



**STORY COUNTY
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March 28, 2023

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

RE: Broadband Intervention Zone – Boone/Story County application

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

It is my pleasure to offer this letter in support of Boone County's application to become a Broadband Intervention Zone. This application also includes Franklin and Lafayette townships in northwest Story County, which are adjacent to Boone County, and border County Road R-38, which is a primary north-south corridor for the growth area northwest of Ames.

There are numerous unserved and underserved locations in these two townships, as Boone County's Application to Qualify shows. The ripple effect stretches across nearly every aspect of our community. It is both a deterrent to prospective businesses locating in the area and detracts from residents' ability to educate their children and to access emergency and public safety information.

Two of the three barriers to broadband expansion included in the Invitation to Qualify apply to Lafayette township:

- Low population density (3,280 in an area of approximately 36 square miles, some of which is in the town of Story City, which is well-served. However, the rest of the township do not have adequate broadband)
- Higher proportion of lower income households

Franklin Township has different barriers. This township has a relatively high population density for a township, due to its proximity to Ames, with a good share of the population living in rural subdivisions. However, they are remarkably underserved, often by older technologies such as DSL that lack the capacity to provide modern speeds in rural settings. Many locations only have line-of-sight radio or satellite systems available, service tends to be low speed, unreliable and with high acquisition cost. Also, because some of the rural subdivision lots are heavily treed, line-of-sight is often difficult or impossible to achieve. Lastly, because the City of Ames does not have in their plans to annex these subdivisions, the larger companies that provide broadband within the city are not likely to expand into the unincorporated areas.

These factors, while different, make it unlikely that residents of either township will receive adequate broadband services without the contribution of governmental funding.

Approving this zone would allow Boone and Story Counties to work jointly with a service provider or providers in providing adequate broadband to an area which is of primary importance to both counties.

I greatly appreciate the Office of the Chief Information Officer taking this step to qualify regions as Broadband Intervention Zones. I would ask you to please grant Boone County's request to include this area in a Broadband Intervention Zone.

Respectfully,

Latifah Faisal, Chair

Story County Board of Supervisors