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CTC Receives DEED Award to Expand Broadband Internet

Brainerd, MN – Today, the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced over \$23 million in border-to-border broadband grants to fund several projects throughout Minnesota. The projects will provide internet access for over 10,900 businesses, homes, and community institutions.

Consolidated Telephone Company (CTC) was one of the grant recipients, receiving \$830,587 in funding. This will be combined with matching funds from CTC, Sourewell, and Stan Dobosenski, a resident and small business owner in the project area.

This fiber-to-the-home project will include 399 passings in portions of Fort Ripley Township in Morrison County and portions of St. Mathias, Oak Lawn, and West Crow Wing Unorganized Townships in Crow Wing County. When successfully completed, residents and businesses will have access to internet with speeds of up to 1Gig.

“It’s an honor to receive this award as it helps to further our mission of connecting more communities,” said Kristi Westbrook, CEO and General Manager at CTC. “We’re confident that better internet services will enhance the lives of everyone that lives, works, and vacations in this area.”

Once complete, the project will allow rural residents to work from home, safely stay in their homes longer, and increase communication options for area businesses and residents... all while boosting economic development to the area. Broadband will bring enhanced

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employment opportunities and educational experiences to the thousands of rural residents that call this area home.

Created in 2014, the Border to Border Broadband Development Grant Program provides state resources that help make the financial case for new and existing providers to invest in building broadband infrastructure into unserved and underserved areas of the state. In the 2019 legislative session, \$20 million was appropriated for each of the next two years. Grants were awarded through a competitive grant application process. More information about the program is available at <https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/grant-program/>.

CTC is a technology advisor and full service telecommunications cooperative based in Brainerd, MN. Formed in 1952, CTC has grown into a complete communications provider offering telephone, high-speed internet, digital television, and IT services to businesses and individuals throughout central and northern Minnesota. More information about CTC can be found at www.goctc.com.

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