

Build Kansas Fund | Fiscal Year 2025 Application Package | Memo



To: Representative Troy Waymaster, Chair, Build Kansas Advisory Committee
Chardae Caine, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Shauna Wake, Office of the Kansas State Treasurer

From: Matthew A. Volz, PE, Executive Director, Kansas Infrastructure Hub

RE: Build Kansas Fund Application #2025-095-NCRPC

Date: April 11, 2025

Attached, please find an application made to the Build Kansas Fund by the Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. The application packet includes the following items:

- Coversheet – provides a high-level overview of the application including a unique identification number, page 1 of 10 of the Build Kansas Fund Application Package.
- Build Kansas Fund Application – includes information submitted with the Build Kansas Fund Application, pages 2-8. Page 8 provides the table of funding sources and zip codes served by the project.
- Attachments – executive summary, pages 9-11.

Project Overview

The Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. seeks funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for funding available through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program for their Electronic Reclosers project which includes installation of oil-free automatic reclosers on existing utility poles to enhance wildfire hazard mitigation efforts and reduce the risk of electrical system-related fire ignitions.

This opportunity is a discretionary IIJA program with a local match requirement of 25% of the total project cost. The entity is requesting \$427,500.00 from the Build Kansas Fund, and is providing a local match of \$22,500.00. This request has the potential to unlock \$1,350,000.00 in federal funds, for a total project cost of \$1,800,000.00.

The deadline is to be determined and this Build Kansas Fund application was received on October 21, 2024.

Build Kansas Fund Steering Committee Recommendation

The Build Kansas Fund Steering Committee reviewed this application on April 9, 2025 following a successful completeness check. The Steering Committee **RECOMMENDS APPROVAL** of Build Kansas Funding to the Build Kansas Advisory Committee for final advice.

Build Kansas Fund | Fiscal Year 2025 Application Package | Coversheet



Build Kansas Fund Application Number	2025-095-NCRPC
Applicant Name	Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.
Application Date Received	10/21/2024
Project Name	Electronic Reclosers Project
Project Description	Install oil-free automatic reclosers on existing utility poles to enhance wildfire hazard mitigation efforts and reduce the risk of electrical system-related fire ignitions.
Entity Type	Non-profit
Economic Development District (EDD) Planning Commission	NCRPC
Infrastructure Sector(s)	Resilience
BIL Program	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
BIL Program Type	Discretionary
Application Type	Implementation
BIL Application Deadline	Paused - TBD
Build Kansas Fund Request	\$427,500.00
Technical Assistance Received	General Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	BIL Application Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Build Kansas Fund Application Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other (Brief Description): Provided general, BIL Application, and BKF Application support.
Application Notes	Build Kansas Fund contribution of \$427,500.00 will unlock \$1,350,000.00 in federal IJA funding, with a local cash contribution of \$22,500.00 for a total project cost of \$1,800,000.00.
Steering Committee Funding Recommendation	4/9/2025 Recommend <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
Advisory Committee Funding Recommendation	4/16/2025 Recommend <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>

Title	Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. by Kathleen O'Brien in Build Kansas Fund Application kmobrien@nemaha-marshall.coop	10/21/2024 id. 48592082
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Original Submission	04/01/2025
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Score	n/a	
	Part 1: Applicant Information	
The name of the entity applying for the Build Kansas Fund:	Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.	
Project Name:	Electronic Reclosers	
Entity type:	Non-Profit	
Applicant Contact Name:	Kathleen O'Brien	
Applicant Contact Position/Title:	General Manager	
Applicant Contact Telephone Number:	+17857362345	
Applicant Contact Email Address:	kmobrien@nemaha-marshall.coop	
Applicant Contact Address:	P O Box O	
Applicant Contact Address Line 2 (optional):	402 Prairie Street	
Applicant Contact City:	Axtell	
Applicant Contact State:	Kansas	
Applicant Contact Zip Code:	66403	

Is the Project Contact the same as the Applicant Contact? Yes

Part 2: Build Kansas Fund - Eligibility Criteria

Certify that you are pursuing an Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity for which your entity is eligible: Yes

Certify that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity you are pursuing has a required non-federal match component: Yes

What is the primary county that the project will occur in? Marshall County

The Build Kansas Fund is intended to support Kansas-based infrastructure projects. Please provide a list of all the zip codes this project will be located in, along with an estimated percent [%] of the project located in that zip code. For example, if seeking funding for road infrastructure, provide a rough percent of the roads expected in each zip code:

[Zip Code Percentage.xlsx](#)

Part 3: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) - Grant Application Information Please Note: This information is related to the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), commonly known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), funding opportunity to which you will apply. This is NOT information for the Build Kansas Match Fund.

Please enter the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity title that the entity is applying for: BRIC

What is the funding agency for this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity? Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

What is the Assistance Listing Number (ALN) for this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity? 97.047

What is the federal application due date for this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity? April 1, 2025

Application Type: Implementation

What is the federal fiscal year for this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity? 2024

Enter the amount of funding being applied for, from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity: \$1,350,000.00 for a total project cost of \$1,800,000.00

Enter the total project cost: \$1,800,000.00

Enter the required non-federal match percentage: 25%

Part 4: Build Kansas Fund - Match Application Information Beginning in July 2024 and moving forward, eligible applicants are expected to contribute a portion of the non-Federal match requirement. This contribution can be in the form of cash and/or in-kind contributions. The goal is to demonstrate the applicant's commitment to the project. The contribution should be significant enough relative to the Build Kansas Fund request. For a local public entity, 5% of the non-federal match is a good guideline, but not a requirement. See Build Kansas Fund Program Guidance for exceptions and more information.

Enter the non-federal cash match amount being requested from the Build Kansas Fund: \$427,500.00 for a total project cost of \$1,800,000.00

Enter the non-federal cash match amount being provided by the eligible applicant, if applicable: \$22,500.00 for a total project cost of \$1,800,000.00

Enter the estimated value of the non-federal in-kind match amount being provided by the eligible applicant, if applicable: 00

Expected breakdown of funding sources to support the project: Enter the funding source and projected amount from each source to support this project:

[Kansas+DOT+table_V2.xlsx](#)

Part 5: Build Kansas Fund - Means Test and Eligible Applicant Match

What other available funding sources that are currently planned to go unused by your entity will be leveraged for this project? 0

Will any American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund monies will be used for the non-federal match? 0

What other sources of in-kind match will be leveraged for this project? Please list and include the actual or estimated value of each. 0

What other funding sources (local, federal, or non-federal) will be used for this match? 0

Describe your efforts to find other available funding sources for this project: We have applied for an RUS Loan to cover any unfunded project expenses.

Part 6: Additional Information

Please upload a draft or final version of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) program grant application associated with this request OR an executive summary providing an overview of the project:

[FEMA_Wildfire_Historical_Data.pdf](#)

[BRIC_Executive_Summary-Reclosers.docx](#)

Provide any additional information about this project not covered in previous sections of this application (optional):

Part 7: Terms and Conditions

Understanding of Fund Release Requirements: checked

Understanding of Use of Funds: checked

Understanding of Reporting Requirements: checked

Authority to Make Grant Application: checked

Persons and Titles: Kathleen O'Brien
The following persons are responsible for making this Build Kansas Fund application.

Position/Title: General Manager

Additional: Patrick Holthaus

Position/Title: Line Superintendent

Additional: Justin Burdick

Position/Title: Accountant

Additional: Kimberly Broxterman

Position/Title: Office Manager

Source	Amount	% of Project
Build Kansas Funds (non-federal match)	\$ 427,500.00	23.75%
Eligible Applicant Cash Match	\$ 22,500.00	1.25%
Eligible Applicant In-Kind Match (estimated value)	\$ -	
BIL Federal Funds (applied for)	\$ 1,350,000.00	75%
Additional Project Contribution (if applicable)	\$ -	
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 1,800,000.00	100%

*Applicant match contribution is 5% of total match requirement

Zip Code	% of project in zip code
66428	12%
66945	12%
66427	8%
66404	12%
66415	12%
66508	12%
66518	12%
66538	12%
66406	8%
	100% in Kansas

Executive Summary for The Build Kansas Matching Fund Application

October 31, 2024

BRIC Grant Application Project Title: Installation of Oil-Free Automatic Reclosers for Wildfire Hazard Mitigation

Applicant Organization: Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.

Location: P.O. Box O; 402 Prairie Street; Axtell, Kansas 66403

Phone: 785-736-2345

Email: kmobrien@nemaha-marshall.coop

Introduction

In recent years, our service territory, which includes the counties of Jackson, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie, and Washington, has experienced a concerning increase in the frequency and severity of grass fires, directly threatening both life and property. An open records request provided historical wildfire data, and the report is attached below. To mitigate these risks, we propose to start a program to install oil-free automatic reclosers on existing utility poles as a proactive measure to enhance wildfire hazard mitigation efforts. We believe this project aligns with FEMA's goals of providing resilience in infrastructure while prioritizing environmental safety and community protection.

Background

Historically, our area has faced several grass fire incidents, primarily attributed to agriculture related activities, but also electrical system faults, lightning storms and other weather-related events have the potential to ignite dry agricultural areas. The likelihood of such events has escalated and has drawn national attention and in some cases litigation, prompting the need for wildfire mitigation maintenance plans as well as advanced solutions to prevent power related ignition sources. Traditional reclosers contain oil and typically try to reset three times when the recloser detects a fault. Each time the recloser operates there is the potential that the fault location could emit sparks. These traditional reclosers can be manually set to only reset one time but it requires a truck and two linemen to perform this task. Our proposal focuses on oil-free technology that minimizes the ecological impact and reduces the risk of fire ignitions with more modern programming in fire hazard situations.

Project Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of this project is to prevent the loss of life and property through enhanced wildfire mitigation strategies. The objectives include:

1. **Installation of Oil-Free Automatic Reclosers:** Deploy state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly reclosers at substations and progressively extend installations outward especially in higher risk or remote areas.
2. **Enhance Electric System Reliability:** Infrastructure improvements reduce outages caused by fire related damage.

3. **Mitigate Wildfire Risks:** Significantly decrease the likelihood of electrical system contributions to wildfire outbreaks.

Project Implementation

This project will allow us to plan and implement an assessment of our substation and major feeder lines to identify optimal installation locations for the automatic reclosers. As such, we will:

1. **Procure Equipment:** Acquire oil-free automatic reclosers through a competitive bidding process to ensure cost-effectiveness and quality. The current cost of each automatic recloser is approximately \$40,000.
2. **Installation:** We will use our qualified linemen to mount the reclosers on existing utility poles and ensure proper programming by qualified engineers who model our electric system.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** We will monitor and evaluate the performance of the reclosers and their effectiveness using our outage notification system and county grass fire information.

Budget and Funding

The total estimated cost for the project is \$1,800,000, which includes equipment procurement, installation, and programming. We are seeking funding through the FEMA BRIC grant program and matching funds through the Build Kansas Matching Fund to cover these expenses. We have also applied for a Rural Utilities Service Loan for any unfunded project expenses.

Conclusion

The installation of automatic oil-free reclosers represents a critical step towards enhancing our electric system's resilience against wildfires. By reducing the risk of electric system faults, this project not only protects lives and property but also aligns with FEMA's vision of fostering sustainable and resilient infrastructure. We are committed to implementing this project and look forward to the opportunity to partner with FEMA and the Build Kansas Matching Fund Committee to enhance our area's safety and resilience.

Contact Information:

Kathleen M. O'Brien
General Manager
Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative
P O Box O, 402 Prairie Street
Axtell, Kansas 66403
785-736-2345
kmbrien@nemaha-marshall.coop

Grass/Wildfires 2022-2024

Count of County	Column Labels			
County	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Jackson	128	78	55	261
Marshall	65	51	44	160
Nemaha	26	25	14	65
Pottawatomie	48	22	13	83
Washington	12	34	9	55
Grand Total	279	210	135	624