Washington's Internet for All

Washington State Broadband Office (WSBO)

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Washington State
Department of
Commerce

v1.5

We strengthen communities

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

INFRASTRUCTURE AND BROADBAND

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

ENERGY

PLANNING AND TECH ASSISTANCE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

CRIME VICTIMS AND PUBLIC SAFETY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
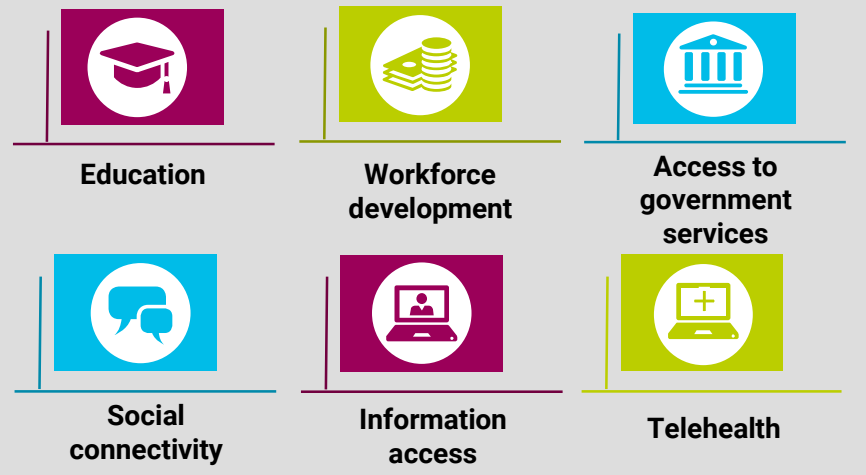
Internet for All Goals

- The goal of "Internet for All" is to connect all communities to reliable high-speed internet (broadband), which is defined by the FCC as a minimum of 25/3 Mbps (download/upload speed), and to increase digital equity.

The **"digital divide"** refers to the gap between those who have access to high-speed Internet and its benefits, and those who have limited or no access, driven by three key barriers.

Access

Affordability

Adoption and Digital Literacy

States will be applying for federal funding to help close the digital divide focusing on "unserved" (<25/3 Mbps) and "underserved" (<100/20 Mbps)* locations.

Benefits of high-speed Internet can include:

Education

Workforce development

Access to government services

Social connectivity

Information access

Telehealth

ARPA Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Awards

- [$121.5M awarded in May 2023](#)
  - 14 entities in 19 grants of 52 applications
    - 5 PUDs
    - 2 Electric co-ops
    - 4 County organizations
    - 1 Tribal entity
    - 2 Ports
- Broad geographic dispersion
- Nearly 15,000 household connections
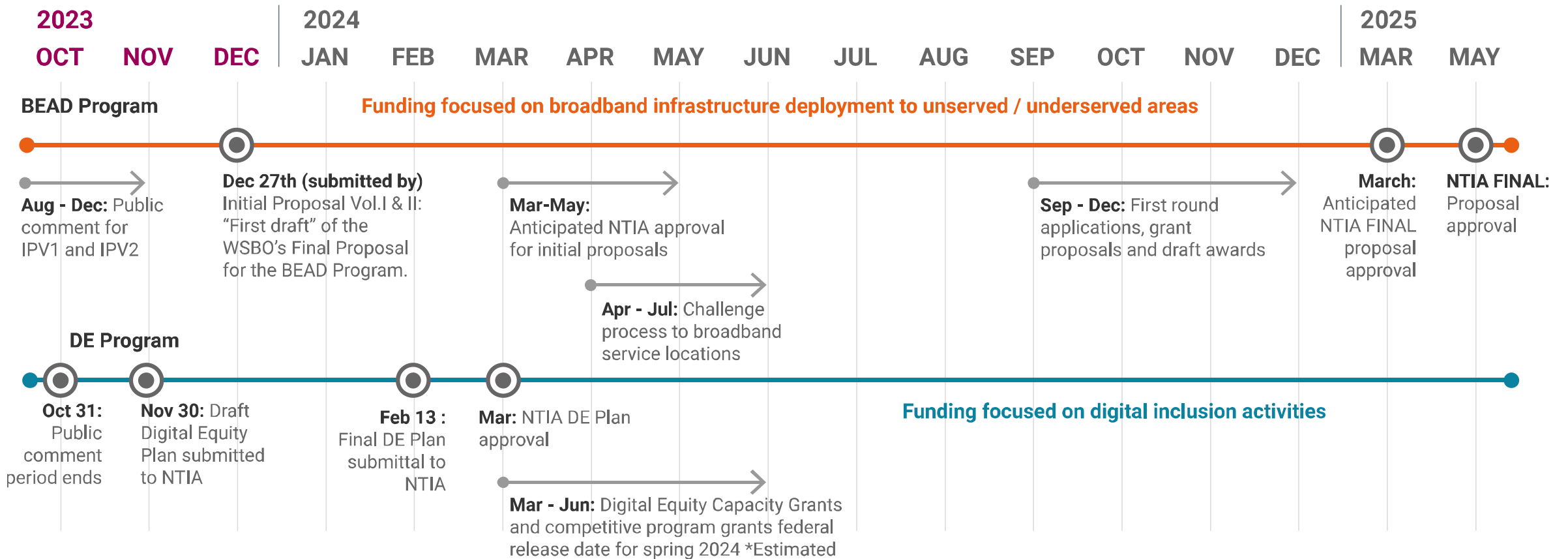- Estimated Construction Completion Oct. 2026

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- $1.2 Billion Funding Allocation from NTIA
  - WA stepped up to the plate! State Broadband Office and other efforts (QR code, social media, press releases, crowdsourcing) added 71,000 unserved locations to FCC map through Jan 13th on a base of 167,000; 42% increase is top 10 in the nation
  - Fabric location challenges added 20,000 locations

- Bead 5-year Plan considered:
  - Wireless technology
  - Use of existing infrastructure and dig-once
  - Streamlined permitting
  - Access to poles

- 5-year Plan submitted on Aug. 11
  - Broad outline of the strategic plan and community needs

Program submission requirements and timeline

Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program and Digital Equity (DE) Program – complementary programs running in parallel

2023 **2024** **2025**
OCT NOV DEC | JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC | MAR MAY

BEAD Program

Funding focused on broadband infrastructure deployment to unserved / underserved areas

Aug - Dec: Public comment for IPV1 and IPV2

Dec 27th (submitted by) Initial Proposal Vol.I & II: "First draft" of the WSBO's Final Proposal for the BEAD Program.

Mar-May: Anticipated NTIA approval for initial proposals

Apr - Jul: Challenge process to broadband service locations

Sep - Dec: First round applications, grant proposals and draft awards

March: Anticipated NTIA FINAL proposal approval

NTIA FINAL: Proposal approval

DE Program

Oct 31: Public comment period ends

Nov 30: Draft Digital Equity Plan submitted to NTIA

Feb 13 : Final DE Plan submittal to NTIA

Mar: NTIA DE Plan approval

Funding focused on digital inclusion activities

Mar - Jun: Digital Equity Capacity Grants and competitive program grants federal release date for spring 2024 *Estimated

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- Worked with Guidehouse (contractor) to formulate a plan
  - WSU-Ext local planning workbooks submitted June 15; Completed review
  - 19+ public listening/focus group sessions though mid-June
  - Continuing formal consultation with Tribal Governments
  - Continuing engagement with Digital Equity Forum
  - Public comments received thru Oct. 15
- Draft Digital Equity Plan
  - [60-day comment public comment period ended Oct. 31](#)
  - Key performance indicators for progress to digital equity across covered populations
  - Draft Digital Equity Plan originally due to NTIA Nov. 30 (NTIA approved extension request, Feb. 13 submission date)

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- Initial Proposal: Volume 1 and Volume 2

Volume 1

- NTIA-required State Challenge process
- State challenge process is required to enhance the accuracy of served and unserved locations to improve map
- State modifications to NTIA model process
  - Speed tests
  - Tribal consent
  - Expansion of Community Anchor Institutions (CAI)
- Challenge process needs to be completed prior to applications
- [Draft Volume 1 published on Oct. 9 with 30 day comment period](#) ended Nov. 10
- Challenge process will begin April 2024 approximately 120 day period

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

Volume 2

- Volume 2 provides detail on:
  - Project area definition
  - Affordability (beyond ACP)
  - Application scoring criteria
  - Fair labor practices
  - Workforce development
  - Cyber security
  - Draft Volume 2 published Nov. 1 with a 30-day comment period, ended Nov. 30.
- Final Volume 1 and Volume 2 will be submitted to NTIA by Dec. 27
- We expect the application process to open in the third quarter of 2024.

Digital Navigation

- In the fiscal year 2023 funding
  - $30 million expended
  - 32 Digital Navigation partners
  - 100,232 individuals assisted with navigation services
  - 101,207 individuals received an internet-connected device
- In fiscal year 2024
  - $15 million appropriated
  - Three awards were granted in Aug. 2023
- There is a substantial need for additional funding to support Digital Navigation across the state

Webinars and technical listening sessions

Ongoing webinars, information sharing, tribal office hours once a month, every two weeks or once a month Internet for All webinar

Visit our Internet for All page for more details.

Thank you!

Questions?

www.commerce.wa.gov

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