MARATHON COUNTY
BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING
Agenda

Date & Time of Meeting: **Monday, September 26, 2022, 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, Kurt Schoenroch, 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.*

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health directives, Marathon County encourages Task Force members and the public to attend this meeting remotely. Instead of attendance in person, Task Force members and the public may attend this meeting by **telephone conference**. If Task Force members or members of the public cannot attend remotely, Marathon County requests that appropriate safety measures, including adequate social distancing, be utilized by all in-person attendees.

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 August 22, 2022, Broadband Task Force Meeting Minutes**
4. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion:**
   - A. Update on Grant Funded Broadband Projects
     1. Frontier (PSC 2022)
     2. Bug Tussel (PSC 2022)
     3. Cirrinity (PSC 2021)
     4. Charter (RDOF)
   - B. Status Report on Bug Tussel's Project
   - C. Speed Test Update – FCC Mapping
   - D. How the change from 4G/LTE to 5G cellular service has, and will, affect the average citizen? – Luke Butzler
   - E. Wausau School District efforts to ensure access to the internet – Jon Euting
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action**:
   - A. Approach to Funding Sources: County, State, and Federal
     1. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program
     2. American Rescue Plan Act
     3. REConnect Loan and Grant Program | USDA
   - B. Process for determining priorities for future broadband expansion efforts
     1. Target Areas Based on Speed Test
     2. Other Factors
6. **Next Steps**
7. **Next Meeting: October 24, 2022**
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

Faxed/Emailed To: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and Other Media Groups
Faxed/Emailed By: T. Ranallo
Faxed Date/Time: 9/21/2022 at 4:00 pm

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE
BY: T. Ranallo
DATE/TIME: 9/21/2022 at 4:00 pm

MARATHON COUNTY
BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING
Minutes
Monday, August 22, 2022, at 3:00 P.M.
Webex/Assembly Room, 500 Forest St, Wausau WI

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair John Robinson	P	
Jacob Langenhahn	W	
Gary Gisselman	P	
Mike Ritter	P	
Jennifer Aarestad		X
Tony Sherfinski	P	
Erick Budleski	P	
Milton Olson	P	
Wade Carroll		X
Kurt Schoenrock		X
Jon Euting	W	

Also Present: Valerie Carrillo, Gerry Klein, Kristin Lambrecht
VIA Web or Phone: Celeste Flynn, Noor Hassan, Kimm Webber, Bill Floyd, Kurt Gibbs

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comments** (15 Minute limit) - None
3. **GISSELMAN MAKE A MOTION; SECOND BY SHERFINSKI TO APPROVE THE JULY 25, 2022, BROADBAND TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**
4. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion:**
   A. Update on Grant Funded Broadband Projects
      1. Frontier (PSC 2022) – They have not received notification from PSC that the long form was approved.
      2. Bug Tussel (PSC 2022) – The current information was handed out with the packet. They continue to work on the installation and completion of fiber to the towers.
      3. Cirrinity (PSC 2021) – Noor reported that project is 90% complete per Scott Nyman and they will notify customers within the next two weeks.
      4. Charter (RDOF) – Celeste Flynn – They have released 78 addresses and they are on track to release 50 more by end of August. Celeste will connect with Randy Wolfgram regarding the schedule for next year. They have 6 years to build out areas in their agreement.
      5. LTD (RDOF) – LTD lost the pre-approval from the PSC. They are no longer eligible for RDOF. The areas that were a part of the LTD proposal are now eligible for other funding.
   B. Status Report on Bug Tussel's Project – The Little Chicago and Rainbow drive area is complete. They will send updates with the August report for tower connections.
   C. Speed Test Update – The task force continues to promote the speed test through GeoPartners. The FCC is in the process of updating their maps as well. The download speeds maps were reviewed. There is encouragement to distribute fliers to the town halls with the upcoming elections. We cannot promote in the voting area. The town halls can display outside the voting area. Jon Euting said they will continue to push it out the speed test in the Wausau School District with open houses. Overall, speed test results are still at 3.75% participation. There were suggestions to do social media ads and include information with the tax bills.
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action:**
   A. Approach to Funding Sources: County, State and Federal

1. NTIA Middle Mile Grant – Marathon County needs to partner with an ISP to apply. The county did submit an application with Charter last year, but it was turned down.
2. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program – There is approximately $45 billion available nationwide. Calls have been made to the PSC for better understanding of the funds.
3. American Rescue Plan Act – Marathon County has $3.9 million ear marked. There will be conversations with Bug Tussel next year regarding a $3 million loan.
4. Other Grants: ReConnect Loan and Grant Program through the USDA. We will be looking into this as potential funding source. We will need to partner with ISPs.

B. Process for determining priorities for future broadband expansion efforts – We need to identify underserved and unserved areas, identify the funding sources, and work with ISPs to move forward. Marathon County working on web redesign. We are hoping to get a Broadband page with maps and explanations. In targeting areas based on speed tests, does the task force want to establish higher standards moving forward? Eric Budleski and Tony Sherfinski feel 100 megabytes may be better threshold. Discussion regarding 3G to 5G towers and effect on access. Discussion regarding how the Wausau School District assists families with internet connections. Jon Euting will present at the next meeting.

6. **Next Meeting Topics**
    1. 3G,4G, 5G presentation
    2. Wausau School District access presentation
    3. Report on Broadband grant meeting
    4. Refine strategies to get people to take speed tests
    5. FCC has updated website
    6. Review grants and timing
7. **Next Meeting:** September 26, 2022
8. **Adjournment**

    RITTER MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING, SHERFINSKI SECOND. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Kathy Johnson

August 2022 Marathon County

The Partnership

PROJECT

Bug Tussel is a proud partner of Marathon County through a bond originating in December 2021. The project, **R.O.A.D. to Digital Equality**, will equip Marathon County with a fiberoptic backbone network and wireless internet access.

Bug Tussel awarded this July with a broadband expansion grant to expand its fiber optic network in Marathon County, providing fiber-to-the-home for portions (FTTH) of the Town of Guenther, Town of Knowlton, and Village of Kronenwetter.

PRODUCT

Per the agreement, Bug Tussel will install 22 towers (in addition to 3 towers already in Marathon County) and 350 miles of fiberoptic backbone/middle mile network within 1-3 years, with options for expansion available as agreed upon by Bug Tussel and the county. Standard packages for fiber will range from 300 Mbps to 1 Gbps download and upload speed. Standard packages for wireless will be 25 Mbps download and 5 Mbps upload speed.

TIMELINE

The project will primarily take place during the fiscal year 2022, with Bug Tussel's goal to have towers completed and online by January of 2023 and fiber connections to follow.

BUG TUSSEL UNIVERSITY

Attend a free class this September!

Registration Recommended. Call (920) 940-0158 or visit our webpage to sign up!

Internet Safety

Tuesday, September 13 | 2:00-3:00 p.m.
Marathon County Public Library - Mosinee Branch (123 Main St, Mosinee, WI 54455)

Scan with your camera phone!

SALES & MARKETING

Sponsorships

- Bug Tussel is sponsoring the Wausau Cyclones Ice Hockey team from July of 2022-June of 2023.
- Bug Tussel sponsored the Greater Mosinee Golf Open on August 18 at Indianhead Golf Course in Mosinee.

Ads

- Bug Tussel ran Facebook ads targeting the county during the month of August.

Your sales representatives

Ashley Bolden
Business Development Manager
Phone:
(608) 432-6308
Email:
Ashley.Bolden@bugtusselwireless.com

Kristin Lambrecht
Regional Business Development Manager
Phone:
(920) 501-8515
Email:
Kristin.Lambrecht@bugtusselwireless.com

GET IN TOUCH

Customer Service
Phone: (877) 227-0924
Email: customerservice@bugtusselwireless.com
Website: bugtusselwireless.com

Report prepared by Melody Schuetz, Director of Community Engagement
Email: melody.schuetz@bugtusselwireless.com
Phone: (920) 940-0158

TOWER STATUS

On Air: 3

- Tower construction and installation complete.
- Internet is live and operational.

Under Construction: 9

- Establish tower foundation.
- Construct tower by stacking from bottom to top.
- Install antenna, lines, and integrate network.

Zoning: 6

- Submit permits and receive approval from local and federal agencies.

Site Acquisition: 5

- Search for and determine tower site.
- Obtain lease from landowner.

TOWER PROGRESS

Rozellville Lease Agreements Finalized

Lease agreements for the Rozellville site (latitude 44.73413923, longitude -90.0116432) have been finalized. Permits will now be submitted.

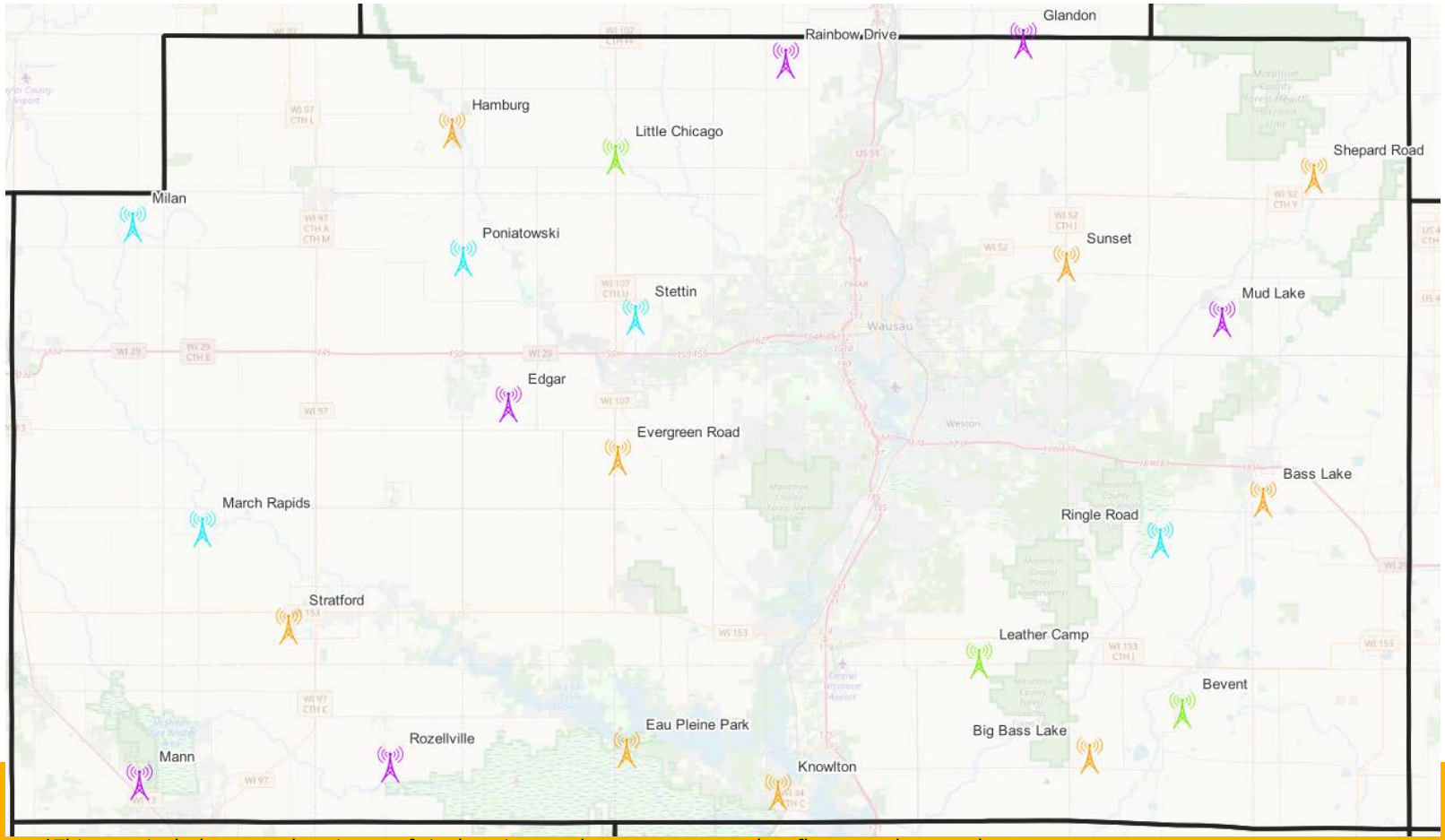
Bass Lake and Knowlton Construction to Begin Soon

Approvals for the Bass Lake (latitude 44.864479, longitude -89.339294) and Knowlton (latitude 44.69566, longitude -89.72178) sites are finalized. Construction is expected to begin soon.

Construction Awaits Equipment Delivery

Stacking (building the tower from the bottom up) of towers Sunset and Evergreen is complete. Crews are waiting for equipment to be delivered. Equipment delivery has been delayed to mid-September.

On Air | Under Construction | Zoning | Site Acquisition



This map includes a rough estimate of site locations and may not accurately reflect actual tower placement.

FIBER NETWORK

25 Miles Fiber Installed

Contractor, M.J. Electric, is making progress deploying conduit and installing fiber along the route. Conduit has been installed along the northern part of the route. Twenty-five miles of fiber have been installed from the Hamburg to Rainbow Drive. More fiber will need to be installed, spliced, and hooked up to internet connections before fiber goes live.

Progress Slowed Due to Utility Locators

While moving steadily, progress is slowed due to delays from USIC: Underground Utility Location and Damage Prevention. USIC is currently overwhelmed with work and staff scheduling difficulties. This causes a challenge for USIC locators to cover areas early enough before the construction crew catches up.

Completion of the Middle Mile (backbone) and Last Mile (distribution) in the county is anticipated in late summer 2023.

FIBER STATUS

On Air: 0 miles

- Fiber is installed.
- Connections to towers are complete.
- Internet is live and operational.

Under Construction: 70 miles

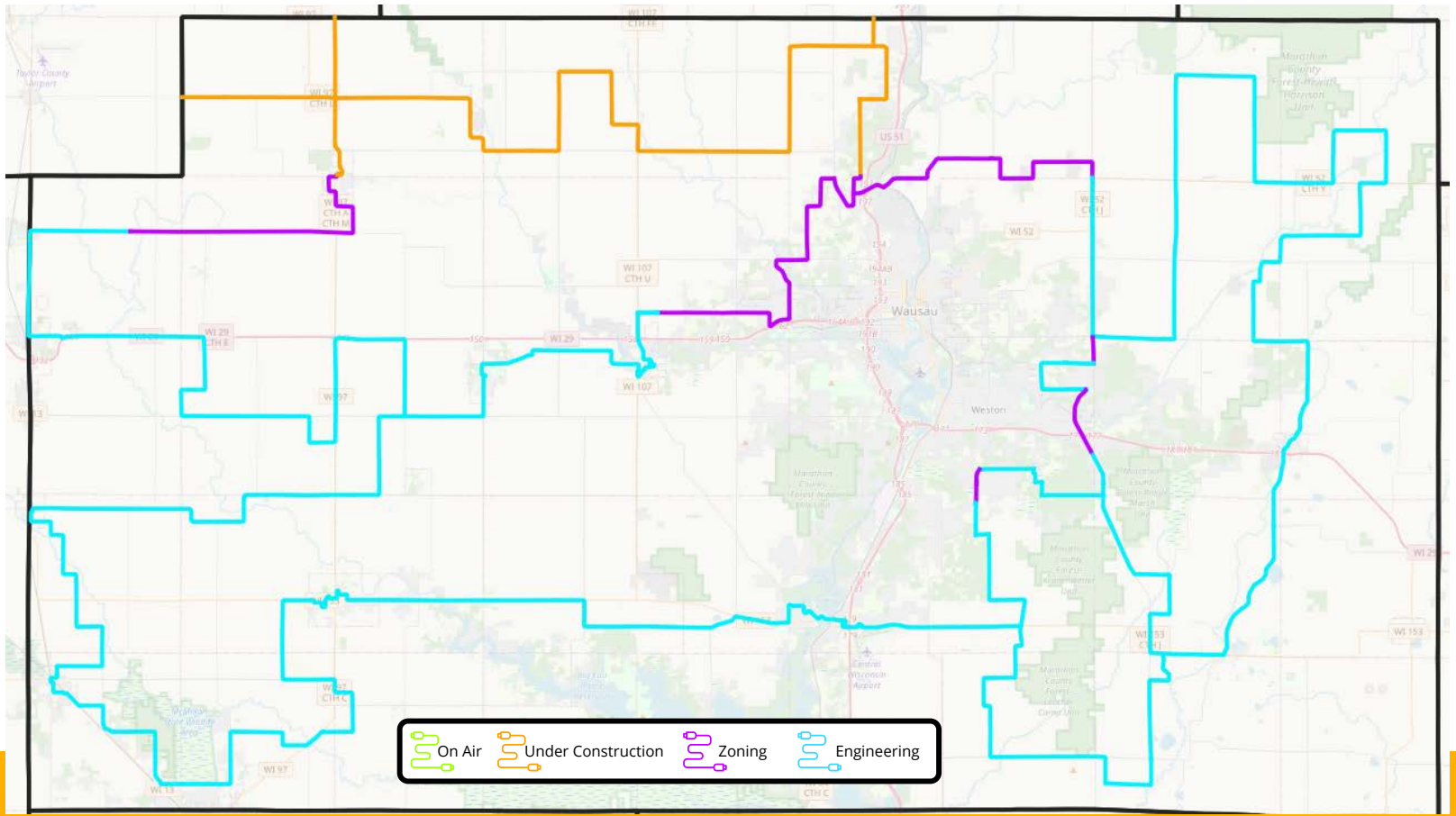
- Conduit, the protection cable that will house the fiber, is installed via Boring (with a drill) or Plowing.
- Handholes, Flowerpots, and Cabinets, access hatches that house utilities and connections, are installed.
- Fiber is sent through the conduit via Fiber Blowing, a technique using a machine on wheels that blows air to push the fiber through the cable.
- Sections of fiber are connected to each other via Splicing, the fusion of fiber pieces with an optical laser.

Zoning: 85 miles

- Permits for work in areas along the route are submitted.
- Permits are approved by appropriate parties.

Engineering: 350 miles

- Fiber route is mapped.
- Route is traveled to determine equipment and landscape needs.
- Sections are Re-designed as needed.



**This map includes a rough estimate of the fiber network and may not accurately reflect final route.*

How is a Fiber Network Created?

Did you know? A fiber network is like a highway system.

The **First Mile** is like an *expressway* connecting main points across very large areas together. This is the *core* network that hooks up internet connections from state to state and, on a larger scale, country to country.

The **Middle Mile** is like a *highway* connecting cities together. This is the *backbone* that connects cities, counties, and states and creates a national network.

The **Last Mile** is like a *road* that travels from the highway to individual neighborhoods. This is the *distribution* that connects the internet network to customer's homes, businesses, and government agencies. This is often the costliest and most challenging part of the network to create.

**Bug Tussel specializes in building Middle Mile and Last Mile networks.*

Installing a fiber network requires 4 major steps:

DESIGN THE ROUTE, OBTAIN PERMITS, INSTALL FIBER, AND **CONNECT TO CUSTOMERS.**

DESIGN THE ROUTE *(Engineering)*

Map the Route
Determine the best route for the network and outline in advanced mapping software.

Travel the Route
Travel the route to determine equipment and route needs based on the landscape. For example, areas with hard rock conditions will require specialized equipment such as a directional drill.

Update Design
Route design is then updated as needed based on landscape requirements, permit needs, etc.

OBTAIN PERMITS *(Zoning)*

Submit Permits
Submit permits to local and federal agencies in order to obtain authorization before beginning installation.

Await Approval
Await approval and re-submit or re-design if approval is denied.

INSTALL FIBER *(Construction)*

Deploy Conduit
Install conduit (a protective cable that will house the fiber) into the ground via plowing or boring (with a directional drill).

Install Access Hatches
Place access hatches in areas (often underground) where intersections will be made, the route changes direction, or fiber will be dispersed. These hatches (which include handholes, flowerpots, and cabinets) will act as utility boxes where fiber connections can be made.

Insert Fiber
Run fiber through the conduit. The most common way to insert fiber is through a process called fiber blowing, which uses a machine to move the fiber through the cable via bursts of air. This reduces friction and the risk of damage to the fiber.

Connect Fiber
Connect sections of fiber to one another by splicing, the process of fusing pieces of fiber together with an optical laser.

Connect to the Internet
Connect the fiber route to the internet, often by hooking up to the larger worldwide network via connection to a switch, a mobile tower, or another connecting point.

CONNECT TO CUSTOMERS *(On Air)*

Connect to Customer
Install fiber from the closest access point (a handhole) to customer's ONT (optical network terminal, which converts light signals to electrical signals) in their home or business.

Set Up Internet
Customer sets up home network system through router and ONT connections.

THE BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS AND DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FUNDED BY THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

Where we are today...

Many Americans lack access to affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet

America runs on high-speed internet. A strong internet connection powers our economy and supports education. It fosters better public health. And, it connects loved ones and strengthens social ties. But not everyone is connected. Too many Americans are cut off from the opportunities that high-speed internet makes possible. That's why we're working to bring high-speed internet to all Americans.

... and where we're going

The BEAD Program includes $42B for high-speed Internet access

Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, BEAD is a federal grant program that aims to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed internet. BEAD prioritizes unserved locations that have no internet access or that only have access under 25/3 Mbps and underserved locations only have access under 100/20 Mbps.

Select BEAD program details

Eligible entities

1. All 50 States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
2. Other Territories: U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Example eligible uses of funds

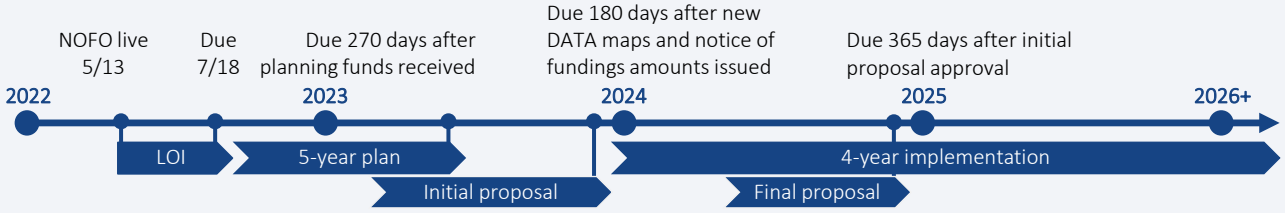
1. Planning for the deployment of high-speed Internet, including conducting research, collecting data, outreach, and training
2. Deploying or upgrading Internet in unserved or underserved areas or improving service to community anchor organizations
3. Installing Internet and Wi-Fi in multi-unit residential buildings
4. Adoption and digital equity programs
5. Workforce development programs and vocational training

Ways to get involved

Eligible entities must conduct coordination with local governments, Tribes, community orgs, and individuals within their jurisdiction. Members of the public are encouraged to contact U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and territories to learn about more ways to get involved.

Timeline

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

News Media Information 202-418-0500
Internet: www.fcc.gov
TTY: 888-835-5322

DA 22-961
Released: September 15, 2022

BROADBAND DATA TASK FORCE PUBLISHES SPECIFICATIONS FOR BULK FIXED AVAILABILITY CHALLENGE AND CROWDSOURCE DATA

WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10

By this *Public Notice*, the Broadband Data Task Force (Task Force), together with the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) and Office of Economics and Analytics (OEA), announce the release of *Data Specifications for Bulk Fixed Availability Challenge and Crowdsource Data*, which provides guidance as to the requirements in the Commission's rules and orders for filing bulk challenges, as well as bulk crowdsource information, to the fixed broadband availability data that will be published on the FCC's Broadband Maps as part of the new Broadband Data Collection (BDC). The *Data Specifications for Bulk Fixed Availability Challenge and Crowdsource Data*, which also explains how to make the required filings in the BDC system, is available at: https://us-fcc.box.com/v/bdc-bulk-fixed-challenge-spec. The bulk fixed availability challenge and crowdsource processes will open after the FCC's Broadband Maps are published.

Individuals and entities, including consumers, state, local, and Tribal governmental entities, and service providers, can submit challenges to the BDC fixed availability data published on the Broadband Map.[1] While interested parties will be able to submit *individual* challenges pertaining to availability at a single location directly from the online maps, entities can also submit "bulk" challenges to the fixed broadband availability data with respect to multiple locations by uploading a file in the BDC system that is consistent with the specifications set forth in the *Data Specifications for Bulk Fixed Availability Challenge and Crowdsource Data*.[2] The required bulk challenge data varies based on the methodology used by the challenger to generate its data. In all cases, the data must include: (1) the challenger's name and contact information; (2) the location of the dispute based on the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric; (3) the category of the challenge; and (4) information supporting the challenge.

Entities such as state, local and Tribal governments may also submit bulk crowdsource data in the BDC system, which may be used by the Commission to verify and supplement the fixed broadband availability data published on the FCC's Broadband Maps.[3] Specifications for bulk crowdsource data are also set forth in the *Data Specifications for Bulk Fixed Availability Challenge and Crowdsource Data*. Crowdsource data differs from challenge data in several ways. For example, crowdsource data is not

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[1] 47 U.S.C. § 642(a)(1)(B)(iii), (b)(5); 47 CFR § 1.7006(d); *Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection; Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*, WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10, Third Report and Order, 36 FCC Rcd 1126, 1155-65, paras. 70-96 (2021) (*Third Report and Order*).

[2] Each bulk fixed availability challenge data file must include records for each location being challenged in a Comma Separated Value (CSV) format. All fields must be included in the file upload (unless otherwise indicated), and all values must conform to the descriptions, codes, or formats identified for each field in the *Data Specifications for Bulk Fixed Availability Challenge and Crowdsource Data*.

[3] 47 CFR § 1.7006(b); *Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection; Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*, WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10, Second Report and Order and Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 35 FCC Rcd 7460, 7487-93, paras. 62-76 (2020) (*Second Order and Third Further Notice*).

limited to availability information. Filers of bulk crowdsource data may provide information on the locations where the data indicate that the actual speed of the fixed broadband service does not match its advertised speed, including information based on the results of speed tests.[4] Further, unlike in bulk challenge filings, information supporting the circumstances claimed in crowdsource data is optional.[5]

For more information about the BDC, please visit the Broadband Data Collection website at https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData.

– FCC –

[4] *Second Order and Third Further Notice*, 35 FCC Rcd at 7489, para. 66 (directing OET, OEA, WCB, and WTB to develop and refine a process for entities and individuals to submit third-party fixed and mobile crowdsource data); *id.* at para. 68 (directing the Offices and Bureaus "to implement the crowdsourced data collection and to create a portal for the receipt of crowdsourced data"); *see also Third Report and Order*, 36 FCC Rcd at 1155-56, para. 72 n.230 (noting that the fixed availability challenge process "is not meant to address disputes that subscribers have with their broadband provider about quality of service issues, such as network performance [i.e., speeds] experienced at a particular location.").

[5] *Id.*

USDA Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ReConnect Program

Funding to facilitate broadband deployment in underserved rural areas

What does this program do?

The ReConnect Program provides loans, grants, and loan-grant combinations to bring high-speed internet to rural areas that lack sufficient access to broadband. ReConnect Program funds can be used to fund the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service.

The ReConnect Program fosters private-sector investments in broadband infrastructure to deploy high-speed internet service to rural homes, businesses, and essential community facilities that support public safety, health care, schools, libraries, business and industry, and agricultural operations, among other sites.

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants can be either for- or nonprofit organizations, and include:

- Cooperatives or mutual associations
- Corporations, limited liability companies, or limited liability partnerships
- States, local governments, or any agency, subdivision, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof
- A territory or possession of the U.S.
- Tribes, Tribal organizations, and governments as defined in the current Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

You must be able to supply broadband service — at speeds defined in the most recent FOA — simultaneously to all customers in your proposed funded service area (PFSA).

What is an eligible area?

For a geographic area to be eligible, it must meet two criteria:

1. The area must be rural.
2. Fifty percent of households in the area must lack sufficient access to broadband service.

What is considered "rural?"

Service areas cannot be located in a city, town, or incorporated area with a population greater than 20,000, or an urbanized area adjacent to a city or town with a population greater than 50,000.

Eligible areas must be completely contained within a rural area, or composed of multiple rural areas. Visit the mapping tool at https://www.usda.gov/reconnect for additional eligibility information.

What is "sufficient access?"

For ReConnect, sufficient access to broadband is defined as "fixed terrestrial broadband service at 100 megabits per second (Mbps) downstream and 20 Mbps upstream."

How can funds be used?

- The construction or improvement of facilities capable of delivering 100 Mbps symmetrical service to every premises in the PFSA at the same time
- Under certain circumstances — and with restrictions — the acquisition of an existing system not currently providing sufficient access to broadband service
- Up to 5 percent of the requested amount can be used for pre-application expenses, and up to 3 percent of this amount can be used to cover the costs of the environmental review.

How do we apply?

Applications must be submitted through Rural Development's online application system, available at this link: https://www.usda.gov/reconnect. All materials required for completing an application are included in the online system. The ReConnect webpage also includes basic program information and detailed application guidance.

Where can we find technical assistance?

Rural Development will host several technical assistance webinars and workshops during the application window. Webinar and workshop dates and times, along with additional technical assistance, can be found at https://www.usda.gov/reconnect.

ReConnect Program

You also can contact your Telecommunications General Field Representative (GFR) for assistance. A map and list of GFRs can be found at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr.

When are applications due?

The application deadline is determined by the most recent FOA.

What governs this program?

In 2018, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act (available at this link: https://go.usa.gov/xea7W), which established the broadband loan and grant pilot program, now known as ReConnect.

In February 2021, USDA codified the program's policies and procedures in a published ReConnect Program Regulation (available at this link: https://go.usa.gov/xexPT). In addition to the regulation, Rural Development publishes a FOA in the *Federal Register*.

The ReConnect FOA published on August 4, 2022 will use funds appropriated and requirements established under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58 - available at this link: https://go.usa.gov/xSUfp - PDF).

What kind of funding is available?

ReConnect offers grants, loans, and loan-grant combinations. The minimum request for funding across all categories is $100,000. Applicants can submit only one application for one of the five following funding options:

Type of Funding Available	Total Funding and Maximum Award Available	Key Funding Requirements
100 Percent Grant	• $150 million total funds • $25 million maximum, per project • $35 million maximum per project if the PFSA meets certain guidelines detailed in the FOA	• Competitive review based on scoring criteria • 25 percent cash match requirement
Loan-Grant Combination (50-50)	• Total funds: $150 million for loans, $150 million for grants • $25 million maximum for the grant, per project • $25 million maximum for the loan, per project • Loan and grant amounts will always be equal	• Competitive review based on scoring criteria • Interest rate set at the U.S. Treasury rate at the time of each advance of funds
100 Percent Loan	• $150 million total funds • $50 million maximum, per project	• Funds are awarded on a rolling basis until exhausted • Interest rate is fixed at 2 percent
100 Percent Grant for Tribal Governments, Alaska Native Corporations, Colonias, Persistent Poverty Areas, and Socially-Vulnerable Communities	• $350 million total funds • $25 million maximum, per project • $35 million maximum per project if the PFSA meets certain guidelines detailed in the FOA	• Only available to those entities and areas defined in the FOA • No cash match is required if the applicant meets the requirements for this type of funding as set forth in the FOA
100 Percent Grant for projects where 90 percent of households lack sufficient access to broadband	• $200 million total funds • $25 million maximum, per project	• Must demonstrate that at least 90 percent of homes in the proposed service area do not have sufficient access to broadband as defined in the FOA • No matching funds required

NOTE: Because citations and other information change, always consult the program instructions listed in the *Federal Register*. You can also contact your General Field Representative for assistance. A map and list of GFRs can be found at this link: www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at www.usda.gov/reconnect. *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*

Last Updated August 2022