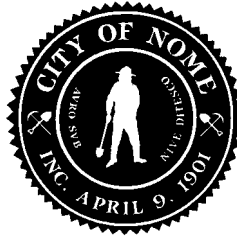


Mayor
John K. Handeland
Manager
Glenn Steckman
Clerk
Bryant Hammond



Nome City Council
Jerald Brown
Doug Johnson
Mark Johnson
Adam Martinson
Jennifer Reader
Meghan Sigvanna Topkok

102 Division St. • P.O. Box 281
Nome, Alaska 99762
Phone (907) 443-6663
Fax (907) 443-5345

August 31, 2021

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
U.S. Department of Commerce

Re: Support for Broadband Funding for
the Nome Eskimo Community Tribe

To Whom it May Concern:

The City of Nome is happy to endorse the application the Nome Eskimo Community for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program grant currently being made available.

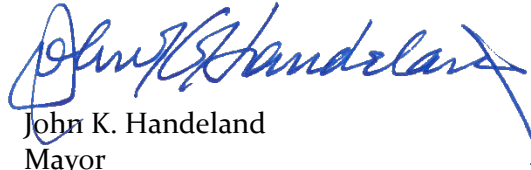
The Nome Eskimo Community (NEC) tribe is a federally recognized tribe, is the tribal governing body of Nome, Alaska. As NEC's members are also Nome residents, NEC and the City work cooperatively on many initiatives for the benefit of the community. NEC represents the political, social, and cultural interests of our tribal membership. In addition, NEC provides social services and related programs to improve the quality of life for more than 3,300 tribal members.

Tribal lands, especially the residential portions in and around Nome, Alaska are underserved, undeveloped and unserved. Basic everyday living requires reliable, high-speed internet connections for remote healthcare, telework, entrepreneurship activities, remote learning, and tribal and business communications, service which is not adequate or not currently available to tribal residents. Presently the only unlimited monthly internet package costs over \$400/month, an amount equivalent to water, wastewater, electric and refuse utilities combined. One can easily appreciate this level of household income expenditures is not affordable on top of high housing and basic living necessities. Many tribal residents reside outside of city limits where access to internet is limited or simply not available. This became much more of a hindrance when schools and businesses shut down due to local Covid-related health mandates during 2020. Many students and families, especially those who are low income eligible, had limited or no access to internet and suffered as a result.

There is also a safety need for tribal residents. A significant portion of members' property has spotty cell service and capacity is not available throughout tribal lands to support security systems for the home. Additionally, with potentially more catastrophic consequences, is that first responders are hampered by poor communication coverage resulting in tribal residents being subjected to delays or less-than-effective emergency or law enforcement support. With adequate broadband, cell phone coverage would be assured, enabling calls for help as well as efficient communications between first responders and/or headquarters.

The City of Nome supports the end goal of eradicating the digital divide to make Nome, Alaska a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of his or her circumstances. We rise with and commend the Tribe for pursuing your program that will address all of the aforementioned issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John K. Handeland", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

John K. Handeland
Mayor