EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In a funding partnership with the State of Indiana, Comcast of Indiana/ Michigan/ Pennsylvania, LLC or its subsidiary, will extend service to 89 unserved homes in unincorporated Kankakee and Scipio Townships in LaPorte County. This Next Level Connections project will enable Comcast to improve unserved levels up to 1 gigabits per second down and 35 megabits up by May 31, 2020. The proposed project area will have access to some of the fastest and most reliable broadband speeds available nationwide. Providing broadband service to this unserved area of LaPorte County will benefit the entire area. Having access to broadband will enable residents to bridge the local skills gap, expand their career pathway, and improve their overall quality of life. Residents will be better able to engage in on-line sales and marketing, banking, telemedicine, improve and increase educational opportunities for students, provide for the use of smart devices in the home; increasing efficiencies for lighting and heating, and encourage the use of technology by the older population. Total eligible project cost is $260,000. Applicant match is $163,195.

The proposed project area includes 89 homes in and around Fail Road and Smithfield Lane in unincorporated LaPorte County. The number of households passed in the proposed project area is 89.

While Comcast continues to review opportunities to expand our network, as the Broadband Grant Program recognizes, there are areas in the State that do not fit the traditional economic model of prudent investment. The Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program has stimulated opportunities to serve communities currently unserved by broadband service. With the Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program’s support, the economics of deploying broadband infrastructure to these areas make the project feasible, which would allow the State and Comcast to work together to reach a common goal – bringing best in-class communications services to this community. Comcast proposes to deploy new broadband plant in portions of Kankakee and Scipio Townships in unincorporated LaPorte County. Comcast commits to maintain our Network in a state of good operation and repair consistent with applicable industry standards as exemplified by the multiple Operator of the Year awards we’ve earned and numerous patents for award-winning technology that we hold.

Comcast has changed the Internet experience for millions of customers by providing some of the fastest and most reliable Internet service in the nation. Our network structure offers the most flexibility now and into the future. We can surgically add speed, capacity and fiber to our networks in a smart and economically feasible way. Our existing network is built for innovation and will only get better as new technologies emerge.

For businesses to retain and attract the necessary workforce, it is critical for communities to have access to fast and reliable Internet. Comcast has increased its speeds 17 times over the past 17 years. This new workforce needs high-speed Internet access. With up to 1 Gbps Internet speeds becoming available to entrepreneurs, it provides residents access to vast online resources and worldwide marketplace.

Providing broadband service to this unserved area will enable teleworkers to engage in on-line sales and marketing and increase the area’s attractiveness for entrepreneurs and start-up entities, create economic development opportunities and help in the creation and retention of
jobs. With up to 1 Gbps Internet speeds becoming available to home-based businesses and entrepreneurs, it opens Kankakee and Scipio Township residents to vast online resources and a worldwide marketplace. Having access to broadband will allow residents to bridge the local skills gap, expand their career pathway, and improve the quality of life for the surrounding areas.

Comcast promotes broadband adoption by working with a network of non-profit, government, school district, and library partners to distribute flyers and raise awareness about the digital divide. This work is embedded in the community and includes being present at back-to-school nights, hosting meetings with Title 1 schools and families, and attending school and community events. In the state of Indiana alone, the program has connected more than 176,000 eligible low-income Hoosiers in 44,000 households. Expanding our network to the proposed project area would provide eligible residents access to Internet Essentials.

*Internet Essentials* from Comcast is the nation’s largest and most comprehensive high-speed Internet adoption program for low-income Americans. It was launched in 2011 and provides low-cost, high-speed Internet service for $9.95 per month plus tax; the option to purchase an Internet-ready computer for under $150; and multiple options to access free digital literacy training in print, online, and in person. Through Internet Essentials and its tens of thousands of partners, Comcast has connected more than 6 million low-income Americans in 1.5 million households to the power of the Internet in their homes. More information can be found at www.internetessentials.com.