

## **Oklahoma Provider BOLT Fiber Optics Announces \$22M Broadband Funding Win**

BOLT Fiber Optics is excited to announce an expansion of its footprint, fueled by more than \$22 million in grant funding from the American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (ARPA SLFRF). This infusion of capital is expected to help BOLT reach an additional 3,000 homes and businesses here in northeast Oklahoma by the end of 2026. Grant funds are earmarked for unserved and underserved locations in Craig, Delaware, Mayes, and Ottawa counties.

Along with the ARPA SLFRF funding and subsequent distribution of monies by the Oklahoma Broadband Office, the joint effort included grant application assistance from the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC).

“We are truly appreciative of the teamwork involved in making this expansion possible,” remarked BOLT Fiber Optics CEO Daniel Webster. “Ultimately, what this means is that our mission of providing high-speed fiber internet to our underserved and unserved rural communities continues into the foreseeable future.”

BOLT will continue to partner with NRTC for design, project management, and construction management services. NRTC was the most qualified respondent to an RFP issued by BOLT in March.

“NRTC is thrilled to partner with BOLT on the expansion of its broadband network,” said Tim Bryan, NRTC CEO. “We applaud BOLT for its efforts to connect rural communities and appreciate the trust that has been placed in us. We promise to match that passion and dedication as we help make this project a reality.”

The current BOLT footprint passes almost 27,000 locations in northeast Oklahoma with a take rate over 60%. Including an investment from BOLT, the ARPA SLFRF-funded expansion project will carry a price tag of \$40 million and reach nearly 7,000 additional serviceable locations.

Added Webster: “The potential now exists for thousands more living here in northeast Oklahoma to access high-speed broadband internet. Many who have been waiting patiently for fiber-based services won’t be waiting much longer. This project will guarantee digital equity and inclusion while solidifying both future employment and educational opportunities to ensure the continued growth of our communities.”

### **About Bolt Fiber Optic Services**

BOLT Fiber Optic Services (BOLT) is a fiber-to-the-premises internet provider that offers a triple-play of fiber-based broadband services (internet, VoIP, HDTV) to more than 16,000 subscribers across northeast Oklahoma. BOLT is a division of

Northeast Rural Services, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative (NOEC). Since its incorporation in 1938, NOEC has grown to a network of more than 5,000 miles of overhead and underground distribution throughout its four-county service area in northeast Oklahoma. In 2014, NOEC further invested in the future of the region with a fiber optic division whose mission was to deliver high-speed fiber internet to underserved and unserved rural communities in northeast Oklahoma.

### **About NRTC**

NRTC is a member-driven cooperative that provides technology solutions to help more than 1,500 electric and telecom members bring all the advantages of today's evolving technology to rural America. NRTC's products and services are developed specifically to meet the needs of rural providers and their customers, and include smart grid and utility solutions, broadband engineering, infrastructure and managed network services, mobile service solutions, and video solutions. NRTC helps providers grow by delivering end-customer technical support, network services, cybersecurity solutions and revenue-generating services leveraged by a powerful service delivery platform. NRTC helps ensure member success by bringing national scope and scale to local, rural projects and helping integrate technology solutions with existing infrastructure. Visit [www.nrtc.coop](http://www.nrtc.coop).