Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Overview Session #3

Webinar Series

Presentation #3:

- Broadband Ready Communities
- Permitting
- Letters of Credit
- Affidavits and other Required Forms
- Eligible Location Determinations
- Next Steps
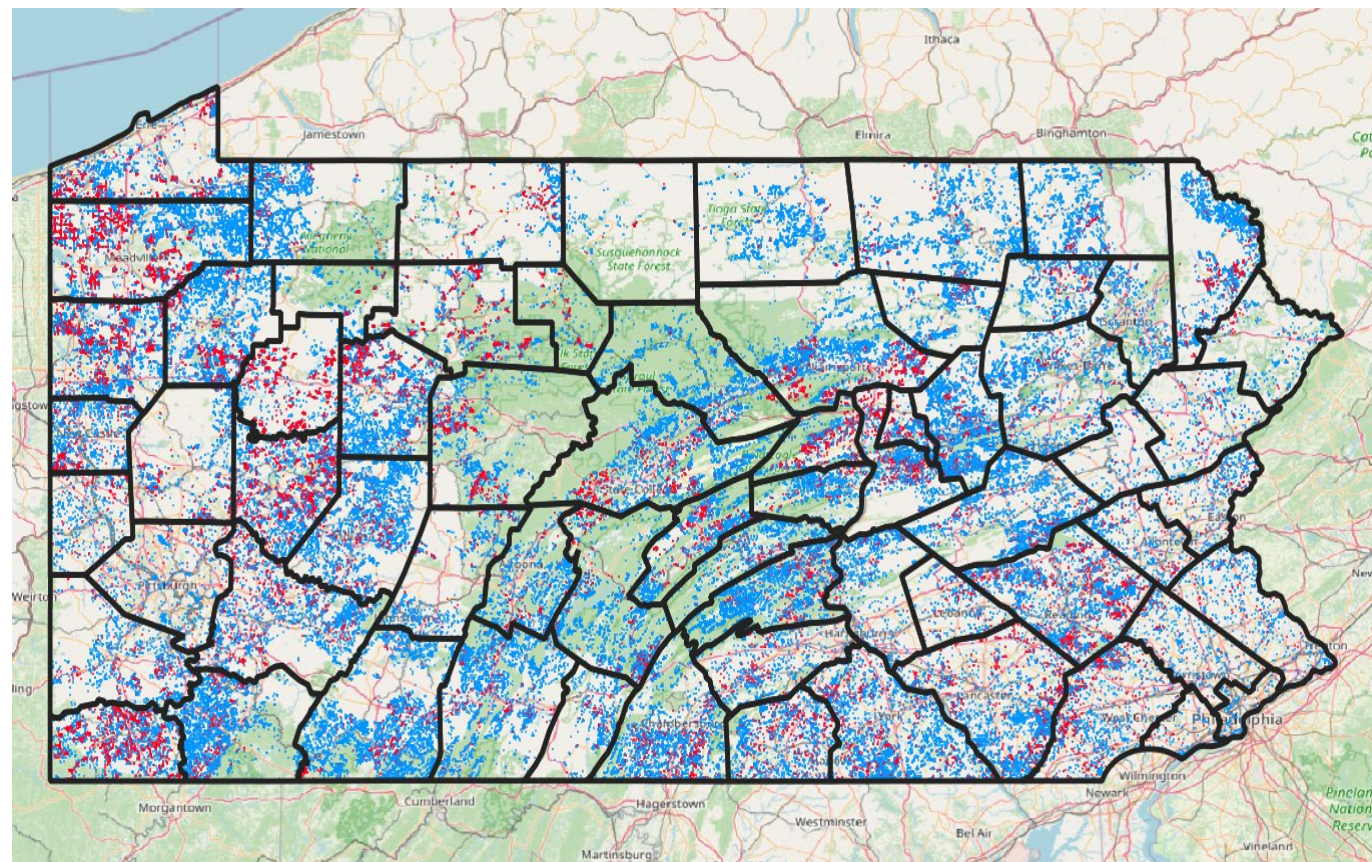
Broadband Ready Communities

- The Broadband Ready Communities (BBRC) program is a resource for local governments to:
  - Increase investment and opportunity through public-private partnerships.
  - Reduce procedural, policy, and permitting barriers to broadband deployment.
  - Encourage broadband infrastructure investment within participating PA communities.
- Participation designates a municipality as a "Broadband Ready Community" and establishes a broadband champion at the municipal or county level.
- BBRC participation is optional but encouraged.

BBRC is not a regulatory program. No funds are directly attached, and it is not an eligibility requirement for BEAD or other PBDA programs.

Historical and Environmental Laws

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of proposed actions before making decisions.
- It aims to ensure that all branches of government consider the environment prior to undertaking any major federal action that significantly affects the environment.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

- Requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects on historic properties before proceeding.
- Ensures that preservation values are integrated into federal project planning and execution, allowing public input and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Letters of Credit Commitment

- NTIA requires that applicants commit to supplying a Letter of Credit if selected for a BEAD award.

- A template for this commitment will be supplied by PBDA. It will also be available on PBDA's BEAD program page.

- NTIA will waive the Letter of Credit requirement under the following circumstances:
    1. If a qualified credit union is used.
    2. If Performance Bonds (valued at 100% of the awarded amount) are used.
    3. Upon reduction in the amount required for a Letter of Credit/Performance Bonds upon completion of project milestones.
    4. Alternative initial Letter

More information about Letter of Credit waiver options can be found in Appendix II of the program guidelines.

Project Area Determinations

- Within 10 business days after the end of the application period, PBDA will make the applied for unserved, underserved, and community anchor institutions available for review.

- PBDA will notify provisional BEAD award winners at the conclusion of both grant application and review periods.

- A finalized spreadsheet of eligible BSLs that have been assigned to project areas will be posted publicly online.

- If a project area has been adjusted by PBDA, applicants may contest based on criteria that the provision of service would be fiscally infeasible.
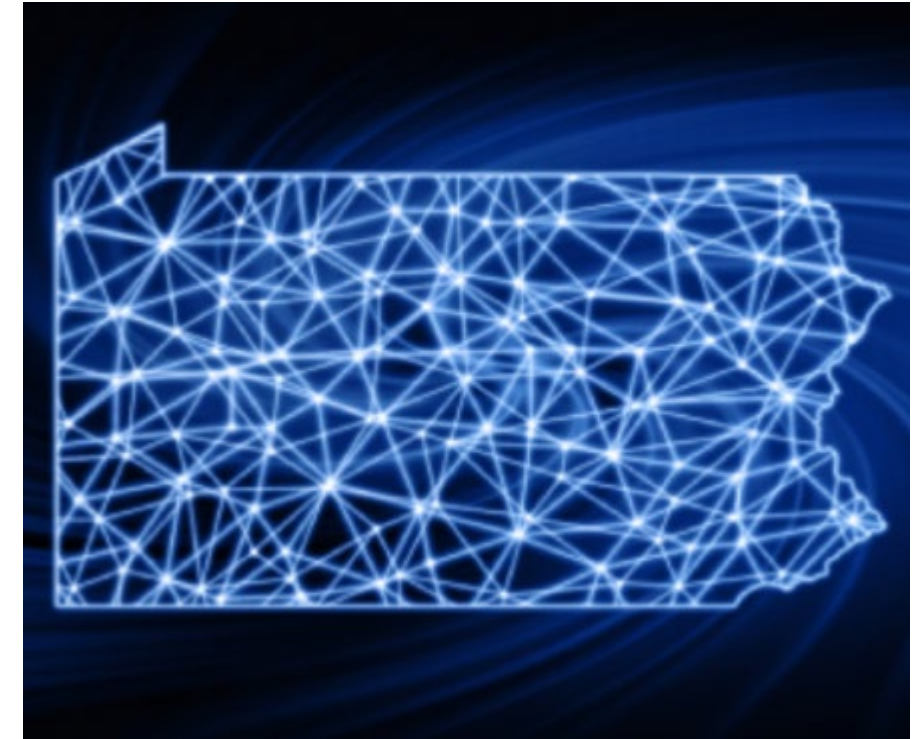
Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit semi-annual reports, covering topics such as *(but not limited to)*:

- The status of all service locations served by BEAD infrastructure

- Identifying new locations served within each project area

- Reporting on contracts and sub-contracts

- Broadband service speed updates

- Labor reporting

- Other reasonable reporting requirements determined by PBDA

Grantees must maintain sufficient records to substantiate reporting data and information upon request.

BEAD Application Technical Assistance

PBDA is committed to offering support to all prospective BEAD grantees to enable:

- Technically viable, robust, and competitive project proposals;

- Sustainable project goals and objectives;

- Compliance with all regulatory and statutory requirements set by NTIA;

In addition to our webinar series, PBDA will offer a series of "Office Hours" for all prospective applicants or interested stakeholders. More information is available on PBDA's "News and Events" webpage.

Pennsylvania
Broadband Development Authority

Please email RA-DCPBDA_BEAD@pa.gov with questions.

Thank you!

broadband.pa.gov