VISION

To guide the State of Utah in facilitating increased availability, accessibility, and affordability of high-speed internet for the benefit of all Utahns.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. Expand broadband to unserved and underserved areas throughout the state.
2. Identify and mitigate obstacles and barriers preventing broadband expansion.
3. Support internet service providers (ISPs) in navigating federal funding requirements.
4. Maximize funding to provide the most value to unserved and underserved communities.
5. Encourage expansion of broadband to community anchor institutions.
6. Strengthen Utah's economy for new and existing business opportunities.

KEY BARRIERS

- Cost of Deployment
- Supply Chain Constraints
- Weather and Climate
- Cybersecurity Threats
- Third Party Infrastructure Approval
- Permitting or Regulatory Challenges
- Labor Force Challenges
- Lack of Supporting Infrastructure

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) PROGRAM

Aims to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet.

The Utah Digital Connectivity Plan serves to meet the requirements of the BEAD Program and also outlines goals and priorities to provide a framework for statewide broadband expansion.

To view the full plan, scan the QR Code:

www.connectingutah.com/broadband-plans

*Numbers generated from FCC Broadband Availability Map subject to change
**KEY STRATEGIES**

- Work with the Department of Transportation and ISPs to close middle mile gaps through program funds or sharing of infrastructure
- Analyze threshold for ISPs to recoup construction costs and set variable threshold for high-cost and extremely high-cost areas, based on location density
- Prioritize the establishment of public-private partnerships through sharing of resources
- Ensure no funding programs are awarded to the same areas
- Develop programs promoting digital literacy and device availability
- Establish priorities for the statewide broadband grant program
- Coordinate closely with ISP leaders, organizations, and companies on deployment challenges
- Create workforce recommendations for subgrantees to adopt as part of BEAD funding
- Develop BEAD-specific checklists and guidelines to distribute to all applicants
- Work with state and local agencies and chambers of commerce to disseminate program specifics
- Collaborate with federal, state, and local agencies; Tribal Nations; and other entities regarding permitting challenges
- Work with ISPs to implement cybersecurity measures

**TIMELINE**

**Statewide Digital Connectivity Plan**

- **Identify unserved/underserved Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs)**
  - Utilize Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Fabric data
- **Collect data**
  - Collaborate and gather data from ISPs and agency partners
- **Validate data**
  - Challenge FCC data; validate with speed tests

**First Grant Round**

- **Implement the selection process**
  - Accept and review sub-grantee proposals

**Final Proposal**

- **Determine subgrantees for BEAD funds**
  - Review and select subgrantee applications off scoring criteria
- **Address any remaining unserved homes not included in subgrantee applications**
  - Negotiate with subgrantees to expand proposed areas or look at alternative methods to reach all unserved
- **Award and gather required information from subgrantees**
  - Review project timeline, workforce, environmental, and planning documentation
- **Develop the audit process**
  - Determine processes for oversight and accountability

**Initial Proposal**

- **Determine network deployment type**
  - Establish a high-cost threshold for fiber vs. fixed wireless service
- **Identify and prioritize middle mile needs to reach unserved areas**
  - Determine which middle mile routes are still needed to reach unserved areas
- **Group unserved homes in project areas**
  - Identify geographical challenges, middle mile access, and typical project size
- **Establish subgrantee process for BEAD funding**
  - Develop scoring criteria for the entire subgrantee process
- **Validate data**
  - Set up a statewide challenge process

**Implementation**

- **Project construction**
  - Review engineered plans and costs from subgrantees
- **Project auditing**
  - Submit semiannual report to National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA)