

Public Service Commission: Receives 194 applications requesting more than \$495 million for state broadband expansion grants

Posted on Thursday, Mar 24, 2022

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PSC expected to award \$100 million for broadband expansion by summer 2022
MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) received 194 applications requesting more than \$495 million for the state's Broadband Expansion Grant Program. Funding for the grants was provided by the 2021-23 biennial budget, signed by Gov. Evers in July 2021, which provided \$129 million over the biennium for expanding high-speed broadband internet. PSC is expected to award up to \$100 million for grants in summer 2022 as part of the first round of funding. The remaining funds will be allocated for future broadband expansion grant opportunities.

"Broadband is a necessity that students and workers, business owners, families, and communities need to be successful, and nobody should have to drive to the end of their driveway or travel into town to sit in a library parking lot just to send an email," said Gov. Evers. "With the help of local broadband providers, our broadband expansion grants have made great strides in closing the digital divide in our state, and I look forward to getting these funds out the door to continue to expand broadband to those who need it."

The Broadband Expansion Grant Program helps find a path to return on investment in areas of the state that are challenging to serve due to population density. Since Gov. Evers has been in office, the state has awarded \$164 million to 262 projects to expand broadband statewide. As a result, more than 300,000 homes and businesses will be connected to high-speed internet following the completion of all previously funded projects.

"Wisconsin has made a lot of progress helping our communities access high-speed

internet; however, hundreds of thousands of our fellow Wisconsinites still lack the infrastructure needed to conduct their everyday business,” said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “Each grant round, we get closer to 100 percent broadband connectivity, and I am grateful that Gov. Evers continues to invest historic funding to make our goal obtainable.”

The PSC’s State Broadband Office made the first round of grant applications available on Dec. 1, 2021, and were due on March 17, 2022. PSC will evaluate each grant based on the matching funds, public-private partnerships, economic development, scalability, impact, and the proposed service area’s existing broadband service needs.

A list of 2022 Broadband Expansion Grant Program applicants is available [here](#).

A map of 2022 Broadband Expansion Grant Program applicants is available [here](#).

A list of previously funded broadband expansion grant projects and more information about the Broadband Expansion Grant Program can be found [here](#).