



Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program – NOFA #006

List of Support Materials



Community Support Letters

Rep. Brian Best, IA House District 12	Rep. David Sieck, IA House District 23	Treynor Optimists Club
Sen. Craig Williams, IA Senate District 6	Sen. Mark Costello, IA Senate District 12	Treynor Community School District
Carroll Area Development Corp/Chamber of Commerce	Glenwood Chamber of Commerce	East Mills Community School District
Carroll County Board of Supervisors	Jim Hughes Real Estate	City of Malvern
Carroll County Farm Bureau	HR Green	Malvern Area Betterment Association (MABA)
City of Carroll	City of Hastings	Glenwood Community School District
Carroll REMax Realty	Mills County Board of Supervisors - Lonnie Mayberry	Sidney Community School District
Greteman & Associates	Mills County Board of Supervisors - Richard Crouch	Lewis-Central Community School District
Crawford County Board of Supervisors	Mills County Board of Supervisors - Carol Vinton	Riverside Community School District
City of Denison	Mills County Economic Development	Ridge View Community School District
Denison Chamber of Commerce/CDC	Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)	East Sac County Community School District
City of Vail	Advance Southwest Iowa Corporation	South Central Calhoun Community School District
Denison Municipal Airport	Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce	Sac County Economic & Tourism Development
City of Dedham	Iowa Western Community College	Sac County Board of Supervisors
Wendl Feed Lot	Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors	City of Nemaha
Carroll Community School District	Fremont County Board of Supervisors	City of Auburn
Kuemper Catholic School	West Pottawattamie County Farm Bureau	Auburn Home Town Pride Committee
Glidden-Ralston School District	Council Bluffs Municipal Airport	Sen. Tim Kraayenbrink, IA Senate District 5
Ar-We-Va Community School District	City of Treynor	Sen. Dan Dawson, IA Senate District 8

**Customer Reference Letters**

Drees Company	Mid-Iowa Insurance and Real Estate	Stone Printing and Office Supply
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Funding Commitments

Carroll County	\$5,000
Mills County	\$10,000
Pottawattamie County	\$10,000

Brian Best

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

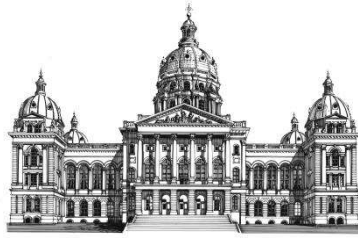
Twelfth District

Statehouse: (515) 281-3221

e-mail – brian.best@legis.iowa.gov

HOME ADDRESS

P.O. Box 450
Glidden, Iowa 51443
Home: (712) 830-1844



House of Representatives

State of Iowa

Eighty-seventh General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES

Transportation-Chair

Human Resources

Appropriations

Commerce

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa Office of the Chief Information Office
Attn: Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Review Committee
Hoover State Office Building
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Chief Information Officer:

I am writing you to express my support for Western Iowa Networks and their application for Empower Rural Iowa Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program. They are looking to overbuild in certain areas of Carroll and Crawford Counties with fiber optics, but will need grant funding to make it happen.

Western Iowa Networks is a broadband and telephone service provider in Carroll County. They provide excellent service and have a great reputation in the Carroll area and will be a great recipient of the grant money. They are on the cutting edge of bringing fast service to rural Iowa and would be a great choice to expand broadband in the area.

Thank you for your consideration,

Representative Brian Best

CRAIG WILLIAMS
STATE SENATOR
Sixth District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

HOME ADDRESS
11886 320th St.
Manning, IA 51455
H: (712) 790-8927
craig.williams@legis.iowa.gov



The Senate
State of Iowa
Eighty-Ninth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, IA 50319

COMMITTEES

Appropriations
Commerce
Government Oversight, *Vice Chair*
Local Government

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Appropriations Subcommittee

July 13, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program, Evaluation Committee
200 E. Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of support for Western Iowa Networks Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Application – Round 6

Dear Evaluation Committee,

This letter is in support of Western Iowa Networks application in Round 6 of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program.

As a member of the Iowa Senate representing District 6, I assure you that fast, reliable broadband service is critical to my constituents. Western Iowa Networks has a history of providing such reliable service to the area and has shown they are worthy of consideration.

I strongly urge you to consider Western Iowa Networks application for this grant award. Your efforts in this project are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig S. Williams", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Craig S Williams
State Senator
Iowa Senate District 6



July 12, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program-Review Committee
200 E. Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

As the President of Carroll Area Development Corporation, I am writing in support of Western Iowa Networks' application to the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program.

Carroll Area Development Corporation is the lead economic development entity serving Carroll County, Iowa. CADC works closely with surrounding counties to feature regional assets that recruit both business projects and talented workforce to the region. We recognize the absolute necessity of having strong connectivity as a key criterion in business recruitment. Broadband has quickly transitioned from a support role almost seen as an amenity, to a piece of critical infrastructure in a short time span. We have seen businesses consider automation, healthcare providers connect to specialists anywhere, and education partners bring exciting new opportunities from the workplace into classrooms, all with the infrastructure that WIN took steps to provide early in the growth of fiber. Since WIN's installation of gigabit service several years ago, it has helped Carroll and CADC to establish relationships within the data circles of site selectors that had not previously existed.

While we have watched the devastation that COVID has caused for businesses, and individually on a global scale, we were again reminded that we in Carroll County can perform and compete globally. The growth of Western Iowa Networks has enabled them to compete as a company with the national entities, while they are allowing our companies to grow and our residents to live and work where they want to work, not where they have to work. For Carroll County to remain competitive in the site selection process and to remain a viable option for the existing industries currently calling Carroll home, investments by Western Iowa Networks are critical to the region.

As CADC continues to seek economic development opportunities for growth, the organization has been well-served by the progressive attitude of Western Iowa Networks. While Carroll County is home to national companies in many sectors, the infrastructure provided by WIN only adds to their success and growth potential. In pulling all of this together, the key infrastructure that Western Iowa Networks bring to Carroll has aided in solidifying Carroll as a regional hub for business, service, education, and healthcare. Providing the fiber for Carroll is truly providing a regional asset for the above-mentioned services.

I encourage your support of the WIN application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Auen', is written in a cursive style.

Jim Auen,
President of Carroll Area Development Corporation

CARROLL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COURT HOUSE
CARROLL, IOWA 51401

Carroll County Board of Supervisors
114 E 6th Street
Carroll, IA 51401

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom it may Concern;

We, the Carroll County Board of Supervisors with pleasure, offer a letter of support and strongly encourage your approval for Western Iowa Networks/Breda Telephone Corp. proposal for grant funding for strategic initiative expansion of broadband to more of our rural areas. In addition to support, Carroll County has committed \$5,000 towards the project, contingent on grant award. We continue to take strides to improve our rural services to our Constituents. With your approval we can continue to strive for more reliable, faster and dependable broadband in Carroll County.

Today's society is more dependent on broadband than ever before. From telehealth virtual meetings, gatherings, and potential education in some areas. The proposed area for expansion does not have adequate internet. These include but are not limited to personal homes and farming operations. Technology allows these entities to implement safer, more economical farming practices and business expansion. For families this allows them to have reliable connectivity.

We would like to thank you for your time, and we kindly ask for your approval for Western Iowa Networks/Breda Telephone Corp. grant application.

Thank you,



Eugene Meiners
Chairman, Carroll County Board of Supervisors



829 Griffith Rd.
Carroll, IA 51401
712.792.9296 | 712.790.1895 cell
712.792.0436 fax
ryan.kock@fbfs.com
ryankock.fbfsagents.com

Ryan Kock, AFIS
Agent

Registered Representative/
Securities & services offered through
FBL Marketing Services, LLC,[†]
5400 University Avenue,
West Des Moines, IA 50266,
877.860.2904, Member SIPC.

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Grant Application Letter of Support

Dear Committee:

Carroll County Farm Bureau is lending its support to the application of Western Iowa Networks, for a fiber construction project in rural Carroll County. Farm Bureau understands the importance of fast and reliable broadband service to all the residents and businesses in Iowa. Rural residents are especially lacking this critical service at a time when it is more important than ever. A large portion of our rural areas remain unserved. Farms and agricultural business are the lifeblood of our local economy, and these businesses are impacted daily by the lack of adequate broadband service. Awarding these funds would help Western Iowa Networks to continue building out fiber optics into these rural areas and provide better service for the people who live and work there.

Please give strong consideration the application Western Iowa Networks is submitting for this grant award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Kock', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan Kock
Agent
Farm Bureau Financial Services

829 Griffith Road
Carroll, IA 514012325
(712) 792-9296

(712) 790-1895 cell
(712) 792-0436 fax

ryan.kock@fbfs.com
ryankock.fbfsagents.com

City of Carroll

627 N. Adams Street**Carroll, Iowa 51401****(712) 792-1000****FAX: (712) 792-0139**

July 23, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Review Committee
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Re: Western Iowa Networks
Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program grant application

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to ask you to support Western Iowa Networks Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program grant application that will extend fiber optics broadband to the rural areas around Carroll. While this project is outside the City of Carroll, we support the development of Broadband knowing the importance it is for rural economic development.

Since 2009 Western Iowa Networks has provided fiber to the premises to every property within the corporate City Limits of Carroll. Broadband networks, such as what has been built by Western Iowa Networks, brings affordable, high-quality Internet access to residents, encourages market competition, and enables local economic development. This cutting-edge technology in the City of Carroll has been a tremendous asset during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over time Western Iowa Networks broadband network has also reduced telecommunication costs for the City of Carroll. Finally, because Western Iowa Networks is locally run, not by a company headquartered in a different state, subscribers can hold our locally owned network accountable.

I strongly support and encourage you to fund Western Iowa Networks Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program grant application that will extend fiber optics broadband to the rural areas around Carroll.

Thank you for your time and your service.

Sincerely,



Michel J. Pogge, AICP
Carroll City Manager

Adam Humlicek
RE/MAX Professionals Realty
526 N Carroll St
Carroll, IA 51401

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Office of the Chief Information Officer,

I am writing this letter of support to you regarding Western Iowa Networks application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program.

RE/MAX Professionals Realty has conducted business with Western Iowa Networks for many years. The service they provide is the best around and they employ many local residents in our area. As a real estate firm in rural Iowa, we understand how important it is to have fast and reliable broadband in the areas we serve. One of the most common questions we get from our customers is "Does this area have high speed internet?" Having reliable broadband service directly affects real estate values in rural areas. If a home does not have high speed service it is not as appealing therefore decreasing the value especially with the recent shift to the work from home model. Having high speed service in rural Iowa is more important than ever especially after going through an unprecedented pandemic that kept people home.

We support Western Iowa Networks on this Rural Iowa Broadband Program.

Sincerely,



Adam Humlicek
RE/MAX Professionals Realty
526 N Carroll St
Carroll, IA 51401

July 12, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Anne Dunn, Director
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Grant Application Letter of Support

Dear Ms. Dunn:

Greteman & Associates is providing our support to the application of Western Iowa Networks, for a fiber broadband construction project in Carroll County and Crawford County, Iowa. Greteman & Associates understands how important fast and reliable broadband service is to prospective buyers, when they are evaluating a piece of real estate. This is true for both residential and commercial buyers. Access to good broadband can have a positive effect on economic development in an area by helping to attract and retain both residents and businesses, and it can help maintain or even increase real estate values in the area. Rural addresses are especially lacking this critical service at a time when it is more important than ever before. Large portions of rural areas in Iowa remain underserved or unserved. Awarding grant funds to Western Iowa Networks will help them to continue their goal of providing future-proof broadband technology to these currently unserved areas. Please give the application of Western Iowa Networks your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Greteman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Board of Supervisors

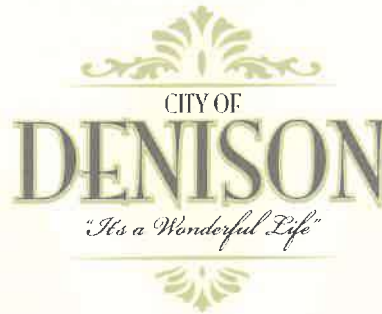
Crawford County, Iowa
Crawford County Courthouse
1202 Broadway, Denison, IA 51442

Telephone: 712-263-5356
Fax: 712-263-8382
crawfordcounty.iowa.gov

07-20-2021

Whereas the Crawford County Board of Supervisors sees a great need for fast, reliable broadband internet service in our area, made even more evident by the COVID-19 pandemic. We wholeheartedly support Western Iowa Networks' application for funding round 6 of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program.

Respectfully,
Crawford County Board of Supervisors



July 7, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 51309

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Denison would like to express our support for Western Iowa Networks' grant application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program. We have been looking for ways to get fiber broadband service throughout Crawford County, so we are excited about this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa K Koch". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lisa K. Koch
City Clerk

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Anne Dunn
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn,

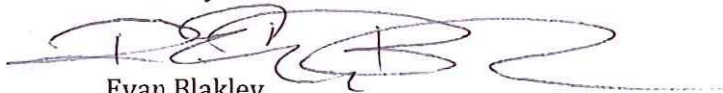
I am writing on behalf of the Chamber and Development Council of Crawford County(CDC), where I have served as Executive Director for the past 9 years. We wholeheartedly support Western Iowa Networks(WIN) in their application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program.

While most of the Denison area is adequately served by broadband services (including access to the high-quality WIN network), the majority of residents in Crawford County are lacking high quality broadband access. Even residents from our second and third largest communities (Schleswig and Manilla) have approached us regarding the need for improved internet access. Many times these rural communities are limited to satellite providers that can be affected by weather or to hotspots from cellular providers which can be costly and also unreliable in rural areas. Also, Denison residents and businesses outside the core of the city may have limited options for broadband. This has been a frequent complaint for our large highway industries just outside of town.

We saw during 2020 how critical broadband access has become for both students and businesses. In order to put rural students and industry on a level playing field, it is imperative that we grow broadband access here. With high-speed access growing across our county we can help businesses grow their sales, efficiencies and revenues in rural Iowa.

Since the acquisition of Monarc Technologies in Denison, WIN has proven to be not only an incredibly stable provider of broadband services for the Denison area, but they have also demonstrated their support of many community initiatives and programs. WIN truly cares about our communities and I trust them to provide high-quality service to the area. I strongly encourage you to support WIN's application.

Sincerely,



Evan Blakley
Executive Director
Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County

July 12, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program – Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Committee Members:

We are sending you this letter to support Western Iowa Network's application to fund fiber optic construction of the rural areas near and surrounding Vail, Iowa. This construction would be very important to the city of Vail and its surrounding rural communities to support continued economic growth and development in our area.

The city of Vail understands economic development relies more and more on access to fast and reliable broadband service. Research suggests broadband infrastructure in rural communities can help achieve important community-wide goals, such as drawing employers to the community, increasing or retaining population, and increasing residents' satisfaction with their community. From an economic development standpoint, access to a fiber optic network would be extremely beneficial to the future of our city and the surrounding area. As it currently stands, access to this kind of broadband service is lacking in our area.

Please give this request your full consideration. Broadband is a critical asset our area needs to be a competitive player in attracting business and industry to our small rural community. Western Iowa Networks is an important partner in helping us expand and attract economic opportunities for rural Iowa. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Monte Crichton, Mayor

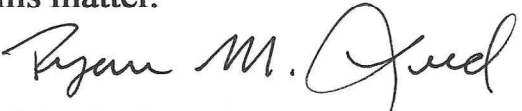
City of Vail

July 6, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Grant Review Committee:

The Denison Municipal Airport is providing this letter in support of the state broadband grant application submitted by Western Iowa Networks. Broadband is a critical service for the airport, as well as the other businesses and residents of rural communities like Denison, Iowa. WIN is an important partner in helping to provide faster and more reliable broadband to unserved areas in the community. Please give their application your full consideration. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely, 

Denison Municipal Airport

712-210-1900

Kadrvr@live.com

**CITY OF DEDHAM
P.O. BOX 48
DEDHAM, IOWA 51440**

July 22, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in support of Western Iowa Networks and their plans to submit an application to the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant. The City of Dedham, like most rural Iowa small communities, has very limited options for internet sources. In fact, at the current time, our only reliable source is Windstream and when I personally updated my service with them; I was told by the technician that no one else in town would be able to update or get new service as their "port" (not the correct terminology) was full after updating mine and they could not take on any new customers or update existing customers according to him. As the City Clerk of Dedham, I did not like the sounds of that at all. What do I tell a new resident in town?? Small towns in rural Iowa are still trying to grow residentially and commercially but good internet service is not a luxury item any longer – it is definitely a necessity. We need companies like Western Iowa Networks to help us fulfill that need for our current residents and to help us be able to attract new residents and new business.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Badding". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Heather Badding
Dedham City Clerk

Wendl Feedlot Inc.

Brian J & Holly A Wendl - 27648 Olympic Ave - Carroll, IA 51401

July 6, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer

200 E Grand Ave

Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It My Concern:

Living in rural Iowa is amazing, and we consider ourselves lucky to call Iowa home. Born and raised here, we'd wouldn't have it any other way. We love where we live and love what we do. The years have been good to us. We have successfully grown our business and own and operate a cattle feedlot permitted to raise 20,000 head. We also have farm ground and raise about 10% of the corn needed to feed our cattle. We employ around 25 people and work with many local farmers and businesses. Agriculture is our life, and our day to day business can be challenging; but it is what we do. But there is an aspect of our business that is, and remains frustrating – our internet service.

In today's world internet is a must, and something most people take for granted. But when your business is located in the middle of Iowa, internet can be a major challenge. Good, adequate, reliable internet service is a battle we have waged for years. It is a battle that continues today and remains frustrating and time consuming. And we have tried many options, for example, we currently have two carriers and two types of internet service as an attempt to bridge the gap and remain connected 24/7 – both Satellite and Towers. But nothing seems to solve the problem.

We don't need better internet to simply stream movies, play xBox Live, have Alexa, have a Ring video doorbell or to shop on-line – which we will admit would be really nice. We need better, faster, more reliable internet for our business. We need better, faster, more reliable internet for security cameras and monitoring systems. Systems we need for environmental purposes and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Iowa Department of Natural Resources regulations. Systems we need for bio-security and for safety. We are constantly looking at ways to improve our operation, but our efforts are always hindered because we don't have the internet available to meet our needs. And we know this because we have tried to implement internet-based control functions. We have spent in excess of \$70,000 on security cameras and monitoring systems for wells and pumps and environmental controls. But at the end of the day, they don't work because we don't have the internet speeds available to support the equipment.

As an example of our frustrations, here is a current scenario we are facing. We are planning an upgrade of our well monitoring system next week. We are having numerous problems maintaining adequate water levels for our cattle due to the lack of rain we are experiencing as well as the heat. Our system is designed to alert us if the water levels dip too low so that we can turn on other wells and make

the necessary adjustments. But our system isn't working the way it should. So, as we look to fix it – next week actually; we are being told that the new system we intend to implement, might not work due to our internet capabilities. A very simple application, a very necessary application - but it probably won't work – because of our internet. That's frustrating.

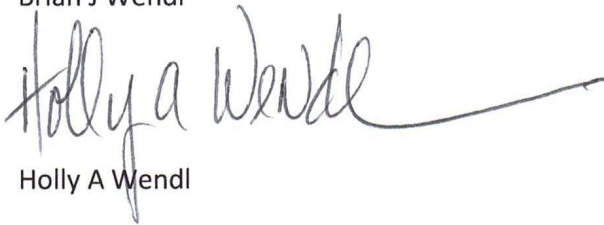
Then there is school. We have six kids, and four of them are still in school – grades 5 through 10. And if you have students in middle school and high school you know they need adequate internet. It's expected. The majority of their homework, assignments, and academic activities are internet based. It's just the way it is. Our oldest daughter owns a tavern in Willey which is about 3 miles away from our home and business. We have setup an entire computer desktop system, printer, etc. there for our kids to use. They actually have to go to their sister's bar sometimes to do their homework. Seriously, they do. I know it sounds crazy – But they literally go 3 miles to a bar, because the bar has better internet. That's frustrating.

I could provide more examples and go on and on, but I think you more than understand our desire for better internet. It's the reasons we mentioned above and many more. We are asking that you please consider Western Iowa Networks' grant application for expanding broadband to our area. We are underserved, and we are in need of better internet. We need it for our business, for our children's academic needs, and as a bonus - for our home life. We appreciate your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Brian J Wendl



Holly A Wendl

Carroll Community School District

Carroll, Iowa 51401-1911

**CCSD Office**

Superintendent: Dr. Casey Berlau
1026 N Adams St
Carroll, Iowa 51401
Phone: 712-792-8001
Fax: 712-792-8008

Carroll High School

Principal: Mrs. Tammie McKenzie
Student Services: Mr. Larry Leslie
2809 N Grant Road
Carroll, Iowa 51401
Phone: 712-792-8010
Fax: 712-792-8118

Carroll Middle School

Principal: Mr. Jerry Raymond
Asst. Principal: Ms. Jill Greiman
3203 N Grant Road
Carroll, Iowa 51401
Phone: 712-792-8020
Fax: 712-792-8024

Adams Elementary School

Principal: Mrs. Sue Ruch
Asst. Principal: Ms. Crystal Boes
1026 N Adams Street
Carroll, Iowa 51401
Phone: 712-792-8040
Fax: 712-792-8008

Fairview Elementary School

Principal: Mrs. Sue Ruch
Asst. Principal: Ms. Crystal Boes
525 E 18th Street
Carroll, Iowa 51401
Phone: 712-792-8030
Fax: 712-792-8074

The Carroll Community School District is committed to supporting Western Iowa Network's pursuit of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant. The Carroll CSD partners with Western Iowa Networks to receive internet services.

Throughout the last year and half, we have worked closely with them to ensure that students and staff have connectivity at school and outside of school. With the pandemic there were challenges that we are still working to overcome. We know there are areas in our school district that struggle to get access to reliable internet services and it was a barrier as we tried to deliver instruction during the pandemic.

Improving reliable internet access to students and staff in our rural areas will allow them to better participate in learning. We know from our experience during the pandemic that our education system must be able to provide education services away from our school buildings in emergency situations. We also know that our experience during the pandemic will lead to changes in how we educate students and having reliable internet services in all corners of our school district is critical for us in order to provide quality education into the future. More online learning opportunities will be available for students going forward as we will offer programs, services and meetings remotely going forward as a result of our experience during the pandemic.

Western Iowa Networks is the right company to take on the challenge of ensuring that reliable internet exists in all corners of the Carroll CSD. We support their grant application and hope that the decision makers for this grant will give their application strong consideration.

Respectfully,

Casey Berlau, Ed.D
Superintendent
Carroll CSD



Kuemper Catholic School System

116 South East Street • Carroll, Iowa 51401 • 712-792-3313 • Fax 712-792-8073
www.kuemper.org

July 12, 2021

Dear OCIO Grant Review Committee,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for Western Iowa Networks (WIN) of Breda, Iowa.

Our regional PK-12 Catholic school system in west-central Iowa based in Carroll is grateful for the important communications infrastructure that WIN provides that many of our 1,150 students and over 500 families use - with many of them residing in smaller rural towns and areas. Correspondence is constant with our many families for all kinds of communications from virtual lessons and homework assignments to virtual parent-teacher conferences and mass text messages to parents for critical announcements. The pandemic has really emphasized the importance of companies like WIN for smooth operations of schools. Future demands for fast and reliable communications by educational institutions like Kuemper will be even higher.

The area parishes and churches in Carroll county that partner with Kuemper and our school system of four buildings in Carroll are grateful for the fine services of WIN and look forward to even stronger communications to keep our PK-12 educational system vibrant for a changing future in rural Iowa. Thank you.

John Steffes
 President
 Kuemper Catholic School System
jsteffes@kuemper.org
 (712) 792-3313, ext. 254

Faith and Knowledge... for a Lifetime

Holy Spirit Center
 Grades Preschool-3
 712-792-3610
 712-792-8072 (Fax)

St. Angela Center
 Grades 4-5
 712-792-8071
 712-792-8073 (Fax)

St. Lawrence Center
 Grades 6-8
 712-792-2123
 712-792-3365 (Fax)

Kuemper High School
 Grades 9-12
 712-792-3596
 712-792-8070 (Fax)



Glidden-Ralston Community School

602 Idaho St.
PO Box 488
Glidden, IA 51443
712-659-3411
712-659-2248 (fax)

Kreg Lensch,
Superintendent,
Co-Athletic Director

Dirk Troutman,
PK-12 Principal
Co-Athletic Director

Kaylee Bach,
School Counselor

Denise Best,
Board Sec./Treas.

School Board

Todd Koehler,
Board President

Renee Schon,
Board Vice
President

Chris Soyer,
Director

Andy Thielen,
Director

Mike Schulze,
Director

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Western Iowa Networks application to receive an Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant. We have used Western Iowa Networks as our internet provider for several years and would love to see them have the ability to broaden their services in our area as we have been more than pleased with their service over that time!

As a school district, we rely on our students and families to have quality internet access. We have been a one-to-one school for many years. This means our students have the technology tools they need right at their fingertips every night and weekend. But we have found that the quality of their internet access is drastically different based upon where they live, both in town and in the rural areas. This creates many difficulties for us as a district in terms of equity of opportunity for many of our students.

Throughout the pandemic we had to rely on that access not only for our students, but for our teachers do deliver instruction as well. We had to hold all our staff meetings and board meetings electronically too. We soon discovered that their ability to function was very dependent upon where they lived. Even within a small district like ours, we had staff and board members with drastically different levels of access to broadband. Many of them with no access at all. I would love to see this be a thing of the past.

So, knowing the quality of service and connectivity they provide, I couldn't recommend anyone more highly than Western Iowa Networks to be awarded this grant funding.

Sincerely,

Kreg A. Lensch
Superintendent of Schools

The Glidden-Ralston CSD offers career and technical programs in the following service areas: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Health Occupations Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, and Industrial Education. It is the policy of the Glidden-Ralston CSD not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Kaylee Bach, School Counselor, 602 Idaho St. Glidden, IA 51443, 712-659-3411, crohrbeck@glidden-ralston.k12.ia.us

Ar-We-Va Community School

108 Clinton Street, PO Box 108

Westside, IA 51467-0108

www.ar-we-va.k12.ia.us



Together We Can Make a Difference

Jeff Kruse/Supt.
712-663-4311

Chris Petersen/PK-12 Principal
712-663-4312

Sara Edholm/PK-12 Counselor
712-663-4312

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Western Iowa Networks in receiving a grant to improve broadband service for our area. They currently provide broadband services for Ar-We-Va Community School District, and they do a fantastic job in doing so. However, as we learned through the pandemic, we still have a fair amount of constituents who lack reliable broadband service. This has created quite a hardship for families as well as for us as an educational institution. The lack of reliable connectivity for some of our students and families has created hardships in communication, and a learning gap we are trying to overcome.

As a school district, we have an inherent need to be able to expand our broadband service in order to reach a greater percentage of students and staff with reliable broadband service. The pandemic has created a transformation in education in which reliable broadband service is a necessity for students and staff. As we have moved to an increase in virtual learning, the utilization of programs such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and other programs require a steady and reliable internet connection. Currently, not all of our students and staff have that capability. In order for us to continue to produce lifelong learners and productive members of society, we must be progressive and proactive in our approach to education. Partnering with Western Iowa Networks has enabled us to do just that, but we are currently in need of even more resources. A grant such as this would benefit our entire school district and community by offering the ability to increase the reach of reliable broadband services to more families. This would be a great boost to our rural communities and have a lasting impact on generations to come.

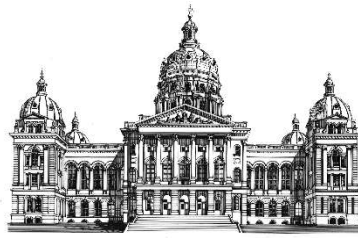
Educationally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ce PR', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chris Petersen
PK-12 Principal
Ar-We-Va Community Schools

David Sieck
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Twenty-Third District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3221
e-mail – david.sieck@legis.iowa.gov

HOME ADDRESS
1710 Timber Lane
Glenwood, Iowa 51534
Phone: 712-527-9809



House of Representatives
State of Iowa
Eighty-Ninth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES
Information & Technology, *Vice Chair*
Agriculture
Economic Growth
Ways & Means

July 25, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of Support for Grant Application of Western Iowa Networks

To whom it may concern:

As the representing member of the Iowa House of Representatives for House District 23, I am sending this letter in support of the broadband grant application submitted by Western Iowa Networks for the continued buildout of the fiber optic network in House District 23. The Governor's plan and the Iowa Legislature's support last session show how important access to high-speed is to all of Iowa's residents. In District 23 we have residents in sparsely populated areas along the Iowa border with Missouri with super highspeed internet and residents 15 miles from the Omaha/Council Bluffs metro area with hardly any reliable access. The ability to tele-work, distance learn, or have access to tele-health services depends heavily on a fast and stable broadband network. The fiber optic network proposed by Western Iowa Networks will allow my constituents to access these critical services for years to come.

I strongly encourage you to please consider the application of Western Iowa Networks for this grant award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave".

David Sieck
State Representative
Iowa House District 23
Serving Mills, Fremont & Montgomery Counties

July 22, 2021

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

RE: Empower Rural Iowa – Broadband Grant Program

Dear Chief Information Officer Annette Dunn and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of BTC, Inc., dba Western Iowa Networks. I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa broadband grant application for Western Iowa Networks. With the assistance of this grant, Western Iowa Network's expanded broadband network will enable us to overcome geographical distances, empower us through information, and bring the world to us through the touch of a keyboard. As an unserved rural area with limited availability to advanced 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. Our community currently lacks the research; distance learning, video and other tools that advanced broadband can bring to a rural school. Therefore, it is extremely important that broadband grant funding be obtained to provide much needed broadband service to our area.

Western Iowa Networks has a long and successful history of providing state-of-the-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 within this area.

Sincerely,



Mark Costello
Iowa
State Senate District 12

37265 Rains Ave
Imogene, IA 51645
(712)-520-0303



Connecting People, Growing Business

State of Iowa, Office
of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Empower Rural
Iowa Broadband Grant Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA
50319

To Whom This May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Western Iowa Networks application for the Broadband Grants. As the Executive Director of the Glenwood Area Chamber of Commerce, we work closely with businesses and individuals across all of Mills County, and one the top five concerns we hear about is connectivity. For many of entrepreneurs in our area, they start their businesses within their homes. Unfortunately, many homes within Mills County don't have access to the level of connectivity that is found within cities. Western Iowa Networks is helping the Mills County area become a competitive place to live and work by expanding broadband.

Western Iowa Networks is a proven partner in bringing that connectivity to homes and businesses. By awarding them this Broadband Grant, you are not only investing in a company that truly cares about the people they provide to, but also you will be supporting and furthering economic growth and vitality within Southwest Iowa.

Rachel Reis
Executive Director
director@glenwoodia.com

Chamber Staff and Volunteers

Tana Saddler - Events and Communication Manager
Suzanne Tuma- Volunteer Chamber Ambassador

2021 Board of Directors

Aaron Smith- McDonalds
Chrissy Ford- Ace Your Health and Wealth
Diana Hoogestraat- Community Advocate
Jason Tillman- Sovereign Martial Arts
Jim Henderson- Black Hills Energy
Julianne Marriot- Glen Haven
Kathy Reisner- Glenwood State Bank
Nicki Poort- Malvern Bank
Spencer Williams- KMA Broadcasting



Jim Hughes Real Estate, LLC

Homes • Acreages • Farms
www.jimhughesrealestate.com

410 South Locust
P.O. Box 111
Glenwood, Iowa 51534
Phone: (712) 527-3114
FAX: (712) 527-5496

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program-Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Letter of Support for Grant Application

To whom it may concern:

Jim Hughes Real Estate would like to offer strong support for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband grant being submitted by Western Iowa Networks for the construction of a fiber network in rural southwest Iowa. This project will be extremely beneficial to our rural communities. This is greatly important as more and more people are working from home.

Our company is actively involved in the development and sale of real estate in Southwest Iowa, and we can confirm firsthand how important Broadband service is to this area. The presence of reliable broadband service is becoming more and more important for prospective homebuyers all the time. Having access to quality broadband service, especially fiber, can increase home values and make it easier to attract and retain homeowners in a given area. In many areas of Southwest Iowa, such as many rural subdivisions and small towns, this type of service is lacking, and the approval of this application would be a good step toward making broadband service more accessible.

We ask you to seriously consider awarding Western Iowa Network the grant funds they are requesting for this project.

Thank you,

Anne Steele

Jim Hughes Real Estate, Board of Directors

July 28, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of Support for Grant Application NOFA#5

Dear Grant Program Review Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Western Iowa Network's grant request for a broadband grant in NOFA#6 within Mills County, Iowa.

Mills County Board of Supervisors and citizens are united in recognizing the significant needs for and better broadband in our County. In an effort to better understand the broadband challenges, the Mills County Board of Supervisors through the Mills County Economic Development Foundation completed a Broadband Study in October of 2018. In the study, the County discovered there are serious broadband service limitations in the County that are not represented correctly on broadband maps. There are steps that have been taken to improve broadband with County investment, Western Iowa Networks investment and State grants, but there is more to do and we encourage the State to continue to help broadband improvement to continue to progress.

Western Iowa Networks has been a very good partner in taking steps to improve broadband in Mills County. It has been great to see their commitment to the County. This NOFA#6 grant will enable them to continue to bring excellent broadband where it needs to be improved. As a personal example, my house shows decent coverage – but the only broadband I can get is satellite. We need to keep improving broadband in Mills County and WIN has shown the commitment to take those steps. Approving their grant request for this NOFA#6 area will keep that progress moving.

The County has taken important steps to make improvements for the citizens of Mills County. Economic Development efforts have been strong and focused on bringing significant investment and business partners to the County. Particularly with the struggles the County has had with flooding, this is an important time to look forward and make Mills County stronger. We see this access to broadband grants as a significant factor in making this happen.

We ask you to approve Western Iowa Network's broadband infrastructure grant application for NOFA#6. We look forward to Western Iowa Networks continuing to make broadband more accessible in Mills County.

Sincerely,
Ken Demlow
Senior Project Manager
HR Green Fiber and Broadband
Mills County Resident

July 26, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program – Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Review Committee Members:

The City of Hastings is sending this letter in support of a funding request for a proposed fiber optic construction project which will include areas in and near Hastings, Iowa, being submitted by BTC, Inc., d/b/a Western Iowa Networks (WIN). This project is important to small rural communities like Hastings because we need the competitive edge and economic advantage which broadband delivers. WIN is willing to invest in the future of Hastings by building this broadband network.

Please give this request your full consideration. Broadband is a critical asset. Hastings needs to be a competitive player in attracting and retaining businesses and residents in our small rural community. WIN is an important partner in helping us expand and attract economic opportunities for rural Iowa. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ryan Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ryan" and last name "Campbell" clearly distinguishable.

City of Hastings



Mills County

Mills County Board of Supervisors
Richard Crouch · Carol Vinton · Lonnie Mayberry

Mills County Courthouse • 418 Sharp Street • Glenwood, IA 51534
Phone: (712) 527-4729 • Fax: (712) 527-1579 • Website: www.millscountyiowa.gov

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of Support for Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program

Dear Grant Program Review Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Western Iowa Network's grant request for a broadband grant in NOFA#6 within Mills County, Iowa.

Mills County Board of Supervisors and citizens are united in recognizing the significant needs for and better broadband in our County. In an effort to better understand the broadband challenges, the Mills County Board of Supervisors through the Mills County Economic Development Foundation completed a Broadband Study in October of 2018. In the study, the County discovered there are serious broadband service limitations in the County that are not represented correctly on current broadband maps.

Western Iowa Networks has been a very good partner in taking steps to improve broadband in Mills County. WIN has invested in some broadband infrastructure in Mills County, but there is considerably more need for broadband connectivity. This NOFA#6 grant will keep steps moving to continue to bring connectivity to people who currently need it.

The County has taken important steps to make improvements for the citizens of Mills County. Economic Development efforts have been strong and focused on bringing significant investment and business partners to the County. Particularly with the struggles the County has had with flooding, this is an important time to look forward and make Mills County stronger. We see this access to broadband grants as a significant factor in making this happen.

We ask you to approve Western Iowa Network's broadband infrastructure grant application and ask you to approve it. We look forward to Western Iowa Networks continuing to make broadband more accessible in Mills County.

Sincerely,

Mills County Board of Supervisors



Mills County Board of Supervisors
Richard Crouch · Carol Vinton · Lonnie Mayberry
Mills County Courthouse • 418 Sharp Street • Glenwood, IA 51534
Phone: (712) 527-4729 • Fax: (712) 527-1579 • Website: www.millscountyiowa.gov

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of Support for Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program

Dear Grant Program Review Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Western Iowa Network's grant request for a broadband grant in NOFA#6 within Mills County, Iowa.

Mills County Board of Supervisors and citizens are united in recognizing the significant needs for and better broadband in our County. In an effort to better understand the broadband challenges, the Mills County Board of Supervisors through the Mills County Economic Development Foundation completed a Broadband Study in October of 2018. In the study, the County discovered there are serious broadband service limitations in the County that are not represented correctly on current broadband maps.

Western Iowa Networks has been a very good partner in taking steps to improve broadband in Mills County. WIN has invested in some broadband infrastructure in Mills County, but there is considerably more need for broadband connectivity. This NOFA#6 grant will keep steps moving to continue to bring connectivity to people who currently need it.

The County has taken important steps to make improvements for the citizens of Mills County. Economic Development efforts have been strong and focused on bringing significant investment and business partners to the County. Particularly with the struggles the County has had with flooding, this is an important time to look forward and make Mills County stronger. We see this access to broadband grants as a significant factor in making this happen.

We ask you to approve Western Iowa Network's broadband infrastructure grant application and ask you to approve it. We look forward to Western Iowa Networks continuing to make broadband more accessible in Mills County.

Sincerely,

Mills County Board of Supervisors



Mills County Board of Supervisors

Richard Crouch · Carol Vinton · Lonnie Mayberry

Mills County Courthouse • 418 Sharp Street • Glenwood, IA 51534

Phone: (712) 527-4729 • Fax: (712) 527-1579 • Website: www.millscountyiowa.gov

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Letter of Support for Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program

Dear Grant Program Review Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Western Iowa Network's grant request for a broadband grant in NOFA#6 within Mills County, Iowa.

Mills County Board of Supervisors and citizens are united in recognizing the significant needs for and better broadband in our County. In an effort to better understand the broadband challenges, the Mills County Board of Supervisors through the Mills County Economic Development Foundation completed a Broadband Study in October of 2018. In the study, the County discovered there are serious broadband service limitations in the County that are not represented correctly on current broadband maps.

Western Iowa Networks has been a very good partner in taking steps to improve broadband in Mills County. WIN has invested in some broadband infrastructure in Mills County, but there is considerably more need for broadband connectivity. This NOFA#6 grant will keep steps moving to continue to bring connectivity to people who currently need it.

The County has taken important steps to make improvements for the citizens of Mills County. Economic Development efforts have been strong and focused on bringing significant investment and business partners to the County. Particularly with the struggles the County has had with flooding, this is an important time to look forward and make Mills County stronger. We see this access to broadband grants as a significant factor in making this happen.

We ask you to approve Western Iowa Network's broadband infrastructure grant application and ask you to approve it. We look forward to Western Iowa Networks continuing to make broadband more accessible in Mills County.

Sincerely,

Mills County Board of Supervisors



MILLS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

July 27, 2021

Dear Annette Dunns,

The Mills County Economic Development Foundation is excited to offer support to Western Iowa Networks for the Empower Rural Iowa Emergency Broadband Expansion Program (NOFA #006). Broadband expansion is fundamental to our mission of improving long-term economic sustainability in Mills County and ensuring a prosperous place to live, work and do business in western-Iowa.

Concerned about the state of broadband and telecommunications in the county, Mills County procured a rural broadband study conducted by the engineering firm, HR Green. The 2018 study reported that Mills County was underserved with large areas of the county lacking adequate broadband service. Currently, Glenwood ranks as the 530th most connected city in Iowa and approximately 2,000 people in Mills County do not have access to any wired internet, while fiber optic internet is available to just 8% if Mills County residents.

Mills County's large labor-shed within the Greater Omaha Metropolitan Statistical Area and proximity to Interstate-29 and multiple rail lines positions Mills County well for future economic development. Greater broadband in Mills County is needed to attract new businesses and retain the firms currently located in the county. The digital landscape and growing reliance on internet of things (IoT) based technology in supporting agriculture, logistics, manufacturing, and office operations hinges on reliable and accessible broadband.

Western Iowa Networks is committed to expanding their services in Mills County and the Rural Broadband Expansion Program will assist Western Iowa Network's growth in offering broadband to some of the 2,000 residents and businesses without broadband. Western Iowa Networks is a local partner with a proven track record of getting work done on time and in an efficient manner. Their past work with grants has been pivotal in Mills County economic development by providing essential services to households, businesses, and emergency responders operating in the county today.

The county and our business community partners are grateful for the opportunity to apply for these broadband funds and appreciate the IEDA considering Western Iowa Network's projects in Mills County. The funding has strong support across the county and there is dedicated plan in place to ensure the funds will be spent efficiently.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marco Floreani".

Marco Floreani
Executive Director, Economic Development

2222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102-4328402-444-6866 P
402-951-6517 Fwww.mapacog.org
mapa@mapacog.org

July 21, 2021

State of Iowa
Ms. Annette Dunn, Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn and Selection Committee:

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) is the Economic Development District/Council of Governments serving Pottawattamie and Mills Counties in Iowa, as well as the communities of Cass, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington Counties in Nebraska. On behalf of our Iowa counties, MAPA greatly appreciates the state's continued, forward-thinking approach to expand both accessibility and bandwidth capacity in both, the rural and metropolitan areas, further supporting critical and essential infrastructure.

I am writing today to express MAPA's support for Western Iowa Networks application for the Empower Rural Iowa (ERI) Broadband Grant. Over the past year the importance of access, affordability and high speed, reciprocal bandwidth capacity for virtually every aspect of personal to professional lives has become apparent. Activities such as education, healthcare, remote working, entrepreneurial ventures, online grocery delivery, to name a few, are now viewed as critical for residents and communities.

To this end, MAPA is currently collaborating on a Nebraska Broadband speed test to map internet upload and download speeds, and Mills and Pottawattamie Counties are included in this initiative. The software is a robust tool that assists providers, local and state leaders to identify and plan for priority unserved or underserved areas, and provide project cost estimates to support grant applications and other opportunities to expand broadband service.

Western Iowa Network has been working diligently with Mills and Pottawattamie Counties for several years, and recently with MAPA and other partners to ensure that our region moves forward to serve all our residents and businesses. We are supportive of these efforts to expand broadband service through the requested grant. This is a critical time to expand our rural areas' bandwidth capacity and accessibility...it is vital to retaining and growing our population, workforce and tax base.

Thank you for your proactive commitment and approach to advancing this necessary infrastructure to strengthen Iowa's potential. If you have any questions feel free to contact Shawanna Silvius at ssilvius@mapacog.org or, by phone, at 402-44-6866 ext. 3227.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Youell", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Greg Youell, Executive Director

CC: Mr. Matt Behrens, Chief Technology Officer



149 W. Broadway, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

July 12, 2021

State of Iowa
Annette Dunn, Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Annette and Selection Committee:

Thank you for continuing to lead Iowa's digital transformation to deliver citizen-centric solutions. I am writing today to express Advance Southwest Iowa Corporation's (the economic development group for Pottawattamie County) support for Western Iowa Networks application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant.

As you know, technology touches, guides and enhances every aspect of our daily professional and personal lives, and the need for fast (100up 100down), reliable and redundant fiber optic internet doesn't stop at major city lines, the need expands throughout the rural areas of Pottawattamie County as well. Western Iowa Networks has been working diligently over the last several years to ensure that no community goes unserved. The city of Treynor for instance, a rural town of only 900+ citizens just had a housing development with 29 new homes sell out. These homes will be in the \$300K-\$1M range and will most likely include several households that rely on internet for their jobs and children's education, Western Iowa Networks is dedicated to serving Treynor, Macedonia and the southeastern edge of Council Bluffs with astounding commitment that will allow our rural communities to continue to grow.

In closing, the world has experienced and been exposed to situations over the past 18-months that nobody could have predicted. We've all relied on our technology companies to keep us connected to loved ones, colleagues and clients during these difficult times and they haven't let us down. Advance enthusiastically supports Western Iowa Networks operation in Pottawattamie County and hopes that the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant committee sees their commitment and chooses to award them the requested grant.

I greatly appreciate you allowing me to share my perspective and support for this grant. Please feel free to call me at (402) 960-8505 should you have any questions.

Regards,
Paula D. Hazlewood
Paula D. Hazlewood
Executive Director



July 14, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

Chief Information Officer Dunn:

The Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce lends its full support to Western Iowa Networks Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program application.

Their proposed project will positively impact Southwest Iowa residents and communities and will also provide improved connectivity and service to portions of eastern and southeastern Council Bluffs.

With the increased appropriation provided the program this fiscal year, Western Iowa Networks is being aggressive and strategic in seeking assistance to expand its fiber broadband service into underserved areas, which is the exact purpose and objective of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program.

We know this is a priority of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and we have been proud to support their work in this field. The Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce, and chambers across the state, advocated strongly this Legislative Session to secure additional funding for broadband services through these very grants. We hope Western Iowa Networks application will be viewed favorably and receive an appropriate level of assistance, as they will then be able to leverage additional public and private dollars to have the largest possible impact on west and southwest Iowa.

Southwest Iowa can sometimes be overlooked, and underrepresented, in programs such as this and we are very pleased to see such a qualified and impactful application come from our region.

In closing, the Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce fully supports Western Iowa Networks application for Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program funds, and we hope you will agree this is a project that merits your investment.

Thank you for your consideration and service to the State of Iowa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Drew Kamp", is written over a horizontal line.

Drew Kamp
President & CEO
Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce



2700 College Road
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712.325.3376 w 800.432.5852

July 26, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Iowa Western Community College is in full support of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Program because of the impact this important grant initiative will have on residents of Southwest Iowa. Iowa Western's main campus in Council Bluff along with its centers in Clarinda, Shenandoah, Atlantic and Harlan rely heavily on Internet and other critical technology to offer first-class educational opportunities throughout Southwest Iowa.

Western Iowa Networks will be submitting a service provider application to deliver additional important technology resources throughout the region, and the college fully supports this company's grant application and those efforts moving forward. Western Iowa Networks is a leading communications company based in Breda, Iowa, and provides telephone, Internet, cellular, cable, and many complementary services to over 10,000 customers across the region.

The end result of these grant initiatives will be to help reduce or eliminate unserved or underserved areas in the state through the installation of Broadband Infrastructure, and Iowa Western believes the Governor and the State of Iowa are demonstrating key leadership in seeing this program through to completion.

Thank you,

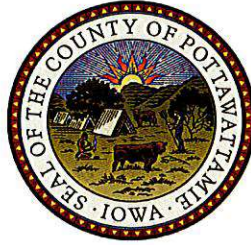
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dan', written over the printed name 'Dr. Dan Kinney'.

Dr. Dan Kinney

The **Division of Economic & Workforce Development** at Iowa Western Community College works with individuals, communities, and existing and emerging businesses in Southwest Iowa providing the services and programs they need to remain competitive and thrive.

Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors

227 South Sixth Street
Second Floor
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501
Phone: 712-328-5644
Fax: 712-328-5770



Scott A. Belt, Chairman
Tim Wichman, Chairman Pro Tem
Lynn Grobe
Justin Schultz
Brian Shea

Regular sessions held weekly, each Tuesday

Andrew Moats, Executive Assistant

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Annette Dunn, Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

The Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors is lending its support for the Iowa broadband grant application submitted by Western Iowa Networks under NOFA #006 of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Pottawattamie County is also pledging \$10,000 to help fund construction of a fiber-to-the-premise network in Pottawattamie County, contingent upon Western Iowa Networks receiving a grant award under this NOFA and proceeding with a construction project. The County understands many of its residents and businesses live and work in areas where adequate broadband is simply not available. This is especially true in rural areas. Western Iowa Networks is proposing to build a future-proof, fiber optics-based network to serve many of these areas in Pottawattamie County. Such a network will fill a critical need for residents of our County. As such, please give this application your full consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Belt
Chairman

Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

COURTHOUSE

SIDNEY, IOWA 51652

TELEPHONE (712) 374-2415

Control Number 418239

July 22, 2021

State of Iowa

Office of the Chief Information Officer

Attn: Annette Dunn, Chief Information Office

200 E. Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

The Fremont County Board of Supervisors is providing this letter in support of the Empower Rural Iowa broadband grant application being submitted by Western Iowa Networks. Access to reliable Internet service is critical to the rural areas of our County. Many areas of Fremont County remain unserved. Western Iowa Networks has a proven track record of building reliable networks in the areas where they provide service. Please give their application your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Hickey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fremont County Board of Supervisors

**PEOPLE. PROGRESS. PRIDE.****WEST POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY FARM BUREAU**

July 26, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Annette Dunn, Chief Information Office
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

This letter from the West Pottawattamie County Farm Bureau is being sent in support of the application of Western Iowa Networks in the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Today's agricultural operations are becoming more reliant on reliable Broadband service. Access to this type of service will become even more important as time goes on. Unfortunately, many farms and agricultural operations are in areas where no such reliable service is available. This is especially true in the rural areas of Pottawattamie County. Through their application, Western Iowa Networks is proposing to provide much faster and reliable Broadband services to these areas. Please give their application your full consideration.

Sincerely,

Luke Stamp - President
West Pottawattamie County Farm Bureau

July 13, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Anne Dunn
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

The Council Bluffs Municipal Airport is sending you this letter to support the broadband grant application being submitted by Western Iowa Networks, for round 6 of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Broadband service is also a critical support for economic development, which benefits and helps sustain all businesses in our area. Many of the surrounding areas still do not have access to reliable Broadband service, and Western Iowa Networks has been proactive in trying to expand fiber optic Broadband service to rural areas throughout Pottawattamie County. We ask you to give their application strong consideration. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Biller', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andy Biller – Executive Director

Council Bluffs Municipal Airport



July 6, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To whom it may concern:

The City of Treynor is providing this letter of support for the Iowa broadband grant application submitted by Western Iowa Networks. As a rapidly growing, small, rural town in Iowa, Treynor understands how critical Broadband service is to the citizens and businesses in our community, and how difficult it can be to find reliable Broadband service. Please give this application your full consideration. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Hoehn".

City of Treynor

Treynor Optimist Club

P.O. Box 354

Treynor Iowa, 51575

July 8, 2021



To:

State of Iowa

Office of the Chief Information Officer

200 E. Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

The Treynor Optimist Club of Treynor, Iowa would definitely want to go on record as favoring the expansion of internet broadband for the entire town of Treynor and the regional rural community. We see many benefits, and here are a few major ones our growing community needs:

Work from Home

The Covid-19 Pandemic forced many Treynor Residents to stop commuting into the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs. Many lost their jobs, but some could work via computer from home. However, current broadband was slow and difficult for many, and not up to business level of service. With improved broadband, these people could take advantage of the social/workplace changes post-pandemic, and continue to work from home, if they wish. This brings many advantages to our community and the world:

1. People can continue current jobs from home via internet
2. New people who could potentially work from home would find Treynor an attractive place to move into and work here. Our population (including school enrollment) would grow.
3. With people working from home, the number of auto commuters would greatly decrease as they would not drive into the cities for work. This would lower carbon emissions in the air, helping global warming concerns. It lowers the city's parking and traffic problems. It sustains our city streets and highways, improves traffic safety, and it reduces the commuters "rush hour" to and from work we currently endure. This also improves the net family income of our residents by greatly reducing their auto and gasoline costs. Since Treynor is a "bedroom community" for city workers, this commuting cost is a significant family expense.
4. With more parents working from home, less daycare is needed for child care in a family. We already have a child care shortage, and this expense could be greatly reduced. This also would greatly add to our resident's net family income.

Treynor Business

Businesses in Treynor need improved broadband capability to keep up with the growing business level of internet communications. Likewise, it will be difficult to expand our local business base without growing broadband levels. If we want to grow our local economic base and attract additional new business, we need the most modern (and expandable) internet service to date. Sadly, our current level of broadband is not modern.

Educational Opportunities

Treynor has its own school system, the Treynor Community School District. Education is greatly expanding the use of internet, and therefore the need for greater broadband. Our school utilized remote learning during the 2020 Covid pandemic, and discovered the problems encountered by both sending and receiving education into resident's homes. Also, with greater broadband, our students can utilize better internet connections to Community College, and even University offerings. A large number of Treynor High School Juniors and Seniors take classes at Iowa Western Community College for college credits. We definitely need reliable broadband for homework, research, and quality distance learning.

Public Safety

Treynor has an excellent, but small, Volunteer Fire Department. Part of the reason it is small is that our volunteers have traditionally commuted into the cities for jobs from Treynor. This leaves few people available for our EMT, Fire and Rescue, and traditional fire suppression functions during workdays. With greater broadband, and more people working in Treynor (at local businesses or working from home), the pool of available Fire Department volunteers greatly increases, so our emergency services increase.

Communications to Law Enforcement via internet would also greatly improve with greater broadband internet service in Treynor. We utilize the Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement. We have no Treynor-based officers. With improved broadband connections, remote cameras can be utilized to serve surveillance needs.

Conclusion

We definitely support expanded and modern broadband service to Treynor, and these are just a few of the important reasons why. Hopefully we have shown how improved internet connections can greatly impact several situations that our area residents are facing currently. Modernized broadband has a wide range of collateral effects that can greatly enhance our Treynor quality of life well beyond just internet connections.

Please support this Western Iowa Network grant application with all these reasons in mind.

Dale Willenborg
402-651-1634
Treynor Optimist Club President
Treynor, Iowa

TREYNOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL

102 East Main Street

Treynor, Iowa 51575-0369

PHONE: 712-487-3414 FAX: 712-487-3332

July 28, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to express support for Western Iowa Networks and their request for grant funding to improve broadband services in the Treynor community and surrounding area. As a school official, reliable broadband service is critical for distance learning and teaching. This is something that all of us learned during the 2020 school closure and the months that followed. As we continue to prepare for the possibility of future closures or other emergency situations, our priority is to stay connected to our students, teachers, and parents. Reliable broadband services are essential to continue communication with our school community. If you need more information or have questions, please contact me at 712-487-3414 or mhopkins@treynorcardinals.org.



Dr. Mark Hopkins

Superintendent

Treynor Community School

EAST MILLS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Control Number 418239

**58962 380th STREET
HASTINGS, IA 51540
PHONE (712) 624-8700
FAX (712) 624-8279
Superintendent – Tim Hood
School Business Official – Darla Hetzel
FEIN #45-0635563**

State of Iowa Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It May Concern:

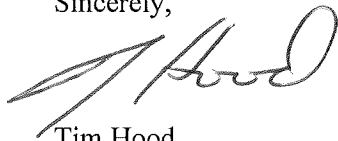
Broadband access in the East Mills Community School District continues to be an issue for students and faculty. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many families chose to keep students at home. While our school devices allowed for this to happen, many students did not have access to reliable, or adequate, broadband service. To meet the needs of these students, the district was required to lease 20 wireless hotspots from US Cellular to provide home Internet access for students. While this met the immediate need, it is not a service that the district can afford to provide on an ongoing basis.

The district also broadcast Wi-Fi signals to the schools' parking areas to provide access to students who were able to drive to the parking areas.

We are a smaller district serving several rural communities, and while Internet access within district buildings has been upgraded, broadband access within our various communities continues to be an issue. Because of all these reasons, we very much support Western Iowa Network's application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program since most of our district lies in the area they want to apply for.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Tim Hood,
Superintendent, East Mills CSD

47 of 65
City of Malvern
100 West 5th Street
P.O. Box 550
Malvern, IA 51551

Phone: 712-624-8282

malverncityclerk@malverniowa.org
malverndeputyclerk@malverniowa.org



Control Number 418239

MAYOR:
Fred A. Moreau

City Clerk: Mary Poort
Deputy Clerk: Kathy R.
Anderson

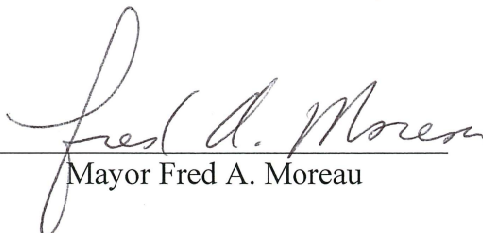
Street Supt.: Dave Hoose

City Council Members: Christina Androy, Bruce Breeding, Roger Johnson, Katelyn McGann, and Doug Shere

July 12, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

On behalf of the City of Malvern, I am writing to express my support for Western Iowa Networks' application for funding through the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant. Like many rural communities across Iowa, access to broadband can be too slow and unreliable to meet the needs of our citizens and the businesses. Western Iowa Networks has worked hard over the past several years to bring these services to Mills County and we are excited at the possibility of extending these services into the city of Malvern and surrounding areas.



Mayor Fred A. Moreau



501 Main St.
P.O. Box 584
Malvern, IA 51551
maba.info51551@gmail.com

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To whom it concerns:

We welcome and support the high-speed internet company of Western Iowa Network's expansion to our area and greatly need the service of quality, dependable high-speed internet. Many are in need of high-speed reliable internet services to compete and conduct business in our Mills County area.

This became even more evident when the pandemic kept us home for work and school and our everyday activities.

Work: There are many residents in the Mills County area who work from home. Having reliable high-speed internet is a must to remain productive and provide employers with secure, correct and timely projects and work flow. Down time is not acceptable and is what we currently have provided thru other sources. Loss of internet connection results in lost data and frustration when completing forms and information for many professions. Many medical professions and other businesses are offering "work from home" options for their employees when profitable and competitive. Communication is key and emails are a necessary part of doing business.

Education: More and more educational classes are completed online. This past year virtual learning was at an all-time high for our schools. Our East Mills Highschool students: 62 enrolled and earned 193 credit hours in the Spring 2021 semester alone. This is a great way for high school students to earn college credits and requires consistent internet.

Our schools also were faced with virtual learning in our district and several students' homes do not have reliable internet to allow them to succeed in learning from home. This is a problem for both students and parents in these households.

All households and Retirees: Having to contact more and more of their services thru use of the internet to do business is required to just pay your bills, update social security information, financial services, contact medical doctors and hospitals, filing tax returns and just about every aspect of our lives requires us to access the internet to complete information for some form of our daily lives. Ordering needed medical supplies, groceries, setting up appointment for cars, doctors, and many other professions is much the norm.

Family: Keeping in touch with loved ones thru face time, chat videos are the more enjoyable internet times we rely on. Families can keep in touch and enjoy building their relationships over distant miles between them.

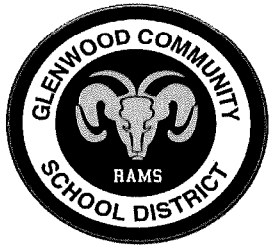
We welcome Western Iowa Network to provide reliable high-speed internet in our area.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Bowden

dotloop verified
07/23/21 7:04 AM CDT
Z59F-PYDW-WDF7-PEIZ

Stephanie Bowden
Malvern Area Betterment Association President SB/bb



Devin Embray
Superintendent

Tim Reinert
Director of Finance

Proud Past, Successful Present, Growing Future

103 Central, Suite 300 • Glenwood, IA 51534 • 712-527-9034 • Fax 712-527-4287

July 28, 2021

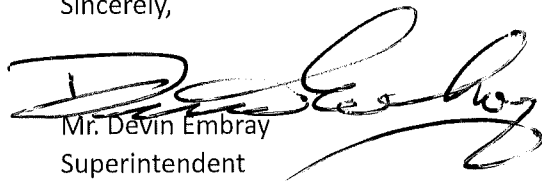
State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Attn: Annette Dunn, Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

I am providing this letter to support Western Iowa Networks and their Empower Rural Iowa Broadband grant application. WIN currently provides Broadband service to our school in Glenwood, as well as to other customers in the surrounding areas. Many of the students and some of our staff live in nearby areas which lack access to reliable Broadband service. This lack of reliable Broadband service was made even more clear during the COVID pandemic. This created difficulties for many of our students, staff, and their families, when they were trying to remotely connect.

Fixing this problem and providing everyone in our school district with access to more reliable service is a goal we are happy to support. Educational needs are changing and access to Broadband is becoming critical. Western Iowa Networks is proposing to build a network which will meet and exceed those needs for current and future students and staff in our School District. Awarding this grant would allow them to complete their building project and fill this critical need.

Sincerely,


Mr. Devin Embray
Superintendent
Glenwood Community School District



Sidney Community School District

2754 Knox Road; Box 609 • Sidney, Iowa 51652 • 712-374-2141

Tim Hood, Superintendent	thood@sidney.k12.ia.us
Trisha Glockel, Business Manager	tglockel@sidney.k12.ia.us
Shannon Wehling, PK-6 Principal	swehling@sidney.k12.ia.us
Kimberly Payne, High School Principal	kpayne@sidney.k12.ia.us
Randy Albright, Board Secretary	ralbright@sidney.k12.ia.us

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Alisha Ettleman, President; Matthew McLaren, Vice-President, Renee Johnson, Shad Smith, and Justin Travis

July 28, 2021

State of Iowa Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It May Concern:

Sidney Community School District, located in rural southwest Iowa, continues to have an issue with adequate broadband access for our students and staff. During COVID 19, we had many students choose to homeschool, and had great need for internet access. We also had staff who were able to work from home, teaching students online. Our school purchased wireless hot spots for their use through US Cellular if they did not have access to home internet. However, this option is not an affordable solution for our students' needs in the long term.

We also have one of the state's approved Online School academies, and serve students across the state with online classes. Again, our students need to have reliable internet service in order to fulfill this classroom setting opportunity.

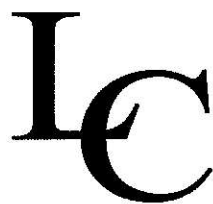
We are a smaller rural district, and while we have adequate internet service for our buildings, we firmly believe that our students need to have internet access at home as well, to provide them the opportunity to work from home if needed, or to complete homework in the evenings or on weekends. We very much support Western Iowa Network's application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program since most of our district lies in the area they are applying.

Thank you for your consideration on their behalf.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Trisha Glockel". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Trisha Glockel
School Business Manager



Lewis Central Community Schools

Educational Resource Center

4121 Harry Langdon Blvd.

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

(712) 366-8202

www.lewiscentral.org

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Sir or Madame,

Please accept this letter of support for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application for Western Iowa Networks. We are excited for the opportunity that this will provide for our students and staff living in the rural areas of our district.

Access to fast and reliable internet access is vital to the success of our students and staff, especially should we be required to shift to remote learning options during this pandemic. The area targeted by Western Iowa Networks has very limited services presently. Students in this area have limited access to affordable and reliable internet services.

Remote and online learning is becoming increasingly important in our system for supplementary educational services and for credit recovery. It is certainly here to stay. Students that lack access are falling behind and efforts like the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant are making access more equitable for our rural students.

Thank you for your consideration!

David Black
School Improvement Specialist
Lewis Central Community Schools



RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Serving the communities of Carson, Macedonia and Oakland



Dr. Timothy Mitchell, Superintendent
P.O. Box 218, Carson, Iowa 51525

Phone (712) 484-2212
Fax (712) 484-3957

Inspire -- Unify -- Achieve

July 28, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

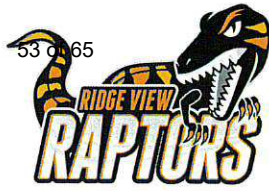
Dear Office of the Chief Information Officer:

I write on behalf of Riverside Community School District in support of the Western Iowa Networks proposal for a grant to fund increasing access to reliable Broadband services to areas of Pottawattamie County in Western Iowa. We strongly support this grant application and the focus on increasing access to Broadband services so our families can have reliable Broadband services to help them access Internet, communication tools and remote learning option, if needed, during the upcoming and future school years. As an organization deeply impacted by COVID-19 over the last year and a half the digital divide was truly apparent and identified as many rural Iowa students in Western Iowa and our district were unable to regularly and reliably connect with the school due to the lack of a reliable Broadband connection to the Internet.

Through this letter, we acknowledge our support in this effort to increase these services in Western Iowa and the benefits it could bring to our students and families. In the event this proposal is funded, we would work with Western Iowa Networks to help in any way to increase Broadband access to our students and families. We look forward to working with Western Iowa Networks and the benefits that could be achieved if they receive this grant funding.

Sincerely,

Dr. Timothy Mitchell, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Riverside Community School District



Jon Wiebers • Superintendent of Schools • 712-368-4353 • 712-275-4267

July 26, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Grant Review Committee:

Our school district would like to express its support of Western Iowa Networks and their Empower Rural Iowa Broadband grant application. Our school district covers a predominantly rural area, and many homes within this area still lack access to dependable Broadband service. This was abundantly clear during the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, when many teachers and students struggled to participate in remote learning due to poor Internet connections. Apart from the pandemic, our classrooms are becoming more connected all the time. Connectivity plays a major role in the future of education, and we risk leaving certain children behind due to their lack of access to adequate broadband.

The fiber network which Western Iowa Networks proposes to build will greatly help to meet this need, and we are in full support of the grant application. We hope you give it your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jon R. Wiebers, Superintendent
Schaller-Crestland School District
Galva-Holstein School District

**EAST SAC COUNTY CSD – HOME OF THE RAIDERS**

**Business Office/HS
801 Jackson Street, PO Box 110
Lake View, IA 51450
Phone: 712-665-5000
Fax: 712-665-5021
Jeff Kruse, Superintendent**

TO: STATE OF IOWA, OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, 200 E.
GRAND AVE., DES MOINES, IA 50309

FROM: JEFF KRUSE, EAST SAC COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

DATE: JULY 26, 2021

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

East Sac County Community School District supports Western Iowa Networks application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant program. As a consolidated school district, ESC provides educational opportunities for approximately 800 students for the communities of Auburn, Lake View, Sac City, and Wall Lake in the state. ESC is a rural school district experiencing declining enrollment and high poverty.

Citizens of East Sac County understand the importance of having a strong school system for the community. Some demographic information about the district includes the poverty rate as of April, 2021 of 31%, but with the federal lunch program offering free lunches to all students, several families did not complete the free and reduced application this year. Normally the district has over 40% of its students who qualify as free and reduced. This factor is contributory in the need for broadband availability in Auburn and surrounding areas.

In conclusion, the East Sac County Community School district fully supports the efforts of Western Iowa Networks as a positive addition to the infrastructure needs of the district.

Educationally,

Jeff Kruse, ESC Supt.

Kevin Litterer – ESC 9-12 Principal
Denny Olhausen – ESC 5-8 Principal
Sara Pibal – ESC PS-4 Principal

John Kraft – Bd. Sec./Business Manager
Sharon Stickrod – Human Resource Director

SOUTH CENTRAL CALHOUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Middle School – Central Office
1000 Tonawanda St
Rockwell City, IA 50579-1802
Phone 712.297.7341
Fax 712.297.7320

Home of the Titans
Brad Anderson,
Superintendent
www.scc.k12.ia.us

High School – Activities Director
709 W Main St
Lake City, IA 51449
Phone 712.464.7210
Fax 712.464.3724

July 22, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter to support the application of Western Iowa Networks in NOFA #6 of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Like many school districts in Iowa, numerous students and teachers in our district live in rural areas, which do not have access to a reliable Internet connection. This makes it very difficult to utilize their Internet service for remote learning, virtual classrooms, or even simply performing online research or submitting homework assignments online. This problem became critical during the pandemic last year, and we are still feeling the effects today.

Remote learning will play an important role in education going forward, and this need for reliable Internet service will only become worse if steps aren't taken to bridge the gap and find ways to provide reliable Internet connections to these unserved areas in our school district. The proposal of Western Iowa Networks to build a fiber optic network to help serve our school district would go a long way towards bridging this gap, and so we encourage you to strongly consider their grant application.

Sincerely,



Mr. Brad Anderson
Superintendent
South Central Calhoun Community School District



July 28, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

I am writing this letter to express my full support of Western Iowa Networks application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Sac County is a rural location with a population near 10,000 people. One goal of ours regarding economic development in our county is to make our communities amenity rich and attractive to live in. Rural broadband is certainly an important aspect of that.

I have personally had the pleasure of working with Western Iowa Networks for years toward expanding fiber optics and rural broadband across Sac County. Western Iowa Networks has taken the lead to make sure our community's residents and businesses have the kind of internet that we need to succeed.

In 2021 rural broadband is an extremely important tool that we utilize to help attract development. Without having it available new business will not locate in our county, residents will not choose to live here, and schools would quickly fall behind.

Our business need broadband to survive in this day of age with marketing and online shopping. We have to make sure that they have the connectivity needed to operate efficiently.

Rural broadband is extremely important for our rural schools now more than ever, especially with rural students needing to work from home at times. We need rural broadband so our schools can remain competitive and offer our students the same opportunities that are available in larger communities. Since the pandemic started we have seen the need for more rural broadband to help aid in student learning with more and more households forced into remote learning situations.

Seeking resources to support this project to help make it possible shows Western Iowa Networks commitment to make this project a success, and your monetary support would help them be one step closer to their goal.

I appreciate the foresight of Empower Rural Iowa in recognizing how this grant could positively affect our whole county and I offer my full support for this project.

Thank you,

Brandy Ripley
Executive Director

(712) 664-2940

bripley@sacountyiowa.com

108 Boyer St., PO Box 327 • Wall Lake, Iowa 51466

www.facebook.com/sacounty

www.SacCountyIowa.com



Sac County Board of Supervisors

Sac County Courthouse

100 NW State Street
Sac City, Iowa 50583

Phone (712) 662-7401

July 23, 2021

State of Iowa

Office of the Chief Information Officer

Attn: Annette Dunn, Chief Information Office

200 E. Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Ms. Dunn:

Fast and dependable Broadband service is critical to the residents and businesses of Sac County. Many addresses, especially in smaller towns and rural areas, still do not have access to a reliable Broadband connection. The Sac County Board of Supervisors is providing this letter of support for the application of Western Iowa Networks in the Empower Rural Iowa broadband grant program. Access to reliable Internet service is critical to the rural areas of our County. Western Iowa Networks provides fiber optic Broadband service to customers in the Auburn and Breda exchanges in southern Sac County, and they propose to build out their fiber network to additional customers in certain areas of rural Sac County, through the funding available in this grant program. Please give their application your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

Brent Wilhelm, Chairman

Sac County Board of Supervisors

CITY OF NEMAHA

ALLEN OLSON
MAYOR

SHIRLEY GILSON
CITY CLERK

CITY COUNCIL
NEIL WEDEKING
MATT QUEALY
AMANDA STOUT

July 23, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Nemaha lends its support to the application of Western Iowa Networks in the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Often, small towns, like Nemaha, are overlooked; and we are excited for the opportunity to receive the faster and more reliable internet service Western Iowa Networks could provide. Having this service available would be a great benefit to the residents and businesses in town, and it would help our small town survive and prosper, by making it easier to attract and retain people in town.

Please consider awarding their application.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

CITY OF NEMAHA



Allen Olson
Mayor

sjg

City of Auburn

209 Pine Street
PO Box 238
Auburn IA 51433
Phone 712-830-7226
E-mail tnuckolls@auburnia.net
www.auburniowa.net

MAYOR – Richard Heim
CLERK – Tammy Nuckolls

CITY ATTORNEY

George Blazek

COUNCILMEMBERS

Jane Barto
Cindy Finley
Rick Carlyle
Randy Schulte
Bob Theulen

July 26, 2021

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 East Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To Whom It May Concern:

In the fall of 2020 Western Iowa Networks/ BTC, Inc. completed broadband FTTH installation to the City of Auburn. Since that time, Auburn (pop 325) has seen unprecedented economic revitalization as a direct result of Western Iowa Networks/BTC, Inc. investment in our community. Several existing businesses have expanded and two (2) new retail establishments; a regional entertainment center with bar and restaurant and a full-service salon were constructed. Throughout the project, Western Iowa Networks/BTC, Inc. worked closely with our community to distribute information on construction plans, installation timelines, and affordable service packages. Broadband is a critical asset that Auburn now enjoys, and the results have been remarkable.

Please give the Western Iowa Networks/BTC, Inc. application your full consideration. Western Iowa Networks/BTC, Inc. has the customer focus, business structure, and experience to provide high quality, affordable broadband services to our underserved communities. The City of Auburn wholeheartedly supports the Western Iowa Networks/BTC, Inc. application for grant funding to expand broadband services to rural, unserved areas.

Sincerely,



Richard Heim, Mayor

City of Auburn

Auburn Hometown Pride Committee

Auburn, Iowa 51433

July 26th, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The Auburn Hometown Pride Committee is made up of community leaders whose goal is to improve our local recreational and economic opportunities. As a community we identified a number of projects that focused on economic development. By far the project with the highest priority was bringing broadband service to Auburn. We approached Western Iowa Networks and asked how we could make high speed internet via fiber a reality for our community. We conducted interest surveys and held community forums to assess needs. Even though grant funds were not available or an option at the time, Western Iowa Networks remained committed to work with our community to find a viable business solution. Through the collective efforts of many and Western Iowa Networks' focus on rural customer base, the installation of broadband in Auburn was completed in the fall of 2020.

Western Iowa Network's investment has been followed by a number of business expansions and main street retail and restaurant operations. Our community is extremely pleased with Western Iowa Network's services and their willingness to take a business risk to invest in rural Iowa. With the momentum from our broadband project the Auburn Hometown Pride Committee is working on connecting our local bicycling trail with nearby Sauk Rail Trail.

Western Iowa Networks is a high quality, customer focused communications service provider and their application for expanding broadband services deserves serious consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Finley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cindy" and last name "Finley" clearly distinguishable.

Cindy Finley, Chair

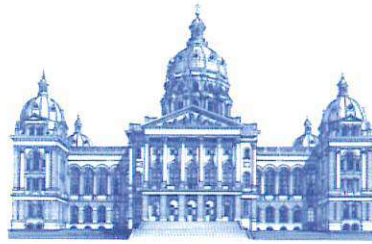
Auburn Hometown Pride Committee

TIM KRAAYENBRINK
STATE SENATOR
Fifth District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

HOME ADDRESS

1561 National Ave
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
H: (515) 576-0417
C: (515) 408-4770
O: (515) 576-0444
F: (515) 576-1638

tim.kraayenbrink@legis.iowa.gov
tim.kbrink@gmail.com



The Senate
State of Iowa
Eighty-seventh General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, IA 50319

COMMITTEES

Appropriations, *Vice Chair*
Education
Local Government
Transportation

Education Appropriations
Subcommittee, *Chair*

July 26, 2021

State of Iowa
Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

To whom it may concerns:

I am lending my support to the application of Western Iowa Networks in the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Fast and reliable broadband service is critical to the constituents in my district. Many rural areas in Iowa remain unserved or underserved. Awarding this application will help continue the expansion of broadband service into areas where it is needed. Please give their application strong consideration.

Thank you,

Senator Tim Kraayenbrink
Iowa State Senate, District 5

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tim Kraayenbrink", written in a cursive style.

DAN DAWSON

STATE SENATOR

Eighth District

Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

—

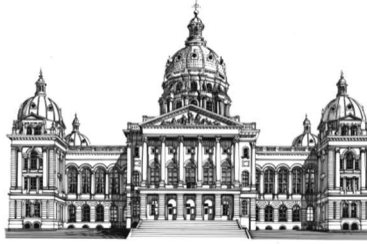
HOME ADDRESS

213 Upland Dr.

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

(712) 256-1199

dan.dawson@legis.iowa.gov

**The Senate**

State of Iowa

Eighty-eighth General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES

Ways and Means – Chair

Judiciary

State Government

Veteran Affairs

July 27, 2021

State of Iowa

Office of the Chief Information Officer

200 E. Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

To whom it may concern:

I would like to register my support for the application of Western Iowa Networks in the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Many of the constituents in my district, especially in rural areas, have no access to reliable broadband service. More funding is critical to make sure these areas are served. Western Iowa Networks proposes to build out to these unserved areas with a fiber Broadband network, and I fully support their efforts. Please give this application your full consideration.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, looping 'D' followed by a horizontal line.

Senator Dan Dawson

Iowa State Senate, District 8



DREES CO.

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Office
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program-Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319

We are a Mechanical and Electrical Contractor in Carroll, Iowa with over 60 employees. We also specialize in HVACR, temperature controls, fire & security systems, plumbing, and appliances. We have been in business for 87 years.

Drees Co. has been a customer of Western Iowa Networks for over 20 years. They provide us with many services that we use to grow our business; fiber optic broadband services, hosted VOIP service, TLAN network, backups, web hosting, email hosting, our office phone system and cell phone service.

Western Iowa Networks is an awesome company to do business with. They realize that if our system is down, we can't run our business. Their response time is outstanding. The customer service is top notch. They are very professional yet personal. We don't have to spend our time worrying about our network, communication, backups – they take care of it all. They are experts in their field allowing us to be experts in ours. We strongly recommend Western Iowa Networks!

Sincerely,

Drees Co.



Sara Drees

Vice President

Mechanical Contractor • Electrical Contractor • HVACR Sales & Service
Control Specialists • Appliances (Commercial & Residential)

Phone: (712) 792-2863 **Fax:** (712) 792-2869
Address: 609 N. Carroll Street, Carroll, IA 51401 **Website:** www.dreesco.com



MID-IOWA INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

Control Number 418239

603 U.S. HIGHWAY 30 WEST
P.O. BOX 217
CARROLL, IOWA 51401
PH: (712) 792-4324
FAX: (712) 792-4840



www.midiowateam.com

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Office
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program-Review Committee
Hoover State Office B
1305 E Walnut
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

To Whom it may concern,

I am Terry Axman President of Mid Iowa Insurance and Real Estate in Carroll, Iowa. We are an Insurance and Real Estate office founded in 1939. We have been a customer of Western Iowa Networks receiving both phone and internet service from them starting back in 2002. Our business is 100% depended on these two functions and the service that they have provided has been outstanding. They are a local company and understand the role that their services mean to our business.

Sincerely,



Terry Axman



State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Office

Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program-Review Committee

Hoover State Office B

1305 E Walnut

Des Moines, IA 50319

Hello, my business name is Stone Printing Office Supply located in Carroll, Iowa. We've been in business since 1946 covering the central and southwest part of Iowa selling office products, furniture and custom printed material. We've been a customer of Western Iowa Network for approximately 10 years using their telephone, wireless and high-speed internet services. WIN has provided us with the service and product to continue to seamlessly operate daily. The WIN team is very conscious of interrupted service and quick to respond to any issues we may have eliminating nearly any down time. We are very satisfied with the product and service provided by WIN. They have proven to us to be a reliable partner that we intend to do business with for a long period of time.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Weber". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "W".

John Weber

Stone Printing Office Supply

712.792.3901