Commission Releases Digital Equity Plan for Public Comment

Wisconsin's draft Digital Equity Plan is out for public comment and is posted to the Commission's Electronic Records Filing system in docket 5-BP-2023. The purpose of the plan is to establish the state's vision for digital equity to ensure that all Wisconsinites have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy.

The plan will be the foundation of the state's future application for Digital Equity Capacity Grant funding. The plan is aligned with Wisconsin's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program 5 year plan, and was informed by the Commission's Internet for All Wisconsin Listening tour and over one hundred meetings with community groups and stakeholders. Public comments on the draft Digital Equity Plan are due to the Commission no later than October 19, 2023 at 1:30pm. Please comment and share with your networks.

Draft Plan

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 1 Accepting Comments

Wisconsin's BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 1 is now available for public comment via the Commission's Electronic Records Filing system in docket 5-BP-2023 . The BEAD Initial Proposal consists of two volumes that must be submitted to the Federal government before receiving BEAD implementation funding. The goal of the Initial Proposal Volume 1 is for Wisconsin to submit a proposal for a process that will result in the determination of the locations and community anchor institutions (CAI) that are eligible for BEAD funding in Wisconsin and conduct a challenge process to validate and finalize those determinations.

Volume 2 will cover sub-awardee selection and many other requirements, and will be available for public comment at a later date.

Comments for the BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 1 are due by October 30 at 1:30pm. Following the 30-day public comment period and review and approval of the Initial Proposal Volume 1 by the Commission, the Wisconsin Broadband Office will submit this Volume 1 to NTIA.

Initial Proposal Volume 1

Comment

Capital Project Fund Broadband Infrastructure Program Updates

The Commission is currently accepting applications for the Capital Projects Fund Broadband Program. Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the U.S. Department of Treasury awarded Wisconsin $42 million through the Capital Projects Fund (CPF) to administer the Broadband Infrastructure Program and invest in projects that will provide high-quality internet to locations that lack access to adequate, affordable service. **Grant applications are due November 7 by 1:30 pm.**

The Capital Projects Fund Broadband Infrastructure (05-CPF-2023) grant application instructions have been amended to include updated information on submitting geospatial data with your grant applications (due November 7). There is a cover letter which explains the changes, a red-lined version to show changes that were made, and a final version that incorporates the changes completely. Please contact our office at PSCCapitalProjectsFund@Wisconsin.gov with any questions. Reminder that the last day for submitting questions and requests for clarification is October 2, 2023.

If you missed the two Capital Projects Fund Broadband Infrastructure webinars recently, or would like to download the slides, you can find them on our website:

Capital Projects **Application** Overview Webinar
- September 8, 2023 Webinar Recording , Slides

Mapping Your Capital Project Overview Webinar
- September 14, 2023 Webinar Recording, Slides

[Digital Inclusion week](#) is an annual time for awareness, recognition, and celebration of all the work being done across the country and the State of Wisconsin to increase digital equity - including affordable internet, access to appropriate devices and technology skills.

Wisconsin has a robust and growing network of agencies, schools, libraries, non-profit organizations, local governments and internet service providers that are doing critical work to ensure that all Wisconsin residents have the skills, devices, and broadband service necessary to fully participate in society and the economy. This is a week to celebrate and highlight their work.

Planning & Partnering Towards Internet for All Workshops

Maximize the Impact of BEAD Funding: Planning and Partnering Toward Internet for All workshops are being organized by UW- Madison, Division of Extension's Community Development Institute in partnership with Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin Broadband Office, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin State Telecommunication Association and Northwood Technical College.

The goal of the 2-day workshops is to help counties best prepare to access BEAD funding through planning and partnering. Extension staff will provide resources on broadband economics, developing public private partnerships, planning tools and financing options for communities.

Attending regional workshops is an allowable expense through your BEAD planning grant. The two 2-day regional workshops that remain:
- October 9-10, Radisson Hotel in Fond du Lac
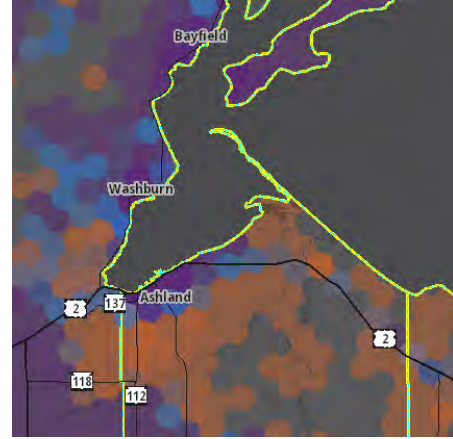- October 25-26, Nicolet College in Rhinelander

Information and Registration

Updated Wisconsin Broadband Planning Map

The Wisconsin Broadband Planning Map Moves Out of Beta and into Local Broadband Plans

The Wisconsin Broadband Office's newest mapping tool takes the FCC's location-based coverage data, and combines several new and existing map layers to provide the most detailed map yet of Wisconsin's broadband landscape. New and updated mapping layers include:

- Consumer Input: Includes WISER and OptiMap consumer survey and speed test results.
- Coverage (as of December 31, 2022): Shows location-level coverage data when the map is zoomed in to the municipality level.
- Coverage Summaries (as of December 31, 2022): Provides updated connectivity summaries for multiple political and census areas.
- Provider Service Areas: By using the tool of the same name, users can see the approximate coverage area of each ISP in Wisconsin, based on December 31, 2022 data.

Check out the new map at
https://maps.psc.wi.gov/apps/WisconsinBroadbandPlanningMap/ and feel free to send feedback to PSCBroadbandData@wisconsin.gov if you have ideas to improve the map.

Governor's Task Force on Broadband October Meeting

The October meeting of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11, 2023 from 1:00 - 2:30 pm. The meeting will be virtual and the Task Force will begin work on their 4th annual report.

The meeting agenda will be posted on the PSC Events Calendar and will include information on how members of the public can watch and listen to the meeting.

Grant Recipient Corner

State-Funded Broadband Expansion Grants
Project Status Reports: Interim Reports Due by October 31, 2023
Updated Project Status Report forms are on the State Broadband Grant webpage under "Resources for Current State Broadband Grant Recipients" section. When preparing your reports, always use the version currently posted on our webpage. The forms have been changed from earlier versions to help inform the Commission and the public about your projects as well as to help Recipients stay in compliance with grant agreements and speed up the reimbursement process.

Interim project status reports for all open grants are due during the month of October and must be filed no later than October 31, unless a final reimbursement request is submitted on or before that date.

Final project status reports are required for all completed projects (i.e., all deliverables have been met), and all final reimbursement requests require the filing of a final project status report.

How to File Your Reports & Final Reimbursement Requests
- Upload your reports to ERF, the Commission's Electronic Records Filing System that provides public access to information about awarded projects, etc.
- When uploading or emailing about a project, please include *Award UID BBEG FYXX [Grantee Keyword(s)], [Project Keyword(s)]* which can be found on your customized reimbursement forms.
- Be sure to upload your report to the correct docket [5-BF-20XX].

ARPA-Funded Broadband Access Grants
Reminder that the deadline to file your **ARPA federal quarterly report is October 10, 2023.**

WBO Newsletter

The Wisconsin Broadband Office will send out regular communication to internet service providers, grant applicants and broadband stakeholders. We aim to be relevant and share timely information from our office.

Please reach out if anyone from the Wisconsin Broadband Office can be of assistance. Email Us

Join Our Mailing List