



Wisconsin Broadband Office

**Broadband, Equity, Access and
Deployment (BEAD) Program Update**

12/17/2024

Background: The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law allocated \$42.5 Billion under the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program for broadband infrastructure deployment

WI Awarded: \$1,055,823,574

Goal: Affordable, reliable internet for all

NTIA oversees to ensure compliance, approves initial & final proposal

PSC operates allocation process: reviewing, scoring, and selecting recipients

Subgrantee Recipients are entities that will construct, own, operate broadband infrastructure, and comply with reporting

Final Proposal: Due Within a Year of the Initial Proposal's Approval

Timing

Once an Eligible Entity's Initial Proposal is approved, it will have **12 months** to submit a Final Proposal

Before submitting the Final Proposal, an Eligible Entity must complete the challenge process and the subgrantee selection process

Content

The NOFO describes minimum requirements for the Final Proposal, and NTIA will provide an **online template** for submission

Review

Prior to submission, each political subdivision and Tribal / Native entities must have opportunity to submit a plan for consideration and comment on the proposal

Assistant Secretary will review in the order Final Proposals are submitted

Assistant Secretary will decide whether the proposed use of funds complies with the statute

Approval

When the AS approves of the Final Proposal, the Eligible Entity will **receive remaining BEAD Program funds**

Final Proposal: Final Proposals Include 15



Plan that specifies the **outcome of the subgrantee selection process**



Timeline for implementation



Processes for **oversight and accountability**



Certification that **local coordination was conducted**



Description of the **results of the challenge process**



Certification that it will **serve all unserved locations**, if seeking to fund underserved, CAI, or other projects



Description of all planned **uses of funding** that are **not** broadband infrastructure **deployment**



Means by which **subgrantees were selected for non-deployment** eligible activities



Description of efforts to support **participation of non-traditional providers**



Implementation **status of plans** described in the Initial Proposal – *additional details on next slide*



Specific commitments made by selected subgrantees to warrant a **Priority Broadband Project**

123

Specific commitments made by subgrantees to warrant **benefits in selection (e.g., primary criteria)**



Environmental documentation and plan to comply w/ environment and national historic preservation reqs



Plans to deploy to **Un-/Underserved Service Projects** and **Resolution of Consent** for projects on Tribal Lands



Description of **unsuccessful applications** that were **affected by laws of the Eligible Entity**

Legend | References to a related requirement in the Initial Proposal

Accelerating the Construction of BEAD Projects



Actions by Eligible Entities

Negotiation of Subgrantee Agreements

- Upon completion of Subgrantee Selection and NTIA approval of the Final Proposal, Eligible Entities must enter into agreements with subgrantees to deploy broadband serve to awarded locations. NTIA has previously encouraged Eligible Entities to publicly post draft subgrantee agreements prior to the initiation of Subgrantee Selection in order for potential subgrantees to better understand their contractual obligations.
- In addition, Eligible Entities may begin negotiating subgrantee agreements with provisional subgrantees immediately upon selection.
 - Eligible Entities may not sign subgrantee agreements with provisional subgrantees until after NTIA approval of the Final Proposal.

Environmental Review

- As joint lead agencies under NEPA, Eligible Entities may have subgrantees complete environmental studies and prepare NEPA documents. Eligible Entities are encouraged to create capacity to meet their NEPA joint lead agency responsibilities, communicate NEPA requirements to subgrantees, and begin environmental analyses immediately upon completion of Subgrantee Selection. Eligible Entities are not required to wait for NTIA approval of the Final Proposal before beginning NEPA analyses, although NTIA must approve NEPA decisions prior to construction.



Accelerating the Construction of BEAD Projects



Actions by Subgrantees

Eligible Entities may allow subgrantees to claim reimbursement for pre-subgrant costs in certain circumstances in accordance with 2 CFR 200.458. Importantly, provisionally selected subgrantees should understand that any pre-subgrant costs are incurred at the risk of the subgrantee and subject to NTIA approval of the relevant Final Proposal.

Ordering Equipment and Materials

- Provisional subgrantees may place orders for equipment and materials necessary to deploy broadband infrastructure.
 - Provisional subgrantees may want to discuss agreements with vendors that allow cancellation without charge in the event of NTIA disapproval of the subgrant.

Negotiating for Right of Way and Pole Attachment

- Provisional subgrantees may negotiate and sign agreements for rights of way and for pole attachments.

Environmental Review

- Provisional Subgrantees may apply for permits from federal, state, and local agencies and may initiate environmental analyses and prepare documentation for NEPA review.



BEAD Challenge Process

- **Purpose:** Determine what locations & CAIs are eligible for BEAD
- **Eligible participants:** local units of government, internet service providers, nonprofits, Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)
 - [5-BCH-2024 BEAD BSL Challenges Final \(PSC REF#: 524389\)](#)
 - [5-BCH-2024 BEAD CAI Challenges Final \(PSC REF#: 524391\)](#)
 - [BEAD Eligible BSLs List](#)- 206,715 BSLs
 - [BEAD Eligible CAIs List](#)- 8,161 CAIs

+ 425,000 unserved and underserved locations
– “Enforceable Commitments” (state & federal funding awards)
+ Pre-challenge modifications (DSL & certain locations where advertised ≠ actual)
– Verified planned private builds by June 30, 2024
+/- Locations that are challenged

206,715 Locations eligible for BEAD

Wisconsin BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 2 was approved July 29, 2024.

Volume 2 outlines the subgranting process for BEAD

Per the BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity, Wisconsin has 365 days from approval to make preliminary subawards and submit our final proposal to NTIA.

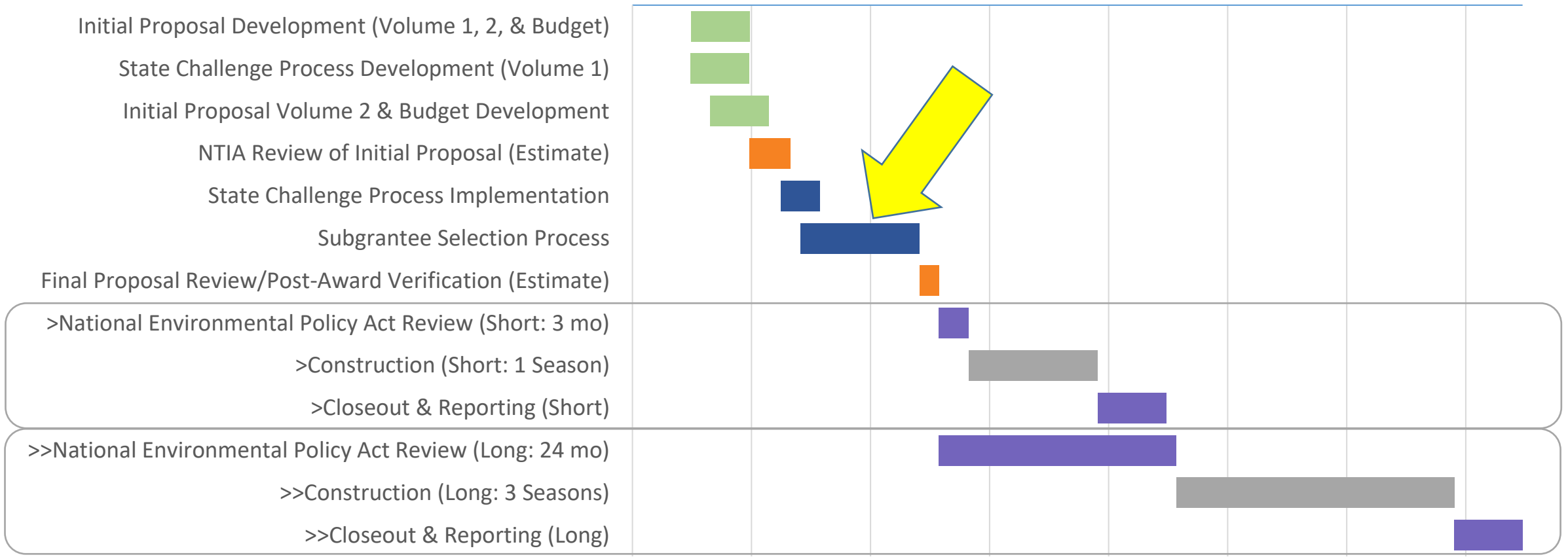
[Wisconsin Initial Proposal Volume 2](#)



Wisconsin
BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 2

Where are we going?

2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030



BEAD subgrantee selection *Estimated* Timeline



8/1/2024 – 10/1/2024 Complete	Letter of Intent open / accepting submissions from prospective BEAD grantees
9/1/2024 – 11/1/2024 In Progress	Letter of Intent Review: Entities meeting requirements invited to apply
1/13/25-2/25/2025	Round 1 BEAD subgranting open to invited entities. Counties should work with the applicants to ensure endorsement materials are ready before the grant round closes
2/26/2025-TBD	Commission staff review period and round 1 preliminary awards
~April	Round 2 BEAD subgranting open to certain new applications and to expand or modify unawarded Round 1 applications
~May	Commission staff review period and additional preliminary awards
~June	Round 3 BEAD negotiate with preliminary awardees, invite alternative technologies, non-competitive allocations
~July	Draft Final Proposal out for public comment and then to the Commission and then submitted to NTIA for review and approval.



Approved

24-7 Telcom, Inc.
AMG Technology Investment Group, LLC
Bertram Communications LLC
Bruce Telephone Company
City of Superior
Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company
Connect Holding II LLC
Comcast Cable Communications Management, LLC
CTC Telcom, Inc.
East Central Energy
Frontier North Inc.
LaValle Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Lemonweir Valley Telephone Company
Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative
Mediacom LLC
Midcontinent Communications
Mount Horeb Telephone Company

NEIT Broadband, LLC
Norvado Inc.
Ntera, LLC
Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services
Richland-Grant Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Spectrum Mid-America, LLC
Surf Air Wireless LLC
Wisconsin Bell, LLC dba AT&T Wisconsin
IBT Group USA LLC
NET LEC, LLC.
USCC Services, LLC

Under Review

Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Hilbert Communications LLC
Sokaogon Chippewa Tribe

BEAD Implementation

1) Qualifications: Letter of Intent

- Technical, Financial, Operation and Managerial Capacity

365 Days

2) Grant rounds

3) Filling gaps through negotiation

4) Approvals:

- Final Proposal (NTIA)
- Permitting (fed, state, local)

5) Construction

Letter of Intent
By Entity
Eligibility screening and questionnaire

Application Submission
By Project
Proposed project units and funding request

Round 1: Fiber Focus

- Award as many fiber projects as possible and remove from future rounds
- Identify best non-fiber project and place "hold" for subsequent rounds to allow only fiber proposals
- "No decisive winner" projects with close scores forwarded to next round for revision

Round 2: Resolve Bids

- Limited competition: only for non-awarded areas
- Resolve competitive/overlapping project proposals
- Award non-fiber projects

Round 3: Fill in Gaps

- Make direct offers to nearby providers
- Redraw project units
- Require grant awardees to accept nearby units
- Recruit non-reliable technology (satellite, unlicensed wireless) through grant round then direct contact

Round 4: CAIs & Non-Deployment

- As funding remains
- Solicit and evaluate CAI proposals
- Allocate to non-deployment uses

Watch our [webinar](#) and read the [slides](#)

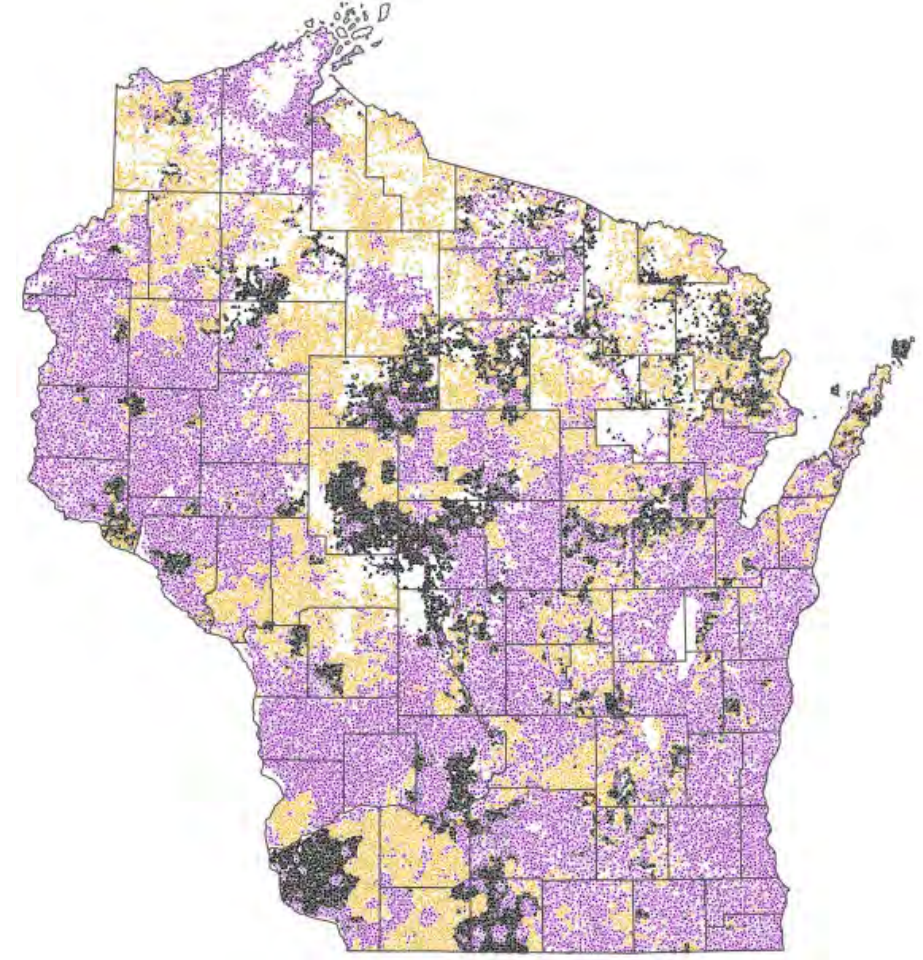
BEAD Eligibility

~2,300,000 Locations (BSLs) in Wisconsin

~206,715 BEAD Eligible (Orange ●)

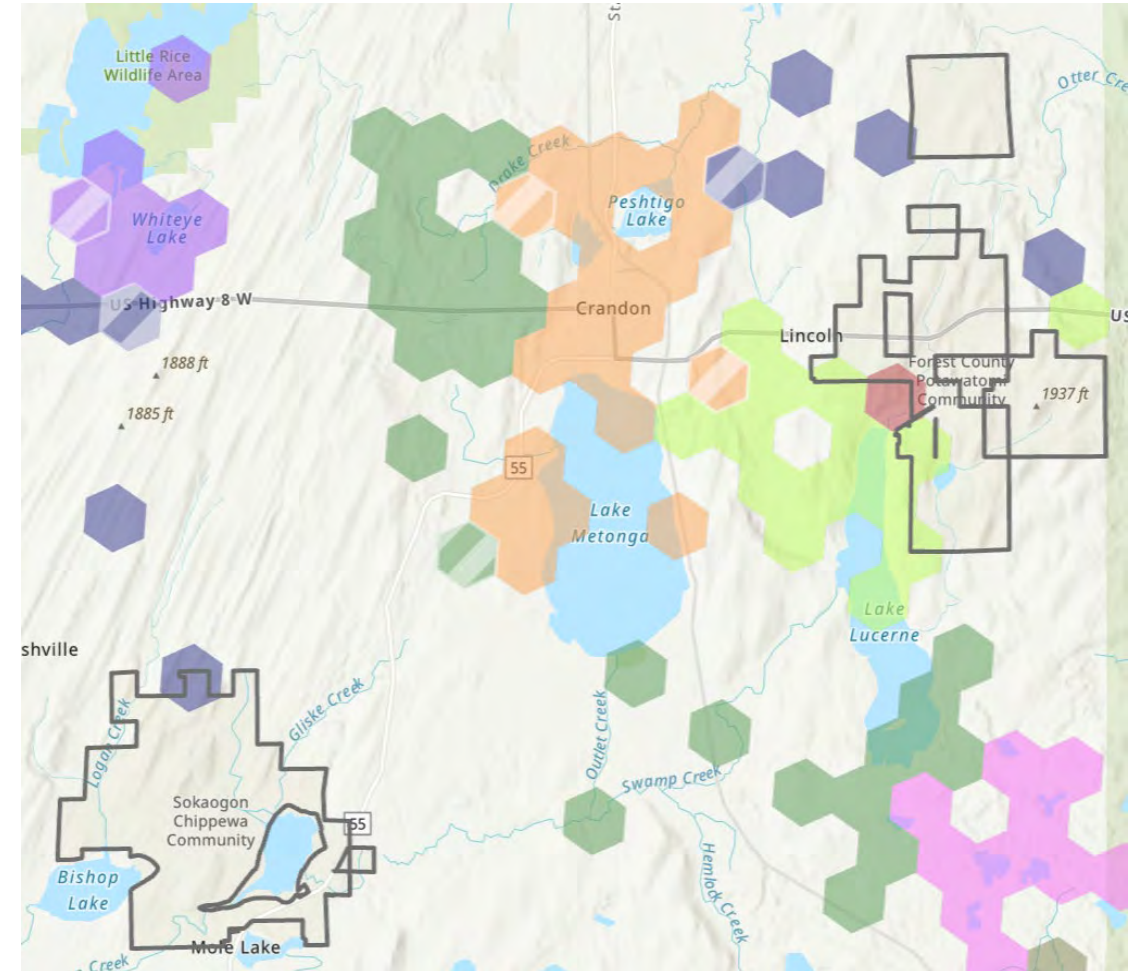
~200,000 In-Progress (Black ▲)

~1,900,000 Served/Ineligible (Purple ●)



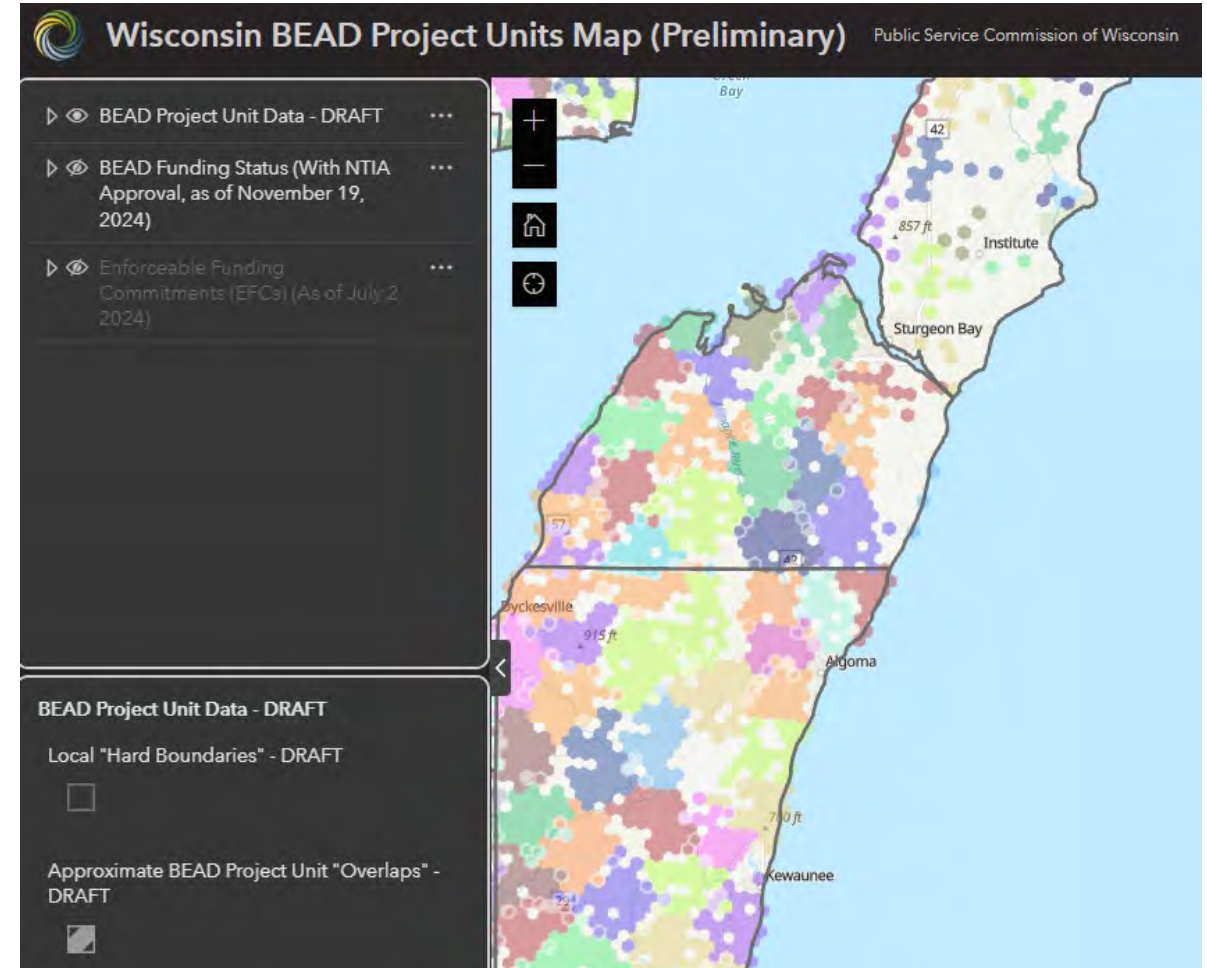
What are Project Units?

- **Groups of locations** nearby to each other that will be made available to BEAD applicants to be built as a single unit (or combination of units).
- Nearby ineligible locations are not included in a project unit.
- Project units do not cross certain “hard boundaries” which include county borders, Tribal Lands, and certain railroads and islands.



Project Units Data

- Draft Project Unit data is also available for download [here](#) (link opens an excel file).
- Note some entities may be eligible for a [free license](#) from Cost Quest Associates.
- Eligible Locations by County list forthcoming.



- Sub-granting Rounds
- Preliminary Award
- Post-Preliminary Award Requirement Submission
- Final Proposal Submission
- Final Proposal Approved
- Grant Agreement information / signature
- Pre-engineering / NEPA review
- Incremental reimbursement milestones
- Construction / Monitoring

Scoring (Priority Projects)

Primary Criteria	Points	Description
Minimal BEAD Outlay	40	Based on % of the reference BEAD match threshold, cost model for the technology and quality of the network for the cost
Priority Affordability	18	Based on the total non-promotional cost of 1 Gbps / 1 Gbps service
Fair Labor Practices	17	Based on prior compliance record and future workforce plans
Secondary and Additional Criteria	Points	Description
Speed to deployment	1	Points for enforceable deployment plans faster than 36 months
Local and Tribal Coordination Support and Engagement	5	Points for demonstrated community support and local and/or Tribal coordination
Endorsement by local government and/or Tribe	7	Points for formal endorsement by County and/or Tribal government through public action
Affordability middle class and low-cost plan	10	Based on cost of service to the customers and reach of required low-cost plan
Community Anchor Institutions	2	Based on inclusion of CAIs without a symmetrical gig of service.

Engagement

- 5 points available.
- Applicant demonstrates that the planning of their proposal included outreach, engagement and coordination with local government, Tribes, and as applicable any schools, libraries or community organizations that work with covered populations.
 - i. Up to 2 points for evidence of a public meeting to engage the community in the project planning
 - ii. Up to 2 points for a letter(s) of support from any municipal government included in the project area.
 - iii. Up to 1 point for a letter of support from the school district, the local public library or organization that supports a covered population in the project area.

Endorsement by County and/or Tribe

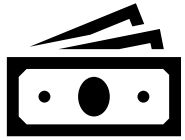
- 7 points = the County and/or Tribe where the project is located takes official action at a noticed, open meeting to affirmatively endorse the project. The action is memorialized in public minutes and an official letter of endorsement is provided.

What is the role of local government in BEAD?



1) Local knowledge

- a) Understanding gaps [challenge process]
- b) Understanding needs [project planning]



2) Incentivize partnerships that meet community needs

- a) Cash & in-kind match
- b) Right of way access, permitting assistance, make ready



3) Formal endorsement: choosing the ISP that's best for your community

4) Accountability:

- a) Keeping projects on-time
- b) Ensuring no members of community are left behind
- c) Assisting in compliance and monitoring



Consent on Tribal Land

- Resolution of consent is required from the Tribal government before BEAD funding can be awarded to a project. If a Tribal Nation does not provide a resolution of consent, the project will not be eligible for award as proposed and the applicant may have the opportunity to resubmit the project in a subsequent round with adjustments to not include Tribal locations or traverse Tribal land.
- The WBO understands that a resolution of consent from a Tribal government can take a considerable amount of time, potentially hindering Tribal Nations from effectively endorsing projects within the sub granting time frame. The WBO will consider preliminary awarding projects that include Tribal locations and/or that traverse Tribal land if the applicant can provide a detailed description of Tribal consultation that has happened to date, any approval steps that have been met, and an anticipated timeline for receipt of a Tribal consent for the application.

What's Next?

- BEAD Subgrant Round 1 Opens January 13, 2025
 - All materials and data available to approved applicants no later than January 6, 2025
- Preliminary Awards made through BEAD subgrant rounds (not published until Final Proposal)
- Final Proposal submission to NTIA for approval (~July)
 - 14-day Public Comment period before submission

Resources

- [PSC BEAD Process](#)
 - [Initial Proposal Volume 1](#)
 - [Initial Proposal Volume 2](#)
 - [Docket 5-BD-2025](#)
- [PSC Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant](#)
 - [Wisconsin BEAD Eligibility Map](#)
 - [Wisconsin BEAD Project Units Map \(Preliminary\)](#)
 - [BEAD Program FAQ](#) [BEAD Program FAQ Version 2](#)
 - [BEAD Engagement Endorsement FAQ](#)
 - [Extension's Writing BEAD Endorsement Letters: Sample Language](#)
 - [PSC County Summary Data](#)



BEAD Grant Inbox

Pscbeadgrants@Wisconsin.gov

Carah Koch, Federal Program Officer

Ckoch@ntia.gov (202) 451-1737

Alyssa Kenney, State Broadband & Digital Equity Director

Alyssa.Kenney@Wisconsin.gov (608) 267-9138

Matthew Marcus, Broadband Policy Lead

Matthew.Marcus@Wisconsin.gov (608) 266-8097

Mark Leonard, Planning and Policy Coordinator

Mark.Leonard@Wisconsin.gov (608) 261-8528

Colter Sikora, GIS Lead

Colter.Sikora@Wisconsin.gov (608) 267-1204