

Broadband Operations Experience

Clear Lake Independent Telephone Company (CL Tel) has 28 years of broadband experience across Iowa. The network consists of more than 539 miles of fiber, making it one of the most extensive fiber optic networks in the region.

The applicant serves the Industrial Parks in Clear Lake and Mason City with fiber to each business. Clear Lake, Mason City and Newman Catholic school districts rely on Applicants fiber infrastructure to provide students the broadband necessary for advanced educational opportunities. The city offices and Police departments of Clear Lake, Ventura and Mason City are served with fiber as well as the Cerro Gordo County Courthouse and Law Enforcement Center. The Public Libraries of Ventura and Clear Lake are served by fiber and the Mason city Public Library will be connected with Fiber by the end of November 2021. All residents and businesses of Clear Lake and Ventura are served with fiber making both communities 100% fiber to the home or business.

The company supports the region's emergency responders, wireless carriers, health care, banking, agriculture, manufacturing, government and education. Additionally, it provides connections across Iowa, the United States, and the world through its ownership in and connection to Aureon.

APPLICANT's accomplishments:

1878: The telephone becomes available in Clear Lake, just two years after Bell invents it.

1879: Iowa's first long distance call is made from Clear Lake

1895: Clear Lake Telephone Exchange is formed with a network of five miles of lines

1955: New dial switch cut over, giving Clear Lake one of the most "modern, up-to-date plants in the state" according to the local newspaper
1982: Information age is ushered in with a new NEC digital switch

1989: Long distance competition is offered through a partnership with Iowa Network Services and its statewide fiber optic network

1991: CL Tel is a partner in providing the first cellular telephone service in North Iowa

1993/1994: Fiber optics cable backbone network is deployed

1994: CL Tel is first in Clear Lake to provide local access to the global Internet

1995: A new second generation AT&T digital switch is installed; video conference facility built and 100th anniversary celebrated

1997: More fiber optic cable is deployed in the network, bringing the project upgrade total to \$3 million

1998: 20 more miles of fiber optics are deployed

1999: CL Tel joins with Midwest Wireless as its cellular wireless carrier; digital cellular service becomes available

2000: High speed DSL Internet service is deployed; a \$7.5 million rebuild of the urban network begins

2002: Urban network rebuild is completed; CLVision digital cable television is launched in January. Residents in Clear Lake and Ventura are the first in the state to have broadband VDSL technology.

2009: Broadband is introduced to North Iowa with the beginning of the Fiber to the Home construction

2012 and 2013: Entire rural area of Clear Lake and Ventura and the community of Ventura are constructed with fiber to the home, providing state of the art gigabit service to those areas.

2013: Hosted PBX is launched in Clear Lake, Ventura and surrounding areas providing state of the art “cloud” VoIP technology to businesses

2013: Construction of a fiber optic route is completed into west Mason City, serving businesses in the industrial park and nearby areas

2015: CL Tel becomes a certified Gig-Capable provider, becoming the first in the region to offer these ultra-fast speeds

2019: Fiber-to-the-Home overbuild is complete, making Clear Lake and Ventura 100% Fiber communities

Invested in Middle Mile Networks – Improved reliability, speed and reach of its local network through investments in Aureon, a statewide fiber network.

- **BIP Recipient** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture entrusted a BIP Grant to APPLICANT to expand its local and middle mile networks to anchor institutions, businesses and residents throughout its exchanges.
- **Community Involvement** – CL Tel continues to reinvest in its community and people, as we work together toward a vibrant future. Community reinvestment takes place in numerous ways: spending millions of dollars to provide an advanced broadband fiber optic network infrastructure with Gigabit Internet to attract new business and industry and investing dollars, personal time and leadership in projects that promote jobs and enhance the quality of life.

Collaborative leadership and reinvestment were some of the reasons CL Tel received the national Smart Rural Community Showcase Award in 2017. These advanced communications services have helped “drive economic and community strength”, according to the NTCA – the National Broadband Association. CL Tel provides free high speed Internet to the Clear Lake and Ventura public libraries; discounted Internet to schools and the One Vision General Store. CL Tel has been a major sponsor of numerous annual community events. CL Tel also has been a major donor in numerous capital campaigns including the Clear Lake library addition and renovation, Central Gardens, the Clear Lake Arts Center, the lake water quality restoration project, the swimming pool, VFW and others. On a regional level, CL Tel has been a major contributor to many capital campaigns including Hospice, Four Oaks, Francis Lauer Youth Shelter; Habitat for Humanity; NIACC Foundation, YMCA and others and is a regular contributor to the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation and United Way of North Central Iowa. During the recent pandemic, CL Tel worked with the public schools to Provide free internet to over 56 needy families for the entire 2019-2020 school year.