

March 20, 2023

BUCHANAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

112 1ST ST E STE B
INDEPENDENCE IA 50644

RE: EAST BUCHANAN TELEPHONE CO-OP
ITQ APPLICATION FOR SOUTHEAST INDEPENDENCE IA

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Carey Lackovich, & my mother Gail Hintz & I moved to a home on 232nd Street in Independence back in 2003. We are writing this letter in support of the ITQ application for southeast Independence project, whose goal is to bring reliable high-speed internet our rural residential community.

We began receiving internet service from East Buchanan Telephone Co-op ("EBTC") in 2014 & were pleased with the service we received. In 2020, we were advised the internet service we received would no longer be available as they had lost their bid for the frequencies they required. At that time, we were in the midst of the pandemic, & I had been working from home for quite a while. Needless to say, internet service was certainly critical for my needs. I began researching options but they were pretty much nil – except for satellite internet service. Most of the providers of that service had sketchy reviews at best & had no "testing period" to allow proof that the service would work well or at all. I settled on Starlink although the wait-time was incredibly long. About the same time I received my Starlink equipment, EBTC requested my assistance with beta-testing a new internet service option as they were partnering with US Cellular. I gladly complied & actually had BOTH EBTC service & Starlink service for several months. Although I would have much preferred to stay local with EBTC, the upload speeds with their service were just not consistent enough to support my needs as I continued working from home.

While quite reliable, satellite internet service is still subject to the whims of Mother Nature. The proposed fiber-optic project would provide service with more reliability & if EBTC is allowed to head the project, we would also have local support available should it be needed. My employer is located in Marion, & working from home has become quite vital – especially when dealing with the vagaries of Iowa weather in the winter. Reliable high-speed internet has made me a more efficient & present employee.

I hope you will work with EBTC in submitting the ITQ application & allow them to move forward with the project should the grant funding be approved. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by e-mail at gailcare4670@gmail.com or me, Carey Lackovich, by phone at (319) 404-3976.

Thank you.



Carey Lackovich



Gail Hintz

2415 232nd St

Independence IA 50644

BUCHANAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CLAYTON OHRT
DAWN VOGEL
JOHN KURTZ



Buchanan County Courthouse
P.O. Box 317
Independence, IA 50644
Phone: (319) 334-3578
Fax: (319) 334-4234

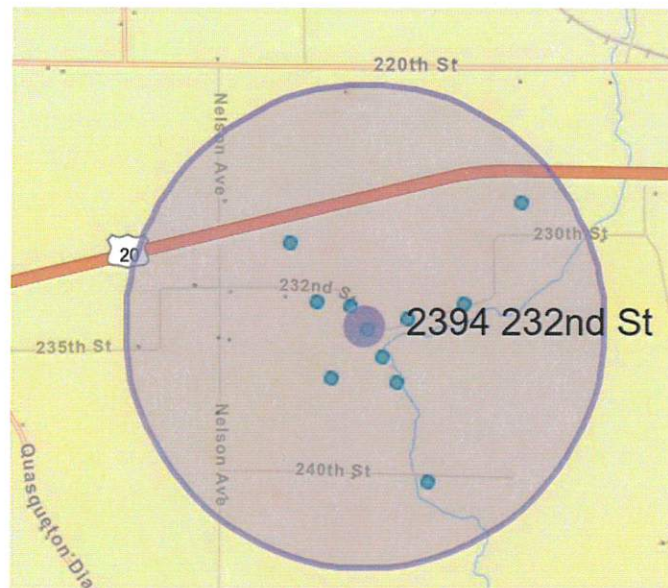
Clayton Ohrt
Chair – Buchanan County Board of Supervisors
PO Box 317
Independence, IA 50644

March 20, 2023

To the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa:

The Buchanan County Economic Development Commission (BCEDC) is submitting this application in response to the OCIO Invitation to Qualify for a Broadband Intervention Zone. The BCEDC, representing local businesses and residents all across Buchanan County Iowa, has collaborated with East Buchanan Telephone Cooperative to identify a specific area of geographic concern with regards to existing broadband availability.

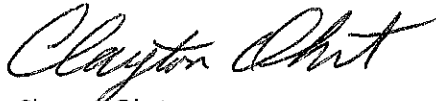
As such, the BCEDC is proposing that a Broadband Intervention Zone be established for the area **southeast of Independence in central Buchanan County**. Pursuant to the Iowa Broadband Map v.5, this area is currently served by broadband providers with speeds that do not facilitate the required 100/20 minimum threshold for robust connectivity. Please see the map below:



As the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, it is our hope that the ITQ application and review of same by OCIO will designate this area in Buchanan County as a geographic area of concern / Broadband Intervention Zone for consideration in the next broadband grant program. Buchanan County shall in its kind support coordinate with the contractor to make modification of the road to cause the least amount of damage and restore the road at the time of completion.

We fully support this effort to bring more reliable broadband to our rural areas to support economic development for businesses, and to further facilitate endeavors for remote work, remote studying, and for remote healthcare.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clayton Ohrt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Clayton" being more prominent than the last name "Ohrt".

Clayton Ohrt
Chair – Buchanan County Board of Supervisors
Independence, Iowa
(319) 334-3578

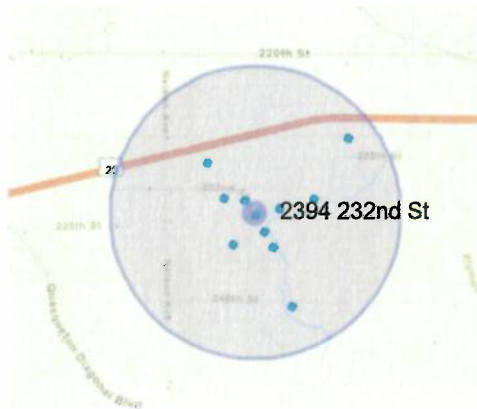


03/15/2023

Buchanan County Economic Development Commission
112 1st Street East, Suite B
Independence, IA 50644

Whomever it my concern:

I, Jeff Rummel am writing to support the Buchanan County Economic Development Commission and to express support for the ITQ application for Southeast of Independence IA project, whose goal is to bring high speed, reliable internet into my residential rural area as displayed below:



This project is important to me for personal and business reasons:

- Business
 - I am the CFO for our counties' Critical Access Hospital. Besides the traditional accounting and finance functions, I also oversee several different operational critical departments. I work often outside the traditional workday and regularly need to be available 24/7. Although allowed, I am not able to work from home due to slow and unreliable internet services. Thus, I regularly am required to travel back to work after hours or on weekends which would not be necessary if my residence had better internet service. On occasion this delays my ability to timely respond as well as is time wasted commuting that in most situations would not be necessary if I could access the varies systems I use.
 - I own a small hobby business that I relay on hosted systems. I am often unable to connect or effectively use the services required to run my business due to slow and unreliable internet connection. This creates huge frustrations and inefficiencies.
 - Our county's Critical Access Hospital has recently lost Dialysis services when the third party provider didn't renew their lease. Speaking as part of the executive team, the replacement service we are likely moving towards is a process utilizing an at-home system. Although my household is not currently in need of such service, it is troublesome to know that if such the need were to arise in the future, we are not a candidate for this only option of local healthcare

services. As CFO for the hospital, my hopes are that every resident of the county would be able to use this newest technology in healthcare but am fully aware that residential locations such as my own would not qualify, thus having to regularly travel further distance to larger cities for service. Healthcare in general is making huge strides in at-home services, monitoring, etc. that my current service would not support.

- Personal

- As mentioned above, I am limited on working from home options and often need to travel back into town when often could have easily addressed any issues or regular work items from home.
- I have children both in grade school as well as college. Most of their school assignments are now assigned and completed completely paperless online. This is a battle for them more often than not do to the poor and unreliable connections we currently have. My college student will not come home for weekends or shortens his stay when he has homework/projects due as he cannot rely on our current service to be able to complete what he needs completed .
- I have a son who lives in Colorado but can actually come home and work from our residence in leu of using PTO or at least he can minimize the use of PTO. Although this is an option, he is not able to do this as again our internet speed and reliability are not sufficient. He ends up coming back to the state but spending most his time with friends and family in town where he can effectively work.
- I am also very concerned what degradation in property value having poor internet causes. That negative value impact will definitely increase as families and businesses consider internet performance as part of an overall evaluation of locations for home and property ownership both now and into the future.

I am hopeful Buchanan County's ITQ application is approved and highly rated, and further that East Buchanan Telephone Cooperative will be able to secure grant funding for this project. They are very reputable in the area and look forward to working with them in the near future.

If anyone has any question or requires any additional information, I am available most any time to answer any questions. My cell is 515-238-7816

Thank you for your consideration,



**Jeff Rummel, CPA
2394 232nd Street
Independence, IA 50644**