

PROJECT PROPOSAL - FOR PUBLIC POSTING



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Please include:

1. An executive summary of the project:


IdeaTek ' s Northeast Saline County rural broadband deployment deploys over 111 miles of new fiber optic broadband infrastructure comprising approximately 580 unserved premises bringing capacity for a symmetrical 1Gbps service level or higher with scalability to significantly higher speeds for long term broadband sustainability. Northeast Saline County is particularly underserved, currently experiencing average broadband speeds of 37X16. This project partners directly with Saline County in an effort to correct Saline County ' s lack of access to reliable, affordable broadband, as access to broadband has become a necessary utility to support students, workers, hospitals, businesses, and families. Kansas has an opportunity to multiply the effect of limited grant funding focused on connecting the unconnected, and to close the rural connectivity divide in Saline 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.

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 part of Northeast Saline county.

Partners: Saline County, Senator J.R. Claeys, Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, Senator Jerry Moran, Representative Ron Estes

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 from FCC 477 Data indicate an average service level of 37X4, well below the Federal definition of the minimum speed broadband definition. See also, attached letters of service need.

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.

Bolster 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 have the ability to lower input costs with real time data, connected equipment, and connected crops and livestock.

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

Premises Passed: 556

Businesses: 23

Anchor Institutions: 41

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.

