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Gov. Walker: Awards $7 million in broadband expansion grants

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Preliminary grants have been awarded to serve 1,100 businesses and 14,000 homes

MADISON – Governor Scott Walker and the Public Service Commission (PSC) today announced $7 million in new Broadband Expansion Grant Awards. The 37 new grants will extend high-speed internet access to as many as 1,100 business locations and 14,000 residential locations. The awards announced today are preliminary. They will be finalized upon the issuance of the Commission's written decision and the expiration of a 10-day appeal process.
"Because of the truly transformative power of broadband we are awarding more than $7 million to extend high-speed internet in Wisconsin," said Governor Walker. "With these grants we are continuing to build on our investments into broadband throughout the state to ensure that Wisconsin families and businesses have access to technology and information they need to excel. Broadband access is revolutionizing education, health care, and business just like electrical revolutionized farming for my grandparents."

Since taking office, Governor Walker has awarded 138 Broadband Expansion Grants totaling $20 million. These grants have been matched with $32 million in private and local dollars to assist with the build-out of an effective communication infrastructure for Wisconsin's rural families, small business, the telemedicine industry, and our tourism industry.

Among the projects approved today is an extension of fiber optic service to Washington Island in Door County. Earlier this year, electric service to Washington Island was damaged by ice. Washington Island is planning to replace the damaged line with a new submarine power line this fall. The grant project approved today proposes to place a 24-strand fiber-optic cable within the new power line, lowering the cost for both the electric and communications services. As a result of this grant, the customers on Plum and Washington Islands will receive essential electric and broadband infrastructure.

This grant round provides awards to counties that had not received previously received a Broadband Expansion Grant. Counties receiving a grant award for the first time include Adams, Brown, Calumet, Green Lake, Lincoln, Outagamie, Racine, Richland, Sawyer and Waushara Counties.

Additional projects will continue to build out broadband service in Bayfield, Buffalo, Chippewa, Iron, Oneida, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, St. Croix and Walworth Counties. These are projects that have been implemented in stages over several grant rounds to provide a robust communications infrastructure for businesses and residents in those areas.

The grant applications approved today are:

Amery Telcom, Inc. d/b/a Northwest Communications Town of Turtle Lake project – $96,500 (grant award). This project proposes to build a fiber to the premises service past 5 businesses and 130 homes in the Town of Turtle Creek, in Barron County, just east of the City of Clayton.

Amherst Telephone Company Towns of Hull and Dewey Phase III project – $314,388. This project will build a fiber to the premises service to an additional 154 homes and businesses in the Towns of Dewey and Hull in Portage County.

Bertram Communications, LLC Shawano County fixed wireless project- $274,065. This project will build a build a fixed wireless service in rural areas of Shawano County in the vicinity of Shawano Lake and west of Shawano. The proposal would install antennas in nine service sites. There are 2,344 households and 110 businesses within the footprint of this project.

Bloomer Telephone Company Bloomer School District Phase II fiber project – $519,824. This project proposes to build a fiber to the premises service to 4

businesses and 251 homes and farms in the Town of Woodmohr, and the west side of the Towns of Eagle Point and Cleveland. This project will complete the build out of fiber service to residential locations in the Bloomer School District.

Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC Lafayette County fixed wireless project – $308,384. This project will build three wireless towers in the southern portion of Lafayette County, south of Highway 11. The fixed wireless service will reach 33 businesses and 162 homes within the footprint of the antennas.

Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC Town of Deerfield fixed wireless project – $102,983. This project will build one wireless tower in the Town of Deerfield in Waushara County. The fixed wireless service will reach 81 businesses and 229 homes within the footprint of the antennas.

Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC Little Green Lake fixed wireless project – $102,983. This project will build one wireless tower in the vicinity of Little Green Lake in Green Lake County. The fixed wireless service will reach 14 businesses and 257 homes within the footprint of the antennas.

Hagar Telecom d/b/a BEVCOMM Town of Diamond Bluff Phase II project – $179,582. This project will build a fiber to the premises service past 121 locations in the Town of Diamond Bluff in Pierce County. This project area is immediately north of the FY 2017 project area.
CenturyTel of Central Wisconsin d/b/a CenturyLink Seymour exchange project – $18,557. This project will install an upgrade in the Seymour exchange office and build a 500-foot fiber route to upgrade the DSL service in a project area along Isaar Road northeast of Seymour. The project will upgrade the DSL service for 3 businesses and 40 residences.
CenturyTel of the Midwest-Kendall, LLC d/b/a CenturyLink Mazomanie exchange project – $15,258. This project will install a 0.4-mile fiber route to a serving device on the south side of the Village of Mazomanie, near Howards Trail. The project will upgrade the DSL service for 5 businesses and 51 residences.

CenturyTel of the Midwest-Wisconsin, LLC d/b/a CenturyLink Mukwanago exchange project – $13,875. This project will install an upgrade in the Mukwonago exchange office and build a 0.5-mile fiber route to a project area northeast of the Village. The project will upgrade the DSL service for 21 businesses and 712 residences.

Chequamegon Communications Cooperative, Inc. d/b/a Norvado Town of Barnes

Phase II project – $640,000. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the Town of Barnes in Bayfield County. The fiber route will pass 9 businesses and 727 residences.
CTC Telcom, Inc. d/b/a Mosaic Telecom Lake Desair fiber project – $70,000. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the vicinity of Lake Desair, northwest of Rice Lake in Barron County. The project will pass 33 homes.

Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company Town of Milton Phase II project – $300,275. This project will build Phase II of the fiber to the premises service project in the Town of Milton in Buffalo County. In this phase, Cochrane will build service to 11 businesses and 84 residences located north of the Phase I project area.

Whitewater Wideband, LLC d/b/a Edge Broadband Town of Sugar Creek Phase II project – $217,952. This project will add to the FY 2018 Round 2 fiber project in Sugar Creek. This project will extend the fiber to the premises service past 61 businesses and 534 homes adjacent to Highway 12 just south of Lauderdale Lake in Walworth County.

E-vergent.com, LLC Town of Raymond fiber project – $56,336. This project will build a fiber to the premises service to an unserved subdivision in Racine County, west of I-94. The project will build past 19 homes.

Iron County Resource Development Association, Inc. Iron County fixed wireless Phase IV project – $53,275. This project will complete the funding of a tower outside of Mercer partially funded in the last round. This project will also build a new tower near Fisher Lake, northeast of Mercer. There are 3 businesses and 963 homes within the footprint of the towers.

Lakeland Communications Town of Eureka Phase II project – $168,000. This project will extend fiber to the premises service past 19 businesses and 93 homes in the Town of Eureka in Polk County.

LaValle Telephone Cooperative fiber project – $240,000. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the Towns of Henrietta and Rockbridge, in Richland County southwest of LaValle, and in the Town of Seven Mile Creek, in Juneau County northeast of LaValle. The project will build past 6 businesses and 95 homes.

Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative, Inc. Towns of Dell Prairie and Newport project – $145,286. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the Town

of Dell Prairie, in Adams County, and the Town of Newport, in Columbia County. The project area is about 1 mile northeast of Wisconsin Dells. The project will build past 111 homes.

Brown County C-LEC, LLC d/b/a Nsight Teleservice Calumet County fiber route – $372,022. This project will build a 16-mile route connecting several communities in Calumet, Manitowoc, and Sheboygan Counties. Nsight will pass 108 businesses, 5 community anchor institutions, and 2 cellular towers.

Brown County C-LEC, LLC d/b/a Nsight Teleservice Town of Green Bay fixed wireless project – $113,112. This project will build a fixed wireless service in the unincorporated community of Champion, in the Town of Green Bay in northeast Brown County. This project will pilot the use of Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) wireless technology. There are 4 businesses and 163 homes within reach of the antenna.

Brown County C-LEC d/b/a Nsight Teleservice Washington Island fiber project – $104,331. This project will build a middle mile fiber route between Gills Rock, Plum Island, and Washington Island, at the northeast side of Door County. The broadband cable will be built into a submarine power line, and placed by Washington Island Electric Cooperative in one joint undertaking.

Ntera, LLC Town of Birch Creek project – $250,000. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the vicinity of Lake Holcombe, east of the Chippewa River, in the Town of Birch Creek in Chippewa County. The project will build past 14 businesses and 262 homes.

Oneida County Economic Development Corporation Oneida County fixed wireless Phase V project – $117,500. This project will build six towers and install fixed wireless equipment on those towers. This will be the fifth phase of this build out in Oneida County. There are 267 businesses and 3,127 residences in the footprint of these towers.

Price County Telephone Company Town of Winter project – $46,040. This project will build a 4-mile fiber route and connect a fiber to the premises service to an underserved area in the Town of Winter in Sawyer County, about 12 miles west of Phillips. The project will build past 2 businesses and 31 homes.

Price County Telephone Company City of Phillips / Town of Worcester project –

$257,898. This project will build 11 miles of new fiber south of Phillips, connecting fiber to the premises service to 39 businesses and 226 homes.

Reedsburg Utility Commission Town of Delton project – $137,722. This project will build a fiber to the premises service past 19 businesses and 134 homes adjacent to Highway 12 just south of I-90/94 at the Wisconsin Dells exit. This project area is northeast of RUC's FY 2016 broadband project area.

Reedsburg Utility Commission River Valley project – $305,550. This project will build a fiber backbone through the Village of Spring Green and extend a fiber to the premises service to unserved areas in the Town of Spring Green. The project will pass 35 businesses, 8 community locations and 262 residential locations.

Somerset Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a Northwest Communications Town of Somerset Phase III project – $63,000. This project will build a fiber to the premises service in the Town of Somerset in St. Croix County. The fiber route will pass 185 residences. This project will build a fiber route along the St. Croix River between the two prior broadband projects in the Town of Somerset, completing the conversion from copper to fiber service from Houlton north to the Polk County line.

Starwire Technologies, LLC Town of Clam Falls project – $159,800. This project will build FTTP service to an unserved area in the Town of Clam Falls in Polk County. The project will build a 16-mile fiber route past 15 businesses and 105 homes.

The Farmers Telephone Company, LLC d/b/a TDS Telecom Town of Beetown DSL project – $375,868. This project will improve DSL service in the Town of Beetown in Grant County. The project will build 7.8 miles of new fiber, install 17 news DSAs and upgrade 6 existing DSAs. The project will improve service for 27 businesses and 470 homes.

Town of King Charter Communications cable project – $372,223. This project will extend Charter Communications cable facilities in the Town of King, in Lincoln County just east of the City of Tomahawk. The project will build past 10 businesses and 247 homes (and 57 vacant lots).

Town of Nashville Northwoods Connect fixed wireless project – $56,000. This project will build two wireless towers in the Town of Nashville in Forest County. The broadband service provider is Northwoods Connect, and this project will complement the Northwoods network in Oneida County. The fixed wireless service

will reach 20 businesses and 485 homes within the footprint of the antennas.

Town of Watertown Netwurx Internet, LLC fixed wireless project – $150,690. This project will build a fixed wireless service in three townships (Farmington, Ixonia and Watertown) in Jefferson County. There are 106 and 1,330 residences located within the project area. This broadband service will provide a speed of up to 30 / 15 Mbps.

Town of Sun Prairie UpNetWI, LLC fixed wireless project – $25,004. This project will build a fixed wireless service to a neighborhood in the Town of Sun Prairie, south of the City of Sun Prairie. There are 7 businesses and 74 homes within the footprint of the antenna. The provider is UpNetWI, LLC.

Vernon Communications Cooperative Vernon County Phase III fiber project – $309,294. This project is Phase III of Vernon Communications Cooperative's fiber build out within the Viroqua telephone exchange. This phase will build past 20 businesses 144 homes in rural Vernon County.