## 1. Project Description and Timeline

### The nature of the project improvements:

**Response:** The nature and scope of the project improvements is to build the required infrastructure to provide high speed internet to rural underserved and unserved Mohave County areas in and around Colorado City, Arizona. Residential and business internet packages ranging from 25 Megabit to 300 Megabit, with specialized packages available by request of end user up to 1 Gigabit. Our first priority in the infrastructure buildout process is to light up the most underserved areas, in particular areas that house families in need of social program support, remote education support, and telehealth services. In addition to providing internet to the underserved and unserved, we will be providing competitive pricing and the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program to bring affordable options to residents covered by the infrastructure without sacrificing the quality of broadband made available.

### How the proposed project addresses the broadband needs of the area(s) that it serves:

**Response:** By utilizing existing fiber infrastructure we will be building out a microwave and millimeter wave network to comprehensively cover the entire region with priority on the underserved and unserved residents in and around Colorado City, Arizona and Northern Mohave County.

### Type of construction to be undertaken (aerial or underground):

**Response:** Both, only aerial construction would be funded by ABDG-22.

### Number of anchor institutions served:

**Response:** 95

### Number of households served:

**Response:** Initial coverage plan to be built with funding has the capacity to cover 2,000 structures both residential and commercial.

### Number of businesses served:

**Response:** 125

### Total population served:

**Response:** Coverage area is estimated to have 6,136 residents from Colorado City to Fredonia, Arizona based upon local data and the census in 2019. 2019 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates with the Federal Government reflect 4,836 population in Colorado City alone. Taking into account the gross errors made on the 2020 census and calculating based upon growth in school enrollment and housing developments over the past two years, we estimate somewhere around 5,100 people living in the greater Colorado City area. However, this infrastructure development is designed to grow beyond the immediate capacity to support 2,000 structures both residential and business to ensure that the future needs for internet, are quickly and feasibly available. This population data has been calculated in part by local guidance and the US Census per 2019 ACS Demographic Reports.

### The anticipated economic development benefit achieved by construction of such improvements:

**Response:** In 2021 there are large regions of the community that do not currently have access to the internet, and or affordable access to the internet. This is perpetuating the trap of under educated, and higher poverty levels in the community. Many of the local community social support groups are working to bring new businesses to the area, however the risk of opening a new business in a town with limited digital age technology is high. This basic service will enable this area to compete for remote workers,

new businesses, remote learning, and everything that comes from reliable and easily obtainable broadband. Broadband is the necessary foundation for growth in communities that struggle to meet modern day demands. Broadband upgrades to a community inherently mean growth and development in many ways.

### Total miles of fiber to be installed (if applicable):

**Response:** 0 Miles of Fiber to be installed from funding. 17 miles of fiber as part of our in-kind match to complete the backhaul needs to support the microwave point to point system.

### Location of new fiber (aerial, underground or both?):

**Response:** We are pulling fiber from the nearest middle mile meeting point which is 17 miles North of Colorado City. The Town of Colorado City owns the utility right of ways on the track we will be using thus our partnership with the Town of Colorado City has been key in securing the middle mile/backhaul fiber connectivity. This portion of the project will be financed by a percentage of our matching funds. We have not included maps for this portion of the project as it is being funded separately. We can provide additional mapping or information on this if requested.

### Stated commitment to operate and maintain the network for a minimum of five (5) years upon completion of the improvements:

**Response:** Air Comm is fully committed to operating and maintaining the network on a physical infrastructure level and local service provider for a minimum of 5 years. Our future growth plans indicate that we intend to serve the community for the foreseeable future well beyond 5 years.

### The party or parties that will perform the infrastructure construction (if known):

**Response:** Air Comm and the Town of Colorado City Utility team.

### The intended uses of the ABDG Rural/Urban funds in respect to the construction or planning:

**Response:** The funds will be used to construct infrastructure, Microwave Point to Point, for major upgrades the underserved and completely unserved regions of Northern Mohave County/Greater Colorado City, Arizona area.

### The specific information required under Section 1.4:

**Response:** Air Comm is not currently applying for or pending approval on any Federal Funding for the Infrastructure project in Mohave County. The FY2022 Arizona Broadband Development Grant (ABDG-22) is the only State or Federal funding opportunity currently being pursued/pending by Air Comm for this region of Northern Mohave County, greater Colorado City, Arizona area.

### A timeline for completion of the infrastructure improvements:

**Response:** Upon award of grant funding by the Arizona Commerce Authority, we will immediately begin the procurement process of infrastructure hardware and any such permitting required by the Town of Colorado City. Dependent on supply chain issues, we anticipate being able to light up the first track of underserved residents with broadband access in 6 months, and completing the funded project in its entirety as funded by the ABDG-22 by 14 months.

### Engineering analysis

**Response:** Through careful analysis of topographical, satellite, GIS parcel maps, and census information, we have selected equipment design and placement based on maximum coverage effectiveness while maintaining a high quality of service. Please see attached tower engineering for additional specs.

### Qualifications of the vendors/contractors:

**Response:** With nearly fifty years in the telecommunications industry serving a wide range of public and private sector businesses and citizens, Air Comm's in house team partnered with the City of Colorado City's utility management and permitting group is equip and qualified to complete this infrastructure project from start to finish. Please see attached resume's for key design personnel and company staffing information for company statistics.

### Background of the project:

**Response:** For the past several decades, Colorado City, Arizona and its surrounding communities have been dramatically underserved and underfunded in many capacities. The community has faced challenges unlike any other in the state. This community has evolved to overcome its history, and grown into a region on the cusp of an economic boom. Several non-profit organizations and individual advocates have been a driving force in supporting this region and its needs for a range of investment. As it stands, Colorado City's communications and wireless infrastructure has been decades behind the rest of the state. This has negatively impacted education levels, poverty levels, first responders and law enforcement's safety, healthcare, the ability for businesses to grow, and the competitive work force. Many people work across the state border in places such as St. George and Hurricane, Utah because that is where the digital age is up to date thus taking positive economic impactors out of Arizona. Much of the available broadband is either not up to reasonable speed standards, too expensive for the financial demographic, or not currently available as the infrastructure is inadequate or non-existent. As a representative of Air Comm, Camille Butler has worked for the past two years to better understand this region, its needs, and advocate for the long overdue upgrades for private citizens and law enforcement telecommunications. We have built relationships with local town management, local law enforcement, UZONA Chamber, non-profit community support groups, health care providers, and many more to understand the obstacles the region still faces. We firmly believe that being awarded the funding we are applying for will be a catalyst for Northern Mohave County. The positive impact this will make on the state will go far beyond internet to the home, as there are several pending projects on a statewide public safety level that could be completed by bringing this area into the 21st century of connectivity and capabilities. The economic impact this funding will make is compounding, as it positively affects education, access to social programs and government assistance programs, minority groups, families living in poverty and more. It also opens the door to employment opportunities otherwise not available, and is the foundation for sustainable growth in the area. Investing in this project to bridge the digital divide means investing in a region of the state with uncapped potential and propelling them toward long overdue successes.

### Ways in which the project will improve redundancy and reliability, if any:

**Response:** This area has limited access to the internet in the most rapidly growing areas, and the available internet is high cost and low bandwidth, and unaffordable by a large percentage of the population. By having an additional provider that is specifically building a solution to match the area, all residents and businesses will be able to have access to the data needs and speeds that are required for school, conferencing, remote work, telehealth, public safety service, and internal services. This provides prioritized coverage to areas not currently served or minimally served and provides competitive pricing to lower the overall cost available to residents and businesses creating a fair market option for the first time in decades.

### The nature of the improvements:

**Response:** Complete and total coverage of the entire populated area so that the regions both underserved and unserved have high quality and affordable access to broadband. The existing internet in the area does not cover the entire populated area leaving many students, elderly, and young adults without access to the internet. By investing in the infrastructure of the region, in less than a year there will be reliable internet available to homes and business. This will open the door to expanded education, remote earned income, lifesaving telehealth resources, and so much more that is dependent on being

connected to the world via broadband.

### How the proposed project addresses the broadband needs of the area(s) that it serves:

**Response:** This area is in constant development and growth over the last decade. Colorado City and the surrounding communities are on the brink of an economic boom that is only being stifled by lack of digital age resources such as reliable and affordable broadband. By providing a cost effective system that has high bandwidth and affordable pricing to the customer, we are tackling the underserved and unserved needs both geographically and economically while taking financial and land demographics into highest consideration. Being able to have a multitude of devices for work and education all connected at the same time will be vital in helping this area compete economically and sustainably in the future. This is quite literally the infrastructure for successful growth in a severely and historically underserved area in more than one way.

Air Comm is committed to completing the project as proposed in this submission with ABDG-22 funding as requested and a [redacted] cash match as required by the guidelines of this grant application. Please see Section - *Documents of Commitments* for a signed Commitment Statement from Air Comm's President, Trent Griffin as well as a letter of support and partnership with the Town of Colorado City for additional commitments.

**Please note, without being awarded the requested funding in this grant application for ABDG-22 this would completely stop all progress in our development of upgraded broadband infrastructure as we would then seek to pursue other funding made available by either State or Federal Government when the opportunity may arise. By receiving the requested funding this would provide the fastest and most effective way to support the completion of the much needed implementation of broadband upgrades to this extremely underserved and unserved region of rural Arizona.**

## 2. Project Description and Timeline - Development

### The nature and scope of the project:

**Response:** The nature and scope of the project is to build the required infrastructure to provide high speed internet to rural underserved and unserved Mohave County areas in and around Colorado City, Arizona. Residential and business internet packages ranging from 25 Megabit to 300 Megabit, with specialized packages available by request of end user up to 1 Gigabit. Our first priority in the infrastructure buildout process is to light up the most underserved areas, in particular areas that house families in need of social program support, remote education support, and telehealth services. In addition to providing internet to the underserved and unserved, we will be providing competitive pricing and the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program to bring affordable options to residents covered by the infrastructure without sacrificing the quality of broadband made available.

### Type of technology to be utilized:

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### Engineering analysis

**Response:** Through careful analysis of topographical, satellite, GIS parcel maps, and census information, we have selected equipment design and placement based on maximum coverage effectiveness while maintaining a high quality of service. Please see attached tower engineering for additional specs.

### Project approach

**Response:** Air comm feels confident that our Project Narrative responses clearly describes our Project Approach for the FY 2022 Arizona Broadband Development Grant Application (ABDG-22).

### Background of the project:

**Response:** For the past several decades, Colorado City, Arizona and its surrounding communities have been dramatically underserved and underfunded in many capacities. The community has faced challenges unlike any other in the state. This community has evolved to overcome its history, and grown into a region on the cusp of an economic boom. Several non-profit organizations and individual advocates have been a driving force in supporting this region and its needs for a range of investment. As it stands, Colorado City's communications and wireless infrastructure has been decades behind the rest of the state. This has negatively impacted education levels, poverty levels, first responders and law enforcement's safety, healthcare, the ability for businesses to grow, and the competitive work force. Many people work across the state border in places such as St. George and Hurricane, Utah because that is where the digital age is up to date thus taking positive economic impactors out of Arizona.

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### Population to be served:

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### Number of households served:

**Response:** Initial coverage plan to be built with funding has the capacity to cover 2,000 structures both residential and commercial.

### Number of anchor institutions served:

**Response:** 95

### Number of businesses served:

**Response:** 125

### Ways in which the project will improve redundancy and reliability, if any:

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## 3. Other Project Outcomes

### Air Comm's Experience in the FY2022 Arizona Broadband Development Grant Project Area (ABDG-22)

For the past decade, Air Comm has provided public safety communications to the wider Colorado City and the City of Hildale areas. We want to help the entire community by providing low-cost, high-quality internet connection, through a Microwave Point-to-Point system, to people and businesses in need of connectivity.

Air Comm has invested research time and efforts over the past two years getting familiar with the area, people, and businesses within the communities. We are earnest in continuing to support the needs of the area and communities beyond in the coming years. Air Comm has been a proponent for telecommunication upgrades on local and state levels for the region over the last two years to provide support on the upgrades needed on public safety and private communications sectors. Our industry reputation is built on putting our customers first and developing solutions that make the most sense for them, rather than simply delivering a one-size-fits-all corporate product. We are confident in our capacity to not only supply solutions, but also provide long-term support and care to the community as regional economics continue to grow, based on the time we have already invested with the local government, local law enforcement, UZONA Chamber, various non-profit support groups, and local health care providers.

We understand that bringing the internet to rural areas frequently requires collaboration and partnerships, which is why we have taken the time to build these relationships in the region we intend to serve. Service providers such as Air Comm can accomplish so much more to make broadband easily accessible with the help of a supportive government partner. We anticipate and are prepared for, the possibility of expanding this project area in the coming years through a capitalistic approach by reinvesting into rural communities and continued advocacy for closing the gap on rural broadband.

Some of the anticipated growth beyond the initial infrastructure build-out may encompass the following locations, based on our research and familiarity with the areas and the communities that will be impacted by this Grant.

- HWY 89A in its entirety from end-to-end
- Growth into the town of Beaver Dam and Town of Littlefield, all-inclusive to HWY 15
- Growth toward the City of Page, at the North end of HWY 89
- Reinvestment of earnings into rural communities along HWY 40
- Working with ERATE to support students and their families in rural Arizona

Our purpose is to establish long-term relationships and deliver trustworthy service so that communities and businesses can grow and thrive in the digital era.

In addition, Air Comm will work with the FCC to secure benefits through the Affordable Connectivity Program for the Town of Colorado City and surrounding communities covered by these infrastructure upgrades. This will ensure that every household and business that qualifies can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare, emergency services, and so much more.

For additional information regarding this program, please see https://www.fcc.gov/acp

| Type | Project | Applicant | GEOID |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rural | Broadband Infrastructure Upgrades to L | Air Comm | 04015950102 |
| Rural | Broadband Infrastructure Upgrades to L | Air Comm | 04015950103 |
| Rural | Broadband Infrastructure Upgrades to L | Air Comm | 04005002000 |