

SUB_ to 2024 RES-288 (PROPOSED-POSTLER)

PROVIDING OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT FOR THE BEAD PROGRAM

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program was created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 and provides \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access across all 50 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Wisconsin has been allocated \$1,055,823,574 of the \$42.45 billion available through a formula based on the state's proportion of locations lacking access to broadband service.

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin has been delegated as the administering authority of the BEAD Program for the State of Wisconsin. The BEAD Program aims to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that all Americans, regardless of their geographic location, have access to reliable and affordable broadband services. The availability of BEAD funding is crucial for supporting infrastructure projects that will enhance connectivity for underserved and unserved households and businesses in Dane County. The purpose of BEAD funding includes promoting economic growth, improving educational opportunities, and enhancing healthcare services through better internet access.

Dane County has made significant progress towards increased connectivity. Namely, the Dane County Broadband Task Force was created via 2020 RES-415 and has continued to meet and focus on issues surrounding broadband access, affordability, and adoption. The task force has heard presentations from numerous subject matter experts, produced reports and assessments, collected data via surveys, and engaged in significant conversations with multiple internet service providers. Additionally, Dane County hired a full-time broadband coordinator in 2023 to lead these efforts in conjunction with the task force.

With respect to BEAD applications in Dane County, the Dane County Broadband Task Force and Broadband Coordinator value:

- the affordability of the end-user internet service, including the ease of enrolling in any associated discount programs.
- the speed by which a BEAD project is deployed.
- the quality of a BEAD application with respect to technology type. Fiber projects should be prioritized.
- a BEAD applicant's ability to respect and adhere to local permitting requirements in an efficient, effective, and timely manner.
- a collaborative process between a BEAD applicant and any affected stakeholders, including Dane County and involved municipalities. Consistent lines of communication with regular application/project updates from said BEAD applicant.
- a BEAD applicant's prior history of success and community focus in Dane County.

Dane County has 3,499 BEAD eligible locations. In an effort to best serve these eligible locations, the Dane County Broadband Task Force outlined a minimum requirement in order for a BEAD applicant to gain official endorsement from Dane County. From the impacted municipality, a letter (or similar method of communication) should be provided stating their support and that the municipality has had discussions with the BEAD applicant about their BEAD plans, interests, or intents in the municipality. The letter should be signed and dated (after April 29, 2024) from a local unit of government including a city, village, or town. The letter should come from an authorized government representative stating support for the BEAD

49 applicant within the local government boundary.

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51 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the following BEAD eligible entities seeking BEAD
52 funding have met the minimum requirements and that the Dane County Board of Supervisors
53 hereby provides official endorsement in the outlined project areas:

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55 Frontier North Inc. dba Frontier in the Town of Sun Prairie, Town of Burke, and Town of Cottage
56 Grove.

57 Bertram Communications LLC dba Bertram in the Town of Dunn, Village of Windsor, Town of
58 Roxbury, Town of Berry, and Village of Brooklyn.

59 Connect Holding II LLC dba Brightspeed in the Town of Mazomanie, Town of Black Earth, Town
60 of Roxbury, Town of Vienna, and Village of Windsor.

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62 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors directs the Dane
63 County Clerk or Dane County Broadband Coordinator to draft and provide a letter to the Public
64 Service Commission of Wisconsin outlining this endorsement and verifying the applicants and
65 geographic locations affected, which shall include the meeting minutes.