



## MILLS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**MISSION:** "To improve the long-term economic sustainability of Mills County through an economic development agenda focused on job creation, job retention, and tax base enhancements enriching the quality of life for all citizens of the County."

October 10, 2019

To whom it may concern:

As the Mills County Economic Development Executive Director, I have led an effort involving the Mills County Board of Supervisors, the Mills County Economic Development Foundation, key service providers, and end users to address the broadband needs in Mills County. Over the past two years MCEDF has held several public meetings encouraging citizen engagement and one-on-one meetings with existing businesses as part of our business retention & expansion program, as well as collaboration with broadband providers as part of a professional comprehensive broadband study completed by HR Green. The Mills County Broadband Study is the means for fully understanding our needs while putting actual project into play meeting the needs of our citizens, local businesses, agricultural producers, and new homeowners and businesses. The Mills County Broadband Study completion was the first step.

Our next steps include applying for state and federal funding to assist in the construction of high-quality fiber. Working with our infrastructure task force we learned the FCC maps drastically changed in the past six months. The new maps illustrate false data and present a challenge. Our consultant and members of our task force have met with providers who acknowledge the maps are incorrect. This has also been confirmed by meeting with home owners and businesses in the areas of Mills County that have very poor service or no fiber access at all. The Mills County emergency management personnel recognize and deal with large areas of Mills County that are poorly served; thus, adding risk to public safety personnel and negatively impacting public health and safety.

Mills County has been declared a national disaster area as a result of the March 2019 flooding. Unfortunately, much of Mills County and Southwest Iowa remain flooded today nearly seven months later. We ask that you please consider this request for funding and feel free to contact us with any questions. We stand committed to partner and see that the citizens and businesses of Mills County have the opportunity for high quality broadband. The fact some providers submitted false data should not impact Mills County's access to grant funding. Rural Iowa needs broadband and this flooding in Mills County has created an opportunity for us to begin addressing this vital need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick L. Allely".

Rick L. Allely, CEcd MCRP

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# Mills County Board of Supervisors

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October 10, 2019

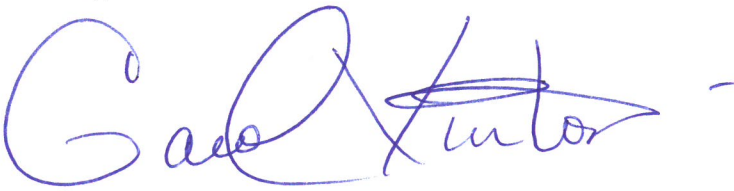
To whom it may concern:

The Mills County Board of Supervisors and the Mills County Economic Development Foundation have diligently been working to address the broadband deficiencies in Mills County. Over the past two years numerous public meetings, citizen input events, business retention & expansion visits, collaboration with providers, and broadband specific studies have been completed so that Mills County can fully understand our needs and begin implementing projects meeting the needs of our citizens, existing businesses, farmers, and new residents.

The completion of the Mills County Broadband Study in the Fall of 2018 began the initial implementation plan as a result of the extreme lack of and availability of quality broadband services. Now that we are ready to make application for various state and federal funding to assist in the deployment of high-quality fiber, we have learned the FCC maps have drastically changed showing a very untrue and different picture than that of our findings and daily experiences. In fact, we have visited with providers who acknowledge the maps are incorrect and backed that up with confirmation from home owners and businesses in the areas of Mills County that have poor or no service. Our public safety and emergency management personnel also recognize areas that are poorly served impacting public health and safety. This has become an even higher issue due to the recent nationally declared flood disaster that began in March 2019 and is continuing today.

We ask that you please consider this request for funding so that the citizens and businesses of Mills County can be offered the opportunity for high quality broadband. Mills County has lost numerous homes and residents as a result of the floods. The incorrect data submitted by providers trying to keep competitors out of the market should not warrant our County's grant eligibility being hurt. Mills County simply needs these funds now more than ever to address this critical infrastructure need.

Sincerely,

  
Board of Supervisor -  
Chairman