

Gov. Evers: Announces release of 2022 Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access annual report

Posted on Tuesday, Jul 12, 2022

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced the [Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access](#) released its second annual report. Building on findings from the 2021 report, the 2022 report provides an update on efforts under Gov. Evers and the Evers Administration to expand access, adoption, and affordability of high-speed internet across the state and makes recommendations for the state to continue building on this progress.

Since Gov. Evers took office in 2019, Wisconsin has disbursed or committed nearly \$300 million towards expanding broadband, including \$105 million in federal funding directed by the governor. State and federal funds allocated under Gov. Evers for broadband grants have provided or will provide more than 387,000 homes and businesses access to new or improved services.

“High-speed internet is absolutely critical to helping folks learn, work, and stay connected to important services, and since 2019, we’ve made tremendous progress in getting Wisconsinites connected by funding projects that will provide new or improved broadband to over 387,000 homes and businesses all across our state,” said Gov. Evers. “I want to thank the many experts, stakeholders, public officials, and industry leaders who have been working on this task force for the past two years for providing smart, strategic recommendations of steps our state can take to get communities connected by expanding the access, adoption, and affordability of internet for families, businesses, and folks across our state.”

Among others, the 2022 report includes recommendations to:

- Sustain the State Broadband Expansion Grant Program funding in order to leverage federal funds projects and support local projects not eligible for federal funding;
- Create a guide to assist communities and local leaders in broadband and digital equity planning efforts;
- Create technical assistance programs to guide communities in developing broadband plans and navigating funding opportunities;
- Encourage and support coordination with Tribal governments in broadband planning, resources deployment, and funding;
- Develop a statewide Digital Navigator Program to assist under-connected people and solve a wide range of adoption issues;
- Develop and improve outreach for the federal Affordable Connectivity Program; and
- Continue advancing the goals from the 2021 Task Force Report.

The 2022 report can be found [here](#).

Created during the coronavirus pandemic and supported by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access consists of experts, stakeholders, and public officials who have been meeting virtually since August 2020. Throughout the process, the Task Force received presentations from outside experts and comments from the public, which helped identify forward-looking broadband policies and initiatives that aim to close the digital divide in the state.

"Removing barriers to access, affordability, and the use of broadband are necessary to ensure that all can realize its benefits," said Rebecca Cameron Valcq, chairperson of the PSC. "Making the investments and taking the steps recommended in this and last year's reports will set our communities on a path towards getting all connected."

In [July 2020](#), Gov. Evers signed [Executive Order #80](#) creating the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access and directed it to:

- Research and recommend forward-looking broadband policies and initiatives that address state broadband goals and needs;
- Promote the efficient, strategic expansion of the broadband facilities and adoption across the state;
- Explore strategic expansion opportunities in partnership with stakeholders across the state;
- Work collaboratively with the PSC State Broadband Office to promote and identify reliable and unique broadband goals and solutions; and
- Present its findings to the governor and state legislature by June 30, 2021.

More information about the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access, as well as the 2021 report can be found on the PSC website [here](#).