

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

Office of Broadband

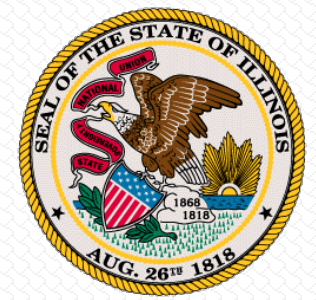
Connect Illinois Program Overview
United Counties Council of Illinois

February 26, 2020



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

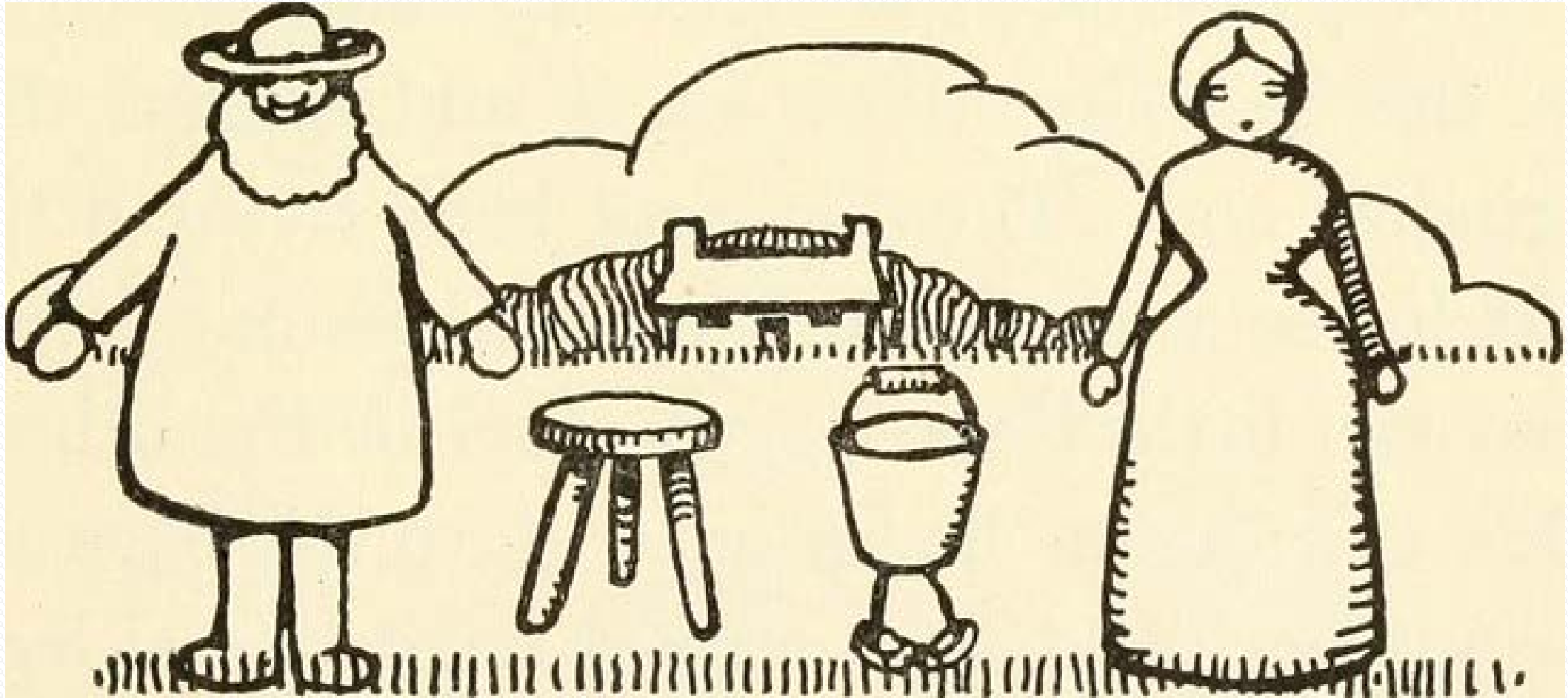
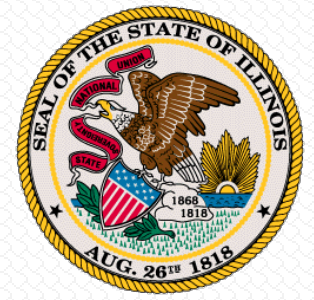


- Vision
- Broadband Advisory Council & Working Groups
- Broadband Strategic Plan
- Mapping
- Broadband Access, Adoption, and Utilization
 - Digital Literacy, Adoption, and Inclusion
 - Community Planning & Capacity Building
 - Infrastructure
- 2020 Notice of Funding Opportunity



CONNECT ILLINOIS VISION

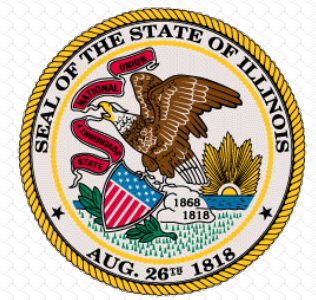
ACCESS – ADOPTION - UTILIZATION





CONNECT ILLINOIS

VISION



- To provide ubiquitous broadband access that is reliable and affordable to homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout Illinois
- To promote digital literacy and adoption
- To drive economic development and expand opportunity and innovation in such areas as education, health care, and agriculture



CONNECT ILLINOIS

BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL



- Convened in August 2019
- Meets quarterly
- Five initial working groups
 - Access
 - Economic development
 - Education
 - Telehealth
 - Technology & Innovation
- Annual report

Member

Deno Peridou
Melia Carter
Chris Nelson
Rick Holzmacher
Zak Horn
Steven Hill
Karen Boswell
Josh Shallenberger
Mike Chamberlain
Anne Slaughter
Deb Alfredson
Jeff Newell
David Antonacci
Bill Bodine
Ryan Gruenenfelder
Nikki Budzinski
Lori Sorenson
Paula Basta
Susan Satter
Jim Zolnierik
Theresa Eagleson
Sen. Bill Cunningham-D
Sen. Jil Tracy-R
Rep. John Connor-D
Rep. Keith Wheeler-R

Organization

AT&T
Verizon
Comcast
Illinois Rural Broadband Association
Metro Communications
Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association
Frontier
CEO of Shelby Electric Coop
Illinois Municipal League/Mayor of Belvidere
Illinois Library Association
Illinois Association of Housing Authorities
Illinois Community College Board
Illinois Board of Higher Education
Illinois Farm Bureau
AARP
Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Department of Innovation and Technology
Department of Aging
Illinois Attorney General
Illinois Commerce Commission
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Illinois Senate
Illinois Senate
Illinois House of Representatives
Illinois House of Representatives



CONNECT ILLINOIS

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Connect Illinois

Governor Pritzker is committed to establishing Illinois as a leader when it comes to technology and innovation. Access to broadband is a critical component of staying ahead of the curve and will improve the lives of families, entrepreneurs, farmers and other Illinoisans who rely on high-speed broadband for everything from healthcare to education.

Governor Pritzker recently launched a statewide initiative, Connect Illinois, to expand broadband access across

HOME

[Connect Illinois](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Digital Literacy](#)

[Community Planning](#)

[Illinois Century Network](#)

BROADBAND GRANTS

[Wireline Service Map](#)

[Notice of Funding](#)

[Making Connections](#)

[Webinar Series](#)

[FAQ's](#)

ADVISORY COUNCIL



Connect Illinois

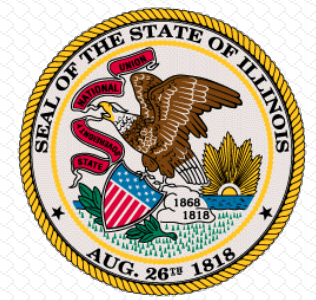
Broadband Strategic Plan

February 2020



BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

PROGRAM GOALS



To guide investment and gauge progress, the Connect Illinois broadband strategy is anchored by distinct, yet interdependent goals ensuring short-term *basic access*, providing longer-term *high-speed access*, and demonstrating *broadband leadership* and *economic development* relative to other states and to countries around the globe.

Short-term goal: basic access. The short-term universal access goal provides that Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions around the state can access broadband at basic service levels:

By 2024, Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout the state will have access to basic service of at least 25/3 Mbps.

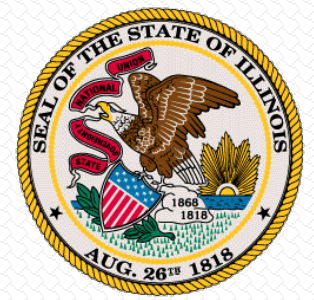
Longer-term goal: High-speed broadband access. The longer-term universal access goal ensures that Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions have access to at least one provider with high-speed service levels necessary for advanced applications, heavy bandwidth use, or future need:

By 2028, Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout the state will have access to at least one provider offering 100/20 Mbps service.



BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

PROGRAM GOALS



Legacy goal: broadband leadership. Just as bandwidth needs change, so does the definition of “broadband.” Connect Illinois seeks to lead relative to its peers on the broadband of today – and tomorrow:

By 2028, Illinois will place in the top three nationally, and top 12 globally, for broadband access.

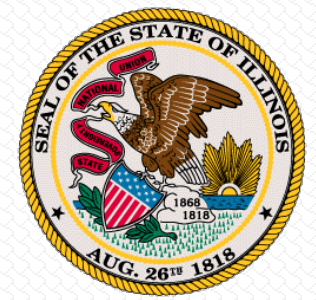
Policy goal: economic development. Access to high-speed internet can catalyze innovations that benefit areas such as education, telehealth, advanced manufacturing, and precision agriculture:

Illinois will be a leader in broadband applications for agriculture, economic development, education, and telehealth while leveraging broadband infrastructure investments to support equitable growth.



BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

SERVICE LEVEL DEFINITIONS



Definition: basic broadband. Just as bandwidth needs change, so should the definition of what constitutes basic broadband. Connect Illinois will index its definition of broadband to track the FCC standard, currently 25/3 Mbps. However, broadband isn't just about speed; even basic broadband should match sufficient speed with adequate capacity, affordable pricing, appropriate reliability, and acceptable latency.

Definition: unserved areas. If a home, business, or community anchor institution lacks access to basic broadband, it is unserved. Connect Illinois considers those areas falling below this threshold, currently set at 25/3 Mbps, to be unserved areas.

Definition: underserved areas. Recognizing that bandwidth needs are rapidly changing, Connect Illinois considers any home, business, or community anchor institution without access to broadband of at least 100/20 Mbps as underserved. Areas falling below this threshold are underserved areas.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

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Connect Illinois

Governor Pritzker is committed to establishing Illinois as a leader when it comes to technology and innovation. Access to broadband is a critical component of staying ahead of the curve and will improve the lives of families, entrepreneurs, farmers and other Illinoisans who rely on high-speed broadband for everything from healthcare to education.

Governor Pritzker recently launched a statewide initiative, Connect Illinois, to expand broadband access across

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BROADBAND GRANTS

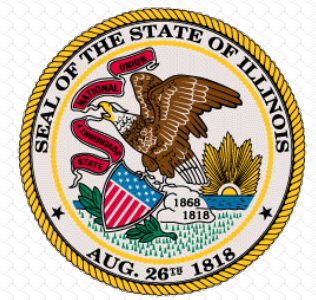
- [Wireline Service Map](#)
- [Notice of Funding](#)
- [Making Connections](#)
- [Webinar Series](#)
- [FAQ's](#)

ADVISORY COUNCIL



CONNECT ILLINOIS

DIGITAL LITERACY, ADOPTION, AND INCLUSION



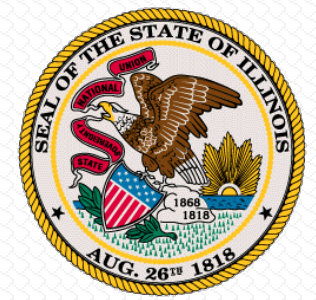
Digital literacy, adoption, and inclusion. For a state, local community, or individual family to compete in the 21st century digital economy, all barriers to broadband access must be overcome. At the same time Connect Illinois invests in broadband infrastructure, the program will leverage complementary efforts to ensure that all Illinoisans have both the requisite broadband service and necessary broadband knowhow.

More or better broadband deployment alone won't close the broadband access gap, but an historic infrastructure investment matched with meaningful civic engagement will position Illinois communities and consumers alike to compete in an increasingly digital global economy – and enjoy the advances in quality of life that come with connectivity of all kinds.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

COMMUNITY PLANNING & CAPACITY BUILDING



Community planning and capacity building. The most compelling infrastructure grant applications will be community driven, with deep connections between the application and a community's technology vision, needs, and goals. Targeted engagement and programming will be necessary to promote community involvement throughout the grant process, eventual deployment, and ongoing broadband adoption and utilization. Without meaningful community involvement, applications may tend toward minimal impact, missing key opportunities for advances in such areas as community and economic development, education, or telehealth.

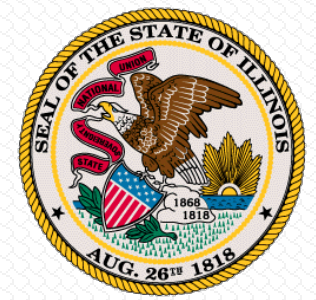
To jump-start community involvement and to maximize the impact of the Connect Illinois investment, effort will be taken to engage individual communities, inspire and support community broadband planning and goal-setting, and galvanize local resources and awareness.

This effort will seek to leverage state and non-state funding to design programming, tap experts in community broadband engagement, and lay the groundwork for meaningful, community-driven infrastructure deployment and lasting approaches to broadband utilization.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE



As the largest state broadband competitive matching grant program ever, Connect Illinois seeks to achieve what no other state or federal approach has accomplished: ubiquitous broadband access. In order to help Illinoisans both access and use broadband, Connect Illinois will promote digital literacy, adoption, and inclusion while leveraging fully scalable broadband infrastructure to drive economic development and increase quality of life.

With \$400 million available for broadband deployment grants targeting areas of greatest need, Connect Illinois is an equity-driven infrastructure program, first and foremost. Challenges tied to population sparsity, geography, or low take rate continue to stand as barriers to broadband ubiquity. In particular, Connect Illinois will seek to address disparities in broadband access and adoption in rural regions and black and brown communities across the state. Understandably, private investment has doubled down on relatively profitable service territories – growing the broadband access gap as a result. Connect Illinois funding will address this market failure and recalibrate the business case for new deployments, connecting communities and individual consumers with scalable service throughout the state.






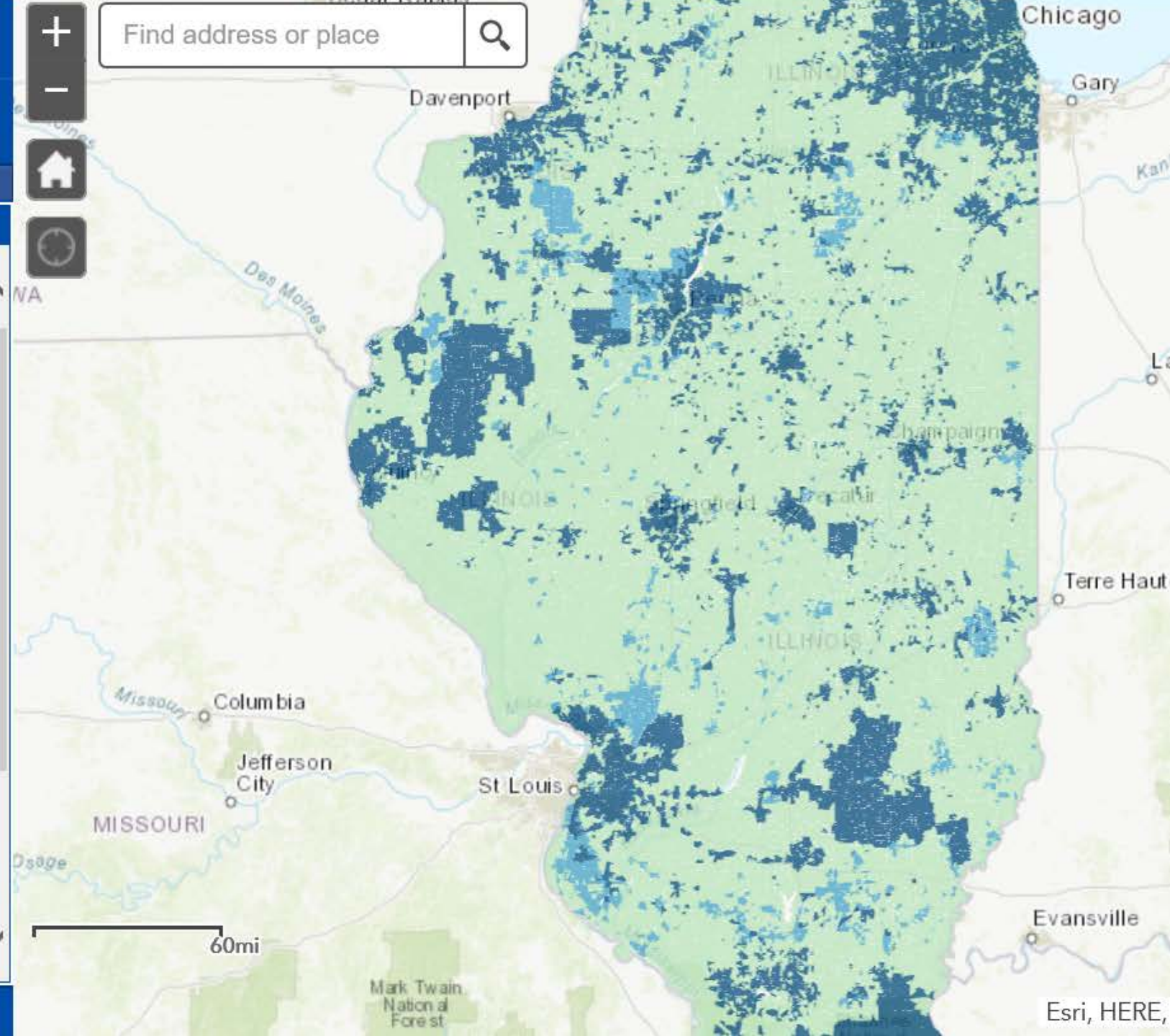
About

To use this app:
Enter an address in the search bar to zoom in to the area of interest. Click on the map to view broadband provider information.

Further information on the FCC Fixed Broadband Deployment Data from Form 477 can be found here: <https://www.fcc.gov/general/broadband-deployment-data-fcc-form-477>. Data is current as of December 2018.

Three Fixed Wireline (e.g. DSL, cable) speed tiers have been calculated:

-  Unserved (Less than 25 Mbps downstream or 3 Mbps upstream or no service available)
-  Minimum 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream and less than 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream
-  Minimum 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream





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GATA

Recent

Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Application (Notice of Funding Opportunity 2366-1333)

GATA Link

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/grants/sitepages/csfa.aspx?page=opportunity.aspx%3fnofo%3d1333>

Technical Assistance Session

No

[NOFO 2366-1333 NOFO Supplement.pdf](#)

[NOFO 2366-1333 Uniform Application.pdf](#)

[NOFO 2366-1333 Budget Template - Capital \(Broadband\).xls](#)

[NOFO 2366-1333 Application Packet.pdf](#)

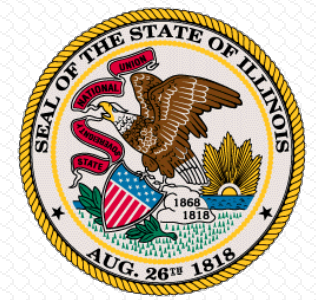
[DCEO Mandatory Disclosure Accessible Enabled.pdf](#)

[DCEO Conflict of Interest Disclosure Accessible Enabled.pdf](#)



CONNECT ILLINOIS

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



2020 Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Application

Up to \$50 million available

Maximum grant amount: \$5 million

Application period opens: Wednesday, February 5, 2020

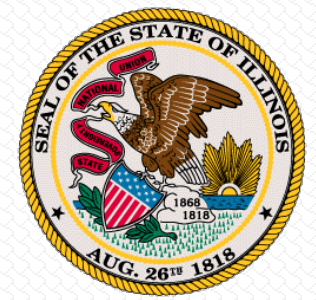
Submission deadline: Friday, April 3, 2020

- ✓ Get GATA pre-qualified
- ✓ Prepare grant application
- Read this entire NOFO document carefully
- Complete project analysis and gather all documentation
- Follow the format templates to complete the project cover sheet and application body
- Attach and label all application appendices correctly



CONNECT ILLINOIS

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



✓ Submit grant application

- Submit the complete application package at any time during the open application period
- Applications that arrive after submission deadline will not be accepted
- Applications are to be submitted in electronic OR paper copy form:
 - One (1) electronic PDF copy must be submitted to broadband@illinois.gov by the application deadline OR
 - Five (5) paper copies must be received by hand delivery or courier service or post marked by the application deadline

✓ Confirm receipt of your application

- Email receipt via broadband@illinois.gov to confirm application submission.

✓ Any questions?

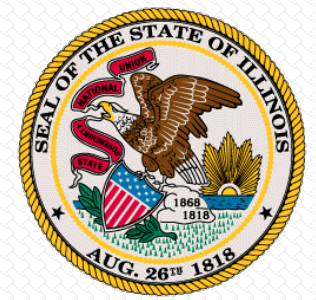
- Contact the Illinois Office of Broadband team at [217-782-5968](tel:217-782-5968) or broadband@illinois.gov

Additional information regarding this grant program, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), are available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois. The website, including the FAQ resource, may be updated during the application window.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



A. Program Description

Public Act 101-0029 authorizes the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the Department; DCEO) to award grants from the Build Illinois Fund to qualified applicants for expansion of broadband infrastructure in Illinois.

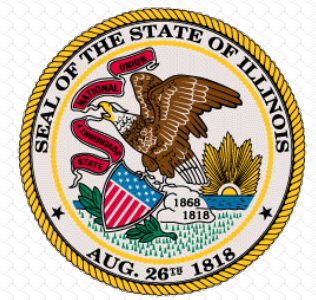
The Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program represents an integral and strategic component of both the comprehensive 2019 Rebuild Illinois infrastructure program and the state's five-year economic plan to expand economic opportunity and reduce socioeconomic gaps through equity investment.

Through multiple rounds of competitive matching grants, Connect Illinois seeks to achieve what no other state or federal approach to date has accomplished: ubiquitous broadband access for homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions. At the same time, Connect Illinois seeks progress in digital literacy, adoption, and inclusion while leveraging investment in new broadband infrastructure to spur advances in such areas as economic development, education, precision agriculture, and telehealth.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



B. Funding Information

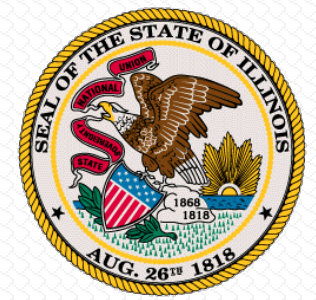
\$400 million has been appropriated and authorized as available funding for the Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program. Up to \$50 million of this amount will be available through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Priority consideration will be given to projects that leverage certain non-state funding – from private, federal, and/or local sources – totaling 50 percent or more of eligible total project costs. The maximum individual grant amount is \$5 million, but applicants are encouraged to submit multiple proposals. Awarded grant project work must be completed by June 30, 2023.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



C. Eligibility Information

An entity may not apply for a grant until the entity has pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov. During pre-qualification, verifications are performed including a check of the federal Debarred and Suspended list and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List. An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., inactive DUNS, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

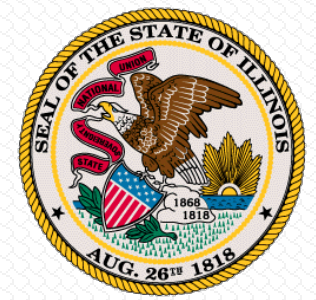
1. Eligible Applicants. Eligible applicants for this program include: an incorporated business or partnership; a political subdivision; a nonprofit organization; a cooperative association; or a limited liability corporation organized for the purpose of expanding broadband access.

2. Eligible Project Areas. Broadband infrastructure projects located in *unserved* and/or *underserved* areas are eligible for Connect Illinois grant funding through this NOFO.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



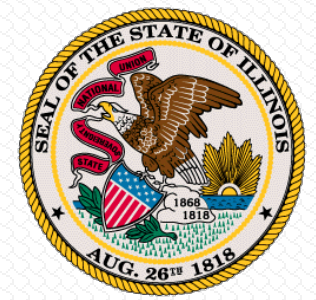
An ***unserved area*** is an area of Illinois in which households, businesses, or community anchor institutions lack access to wireline broadband service of at least 25/3 Mbps. An ***underserved area*** is an area of Illinois in which households, businesses, or community anchor institutions have wireline broadband access of at least 25/3 Mbps but less than 100/20 Mbps.

These designations are reflected in broadband mapping utilized by the Connect Illinois program; for this NOFO, the mapping relies upon flawed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) data that often overstate broadband access and available service. As a result, applications may demonstrate through the application and subsequent communication with the Illinois Office of Broadband that available service in otherwise ineligible project areas is overstated as reflected in current Connect Illinois mapping available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois. In such instances, initially ineligible areas may be considered eligible for funding. Likewise, providers are encouraged to contact the Illinois Office of Broadband if broadband access and available service is understated on available Connect Illinois maps.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



3. Eligible Program Costs. Eligible costs refer to the costs associated with the acquisition and installation of middle mile and/or last mile infrastructure that can support broadband service scalable to speeds of at least 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload.

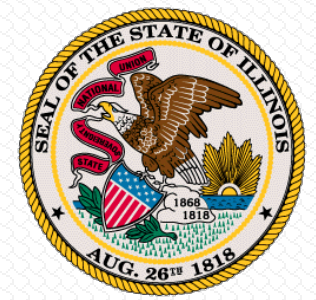
Last mile infrastructure is broadband installation that serves as the final leg connecting the broadband service provider's network to the end-user customer's on-premise telecommunications equipment. *Middle mile* infrastructure is broadband construction that links a broadband service provider's core network infrastructure to last mile infrastructure.

Eligible project costs for this NOFO may include the following: network design; project planning; obtaining construction permits; construction of facilities – including deployment of middle mile and/or last mile infrastructure; durable equipment; and installation and testing of the broadband service.



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GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



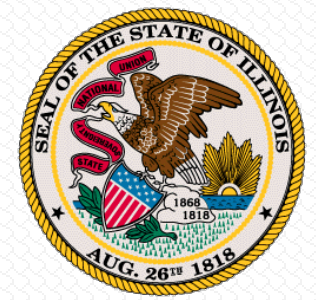
4. Cost Sharing via Non-State Matching Funds. The Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program will contribute up to 50 percent of the eligible costs for a qualifying project. To obtain a grant, the applicant must provide for the funding not covered by the grant with matching funds. The match can come from any private and/or public sources available to the Applicant. The merit-review scoring process will award points to applications that leverage matching funds totaling 55% or more of total eligible project costs.

Documentation to validate the availability of matching funds is required as part of the application. Some examples of appropriate documentation include: a letter of credit; letter confirming funds from a bank; board resolution committing funding; or loan documentation. If the application will have additional financial partners contributing to the matching funds, the application must also identify the financial partner(s) and documentation of the amount and availability of each partner's financial match.



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GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



5. Other, if applicable.

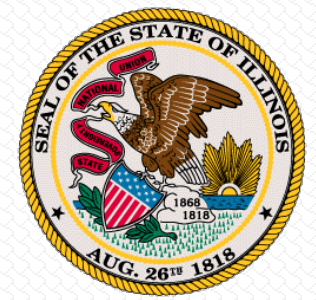
Business Enterprise Program: For grant awards of \$250,000 or more, the grantee will be required to comply with the Business Enterprise Program for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act (30 ILCS 575/0.01 *et seq.*), which establishes a goal for contracting with businesses that have been certified as owned and controlled by persons who are minority, female or who have disabilities. The Department and the Capital Development Board will work with the grantee to ensure compliance prior to the establishment of the grant agreement as well as through the life of the grant.

Environmental Review Requirements: Capital grants will be reviewed to determine environmental review requirements. Based on the scope of the project, the grantee may be required to complete additional environmental approvals before a grant agreement can be initiated.



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GRANT APPLICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION



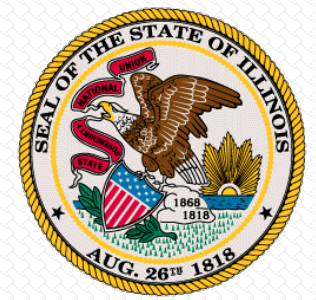
Illinois Works Jobs Program Act (30 ILCS 559/20-1 *et seq.*): For grants with an estimated total project cost of \$500,000 or more, the grantee will be required to comply with the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative (30 ILCS 559/20-20 to 20-25) and all applicable administrative rules. The “estimated total project cost” is a good faith approximation at the time an applicant submits to the Department a grant application of the costs of an entire project being paid for in whole or in part by appropriated capital funds to construct a public work. The goal of the Illinois Apprenticeship Initiative is that apprentices will perform either 10% of the total labor hours actually worked in each prevailing wage classification or 10% of the estimated labor hours in each prevailing wage classification, whichever is less. Grantees will be permitted to seek from the Department a waiver or reduction of this goal in certain circumstances pursuant to 30 ILCS 559/20-20(b). The grantee must ensure compliance for the life of the entire project, including during the term of the grant and after the term ends, if applicable, and will be required to report on and certify its compliance.

Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130/0.01 *et seq.*): Applicants that are awarded grants shall comply with all requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act, including but not limited to, inserting into all contracts for construction a stipulation to the effect that not less than the prevailing rate of wages as applicable to the project shall be paid to all laborers, workers, and mechanics performing work under the award and requiring all bonds of contractors to include a provision as will guarantee the faithful performance of such prevailing wage clause as provided by contract. Grantees will be required to report on Prevailing Wage Act compliance on a monthly basis.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PREPARING A GRANT APPLICATION



A. Application Submittal Information

1. **Address to Request Application Packet.** A hard copy of this NOFO is available via mail by contacting the Illinois Office of Broadband by phone, mail, or email:

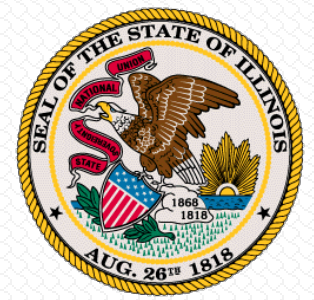
Illinois Office of Broadband
Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
500 E. Monroe Street, 5th Floor
Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: 217-782-5968
Email: broadband@illinois.gov

Additional information, including an application template and interactive broadband access maps, is available at www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois. The maps are derived from the most recent available FCC data. The accuracy of this mapping is imperfect, but until separate, state-procured mapping is available the FCC mapping is to be used by the Applicant, the Office of Broadband, incumbent providers and other stakeholders alike as a starting point for determination of project area eligibility.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PREPARING A GRANT APPLICATION



2. Content and Form of Application Submittal Information. To be deemed eligible for funding, completed applications and all required supporting documentation – five (5) paper copies OR one (1) electronic PDF – must be received by the Illinois Office of Broadband on or before 5 p.m. on Friday, April 3, 2020.

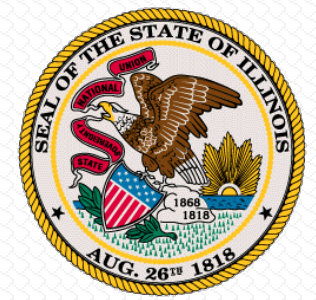
The paper copies of the completed application packages with all associated documentation must fit on 8.5” x 11” paper. This size restriction includes all paper copy versions of maps and tables. Large format maps (e.g. .shp, .kmz, .kml) should be provided in an electronic submittal.

If paper copy documentation for a particular response is voluminous and therefore easier to attach as a separate paper or electronic file, it should be labeled as an Appendix with the associated item number with which it corresponds in the grant application.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PREPARING A GRANT APPLICATION



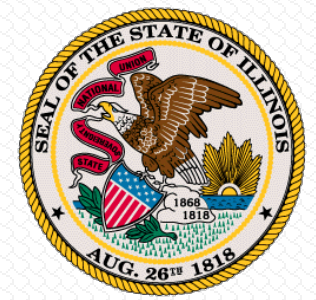
Applications for Connect Illinois grant funding should adhere to the standard format outlined below and detailed in the Application Packet, available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois.

- Cover Sheet
- Executive Summary
- Part I – Key Project Data
- Part II – Anticipated Broadband Impact
- Part III – Nonstate Matching Funds
- Part IV – Project Readiness
- Part V – Project Sustainability
- Part VI – Broadband Adoption Assistance
- Part VII – Open Access and Shared Use
- Part VIII – Applicant Affidavit
- Uniform Application
- Uniform Budget
- Conflict of Interest
- Mandatory Disclosure
- W-9 Form



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PREPARING A GRANT APPLICATION



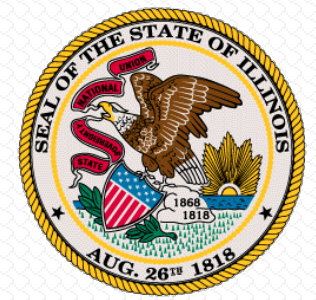
3. Applicant Registration. The Applicant (unless the Applicant is a Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab.
- ii. Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
- iii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The State awarding agency may not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the Applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an Applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the State awarding agency is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the State awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.



CONNECT ILLINOIS

PREPARING A GRANT APPLICATION



4. **Submittal Dates and Times.** The Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program application window will open upon publication of this NOFO.

**All applications must be received on or before the application deadline of:
5 p.m. on Friday, April 3, 2020.**

5. **Submittal Address.** Applications are to be submitted in electronic OR paper copy form:

- i. One (1) electronic PDF copy must be submitted to broadband@illinois.gov by the application deadline OR
- ii. Five (5) paper copies must be received by hand delivery or courier service or post marked by the application deadline, addressed to:

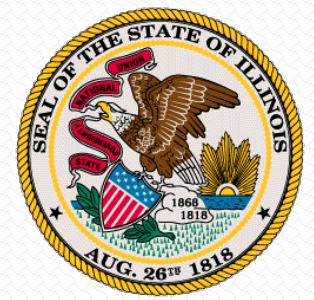
Illinois Office of Broadband
Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
500 E. Monroe Street, 5th Floor
Springfield, IL 62701

6. **Submittal Confirmation.** Please email the Illinois Office of Broadband at broadband@illinois.gov to confirm that each complete application package has been mailed or delivered for receipt on or before submittal deadline.



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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



A. Grant Selection Criteria & Scoring Categories (200 points possible)

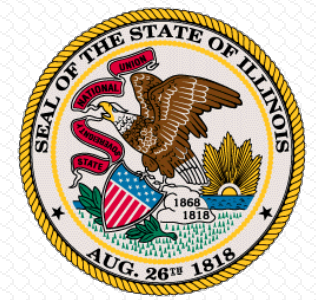
The Illinois Office of Broadband will award grants to projects that help advance the Connect Illinois vision while demonstrating optimal impact of Connect Illinois funds. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a team from the Illinois Office of Broadband. This team will use the following criteria and associated point values (200 points possible) to assist in systematically scoring applications and awarding grants. These criteria will be applied to information provided by the Applicant in response to the requirements of this NOFO. To ensure that an application receives the highest possible scoring, please be sure to provide complete, comprehensive, and clear responses for all information requested; succinct responses are encouraged as appropriate.

The team will strive to achieve geographic balance throughout the state in awarding grants. As a result, applications may be considered on a regional basis per the 10 designated state economic development regions of Illinois, a map of which is available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois.



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Applications also may be considered on the basis of three categories of focus. Given the Connect Illinois vision to achieve broadband ubiquity while driving economic development and advances in areas such as distance learning, precision agriculture, and telehealth, applications should be classified under one of three categories:

- (a) *broadband access*** for Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions;
- (b) *broadband innovation*** for economic development and related applications; or
- (c) *urban broadband*** for access and/or innovation in qualified Illinois cities or metropolitan areas of 75,000 residents or more.

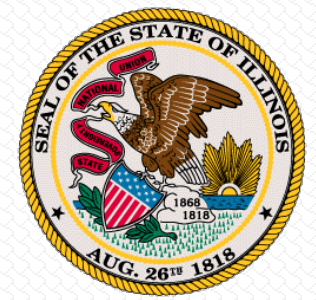
Although successful projects may – and are encouraged to – produce positive impact toward both *broadband access* and *broadband innovation*, Applicants must indicate under which of the three categories an application is intended to be considered.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award in each category.



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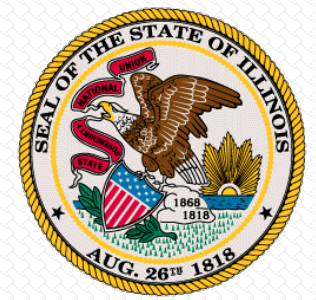


1. **Anticipated Broadband Impact:** *60 points possible*
 - a. **Unserved or underserved total passings potentially served by project:** 35 points possible
 - b. **Economic development and community benefit of the project:** 25 points possible
2. **Nonstate Matching Funds:** *20 points possible*
3. **Community Participation:** *15 points possible*
4. **Project Readiness:** *40 points possible*
5. **Project Sustainability:** *40 points possible*
6. **Broadband Adoption Assistance:** *15 points possible*
7. **Open Access and Shared Use:** *10 points possible*



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1. Anticipated Broadband Impact: 60 points possible

1.a. Unserved or underserved total passings potentially served by project: 35 points possible

Applicants must identify the following in their proposals:

- Anticipated improvements in broadband speed offerings from pre-existing broadband service levels to proposed service levels – project must reach or exceed 25/3 Mbps in unserved areas and 100/20 Mbps in underserved areas
 - Highest scores are awarded for largest broadband speed improvements
- Number of total passings potentially served (# of passings)
 - Total passings include households, businesses, farms, and community anchor institutions

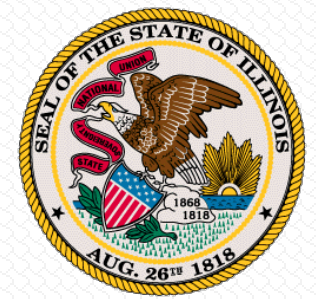
Anticipated Total Passings Scoring Table

# of Passings	Speed Now:	0/0	≤10/1	0/0	≤10/1	≤25/3	0/0	≤25/3	≤100/20
	Speed After Build:	25/3+	25/3+	100/20+	100/20+	100/20+	1G/1G+	1G/1G+	1G/1G+
0-50	Points Awarded:	21	13	25	21	17	29	23	19
51-250		23	15	27	23	19	31	25	21
251-499		25	17	29	25	21	33	27	23
500+		27	19	31	27	23	35	29	25



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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



1. **Anticipated Broadband Impact:** *60 points possible (continued)*

1.b. **Economic development and community benefit of the project:** 25 points possible

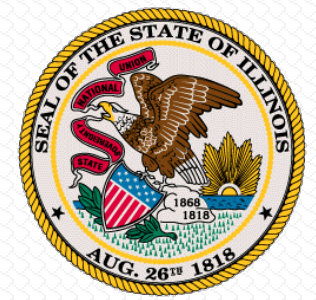
Applicants must identify the following in their proposals:

- Businesses, farms and agricultural use customers, community anchor institutions, educational and/or healthcare facilities in the proposed project area; include letters of support if possible
- How the project will demonstrate broadband-driven economic development in accordance with the state's five-year economic development plan – particularly with regard to agriculture, economic development, education, and healthcare; be specific if possible
 - For businesses and economic development, how improved broadband speeds and coverage will enable the project area to become and/or remain competitively viable
 - For farms and agriculture, how improved broadband speeds and coverage will enable the project area to demonstrate potential of such applications as precision agriculture
 - For education, the proposed impact on distance learning or related off-campus uses
 - For healthcare, the proposed impact on telehealth, electronic medical records, or related uses
 - The proposed impact on community anchor institutions such as public libraries, hospitals, schools, social service centers, community gathering centers, or other health care clinics
 - The proposed impact on workforce development, job creation, entrepreneurship, public safety, etc.



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2. Nonstate Matching Funds: 20 points possible

Points award based upon percent of state grant request compared to total eligible project costs:

- Applications providing nonstate matching funds of 55% or more will result in a higher application score for this category
- Any and all funding partner contributions are included in Applicant matching funds for points

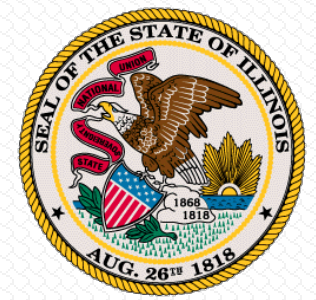
Nonstate Matching Funds Provided Scoring Table

Percent of eligible project costs covered by nonstate match	Points
70% or more	20
66 - 69%	16
63 - 65%	12
60 - 62%	8
55 - 59%	4
50 - 54%	0



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3. Community Participation: *15 points possible*

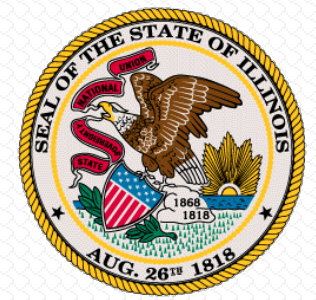
Points will be awarded for the following:

- Verified financial commitment to the project from any qualified community partner(s)
[Community partner may be any public, private, non-profit, or philanthropic entity – this would include a non-bank business, county, township, city, or community coalition]
- Project applications that provide substantive evidence of community support for the project



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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



4. Project Readiness: 40 points possible

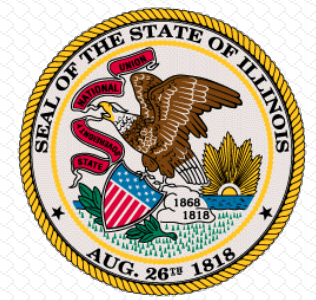
Applicant has demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of – and detailed preparation for – the proposed project. Applicant has provided evidence of being fully prepared to build, implement, and operate the project:

- All budget material is provided in detailed, yet clearly understandable manner, sources and uses of funds are realistic, all eligible elements of project are included, all funding partners are secured
- Other broadband infrastructure requirements are included (*e.g.* certified engineering design and diagrams by an Illinois-licensed professional engineer, documentation of scalable equipment, and all preconstruction requirements are identified and included in the project schedule)
- Project implementation requirements are provided (*e.g.* proposed speed tiers and service pricing, five-year service commitment, and proposed marketing strategies)
- Complete project schedule and financial requirements are provided



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5. Project Sustainability: 40 points possible

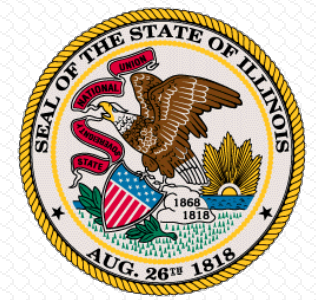
Applicant has demonstrated strong internal capacity to effectively support and sustain its broadband infrastructure proposal:

- Demonstration of technical expertise – specific prior experience in providing broadband services
- Organizational support evidence provided – extent of organization and how organizational strength will sustain broadband service delivery and maintenance
- Financial statements provided – most current year's audited financial statements, and supporting documentation where applicable, to demonstrate overall financial viability



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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



6. **Broadband Adoption Assistance:** *15 points possible*

Points will be awarded for the following:

- Are broadband adoption activities planned for project?
- Will technical support or training on broadband be offered?
- Will the applicant establish a new low-income broadband assistance program offering for customers in the project area or elsewhere in the State of Illinois?

7. **Open Access and Shared Use:** *10 points possible*

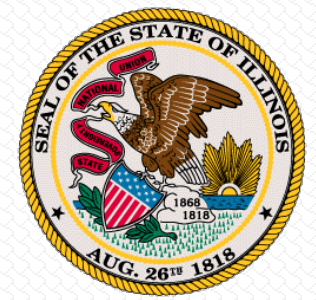
Points will be awarded for the following:

- Does the project provide broadband infrastructure for public agency use (*e.g.* public safety or transportation)?
- Does the project allow for use by other broadband providers (*e.g.* incumbent or competitive providers)?
- Does the project allow for use by providers utilizing other technology (*e.g.* cellular or wireless)?
- Does the proposal include a memorandum of understanding between the Applicant and one or more entities to collaborate on an open access or shared use basis?



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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



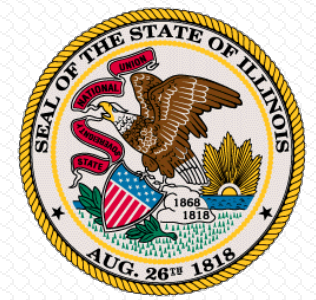
B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be graded using the merit-based review process and scored on the criteria specified herein and via application materials available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois.

The Department will designate an Evaluation Team to score each qualified application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Evaluation Team member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final application score. Each applicant may then be ranked by score within relevant geographic region and/or category specified. Applicants may utilize the appeal process as stated in the merit-based review policy available in the Resource Library at www.grants.illinois.gov

Although the merit-based review is subject to appeal, evaluation scores cannot be appealed. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The typed appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. Appeals can be submitted to CEO.Accountability@illinois.gov.

Before grants are awarded, applicants will have an opportunity to challenge the accuracy of the Connect Illinois maps. Likewise, broadband providers will be allowed to challenge the eligibility of a grant application on the basis of current available broadband service or near-term planned broadband deployment. The challenge process operates beyond the scope of this NOFO and details will be available at: www2.illinois.gov/dceo/ConnectIllinois.



QUESTIONS?

Matt Schmit | Deputy Director
Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Illinois Office of Broadband | broadband@Illinois.gov