



**MARATHON COUNTY
BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING**

Minutes

Monday, June 24, 2024 at 3:00 P.M.

Assembly Room, 500 Forest St, Wausau WI

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair John Robinson	x	
Mike Ritter	x	
Brandon Jensen	x	
Jasper Hartinger		x
Randy Radtke		x
Jordan Reynolds		x
Jon Euting	x	
Eric Budleski		x
Milton Olson	x	
Valerie Carrillo	x	

Also Present: Gerry Klein, Erin Andrews

VIA Web or Phone: Preston Vande Voort, Mark Leonard, Scott Feldt, Bill Flood, Kevin O’Brien, Joseph Muia, Todd Kruse, Kimm Weber, Chris Crawford, Aaron Salata

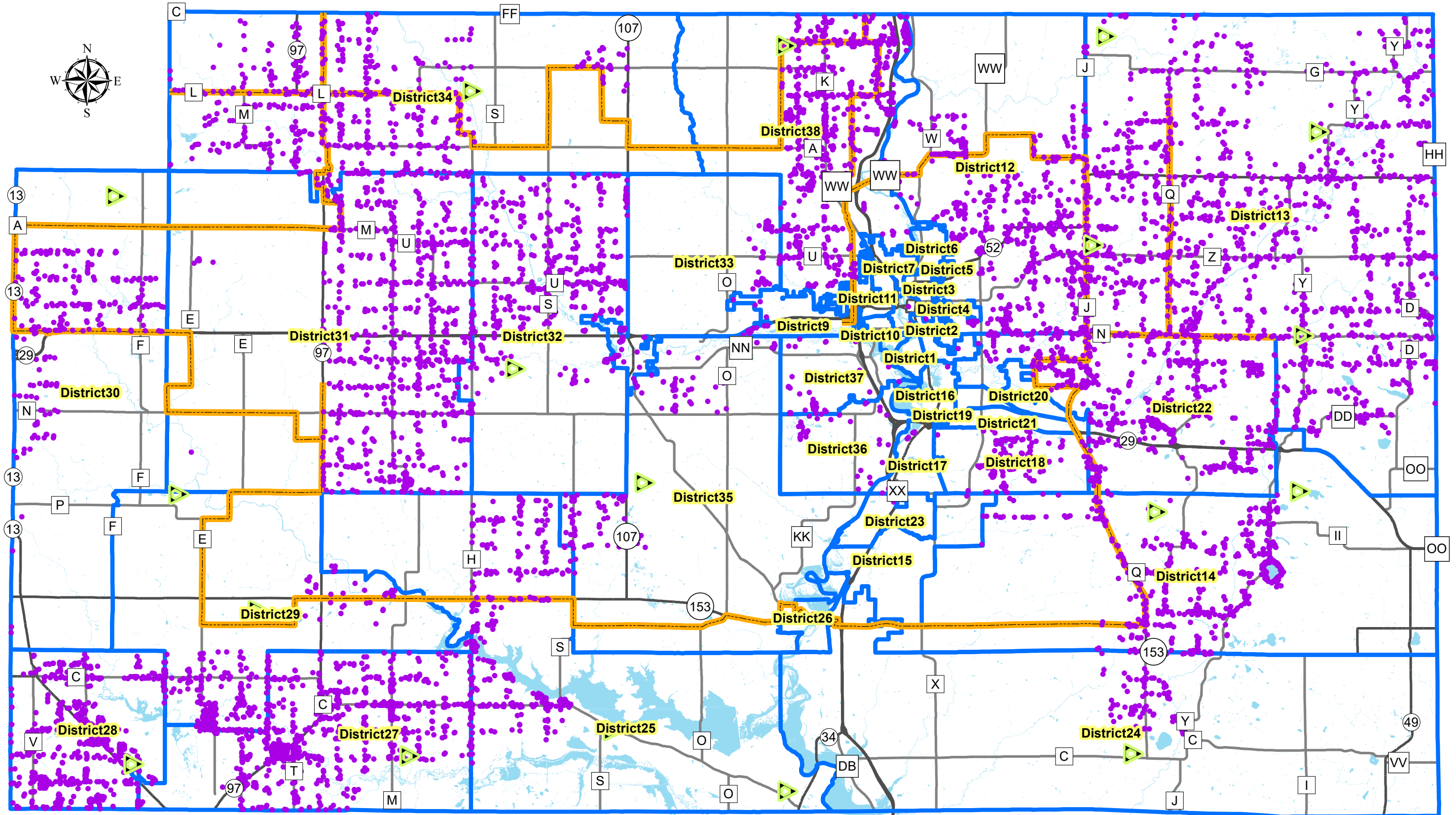
1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.
2. **Public Comments** (15 Minute limit) – no public comment
3. **RITTER MAKE A MOTION; SECOND BY OLSON TO APPROVE THE MAY 28, 2024 BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**
4. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion:**
 - A. Update on Grant Funded/Assisted Broadband Projects
 1. Ongoing Grants Report – There is an ongoing report in the packet that Erin Andrews reviewed.
 2. Frontier – Todd Kruse reviewed their report in the packet.
 3. Bug Tussel – Scott Feldt reviewed their current status and information sent in the packet.
 4. Charter RDOF – Chris Crawford shared his screen with the current map completions and upcoming dates for completions.
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action:**
 - A. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program
 1. BEAD Eligible Addresses – Erin reviewed the maps in the packet.
 - a. Impact of Frontier PSC/Charter RDOF changes – There are more homes that will need to be served. There will be upcoming meetings to see if other ISPs are willing to add them to their projects.
 2. County Role in working with ISP
 - a. Meetings with ISPs to explore areas of interest – A meeting was offered to all ISPs at the of April. Priority areas were discussed, and all providers stated they were waiting to hear back from the PSC regarding volume 2.
 - b. Parameters for determining projects for County to support – Discussion of suggestions included looking at cost (ROI), rock base, how many serviceable homes are in the project area, and municipality engagement.
 - c. Community Engagement – There are 12 points in the rubric for judging grants specifically for community engagement. Discussions about how to prioritize and include this piece. The county can only prioritize one ISP, no matter how many applications.

- B. Bug Tussel Financing Agreement
 - 1. 2022 PSC Grant Funding/Loan – Discussion and recap of the funding and loan.
 - 2. 2021 Supplemental Conduit Borrowing Request – County board approved moving forward with resolution. The vote will happen in August or September.
 - 3. Update on County Board process and concerns – Supervisor Robinson shared the process and concerns from the county board meeting.
- C. PSC Capital Projects Digital Connectivity and Navigator Program
 - 1. United Way of Marathon County/United Way of Wisconsin – United Way is looking for letters of support to strengthen their grant application.
 - 2. Request support from Marathon County – Supervisor Robinson is submitting a letter on behalf of the Broadband Task Force.
- 6. **Next Steps and Timelines**
 - A. Discuss Volume 2
 - B. Criteria and rank scoring for county role rubric
- 7. **Next Meeting:** July 22, 2024
- 8. **Adjournment: CARRILLO MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING, RITTER SECOND. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:23pm.**

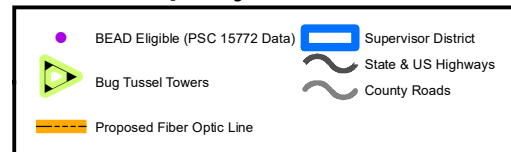
Respectfully Submitted by,
Kathy Johnson

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER (ISP)	Grant/Funding Program	Year Awarded	Goal of Completion	Approx # Served	Description	Status
Charter/Spectrum	RDOF -Rural Opportunity Development Fund	2022	2026		Fiber to regions W, NW and E of Wausau (see map in packet)	Charter submitted intent to default on 156 addresses in the 2025 portion of RDOF project East/Southeast of Wausau, remaining addresses to be completed in 2025
Bug Tussel	Conduit Loan	2021	2024	1,800	Fiber run to approximately 1800 homes(see map in packet)	Not completed - goal to complete by end of 2024; Bug Tussel requesting a loan from County to complete middle mile fiber/tower and Leathercamp project. More information coming soon.
Bug Tussel	PSC Grant	2022	2024	600+	"LeatherCamp" project to connect approx 600 premises South of Kronenwetter/East of I39 (see map)	Not completed - goal to complete by end of 2024; Bug Tussel requesting a loan from County to complete middle mile fiber/tower and Leathercamp project. More information coming soon.
TDS	E- ACAM - Enhanced Alternative Connect American Cost Model		2027		Upgrade DSL to fiber for existing customers, primarily in Mosinee and south central Marathon County	25% done by end of 2024, 50% by end of 2025, 75% by end of 2026, 100% by end of 2028
Cirrinity	E- ACAM - Enhanced Alternative Connect American Cost Model		2024		Provide Fiber to the home in SE Marathon County	Project Completed in Marathon County

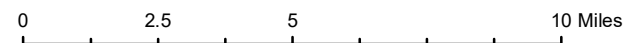
Marathon County



Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Planning Areas



Map Date: 9/5/2024



8443 BEAD Eligible Addresses
This information is tentative and subject to change.



BEAD subgrantee selection Estimated Timeline



8/1/2024 – 10/1/2024	Letter of Intent open / accepting submissions from prospective BEAD grantees
9/1/2024 – 11/1/2024	Letter of Intent Review: Entities meeting requirements invited to apply
11/1/2024 – 1/3/2025	Round 1 BEAD subgranting open to invited entities
1/3/2025 – 2/1/2025	Commission staff review period and preliminary awards
2/1/2025 – 3/15/2025	Round 2 BEAD subgranting open to certain new applications and to expand or modify unawarded Round 1 applications
3/15/2025 – 4/15/2025	Commission staff review period and additional preliminary awards
4/15/2025 – 7/1/2025	Round 3 BEAD negotiate with preliminary awardees, invite alternative technologies, non-competitive allocations
7/1/2025 – 8/1/2025	Final Proposal to the Commission and then to NTIA



Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program: Engagement and Endorsement Scoring Criteria

What are the support and engagement scoring criteria?

As established in the approved [Initial Proposal Volume 2](#), scoring criteria for Local and Tribal Coordination Support and Engagement provide applicants points for demonstrated community support and local and/or Tribal coordination. Applicants have the opportunity to demonstrate their outreach to, engagement with, and support from local governments, Tribes, and any applicable school districts, libraries or community organizations that serve covered populations (for covered populations definitions see [Census Bureau resource on the Digital Equity Act](#)). Applicants will receive points based on evidence and documentation provided that demonstrates specific engagement activities and/or specific letters of support.

<u>Support and Engagement Scoring Criteria</u>		
<i>Points available</i>	<i>Support and Engagement Activities</i>	<i>Examples of documentation</i>
Up to 2	Evidence of a public meeting(s) to engage the community in the project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting agenda (including date, time and location) with meeting minutes - Presentation materials used for public meetings - Explanation of how the public meeting informed the project proposal - Photos or attendance lists indicating level of participation
Up to 2	Letter(s) of support from any local government (not county, regional, or state) included in the project area	- Signed and dated letter (after April 29, 2024) from local government including city, village, or town (not county, regional, or state) from authorized government representative stating support for the BEAD applicant within the local government boundary.
Up to 1	Letter(s) of support from the school district, the local public library or organization that supports one or more covered populations in the project area.	- Signed and dated letter (after April 29, 2024) from an authorized representative for the entity providing support for the BEAD applicant within the area the entity (school district, library or organization) operates.

Contact: PSCBEADGrants@wisconsin.gov

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Frequently Asked Questions: Support and Engagement

How many engagement points are available and what type of engagement is required?

Up to 5 points (of 100 total) are available for the support and engagement scoring criteria. See the table above for types of engagement and examples of documentation for each sub-category within this scoring criteria.

Will partial points be awarded for the subcategories of the engagement scoring criteria?

Yes, applicants may receive up to the total number of points available for each sub-category listed in the support and engagement table above depending on the quality of the engagement and the extent to which it is documented.

How is the scoring used in the BEAD Program subgranting process?

All applications will be scored. For project units with only one project proposal, the application must reach the minimum threshold of 40 points to be awarded funding in round 1 or round 2. In the event two project proposals are competing for the same locations, score will be used to compare project proposals using the same technology type. Score is primarily used when there are competing proposals using the same technology type for the same geographic area. (See Initial Proposal Volume 2 for complete scoring details.)

Does an applicant need to provide evidence that shows engagement with all possible engagement stakeholders referenced in each sub-category? For example, if there are multiple municipal governments or school districts within an applicants proposed project area, must the applicant receive letters of support from all of them to be considered for the full point allotment for the respective sub-category?

Applicants are encouraged but not required to seek engagement with local government and key stakeholders. Higher points will be provided for engagement that demonstrates robust and representative sampling of the most impacted local governments, school districts, libraries, etc. In general, larger projects affecting a broad geographic area should expect to document more engagements and letters of support to earn higher points.

Should the letters of support be provided directly from the signatory to the Commission or included in the application?

Letters of support must be provided within the application submission and are due at the time of the application. Any letters submitted outside of the application system will not be considered.

Who should letters of support be addressed to?

Cru Stublely

Secretary to the Commission Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

4822 Madison Yards Way Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Contact: PSCBEADGrants@wisconsin.gov

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What are the endorsement scoring criteria?

As established in the approved [Initial Proposal Volume 2](#), scoring criteria for Local and Tribal Coordination: Endorsement by County and/or Tribe provide applicants the opportunity to work directly with counties and/or Tribes to receive an official endorsement. The County and/or Tribe where the project is located must take an official action at a noticed, open meeting to affirmatively endorse the project.

<u>County and/or Tribal Endorsement Scoring Criteria</u>		
<i>Points available</i>	<i>Endorsement Activities</i>	<i>Required documentation</i>
Up to 7	<p>Official endorsement by county government and/or Tribe, occurring at a noticed meeting that is open to the public.</p> <p>The endorsement will specify the applicant for funding. If a project scope is not specified, all locations an applicant pursues within the county/Tribal boundary will be given endorsement points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation submitted during the application phase will consist of two parts: (1) the minutes that establish the endorsement action and any relevant supplemental material, and (2) a letter addressed to the Public Service Commission from the clerk, chair or similar of the governing body certifying the date of the meeting, and nature of the endorsement including any geographic boundary. - Documentation must clearly and affirmatively endorse the BEAD applicant(s). The documentation may indicate the entire jurisdiction or specify a geographic boundary to the endorsement. - The official action does not need to be a resolution and can be simple proposed action with a voice vote.

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Frequently Asked Questions: Endorsement

How many endorsement criteria points are available and what type of endorsement is required?

Up to 7 points (of 100 total) are available for endorsement from a County and/or Tribe. See the table above for documentation required for endorsement.

How is the scoring used in the BEAD Program subgranting process?

All applications will be scored. For project units with only one project proposal, the application must reach the minimum threshold of 40 points to be awarded funding in round 1 or round 2. In the event two project proposals are competing for the same locations, score will be used to compare project proposals using the same technology type. Score is primarily used when there are competing proposals using the same technology type for the same geographic area. (See Initial Proposal Volume 2 for complete scoring details)

Can endorsement authority be delegated to a broadband committee or an individual official of the county governmental body?

No. An endorsement must occur by an affirmative vote or official action of the representative body and cannot be delegated to individuals or appointed groups. For a county government, the endorsement must come from the county board.

If an applicant includes project units that span more than one county and/or Tribe in their application, how will points be awarded if the applicant only receives one endorsement from a county/Tribe, for example?

Points are assigned to each project unit individually. Thus, if a project receives endorsement from only some of the counties or Tribal lands it affects, points will be assigned solely to project units within that county's territory and/or that Tribal land. For an entire area to gain full points, an applicant would need to secure endorsement from all impacted counties and Tribal lands.

Can an entity (county/Tribe) endorse for specific geographic boundaries?

Yes. An endorsement may be provided based on the boundary of a political subdivision, such as specifying the BEAD applicant is endorsed for any BEAD broadband deployment within a specific township or municipal boundary. Alternatively, an endorsement may be provided for any application by the applicant within the entire county or Tribal Nation.

Can an entity (county/Tribe) endorse different applicants for different areas?

Yes. An endorsement may specify an applicant is endorsed for only a portion of its geographic area, as long as the boundary is clearly specified as one of the following: a group of project units, or a town, township, village, or city boundary.

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Can an entity (county/Tribe) endorse multiple applicants for the same geographic area?

Yes. An entity may wish to endorse multiple applicants for the same geographic area. For example, an entity may wish to endorse a different applicant for each technology type. Alternatively, an entity may wish to endorse all applicants that meet certain metrics or terms. However, be aware that endorsing every applicant for the same geographic area will result in no impact on the award decision, because scores are compared among proposals for the same project unit.

Can an entity (county/Tribe) offer endorsement conditional on certain commitments or actions from an applicant? For example, can an entity only endorse applicants that commit to constructing service to all eligible community anchor institutions within the project area?

Yes. However, the Commission cannot assume responsibility for reviewing if such conditional commitments have been met. Provision of a formal endorsement letter as an attachment to an application is assumed to be proof that the conditional commitments have been satisfied or the entity has an independent guarantee that it will be met in the future.

Further, the Commission will not award points for endorsements that are provided with a condition that is not related to the improvement of broadband access, affordability, or adoption within a community. In such instances where an endorsement is associated with non-broadband conditions, the Commission reserves the right to withhold endorsement points provided to that applicant.

When should entities (county/Tribe) complete their endorsements?

The exact BEAD timeline has not been finalized and is pending certain approvals. It is anticipated that the BEAD application process will begin in November 2024 and that applications will be due at the end of December 2024. The Commission recommends that entities complete their initial endorsement activities by December 18, 2024.

If an entity(county/Tribe) does not make any endorsement does that mean the entity will get less funding?

No, the intent of the endorsement criteria is when there are two or more competing proposals for the same geographic area. The endorsement will provide additional points for the applicant or applicant(s) that the community has selected to endorse. The endorsement criteria is not intended or designed determine which communities get funding but which applicant(s) gets endorsement points when there is competition for the same geographic areas.

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The PSC has not published Project Units yet, how can an entity (county/Tribe) endorse without project units?

While project units are not complete (as of August 30, 2024) the initial [BEAD eligibility map](#) is available online <https://maps.psc.wi.gov/apps/BEADEligibilityMap/> and shows the very likely BEAD eligible locations as submitted to NTIA for approval on August 27, 2024. The Commission recommends that entities endorse applicants based on political geographic boundaries either for their entire geographic area or certain applicants for specific towns, villages cities or townships.

Should the Letters of Endorsement be provided directly from the signatory to the Commission or included in the application?

Letters of Endorsement must be provided within the application submission and are due at the time of the application. Any letters submitted outside of the application system will not be considered.

Is there specific language or model language that should be used in a resolution or endorsement letter?

No specific language is required to meet the criteria. Applicants interested in additional technical assistance related to endorsement language or process should contact the University of Wisconsin, Division of Extension (UW Extension) Broadband Technical Assistance Team. Entities may email jessica.beckendorf@wisc.edu for technical assistance on the endorsement language from UW Extension.

Will the Commission accept *draft* minutes that establish the action of the endorsement?

Yes, due to the accelerated timeline of the BEAD sub-granting process the Commission will accept draft minutes that document the endorsement. However, the accompanying letter from the endorsing entity must 1) indicate the minutes are a draft 2) confirm that the signatory of the letter will immediately update the Commission if the minutes change between the draft and approval and 3) commit to provide an approved copy of the minutes when available.

Who should letters of endorsement be addressed to?

Cru Stublely

Secretary to the Commission Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
4822 Madison Yards Way Madison, Wisconsin 53705

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Internet Service Providers

Invited to engage in BEAD in Marathon County

AirRunner Networks

Amherst Communications

ATT

Bertram Communications

Bug Tussel

Charter/Spectrum

Cirrinity

Country Wireless

Frontier

Network Professionals

Nsight (Cellcom)

Reach Connects

Solarus

TDS

T Mobile

SAMPLE DECISION MATRIX -DRAFT

Criteria	Weighted Rating	ISP #1		ISP #2		ISP #3	
		Rating	Weighted Rating x Rating	Rating	Weighted Rating x Rating	Rating	Weighted Rating x Rating
Timeline of Project Completion	2	3	6	2	4	2	4
Private Investment % of Project Costs	5	3	15	3	15	5	25
Request for County/Municipal Support							
Proven Record of Successful Projects	3	4	12	3	9	5	15
Population Density AND/OR Most difficult to serve areas/highest number of un/underserved	1	3	3	3	3	5	5
Efforts in Community Engagement							
Support of Municipalities							
OTHER?							
Total Value		13	36	11	31	17	49

Rating Scale	1-Doesn't Meet Criteria	2-Somewhat Meets Criteria		3-Meets Criteria		4-Exceeds Criteria	5-Significantly Exceeds Criteria
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