



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro and Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority Announce More Than \$448 Million in BEAD Funding to Expand Pennsylvanians' Access to Affordable High-Speed Internet

This initial Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding will support projects in 50 counties, with all remaining program funds to be awarded before the end of this year.

Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, the number of households and businesses that lack access to high-speed internet has decreased by nearly 60 percent across the Commonwealth, with over 198,000 locations connected since 2022.

Governor Shapiro is keeping his promise to connect all locations that lack high-speed internet service and close the Commonwealth's digital divide.

A full list of today's BEAD awards is available [here](#) – and Pennsylvanians waiting to be connected to the internet can see when PBDA expects to connect their location by visiting pa.gov/ConnectPA.



Bellefonte, PA – Today, Governor Josh Shapiro and Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) Executive Director Brandon Carson visited Bald Eagle High School in Centre County to announce more than **\$448 million** in [Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\)](#) grants have been awarded to projects in **50 counties** across the Commonwealth. This is the first round of awards after the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) [approved](#) more than **\$711 million** in BEAD funding for Pennsylvania in April.

Since the Governor took office, **the number of households that lack access to high-speed internet has decreased by nearly 60 percent** across the Commonwealth, down from more than 330,000 households in 2022 to less than 133,000 today, as a result of the Shapiro Administration's work to drive out funding quickly and effectively. The projects announced today build on that progress to continue bringing reliable, affordable, high-speed internet to homes, businesses, schools, libraries, and other community facilities across the Commonwealth — expanding access in areas that have long lacked adequate broadband service.

"I promised to connect every Pennsylvanian to high-speed, affordable internet by the end of the decade, and my Administration is working quickly to drive out hundreds of millions of dollars to meet that timeline," said **Governor Shapiro**. "In the 21st century, reliable and affordable internet can't just be a luxury for some — connecting more Pennsylvanians to the internet will help kids achieve more in school, small business owners connect with potential customers, and families see the doctor when they can't travel. We've already connected nearly 200,000 households to the internet in the last several years and now we're working to connect the remaining 133,000 households in the next four years."

The funding announced today will support broadband projects that include a diverse mix of technologies including fiber and fixed wireless, for use in long-term leases; multi-family residential deployment; planning, design, and engineering; personnel costs; physical improvements; and network software upgrades. There is no minimum or

maximum grant amount for any project, however, projects require matching a minimum 25 percent share of the total project cost.

The Governor also announced the creation of a new website allowing Pennsylvanians who do not yet have access to high-speed internet to track when PBDA estimates they'll receive a connection here. That website is available at pa.gov/ConnectPA.

"Access to high-speed internet has become an essential part of life," said **PBDA Executive Director Carson**. "Everything from education, banking, and even healthcare depends on access to online resources and a high-speed connection. The projects announced today will connect thousands of Pennsylvanians and rural locations in every region of the Commonwealth to reliable, high-speed infrastructure."

Pennsylvania was originally allocated \$1.16 billion in BEAD funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 and established the BEAD program in accordance with NTIA's [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), [NTIA's BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice](#), and Pennsylvania's [Act 96 of 2021](#).

As part of the [updated requirements](#) issued by the NTIA in 2025, today's announcement includes the following agreements finalized by PBDA:

- Central Bradford Progress Authority
- Centre WISP Venture Company
- Commonwealth Telephone Company (doing business as Frontier Communications)
- Connect Holdings (doing business as Brightspeed)
- CoreConnect
- eCommunity Holdings
- IBT Group USA
- Upward Broadband
- Verizon Pennsylvania and Verizon North

A full list of today's BEAD awards is available [here](#).

With their award, Verizon is investing \$40 million and receiving \$28.85 million in BEAD funding for a project that will serve nearly 3,000 homes and businesses throughout Centre and Mifflin counties.

"Verizon is proud to serve customers and communities across Pennsylvania by partnering with local leaders to expand broadband statewide. We know access to broadband is critical for advancing educational opportunities and the difference it can make for students' futures," said **Tony Lewis, Vice President, Public Policy, Verizon**. "Working directly with Gov. Shapiro, Secretary Siger, and Executive Director

Brandon Carson made this possible and we're thankful for their diligence in helping us achieve this."

Once complete, local businesses will gain increased access to customers and markets, workers will have expanded access to employment and training opportunities, and farmers will be given increased access to modern precision-ag technologies. This expansion will also ensure students, health clinics, and families have the connectivity they need to succeed, including nearly every person living in the Bald Eagle Area School District.

"The Centre County Commissioners sponsored a broadband study in 2021 that demonstrated the clear need for greater broadband accessibility across the county," said **Chair Mark Higgins, Centre County Commissioner**. "At that time, more than 8,000 addresses in Centre County lacked access to broadband internet. The Commissioners thank the Governor, our state elected officials, and the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority for their partnership in helping close the broadband accessibility gap."

"We were honored to welcome Governor Shapiro to Bald Eagle Area and to be part of an announcement that will have a meaningful impact on our students, families, and communities across Centre County," said **Superintendent Chris Santini, Bald Eagle Area School District**. "Reliable, high-speed internet is essential for our students and schools, and this investment will help ensure more students have the connectivity they need to learn, succeed and access opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. We appreciate the Governor's continued support for public education and for making investments that strengthen our communities."

"As a high school counselor in a rural district, I see firsthand how reliable broadband can impact our students," said **Katie Kingera, Counselor, Bald Eagle High School**. "I've worked with students who use a parent's cell phone as a hotspot just to access assignments and complete their schoolwork, or rush to finish homework during study halls because they may not have reliable internet at home. For rural students, broadband means access to education, college applications, career opportunities and resources beyond our community. Every student deserves to be judged by their effort, abilities and potential — not by whether their family has reliable internet access."

"Reliable high-speed internet isn't a luxury anymore; it's fundamental economic infrastructure," said **Greg Scott, President & CEO, Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County**. "For Centre County, expanding broadband means more of our residents can participate in the economy, more businesses can grow wherever they're located, and more of our communities can compete for jobs and investment. This is exactly the kind of infrastructure investment that strengthens our entire county."

"These investments aren't just helping close the digital divide. They're also creating quality career opportunities for Pennsylvania workers, creating good-paying jobs, building strong careers, and opening new apprenticeship opportunities for workers to build the infrastructure that our communities need," said **Steve Kuncelman, Assistant Safety and Training Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers**

(IBEW) Local 126. “We’re proud to play a part in connecting Pennsylvanians with reliable high-speed internet.”

“As I’ve said often, access to fast, reliable internet isn’t a luxury, it’s a necessity. This first round of BEAD funding is the culmination of several years of efforts, of which I’ve been honored to have been deeply involved with since the creation of the PA Broadband Development Authority itself,” said **Representative Rob Matzie, PA’s 16th House District**. Through every stage of this long process, the overriding goal remained simple – to close the technology divide in our Commonwealth. This is a giant step forward in fulfilling that goal.”

“The lack of high speed internet isolates individuals and communities, especially in an increasingly interconnected world. Simple, everyday tasks that many of us take for granted - like searching the web or buying something online - can be a serious challenge in those communities. But the lack of high speed internet is not just a quality of life issue, it is also a significant economic development issue - limiting connectivity for local businesses, restricting learning opportunities, and even preventing certain healthcare options, such as tele health. And when combined with limited cell phone service and coverage, it can also be a serious barrier for public safety,” said **Representative Paul Takac, PA’s 82nd House District**. “That is why today’s announcement of the first round of funding is so important and exciting for rural and underserved communities here in Centre County and across the Commonwealth.”

Last year, **Governor Shapiro** and **PBDA Executive Director Carson** also [visited Cambria County](#) to highlight PBDA’s progress in providing more Pennsylvanians with affordable high-speed internet access. PBDA previously deployed **more than \$269 million** to improve high-speed internet connectivity and device access, including:

- **\$204.1 million in Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP)** for projects to bring high-speed internet to over 100,000 Pennsylvanians in 42 counties.
- **\$45 million in Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program** grants for 49 projects in 27 counties across Pennsylvania.
- **\$20 million in Digital Connectivity Technology Program** funding to provide technology devices such as laptops for distribution to schools, libraries, municipalities, workforce training organizations, and other non-profits who can make them available to individuals that lack the technology needed to access the internet.

The remainder of BEAD grant allocations will be awarded by the PBDA before the end of this year — with updated resources for the program [here](#) — and by 2030, universal internet access will be available throughout the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvanians who do not yet have access to high-speed internet can track when PBDA estimates they’ll receive a connection [here](#).

Visit the [Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority’s website](#) to learn more about its work to close the digital divide in the Commonwealth.

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