PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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DOMESTIC SECTION 214 APPLICATION FILED FOR THE TRANSFER OF CONTROL OF HOOPER TELEPHONE COMPANY DBA WESTEL SYSTEMS AND ITS SUBSIDIARY, HTC COMMUNICATIONS, L.L.C., TO NORTHEAST NEBRASKA TELEPHONE COMPANY

NON-STREAMLINED PLEADING CYCLE ESTABLISHED

WC Docket No. 26-206

Comment Date: September 17, 2026
Reply Comment Date: September 24, 2026

By this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau seeks comment from interested parties on an application filed by Hooper Telephone Company dba Westel Systems (Hooper), HTC Communications, L.L.C. (HTC), and Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company (NNTC), (collectively, Applicants), pursuant to section 214(a) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and section 63.04 of the Federal Communications Commission's (Commission) rules,[1] requesting consent to transfer control of Hooper and HTC to NNTC.[2]

Hooper, a Nebraska corporation, is a rural incumbent local exchange carrier (LEC) serving approximately 245 access lines in four counties in northeastern Nebraska.[3] Hooper wholly-owns the member interests in HTC, a Nebraska limited liability company, which provides resold domestic interstate interexchange long-distance services originated in and around Hooper's service area.[4] The only 10 percent or greater interest holder in Hooper is West Iowa Telephone Company (WITC) (94% interest), an Iowa corporation. WITC provides service as an incumbent local exchange carrier (LEC) to approximately 1,700 access lines in multiple counties in northeastern Iowa.[5] WITC also wholly-owns MidlandsNet LLC (MidlandsNet), an Iowa limited liability company, which provides resold domestic telecommunications services and other services in and around the service area of WITC.[6] The only 10 percent or greater interest holder in WITC is The WH Daubendiek Trust Under His Last Will and

[1] *See* 47 U.S.C. § 214(a); 47 CFR § 63.04.

[2] Domestic Section 214 Application Filed for the Transfer of Control of Hooper Telephone Company dba Westel Systems, and its Subsidiary, HTC Communications, L.L.C., to Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company, WC Docket No. 26-206 (filed August 17, 2026) (Application). Applicants also filed an application for the transfer of authorizations associated with international services. Any action on this domestic section 214 application is without prejudice to Commission action on other related, pending applications.

[3] Application at 4. Applicants state that Hooper is designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) in Nebraska and receives intercarrier compensation (ICC) support and support through the Revised Alternative Connect America Cost Model (Revised ACAM) program. *Id*. at 4, n.4. Applicants state that Hooper participates in the Lifeline program and will continue to do so post-transaction. *Id*. at 5.

[4] *Id*. at 5.

[5] *Id*. WITC does business under the registered trade names WesTel Systems and MidlandsNet LLC. *Id*.

[6] *Id*. at 11.

Testament (WH Daubendiek Trust) (88.9 % interest), an Iowa trust, of which the beneficiaries and trustees are all U.S. citizens.[7]

NNTC, a Nebraska corporation, provides telecommunications services and other services as a rural incumbent local exchange carrier (LEC) telephone cooperative operating in portions of 28 Nebraska counties to approximately 6,000 access lines in the northeast portion of Nebraska.[8] NNTC also provides service as a competitive LEC in various counties in Nebraska.[9] NNTC's wholly-owned subsidiary, CenCom, Inc. dba NNTC Long Distance (CenCom) provides interstate interexchange long distance services.[10] NNTC is a cooperative with no shareholder holding a 10 percent or greater interest in NNTC and its board members and its General Manager and CEO are all U.S. citizens.[11]

Pursuant to the terms of the proposed transaction, the transfer of control will be consummated through the acquisition by NNTC of 100 percent of the issued and outstanding stock of Hooper and HTC.[12] As a result of the proposed transaction, NNTC will wholly-own and control Hooper and HTC.[13] Following consummation of the proposed transaction, Hooper and HTC will continue to exist and operate in their respective service territories, under the same names, and provide service pursuant to then-existing rates, terms, and conditions.[14]

Applicants assert that the proposed transaction is consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity.[15] Because the proposed transaction is more complex than those accepted for streamlined treatment, and in order to analyze whether the proposed transaction would serve the public interest, we accept the Application for non-streamlined processing.[16]

Domestic Section 214 Application Filed for the Transfer of Control of Hooper Telephone Company dba Westel Systems, and Its Subsidiary, HTC Communications, L.L.C., to Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company, WC Docket No. 26-206 (filed August 17, 2026).

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Application identified herein has been found, upon initial review, to be acceptable for filing. The Commission reserves the right to return any application if, upon further examination, it is determined to be defective and not in conformance with the Commission’s rules and policies.

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[7] *Id*. at 11-12. Applicants provide additional information regarding the trustees and beneficiaries of the WH Daubendiek Trust in the application. *Id*.

[8] *Id*. at 2. Applicants state that NNTC is designated as an ETC in Nebraska and receives ICC support and support through the Enhanced Alternative Connect America Cost Model (Enhanced ACAM) program. *Id*. at 4, n.4. Applicants state that NNTC participates in the Lifeline program and will continue to do so post-transaction. *Id*. at 3.

[9] *Id*. at 2, n.1.

[10] *Id*. NNTC also holds a 25 percent interest in NebraskaLink Holdings LLC dba OPTK, which is primarily a fiber transport entity in Nebraska. *Id.* at 13.

[11] *Id*. at 12-13. Applicants provide additional information regarding the board members and the General Manager and CEO of NNTC in the application. *Id*.

[12] *Id*. at 6.

[13] *Id*.

[14] *Id*.

[15] *Id.* at 17-19.

[16] *See* 47 CFR § 63.03(c)(1)(v).

Interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing.
  - Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial courier, or by the U.S. Postal Service. **All filings must be addressed to the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.**
  - Hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary are accepted between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. by the FCC's mailing contractor at 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.
  - Commercial courier deliveries (any deliveries not by the U.S. Postal Service) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
  - Filings sent by U.S. Postal Service First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Priority Mail Express must be sent to 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554.

People with Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530.

In addition, e-mail one copy of each pleading to each of the following:

1) Dennis Johnson, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, dennis.johnson@fcc.gov;
2) Brenda Villanueva, Office of International Affairs, brenda.villanueva@fcc.gov;
3) Audra Hale-Maddox, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, audra.hale-maddox@fcc.gov; and
4) Jim Bird, Office of General Counsel, jim.bird@fcc.gov.

The proceeding in this Notice shall be treated as a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules. Persons making *ex parte* presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the *ex parte* presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter's written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during *ex parte* meetings are deemed to be written *ex parte* presentations and must be filed consistent with rule 1.1206(b), 47 CFR § 1.1206(b). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

To allow the Commission to consider fully all substantive issues regarding the Application in as timely and efficient a manner as possible, petitioners and commenters should raise all issues in their initial filings. New issues may not be raised in responses or replies.[17] A party or interested person seeking to raise a new issue after the pleading cycle has closed must show good cause why it was not possible for it to have raised the issue previously. Submissions after the pleading cycle has closed that seek to raise new issues based on new facts or newly discovered facts should be filed within 15 days after such facts are discovered. Absent such a showing of good cause, any issues not timely raised may be disregarded by the Commission.

For further information, please contact Dennis Johnson, at (202) 418-0809.

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[17] *See* 47 CFR § 1.45(c).