

Broadband and Digital Equity: It takes a village

House Innovation, Community and
Economic Development, and
Veterans Committee

Dr. Karen Johnson, Director, Office of Equity

Karin Berkholtz, Executive Director, Public Works Board

Janea Stark, Executive Director, Community Economic Revitalization
Board

Jasmine Vasavada, Director of Governmental Affairs and Policy,
Department of Commerce

Mark Vasconi, Director, State Broadband Office, Department of
Commerce

01/20/23



We strengthen communities



HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS



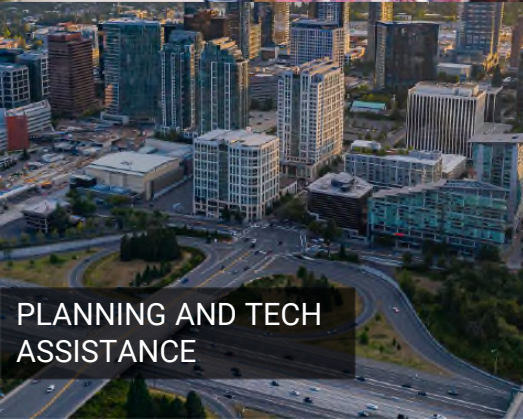
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
BROADBAND



SMALL BUSINESS
ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING AND TECH
ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY
SERVICES AND FACILITIES



CRIME VICTIMS AND
PUBLIC SAFETY



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

Digital Equity Forum



Working together for strong, vibrant economies & communities where everyone has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

Digital Equity Forum Members



Agaiotupu Viena	LGBTQ Commission	Jim Bamberger	Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA)
Amanda Six	Libraries of Stevens County	Jon Claymore	OSPI Office of Native Education
Anna Zivarts	Disability Rights Washington	Laura Ruderman	Technology Alliance
Bill Kehoe	Office of the Chief Information Officer	Lisa Rosenblum	King County Library System
Bre Urness-Straight	OSPI	Maria Siguenza	Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs
Cathleen MacCaul	AARP	Melvinjohn Ashue	Hoh Tribe
Cindy Aden	Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition	Renee Rooker	Walla Walla Housing Authority
Darryl Hunt	King County	Rituja Indapure	Washington State Women's Commission
David Keyes	City of Seattle	Sameth Mel	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Ed Prince	Commission on African American Affairs	Sharayah Lane	Philanthropy Northwest
Elizabeth Gordon	Committee on Disability Issues and Employment	Sharon Miracle	Yakima Valley Community Foundation
Eu-wanda Eagans	Goodwill of the Olympics & Rainier Region	Sharonne Navas	Equity in Education Coalition
Jennie Harvell	Washington Healthcare Authority	Tiffany Circle	Colville Tribes
Jessica James Zinda	DSHS	Trevor Lane	Washington State University
Jesus Hernandez	Family Health Centers of Okanogan		

Digital Equity Forum



Leadership roles:

Dr. Karen Johnson	(co-chair) Director, Office of Equity
Mark Vasconi	(co-chair) Director, State Broadband Office
Rep. Matt Boehnke	(ex-officio) 8 th District
Rep. Mia Gregerson	(ex-officio) 33 rd District
Sen. Shelly Short	(ex-officio) 7 th District
Sen. Lisa Wellman	(ex-officio) 41 st District

A brief history of broadband programs

1999

CERB authority for telecommunications infrastructure added to eligible activities

2019

- PWB Broadband Program established
- Statewide Broadband Office established

2022-present

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and funding authority to CERB, PWB, and SBO

2018

CERB Rural Broadband Program authorized

2021-present

American Rescue Plan Act and funding authority to CERB, PWB, and SBO

Public Works Board Broadband

Investments since 2019

- \$450K to 9 broadband planning-feasibility study grants.
- \$58M to 23 broadband construction projects, including 2 tribal government projects.
- Funding: state loans and grants, federal grants.

Once complete, construction projects will add **590 miles of fiber** making up to **10,582 connections** for Washington communities.



Lewis County PUD
"Conduit Connecting" groundbreaking event
October 2022

State and federal collaboration

2020 Lewis County Broadband



With \$3M in USDA funding, a \$503K PWB grant/loan, and \$750K in WSBO matching funds, constructing broadband infrastructure to serve 335 residential and commercial customers.

2022 Lincoln County Broadband



With federal grants from PWB (\$4.2M) and WSBO (\$5.2M), and local government and in-kind funding (\$123K), constructing broadband infrastructure to serve 1,231 premises.

2022 Clallam County Broadband



With a \$4.5M grant from PWB and a \$16M grant from WSBO, constructing broadband infrastructure along Hwy 101 and Hwy 112 to serve 1,600 premises.

Public Works Board Broadband

PWB Broadband Rulemaking Workshops and public hearing

- Rules implement ESHB 1673.
- Public Hearing February 7, 2023.
- Rule effective date is March 15, 2023.

Broadband funding cycles

- Early summer 2023: Broadband loan cycle with \$19M in state loan dollars.
- Late 2023/Early 2024: \$25M federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) grant cycle.



WASHINGTON STATE
PUBLIC WORKS BOARD
INFRASTRUCTURE IS FUNDAMENTAL





Community Economic Revitalization Board

CERB is designed to:

Finance public
infrastructure
construction to
support private
business
development

Finance public
broadband
infrastructure to
provide high-speed,
open-access service
for rural underserved
communities.

Assist local
governments with
economic
development and
broadband planning





Community Economic Revitalization Board

CERB programs

Economic
Development
Broadband

Planning

Private business
needs public
infrastructure to:

- Site, expand, be retained
- Create and retain jobs
- Complete private capital project

Committed Private Partner

Planning has
been completed
and project is
deemed feasible

Public
infrastructure is
needed to:

- Recruit private industry to the community
- Job creation
- Private Investment

Prospective Development

Planning has been
completed and
project is deemed
feasible

Project is in a rural
county/ community

Project is in
unserved or
underserved area

Project has a
committed ISP

Rural Broadband





Community Economic Revitalization Board

Eligible jurisdictions

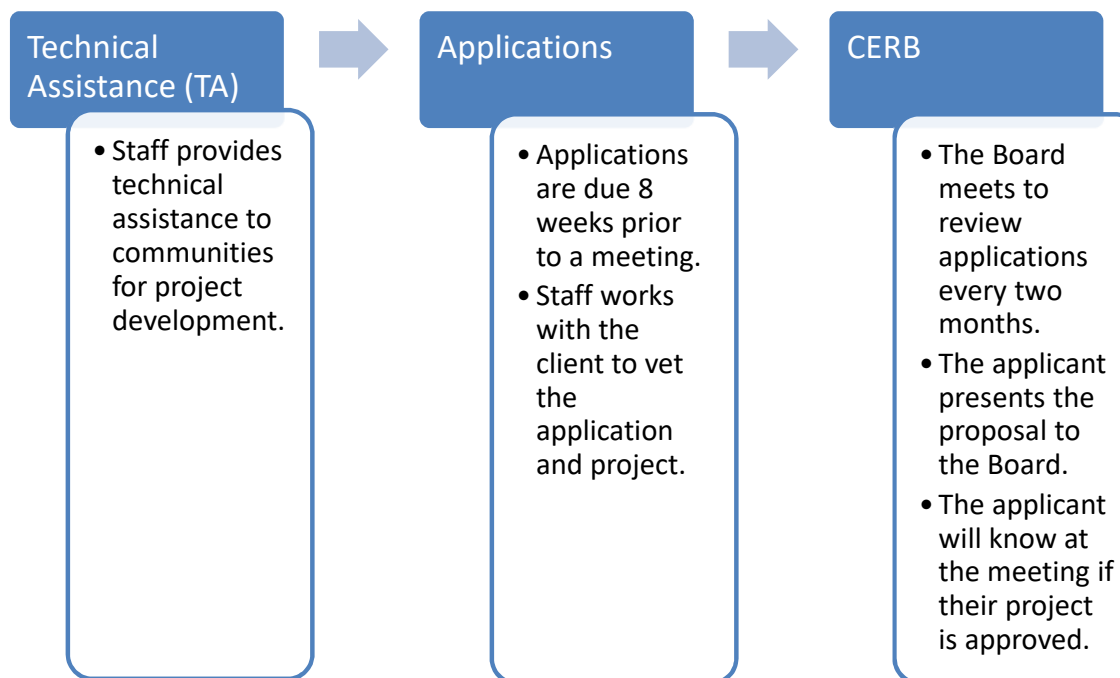
- Cities and Towns
- Counties
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribes
- Municipal and Quasi Municipal Corps
- Port Districts
- Special Purpose Districts (such as, PDAs, PUDs)





Community Economic Revitalization Board

How CERB works



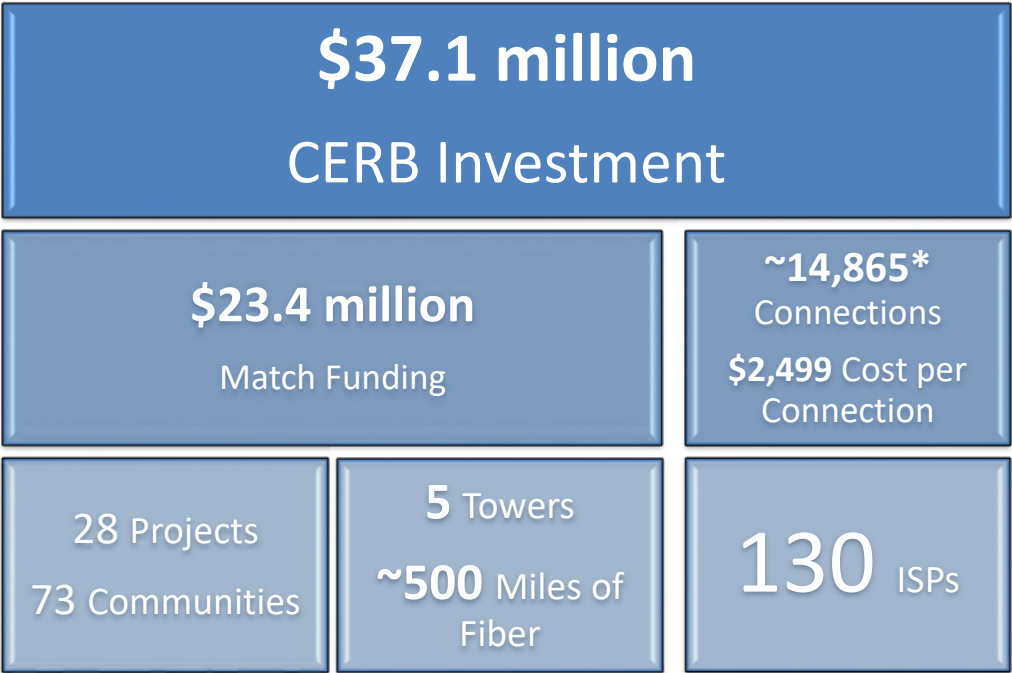
*CERB Tracks **ALL** Projects for 5 years **AFTER** Completion*





Community Economic Revitalization Board

Rural Broadband 2018-2022



**13,870 are household connections that facilitate virtual education, ecommerce, telework, and telemedicine*





Community Economic Revitalization Board

\$37,146,627

Invested

28 Projects

73 Communities

14,865 Connections

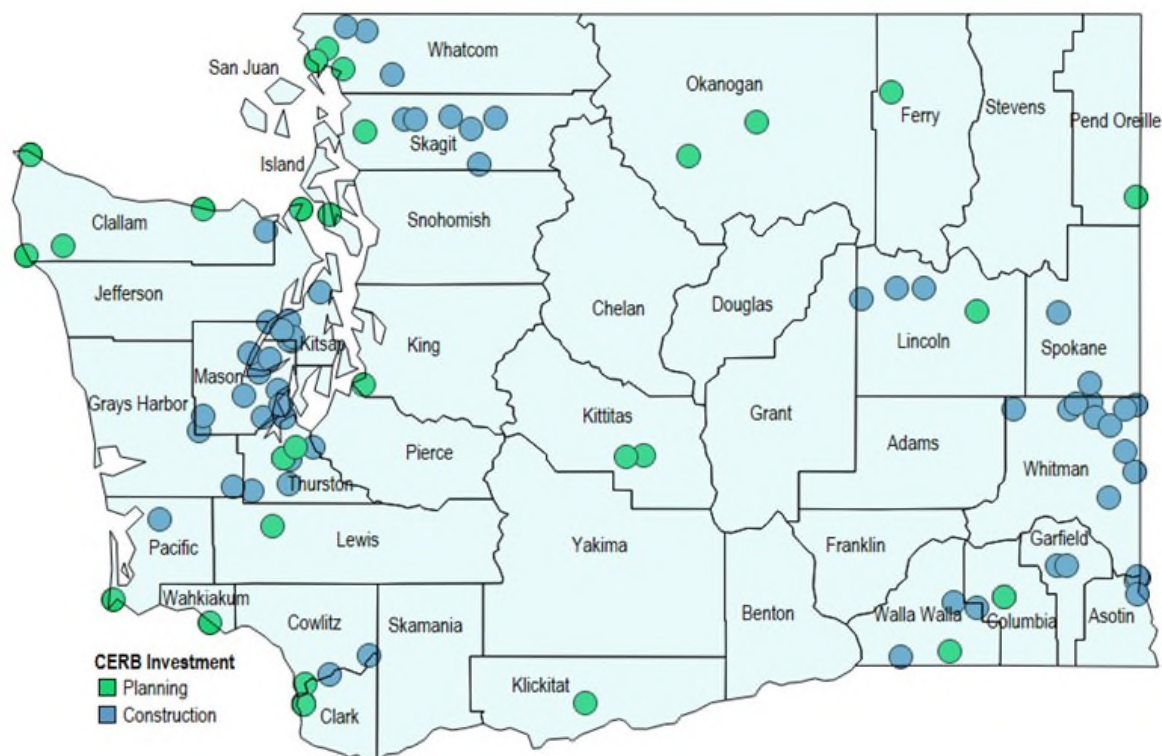
130 ISPs

5 Towers

~500 Miles of Fiber

\$2,499 Cost per
Connection

Avg. Project
\$1,326,627



Community Economic Revitalization Board



WSBO Webpage

Funding: Grants

Funding Cycle: Competitive – Open 11/22/2022

Next Cycle: 11/22/2022 – 1/17/2023

Eligible Activities:

Eligible construction projects that provide high-speed broadband infrastructure that meets the state's speed goals of 150 Megabytes (Mbps) symmetrical by 2028. Projects must be deployed in unserved communities across the state.

Eligible Applicants:

Local governments
Federally recognized Tribes
Nonprofit organizations
Nonprofit cooperative organizations
Public/private partnerships

Resources

[Access and speed survey](#)
[Broadband Action Team list](#)



CERB Webpage

Funding: Loans/Grants

Funding Cycle: Non-competitive – Open

Next Cycle: Continuous

Eligible Activities:

Eligible construction projects are those that provide high-speed broadband service access to unserved and underserved populations in rural communities across the state.

Eligible Applicants:

Local governments
Federally recognized Tribes

Requirements:

All applicants must have a committed internet service provider.

Resources

[Current CERB award status](#)



PWB Webpage

Funding: Loans/Grants

Funding Cycle: Competitive – Closed

Next Cycle: 2023

Eligible Activities:

Eligible construction projects are those that provide high-speed broadband service access to unserved populations in rural and urban communities across the state.

Eligible Applicants:

Local governments
Federally recognized Tribes
Nonprofit organizations
Cooperative associations
LLCs organized to expand broadband
Incorporated businesses or partnerships

Requirements:

All applicants must notify project area internet service providers at least six weeks prior to application.

Resources

[Current PWB award status](#)

A coordinated
web presence



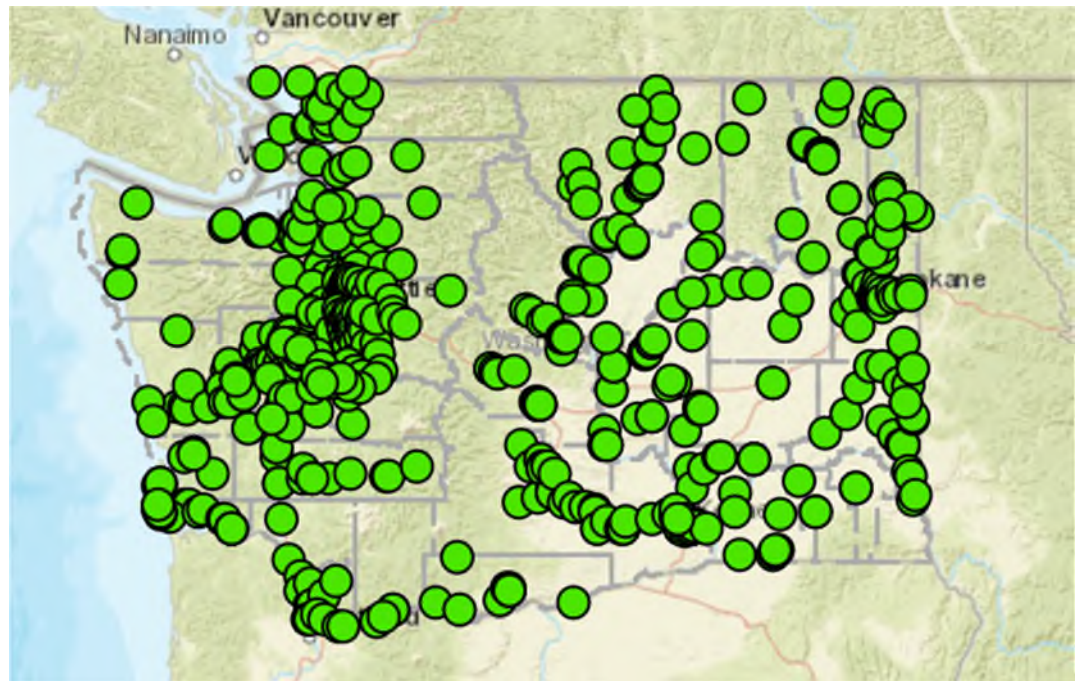
Digital Equity



Early action on digital equity: Wi-Fi hotspots

Drive-in Wi-Fi Hotspot Program

- April to June 2020
- State, local, private and high-education collaboration
- 582 Drive-In Wi-Fi locations
- Online location finder www.driveinwifi.wa.gov
- In 2021, SBO collaborated with NoaNet to fund additional hotspots statewide



Affordability: Federal subsidy

- Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) and Affordable Connectivity Programs (ACP) offer low-income households discounts for:
 - Monthly internet bills (ACP discount is \$30/month and \$70/month for tribal lands), and
 - Internet-capable devices (up to \$100).
- SBO is amplifying awareness to drive enrollment.

ACP by the numbers

237,010 households
Enrollment (Jan. 2023)

61,137 devices
Discounted devices (Nov. 2022)

\$81 million in benefits
Total claimed benefits (Nov. 2022)

Skills: Digital Navigators Program



EQUITY IN EDUCATION
COALITION



Washington State Broadband Office

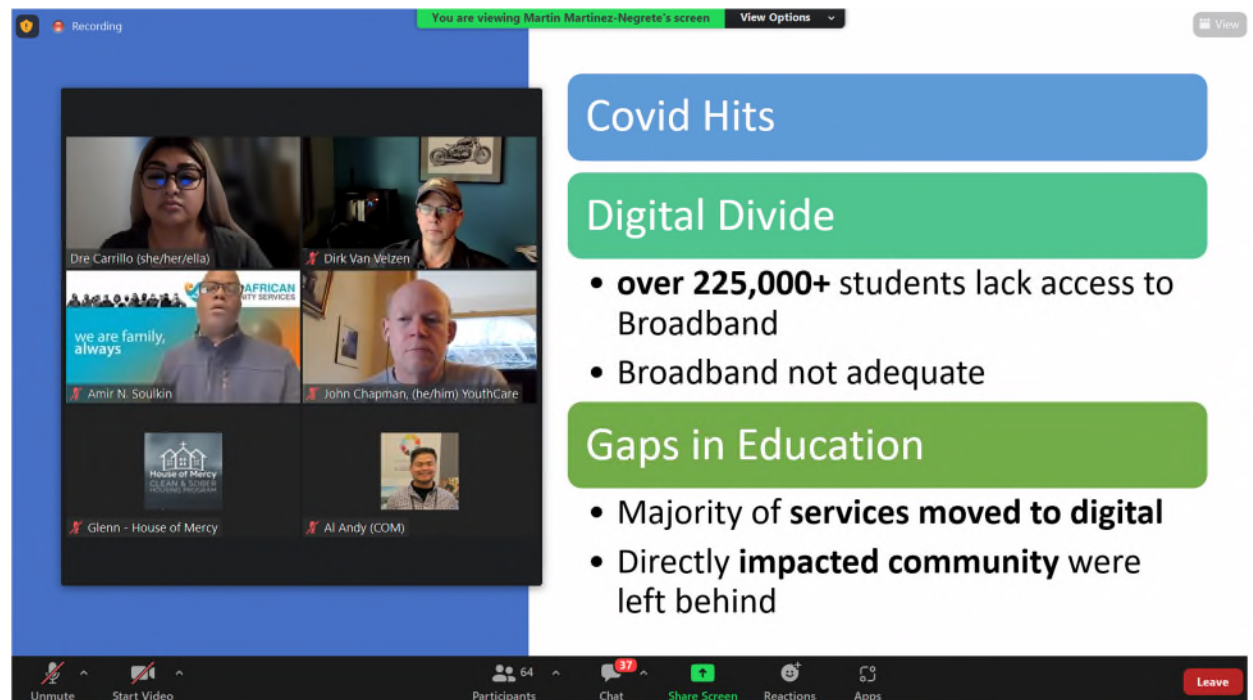
Digital Navigator program metrics, January – June 2022:

- Total Clients All Services: 39,607
- Total Medicaid clients all services: 7,969
- Total digital navigation: 20,893
- Total Medicaid digital navigation: 2,294
- Total digital literacy skills services: 15,901
- Total Medicaid digital literacy skills services: 3,990
- Total Device Distribution With Built In Subscription Assistance: 2,813
- Total Medicaid clients device distribution with built in subscription assistance: 1,685

Navigators learning from each other

Cohort meeting: A venue for sharing best practices

- Grantees learn from others delivering digital navigator services
- Format and content is determined by grantees



The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left, a grid of six participants is visible: Dire Carrillo (she/her/ella), Dirk Van Velzen, Amir N. Soulikin, John Chapman (he/him) YouthCare, Glenn - House of Mercy, and Al Andy (COM). The top of the interface shows 'Recording' and 'You are viewing Martin Martinez-Negrete's screen'. On the right, a list of topics is displayed in colored boxes: 'Covid Hits' (blue), 'Digital Divide' (green), and 'Gaps in Education' (green). Below these topics, bullet points are listed: 'over 225,000+ students lack access to Broadband' and 'Broadband not adequate' under 'Digital Divide'; and 'Majority of services moved to digital' and 'Directly impacted community were left behind' under 'Gaps in Education'. The bottom of the interface shows a toolbar with icons for Unmute, Start Video, Participants (64), Chat (37), Share Screen, Reactions, Apps, and a Leave button.

Covid Hits

Digital Divide

- **over 225,000+** students lack access to Broadband
- Broadband not adequate

Gaps in Education

- Majority of **services moved to digital**
- Directly **impacted community** were left behind

Digital Navigators – next steps

Next steps for expanding the program

- SBO has recently finalized 17 new contracts with organizations to further reach Washington's communities. (\$8m)
- Interagency agreement with Department of Veterans Affairs. (\$2.5m)
- Currently finalizing contracts with organizations that assist communities reentering the workforce from recent incarceration. (\$5m)

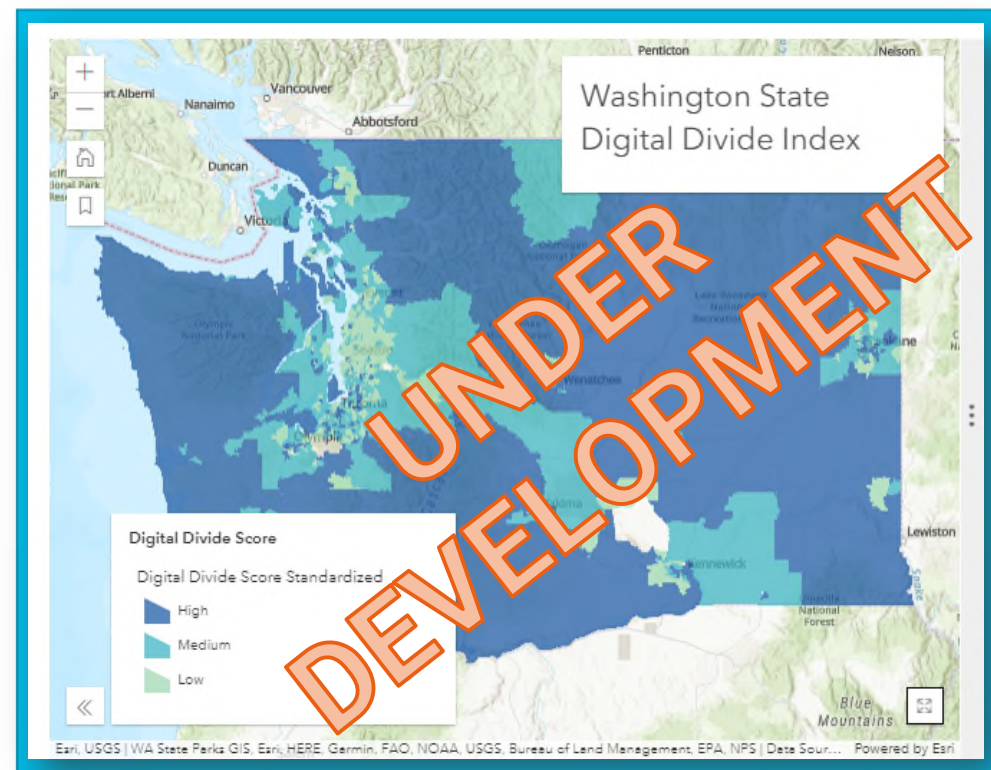
Tools: Digital Equity Plans at state and local level

- **WSU-Extension supporting Local Broadband Action Teams (BATs)**
 - Funded by WSBO
 - Community tables identifying needs
- **Planning/start-up grants to 29 Tribal nations and 39 counties (\$3M total)**
- **Office of Equity and WSBO in partnership for the Digital Equity Forum**
 - Listening to community perspectives - survey in July, 2022

Tools: Digital Equity Dashboard

Commerce IT and consultant team are:

- Showing maps and dashboards of what's possible.
- Working on user stories that will define requirements and drive enhancements.
- Estimated to be ready mid to late 2023.



2021-23 digital equity funding – State resources

Digital equity and broadband access programs

Funding:
\$50 million

Programs to increase access for low-income and rural communities, including: expanding the digital navigator program, broadband action team capacity building, mapping, and other activities.

Local digital equity plans

Funding:
\$3.0 million

In partnership with WSU, funding for regional digital equity planning grants and broadband action team support.

Digital Equity Act (HB 1723) implementation

Funding:
\$953,000

To implement HB 1723, including staff and contracted assistance to stand-up two new digital equity programs.

Digital Equity Forum facilitation

Funding:
\$172,000

Contacted support for facilitation and meeting preparation of the Digital Equity Forum.

2021-23 digital equity funding – Federal resources

Digital equity planning

Approved funding:
\$1,076,249

Federal planning award to support development of the state's digital equity plan. **Identifies digital equity needs for unserved and underserved communities.**

BEAD (Broadband Equity Access and Deployment) planning

Approved funding:
\$5.0 million

Federal planning award for BEAD planning programs. **Implementation plan to provide access to unserved and underserved communities.**

BEAD broadband and digital equity programs

Expected funding:
~\$900M initial estimate

Based on current FCC draft map. Map is subject to challenge process that the state is engaging in.

2021-23 digital equity funding summary

Program	Intended use	Funding*	Source	Availability
Digital equity and broadband access programs	Various programs to increase access for low-income and rural communities, including: expanding the digital navigator program, broadband action teams, mapping, and other activities.	\$50,000,000	State General Fund	FY23
County and tribal digital equity plans	In partnership with WSU, funding for regional digital equity planning grants and broadband action team support.	\$3,000,000	State General Fund	FY23
HB 1723 implementation	Includes staff and contracts to stand up the digital equity programs under HB 1723	\$953,000	State General Fund	FY23
Digital Equity Forum	To expand Digital Equity Forum facilitation	\$70,000	State General Fund	FY23
BEAD – Digital Equity	To develop and implement the State Digital Equity Plan	\$1,076,249	Federal - IIJA	TBD – FY23
BEAD – Digital Equity	To begin the IIJA digital equity planning grant program	TBD	Federal - IIJA	TBD – FY24
BEAD – Digital Equity	For the IIJA state planning grant, state capacity grant, and competitive grants	TBD	Federal - IIJA	TBD – FY24
TOTAL		At least \$55,099,249		

*Includes program administration

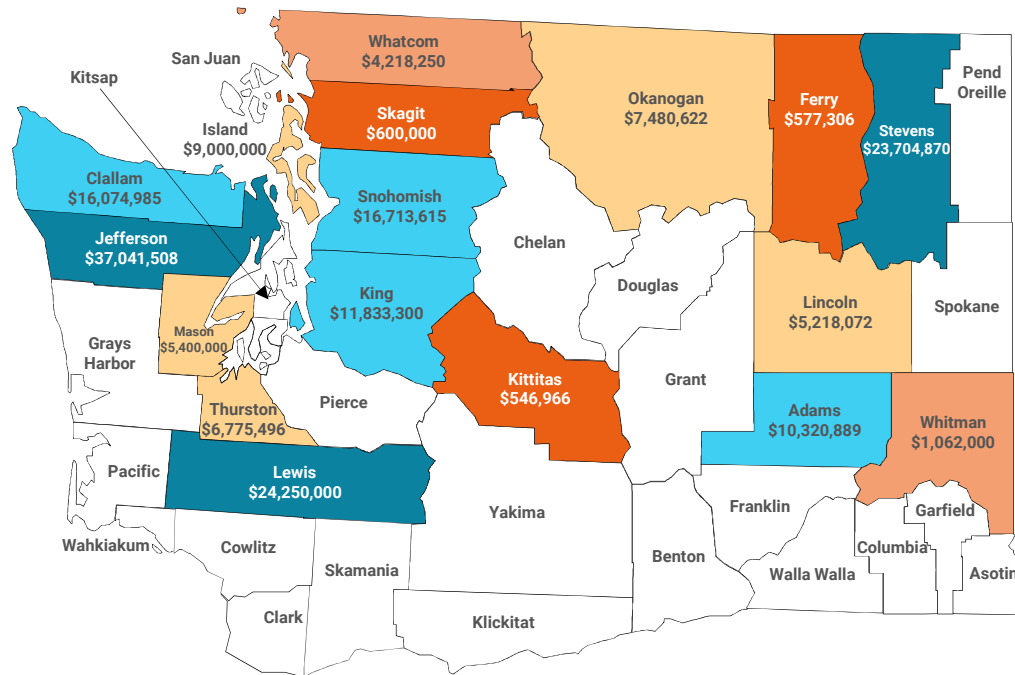
WSBO funding programs agenda

- **Past accomplishments**
 - Funding and programs
- **Present**
 - Programs in progress
 - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) capital projects funding
 - Expenditure of state matching funds
 - Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) planning
 - BEAD consultant selection
 - WSU-Extension community outreach efforts
 - Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mapping review
 - State broadband pipeline
- **Future**
 - National Telecommunications Infrastructure Administration (NTIA) Funding

State broadband goals: RCW 43.330.536

- **By 2024** all Washington businesses and residences have access to high-speed broadband service that provides minimum download speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) and minimum upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps;
- **By 2026** all Washington communities have access to at least one gigabit per second symmetrical broadband service at anchor institutions like schools, hospitals, libraries, and government buildings; and
- **By 2028** all Washington businesses and residences have access to at least one provider of broadband with download speeds of at least 150 Mbps download and upload speeds

WSBO construction grants 2021 – 2022 for approximately \$189 million*



Capital investments (to-date)	
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)	\$141,018,476
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA): Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP)	\$30,000,000
State Match	\$17,507,310
Direct Appropriations (two projects)	\$472,380
Total	\$188,998,166



*County totals vary year to year due to de-obligations, terminations, and award withdrawal due to non-compliance.

WSBO 2021-23 capital appropriations and awards

Funding source	Appropriations	Awarded	Leveraged funding	Total project cost	Households	Counties
ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds	\$143,806,060	\$ 141,018,476	\$21,702,692	\$162,721,168	18,933	14
State match	\$48,800,000	\$17,507,310	\$32,583,567	\$50,090,877	6,913	9
ARPA Capital Project Funds (CPF)	\$122,431,140	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Totals	\$315,037,200	\$158,525,786	\$54,286,259	\$212,812,045	25,846	23

As of 01/15/23

Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds: Awards (“Round 1”)

- More than \$141M to 13 applicants.
- Up to 18,933 new service connections.
- Majority of contracts (11/13) are executed.
- Projects must complete by October 2026.



WSBO match awards from \$50M state funding

- **\$17.5M in match for 10 projects across state and federal sources**
 - Supports programs sponsored by CERB, USDA, and NTIA.
 - Up to an additional 6,913 connections
 - Awards in nine Counties
 - Matches \$32.6M in federal program funding
 - Total project cost \$50.1M
- **Additional match requests are under review that will leverage federal funding**

Status of ARPA Capital Project Funding (“Round 2”)

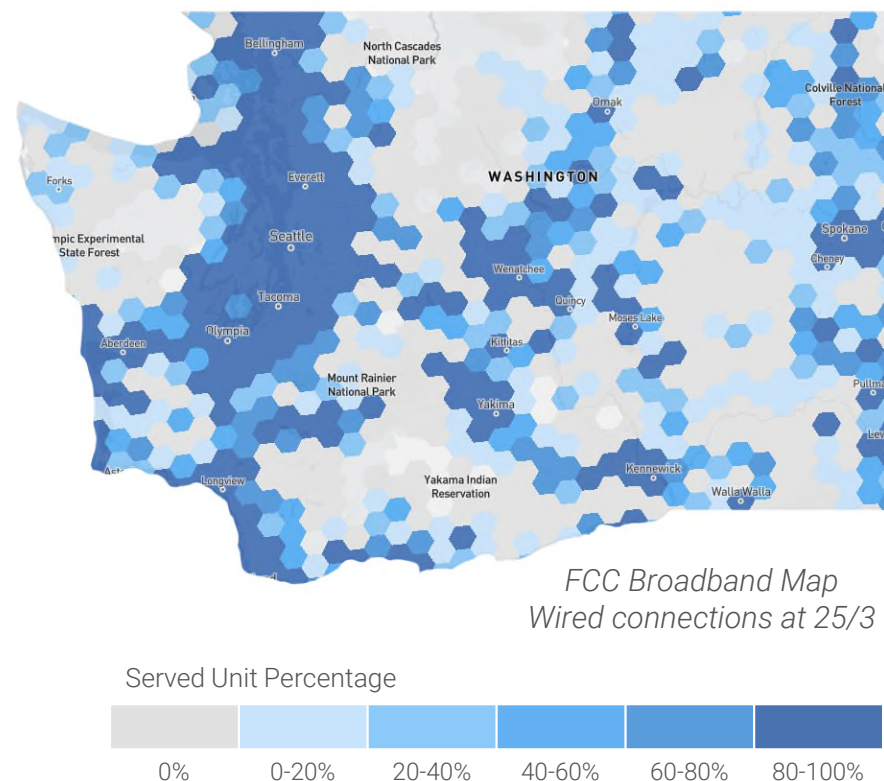
- **More than \$122M in funding is available**
 - Nov. 22, 2022: Notice of Funding Opportunity announced
 - Jan. 17, 2023: Applications closed
 - Feb. 28, 2023: Award announcements
 - Mar. 2023: Contracts issued
 - Oct. 2026: Projects must be completed
- **Preliminary results from the cycle:**
 - WSBO received 52 applications for nearly \$313M

Federal funding is our central focus

- **BEAD Construction \$900M (estimated state share) – 5-year period**
- **\$5M grant to develop BEAD 5-year action plan**
 - Award provided on November 15, 2022
 - Initial Proposal due June 11, 2023
 - State 5 Year Action Plan due August 12, 2023
- **\$1.076M grant to develop Digital Equity plan**
 - Award provided on November 22, 2022
 - Digital Equity plan due Dec 1, 2023
 - Submission of draft Digital Equity Plan Sept 1, 2023
- **Guidehouse selected for BEAD and Digital Equity Planning**
 - Contract awarded on January 9, 2023

Draft Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Map

- Draft FCC map released on Nov. 18, 2022
 - [Home | FCC National Broadband Map](#)
- Preliminary Analysis on Map data
 - Unserved WA locations = 166,550 (2.13% of US Total)
 - Preliminary WA Funding estimate ~ \$900M +/-
 - **Subject to more analysis and Challenges to Draft FCC Map**
- Draft Map Shows:
 - WA Fixed Wireline coverage:
 - Unserved (<25Mbps/3Mbps) = 2.14% (97.86% Served)
 - Underserved (<100Mbps/20Mbps) = 11.43% (88.57% Served)



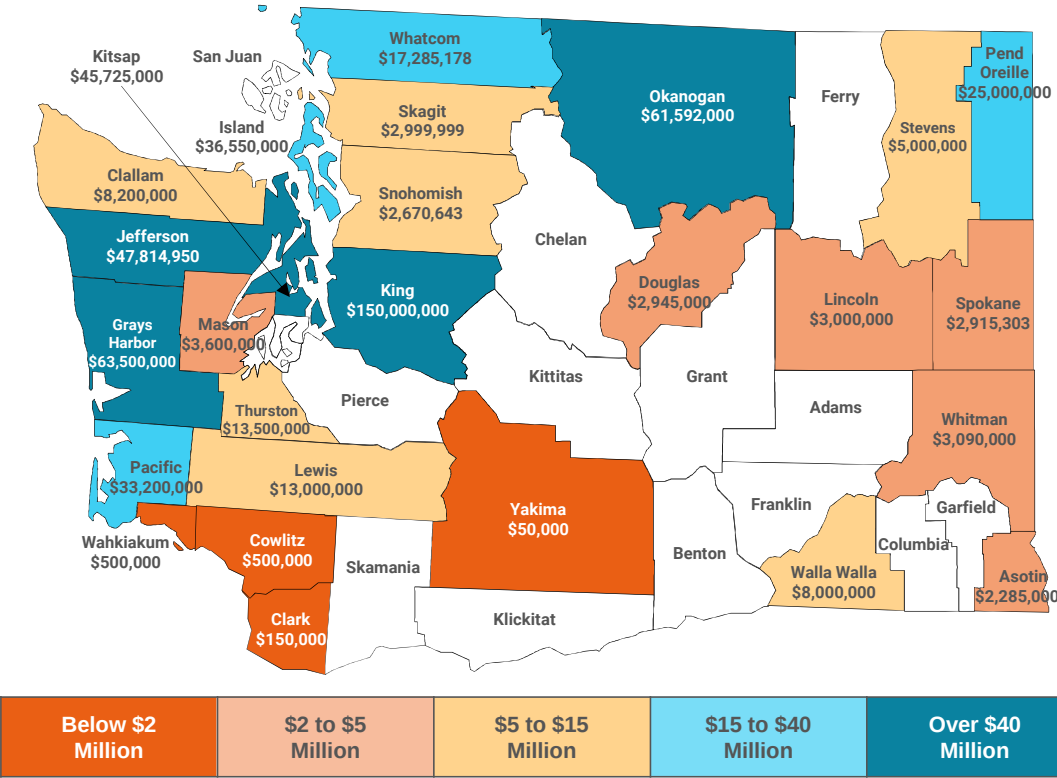
FCC Map Challenges

Two types of challenges

- Location challenges
- Outreach to public entities and WSU-Extension as facilitator of BATs
 - 132,000 locations challenged by NoaNET and Spokane County
 - Additional analysis continuing with electric and gas locations served
- Availability challenges
 - Crowdsourced Challenges – individual submissions to FCC
 - [How to Submit an Availability Challenge – YouTube](#)
 - [WSBO FCC Broadband Mapping website](#) distributed to Counties, Cities, Tribal Nations and [Broadband Action Teams \(BATs\)](#)
 - On-going challenges will be accepted by NTIA beyond Jan. 13.



WSBO, CERB and PWB broadband pipeline - Over \$553 million*



*Projects identified for multiple counties had their anticipated request divided evenly between the counties.

2023-25 Governor's Budget update

Capital Budget (state match)

- The state share of federal Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) is estimated to be \$900M in federal funding with a 25% state match.
- Governor's Proposed Budget, 2023-25: \$50M
 - 2025-27: \$100M projected
 - 2027-29: \$50M projected

Operating Budget (digital navigation and WSU BATs)

- Enacted Budget, 2021-23: \$50M
- Governor's Proposed Budget, 2023-25: \$15M

Thank you!

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