

# 506541 - Black Hawk County - NE

## Application Details

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**Funding Opportunity:** 498157-Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) Broadband Intervention Zones

**Funding Opportunity Due Date:** Mar 31, 2023 5:00 PM

**Program Area:** ITQ - Broadband Intervention Zones

**Status:** Submitted

**Stage:** Final Application

  

**Initial Submit Date:** Mar 31, 2023 11:15 AM

**Initially Submitted By:** Isaiah Corbin

**Last Submit Date:**

**Last Submitted By:**

## Contact Information

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### Primary Contact Information

**Active User\*:** Yes

**Type:** External User

**First Name\*:** Isaiah      Middle Name Corbin  
First Name      Last Name

**Title:**

**Email\*:** icorbin@inrcog.org

**Address\*:** 229 E Park Avenue

  

Waterloo Iowa      50703  
City      State/Province Postal Code/Zip

**Phone\*:** (319) 235-0311 127  
Phone      Ext.  
###-###-####

**Fax:** ###-###-####

**Agency:**

### Organization Information

**Status\*:** Approved

**Name\*:** Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

**Organization Type\*:** Councils of Government

**DUNS:** 05-796-2243  
##-###-####

**Tax Id:**

**Unique Entity Identifier (UEI):**

**Organization Website:**

**Address\*:** 229 E. Park Ave

**Phone\*:** Waterloo Iowa 50703  
City State/Province Postal Code/Zip  
(319) 235-0311 Ext.  
###-###-####

**Fax:** (319) 235-2891  
###-###-####

**Benefactor:**

**Vendor Number / ID:**

## Cover Sheet-General Information

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### *Cover Sheet-General Information*

#### Authorized Official

**Name\*:** Linda Laylin

**Title\*:** Chairperson

**Organization\*:** Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors  
**If you are an individual, please provide your First and Last Name.**

**Address\*:** 316 E 5th Street

**City/State/Zip\*:** Waterloo Iowa 50703  
City State Zip

**Telephone Number\*:** 319-833-3076

**E-Mail\*:** llaylin@blackhawkcounty.iowa.gov

#### Fiscal Officer/Agent

Please enter the "Fiscal Officer" for your Organization.  
If you are an individual, please provide your First and Last Name.

**Name\*:** Grant Veeder  
**Title:** County Auditor & Commissioner of Elections  
**Organization:** Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors  
**Address:** 316 E 5th Street

**City/State/Zip:** Waterloo Iowa 50703  
City State Zip

**Telephone Number:** 319-833-3119

**E-Mail:** auditor@blackhawkcounty.iowa.gov

**County(ies) Participating,  
Involved, or Affected by this  
Proposal\*:** Black Hawk County

To find your district, click on the "Congressional Map" link. On the left hand side of the page, click on the drop-down list and click on "State of Iowa". Then, enter an address for the county/ies you serve in the Search bar. Click "Enter." This will provide you with your Congressional District, Iowa Senate District and Iowa House District.

**Congressional District(s)  
Involved or Affected by this  
Proposal\*:** 2nd - Rep Ashley Hinson  
Congressional Map

**Iowa Senate District(s) Involved  
or Affected by this Proposal\*:** 34  
Iowa Senate Map

**Iowa House District(s) Involved  
or Affected by this Proposal\*:** 68  
Iowa House Map

## Invitation To Qualify Application Exhibits

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### *Required Forms and Submissions*

Please indicate the community applicant type that best fits from this list.

**Community Applicant Type\*:** County

**If Community Applicant Type is  
"Other", please add additional  
information here. :**

This section of the Iowa Grants system requires the Applicant to upload a cover letter as a Word doc or pdf on the Applicant's letterhead to provide a high-level overview of the Application describing your community's Broadband need in the area and the community's interest in obtaining programmatic funding in the Geographic Area of Concern. The Cover Letter is not scored.

**Cover Letter\*:** Black Hawk County NE Waterloo Cover Letter.pdf

The Applicant must upload a spreadsheet of locations obtained from the Broadband Availability Map. The system will allow you to download the locations as a CSV formatted spreadsheet. The Eligible Service Locations Spreadsheet must then be uploaded by the Community Applicant to the Iowa Grants system.

Note: Reference the "Geographic Area of Concern and Data Export/Import Instructions," labeled "Exhibit D," for instructions regarding how to properly complete this aspect of the Application.

**Eligible Service Locations  
Spreadsheet\*:** ITQ Eligible Locations NE Waterloo.csv

Generally describe the area identified with the Geographic Area of Concern Selection Tool. Example: Rural Adams County, Poweshiek County Highway 6 Corridor, etc.

**General Description of the  
geographic area of the circle\*:**

**The area generally covers northeast of Waterloo between Highway 63 and Raymond Road.**

Write down the radius distance used to create your circle. The instructions for how to identify the radius can be found in Exhibit D Geographic Area of Concern Selection Tool and Data Export/Import Instructions ("Selection Tool").

**Radius of the circle\*:** 6

**Address at the center of the  
circle - Street Address \*:**

**3520 N Elk Run Rd**

**Address of the center of the  
circle - City\*:**

**Waterloo**

**Address of the circle - State\*:**

**IA**

**Address of the circle - zip code\*:** 50703

***Optional Forms and Submissions - Work, Education, and Health Monitoring***

This sub-factor takes into consideration whether Broadband investments in the proposed Geographic Area of Concern will help to facilitate community members engagement in employment, search for employment, and/or develop the requisite skills and knowledge to become employed (e.g., participate in career counseling programs, workforce training programs, as well as gain access to internet websites to search for and apply to jobs).

**Work:**

**Black Hawk is a unique county within the state of Iowa. As the 5th largest county, it has a large population base with a unique economy. It's driven significantly by agriculture and manufacturing while also having a strong blue-collar base. While the majority of individuals live within the Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro, many workers prefer living outside of the metro and commuting to work within the metro. As such, many of these workers have also come to benefit from the work-from-home model and hybrid working environments. However, reliable and affordable internet connectivity is critical in order to take advantage. Unfortunately, those who live outside of the metro often lack quality internet services. This accounts for a significant number of individuals who are currently unable to meet the demands of the present working environment and remain productive within the global economy. Moreover, the importance of agriculture in the regions outside of the population centers in Black Hawk County is critical. Farmers need and require quality internet services as their needs expand and equipment becomes increasingly dependent on being connected to the internet.**

**As stated in Cary Darrah's letter of support from Grow Cedar Valley, "The number one concern of our businesses and employers from every sector is attracting and retaining workforce. All people and especially young families require broadband access for remote work, education uses, and entertainment. It is no longer a 'want', it is a 'need' for Black Hawk County to grow and attract new families and businesses." Kelli Snyder, Youth Director at St. John's Bennington also expressed her concern about losing members due to poor internet service and therefore giving individuals one more reason to not reside within Black Hawk County.**

This subfactor takes into consideration whether Broadband investments in the proposed Geographic Area of Concern will help facilitate educational activities. Such education activities may be to acquire knowledge and/or skills, undertaken as part of a

person's participation in school, an academic program, extracurricular program, social-emotional development program for students or youths, internship, or professional development program, or in another educational environment.

**Education:**

During the pandemic, the education model shifted from in-person instruction to virtual learning. The needs of students in rural areas became apparent. In Black Hawk County, all the students outside of Waterloo and Cedar Falls attend small, rural schools. Many of those school district students did not have sufficient infrastructure to support online learning. Further, many individuals within the Waterloo School District also live outside the main metro in rural areas. These students often do not have access to quality internet access without traveling to the city.

The Associate Superintendent and JH/HS Principal at Dunkerton Community School District, Kory Kelchen outlined the issues for students during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Students in these rural areas require some form of online learning and are often forced to use hotspots to meet those learning objectives because they simply don't have access to quality internet service. This was further emphasized by Waterloo School District Superintendent, Dr. Jared Smith, who noted hot spots were not enough, and "the improvement of broadband internet throughout the entire community and particularly in our more underserved neighborhoods is a necessity."

Moreover, many of these students are also served by the local community college, Hawkeye Community College. The College provides high-quality education within Black Hawk County. Many of those classes require online learning and engagement. These types of educational opportunities are crucial for those individuals looking to grow their skills to meet the evolving demands of the economy. Without quality internet, these types of opportunities become out of reach.

This subfactor takes into consideration whether Broadband investments in the proposed Geographic Area of Concern will help facilitate health monitoring services to monitor an individual's health, including with respect to either physical or behavioral health.

**Health Monitoring:**

Black Hawk County is served by two regional health systems: Allen Hospital and MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center. The two hospitals are located in the center of Black Hawk County and much of the rural areas identified in the ITQ are 15-20 minutes away from access to the hospital and available clinics. As healthcare has evolved to utilize remote/virtual care via telehealth services, these residents are often unable to take advantage of the poor internet services. As the different types of telehealth services expand, it is becoming increasingly important for those individuals to have internet services so they can effectively and efficiently access these services. Moreover, as it becomes increasingly difficult to find healthcare workers in Black Hawk County, access to these services becomes even more critical to the health of these residents and will be key to ensuring continued high-quality healthcare in Black Hawk County.

***Community Support Letters*****Testimonial :**

**Community Support Letter :** 1B. Black Hawk County Community Support Letters.pdf

This Community Support upload does not have to be on letterhead or have a mailing address within the Geographic Area of Concern. The author must demonstrate that there is a community tie-in or relationship to the Geographic Area of Concern.

**Community Support Letter (no letterhead or mailing address):**

***Optional Forms and Submissions - Community Broadband Capital***

Item Description		Category	Supporting Documentation
1	Financial Assurances - \$25,000	Cash	Board of Supervisors Resolution of Financial Support.pdf
2			
3			
4			
5			

### ***Barriers to Broadband***

#### **Barriers to Broadband**

##### **Installation:**

Black Hawk County is rural and dominated by primarily agricultural farms outside of its Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro. Broadband networks are often difficult to build and expand in these rural areas, especially in areas that lack large population centers. Several providers currently exist and provide quality service within Black Hawk County, but it is difficult to justify investing significantly in these areas that lack large population centers. Furthermore, investment in broadband that has taken place in Black Hawk County has primarily been focused on serving the metro. The rural areas are separated far enough from population centers, not creating enough incentive for these providers. Many of these areas are also located off main roads, further complicating improvements in connectivity. Outreach efforts have often fallen on deaf ears, but the rural residents of Black Hawk County want and need internet connectivity for both business and personal reasons and remain a large constituency outside of the metro. As stated in the General Manager of Dunkerton Communications, Abbi Kienast's letter of support, funding from alternative sources, such as grant programs, is necessary to continue to build out fiber optic networks to reach residents in the underserved areas of Black Hawk County.

Black Hawk County has a population of 131,144, the fifth largest County by population in the State of Iowa. While the vast majority of residents belong to the Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro, a very significant amount of people have chosen to reside in the rural areas. This population serves as a critical artery for the County's growth and economic development. However, the rurality of these areas has complicated broadband development for those who remain underserved. With such a significant population in these rural areas, the need becomes even greater. They often lack the resources and voice to entice providers to invest in the development of quality internet for them.

#### **Optional Supporting Materials**

##### **for Barriers to Broadband**

##### **Installation Narrative:**

## **Minority Impact Statement**

### ***Minority Impact Statement***

Does the proposed grant program or policy have a disproportionate or unique positive impact on minority persons? \*: **No**

Describe the positive impact expected from this project.:

**Detail the rationale for the existence of the proposed program or policy.:**

**Indicate the group(s) positively impacted.:**

**Could the proposed grant program or policy have a disproportionate or unique negative impact on minority persons? \*:** **No**

**Describe the negative impact expected from this project.:**

**Detail the rationale for the existence of the proposed program or policy. :**

**Indicate the group(s) negatively impacted.:**

**Explain how you provided consultation with representatives of the minority groups impacted.:**

**I hereby certify the information above is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.\*:** **Yes**

**Chairperson Linda Laylin**  
Title First Name Last Name