

# State officials developing implementation plan for federal broadband dollars

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State officials are now developing an implementation plan for more than \$1 billion in federal dollars coming to Wisconsin through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program.

During a meeting of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access, Broadband Expansion Manager Rory Tikalsky yesterday provided an update on BEAD planning efforts in Wisconsin. His position is part of the Public Service Commission's Wisconsin Broadband Office.

He explained planning efforts have pivoted from outreach and gathering feedback to writing a plan for "figuring out how to actually make this happen" in the next several years.

Wisconsin is set to receive about \$1.06 billion in federal funding through the BEAD program, a \$42.45 billion national effort established through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

"We're sprinting toward the finish of our BEAD five-year plan," Tikalsky said. "That's going to be due Aug. 28, but realistically we've got to finalize our content in the next week or two here, then polish and improve and everything else."

Much of that plan will align with the task force's third annual report, which was released early last month, Tikalsky noted.

Going into this fall, state officials will be developing an initial proposal for the program, which will include a comprehensive map of locations that will receive funding as well as scoring criteria, details on the allocation process and more. That proposal is due Dec. 27.

After a spring "state challenge process" focused on the eligibility map for funding

allocations, Tikalsky said “by next spring, next summer, we’re going to start opening grant rounds, awarding grants — really trying to find a way to push money out the door and start construction.”

Watch a video of the meeting here:

<https://wiseye.org/2023/08/02/governors-task-force-on-broadband-access-12/>

See the task force’s 2023 report:

[https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2023/07/07/file\\_attachments/2548445/2023GovernorsTaskForceOnBroadbandAccessReport.pdf](https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2023/07/07/file_attachments/2548445/2023GovernorsTaskForceOnBroadbandAccessReport.pdf)

See more on the BEAD program:

<https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program>

*-By Alex Moe*