

CADDO PARISH COMMISSION

505 TRAVIS STREET, GOVERNMENT PLAZA

PUBLIC NOTICE

BROADBAND COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

September 19, 2022

1:00 pm

1. BROADBAND COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROLL CALL:

Willie H. Arbuthnot

Poltavas Black

James Carstensen

Greg Frith

Ray Holomon

Rickey Jones

Marion Marks

Glenn Moore

Famia Roots

James Sims

Manjit Singh Warrar

Brian Wilson

2. INVOCATION:

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Veterans and active military members saluting during recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance would be appropriate, should you wish to do so.

4. AGENDA ADDITIONS:

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Citizens who wish to address the Committee please fill out a comment card located in the chamber foyer, and return to the Chairman or the Clerk of the Commission. Citizens may also fill out & submit a [COMMENT CARD ONLINE HERE](#) prior to the meeting. Individual comments are limited to 3 minutes

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.I. Brief Recap Of Meetings: AT&T, Comcast, Louisiana Broadband Summit, Etc.

6.II. Donette Dunbar, CEO Of Louisiana-Connected.com And Principal At Dash Media
(Burrell)

Documents:

[CADDO PARISH PRESENTATION - FINAL 090122.PDF](#)

6.III. Next Step

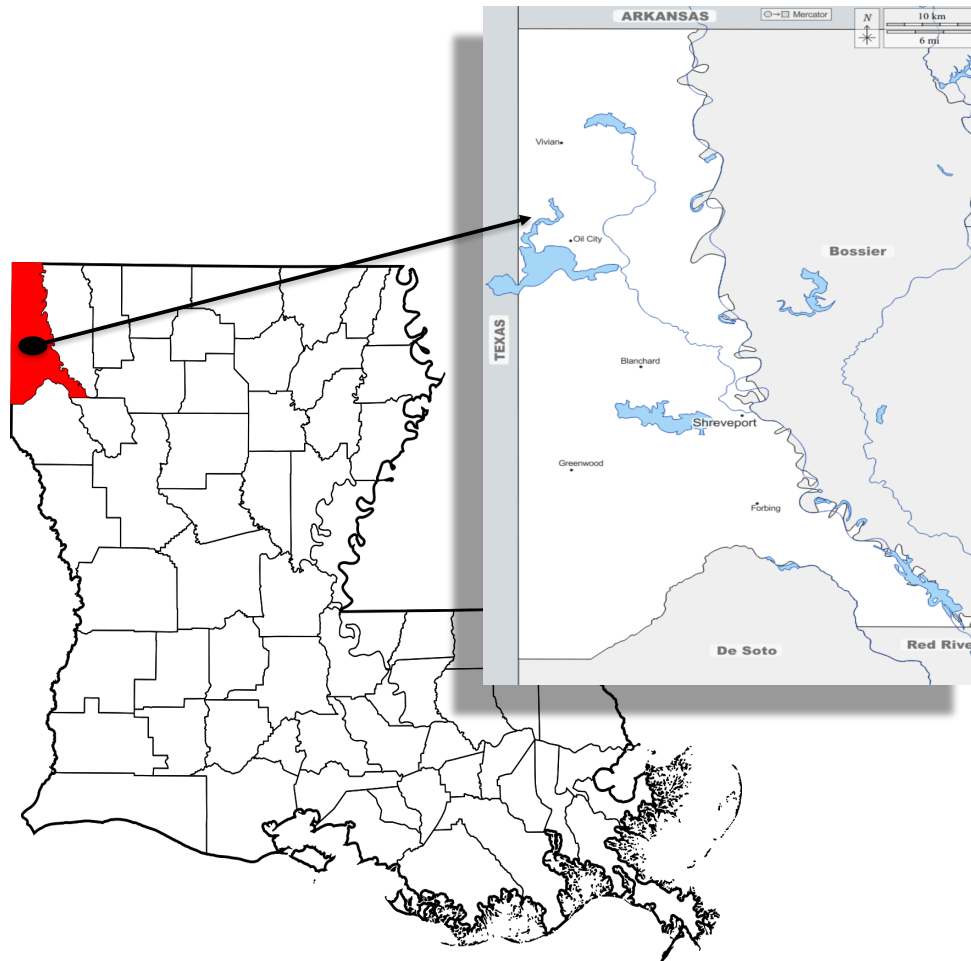
7. ADJOURN:

Caddo Parish

September 2022



Caddo Parish Map



Objective

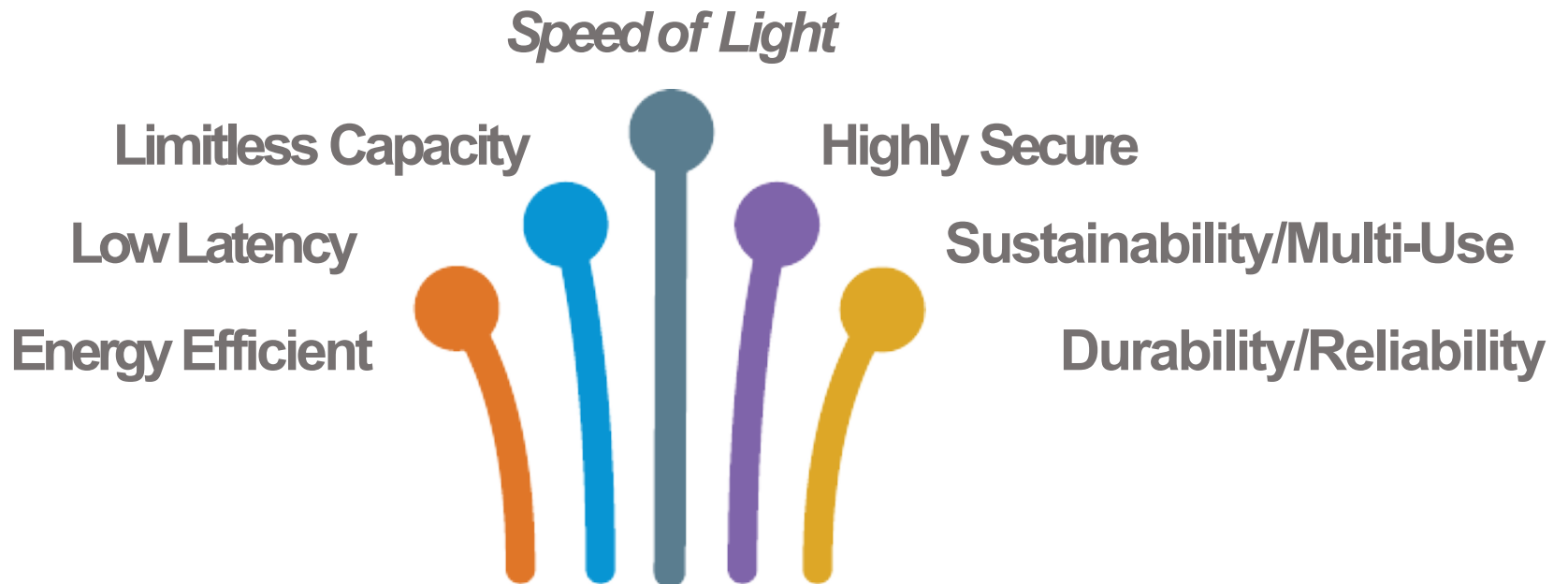
Public Private Partnership to bring high speed affordable broadband
to Caddo Parish



Broadband Definition

What's the Definition of Broadband

Fiber Broadband: *If it's not fiber, It's not Broadband*



Fiber Broadband is the gold standard on every dimension

What Is Broadband?

Telecommunication/network system:

Network where information such as voice (verbal), video (visual) and data (non-verbal) is transmitted via electronic technologies like telephones, cable, fiber optics, satellite, radio and television and internet

Broadband:

Permanent high speed internet connection that brings internet signals into your home/business via cable, satellite, mobile and fiber optics

Bandwidth:

Maximum amount (volume) of data transmitted over an internet connection in a given amount of time. Higher bandwidth give your a better experience on your device.

Internet speeds:

Speed that data travels from the internet to your computer, tablet or smartphone. Most often seen as Megabits or Gigabites. Examples of why speed is important:

Streaming videos: 3Mbps

Youtube: 5-6Mbps

Distance learning: 1.05Mbps

Uploading:

Process of putting web pages, photos and files onto a web server

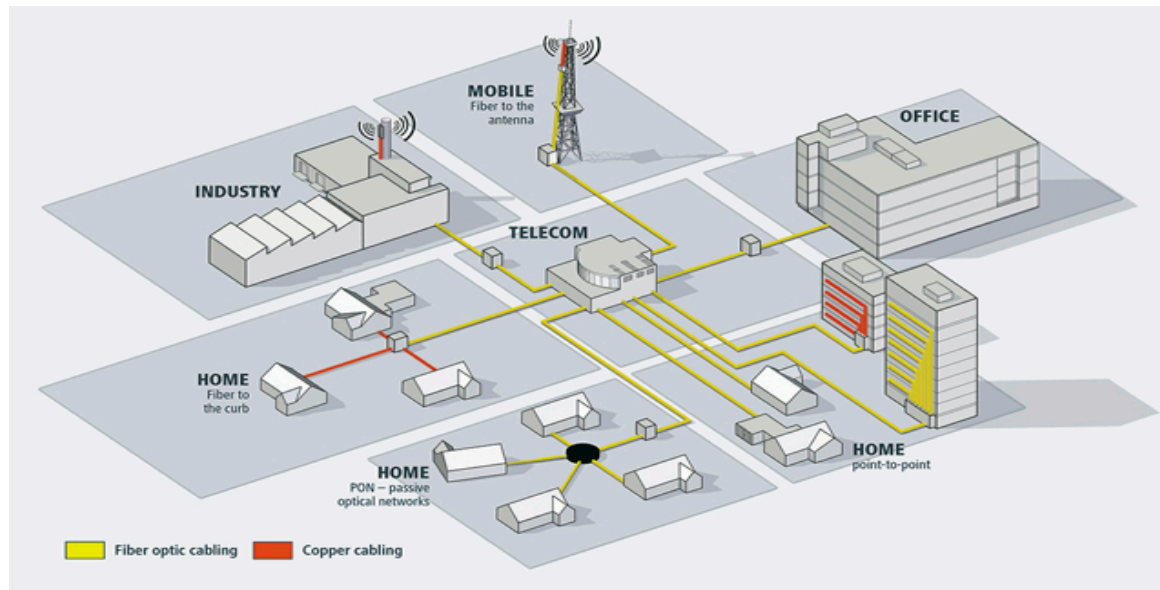
Downloading

Process of getting web pages, photos and files from a server.



Fiber Broadband Network

Design of System



Why Fiber?

- Faster
- More Secure
- Transmits data over longer distances
- Businesses prefer Fiber



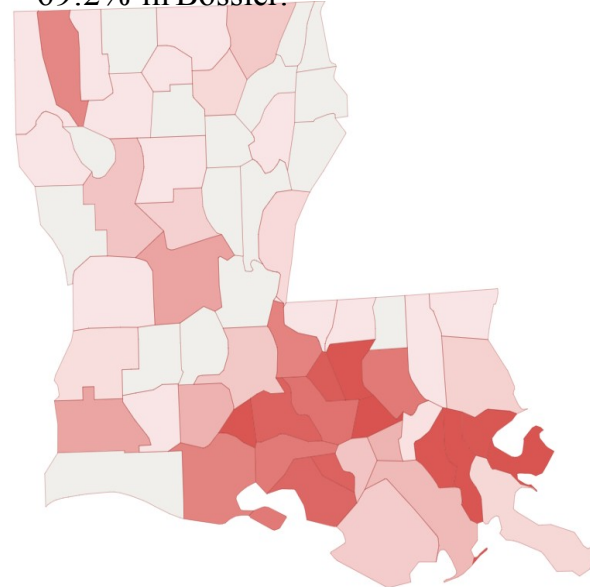
The State of Broadband in Louisiana

Louisiana

- 75.0% of Louisiana have access to terrestrial broadband
- 33rd in the nation for broadband
- 26.9% have access to fiber optics
- Highest concentration of high-speed broadband is in SELouisiana

13.5% of Caddo Parrish has access to 1Gbps.

- 0% in Red River.
- 0.5% in DeSoto.
- 69.2% in Bossier.



25+ mbps 100+ mbps 1 Gbit [Embed this map](#) [Customize map](#)

BroadbandNow.com

Cities With Municipal Broadband Networks

As OF MAY 2020, THERE ARE **331** MUNICIPALITIES THAT OWN/OPERATE THEIR BROADBAND SYSTEMS

“Cabot cannot be competitive without fiber internet. We are not asking for any money- we just need new law to work in our favor and not against us.”

Mayor Ken Kincade, Cabot Arkansas

- Lafayette Louisiana built \$125 million dollar system in 2008 – was recently awarded a \$100 million dollar Amazon fulfillment center that included 500 jobs.
- Chattanooga Tennessee – Built their system 10 years ago and it has generated \$2.7 billion dollars in economic development.
- Arkansas removed legislation in 2021 that barred municipalities from building their own broadband systems. Mayor Kincade of Cabot was a leader in the effort.
- Seattle and Boston, two of the countries leading tech hubs are considering building their own municipal broadband systems to address the digital divide.
- \$100 billion Broadband bill working through congress.



Benefits Of Broadband

- The 2020 US Telecom Report indicates broadband would create 10 million new jobs in America alone.
- Broadband attracts employment from other regions through telecommuting.
- Broadband can make or break a business. A recent study determined that Amazon might lose \$1.6 billion in sales from a one second delay in page loading time.
- 96% of companies use cloud computing. Slow uploading and downloading data speeds cost companies millions of dollars. Communities with broadband services have a competitive edge in attracting and retaining businesses.
- Telehealth bridges the gap between people, physicians, and health systems enabling everyone to communicate with physicians through virtual channels. Telehealth is now the platform for distributing healthcare as it limits the spread of COVID19 and any deadly virus in a future pandemic.
- In the U.S., most school students have access to at least one computing device, but CoCOVID19 has made clear that having a computer is meaningless without connectivity.
- Broadband helps the farming industry to produce efficient operations with newer equipment for smart farming.



Regulatory Environment

1. Louisiana Revised Statute 844.52 FAIR COMPETITION ACT

- Establishes regulations by which municipalities may build broadband systems.
- Ensures that municipalities that regulate telecoms do not use that power to gain a competitive advantage.

2. *Naquin v. Lafayette City-Parish Government* 950 So.2d 657 (La. Supreme Court 2007).

- Plaintiff challenged whether Lafayette could issue \$125 million in revenue bonds to build a municipal broadband system.

The La. Supreme court ruled that Lafayette did have authority to sell bonds to pay for the system.



Louisiana Fair Competition Act

LOUISIANA FAIR COMPETITION ACT

Requires all municipalities do a feasibility study to assess their need for broadband. Municipalities will not have access to funding without the completion of a feasibility study. Mansfield completed its feasibility study earlier this year. Bossier and Monroe are currently doing a feasibility study.



Funding For Broadband Feasibility Study

1. ARPA American Rescue Plan Act Funds

This bill provides additional relief to address the continued impact of COVID-19 (i.e., coronavirus disease 2019) on the economy, public health, state and local governments, individuals, and businesses.

2. The CARES Act Funds

U.S. Department of the Treasury, “**The CARES Act**” Provides Assistance for State, Local, and Tribal Governments.



Guidelines For Infrastructure Bill

Broadband guidelines in the \$65 Billion Infrastructure bill favors fiber only and 100 mbps.

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Mitt Romney
Mitt Romney
United States Senator

Roy Blunt
Roy Blunt
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

Roger Wicker
Roger Wicker
United States Senator

Michael D. Crapo
Michael D. Crapo
United States Senator

Thom Tillis
Thom Tillis
United States Senator

Kevin Cramer
Kevin Cramer
United States Senator

Rob Portman
Rob Portman
United States Senator

James E. Risch
James E. Risch
United States Senator

Charles E. Grassley
Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator

Deb Fischer
Deb Fischer
United States Senator

Richard Burr
Richard Burr
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 18, 2022

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is an important example of a bipartisan accomplishment. One of the IIJA's many provisions that will have a significant impact on communities across the country is the \$65 billion investment in broadband. This investment will help connect all Americans to high-quality broadband service.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) recent Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the \$42.45 billion Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program accurately reflects key aspects of Congress' direction to deploy these resources effectively. For example, the NOFO directs the prioritization of funds first to unserved areas, and then to underserved areas, just as the law instructs. It also takes into consideration enforceable commitments by providers to expand broadband infrastructure to unserved areas under existing federal programs to avoid duplicative federal spending. Additionally, it asks States to streamline permitting processes and allow cost-effective access to poles, conduits, easements, and rights-of-way, which will also help accelerate broadband deployment.

There are several areas, however, where the NOFO undermines or conflicts with congressional intent and the plain language of the law. Certain provisions go beyond the authority granted to NTIA and will discourage or deter broad provider participation. This undermines our shared goal of delivering broadband service to all Americans as soon as possible. In particular, we are seeking changes to the following provisions:

- **Rate Regulation:** As part of the IIJA, Congress authorized specific initiatives to support broadband affordability. First, we established the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) at the FCC, which allows eligible households to apply a \$30 monthly benefit to *any* internet service offering. Second, participating providers must offer a low-cost broadband service option for eligible low-income consumers. The bipartisan negotiators were also deliberate to prohibit the NTIA, or any other federal agency, from regulating rates of broadband service. For that reason, the law includes an explicit prohibition of government actions that would otherwise interfere with broadband prices and terms in connection with participation in the BEAD program. The law clearly states: "Nothing in this title may be construed to authorize the Assistant Secretary or the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to regulate the rates charged for broadband service." In your recent testimony before Congress on April 27, 2022, you



Why Public Private Partnership

- Local governments do not have the technical expertise to build project
- Cost of capital makes 100% private funding too expensive
- Markets have determined that building rural broadband is not cost effective
- Building broadband in rural areas cannot meet investment returns for telecoms



How Public Private Partnerships Work

Public Private Partnership to build high speed affordable broadband:

Public:

- Access to Right of Way
- Access to Government facilities
- Governmental approvals
- Municipal Revenue Bonds

Private:

- Design and build system
- Maximize funding sources
- Grant writing
- Marketing
- Legal
- Operate/Maintain system
- Lead workforce development efforts



Federal Funding

Once In A Generation Opportunity

- President Biden proposed \$20 billion for broadband in the latest COVID Relief bill
- Federal Communications Commission's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund recently awarded \$2 billion
- FCC Low Income Broadband supplement funded at \$3.2 billion
- James Clyburn bill for \$80 billion to build rural broadband passed House
- FCC awards \$342 million in grants to build broadband in Louisiana (up to 10 years to build)



Municipal Revenue Bonds

NO TAXPAYER DOLLARS REQUIRED

- Issued to pay for public projects
- Paid back from revenues generated from the broadband system



Who Are We?



Louisiana Connected website - <https://www.louisiana-connected.com/>

Lit Communities website - <https://litcommunities.net/>

Orrick Website - <https://www.orrick.com>



Projects Profile

Similar Projects



Mansfield

NETWORK LOCATION Mansfield, LA	DATE November 2021 - present
SIZE (LAST MILE) 36 miles	ANTICIPATED COMPLETION 24 months
BUDGETED COST \$4.6mm	NETWORK TYPE Aerial & Underground
SCOPE Community Assessment, Municipal middle mile	



Middle Mile Development

- Lit Communities partnered with Louisiana Connected to conduct a citywide feasibility study to better understand the steps to building a fiber broadband network. The results of the data analyzed shows strong evidence of the need for a City-wide fiber middle mile infrastructure network that will support the much needed City-wide fiber-to-the-home and business network.
- The project team recommends the City build a broadband network that serves to provide infrastructure to support the City's community anchor institutions including municipal buildings, schools, emergency services building, medical facilities, and the communication networks that support each of these entities.
- The project team recommends the City seek State of Louisiana revenue bonds for the cost of construction for the municipal fiber broadband network.

Press

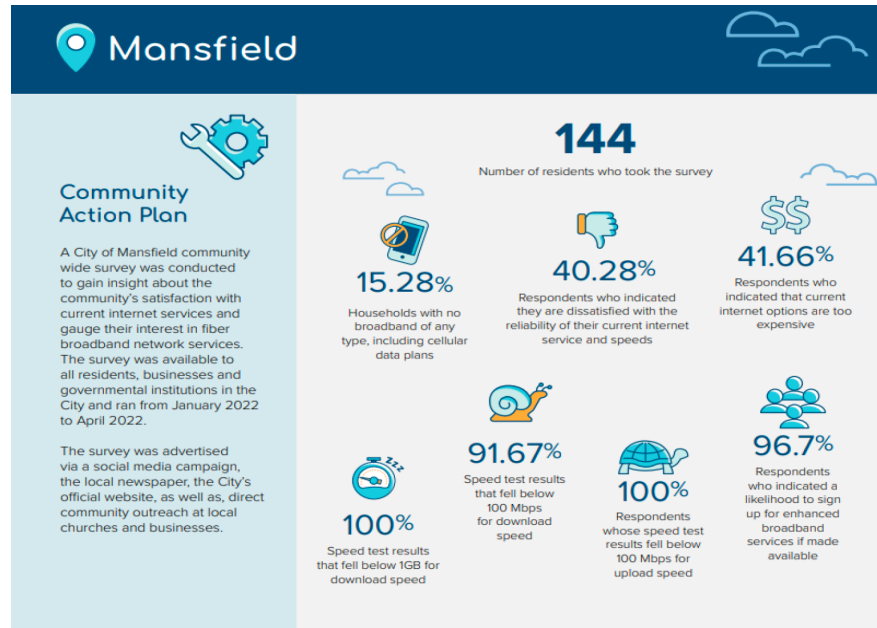
- ▶ City of Mansfield approves study to build municipal owned broadband network
- ▶ Partnership will bring high-speed internet to Mansfield

Current Status

- A formal public private partnership (P3) was established between the City of Mansfield, Lit Communities, and Louisiana Connected to leverage the state grants and federal funding opportunities specifically for broadband infrastructure projects, as well as, establish partnerships with private companies with industry experience and expertise in development of broadband projects.



Projects Profile



“\$150/month is way too much to pay for internet. I would prefer something closer to \$70 ...”

“It would make it much more convenient!!!! We are currently with Spark Light and it's constantly out of service.”

“The service we have right now is very slow. More speed will be worth a whole lot.”

“We need reliable internet for live streaming.”

“My service is slow and buffers all the time.”



Projects Profile

Medina Fiber

NETWORK LOCATION
Medina County, OH

SIZE (LAST MILE)
450 miles of fiber

BUDGETED COST
\$58mm

SCOPE
Business Plan, Road Map and Deployment for approximately 50,000 residents and businesses

DATE
July 2017 – Present

ANTICIPATED COMPLETION
48 months

NETWORK TYPE
Aerial & Underground

INITIAL SERVICES
Internet: 100/100 Mbps, 250/250 Mbps, 1 Gig



Middle Mile Partnership

- In 2010, the Medina County Port Authority bonded a broadband project, Medina County Fiber Network (MCFN), to create the infrastructure for robust broadband service that could be shared by multiple telecommunications carriers as part of driving economic development within Medina County.
- The MCFN created a strategic plan in 2017 that addresses expansion of certain fiber trunks into industrial parks and to introduce a residential and small business fiber product through commercial partnering.
- In 2021, a relationship was created with the commercial entity, Medina Fiber, to introduce a residential and small business offering to Medina County. Medina Fiber is partnering with MCFN, leasing strands to build last mile connectivity to the residents and small businesses of the County.

Press

- ▶ [Medina County Fiber Network and Lit Communities Reach for Ohio Residents](#)
- ▶ [Fiber to the home construction begins in Seville](#)
- ▶ [Fiber to the home access to be sped up for townships](#)
- ▶ [Lit Communities' Medina Fiber celebrates ribbon cutting for new storefront in Seville](#)

Current Status

- Since March 2021, Medina Fiber has deployed fiber across nearly 4,000 households in Seville, Westfield Center, Montville and Medina City combined.
- In October 2021, Medina Fiber opened its first Demonstration Center in Seville for customers to provide direct customer service, learn about gigabit internet services and its utilization in the home and business.
- Through a partnership with Medina County, Medina County Fiber Network and the Lorain-Medina Rural Electric Co-op, Medina Fiber is applying for the State of Ohio's Residential Broadband Grant Program to bring gigabit service to over 4,500 unserved and underserved households, students, businesses, and remote workers who currently do not have access to reliable and affordable internet.



Projects Profile

Oldham County, KY

NETWORK LOCATION
Oldham County, KY

SIZE (LAST MILE)
245 miles of fiber (planned)

BUDGETED COST
\$36.9mm (planned)

SCOPE
Community Assessment,
FTTP to Oldham's Unserved
and Underserved in 2022.

DATE
April 2020 – Present

**ANTICIPATED
COMPLETION** 36 months

NETWORK TYPE
Aerial & Underground



Last Mile Development

- In 2019, the Oldham County Fiscal Court entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth of Kentucky to purchase a 144 count bundle of excess fiber through the Kentucky Wired Project. With this connectivity from Kentucky Wired, Oldham began looking for last mile fiber solutions for their community.
- In April 2020, Lit Communities began working with Oldham County on a County-wide Community Assessment that would provide the County with a network design, cost estimates, ownership and funding options and demonstrate community support.
- In September 2020, the County launched its broadband survey to measure current broadband usage and likelihood to sign up for services — over 3,000 residents in Ballardsville, Buckner, Orchard Grass Hills, Centerfield, Goshen, La Grange and Crestwood took the survey. 86% of respondents indicated they would sign up for a network that provided enhanced connectivity.



www.litcommunities.net

Current Status

- In October 2021, Lit Communities applied for a \$10mm grant through Oldham County's Broadband Grant Deployment Program, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act Funding to provide service to Oldham's unserved and underserved communities
- Upon award of the County's grant funding, Lit Communities will invest an additional \$26.2mm to deploy last mile infrastructure and enhanced broadband connectivity to all of Oldham's residents, businesses, and municipal organizations.
- Lit Communities is committed to providing Oldham County access to fiber within 36 months over a network that can provide the minimum speeds of 100/100.



Projects Profile

Oldham County, KY



Community Action Plan

Our work in Oldham County began with a community-wide survey. The results enabled local decision-makers to hear from residents and identify needs and priorities before moving forward.

The following statistics and quotes are from our survey results unless noted otherwise.

3,410

Number of residents who took the survey



45%

Respondents who indicated dissatisfaction with the speed and reliability of current options



66%

Respondents who indicated that current internet options are too expensive



33%

Speed tests that failed to pass the FCC's broadband definition speed of 25/3 Mbps



86%

Respondents who indicated a likelihood to sign up for enhanced broadband services if made available



98%

Respondents whose speed test results fell below 100 Mbps for upload speed



100%

Speed test results that fell below 1 Gbps for download speed



68%

Speed test results that fell below 100 Mbps for download speed

"Please make sure everyone has the ability to get internet. Our neighborhood doesn't have cable run."

"I am so incredibly grateful someone is trying to do something about this! It is hands down the worst part of living in La Grange, and we have considered moving back to Jefferson county because of this issue."

"Lack of a fiber cable option, especially during Covid-19 days, makes living in this beautiful part of Oldham County extremely difficult. I would NOT have moved here if I truly understood there wasn't a fiber cable option. I didn't even know that was a possibility in 2020 and only 20 miles outside a metropolitan area. I discourage anyone interested in moving to this area from doing so because of this limitation. It needs to be corrected ASAP. I'll help in any way possible."

"Offering reliable internet to many of us just off the main roads would be so helpful. We have kids in school, work from home, enjoy the ability to access streaming services, and [want to] join everyone else with access to 21st century technology."

"[It will help if] the decision makers who live in areas served by fiber optic really understand the travails of a family who have to rely on a top speed of 2.5 mbps and its limitations. It is like trying to convince those in cities in the 1940s what life was like in rural America without electricity!"



Projects Profile

York County

NETWORK LOCATION

York County, PA

SIZE (LAST MILE)

3,125 miles of fiber (planned)

BUDGETED COST

\$70mm (planned)

SCOPE

Community Assessment,
Pilot Middle Mile and
Wireless Project and
Planned FTTP Deployment
in 2022

DATE

October 2020 – Present

ANTICIPATED COMPLETION

56 months

NETWORK TYPE

Aerial & Underground



Middle Mile Development

- According to the 2019 American Community Survey, 18.4% of households in York County are without broadband internet access. As a result, nearly a fifth of the County's residents struggle to access the internet, conduct personal business or complete schoolwork.
- Recognizing the severity of this problem, the County utilized \$1.3mm in COVID-19 CARES Act funding to complete its Broadband Community Assessment and 16-mile Rail Trail Pilot Project to begin addressing the lack of broadband in the community.
- In October 2020, Lit Communities began working with York County on a County-wide Community Assessment and strategy for a fiber-optic network owned by both the public and private partners, including last mile fiber to the premise.
- Currently, the County is embarking on a multi-year effort to develop its own 333-mile middle mile backbone network utilizing up to \$25mm of American Rescue Plan Act funding, allowing for further opportunities to work with private partners to deploy last mile services in priority areas of the community.
- Additionally, the County's proposed network will connect 285 anchor institutions including, 38 Emergency Medical Service facilities, 74 Fire Stations, 33 Police Stations, 121 Schools, and nineteen 911 towers.



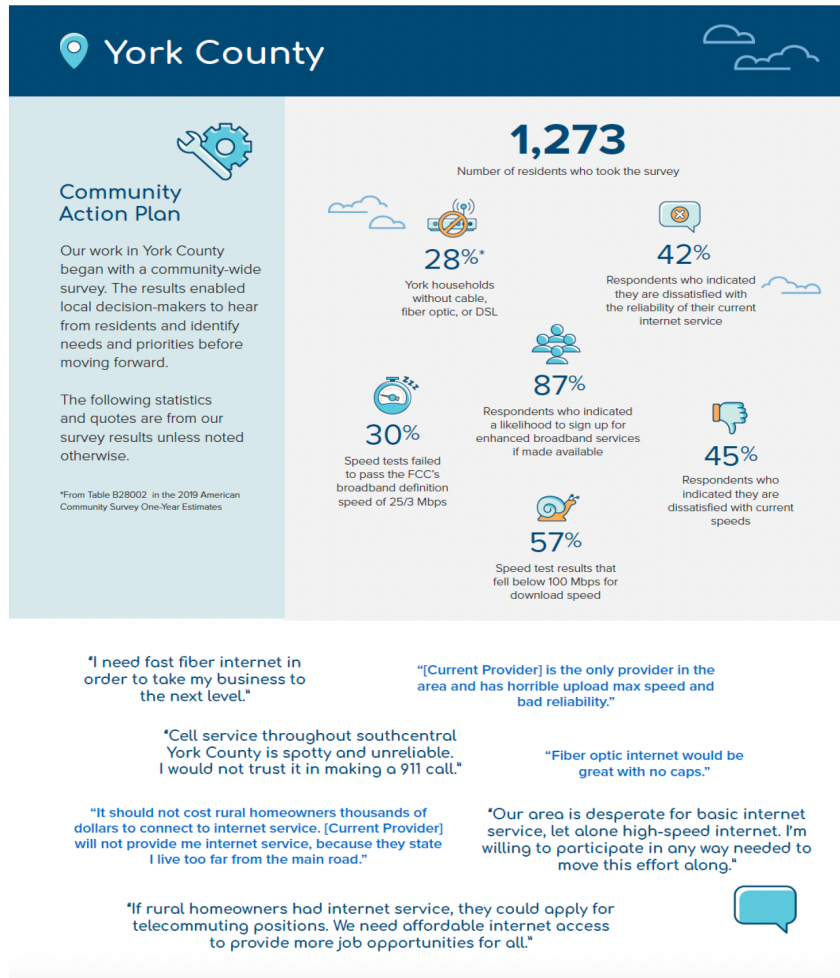
Current Status

- In August 2021, Lit Communities partnered with the County and applied for \$8.9mm in NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program funding to deploy last mile infrastructure for 4,177 households in the three Census Tracts of which 1,194 are unserved.
- Beyond the direct and immediate availability of fiber-optic based broadband services, the NTIA funded project will also yield a positive impact on public safety, workforce development and adoption of telehealth/telemedicine.

www.litcommunities.net



Projects Profile



Projects Profile

BTX Fiber

NETWORK LOCATION Brownsville, TX	DATE July 2020 – Present
SIZE (LAST MILE) 550 miles of fiber (planned)	ANTICIPATED COMPLETION 48 months
BUDGETED COST \$61mm (planned)	NETWORK TYPE Aerial & Underground
SCOPE Broadband Feasibility & Digital Inclusion Plan and Planned FTTP Deployment in 2022	



Middle Mile Development

- According to the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), Brownsville, TX, has consistently ranked as one the least connected cities in the United States, with 47.13% of households without broadband of any kind and 67% of households who do not have cable, DSL, or fiber broadband.
- Recognizing the severity of this problem, the City established a partnership with seven community anchor institutions to fund the Broadband Feasibility and Digital Inclusion Plan to study and address the lack of broadband in the community.
- In July 2020, Lit Communities began working with Brownsville on a City-wide broadband feasibility study and digital inclusion plan.
- The City's plan consisted of a comprehensive plan for a fiber-optic network owned by both the public and private partners, including last mile fiber to the premise.
- Currently, the City is embarking on a 24 month effort to develop its own 93-mile middle mile backbone network utilizing \$19.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding, allowing for further opportunities to work with private partners such as BTX Fiber to deploy last mile services in priority areas of the community.
- Additionally, the City's proposed network will connect 32 anchor institutions including city facilities, Police, Fire, EMS, and public parks.

Press

- ▶ [Brownsville approves \\$19.5M for deployment of broadband installation](#)
- ▶ [Getting connected: City hires broadband consultant](#)
- ▶ [Expanding Broadband Access: City of Brownsville, Texas](#)

Current Status

- In July 2021, Lit Communities Broadband, Inc. created BTX Fiber, LLC for the sole purpose of serving Brownsville's residents and businesses and partnering with the City to provide a source of revenue generation.
- Understanding the importance of affordability, BTX Fiber planning to implement a 50 Mbps download / 50 Mbps upload service tier that is 100% subsidized through the FCC's Lifeline program.
- BTX Fiber will work with the local workforce and community college (Texas Southmost College) to meet both the skills and labor needs of the project.
- In August 2021, BTX Fiber partnered with the City and applied for \$15.2mm in NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program funding to deploy last mile infrastructure for 10,876 households in the twelve Census Tracts of which 6,054 are unserved.



Projects References

References

Mansfield, LA

Thomas Jones - Mayor

City of Mansfield, LA

Email: mobc513@yahoo.com

Phone: 318-347-1318

Description of services: Broadband Community Assessment/Feasibility Study and P3 Agreement

Medina County, Ohio

David Corrado - CEO

Medina Fiber Network, 144 N. Broadway, Medina, OH 44256

Phone: (216) 832- 7059

E-mail: dcorrado@fiber.com

Description of services: Broadband Community Assessment, FTTP infrastructure build and P3

Brownsville, Texas

Noel Bernal- City Manager

City of Brownsville, TX

Email: Noel.Bernal@brownsvilletx.gov

Phone: 956-548-6005

Mayor Juan "Trey" Mendez, III, City of Brownsville, TX,

Email: Trey.mendez@brownsvilletx.gov

Phone: 956-948-6007

Description of services: Broadband Feasibility Study and Digital Inclusion Plan

York County, Pennsylvania

Silas Chamberlin - Vice President, Economic & Community Development

York County Economic Alliance, 144 Roosevelt Ave, York, PA 17401

Phone: (717) 718-7850

Email: SChamberlin@yceapa.org.

Description of services: CARES Act broadband project, Broadband Community Assessment

Monongalia County, West Virginia

Sean Sikora- Monongalia Commissioner

Monongalia County Commission, 243 High Street, Morgantown, WV 26505

Phone: 304-291-7282

Email: Ssikora@monongalia.gov

Description of Services: Comprehensive Strategic Broadband Plan



Call To Action

*“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today.
We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding of conundrum
of life and history there is such a thing as being too late.”*

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

