



Title **0028** 01/25/2021


by **Damien Gilbert** in **Public Comment** id. 18998806


Wamego, Kansas
66547
United States

Damien.Gilbert@house.ks.gov

Original Submission 01/25/2021

Please provide your name: **Ron Highland**

Please provide your address: 
**Wamego
Kansas
66547
US**

Please provide a phone number: 

Please provide your email contact: **ron.highland@house.ks.gov**

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

January 18, 2021

To: Grant application review committee

Ref: Broadband Acceleration Grant, letter of support for Wamego Telecommunications Company application

Dear committee members:

I am writing in support of Wamego Telecommunications Company's (WTC) application for a grant to expand high-speed internet service to southeast Riley County, which currently lacks high speed internet access. During testimony both in the Rural Revitalization and Agriculture Committees, the lack of broadband connectivity was the most often mentioned cause of declining population and businesses in rural Kansas. This area of Riley County is cut off from the rest of the county by the Kansas River. This area could become a vibrant business development area for the county by simply providing high-speed internet service, especially at the 1 Gbps down/ 1Gbps up speeds.

SE Riley County most directly abuts Wabaunsee County. Wabaunsee County is currently being served by Wamego Telecommunications or is under development. Their proximity makes the area an ideal candidate for expansion and support. With the expanding businesses within the animal health corridor and their proximity to Topeka, Manhattan, and Emporia, they are prime for growth to serve as base for ancillary businesses, commuters to the metropolitan areas, and agricultural research opportunities. WTC is a very well-run company that provides broadband services, primarily in the northern area of the county. They are known for their quality of service, in both personnel and equipment. When they approached me concerning the application, they shared that they are interested in expanding to this service area. This is an area that would prove rewarding in terms of return on investment.

Broadband connectivity is being compared to the rural electrification and landline phone service early last century. I would agree and suggest that survival in rural areas of our state now depends on internet connectivity in the form of a broadband fiberoptic network. SE Riley County could become the model for determining the best solutions for other rural areas. Its proximity to Manhattan and Topeka makes interaction with Kansas agencies and policy makers beneficial to all parties.

Respectfully,

Representative Ronald L. Highland, D.V.M., Ph.D.

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

[Broadband_Acceleration_Grant_letter_of_support.pdf](#)

By submitting this form for public comment and evidence to support your comment, you are accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted and that it is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. You agree to be contacted by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Department of Commerce should the need arise. Furthermore, by making this submission, you understand that Kansas Department of Commerce and the Office of Broadband Development reserve the right to publicly publish your comment and evidence provided. Falsification of information will result in rejection of future public comment submissions and could result legal action. Please type your name and today's date in the text box below.

Ron Highland, 1/25/21

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

27487 Wells Creek Rd.
Wamego, KS 66547-1867
(785) 456-9799

State Capitol
Topeka, Kansas 66612
(785) 296-7310
ron.highland@house.ks.gov



Ron Highland, DVM, PhD
Representative, 51st District

Committee Assignments

Chair: Water
Member: Commerce, Labor and Economic
Development
Member: Taxation
Member: Rules and Journal

January 18, 2021

To: Grant applications review committee

Ref: Broadband Acceleration Grant, letter of support for Wamego Telecommunications
Company application

Dear committee members:

I am writing in support of Wamego Telecommunications Company's (WTC) application for a grant to expand high speed broadband internet service to South East Riley county that currently lack high-speed internet access. During testimony both in the Rural Revitalization and Agriculture Committees, the lack of broadband connectivity was the most often mentioned cause of declining population and businesses in rural Kansas. This area of Riley County is cut off from the rest of the county by the Kansas River. This area could become a vibrant business development area for the county by simply providing high-speed internet service, especially at the 1 Gbps down/ 1Gbps up speeds.

SE Riley County most directly abuts Wabaunsee County. Wabaunsee County is currently being served by Wamego Telecommunications or is under development. Their proximity makes the area an ideal candidate for expansion and support. With the expanding businesses within the animal health corridor and their proximity to Topeka, Manhattan, and Emporia, they are prime for growth to serve as base for ancillary businesses, commuters to the metropolitan areas, and agricultural research opportunities. WTC is a very well-run company that provides broadband services, primarily in the northern area of the county. They are known for their quality of service, in both personnel and equipment. When they approached me concerning the application, they shared that they are interested in expanding to this service area. This is an area that would prove rewarding in terms of return on investment.

Broadband connectivity is being compared to the rural electrification and landline phone service early last century. I would agree and suggest that survival in rural areas of our state now depends on internet connectivity in the form of a broadband fiberoptic network. SE Riley County could become the model for determining the best solutions for other rural areas. Its

proximity to Manhattan and Topeka makes interaction with Kansas agencies and policy makers beneficial to all parties.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronald L. Highland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'R'.

Ronald L. Highland, D.V.M., Ph.D.

Title **0015** 01/19/2021
by **Jeffery Urbanek** in **Public Comment** id. 18897329
[REDACTED]
Manhattan, Kansas
66502
KS
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/19/2021

Please provide your name: **Jeffery Urbanek**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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

I am providing comments related to the following application (choose one):
WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **area is need of decent internet access. For kids in school, communications, research, Work,**

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

By submitting this form for public comment and evidence to support your comment, you are accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted and that it is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. You agree to be contacted by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Department of Commerce should the need arise. Furthermore, by making this submission, you understand that Kansas Department of Commerce and the Office of Broadband Development reserve the right to publicly publish your comment and evidence provided. Falsification of information will result in rejection of future public comment submissions and could result legal action. Please type your name and today's date in the text box below.

Jeffery Urbanek

Title **0010** 01/18/2021
by **Maggie Behnke** in **Public Comment** id. 18885028
[REDACTED]
Manhattan KS, Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/18/2021

Please provide your name: **Maggie Behnke**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

I am writing in support of the Zeandale/Pillsbury area grant for increased service in our area. We are an underserved area. The pandemic has showed us that limited options for high speed internet can have big consequences for our children in remote learning and the adults at home (K-State professor, USDA veterinarian) with remote working. We would pay double what we do now for a land high speed internet connection vs satellite internet.

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

Maggie Behnke 1/18/20

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Title **0008** 01/17/2021

by **Paul Abitz** in **Public Comment**


id. 18871521



Manhattan, Kansas
66502
United States



Original submission

01/17/2021

Please provide your name: **Paul Abitz**

Please provide your address: 
**Manhattan
Kansas
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: 

Please provide your email contact: 

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

As a resident of the Deep Creek community who has minimal options for affordable internet providers we offer our full support of this project. This project is very important to our community group for several reasons first it will allow our children and the rural communities to be able to do remote learning without that decision being detrimental to their learning. Second it would also allow property values in this area to increase because in today's world high speed internet option is a selling point. Lastly it would allow our farmers and ranchers in this area to be put on a more even playing field so that they would be able to be more productive in their businesses.

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

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Paul Abitz 01/17/2021

Title **0002** 01/11/2021
by **Brendon Parsons** in **Public Comment** id. 18772023
[REDACTED]
Manhattan, Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/11/2021

Please provide your name: **Brendon Parsons**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **We are unable to get reliable high speed internet in my area. The Few options we have are Cell and Satellite. Both costly and limit the amount you can use. This issue has really hit the community hard with working from home and remote learning this year.**



Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

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Brendon W Parsons


Title **0007** 01/16/2021
by **calley hoffman** in **Public Comment** id. 18848559



Manhattan, Kansas
66502
KS
United States


Original Submission 01/16/2021

Please provide your name: **Calley Hoffman**

Please provide your address: 
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: 

Please provide your email contact: 

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

The citizens of our community and surrounding area are in desperate need of quality, affordable and consistent internet providers. The demand for internet increases by the day. The pandemic presented a whole new set of challenges for those without a consistent and reliable provider while trying to work from home or school our children from home. We need internet.

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

Calley Hoffman 01-15-2021

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Title **0019** 01/20/2021
by **debbie Sornoso** in **Public Comment** id. 18926661
[REDACTED]
Manhattan , Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/20/2021

Please provide your name: **Debbie Sornoso**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
Kansas
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **We are stuck with satellite internet that has high charges and throttle internet speed.**

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

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Debbie Sornoso 1/20/2021

Title **0024** 01/25/2021
by **Heath Shafer** in **Public Comment** id. 18982903
[REDACTED]
Manhattan, Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/25/2021

Please provide your name: **Heath Shafer**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

Currently based on limited and expensive internet options like, but not limited to, US Cellular my family has been using the hotspot capabilities provided by our cell phones for roughly 12 months. These options are slow and do not provide the ability for my children to effectively and efficiently conduct online schooling required by the USD 383 district. Having a fast affordable option would immediately garner our business and improve my family's lives. This project is something we want and is something we need.

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.



n/a

Heath Shafer

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Title **0003** 01/12/2021


by **JEFFREY NELSON** in **Public Comment** id. 18778997



Manhattan, Kansas
66502
United States


Original Submission 01/12/2021

Please provide your name: **JEFFREY NELSON**

Please provide your address: 
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: 

Please provide your email contact: 

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **My wife is a teacher and I'm in the army reserves. The lack of internet has been hindering both our jobs especially during the pandemic.**

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

By submitting this form for public comment and evidence to support your comment, you are accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted and that it is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. You agree to be contacted by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Department of Commerce should the need arise. Furthermore, by making this submission, you understand that Kansas Department of Commerce and the Office of Broadband Development reserve the right to publicly publish your comment and evidence provided. Falsification of information will result in rejection of future public comment submissions and could result legal action. Please type your name and today's date in the text box below.

JEFFREY p NELSON

Title **0013** 01/18/2021
by **Kim Iversen** in **Public Comment** id. 18888866
[REDACTED]
Manhattan, Kansas
66502
KS
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/18/2021

Please provide your name: **Kim Iversen**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

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

Please provide the name of the organization and address for which you are submitting comments: **Deep Creek/Pillsbury Area**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

am submitting
comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your
comments in the text
box below.

We live in the Deep Creek area. We are paying for the top plan with Hughes net and we still don't get WiFi service. We've researched and called surrounding providers no one can provide us with service. There's got to be an answer for those of us in this area. I'm a teacher and can't even zoom from my home due to horrible internet service. We pay \$140 for Hughes net top plan and it's horrible! Please help our area!

Please provide
supporting
documents relative to
your comments.
Please submit
multiple files as a ZIP
file.

n/a

Kim M. Iversen

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Title **0012** 01/18/2021
by **Ron Highland** in **Public Comment** id. 18887414
[REDACTED]
Wamego, Kansas
66547
Kansas
United States
[REDACTED]
ron.highland@house.ks.gov

Original Submission 01/18/2021

Please provide your name: **Ron Highland**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Wamego
KS
66547
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: **ron.highland@house.ks.gov**

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

Please provide the name of the organization and address for which you are submitting comments: **Wamego Telecommunications, Wamego, KS 66547**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

am submitting
comments to express

Support for a project

Please provide your
comments in the text
box below.

I am writing in support of Wamego Telecommunications Company's (WTC) application for a grant to expand high speed broadband internet service to areas of South East Riley county that currently do not have adequate internet service. During testimony both in the Rural Revitalization and Agriculture Committees, the lack of broadband connectivity was the most often mentioned cause of declining population and business in rural Kansas.

SE Riley County is separated from the rest of the county by the Kansas River and rural. That separation and their direct connection to Wabaunsee County that is serviced by WTC makes it an obvious choice to expand broadband service to the area. Their proposed service expansion to 1 Gbps down/ 1Gbps up greatly exceeds your minimum request of 25/3.

WTC is well known voice, internet, and cable provider in this area and their past represents careful and well supported projects. Their most recent grant request has resulted in expansion to the McFarland community as promised for the most recent grant request.

I support their application and urge they be awarded the grant for broadband expansion.

Please provide
supporting
documents relative to
your comments.
Please submit
multiple files as a ZIP
file.

n/a

Ron Highland

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Title **0005** 01/15/2021
by **Ron Wilson** in **Public Comment** id. 18831853
[REDACTED]
Manhattan, Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/15/2021

Please provide your name: **Ron Wilson**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
KS
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below.

I believe the Zeandale region should be the highest priority among all broadband grant applications. In terms of Internet access, we have the worst of all worlds. We are close to Manhattan so people assume that we have good Internet access, but we do not. When my wife and I moved back to the family ranch in the Zeandale area, we were closer to a larger city than we had been, but our Internet access was much worse. The Zeandale valley is highly populated but is underserved. Many residents work at K-State, are highly educated, are seeking to operate businesses, or are working and educating from home. My wife is operating a woman-owned small business and Internet access is vital for her business. Of all the possible places where a grant could be directed, this would be one with a high return on investment. I urge KDOC to approve this grant!

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

Ron Wilson

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Title **0011** 01/18/2021
by **Stephanie Shannon** in **Public Comment** id. 18886881
[REDACTED]
Manhattan , Kansas
66502
United States
[REDACTED]

Original Submission 01/18/2021

Please provide your name: **Stephanie Shannon**

Please provide your address: [REDACTED]
**Manhattan
Kansas
66502
US**

Please provide a phone number: [REDACTED]

Please provide your email contact: [REDACTED]

Are you responding on behalf of an organization? **No**

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): **WTC Communications Zeandale/Deep Creek**

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

Please provide your comments in the text box below. **Having no options for internet is terrible. Satellite and cellular internet is unreliable and very expensive. We currently have Verizon and it is probably worst than dial up with 3 kids in remote schooling. Getting work done is nearly impossible.**

Please provide supporting documents relative to your comments. Please submit multiple files as a ZIP file.

n/a

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Stephanie Shannon