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)

Orange County Fiber, a Division of Orange County REMC, proposes to build a fiber to the home project for the remaining portions of Orange County and into Dubois County. This will include finishing a (144) count fiber ring to the Orange County REMC substations as well as ringing rural Dubois County with (144) count fiber. Deployment to the (2165) residents and (177) businesses will occur off this ring, allowing for each location to receive up to 1 Gbps symmetrical broadband service as well as VOIP telephone service. This project will cost $14,849,147 and without the $5,000,000 grant will be impractical to execute.

- 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

The general service locations for the grant project are all identified census blocks per NLC spreadsheet in the following counties: all census blocks in Crawford Co. townships of Johnson, Patoka, Union; Dubois Co. all census blocks; Lawrence Co. townships of Bono, Marion, Spice Valley; Orange Co. all census blocks; Washington Co. townships of Brown, Jefferson, Madison, Posey, Vernon. Estimated passings of Households 2,058; Businesses 151; Anchor Institutions 20. More specific maps with location information can be seen in Appendix IV.

- 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

Orange County REMC intends to manage and sustain this project as all the Indiana Electrical Cooperatives has in providing electric and now broadband services to persons in rural areas that have not been served by the for-profit companies. We are during a fiber to the home project that will provide 1Gbps symmetrical internet and voice over IP phone service to our members. This application is an extension of this project that allows Orange County Fiber to also deploy to those Dubois County residents that are also unserved. Leveraging this state grant funding is what makes such a project feasible. Even for the cooperative model, which allows the long-term construction cost recovery timeframe to be much longer than that of a for profit entity, without such grants the project becomes non-feasible.
• A statement on how broadband improvements will advance the quality of life and strengthen economic development opportunities in the communities in the project area

From the different letters of support, we have received, the underlying comment of all participants is that internet is crucial to their institution’s long-term goals. From a school stating that internet at home will allow teachers to further instruct their students at home using the mobile devices they currently use in the classroom, to a REC Manager who says that having high speed internet to his members will allow them access to services that previously were not available. Dubois REC General Manager further believes that with this service his Cooperative will become stronger in the future as his service territory members can now compete on a global basis for jobs, new businesses and new opportunities without having to leave the lifestyle that is available in the rural Indiana.

One example of the quality of life improvements is related to education. Those schools that have deployed 1-to-1 technology to their student body, struggle to execute an e-learning day. These schools must open their school up, even if the school itself has good enough internet service and allow students to drive back to school on the weekend to complete their work. Other schools have held off implementing technology due to knowing most of the student body does not have adequate internet service at home. These students are either being needlessly hassled just to complete school work of the 21st century and/or being left behind completely.

Studies have shown that for every $1 spent on a gigabit capable system an economic benefit of $4 is returned to the area of deployment. With this project alone the State can expect to achieve $60M of economic benefit with an investment of just $5M. Finally investing in a fiber-based solution allows for future growth. Bandwidth requirements per location will only continue to grow, nearly exponentially, in the coming years. In order to meet that expected growth, a fiber-based system only needs to upgrade their optics to advance to 10Gig capability.

Other technologies that propose to provide only 10Mbps/1Mbps speeds via DSL or fixed wireless will only have to come back for additional assistance when their near inadequate solution today becomes inadequate in the very near future.