



DANE COUNTY CITIES' & VILLAGES' ASSOCIATION

DANE COUNTY TOWNS ASSOCIATION
ADVOCATE FOR TOWN GOVERNMENT IN DANE COUNTY

October 8, 2021

Municipality
Street
City

Dear _____,

American Rescue Plan Act Funds – Potential partnership for broadband expansion

The [Dane County Broadband Task Force](#) was created by the Dane County Board earlier this year, and have been meeting since July, 2021. The Task Force includes 15 members representing a variety of areas of interest including but not limited to education, healthcare, aging community, agriculture, and members of the community from rural areas of the county.

At approximately the same time that the Task Force was created, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which included funds for states, counties, and municipalities. Dane County received \$106 million, of which \$5 million has been set aside to expand broadband access in the county. It is understood that municipalities also received funds from the federal government.

The Task Force is charged with creating recommendations to expand broadband in Dane County, which may include matching grants, support for grant writing, and/or contributions to infrastructure. As the Task Force has just begun meeting, the initial meetings have been largely educational in nature to bring all members to the same level of understanding of this issue. As the work continues, recommendations will be developed. The county has a website, available at <https://board.countyofdane.com/initiatives/Broadband-Task-Force>, which provides information on the task force and what it has been working on.

One recommendation that has been made clear in the short time that the task force has been meeting is that this issue will not be confronted alone and members of the community, providers, and municipalities are going to be essential in partnering to make sure everyone in Dane County has reliable internet access.

As you think about how your municipality will spend the funds received from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the Broadband Task Force, the Dane County Towns Association, and the Dane County Cities and Villages Association encourage you to consider holding some of your funds for potential investment in broadband expansion within your community if deemed necessary. We know there are a lot of demands on the funds you received, but as many have said, these are once-in-a-generation funds. The

combination of funding sources coming together will provide a unique opportunity to develop a county-wide strategy that could provide broadband/internet for future generations.

The Task Force will continue working in the coming months on recommendations. If you are interested in attending a meeting or have additional questions, please visit <https://dane.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>, or contact Lauren Kuhl, Policy Analyst in the Office of the Dane County Board for additional information.

Sincerely,

Dane County Broadband Task Force
Dane County Cities and Villages Association
Dane County Towns Association