
Title **0013** 08/07/2023

by **Debby Minkler** in **BEAD Initial Plan, Volume 1 Public Comment Form** id. 41578418

607 Main St
Atwood, Kansas
67730
Kansas
United States
3086603647
deb@rawlinscounty.org

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Please provide name **Deb Minkler**

Please provide address (Not required) **607 Main st
Atwood
ks
67730
US**

Please provide email **deb@rawlinscounty.org**

Please provide phone number (not required) **+13086603647**

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **Yes**

Organizational affiliation (If applicable) **Rawlins County Economic Development**

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD) is in the process of developing its BEAD Initial Proposal as required by the NTIA. This initial plan is divided into Volume 1 and Volume 2. Volume 1 includes initial identification of unserved and underserved locations, definition of community anchor institutions, proposed pre-challenge process location modifications, and the model challenge process. Please use this link to review the entire Initial Proposal Volume 1 document, and feedback on Volume 1 will be captured in the text boxes below. The comment portal will be open from August 1, 2023 through August 30, 2023. KOBD will then review all feedback and submit the Initial Proposal to the NTIA. To access a full copy of Volume 1 of the BEAD Initial Proposal along with accompanying documents, please use the links below:

<https://www.kansascommerce.gov/officeofbroadbanddevelopment/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment/>

I am responding to comments related to the following Volume 1 requirements

Requirement 3: Identification of existing broadband efforts
Requirement 5: Identification of existing unserved and underserved broadband locations
Requirement 7: Detailed BEAD challenge process

Comments relating to Requirement 3: Identification of existing broadband efforts

We applied for a Broadband grant through Nex-Tech to improve broadband/internet access in the rural part of the county. However, our application was vetoed by Vyve and Dunkers, who claimed that they have no viable plan to extend broadband coverage to these underserved areas, leaving the community without a reliable solution for improved connectivity.

Comments relating to Requirement 5: Identification of existing unserved and underserved broadband locations

Identification of existing unserved and underserved broadband locations is a critical step in understanding the extent of the digital divide in the region spanning from the county borders of Decatur to Thomas to Cheyenne County. Accurate data on these areas will inform targeted efforts to bridge the gap and provide reliable broadband access to underserved communities.

Comments relating to Requirement 7: Detailed BEAD challenge process

The Broadband Economic Assistance and Development (BEAD) challenge process in Rawlins County aims to address the lack of broadband access in underserved areas. However, Vyve, the existing service provider, is having residential customers falsely claim to be businesses to try to qualify for broadband services. Moreover, Vyve's service reliability has declined, leaving residents frustrated, and local internet companies are unable to provide broadband due to uncertainties in partnering with Vyve. These challenges pose significant obstacles to achieving widespread broadband coverage in the county.

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 (KOBDD) to contact you if further information is needed. You expressly acknowledge and

Deb Minkler

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.
