

SECRETARY'S RECORD, NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska)	Application No. NUSF-92.50
Public Service Commission, on)	
its own motion, seeking to)	
administer the Nebraska)	
Universal Service Fund's)	
Broadband Program: Application)	GRANTED
to the Nebraska Broadband)	
Program received from Cox)	
Nebraska Telcom, LLC and 75)	
North Revitalization)	
Corporation/Adoption.)	Entered: December 13, 2016

BY THE COMMISSION:

By Application filed October 28, 2016, Cox Nebraska Telcom, LLC and 75 North Revitalization Corporation ("Applicants") jointly seek Nebraska Universal Service Fund support for a broadband adoption grant in the amount of \$126,880. Notice of this application appeared in the Daily Record, Omaha, Nebraska on November 2, 2016. No protests or petitions of formal intervention were filed by any other interested party. Although the application was filed outside the window designated by the Commission, the Commission believes it should give consideration to this application given the \$500,000 set aside for broadband adoption projects in 2016 has not been exhausted.

Description of the Proposed Project:

Cox Nebraska Telcom, LLC (Cox) has a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to operate as a competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) in Nebraska. This authority was granted by the Commission in C-1359 on December 10, 1996. Cox was later designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) allowing Cox to participate in the Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program (NTAP) in docket C-1693. Cox operates in the Omaha area and offers telephone, cable and Internet services to residential and business customers.

75 North Revitalization Corporation (75 North) was founded in 2011 to facilitate the creation of a healthy, sustainable, mixed-income community in the Highlander neighborhood in North Omaha. The goal of 75 North is to break the cycle of generational poverty and community deterioration by developing high quality, mixed-income housing, supporting the turnaround neighborhood school, and creating opportunities for increased health and wellness amenities in the Highlander neighborhood.

The Highlander neighborhood encompasses the former site of one of Omaha's largest public housing projects, Pleasant View Homes,

the 2009 demolition of which created a unique community revitalization opportunity that has become the foundation of 75 North's redevelopment strategy. In addition to the now vacant 23 acre parcel, 75 North has since acquired an additional 13 contiguous acres and 55 vacant lots surrounding the former Pleasant View Home site.

75 North seeks to create an environment in Highlander that is conducive to residents' ability to live full and enriched lives. High quality, innovative programming focusing on entrepreneurship, technology, the arts and music has largely been missing from the community. 75 North has created strategic partnerships with entities such as Creighton University, Metropolitan Community College and urban farming nonprofit Whispering Roots to bring community programming in the areas of the arts, health and wellness, job training, higher education, adult basic education and technology to the neighborhood. The hub of these activities will be housed in the 65,000 square foot Community Accelerator building. The Accelerator will establish a cultural anchor for the neighborhood and create a positive sense of place and identity. The Accelerator will be a natural gathering point for existing residents while also drawing visitors from outside the neighborhood through unique and creative events, spaces and programming and access to technology, all housed in a single destination. Construction on the Accelerator is underway and has an estimated completion date of mid-summer 2017.

The Applicants propose to use universal service support to bring free Wi-Fi service to north Omaha's Highlander neighborhood. Specifically, Cox seeks support to provide Wi-Fi to the Community Accelerator building and surrounding grounds developed by 75 North in the Highlander neighborhood for a three-year period. The amount requested is \$3,205/month for 36 months for the Wi-Fi service, for a total cost of \$115,380. In addition, \$9,500 will be incurred as a one-time charge to wire infrastructure to support the wireless solution and \$2,000 will be incurred as a one-time charge for the installation. This brings the total project cost to \$126,880 which is the amount being requested from the Commission. Speeds at a minimum of 4 Mbps downlink and 2 Mbps uplink, per user, will be provided although higher speeds could be achieved as technology evolves.

The Applicants state the free Wi-Fi service will enhance the delivery of education for teachers and students. It will increase business productivity and economic development. The Accelerator building will become a technology hub for all ages and income levels eliminating the economic adoption barriers that presently exist. The Applicants estimate the number of users could easily exceed 5,000 on an annual basis. Many, it is believed, would be new users.

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O P I N I O N A N D F I N D I N G S

The Commission set aside \$500,000 for broadband adoption projects to increase broadband adoption and usage in Nebraska. Because it is a pilot program, the Commission found it would address these applications on an ad hoc basis rather than utilizing a specific methodology for choosing projects. Four applications for adoption support were filed this year. The collective request for all three projects was less than \$500,000. Accordingly, the staff did not make a recommendation.

Based upon the information provided in the application, the Commission finds the application should be granted. The Commission approves support for the proposed project up to an amount of **\$126,880.00 or the actual cost** of the project whichever amount is lower. The Applicants shall submit detailed and accurate invoices and other documentation required by the Department prior to reimbursement for the supported project(s).

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that the above-captioned grant application be, and it is hereby granted as provided herein.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Applicant shall submit detailed and accurate invoices and other documentation required by the Department prior to reimbursement for the supported project(s).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Applicant shall use Nebraska Broadband Program support only for the purposes described in its application and authorized by the Commission.

ENTERED AND MADE EFFECTIVE at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 13th day of December, 2016.

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Donald L. Up

Crystal Goodrich

//s//Frank E. Landis
//s//Tim Schram

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Tim Schram
Chairman

ATTEST:

John R. [Signature]

Deputy Director