing business in today's world. All the different services and technologies that I can use today will help me expand my business in the future. This will create new jobs as well as secure the jobs that my employees have currently. Creating new jobs means our communities will flourish and survive.

The town of Riceville has benefited from many Charity Grants that Omni Tel Communications has given out. They take pride in giving back to the communities and organizations they do business with.

At this time please consider Omni Tel Communications for the Iowa Broadband Grant they are applying for. It will go to good use!

Steve Eastman, President

Farmers Feed and Grain

FOCUS

INSURANCE TEAM

March 2, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

Omnitel Communications has been a very dependable and reliable provider of our internet and telecommunications needs. As an Independent Insurance Agency we are highly dependent on the internet and customer service. In our 3 years of operation we have rarely needed any service, but on the one or two occasions we required a service call Omnitel was very prompt and professional with a response to our needs. Omnitel was there the day we opened business on January 3, 2016 and they were instrumental in the early success of our business. Our businesses and our communities are fortunate to have the services provided by Omnitel Communications.

Omnitel also stands out in Saint Ansgar and surrounding communities for giving back to the communities. We have witnessed their employees volunteering hours of community service and charitable giving for many different fundraisers and events.

On behalf of Focus Insurance Team, Inc. I would highly recommend Omnitel be considered as a leading candidate for the Iowa Broadband Grant. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Joel D Nickerson, Owner/Partner

Focus Insurance Team, Inc.

211 Saints Ave, PO Box 188

Saint Ansgar, IA 50472-0222

641 713-2345



Luke Weiss
PO Box 200
Rudd, IA 50471

March 4, 2019

Iowa Broadband Grant

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Omnitel Communications as it relates to the Iowa Broadband Grant. As a growing business in Rural Iowa, Hoover's Hatchery has been fortunate to work with the Omnitel team.

In early 2016, Hoover's Hatchery determined that in order to support its growing business a faster and more dependable internet connection was needed. Hoover's has a custom software package that is stored in the cloud. Additionally, the traditional phone system that Hoover's had at the time was inadequate for Hoover's customer service needs.

At the time, Omnitel did not offer a fast-enough internet connection to Hoover's that would allow Hoover's to run its cloud-hosted software and upgrade to a modern Voice Over IP telephone system. After much discussion, the Omnitel team offered a solution to run fiber optic from their office to Hoover's and to split the cost of this fiber line 50/50 with Hoover's. Both parties agreed, and Hoover's has had outstanding internet connection ever since.

This outside the box thinking by Omnitel has allowed Hoover's to continue to grow and serve our customers right here in Rudd, Iowa. Since 2016, Hoover's has nearly doubled its workforce. Considering the trends of small towns shrinking, this has been extremely positive for the community of Rudd. I know that Omnitel will have this same impact on other small towns should they be awarded this grant money.

Regards,

Luke Weiss, CFO

PO Box 200
205 Chickasaw St.
Rudd, IA 50471
(800) 247-7014

Dave Sherlock
Customer Service Manager
OmniTel Communications
105 N. West Street
Truro, Iowa 50257

7 March 2019

Dave,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for the many years of great service we have received from your firm.

Our relationship began several years ago as I needed a reliable internet connection for my home business. At the time, in my location, the only option was satellite service. Working with your field technicians I saw a team that was dedicated to quality work and customer service. It was an astute field tech that matched my need for more data and speed to your planned fiber optic service. Your willingness to meet my needs on a custom installation was much appreciated in an industry where many installs are only standard "cookie cutter" configurations or none at all.

The day our fiber was turned on, May 2, 2014, is celebrated at my house as the day we really got connected to the world. It has helped my business maintain a competitive edge and brought my family the same or better connectivity than that enjoyed by our urban cousins.

Our service has been fast and reliable. Service issues have been rare and dealt with in a quick and efficient manner. We have toured your facility in Truro, met the staff and were impressed with your knowledge and customer service..

Any community where you expand your business is fortunate to have your services. Connectivity for all is a key element in the development of our local economy and maintaining competitiveness in the region and around the world. You have increased our quality of life and will do the same for any communities you serve.

Sincerely,



Chris Bertelson

President, Chrisber.com
Microsoft Office Training Services
3025 Cumming Road
Van Meter, IA 50261

October 7, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone : (515) 281-5503

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OmniTel is dedicated to ensuring those residing in their existing service territories have quality access to advanced broadband and communication services. I am confident they will bring the same level of service to unserved locations within Madison and Warren Counties.

I urge the Office of CIO to strongly consider OmniTel's application to assist with the improvement of broadband services to these areas.

Sincerely

Diane Fitch
Madison County Board of Supervisors

October 7, 2019

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
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RE: Empower Rural Iowa – Broadband Grant Program

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We strongly urge the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa fund this Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in OmniTel's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

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Broadband enables us to better serve our customers through online collaboration, real time lookup of products and services and customer centered modes of communication.

OmniTel has a long and successful history of providing state-of-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, we are confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service for Oakland, IA..

Sincerely,
Will Frazee

Farm Bureau Financial Services
1080 230th St.
Emerson, IA 51533

