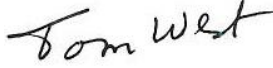

North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium

To: All Interested Parties in Mendocino County

From:

Tom West
NBNCBC Manager



Subject: **Proposed Project #1 to Begin Implementing the Mendocino County Broadband Plan: Round Valley/Covelo, Laytonville, Willits and Hopland**

Date: March 9, 2020

We would like to inform you of a proposed grant application being submitted April 1, 2020 to the CPUC's California Advanced Service Fund (CASF) Infrastructure Grant Program to deploy broadband infrastructure and provide services to the Unserved and Non-Served Households as well as businesses and anchor institutions in the Round Valley/Covelo, Laytonville, Willits and Hopland communities and surrounding areas. We had hoped to meet with you in person, but the press of time makes that impossible. We will attempt to schedule meetings in your community in late April or early May.

Background

For the past several years the County of Mendocino has been a member of the North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC) whose mission has been to facilitate the deployment of broadband infrastructure and services throughout the NBNCBC region (Marin, Mendocino, Napa and Sonoma) to meet the needs of Unserved and Non-Served communities. While we have been successful in assisting providers in Marin and Sonoma counties win CASF grants for three major projects, we have not found a provider interested and willing to pursue CASF grant funding for projects in Mendocino County. As a consequence, Mendocino County has the 8th lowest percentage (86.7%) broadband access of the 58 counties at the current California speed standards of 6 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload. The State's goal is 98% by region.

The Provider Named

Our NBNCBC Team, working on behalf of the county and its residents, has successfully identified a very capable and eager provider to undertake the implementation of the Mendocino Broadband Plan assuming we can be successful securing CASF grant funding for three projects over the next three years.

Hunter Communications

Hunter Communications is a Southern Oregon based Telecommunications Company, Competitive Local Exchange Carrier ((Phone Service) (CLEC)), and Internet Service Provider (ISP), with offices and facilities located throughout the State of Oregon and Northern California. Since 1994, Hunter Communications has been involved in a variety of cabling and installation services to customers in Oregon and throughout the Pacific Northwest.

From 1999-2000, Hunter built Southern Oregon's only local fiber optic Metropolitan Area Network (MAN), which currently satisfies high bandwidth and voice service needs throughout Lane, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, (N. CAL) Siskiyou, Humboldt and Shasta County. Hunter also maintains peering relationships with multiple national and international service providers, allowing Hunter to offer Ethernet transport services virtually anywhere in the world.

Hunter Communications' has abundant experience in telecommunications and now serves the largest, privately held fiber optic network in the State of Oregon, connecting Southern Oregon's Educational

Systems, Healthcare Facilities, Financial Institutions, City and County Governments, and businesses of all sizes to a dependable, commercial grade communications network and residential phone and Internet services.

Scope of the Three-Year Plan

As part of a previous CASF Regional Consortia planning grant the Mendocino Team of NBNCBC developed the ***Mendocino County Digital Infrastructure Plan: 2019:2025***. The goal of the plan is to:

“develop the digital infrastructure needed to have available and affordable high-speed internet access for 98% of households by 2025. High-speed Internet, for the purposes of this plan is defined as 100 megabits per second (mbps) download speed and 20 mbps upload speed. This is an ambitious goal, but critical for the economic future of Mendocino County and through advancements in technology it is possible.”

With a new CASF Regional Consortia planning grant NBNCBC’s Mendocino team has a three-year work plan focused on implementing the Digital Infrastructure Plan with three annual projects to be funded by grants from the CASF Infrastructure Program. These projects are being developed to deploy broadband infrastructure and service to meet the needs of Unserved and Non-Served communities throughout Mendocino. They include:

Project #1-Grant Application 2020 —Round Valley/Covelo, Laytonville, Willits and Hopland

Project #2-Grant Application 2021--- Leggett, unserved areas around Fort Bragg, and unserved areas around Caspar, Mendocino, Little River, Comptche, Albion, Manchester and Point Arena

Project #3-Grant Application 2022--- Brooktrails, Redwood Valley, unserved areas in Potter Valley, Boonville, Philo, Anchor Bay and unserved areas around Ukiah

When all three projects are completed not only will thousands of Unserved and Non-Served Households have broadband access there will also be a robust and diverse middle-mile backbone around the county, as depicted on the attached map.

Scope of Project #1

The second attached map conceptually represents our planned build-out to Round Valley/Covelo, Laytonville, Willits and Hopland to reach the Unserved and Non-Served households (HHs) in eligible census blocks, as defined by the CPUC. The elements of the “Project 1 Broadband Network” are still in final engineering and costing. Hunter hopes to serve nearly all of the approximately 3,525 Unserved and Non-Served households and 8,621 residents in these four communities and surrounding areas.

Hunter believes the best optical fiber cable construction solution all three projects will be underground, in compliance with the local building codes for underground utilities. This will be supplemented with wireless infrastructure to facilitate access to more difficult and/ or more distant user sites. Hunter will select a wireless provider to provide this service.

Request for Letters of Support

Please find enclosed a template for a Letter of Support (LOS). We would very much appreciate it if you would provide us a signed LOS by March 25, 2020 on your letterhead. You can simply use the template as is, modify it to reflect your specific interests or do one from scratch. Please send to Jeff Tyrrell, Community Foundation -- tyrrell@mcn.org

ATTACHMENTS---LOS template and two maps