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Contact:

Cassie Nichols

cassie.nichols@ks.gov

Governor Laura Kelly Announces Recipients of \$10 Million Investment Expanding Broadband Access Across Rural Kansas

TOPEKA – Governor Laura Kelly today announced the 11 recipients of the Broadband Acceleration Grant program resulting in more than \$10 million of investment in high-speed broadband access across 10 rural Kansas counties.

“We’re continuing to deliver on our bold and ambitious goal to make Kansas a top 10 state for broadband access by 2030,” **Governor Laura Kelly said.** “Affordable broadband is necessary for our communities to remain viable and competitive, and every Kansan deserves a reliable connection to the world. These grants accelerate our efforts to make that a reality.”

Launched in 2020, the Broadband Acceleration Grant is a ten-year, \$85 million program that will bring critically needed broadband access to Kansas communities. The program is administered by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development and funded through the Kansas Department of Transportation’s Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (IKE). This second year of the program brings the total broadband infrastructure investment in Kansas communities to more than \$70 million since 2020.

“Access to quality broadband is no longer a luxury, it’s a necessity,” **Lieutenant Governor and Commerce Secretary David Toland said.** “Broadband connectivity improves quality of life and opens the door to new business and community growth all across Kansas. We’re grateful to the community leaders who are championing broadband access at the local level and making long-term, strategic investments in their communities.”

The \$5 million in grant funding for 2022 will be combined with an additional \$5 million in matching funds, resulting in more than \$10 million for critically needed broadband infrastructure in Kansas communities. Three of the awarded projects involve key partnerships with municipalities and include \$875,000 in matching funds from the local community.

“Broadband infrastructure is as critical to the well-being of Kansans as are safe roads, bridges, and drinking water,” **said Julie Lorenz, Transportation Secretary.** “These IKE-funded grants, when combined with broadband funding opportunities available through the federal Bipartisan

Infrastructure Law (BIL), enable Kansas to strategically and efficiently expand quality broadband infrastructure throughout our state.”

The projects were selected following a competitive funding round, and all proposed projects were made available for public review. To encourage input, a public comment period was included in the process, ensuring transparency and community feedback in the process of making awards.

“Our focus is on improving access for the nearly 60% of Kansans who are in need of robust internet connectivity,” **Interim Director of the Kansas Office of Broadband Development Melinda Stanley said.** “Governor Kelly recognizes that broadband access is a necessity for our communities and Kansas households, and though there is much work yet to do, these awards bring us another step closer to connecting all Kansans.”

Applicants, awarded grant amounts, and matching investments are as follows:

Awardee	Location	Grant Award	Matching Funds	Total Investment
Blue Valley Communications	Nemaha County	\$ 809,549	\$809,549	\$ 1,619,098
Charter Communications	Leavenworth County	\$ 403,158	\$ 1,512,000	\$ 1,915,158
Cunningham Communications	Cloud County	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,000,000
EpicTouch Communications*	Liberal, Seward	\$ 889,063	\$889,063*	\$1,778,126
HB Cable*	Kanopolis	\$ 300,407	\$ 300,407	\$ 600,814
Ideatek	Seward County	\$ 259,752	\$ 259,752	\$ 519,504
KwiKom Communications*	Paola, Miami County	\$ 496,190	\$ 496,190	\$ 992,380
S&A	Americus, Lyon County	\$ 121,734	\$ 121,734	\$ 243,468
SC Telcom	Harper County	\$ 750,698	\$ 750,698	\$1,501,396
WTC Communications*	SE Riley County	\$ 182,750	\$ 182,750	\$ 365,500
WTC Communications	Pottawatomie County	\$ 286,699	\$ 286,699	\$ 573,398

(* include community co-investment or are part of a KDOT “Dig Once” initiative)

