



FACILITATED SESSION FOR COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

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AGENDA

- I. IIJA/BIL Overview
- II. Broadband Technology Overview
- III. Broadband Funding and Programmatic Opportunities
- IV. Opportunities for Community Anchor Institutions
- V. Engagement and Input

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL/IIJA) Broadband, Equity, Access, & Deployment (BEAD)

National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) grant program

- \$42.45 billion in broadband funding - \$100 million guaranteed to each state
- Funding for states to connect unserved addresses, then underserved addresses, then ensure community anchors institutions can get gigabit internet connection.
- Prioritizes fiber direct to end user for deployment of last-mile infrastructure, requires funded projects to offer low-cost options to eligible subscribers.
- At least \$100M to state plus allocation based on number of unserved addresses per FCC maps. States have challenged FCC maps with additional data.
- State must submit a broadband Five-Year Action Plan, an Initial Proposal for deployment projects (20% funding upon NTIA approval), and a Final Proposal to complete deployment (remaining allocation upon approval).

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL/IIJA) Digital Equity Act (DEA)

National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) grant program

- \$2.75 billion in funding – establishes 3 programs
 - State Planning Grants: for states to develop DE plans
 - State Capacity Grants: for states to implement their plans (funding available over 5 years)
 - Competitive Grants: other entities, including states, can apply for funding for DE projects
- Prioritizes covered populations including
 - Low income
 - Disabled
 - Racial and ethnic minorities
 - Rural
 - Aging
 - Incarcerated
 - Veterans

BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

An introduction to broadband infrastructure and technologies for communities and local policymakers.

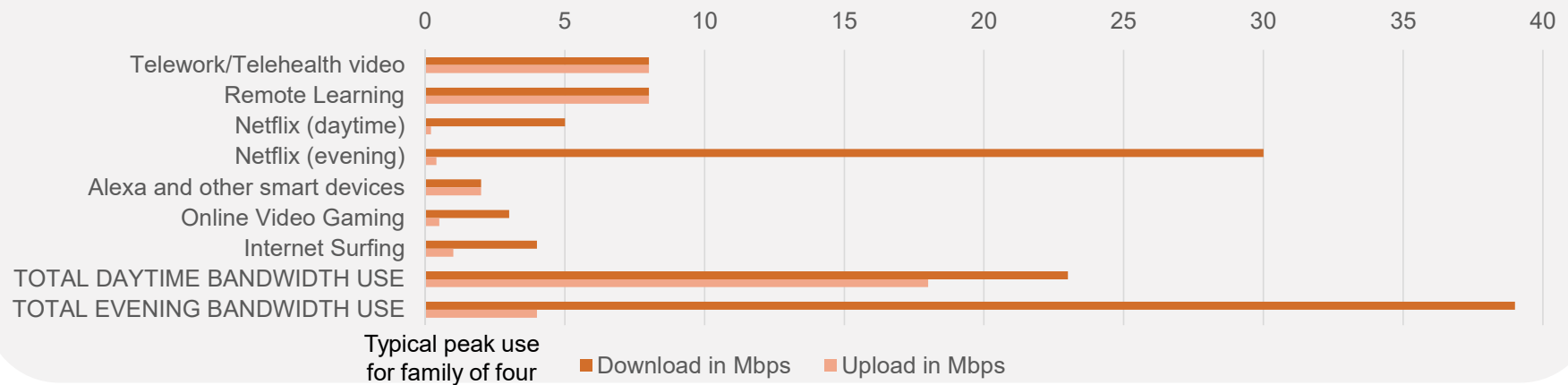
THE ELEMENTS OF A BROADBAND NETWORK



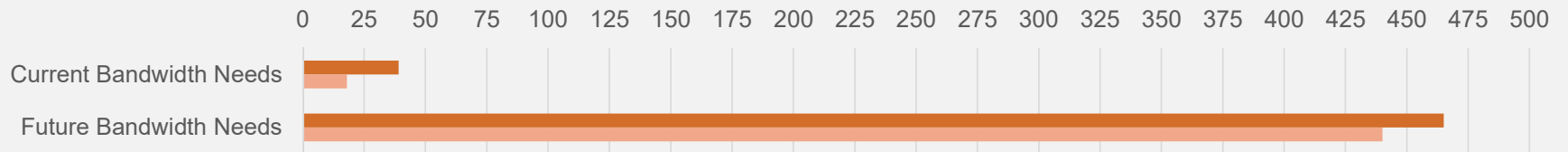
A broadband network connection from the backbone (long-haul fiber) to the home (last mile)

HOW MUCH BANDWIDTH DO WE NEED?

Today, we need more bandwidth than minimum 25/3 Mbps broadband speeds defined by FCC.



With augmented reality, other anticipated applications, and increased usage, we will soon need much higher speeds.



FEDERAL AND STATE BROADBAND SPEED THRESHOLDS

**25/3
Mbps**

The FCC's definition of broadband is 25 megabits per second down and 3 megabits per second up (25/3 Mbps)

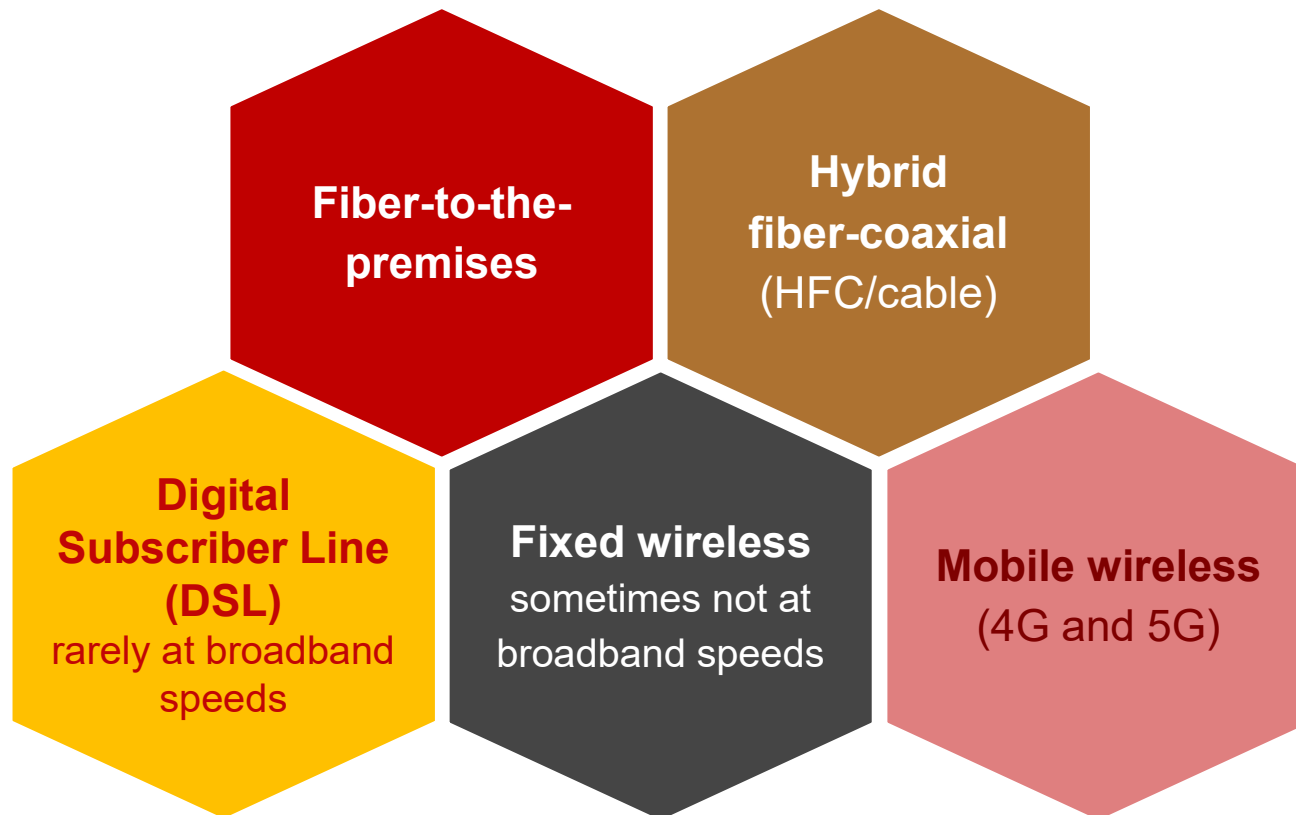
**100/20
Mbps**

Congress set a new 100/20 Mbps standard in the American Rescue Plan Act and Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act

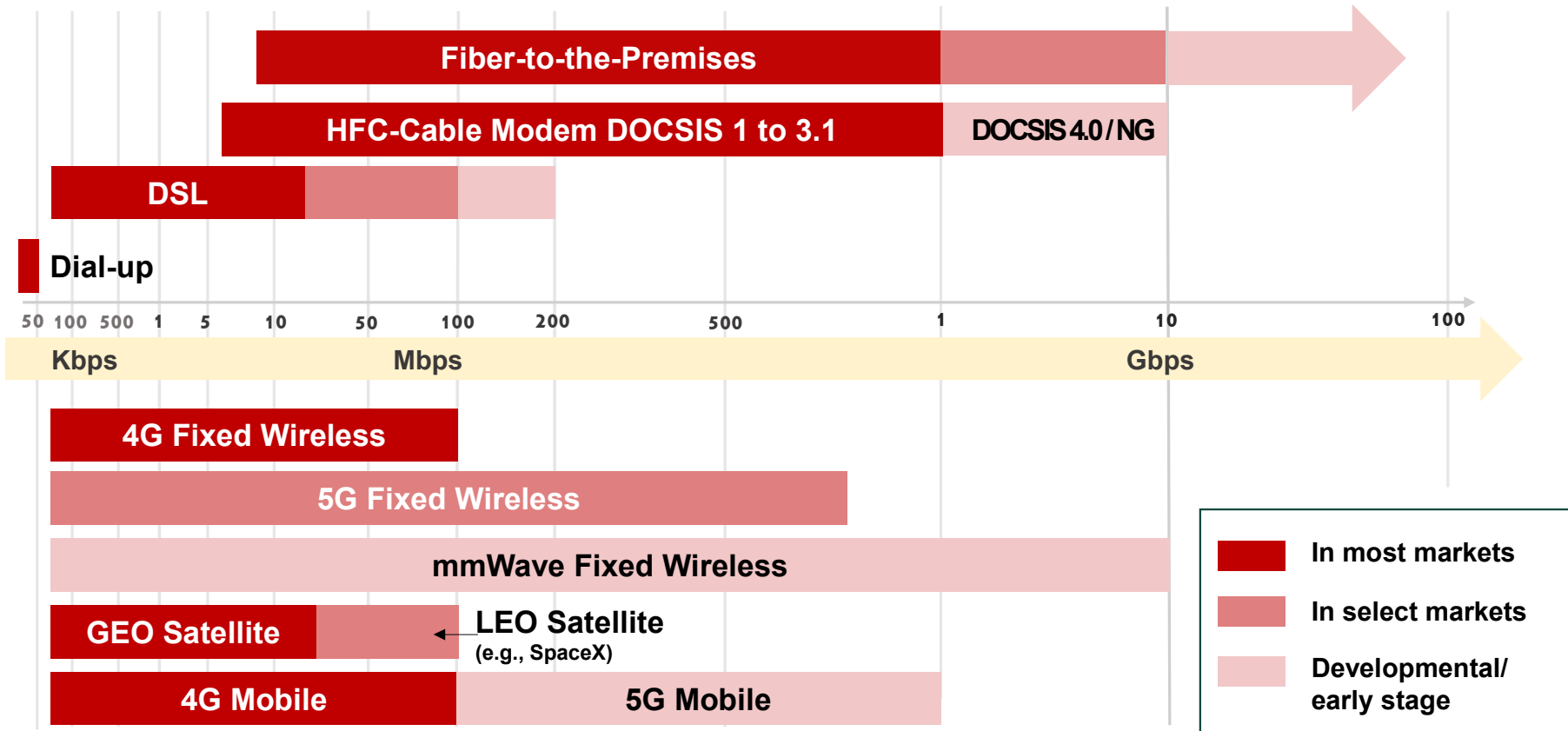
**100/100
Mbps**

Current state threshold for adequate broadband 100/100 Mbps

TYPES OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE



TYPICAL SPEEDS: WIRELINE AND WIRELESS TECHNOLOGIES



- In most markets
- In select markets
- Developmental/early stage

WHAT IS “DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY AND EQUITY”?

Components to digital connectivity and participation



Broadband Access:

Affordable, accessible, and reliable high-speed home internet service is available for all individuals



Accessible and Inclusive Content:

Public online content is inclusive and accessible by all individuals



Devices and Tech Support:

Individuals have access to a computer or tablet and technical support



Privacy and Security:

Individuals can protect their data privacy and online security



Digital Literacy and Skills:

Individuals have digital skills to support their ability to meaningfully use the internet in their daily lives

FUNDING AND PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITIES

Funding overview and timeline

BROADBAND FUNDING PRIORITIES AND TIMELINE

Maryland will develop a statewide plan for expanding broadband to all in-state locations including through upcoming federal funds of at least \$100 million

Funding priorities for last mile deployment

1. Unserved locations: those that cannot get internet service at least 25/3
2. Underserved locations: those that get internet service between 25/3 and 100/20 Mbps
3. Community Anchor Institutions (schools, libraries, hospitals, public safety): locations that cannot get 1Gbps internet
4. Low income and affordable housing

Planning

2023

Provisional grant program

2024

Deployment

2025

BROADBAND SERVICE DEPLOYMENT UNDER BEAD

- State issues subgrants to deploy broadband infrastructure and deliver service
- Projects comply with fair labor standards
- State workforce development plan ensures readiness and new jobs to underrepresented groups
- Low-cost service options available to Eligible Subscribers – any household qualifying for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
- Low-cost service parameters based on provider participation in ACP or other subsidies, cost to subscribers after subsidies, and plan speed



COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

- **CAI connectivity:** After unserved and underserved locations, BEAD funds can support access to 1 Gbps internet for CAIs
- **State identifies eligible CAIs** and assesses needs
- **State applies the definition** and determines CAI types to serve, and its basis if selecting CAIs not explicitly in definition
- **Challenge process:** Organizations not selected as eligible CAIs will have opportunity to challenge state determination



Definition:

“Entity such as school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals.” (BEAD NOFO p. 11)

EDUCATION CAI NEEDS

• K-12 Education

- Curriculum access: online requirements for school-work packets
- Digital skills training: students and parents/guardians
- Outreach/education/enrollment into Affordable Connectivity Program



• Community College and 4-Year Degree Institutions

- Curriculum content: cybersecurity & IT degree programs
- Curriculum process: online resource based, including video/chat



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCESS BEAD FUNDS

Broadband Connectivity

Installing or providing low-cost internet to multi-dwelling units for low-income residents; supporting sign-up for broadband subscriptions and subsidies; subsidizing broadband subscriptions

Digital Skills and Digital Navigators

Supporting programs to teach digital literacy skills from entry level to coding; supporting digital navigator programs to provide 1:1 support to help people use the internet

Covered Populations

Focused programs on covered populations such as seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, incarcerated individuals, or English learners

Workforce Development

Investing in workforce training to supply workers for infrastructure deployment projects

Telehealth Services

Digital training to support the use of telehealth services

QUESTION FOR PARTICIPANTS

- If extra BEAD funding is available, which digital equity activities should the state prioritize?
 - Outreach, education and enrollment assistance for federal broadband subsidy benefits
 - Digital skills and digital navigator programs
 - Digital workforce development programs
 - Expanding and enabling telehealth services
 - Other ideas

Digital Equity Act (DEA)

Maryland will develop a statewide plan for advancing digital equity, including utilization of upcoming federal funds

PROGRAM AREAS

Broadband Access: Individuals have more affordable, accessible, and reliable high-speed home internet service

Devices and Tech Support: Individuals have access to a computer or tablet and technical support

Digital Literacy and Skills: Individuals have digital skills to support their ability to meaningfully use the internet in their daily lives

Accessible and Inclusive Content: Public online content is inclusive and accessible by all individuals

Privacy and Security: Individuals can protect their data privacy and online security

COVERED POPULATIONS

- Rural residents
- Low-income individuals
- Veterans
- Seniors
- Individuals with disabilities
- English learners
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Incarcerated individuals

DIGITAL EQUITY AND CONNECTIVITY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program:

In 2024, Maryland will receive funding from NTIA to implement the Maryland Statewide Digital Equity Program over five years

Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program:

In 2025, NTIA will open a program to fund annual digital equity grants for four years. Maryland state, local jurisdictions and organizations can apply directly to NTIA.

NTIA is accepting comments on these grant programs now -
<https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov>

QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

What are the gaps/challenges towards achieving connectivity for your organizations as well as the residents and communities that you serve?

What are some barriers from preventing closing those gaps?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTION (CAI) ENGAGEMENT

SUBMITTING AN FCC CHALLENGE

Upcoming funding allocations will be determined by FCC's new map

- Map contains errors which can be remedied via a challenge process

Types of information to challenge

- Address fabric data (building locations and unit counts)
- Reported service coverage

Ways to challenge

- Challenge an individual address*
- Challenge bulk addresses** (requires individual address input)

What can my organization do?

- Educate partners and residents
- Support coordination of bulk challenges

* <https://help.bdc.fcc.gov/hc/en-us/articles/10475216120475-How-to-Submit-a-Location-Challenge->

** <https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2022/09/broadband-serviceable-location-fabric-bulk-challenge-process-webinar>

LEVERAGING THE AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP)

FCC subsidy program benefits households

- Up to **\$30/month** internet service discount
- Maryland offers an additional **\$15/month** for service that exceeds the ACP amount
- One-time discount up to \$100 for a device from participating ISP's
- Some low-cost service plans can be entirely subsidized
- Household income and federal assistance programs determine eligibility*
- Community partners increase enrollment by providing enrollment support

Apply for ACP: <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>

ACP Enrollment Support: (877) 384-2575

*See all eligibility criteria at <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>

Additional ACP enrollment help can be found at

<https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/acpbenefit/>

FOCUSED STAKEHOLDER FACILITATIONS

All sessions overview federal Broadband, Equity, Access & Deployment and Digital Equity/ Capacity programs along with state timelines/milestones for planning and deployment



Local and
Regional
Governments

Government roles in providing assets to facilitate broadband deployment and as community anchor



Internet
Service
Providers

ISP roles in providing affordable broadband, workforce development



Community Anchor
Institutions

CAIs' roles in broadband resilience and needs for service (includes libraries and education)



Workforce
Development

Workforce development to support bottlenecks in broadband deployment

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

For State planning for broadband deployment and digital capacity grant funds



State & Local
Government
Asset Inventory

Infrastructure-related assets that may help facilitate or reduce the cost of broadband deployment in the state



Community
Anchor
Connectivity

Barriers and obstacles to clients, facility access, criticality of internet to mission and program capacity



ISP Workforce
Preparedness

Sources for hiring, workforce programs, ACP, internet skills and adoption, collaboration in community, deployment approaches, disaster recovery plans



Workforce
Programs
Inventory

Workforce programs profile, barriers to developing diverse & skilled workforce, ISP workforce-related questions



Digital Equity
Program
Inventory

Program details, planned program types & areas of focus, broadband impacts on programmatic outcomes



Barriers &
Obstacles for
Covered
Populations

Internet, computer, & content access, digital skills, data security, barriers & obstacles, broadband impacts on programmatic outcomes

COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS SURVEY



CAI Survey

COVERED POPULATIONS SURVEY

- **Internet access:** Individuals in covered populations' experience with internet service.
- **Computer access:** Individuals' experience in accessing computers
- **Digital literacy and skills:** Individuals' ability to effectively use technologies, get information, and use the internet
- **Inclusive and accessible content:** Individuals' access to meaningful website content
- **Data privacy and cyber security:** Individuals' ability to secure their information and computers
- **Barriers and obstacles:** Unique barriers to accessing broadband internet, home computers, and website content; acquiring digital skills; and securing their information and how to address these
- **Programmatic impacts** of access to broadband. Metrics used to measure progress on programmatic outcomes.



Questions?

CONTACTS

- Email: OSB@maryland.gov
- Website: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Broadband>
- Link to the anchor institution survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MD_AnchorInstitutions01
- Link to providing feedback and public comment:
OSB.BEAD@maryland.gov BEAD comments
OSB.DE@maryland.gov DE comments