



## DAKOTA CARRIER NETWORK BREAKS GROUND ON NEW FACILITY

To accommodate its expanding network and growing customer needs – and provide even greater assurance of business survivability – Dakota Carrier Network (DCN) is building a new Network Operations Center in Bismarck, North Dakota. Approved by DCN's owner companies in June 2010, the 42,000-square-foot facility (see rendering above) is being built at 4202 Coleman Street and is the first major development on the 43rd Avenue corridor in Bismarck. Completion is expected at the end of 2011.

The new DCN Network Operations Center will act as a “Fort Knox” for network connectivity, support and monitoring purposes. The building will be a carrier grade hardened facility, meaning that it will be extremely reliable, well tested and proven in its capabilities. Carrier grade systems are tested and engineered to meet or exceed high availability standards, and the facility is being built to ensure 99.999 percent network uptime.

“DCN provides network connectivity to North Dakota’s most critical institutions, including health care, public safety, state government and financial organizations. While business continuity and survivability in the face of a catastrophe is important for any organization, it is especially critical for those entities that provide vital services,” said Evan Hass, general manager of DCN.

“We appreciate the great public-sector, private-sector partnership we have forged with DCN, which has helped to make the latest communication technology available to the people of North Dakota,” said Governor John Hoeven at the DCN Ground Breaking Ceremony held July 20th at the job site.

With more than 16,000 miles of fiber optic cable in service, the 15 companies that own Dakota Carrier Network represent all the major local independent telephone companies and serve more than 164,000 customers in 250 communities – more than 90 percent of the state’s total surface area.

## DAKOTA CARRIER NETWORK AWARDED \$10.7 MILLION GRANT

More than 175 community anchor institutions to get high-speed connectivity

Dakota Carrier Network recently learned that it is the recipient of a multi-million dollar grant for extending broadband services across the state. Through the \$10.7 million grant, DCN will provide high-speed fiber connectivity to more than 175 largely rural and underserved North Dakota critical community anchor institutions, including public safety entities, schools, and government agencies. To receive access to the grant, DCN has committed to providing a cash match of \$4.6 million.

The grant is made possible through The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provided the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) with \$4.7 billion to support a number of initiatives, including the deployment of broadband infrastructure. NTIA administers the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) within three project categories: comprehensive community infrastructure (CCI), public computer centers, and sustainable broadband adoption.

DCN's CCI broadband project involves a unique combination of public and private partnerships and collaboration with multiple Recovery Act broadband awardees to provide last-mile service. Given the largely rural, underserved nature of the proposed service area, in which many community anchor organizations lack access to necessary last-mile broadband speeds, DCN plans to deploy 169 miles of new fiber with backhaul speeds as fast as 1 Gbps to enable last-mile service across North Dakota. Additionally, the project will enhance e-health in the state by deploying a dedicated 10 Gbps healthcare network for more than 200 hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare providers to enable telemedicine, teleradiology, telepharmacy, and electronic health information exchange.

“By building a network infrastructure that will facilitate health information exchange for all providers, the CCI project will provide a significant opportunity to improve health outcomes for North Dakotans,” said Carol K. Olson, executive director, North Dakota Department of Human Services.

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## DCN'S GRANT PROJECT TO GREATLY ENHANCE RURAL NORTH DAKOTA

Since being founded in 1996, Dakota Carrier Network has worked tirelessly to deliver on its mission of "helping organizations achieve greater value through the advancement of fiber optic telecommunications". The company's efforts continue to benefit the businesses of North Dakota as well as the state's communities. Through its CCI broadband project, North Dakota's medical, educational and public safety services will be improved:

- **Medical:** obtaining quality medical treatment and having access to viable long-term care are vital to rural communities, and high-speed connectivity for medical facilities is a must. DCN will bring direct high-speed fiber connectivity to an additional 79 medical sites, and an additional 345 medical and healthcare customers will have to option of gaining access to a network with high-speed capabilities.
- **Educational:** schools are key elements to the survivorship of rural communities. When a rural school closes, it can lead to the demise of the community. DCN currently provides fiber-based facilities to 122 educational locations across the state. An additional 29 sites will be directly connected, and 36 state agencies will have the option of high-speed capabilities.
- **Public safety:** rural areas rely heavily on radio connectivity for communication. Increasingly, the communication services require reliable high-speed data connectivity for law enforcement, National Guard and emergency services. DCN currently provides fiber-based facilities to 27 public safety locations and will bring high-speed capabilities to an additional 33 sites.

In short, the key elements of medical, educational and public safety services are critical to the health and well-being of rural communities. By improving such services with high-speed fiber connectivity, DCN is helping to enhance the quality of life, create jobs and provide economic stability to remote locations across North Dakota.

"The need for network speed is becoming a necessity with the advancement of today's technology. Radio towers positioned throughout the state provide emergency response and enforcement-related radio communications between state and federal agencies. Public agencies are dependent on the use of these towers for communications during normal day-to-day operations as well as during emergency situations. High-speed fiber connectivity will greatly enhance the functionality." – Francis G. Ziegler, P.E., director, North Dakota Department of Transportation



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