

For Immediate Release

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NebraskaLink receives funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

(Lincoln, NE) – NebraskaLink, LLC announces its award of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). NTIA has awarded a BTOP grant in the amount of \$11,547,866 to NebraskaLink in order to build a self-healing optical network covering the state of Nebraska at a total cost of \$16,500,000. The project is expected to create 162 jobs.

According to Shawn Hanson, president and general manager of American Broadband, “American Broadband is pleased to be one of the founding members of NebraskaLink and a part of a project that is going to be this beneficial to the state of Nebraska. The opportunities of this state-of-the-art fiber network will have a significant impact to rural communities and economic development in those areas.”

The proposed network includes 1,979 miles of fiber optic cable. The proposed network includes existing and newly constructed fiber optic infrastructure that will provide broadband data services to 37 Middle Mile Service Areas throughout the State of Nebraska. The network will include the construction of fiber optic cable to directly connect 101 community anchor institutions across the state. In addition, NebraskaLink will be able to provide “Middle Mile” services to another 425 community anchor institutions by interconnecting with their existing last-mile service provider. Community anchor institutions include medical facilities, libraries, public safety entities, community colleges, K-12 schools, and higher education institutions.

Broadband access is a critical component of economic development and enhanced learning opportunities. Broadband services create the potential for increased business growth, public services, and public safety. The NebraskaLink network will be a carrier-grade optical fiber network that will facilitate a variety of interactive two-way broadband services, high speed internet access, and digital multimedia. NebraskaLink will provide the services community anchor institutions need today and create a system that can be easily upgraded in the future as broadband needs evolve. The NebraskaLink

network will provide a redundant and reliable “Middle Mile” infrastructure, which will be completed within a three year timeline; with services being deployed as phases of the network become complete.

“NebraskaLink is excited about the opportunity to develop a Nebraska-wide, state-of-the-art, fiber optic network and to make a positive contribution to the community, public services, and economic development. We look forward to working with our community anchor institutions, private business, and all stakeholders in making this network available to serve Nebraskans” said Paul Ludwick, Chief Executive Officer of NebraskaLink.

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