What Is RS Fiber?

- Initiative started in 2010
  - Driver:
    - Lack of high speed bandwidth in rural areas
    - Existing providers not willing to invest in infrastructure for rural areas given the low return on investment
  - Project originally initiated through our local governments
    - Local community members volunteered many hours of support
    - Consultant hired
    - Surveys utilized to determine interest level
    - Operator determined
    - Revenue Bonding
- Project restructured under a Cooperative in xx/xx
  - Owned by people who use its services
  - Operates for the economic benefit of the members
  - Support one another for the benefit of our communities
RS Fiber Cooperative is a public-private partnership that upon completion will operate a fiber network covering most of Sibley County and a portion of Renville County.

Two phased approach:
- Phase 1: Build FTTH in cities first 2015-2016 with rural areas served by high speed wireless internet starting this year
- Phase 2: Begin construction of fiber to the farm network in 2018
Public/Private Partnership makes the business plan work

- 10 cities and 17 townships formed a Joint Powers Board to provide a $13.7 million loan to the cooperative
- Phase 1: Cities bonded in 2015
- Phase 2: Townships will bond in 2018

The cooperative is raising additional $32-35 million in 2 Phases through loans, loan guarantees, equity drive, grants, and tax credits
RS Fiber Cities and Townships

Legend:
- Cities in RS Cooperative
- County in RS Cooperative
- Townships in RS Cooperative
- County Boundary
- Cities
- Townships

Scale:
0 2 Miles
1 in = 2 miles
Public Private Partnership

- Network will be operated by Hiawatha Broadband Communications (HBC)
- HBC is based out of Winona, MN and was formed in 1997
  - They are a for-profit company that evolved out of a non-profit education initiative which connected the Winona educational institutions to a fiber-optic network
- HBC’s business model focuses on service to the community and putting people before profit
- They’ve grown to operate 21 Fiber to the Home networks in rural communities in Southeast Minnesota
  - HBC provides Air Broadband Service to adjacent areas around those communities
Contact Information

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