

## Demonstrated Experience

Mabel Cooperative Telephone Company (Mabel Telephone) has been in business since 1915 and has supplied its member customers with quality telecommunication services ever since. Mabel Telephone provided dial tone to our community and then upgraded to ADSL to ensure customers receive the technology and speed they need to succeed. In March 1980, Mabel finalized the build of the first telecommunications system that utilized smart remotes in the network. The first fiber technology was deployed in our serving area in 2011, and continues today. In 2017, Mabel Telephone installed a Genband C15 soft switch. Mabel currently serves 191 square miles, with 126 square miles located in Iowa and 65 in Minnesota. Although a small rural company with budget constraints, the company has been able to upgrade equipment as needed, through strong management decisions, hard work and high-cost support funds.

Federal funding via ACAM support has helped us push forward with fiber builds in our serving area. Mabel Telephone is seeking assistance with this grant for areas that are located in census blocks that are located just outside our study area boundary. The incumbent telephone company does not offer high-speed broadband to these customers. Mabel has had many requests from these customers to offer service, but has not been able to justify the costs involved. With grant funding, Mabel will be able to supply these customers reliable high-speed connections that they need for telework, telehealth, business opportunities and on-line learning. This infrastructure project will not only serve these in-need customers, but it will also serve as a redundant traffic route for our current customers. The redundancy will allow for minimal bottlenecks of data running over the network and allow for back up if a weather-related occurrence or fiber cut were to happen elsewhere in Mabel's fiber network.

Mabel Telephone has a proven reputation of deploying broadband services and is led by experienced staff members that can manage the organization to successfully implement and operate the proposed broadband infrastructure. Mabel Telephone is current with capital credits and continues to manage the cooperative in a financially stable manner. Mabel Telephone offers its customers benefits through the Federal Lifeline Program. This program will be offered to all households in this service area as well.

Mabel Telephone is a certified Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) in the State of Iowa and in the State of Minnesota and is in good standing. Mabel Telephone has a strong financial background and sustainability, being in business for over 106 years. We are skilled in deploying fiber networks and working with local schools, hospitals and businesses. These relationships are what we depend on just as much as these customers depend on us. We have the know-how and the desire to keep Iowa connected.