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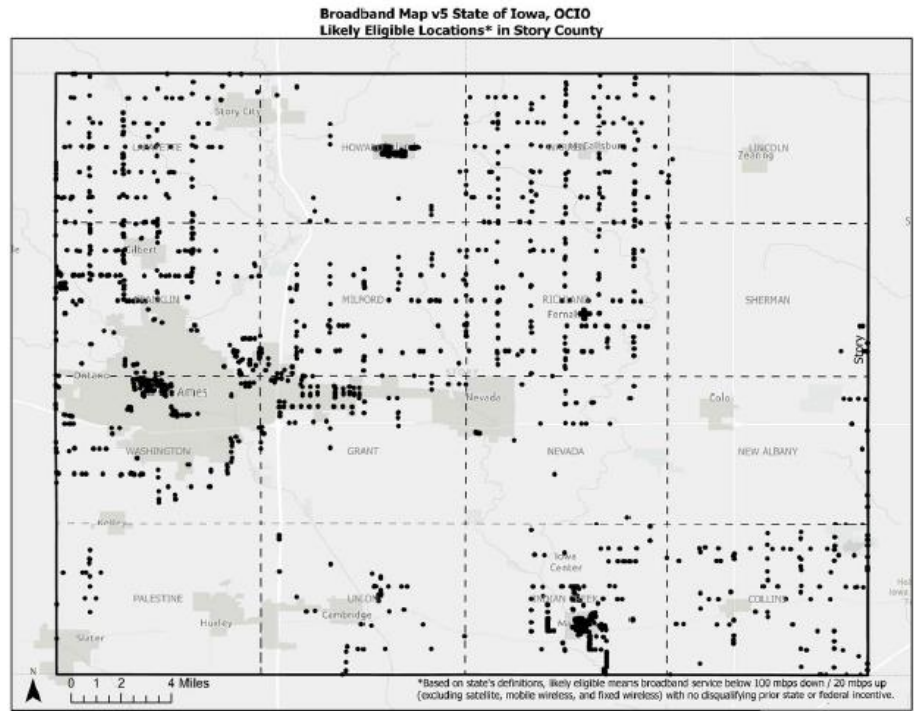
RE: Broadband Intervention Zone

To the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa:

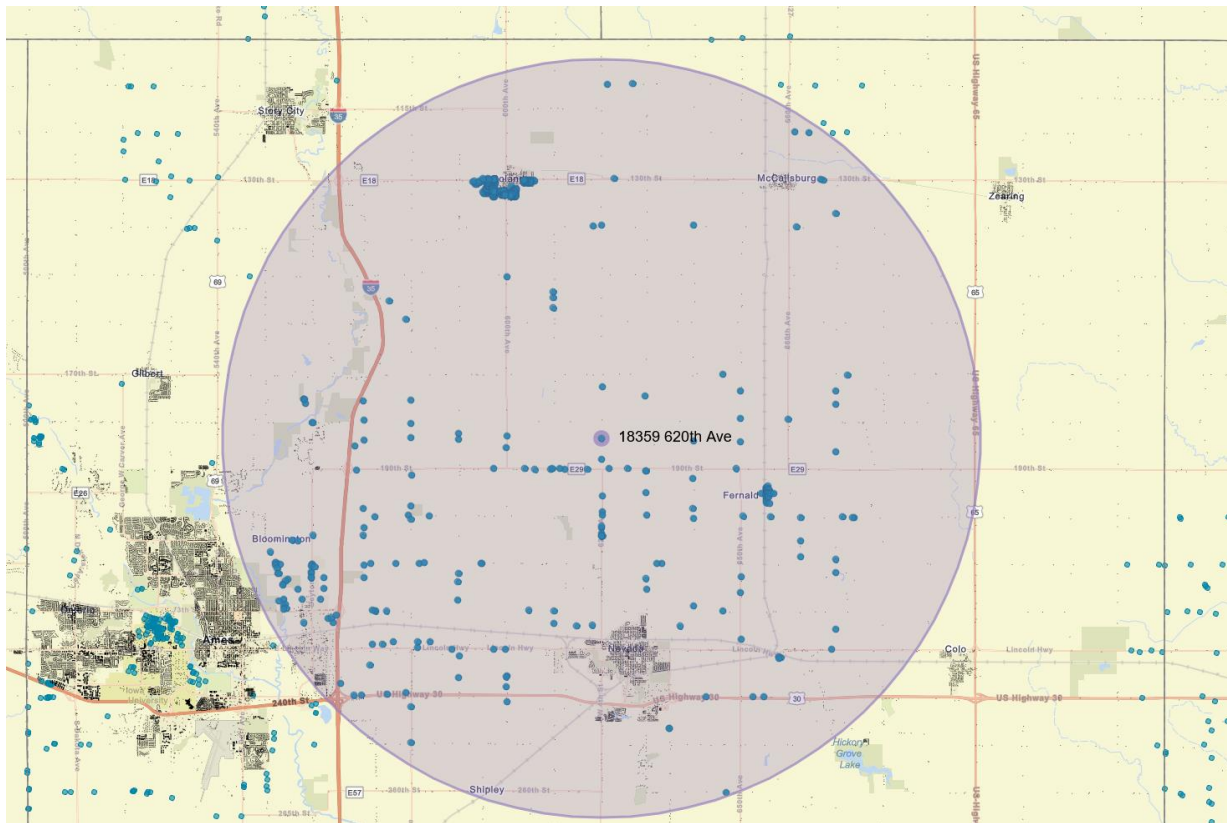
Providing adequate broadband to residents and businesses in our rural areas is one of Story County's highest priorities. In 2021 we formed a working group of county employees and others to spearhead our work on this issue. We reached out to our broadband providers and made strides with them in securing funding through the OCIO for broadband expansions.

But we still have several large areas of the Story County that are unserved or underserved. This is particularly important because Story County is one of a handful of counties in Iowa with significant population increase shown by the 2020 Census, and a good share of that growth is residential development and agriculture-related businesses in the unincorporated areas of the county. There are also many locations that may be too expensive to serve with fiber or other hard infrastructure, due to low population density.

The map to the right shows the unserved and underserved locations in Story County per your map on February 15 of this year. As you can see, a good share of these locations are in a contiguous area in north-central Story County (north of Nevada, extending up to County Road E18), and includes the townships of Nevada, Richland and Milford; the northern half of the townships of Grant and Nevada, and some locations in the township of Warren (we superimposed the township lines on this map for our planning purposes).



This next map is this same area from your website on March 15. Based on our discussions with Township Trustees and residents of our proposed intervention zone, we believe the February 15 map is more-nearly accurate.



This recent mapping, our participation in the Greater Des Moines Partnership’s Broadband Study and our discussions with residents have confirmed that we still have a long way to go toward our goal of ensuring that all Story County residents have access to affordable broadband services. The existing internet infrastructure is not up to standards, and the ripple effect stretches across nearly every aspect of our community. Not only is it a deterrent to prospective companies locating in Story County; it is also a hinderance to attracting and retaining a much-needed workforce. Furthermore, it detracts from our ability to educate our children, further handicapping our ability to grow workforce from within.

It is also important to note that these townships have low population densities, which make them difficult to serve, as follows:

Richland Township	344	Includes the unincorporated village of Fernald
Milford Township	553	No towns or villages
Warren Township	598	Includes the town of McCallsburg
Grant Township	1,692	Includes the unincorporated village of Shipley
Howard Township	2,387	Includes the town of Roland, to which fiber is being run. However, some rural locations remain unserved
Nevada Township	6,775	Includes part of Nevada, the second largest city in Story County, which is generally well-served. However, rural locations remain largely unserved.

NOTE: A township is approximately 36 square miles, so the resulting population densities (people, not households) are very low in the unincorporated areas.

The pandemic showed us how dependent our communities and economies are on an interconnected world. The longer we go without adequate internet service, the farther we fall behind and the harder it becomes to catch up.

Being designated as a Broadband Intervention Zone and participating in planning with the OCIO will ensure that broadband expansion can be completed in a planned and organized fashion that will make broadband accessible and affordable to all Story County residents.

We greatly appreciate the Office of the Chief Information Officer taking this step to qualify regions as Broadband Intervention Zones. Thank you for considering Story County for this designation.

Respectfully,

Latifah Faisal

Chair, Story County Board of Supervisors