

# PROJECT PROPOSAL - FOR PUBLIC POSTING



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Please include:

1. An executive summary of the project:

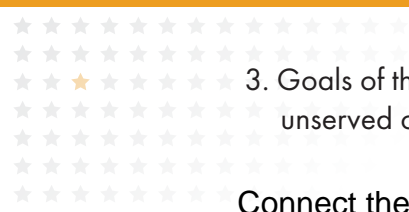
IdeaTek ' s Reno and Sedgwick County rural broadband project deploys over 205 combined fiber miles between Reno and Sedgwick Counties, and would serve approximately 780 underserved homes and businesses. These rural areas of Reno and Sedgwick Counties are particularly underserved, currently experiencing broadband speeds as low as 6/1. This project partners with Reno County and the Greater Hutch Community Development in an effort to correct the lack of access to reliable, affordable broadband these rural areas experience, as access to broadband has become a necessary utility to support students, workers, hospitals, businesses, and families. This application brings an opportunity to multiply the effect of limited grant funding focused on connecting the unconnected, and to close the rural connectivity divide in rural Reno County and Sedgwick County, boosting quality of life, workforce productivity, and expanding employment and student access and success. Additionally, this investment will create long term positive impacts in economic development, business, and agricultural investment (following

2. A description of the location (City(s), County(s), etc.), proposed service areas, partners involved and anticipated improvements.

**Location:** The proposed service area is a rural and remote unincorporated parts of Reno and Sedgwick counties.

**Partners:** Greater Hutch Economic Development Advisory Council is committed to contributing \$25 per premise in this project, up to \$15,000 in matching funds, Hutchinson Community Foundation, Reno County, Representative Joe Seiwert, Fairfield USD 310, Representative Ron Estes, Senator Jerry Moran, Greater Wichita Partnership, USD 308 - Hutchinson Public Schools, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce, South Hutchinson, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Reno County Farm Bureau, Representative Steven Howe

**Improvements:** fiber optic broadband connectivity deployments

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3. Goals of the project and community need to address including whether the proposed area is unserved or economically distressed or what the compelling need is, if served.

Connect the underserved with scalable, high capacity fiber optic broadband services - current service speeds indicate that 85.8% of locations in the proposed project are unserved, receiving less than 100x20 - well below Kansas the Federal the minimum speed broadband definition. See also attached letters of support, referencing the need for reliable broadband in these communities.

Address the economically distressed status of these areas and serve disadvantaged residents, students, business owners, and farmers deprived of affordable broadband by providing low to no cost connectivity, utilizing FCC ACP and lifeline programs.

Bolsture Kansas ' ag economy and ag investments with next generation infrastructure. This service area represents under connected and unserved cattle ranches and farms, which need the best connectivity to successfully compete in modern times. In a time where costs are rapidly rising it is more critical than ever to

4. The proposed infrastructure and access improvements planned, including the number of proposed connected premises and community anchor institutions, businesses, or other organizations and the recipients to be served by the project.

Households - 758  
Education Institutions - 1  
Healthcare Organizations - 1  
Business - 18  
Municipal Organizations - 1  
Total Community Anchor Institutions -3

5. The short and long-term investment benefit to the community and service area proposed.

In the short-term, IdeaTek will hire contractors to complete the fiber build, providing an opportunity for employment for Kansas-based workers. In addition, broadband access will provide residents in these areas an immediate opportunity to efficiently work remotely, expanding employment access, as well as access to telehealth and remote education.

In the long-term, communities with fiber infrastructure are far more attractive to new residents and businesses, bringing long-term economic growth and opportunity to the community . When critical, superior broadband access is provided to rural areas, economic growth and opportunity are no longer out of reach.

