

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Cindy Wallace on 02/28/2022

Please provide your name:

Cynthia Wallace

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Resident in proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

I support EpicTouch's application for the broadband grant so they can expand their service to other parts of Liberal. I live in a section of town that will be able to be connected with fiber to the premise if this grant is awarded. They have only been able to do parts of town north of where I reside and having this brought into my neighborhood and further south will improve our capabilities to have faster and more reliable internet speeds and make it easier for residents to work from home or have access to health providers and educational services. This could also attract more residents to Liberal and open up new business in the area knowing their internet access is up to date and reliable.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

By submitting the Public Comment Form (the "Form") and any supporting evidence, you attest that all information furnished is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge and that any attachments are free of malware or viruses. You also acknowledge that falsifying any information could result in legal action against you and will bar you from submitting public comments to this web site in the future. You authorize the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Department of Commerce (KOBD) to contact you if further information is needed. You expressly acknowledge and consent to some personal information, including your name, address, phone, e-mail, organization you represent, and comments, being posted for public view on the Kansas Department of Commerce web site at www.kansascommerce.gov. The KOBD will use its best efforts to redact any personal identifiable information outside of the above that is not considered in the public domain. By typing your name and date and by submitting the Form, you acknowledge, authorize, and consent to this Public Comment Privacy & Acknowledgments.

Cynthia Wallace

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Cheryl Collins on 03/04/2022

Please provide your name:

Cheryl Collins

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Resident in proposed service area
- Business leader in proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

I am the General Manager at a radio station in Liberal. We are located on the fringe of the North build. Epic Touch saw the importance of the local media have access to good fiber internet and fit us into their schedule to add fiber to our building. We have had to have 2 internet providers for years to insure when one provider went down, we would have a back up. This is not a cost effective way to do business, but because of the unreliability of the current providers, it was necessary. Since having Epic, we have not needed a back up service.

I also am a resident in the South end of Liberal that has been through almost every provider in town trying to find one that works well at my house. My daughter and several friends are current customers of

EpicTouch and have not had any problems...no down time, no slow internet. I look forward to the day when EpicTouch will be in my area of town.

By getting this grant to service 15th to 8th Street, there would be great progress to reaching my area.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Cheryl Collins

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Annette Hackbarth-Onson on 03/04/2022

Please provide your name:

Annette Hackbarth-Onson

Please describe

I work in education in the proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Epic touch has been able to cover a portion of the Liberal KS area so as a resident I have already been able to subscribe to the service. The service has been excellent. Currently a large portion of Liberal KS does not have reliable internet though. As someone that works in the field of education I know that students need reliable technology.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Annette Hackbarth-Onson

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Brad Bennett on 03/04/2022

Please provide your name:

Brad Bennett

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Resident in proposed service area
- Business leader in proposed service area
- Other

Please describe

President, Seward County Development Corporation and President Elect, Liberal Rotary Club

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Our current provider, ZitoMedia, has been a nothing but difficult relationship and lacking services from the beginning for us. The church I served increased our service contract to Gigabit service with the assurance from ZitoMedia that they could provide this and that would increase our speed and capacity to carry our

weekly and other regular livestream video uploads. We were told that if we paid for the Gigabit service that our upload speeds would proportionally increase with our Gigabit download, so that our livestream video uploads would be assured. The evidence in the Speedtest documentation (see fast speedtest 1) 2 3 4 - 03042022.pdf we've uploaded shows that we are nowhere near the Gigabit service for which we pay and this has been a common experience for us for over a year since we increased the service and costs. Although there is a local office in Liberal, no local service numbers are available and the toll free access numbers leave us put on hold, at least a half dozen times over the past year and half, for several hours. Then, when you reach a person in a network call center in Pennsylvania and explain that your service is down (already for a week and sometimes two), they say they will put a ticket in. A few days later, a tech (one of two for the whole region contracted to do the work) will call or just show up; these guys are hard workers, but they are obviously inundated by service calls and not happy with the company they've contracted with due to poor equipment quality and a frequent breaks in the "Fiber loop around Liberal" and connecting cabling to homes and businesses. I've had important zoom call meetings, both in my workplace and in my residence, totally shut-down that had been planned months in advance due to ZitoMedia's service. I've heard the same experience from other leaders in our community.

My wife and I learned about EpicTouch, first through word of mouth and later through county and city elected and organizational leaders, regarding the excellent service in several towns close by and that EpicTouch was leading an effort to install Fiber-optic in Liberal - which for years has had a glut of potential internet and phone service providers, but a dearth of providers who were able to put the funds into infrastructure such as Fiber -- too much competition that kept a small-city hub in the Southwestern corner of Kansas without the internet services that were needed for modern businesses and residents.

EpicTouch first phase began with the far north quadrant of the city, where many wealthier families and the Seward County College and new large businesses and our SW Medical Center are located. Based on the evidence presented by now current customers, I believe that EpicTouch can provide the internet infrastructure with Fiber-Optic lines through the proposed Phase 2 and other projected phases until the entire city of residents and businesses are connected. This makes residents of Seward County and Liberal proud, because EpicTouch is "local" and, in general, people like to keep business local in Liberal, but most importantly they have proven to provide excellent service with relatively short response times while treating people like neighbors.

Seward and Stephens Counties have a long history of familial and agricultural and energy related business relationship. Our city and county leaders continue to provide incentives to future industry to increase and support an already large packing plant industry with accompanying growth and grooming farms. One common complaint about potential new businesses and industry corporations, who are considering a move to Liberal, is the lack of quality and high-speed internet in Liberal. Many small towns surrounding Liberal have enjoyed and made good use of Fiber-optic for months and years (in some cases) and the has contributed to stagnating the growth and business industry of our city. As a result, our population continues to decline and suffer. I believe, the state's support of EpicTouch would have a huge impact on keeping western Kansas strong with economic viability for many years to come. I hope the state will say 'YES' to the proposed Fiber expansion throughout Liberal. Thank you for your work.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.



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Brad Bennett

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Shannon Francis on 03/04/2022

Please provide your name:

Shannon Francis

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Elected or Government official

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

My Business and residence are both on EpicTouch. The speed and reliability of this service is much better than our previous provider. This grant will allow more residents of my community to have access to this level of service.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Shannon Francis

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Susan Lukwago on 03/04/2022

Please provide your name:

Susan Lukwago

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Resident in proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Oh my goodness! We need this! We need the faster/fastest broadband that Epic Touch would be able to bring with this project. We were accustomed to slow speeds out here in the rural area. But then the pandemic happened and we all needed and used broadband for work, for school and then for entertainment. And everything slowed down. I work from home a lot now and attending many meetings over Zoom. Most of the time, I cannot have my camera on because then my voice goes in and out and I freeze. Even without camera, there is not enough bandwidth if the neighbors are home. Watching a movie is a joke. With this grant, Epic Touch could bring our rural County into the 21st Century. I have relatives in Africa and when we do family zoom calls, Susan in America - that's me - has the weakest broadband ... weaker than Africa. Not funny.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Susan N Lukwago

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Eli Svaty on 03/07/2022

Please provide your name:

Eli Svaty

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Business leader in proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

The Epic Touch application is ambitious, but their commitment to the community and track record of delivering on their promises makes this company a worthwhile investment. Their vision for the town includes passing every structure within the city limits. This will not happen overnight, but with state investments combined with local investments, they can begin to work towards that vision in large builds. Last year, Epic Touch received a Broadband Acceleration Grant, and the work on that project is nearing completion. More and more homes and businesses are signing up for their service because more and more people are hearing about how great their service is.

The community of Liberal has been underserved for too long. If we hope to compete for remote jobs or innovative new companies that require high-speed download and upload capabilities, we must get the fiber

infrastructure in place now.

Furthermore, (and on a personal note) my family and I were fortunate enough to live in a part of town now served by Epic Touch. All of their claims have been verified. From the convenience of the installation team, to the follow-up of the tech team, and the quality of their internet; they are a special company that genuinely cares about the work they do and the role they play in a community.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Eli Svaty

Project: Broadband Acceleration Grant Yr 2 - Public Comment

Submitted by Andrew Barkley on 03/08/2022

Please provide your name:

Andrew Barkley

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- Resident in proposed service area

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):

EpicTouch - Liberal

I am submitting comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Southwest Kansas is slow for economic development and growth. Having high speed internet access would help provide one of many steps in the needs of infrastructure. I ask you to consider this project.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Andrew

Title **0080** 03/09/2022
by **Kay Burtzloff** in **Broadband Acceleration Grant** id. 23190810

Original Submission 03/09/2022

Please provide your name: **Kay Burtzloff**

Which of the following best describes you?
(Check all that apply) **Business leader in proposed service area**

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one): **EpicTouch - Liberal**

I am submitting comments to express **Support for a project**

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Currently my wireless access at both my home and my office is unreliable and slow. It frequently drops off or it's so slow it is hard to get my work completed which is extremely frustrating when I'm on a deadline. I actually run three non-profits and one of my offices is located in an area that is serviced by Epic Touch. The difference in service is extremely noticeable. I never have a problem with Epic Touch. It is both fast and reliable.

I have United Wireless at home which drops off all the time and usually can sustain streaming a whole show. When I'm on a Zoom call, most of the time I have to keep the video off or the screen will freeze up.

At another office, I have AT&T which is not only slow but seems to just quit every day at 3 to 4 p.m. I've talked to the office but they haven't given me any solution to the problem.

I would like to see Epic Touch available not only in proposed expansion but throughout the whole community. I've never had a problem with Epic Touch but my friends have said that when they have had concerns, it was addressed quickly and effectively.

In rural Kansas, reliable and high-speed internet is critical for us in both education and work. I would really like to see Epic expanded to the community college and the surrounding area because the internet has been an ongoing issue for the college.

I hope the state will award this grant to Epic Touch so that a larger number of our residents will have access to an effective internet.

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Kay Burtzloff 2/8/22

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Title **0081** 03/09/2022
by **Jeff Chance** in **Broadband Acceleration Grant** id. 23191568

Original Submission 03/09/2022

Please provide your name: **Jeff Chance**

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply) **Resident in proposed service area**

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one): **EpicTouch - Liberal**

I am submitting comments to express **Support for a project**

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **We currently have internet that provides 10mps and 5mps which will barely stream or support 2 users at the same time. We have friends with epic touch getting 100 and 100**

Please provide supporting documentation to support your comments. Concerns related to overbuilds should include explicit data such as Census block and address specific data. Submit multiple files as a single ZIP file.

n/a

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Jeff Chance

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