

## Prairieburg Telephone Company

### Description of Company Workforce

Prairieburg Telephone Company began serving the customers in the town of Prairieburg, in rural Linn County, Iowa, approximately 30 minutes outside of Cedar Rapids in 1954. Prairieburg is part of the three-county Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area. Over the past 68 years, Prairieburg Telephone Company has adapted new technologies to now offer FTTH, DSL, and fixed-wireless Internet connectivity to more than 700 access lines throughout the community of Prairieburg.

Hilliary Acquisition Iowa, a Hilliary company, acquired Prairieburg Telephone Company in early 2021. Since then, network and accounting operations have been consolidated and relocated to Hilliary headquarters in Medicine Park, Oklahoma; local maintenance and customer support staff continue to operate out of the Prairieburg regional office, under the leadership, guidance, and expertise of Hilliary.

Hilliary began as Medicine Park Telephone Company in 1958 in the rural southwestern Oklahoma town of Medicine Park just north of Lawton in the Lawton Micropolitan Statistical Area. Medicine Park Telephone Company began with 100 lines serving 66 customers in the Medicine Park exchange. In 1979, Medicine Park Telephone Company installed Oklahoma's first digital switch a Nortel DMS-10. In 2000, fiber was installed throughout Medicine Park, Oklahoma, and Broadband service was deployed to the entire Medicine Park exchange. Since then, the company has evolved and expanded to serve Broadband connectivity to customers in 26 counties across three states – Oklahoma, Texas, and Iowa. Through an aggressive growth strategy that included the purchase of six ILEC operators and the continued construction of a CLEC operation, Hilliary now service over 15,000 customers.

In August 2023, Prairieburg Telephone Company was granted \$1,993,775 from the USDA's Reconnect Round 4 program. Those funds will be used to deploy a fiber-to-the-premises network to provide high-speed internet to 1,232 people, 51 businesses, two farms and nine educational facilities in Linn County, Iowa. Prairieburg Telephone Company Incorporated will make high-speed internet affordable by participating in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Programs.

To incorporate the proposed service offerings in the application will require experienced and educated personnel in a variety of areas. Prairieburg has the personnel, contractors, and consultants to build the network and operate the broadband services for its PFSA. Prairieburg will be directly responsible for overseeing the planning and construction of the project. Since the purchase by Hilliary, Prairieburg has available the resource personnel to perform much of the material coordination and construction management of the project. Established relationships with the local community, and the county and state agencies already provide assistance wherever possible.

Where detailed engineering and construction management assistance may be required, Prairieburg has secured an agreement with an experienced consulting engineering firm familiar with all types of telecommunications and broadband networks including FTTH networks like the one proposed. The firm has worked with Prairieburg for more than 30 years. Prairieburg has an established relationship with an experienced local construction company who is familiar with Prairieburg requirements along with the local terrain and permitting requirements. Prairieburg has established a standard set of construction unit prices

with the company based on past competitive quote processes to ensure that construction standards are met at a competitive unit-based cost.

Additional staffing will be addressed by hiring two more technicians, complementing Prairieburg's existing workforce. The Market Manager is already an integral member of Prairieburg's seasoned team of professionals. The operations manager's role encompasses overseeing project construction, coordinating and reporting to Prairieburg executives, ensuring timely project completion within budget, and meeting all project objectives. Technicians will collaborate closely with the Market Manager assuming responsibility for all subscriber installations. Each technician possesses a minimum of two years' experience in identical job roles and responsibilities.

As an established ISP provider, Prairieburg has existing personnel to handle daily operations, billing, customer service and trouble calls. The proposed project is adding additional customers to its existing service offering platform. Technicians and customer service personnel will be on call 24/7 to attend to customer needs. Prairieburg utilizes the help desk provided by Hilliary, an affiliate company of Prairieburg, to handle any ISP issues should they arise.

Prairieburg has experienced personnel to assist the local businesses with the webpage development and hosting as discussed above and will coordinate with its engineering consultant when necessary. Hilliary GIS mapping group is implementing a new system using external mapping resources as needed to perform unique tasks to assist with an overall conversion to the network.

Prairieburg staff is ready to take on the design and operations of the facilities if granted. Maintenance and operation staff are in the areas maintaining the existing copper plant and will welcome the change to a lower maintenance fiber facilities. With assistance of engineering and contractors, Prairieburg will meet the new demands placed on the organization.