

Program Overview:

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD) has developed the Kansas Broadband Ready Communities (KBRC) program to address broadband access challenges in unserved and underserved areas of the state. The program aims to assist communities in preparing for future grant funding opportunities by providing an efficient and accessible path to broadband readiness.

Communities seeking certification under KBRC must adopt an ordinance that aligns with the minimum requirements outlined by the program.

These requirements include:

- having a designated point of contact,
- timely review of project applications within 30 business days,
- transitioning to electronic filing systems,
- ensuring reasonable filing fees, and
- prohibiting discrimination in permitting procedures.

KOBD will maintain a public-facing list of certified communities on its website, showcasing their commitment to broadband deployment.

The KBRC program aims to empower Kansas communities in expanding broadband access and ensuring readiness for future grant funding opportunities. By meeting the program requirements, communities can achieve certification while demonstrating their commitment to broadband deployment and equitable access.

Certification Requirements:

To be considered a Kansas Broadband Ready Community by the KOBD, an eligible entity must make measurable strides to adhere to the following “Principles of a Kansas Broadband Ready Community” (Principles):

1. Community has a single point of contact for all matters related to a broadband project.
2. All applications related to a project will be reviewed and either approved or rejected within thirty (30) business days of submission.
3. Community is in process of moving towards electronic-filing system for all forms, applications, and documentation related to a project.
4. Not impose a fee for reviewing an application or issuing a permit for a project beyond what is allowed in K.S.A. 17-1902;
5. The regulatory permit procedure prohibits discrimination among broadband, telecommunications, utilities, or cable service providers with respect to granting access to public rights-of-way, infrastructure, poles access, or any other physical assets owned or controlled by the applicant.

In order to show commitment to the principles outlined above, the KBRC requires that an eligible entity adopt them into its respective code in the form of an ordinance. The ordinance must substantially adhere to the language and purpose of the principles outlined above. Eligible entities will have the option of adopting a draft ordinance contained herein. Adoption of the draft ordinance with no material change will automatically qualify a community as broadband ready.



Timeline:

KBRC applications will be received on a rolling basis. KOBD will respond with 30 business days to submitted applications. If curing is required, the applicant will have 30 days once notified to resubmit.

Eligible Entities:

Any county or municipality within the state of Kansas is eligible to apply for KBRC certification.

Application Process:

Interested applicants are required to submit the following documents, completed and with all required signatures, to kdc_broadband@ks.gov:

- Completed application
- Proof of passed ordinance containing the aforementioned principles.

If a community opts to not adopt the model ordinance, KOBD reserves the right to accept or reject a submitted ordinance based on its own interpretation of adherence to the principles outlined herein. Furthermore, KOBD reserves the right, based on its own review of the application, to offer a rejected applicant the opportunity to cure any defects that may have led to rejection of the application during the initial round of review.

Reevaluation of Standards:

In line with the rapidly changing standards in the broadband environment, the program principles outlined herein will be reevaluated every three years by the KOBD. Previously approved applicants will be grandfathered into new approved standards and will have to recertify in accordance with their preexisting calendar date.

Recertification:

Previously qualified applicants will be required to recertify every three years. Currently certified communities will be notified six months prior to the expiration of their certification.

Definitions:

Kansas Broadband Ready Communities ("KBRC"): A Kansas Broadband Ready Community (KBRC) is defined as a city or county within the State of Kansas that has met all requirements established by the program and has received official notification of certification by the KOBD.

Permit: Any local permit, license, certificate approval, registration, or similar form of approval required by policy, administrative rule, regulation, ordinance, or resolution with respect to a broadband network project.

Project: The construction or deployment of wireline or wireless communications facilities to provide communications services.



NEED MORE INFO?
PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR SHELLEY PAASCH
SHELLEY.A.PAASCH@KS.GOV 785.276.9995