OKLAHOMA
Broadband Office

THE

BROADBAND BULLETIN

Your source for broadband news, updates, and impact

May 8, 2025

Groundbreaking news

Groundbreaking news, both literally and figuratively, is coming from the Oklahoma Broadband Office.

As efforts to make reliable and affordable high-speed internet service available to all Oklahomans proceed, the office is partnering with internet service providers to focus attention on the work.

To date, more than a dozen groundbreaking ceremonies have been held in all four quadrants of the state, from Lone Wolf to Vinita, from Arapaho to Atoka, and points between. More are on the way.

A total of 164 projects funded by ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds and Capital Projects Fund grants are being administered by the office.

Once completed, 69,133 homes and businesses previously with no access to broadband service will have connection.

Total investment currently tops $756 million.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

By Mike Sanders, Executive Director, Oklahoma Broadband Office

Rural Oklahoma stands at the dawn of a new and exciting era. At long last, rural residents are being placed on equal footing with those living in the metro areas.

Thanks to grants being administered by the Oklahoma Broadband Office, several hundred million dollars have already been directed toward closing the digital divide in our rural communities.

Of the almost 70,000 homes and businesses already scheduled to receive access to fast, affordable and reliable service, 93 percent are in rural Oklahoma.

And there's a lot more coming!

Competition is now open for $768 million in grants through the BEAD program, from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

BEAD has the goal of ensuring every American has access to broadband service. In Oklahoma, more than 50,000 additional locations are on the list to be served. Of those, 92 percent are in rural areas.

Those awards are expected by the end of this year.

None of this would be happening without the hard work — and investment — of our internet service providers.

Grants awarded so far by the Broadband Governing Board total $469 million. But total investment is $756 million. Those additional millions are coming directly from the companies building the projects.

> *"Rural residents are being placed on equal footing with those living in the metro areas."*

For every grant dollar being invested in expanding broadband service in Oklahoma, internet service providers are kicking in an additional 61 cents.

The BEAD program promises similar results. The scoring criteria for competitive proposals offers more points for applications with the lowest cost per location. Driving down the cost per location can be achieved if applicants pitch in more private investment through their match amount.

But on final tally, the real winners are our rural residents.

BITS AND BYTES

BEAD Competition Underway

Competition by internet service providers is underway for federal grants in the largest high-speed internet expansion program in Oklahoma history.

More than $768 million in broadband expansion grants are expected to be awarded late this year through the BEAD program administered by the Oklahoma Broadband Office.

BEAD grants are designed to connect every remaining unserved and underserved home and business in Oklahoma to reliable and affordable high-speed internet.

The deadline for submitting applications is May 26. After submissions are scored, the office will present its final proposal to the Oklahoma Broadband Governing Board. It will then be sent to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for final approval.

ARPA Middle Mile Grants Nearing Award

The Oklahoma Broadband Governing Board is expected to soon approve awards of some $53 million for Middle-Mile grants.

More than 70 applications were submitted for consideration earlier this year.

The Middle Mile program will help reach hard to serve last-mile connections, including homes, businesses and Community Anchor institutions.

Middle mile infrastructure is the highway of the internet — fast roads that carry data from regional hubs to local areas.

Funding is through the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

Construction Starting for ARPA Capital Projects Fund Awards

Shovels are already hitting the ground for ARPA Capital Projects Fund grants awarded late last September by the Oklahoma Broadband Governing Board.

Three of the 45 awarded projects have completed all planning and construction is underway.

The projects will connect 26,484 homes and businesses with broadband service.

Almost 80 percent of the locations will receive fiber optic connection with the remainder served by fixed wireless technology.

Total Capital Projects Fund investment is $227.7 million between grants and private funds.

All ARPA-funded projects must be operational by October of next year.

Next Public Meeting

The Oklahoma Broadband Governing Board is scheduled to meet at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 13, in the Conference Room of the Harvey Parkway Building, Suite 105, 301 N.W. 63rd Street, Oklahoma City.

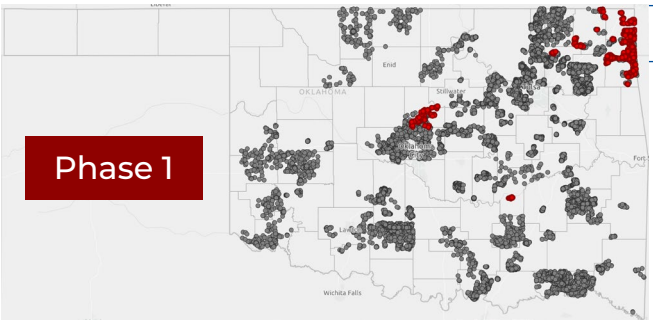
Members of the public are invited to attend in person or watch via live stream.

Links to the meeting agenda and webcast will be posted on the board's meetings page on the Oklahoma Broadband Office website at least 24 hours beforehand.

BROADBAND BY THE NUMBERS

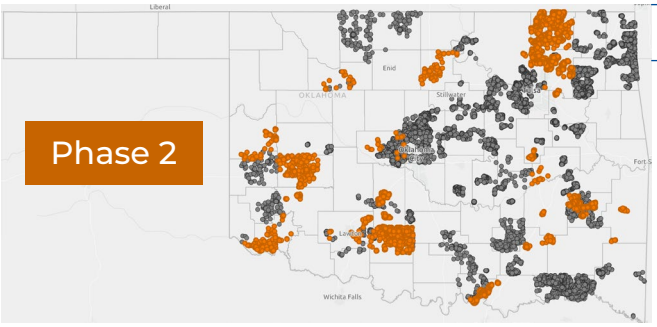
ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Project Status



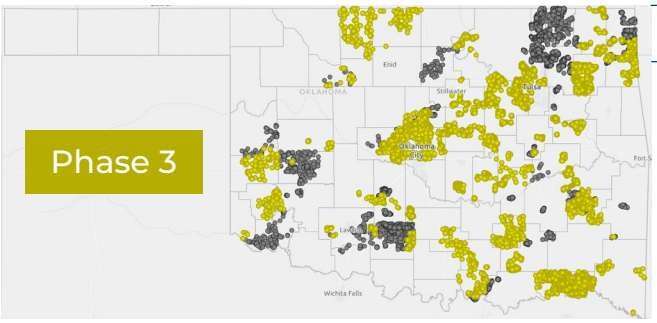
Engineering underway

- 6 projects
- 4 companies
- 4,037 locations
- 5% of projects
- 8% of overall award amount



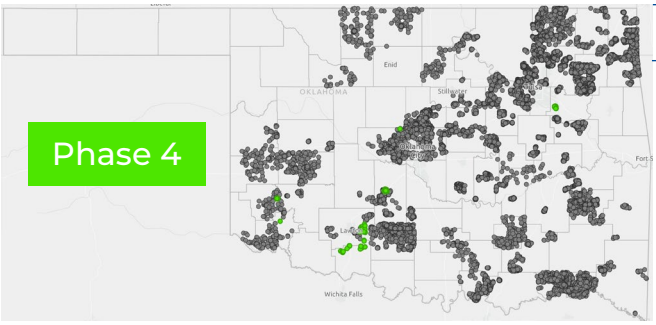
Preparing construction

- 38 projects
- 15 companies
- 13,117 locations
- 32% of projects
- 23% of overall award amount



Construction underway

- 67 projects
- 20 companies
- 25,222 locations
- 56% of projects
- 66% of overall award amount



Construction complete, closeout started

- 8 projects
- 7 companies
- 273 locations
- 7% of projects
- 3% of overall award amount

The Broadband Bulletin is produced by the Oklahoma Broadband Office.