



**MARATHON COUNTY
BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING
AGENDA**

Date & Time of Meeting: **Monday, December 18, 2023 at 3:00 P.M.**

Meeting Location: **Assembly Room, Marathon County Courthouse, 500 Forest St, Wausau, WI**

Task Force Members: Chair John Robinson, Jacob Langenhahn, Gary Gisselman, Mike Ritter, Jennifer Aarrestad, Tony Sherfinski, Eric Budleski, Milton Olson, Wade Carroll, Jon Euting

Task Force Purpose: *Develop recommendations identifying the potential role of Marathon County in facilitating the expansion of Broadband access in Marathon County. Review the Report: Broadband for Marathon County Broadband Assessment and Plan prepared by Design Nine and develop broad policies and partnership recommendations relating to the expansion of broadband/internet services throughout Marathon County.*

Phone #: 1-415-655-0001

Access Code: 120 112 4516

When you enter the telephone conference, **PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Public Comments (15 Minute limit)**
3. **Approval of the November 1, 2023 minutes**
4. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion:**
 - A. Update on Grant Funded/Assisted Broadband Projects
 1. Frontier
 2. Bug Tussel
 3. Charter
 - B. Update on PSC Capital Projects Fund Projects Requests (Frontier and Charter)
 - C. Broadband Support Position Update
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action:**
 - A. Review Coverage Maps
 - B. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program
 1. Process and timelines for determining priorities for future broadband expansion efforts
 - a. Unserved Areas
 - b. Underserved Areas
 - c. Community Anchor Institutions
 2. Identify County Role in Process
 - a. Process and timelines for maximizing ISP participation
 - b. Task force role
 - C. Review Wisconsin Digital Equity Plan to Identify Opportunities for Marathon County
6. **Next Steps and Timelines**
7. **Next Meeting Date**
8. **Adjournment**

"Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or e-mail countyclerk@co.marathon.wi.us one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED /s/ John Robinson
Presiding Officer or Designee

EMAILED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and other Media Groups

EMAILED BY: Toshia Ranallo

DATE & TIME: 12/13/2023 at 3:00 pm

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE _____

BY: _____

DATE & TIME: _____



MARATHON COUNTY

BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 2:00 P.M.

Employee Resource Conference Room, 500 Forest St, Wausau WI

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair John Robinson	x	
Jacob Langenhahn	x	
Gary Gisselman		x
Mike Ritter	x	
Jennifer Aarrestad	x	
Tony Sherfinski		x
Eric Budleski	x	
Milton Olson	x	
Wade Carroll		x
Jon Euting	x	

Also Present: Gerry Klein, Valerie Carrillo, Kurt Gibbs

VIA Web or Phone: Adam Raschka, Todd Kruse, Preston Vande Voort, Chris Crawford, Michael Puerner, Scott Nyman

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 2:01pm.
2. **Public Comments** (15 Minute limit) – none
3. **LANGENHAHN MAKE A MOTION; SECOND BY BUDLESKI TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2023 BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**
4. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion:**
 - A. Update on Grant Funded/Assisted Broadband Projects
 1. Charter – Adam Raschka reviewed the map in the packet. They are on schedule to complete the current project by year end.
 2. Frontier – Todd Kruse stated they are on schedule under the 2-year plan, total crossings about 10,680 locations. They experienced some delays in trenching to due rain.
 3. Bug Tussel – Chair Robinson gave an update. They have scheduled meetings to discuss their projects and delays. They are working on a path forward to complete the project.
 - B. Broadband Support Position Update – The position had been reposted and closed on October 31.
 - C. Update on Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) – The state of Wisconsin submitted an initial application for public comment for year 1 of the federal dollars. There continues to be concerns about the mapping and quality of maps. There was a discussion of our current maps and areas served.
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action:**
 - A. PSC Capital Projects Fund \$42 million
 1. Potential projects and role of county – Frontier, Todd Kruse, discussed their bid plan that will include passing 846 homes, broken down into three project areas. Charter, Adam Raschka, has identified the central area, west of Wausau, for their proposal project. It would include 2088 homes. They are redesigning a project to not overlap with Frontier as well.
 - B. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program
 1. Public comment on draft plan – no public comment.
 - C. Process for determining priorities for future broadband expansion efforts – Discussion of maps and needs. Potential to offer town hall meetings in the evening.
 - D. Resolution Supporting Applications to PSC for Broadband Expansion
MOTION TO ALLOCATE UP TO \$100 PER CROSSING, UTILIZING ARPA FUNDS, IN SUPPORT OF THE GRANT APPLICATIONS. LANGENHAHN MOTION; GISSELMAN SECOND. MOTION CARRIED.
6. **Next Steps**
 - A. Updating maps with new information
 - B. Prepare for BEAD
7. **Next Meeting:** November 27, 2023
8. **Adjournment**
BUDLESKI MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING, RITTER SECOND. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:16pm.

From: Gerard Klein <Gerard.Klein@co.marathon.wi.us>
Sent: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 4:37 PM
To: John Robinson <John.Robinson@co.marathon.wi.us>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] PSC Email EZ subscribe: 5-CPF-2023

Capital Projects Fund
Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program (5-CPF-2023)



Application Statistics

Applications	Applicants	Miles of Fiber	Communities	Counties	Locations
124	40	6,247	249	52	64,133

Grant Funds Requested	Match Funds Pledged	Total
\$221,616,886	\$251,966,737	\$473,583,623

Application Summaries (Alphabetical by applicant)

Gerry Klein
Director
City-County Information Technology Commission
(715) 261-6707
Email: gerard.klein@co.marathon.wi.us

CCITC Mission - We are one IT team bound together with one mission,
to serve the community by helping our governmental partners
use technology effectively

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS & DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) GRANTS PROCESS

The BEAD program will provide approximately \$42.5 billion nationwide in funding to build broadband

Total Wisconsin BEAD Funding	Purpose	Where will be targeted with BEAD funding?
\$1,055,823,573.71	Every Wisconsinite has access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest priority: unserved households and businesses lacking 25/3 Mbps. • Eligible: underserved households and businesses lacking 100/20 Mbps. • Also eligible: community anchor institutions lacking 1 Gbps, and other digital equity and adoption activities.

BEAD will support the deployment of primarily fiber internet technology that provides service of 100/20 Mbps to all households and residences in Wisconsin that lack access to 25/3 Mbps service.

Wisconsin’s allocation of \$1,055,823,573.51 was determined through a formula based on the state’s proportion of locations lacking access to broadband service, calculated using updated Federal Communications Commission (FCC) maps.

Wisconsin Five-Year Action Plan: Submitted to National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on August 27, 2023. Goals include:

- Achieve the highest possible level of broadband deployment and adoption.
- Deliver sustained, long-term impact on broadband access and digital opportunity for all Wisconsin residents.
- Increase the affordability and reliability of broadband service in Wisconsin.
- Ensure a sufficient and trained broadband workforce for internet service providers, contractors, and subcontractors to construct, operate and maintain current and new broadband infrastructure.

Volume 1 Submitted: December 1, 2023 Approved: _____
 Establish locations and Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) eligible for BEAD funding. Outlines the challenge process.

Volume 2 To be Submitted: December 27, 2023 Approved: _____
 Details remaining requirement for initial proposals

Once Vol 1& Vol 2 approved by NTIA, PSC 365 day sub-awarding process begins (Likely April/May)

ANTICIPATED DEADLINES:

Letters of Intent (LOIs) Due: _____ TBA (January/February 2024)

Grant Applications Due: _____ TBA (March/April 2024)

Awards Begin: _____ TBA (April/May 2024)

BEAD Proposals must include:

- Objectives
- Local, Tribal, Regional and Broadband Planning
- Local Coordination
- Deployment Subgrantee Selection
- Non-deployment Subgrantee Selection
- Eligible Entity Implementation Activities
- Labor Standards and Protections
- Workforce Readiness
- Minority/Woman owned Enterprises/Labor Surplus Firms
- Cost and Barrier Reduction
- Climate Assessment
- Low-Cost Broadband Service Option
- Use of 20 Percent of Funding
- Eligible Entity Regulatory Approach
- Certification of Compliance with BEAD Requirement
- Middle Class Affordability Plan

Letters of Intent (LOIs) -Each prospective subgrantee will submit LOIs by _____, **2024 (TBA)**, which must include:

- Estimated number of locations applied for, the geographical area and proposed technology
- Commitment to providing low-cost service option
- Documentation of financial, managerial & operational capacity
- Documentation of other funding received or being pursued

If LOI is approved, Grant Application Process Begins _____ , 2024 (TBA). Applications must include:

- Project units proposed to be served & amount of funding requested
- Proposed technology
- Project Budget
- Listing of matching funds
- Delineation of each CAI within the project
- Geospatial data demonstrating the wireline route and/or placement of towers
- Information on any community engagement, public/private partnership, or non grantee match funding
- Letter of endorsement from the appropriate local government(s) and/or Tribes in footprint of project
- If traversing Tribal land, signed letter of permission from Tribal leadership
- Pricing plans and affordability offerings
- Plans to leverage a highly skilled workforce, including information of the inclusion of women and minority-owned business, organized labor, directly employed staff, etc.
- Timeline to deployment, including detailed milestones
- Project diagrams, network designs and cost information certified by a professional engineer
- Information necessary to assess a project's resilience against climate risks
- Analysis of a provider's service pricing in relation of median income within project area

DIGITAL EQUITY

The federal Digital Equity Act program will support the closure of the digital divide and promote equity and digital inclusion, so that “individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.

Digital Equity is a component of BEAD granting process as well as a separate funding opportunity.

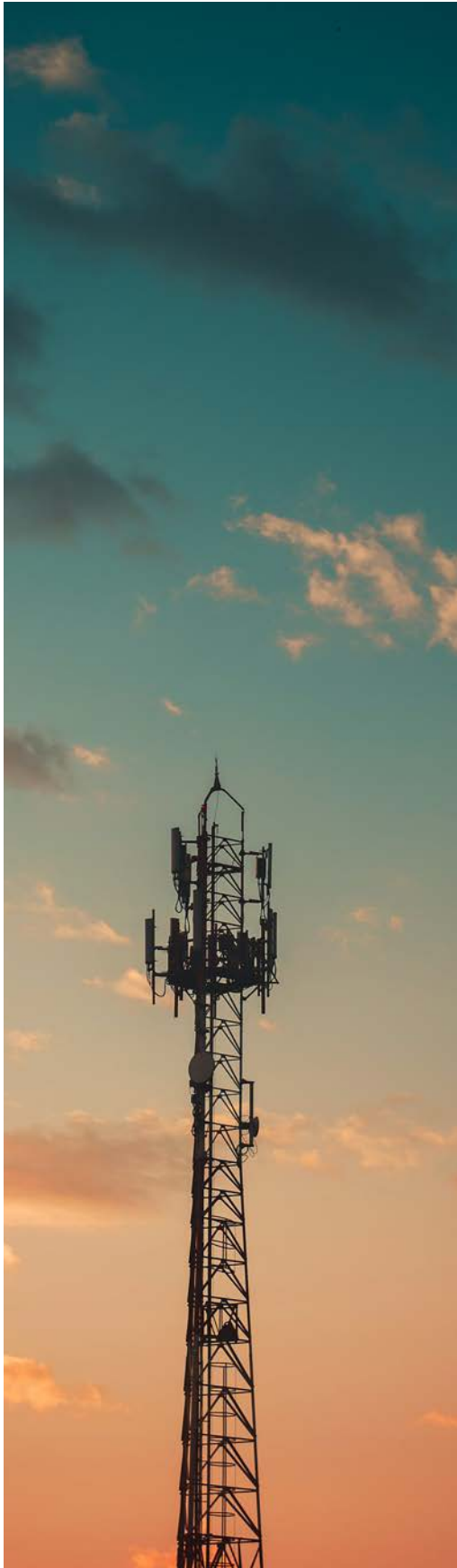
Digital Equity Act Programs

Total Wisconsin Digital Equity Funding	Purpose	What populations will be targeted with digital equity funding?
State Planning Program: \$952,197 State Capacity Grant Program: \$24 to \$30 million over 5 years	Broadband adoption efforts for targeted communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residents of rural areas• Individuals of color• Aging individuals• Individuals with disabilities• English language learners• Veterans• Incarcerated individuals

The Digital Equity Act (DEA) consists of three separate planning and implementation grant programs that promote digital equity. Digital equity is the condition where all citizens have the skills, devices, and broadband service necessary to fully participate in the economy and society of Wisconsin.

Funding will be distributed through three programs, two of which are administered by the PSC:

1. The State Planning Program provides funding to states based on a formula for the development of a state digital equity plan. Wisconsin’s share of planning funds is \$952,197.
2. The State Capacity Grant Program provides funding to states through a formula to support digital equity projects and implement each state’s digital equity plan. Wisconsin’s estimated share of capacity grant funding is approximately \$24 million to \$30 million over five years.
3. The Competitive Grant Program, administered by NTIA, will support digital equity projects nationally over a five-year period.



FALL REPORT

September-November 2023

COMMUNITY

EVENTS

Bug Tussel University: 2 classes

CUSTOMERS

SUBSCRIBERS

Fixed Wireless: 45+

Potential Customers*: 40+

**Interested in service, in contact with Bug Tussel.*

Fiber

Potential Customers*: 85+

**Interested in service, in contact with Bug Tussel.*

Parcels Along Planned Route: 3,000+

btussel.com

(877) 227-0924

Sign up for email updates:

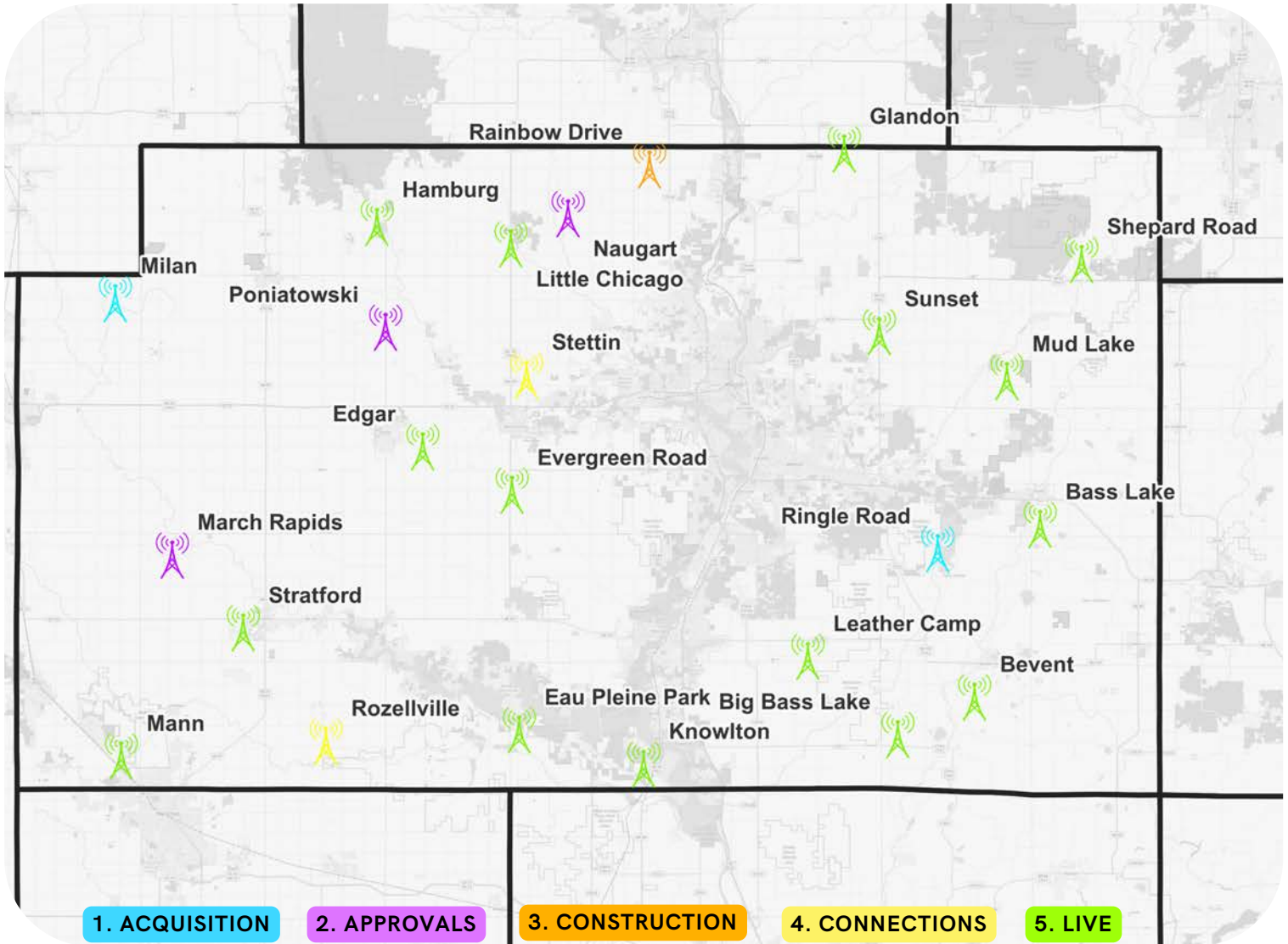


FIXED WIRELESS

Representation of project-funded sites and other sites. Subject to change.

PROJECT SITES: 20

FUNDING TYPE: BOND



1. ACQUISITION

Scouting and lease agreement for site location are in progress.

2. APPROVALS

Permit submission and approvals are in progress.

3. CONSTRUCTION

Construction and equipment installation are in progress.

4. CONNECTIONS

Utility, power, and signal connections are in progress.

5. LIVE

Interested in [becoming a Bug Tussel customer?](#)

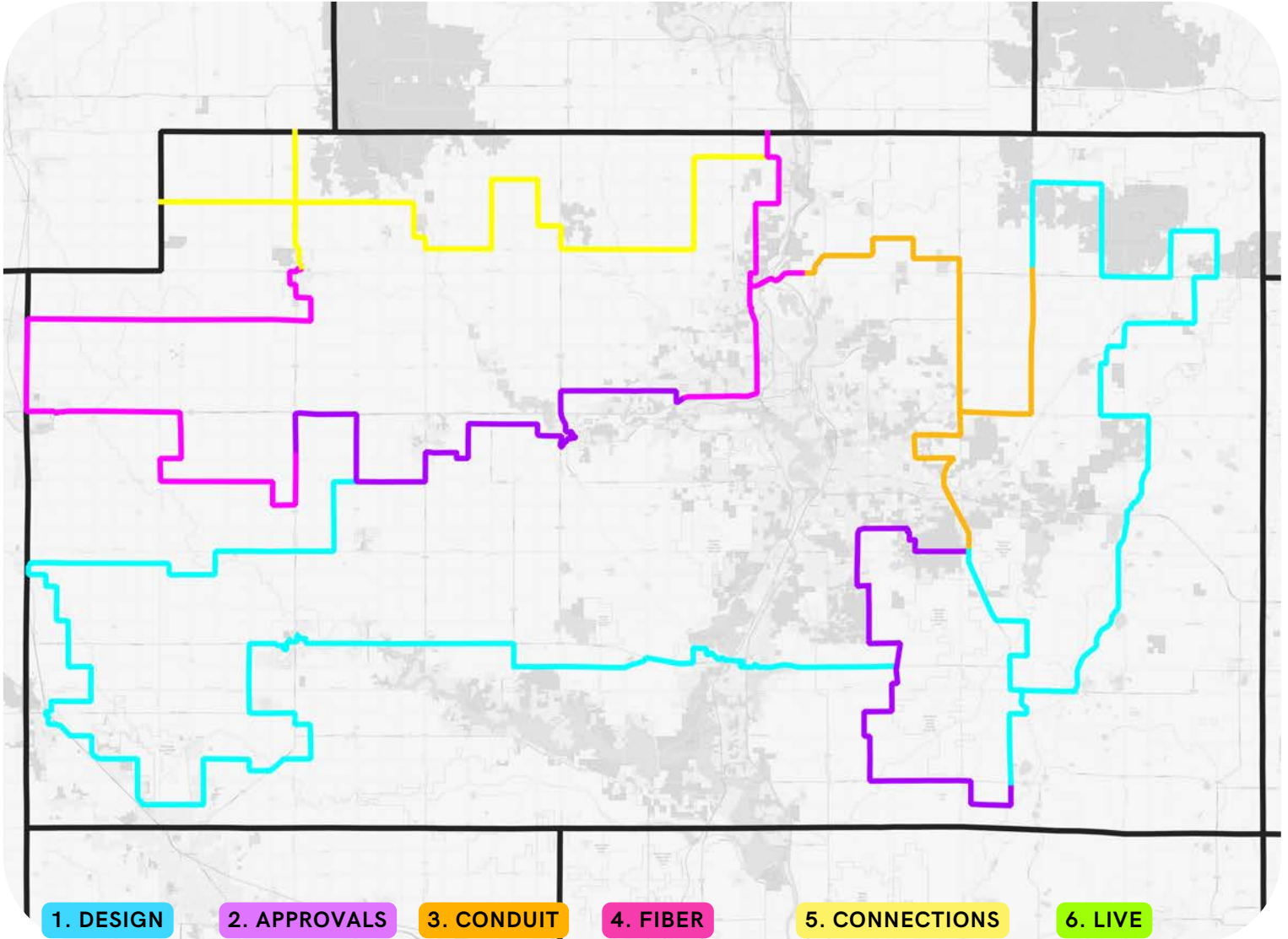


FIBER

Representation of backbone for all projects and phases. Subject to change.

PHASE I MILES: 340
FUNDING TYPE: BOND

PHASE II MILES: 90+
FUNDING TYPE: GRANT (LEATHERCAMP)



1. DESIGN

Route design, planning, and engineering are in progress.

2. APPROVALS

Permit submission and approvals are in progress.

3. CONDUIT

Conduit cable and utility construction are in progress.

4. FIBER

Fiber placement inside conduit is in progress.

5. CONNECTIONS

Fiber splicing and utility, power, and signal connections are in progress.

6. LIVE

[Interested in becoming a Bug Tussel customer?](#)

