

Project Summary

This project is for a Fiber to the Premises network to be built and operated by Alpine Communications Inc. (Alpine). The network would cover rural areas in Clayton County north of Elkader. This would provide high speed fiber optic broadband up to 1Gbps symmetrical service to 69 homes and 15 businesses for a total of 84 broadband units.

The project will utilize new Alpine middle mile fiber and their existing CO in Elkader. Costs associated with the middle mile fiber build and central office expenditures required to ensure this application area is connected with advanced broadband have been excluded from this application (the application only includes costs directly associated with locations within the targeted service area). The build will utilize an Active Ethernet network design and offer speeds up to 1Gbps symmetrical. Alpine has identified this area as an unserved area in their ILEC service territory and has been planning a new network in this area for many years. Grant funds would greatly accelerate this project as the funds would allow them to expand their build plans for 2020 and 2021. Alpine has worked with Finley Engineering to develop high level designs and budgets, and to author the application. They will continue to work with Finley for environmental filings, detailed design/staking, permitting, and construction management. Once the project is complete Alpine will operate this network in conjunction with their other FTTP customers. Alpine has managed fiber networks in the area since 1997 and are well versed in providing service in Clayton County. Alpine is confident that they can meet the service milestones of completing the project in 5 years.

Alpine will be able to leverage their existing back office equipment (routers, ISP capabilities, billing, etc.) as well as middle mile network in place to support the buildout and operation of a network in this very rural setting. However, absent grant funding it would not be financially feasible for Alpine to provide service to everyone or it may take many more years to fully serve this rural area of Clayton County. If Alpine is awarded a grant, company funds are available and have been set aside for this project. Additionally, Alpine has completed preliminary design and staking for this project. They have lined up contractors and materials to begin work on the project and would be ready to immediately break ground on the project were funds to be awarded. This is truly a shovel ready project that would not be possible to complete at this size and scope without funding from this grant.

Access to high-speed broadband would improve the quality of life in several different ways. It would provide new growth opportunities for businesses, allowing them to do business on a larger scale, as well as contributing greatly to helping maintain existing businesses. New businesses are attracted to areas that have access to high speed Internet, which allows for increased efficiency. Better broadband would also allow more access to healthcare, education, and employment via telecommuting. Higher education via distance learning would also become a better option with bigger and faster broadband. Residents will also enjoy more entertainment opportunities, better access to financial management tools, and social media. Using these tools has become increasingly important in rural areas because it reduces the need to travel, saving

customers time and money. Broadband has proven world-wide how it can create changes in nearly every aspect of life and Alpine recognizes how advanced broadband can impact every person and organization once it is implemented.