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)

In 2010 Swayzee Telephone Company, Inc. purchased multiple small cable television territories from Longview Cable. Swayzee continues to operate the majority of these territories to include broadband. In 2016 we made the decision to abandon the old and tired coax system and replace it with an Active Ethernet FTTP system such as the one built in our main Swayzee ILEC territory.

In 2019 we were made aware of the Next Level Grant project. While there are several blocks within the Sheridan area considered unserved we saw this as an opportunity to extent the fiber build south of Sheridan. We are not asking for grant money in any of the areas we have already started to build only in the areas we haven't engineered and were not planning to serve.

The plant we are building will be in service for years to come.

- 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 Sheridan/northern Hamilton County. The entire project is expected to pass 1600 home/businesses. The qualified portion of the grant area is 300 home/businesses.

- 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

Swayzee Telephone has owned and operated the cable system since 2010 in Sheridan. Sheridan is a major contributor to the overall operation of STC/Fiberhawk. We also have a dedicated office employing five people.

- A statement on how broadband improvements will advance the quality of life and strengthen economic development opportunities in the communities in the project area
When I bought Swayzee Telephone Company, Inc. from Mr. Sam Samuels in 2007, STC had about 1000 POTS lines and a little over 100 DSL subscribers with its highest speeds at 768 Kbps. Our entire backbone was a 5Mbps circuit and the first weekend I owned the company we had a complete Internet outage that hit on Saturday morning. I called the IT contractor we were using and I asked him to look into it. His exact words were, “Oh, you want me to come in and fix it on the weekend? That’s double time and Sam always told me that weekend outages can wait until Monday.” When I asked Sam about this he shrugged his shoulder and told me that he thought the Internet was just a fad.

Fast forward to 2019 and if the Internet so much as times out in five seconds customers are on the phone letting you know, or even worse, on social media leaving you a bad review. The Internet has infiltrated every aspect of our lives and will continue to do so in ways we have yet to understand.

My job is to get fiber to the masses. My personal philosophy, “The Company with the most fiber - WINS.” Cellular and wireless has its niche place and while we utilize them, nothing compares to an individual fiber connection now or in the future.

I’d like to imagine that someday a future Albert Einstein or Stephen Hawking will be able to develop his or her skills while utilizing the fiber optic, broadband network we have worked so hard to bring to rural Indiana.