



FACILITATED SESSION FOR STATE AGENCIES AND LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

March 2023

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Director
Office of Statewide Broadband

AGENDA

- I. BEAD Overview
- II. Broadband Technology Overview
- III. Broadband Funding and Programmatic Opportunities
- IV. Opportunities for Government and Elected Officials

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).

Maryland's Role in Broadband Connectivity and Participation

In 2021, the Office for Rural Broadband expanded to become the Maryland Office of Statewide Broadband (OSB) (an office within DHCD)

In 2021, Maryland dedicated \$400 million towards broadband connectivity and participation.

Maryland OSB provides funding for physical broadband infrastructure projects to unserved residents as well as piloting a series of Digital Opportunities Grants to expand participation

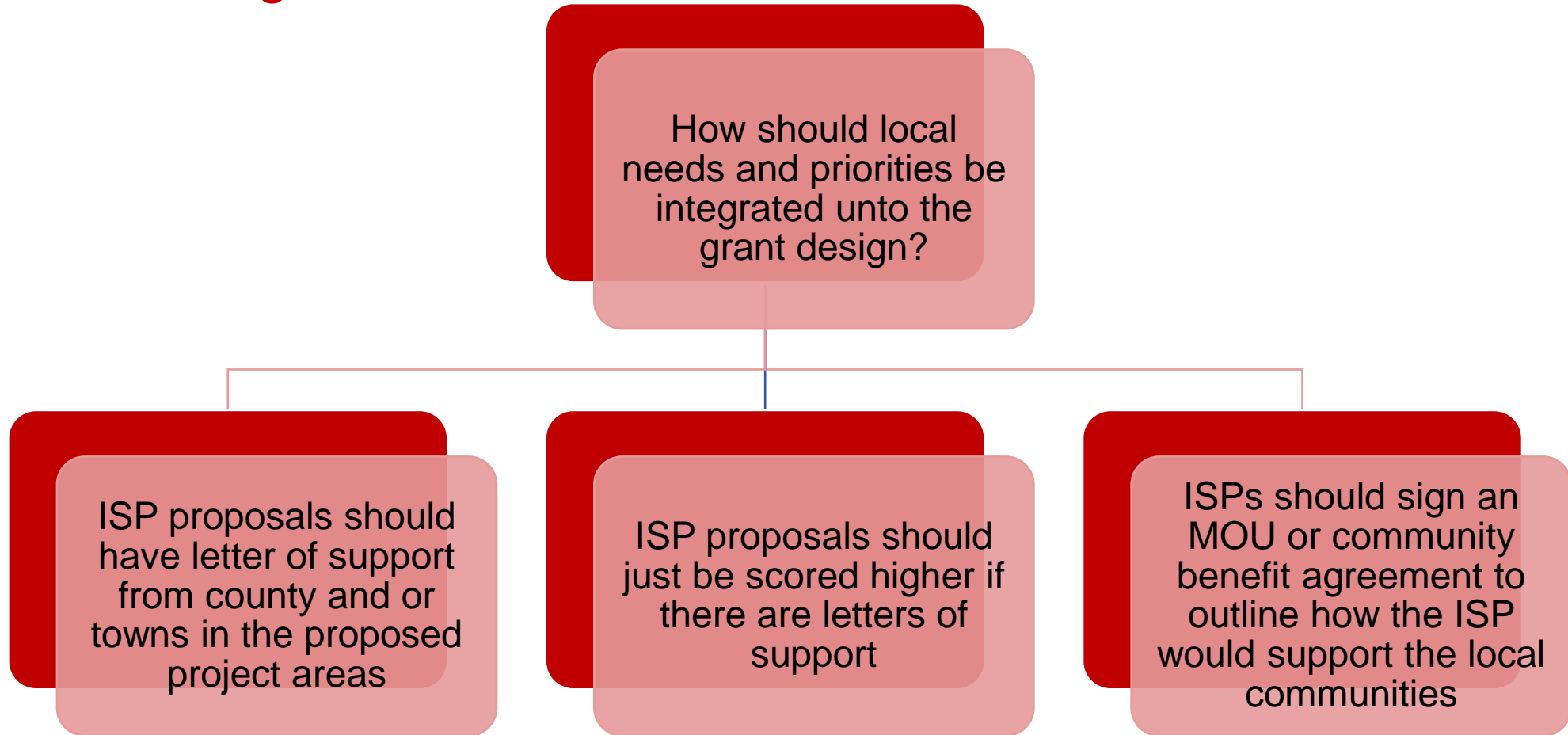
Participant Questions

How does better, more affordable, broadband help deliver on your mission and services in areas such as economic and workforce development, health outcomes, education, civic engagement and other critical and essential services?

How do measurable objectives around affordability, accessibility, digital skills, cybersecurity, and availability of computers/tablets align with your agency/government objectives?

Are there particular challenges or opportunities when it comes to broadband for any vulnerable populations you are serving?

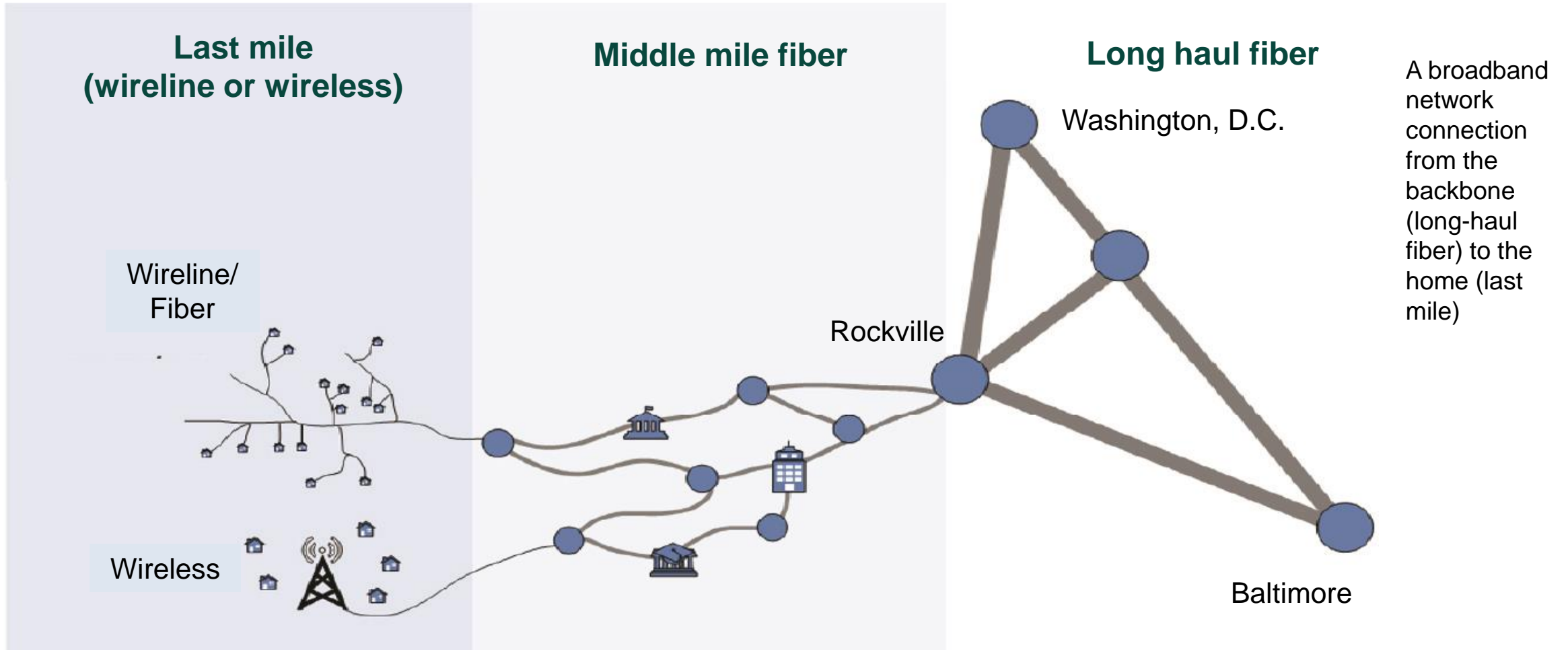
Local Leverage Questions



BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

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

THE ELEMENTS OF A BROADBAND NETWORK



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)

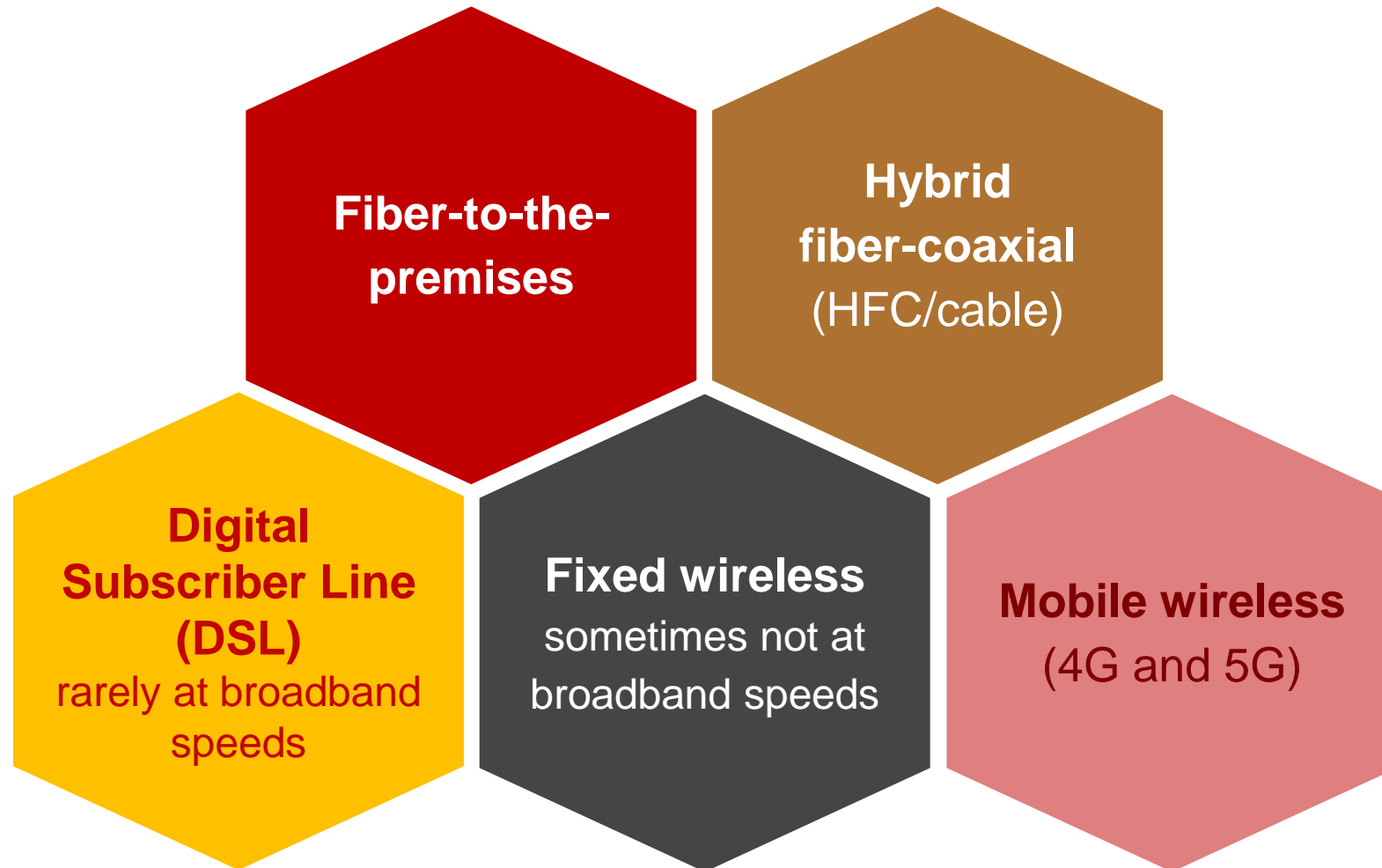
**100/20
Mbps**

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

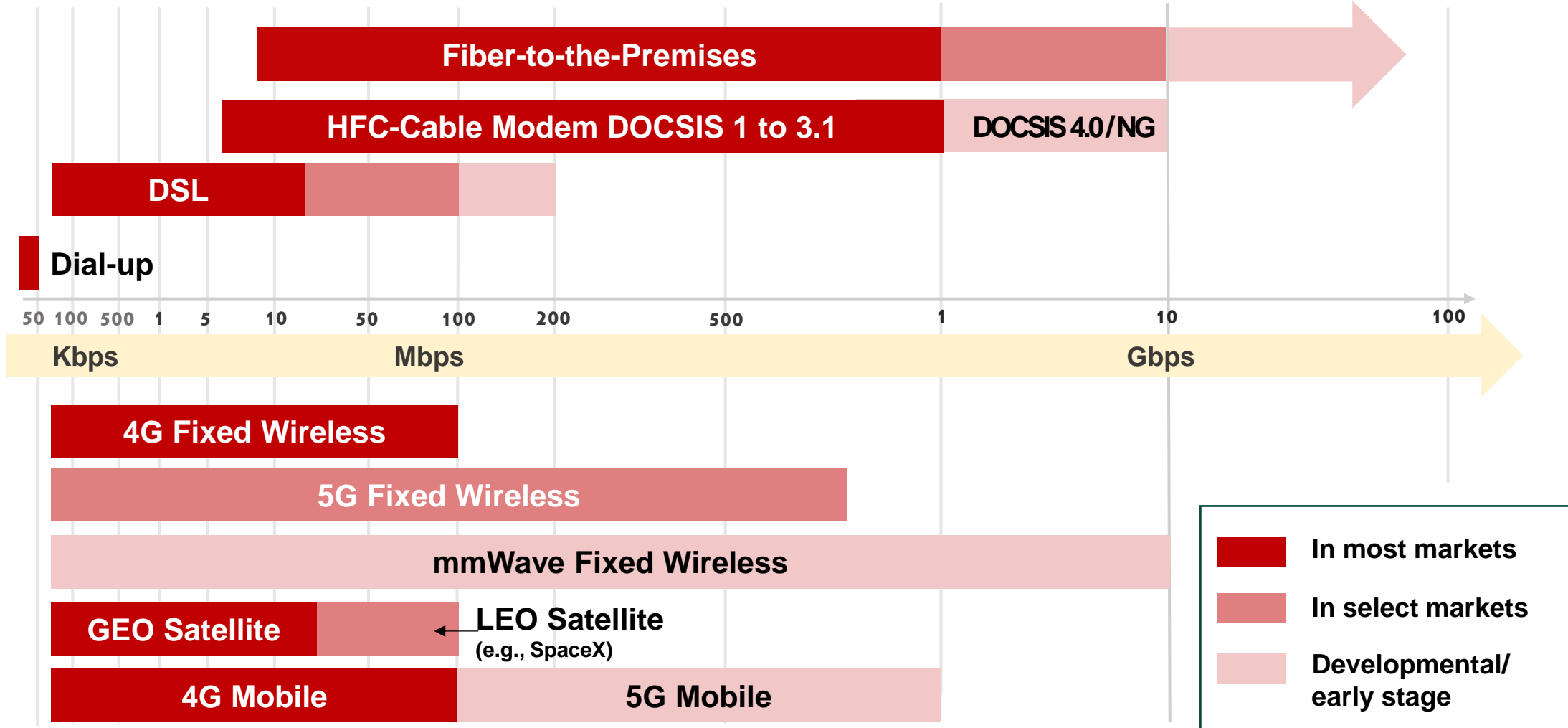
**100/100
Mbps**

Current state threshold for adequate broadband 100/100 Mbps

TYPES OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE



TYPICAL SPEEDS: WIRELINE AND WIRELESS TECHNOLOGIES



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL/IIJA)

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

WHAT IS “DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY AND EQUITY”?

Generally, experts have identified five elements of digital opportunity and equity:



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

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UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

Computer Helpline:
301-405-9810
866-206-8567
9-3 M-F



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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

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IF THERE ARE 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

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>

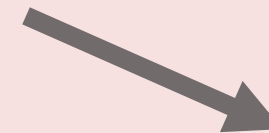
STATEWIDE RESIDENT BROADBAND SURVEY

Maryland will be conducting a statewide resident phone survey to assess digital connectivity participation.

Survey data, along with stakeholder interviews, will support the development of measurable objectives in the following areas:

- **Broadband access and adoption**
- **Devices and technical support**
- **Digital skills and literacy**
- **Data privacy and cybersecurity**

**If contacted,
please
participate!**



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/>

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>

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOVERNMENT AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

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

GOVERNMENT AGENCY ASSET INVENTORY

- **Physical assets** (conduit, fiber, structures, real estate, poles, etc.) available for lease to ISP) for broadband deployment
- **Capital construction projects** that include opportunities for placement of communications facilities
- **Analysis of skilled labor availability and workforce readiness** as it may impact state broadband policies and deployment goals
- **Agency role in tracking and monitoring** broadband or other communications outages
- **Planning or development of regulations** related to reliable and resilient broadband or other communications services
- **Policies and strategic plans** related to broadband digital equity, infrastructure deployment, economic development, resilience, partnerships, business planning and related efforts



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



Questions?

CONTACTS

- Email: OSB@maryland.gov
- Website: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Broadband>
- Link to the asset inventory survey:
- https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MD_AssetInventory01

- Link to providing feedback and public comment:
OSB.BEAD@maryland.gov BEAD comments
OSB.DE@maryland.gov DE comments