

Executive Summary & Grant Rationale

Your response to the outline below should be no longer than two pages.

This information may be made public.

*After you've completed the preceding application and reviewed the **AWARDING GRANTS – Selection Criteria & Weights** pages that follow this page, please reflect on your application responses and provide a brief executive summary and grant rationale that includes:*

- Brief project description/summary (less than 150 words)

The Monroe County project is a Fiber-to-the-Home project that will serve 21 unserved households in northeastern Monroe County. The project includes building fiber directly to rural residences within the project area. The project will be complete by December 2020. Total eligible project cost is \$551,252. The applicant match is \$413,252. This project will leverage an additional \$710,047 of private investment to bring gigabit speeds to 200+ residents within the project area that are currently underserved.

- A general geographic location of the project (not census blocks) and total number of passings estimated to be made as a result of the grant project

This project is located northeast of the Town of Ellettsville in Bean Blossom and Bloomington Townships. In addition to the 21 homes that are currently unserved, this project will improve speeds for an additional 228 residences that already are experiencing speeds above 10/1, for a total impact of 249 homes.

- A brief description of the applicant's involvement in the project to date and how the applicant (and/or partners) intends to manage and sustain the project

Smithville has been a provider in Monroe County since 1922. As such, we have participated in many organizations and supported initiatives within the County. For this project, we have engaged with local elected officials including Monroe County Council, County Commissioners, State Legislators, Members of Congress, and local school corporations.

Our long-term commitment to the community and our customers includes a focus on continually improving services and increasing speeds. In rural areas such as Monroe County, this takes time and significant investment, but we plan to sustain this path forward for the foreseeable future. The Next Level Connections Broadband Grant provides an opportunity to move that timeframe forward and upgrade services much sooner than we would be able to do otherwise.

- A statement on how broadband improvements will advance the quality of life and strengthen economic development opportunities in the communities in the project area

This project will bring gigabit-speed fiber optic connectivity to residents in a rural portion of the county that are currently unserved as well as additional residences that are currently underserved. By improving broadband for these residents, the ability to start a home-based business or work from home becomes possible. Residents wishing to access telehealth applications and students needing to access online educational resources are helped significantly through this project. Due to the proximity of Crane and Cook, the demand for homes within the region continues to grow, and those individuals prefer homes with broadband access. This project will expand the number of available homes for those employees and improve the quality of life for all residents in the project area while contributing to the economic vitality of the region