



FY26 Broadband Expansion Grant (BBEG): Challenge Webinar

Date of presentation: August 17, 2026

Agenda

- Overview
- Statute Change
- Eligible Challengers
- How to Prepare a Challenge
- Challenge Evidence
- How to Submit Challenges
- BSL Fabric License
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Overview

- The Commission opened the FY2026 State Broadband Expansion Grants (BBEG) from May 19 – July 27, 2026, making \$60 million available from bonding and cash sources.
- The Commission received 93 applications requesting \$160.2 million
- In accordance with Wis. Stat § 196.504(2t), the Commission published a challenge map that depicts each application's proposed geographic broadband service area and the proposed broadband service speeds, initiating the challenge period
- Schedule of Events:
 - Application closed July 27, 2026
 - Challenge Period opened August 7, 2026
 - **Last day to submit a challenge September 6, 2026, 11:59 PM CT.**
- Application round documentation filed in [docket 5-BF-2026](#)
- Additional details and resources available on the [State Grant Webpage](#)

Statute Change

- Wisconsin State Legislature enacted changes to Wis. Stat. § 196.504 creating the Challenge Period for the Broadband Expansion Grant program.
- Challenge Period allows ISPs to challenge an application that proposes to construct broadband on locations they offer qualifying service or commit to offer qualifying service to within 24 months
- An ISP in or proximate to a proposed project area will have 30 days to submit in writing a challenge to an application.
- If the Commission determines a challenge is credible and relevant, and that service is or will become available, it will not award funding to the relevant challenged portion of the project.
- If the Commission accepts a challenge and the commitments made in the challenge are not complete within 24 months, the Commission is prohibited from awarding grant funding to that Internet service provider for the following 2 grant cycles and that Internet service provider is prohibited from participating in the challenge process for the following 2 grant cycles.

Eligible Challengers

Who can submit challenges?

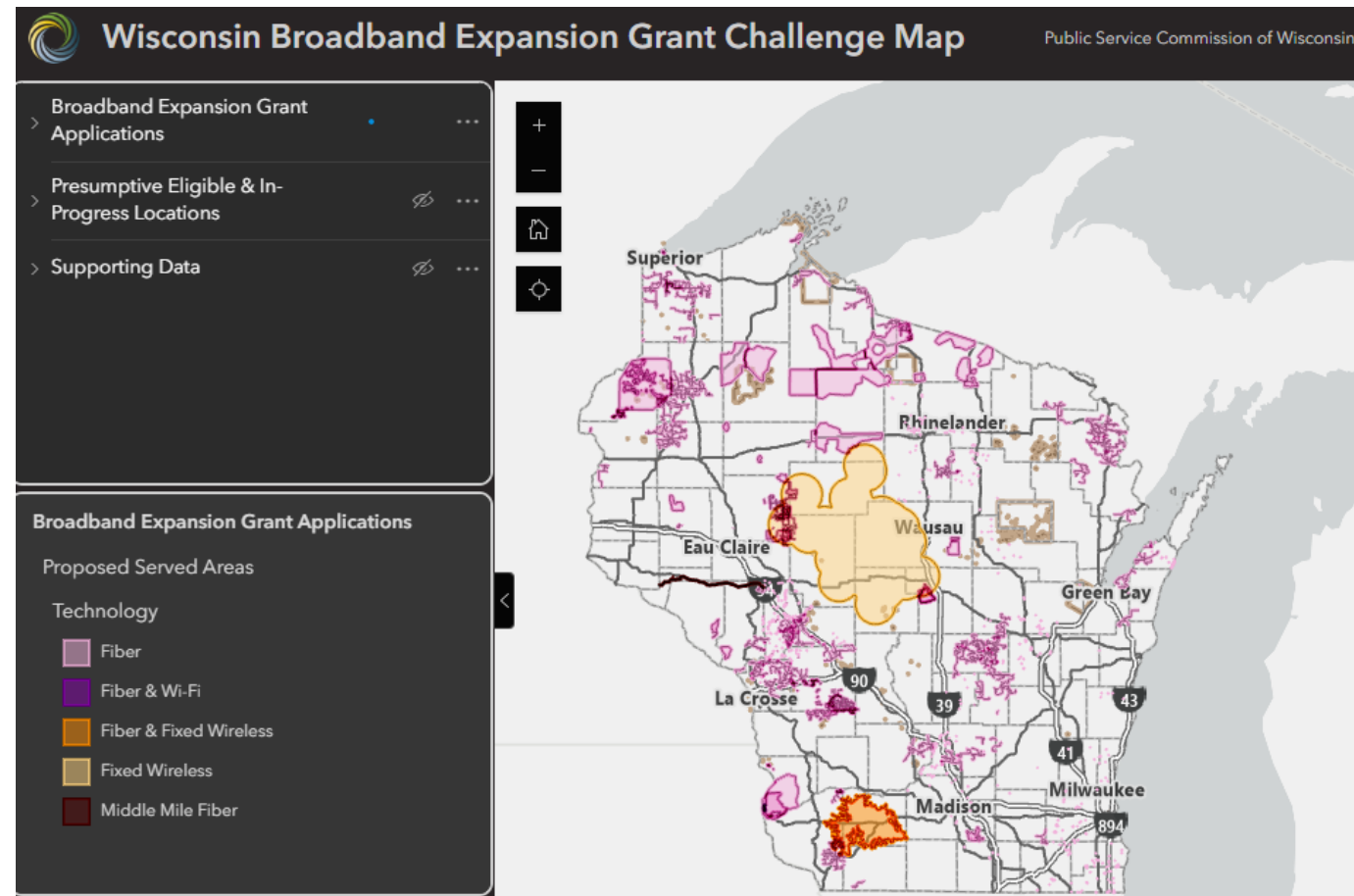
- Internet Service Providers in or proximate to a proposed project area.
- Challenges submitted by entities that do not directly provide internet service in Wisconsin or do not provide internet service in or proximate to the proposed project area are ineligible to challenge.
- In your challenge submission explain how proximate the ISP is to the project area

Eligible Challenge Types

Per Wis. Stat. § 196.504(2t)(b), a challenge must demonstrate at least one of the following:

- The provider challenging the application **currently provides qualifying service**
- The provider challenging the application **commits to complete construction** of broadband infrastructure and to provide qualifying service **no later than 24 months after the date of the Commission's order awarding broadband expansion grants** (by December 1, 2028). And the provider must submit documentation showing this commitment to the satisfaction of the Commission, which could include engineering plans, invoices related to project materials, permit applications, and a detailed project timeline that includes a completion date.

WI BBEG Challenge Map Tutorial



Challenge Evidence

- It is the responsibility of the challenger to establish that they are eligible to challenge and to provide a comprehensive and defensible picture of the existing or planned service as it relates to a single specific application's proposed project area.
- The Commission will only consider challenges from eligible ISPs that **clearly demonstrate** existing or planned service that meets the requirements in state statute.
- Evidence may include:
 - National Broadband Map data showing locations already being served or an explanation of why the service is not depicted in the National Broadband Map and proof of an updated FCC service filing and proof of customers in the project area with qualifying service.
 - Maps and any relevant data depicting existing infrastructure demonstrating actual available and reliable qualifying service.
 - If committing to complete a broadband project, indicate whether the project is planned or in-progress.
 - Planned or in-progress projects should include sufficient evidence to meet the challenge requirements and so that the Commission can review. Documentation may or should include project design details, engineering plans, planned technology, timeline, permits applications, invoices related to project material and other documentation that demonstrate the broadband infrastructure project will be complete within 24 months of the Commission Order.

Challenge Evidence Continued

- Screenshots or documentation that show a customer service request is possible for a location is not sufficient.
- A list of BSLs or static map of a planned service area with a statement that the locations will be completed is not sufficient without supporting evidence.
- The Commission will exercise sole discretion in determining successful challenges.
- Challenge documentation must be uploaded to the Electronic Records Filing (ERF) system under docket 5-BF-2026 by September 6, 2026.

How to Prepare a Challenge

A complete challenge must be specific to a single grant application and include only the two the following files, files or pages received in excess will not be reviewed.

1. A single PDF that comprehensively demonstrates the required current or planned service for locations being challenged. The application ID of the single application that the provider is challenging must be indicated in the PDF file name. All the documentation should be incorporated into one file that may not exceed 20 pages.
2. An excel (.xlsx) file with a list of the Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) that are being challenged. The excel file must contain only the columns Challenge Entity Name, Application ID, Challenge Type, and BSL ID.

How to Submit Challenges

- All Challenge Documents must be uploaded to docket 5-BF-2026 using ERF (not the PSC Grant System) by September 6, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. CT
- All submitted challenge documentation must use the following file naming conventions
 1. Up to 20 page pdf Challenge details file: challenge entity name-details-application ID being challenged (e.g. *broadbandprovider-details-1234.pdf*)
 2. Challenge BSL file: challenge entity name-BSLs-application ID being challenged (e.g. *broadbandprovider-BSLs-1234.xlsx*).

Fabric License

- A No-cost CostQuest license is available to access BSL fabric data.
- Complete the [intake form](#) to request a license and select counties needed to submit a challenge.
- [Detailed instructions](#) on fabric license can be found on docket 5-BF-2026.
- Contact CostQuest to request additional counties if there's an existing license by emailing compliance@costquest.com

Resources

- [Challenge Letter](#)
- [State Statute Challenge Language](#)
- [Summary of Applications](#) (get your application number here)
- [Challenge Map](#) (or get your application number here)
- [List of Broadband Serviceable Locations by application](#)
- [FY 2026 Broadband Expansion Grant Docket 5-BF-2026](#)
- [Broadband Expansion Grant Webpage](#)



Questions?

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