

Gov. Evers: Announces \$100 million for next round of State Broadband Expansion Grants

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today, together with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), announced that \$100 million will be available for the next round of the State Broadband Expansion Grant Program. Altogether, under Gov. Evers, the 2019, 2020, and 2021 state broadband expansion grants and efforts funded using federal funds for broadband grants have provided or are going to provide more than 300,000 homes and businesses with access to new or improved service.

“I declared 2021 the Year of Broadband Access because the coronavirus pandemic further deepened the digital divide in our state and underscored the need for high-speed, affordable internet in every household and every corner of Wisconsin,” said Gov. Evers. “Whether it’s going to school, working from home, or running a small business, broadband is essential to ensuring our families, communities, and our state bounce back from this pandemic even better than we were before it hit. I’m proud of our efforts to make historic investments in broadband expansion to help make sure folks are connected.”

The funding for the grants announced today comes from the 2021-23 biennial budget signed by Gov. Evers in July, which provided \$129 million over the biennium for expanding high-speed broadband internet to unserved or underserved areas of the state. In Gov. Evers’ first biennial budget, \$48 million was allocated for broadband expansion, which funded 130 grants. In addition to the state’s Broadband Expansion Grant Program, Gov. Evers allocated federal dollars to provide new or improved broadband services. In funding provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and through the federal American Rescue Plan Act, Gov. Evers authorized the PSC to award over \$105.3 million for 94 projects in more than 42 counties and three tribal communities.

“I want to thank Gov. Evers for signing a budget that invests \$129 million for the expansion of broadband internet in Wisconsin. This amount of funding demonstrates his commitment and dedication to connecting all of Wisconsin to this essential service,” said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “As we continue to push towards the goal of getting all of us connected, the PSC will utilize these dollars effectively and efficiently while maintaining our high standards of accountability and transparency.”

The purpose of the State Broadband Expansion Grant Program is to deploy high performance broadband in underserved areas of the state. Since the inception of the program in 2014, 268 grants have been awarded and have connected or are in the process of connecting over 20,000 businesses and 296,000 homes to high-speed broadband internet service.

The application to apply for the next round of grant funding will be available on the [PSC website](#) on Dec. 1, 2021. More information about the State Broadband Expansion Grant Program and its past recipients is available [here](#).