

2021 RES-224

AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH UW RIVER FALLS TO CONDUCT A SURVEY ON
BROADBAND ACCESS IN DANE COUNTY

The Dane County Broadband Task was created via 2020 RES-415 in April, 2021. The Task Force will be addressing gaps in broadband service found in the areas of Dane County, and aims to support municipalities as they prepare to seek grants to develop a more robust broadband network that adequately serves the entire county.

There has been considerable discussion at Task Force meetings around what the data collection might look like, and the Task Force would like to move forward with a survey. The survey will be conducted over the winter months with an analysis completed in spring to inform the recommendations of the task force in the middle of 2022.

After examining several examples of surveys conducted in various communities around the state of Wisconsin, the Task Force is interested in partnering with University of Wisconsin River Falls Survey Research Center to conduct the survey. Their work will include surveying, analysis, and a written report of findings.

Whether and how the funding responds to the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need to have affordable, reliable internet in every home and business to attend virtual school, do online banking, and attend healthcare appointments virtually to name a few.

Whether the allocation is duplicative of other federal/state/local/school funding efforts or in coordination with them

There are a variety of state and federal grants available for broadband expansion. In order to apply for these grants, there needs to be accurate data that shows unserved and underserved areas. The current maps created by the FCC do not show an accurate representation of where service is and is not.

Whether the allocation leverages existing partnerships and Dane County programs

The Broadband Task Force is staffed by both the County Board Office and the Extension Office. Due to Dane County Extension's Office being affiliated with the University of Wisconsin, this survey will be available for 18% less than it would cost for Dane County to do so without this partnership.

Reference to the law and/or guidance that authorizes the allocation

[§ 35.6\(e\)\(2\)](#) Indicates that a recipient may use funds to make investments in broadband.

An explanation of expected outcomes, including equity measures

The results of the survey will be used by the Broadband Task Force to inform recommendations to the County to improve broadband access for residents.

A plan for data collection and other outcome measures that ensure accurate quarterly reporting of program experience and outcomes

47 The Dane County Broadband Task Force will have a report with recommendations when the
48 task force completes work in June 2022. The survey results will be included in the report.

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50 The American Rescue Plan Act's funding is able to be used for broadband expansion. As the
51 world has learned throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, internet access is no longer optional, it
52 is a necessity to complete many day-to-day tasks.

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54 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports
55 the work of the Dane County Broadband Task Force and their effort to collect information on
56 underserved and unserved areas of Dane County in regards to broadband access.

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58 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the following amendment be made to the 2021 operating
59 budget in UW Extension's budget:

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61 EXTENSN NEW "Broadband Survey" \$50,000
62 EXTENSN 81367 "ARP Revenue" \$50,000

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64 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the County Board requests the survey report be shared with
65 members of the County Board and the Dane County Broadband Task Force upon completion.