



NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

2021-2022 GREAT GRANT PROGRAM GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Growing Rural Economies with Access
to Technology Grant Program

Funded by the Federal American Rescue Plan Act

Published Jan. 31, 2022

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About the N.C. Department of Information Technology

The mission of the N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) is to promote a stronger North Carolina that connects customers, citizens, business, education and government. NCDIT provides technology services to state agencies and is charged with closing the digital divide by expanding availability of broadband services and promoting the adoption of affordable, high-speed internet.

The NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity is responsible for expanding access to broadband infrastructure, supporting affordability, advancing digital literacy and building digital equity in North Carolina. The Division houses two offices, the Broadband Infrastructure Office and the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy, charged with ensuring that every North Carolinian has access to an affordable, high-speed internet connection. The goals of the Division are to ensure that, by 2025, 98% of households have broadband internet access, 80% of households subscribe to broadband internet, and 100% of households with children subscribe to broadband internet.

The Broadband Infrastructure Office (the Office) serves as a statewide resource for broadband expansion and first-responder communications. The Office works collaboratively with state, federal, local, private and nonprofit partners to draw attention to the digital divide in the state and work to close the gap by administering rural broadband grant programs, facilitating partnerships with broadband providers, gathering data to identify unserved areas, and providing policy and technical guidance to local and state leaders.

Disclaimer

The Office reserves the right to amend this guidance pursuant to feedback from potential applicants and legislative changes amending the governing law. While we have worked to ensure that the content of the guidance is complete and accurate, errors and omissions can occur. The information contained in this document is not legal or professional advice. While the Office is available to answer questions and will attempt to help you resolve any concerns, we cannot provide legal advice to applicants, and you should consult with professional advisors concerning specific matters relevant to your application.

1. PROGRAM SUMMARY

NCDIT's Broadband Infrastructure Office is seeking applications to provide grant funding to private providers of broadband services to facilitate the deployment of broadband service to areas of the state unserved with broadband. The grant funding will be provided through the Growing Rural Economic with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant Program, which is a competitive grant program codified in N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373, established under S.L. 2018-5, and amended by S.L. 2019-230, S.L. 2020-97, and S.L. 2021-180. The program will provide grants for eligible projects in eligible economically distressed counties as explained in this guidance and in the enabling legislation.

The enclosed application materials and program guidelines are for use when applying for this round of GREAT grants and have been developed based on the enabling legislation for the GREAT Grant Program and applicable federal guidance.

Access key definitions as defined in legislation for the GREAT Grant program in [Appendix A – Program Definitions](#) and within the relevant sections of the document for clarity.

A. Funding Source and Funding Availability

The GREAT Grant program originally launched in 2019 and subsequently became a recurring state-funded grant program within the NCDIT Broadband Infrastructure Office. Session Law 2021-180 appropriates \$350 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the GREAT Grant Program. This funding round (GREAT ARPA Round) may award up to \$350 million in grant awards. Per current legislation, a portion of funding is appropriated through State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) (\$72,939,144) and a portion is appropriated through Coronavirus Capital Projects Funds (CPF) (\$277,060,856).

N.C. [Session Law 2021-180](#) and the corresponding appropriations committee report established the use of Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) and Coronavirus Capital Projects Funds (CPF) from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and the U.S. Department of Treasury for the GREAT Grant Program. The NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity's Broadband Infrastructure Office will administer these funds in accordance with the requirements of State law and the [US SFRF Treasury Guidance](#), such as the [Final Rule](#), [the FAQs](#), and [the Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#) or [US CPF Treasury Guidance](#) and [the CPF FAQs](#). Both sources of funds will follow compliance requirements of the [Uniform Guidance \(2 CFR 200\)](#).

- See [Appendix B - Summary of Federal Compliance Requirements](#) for additional information.

Under this GREAT round, applications will be treated in the following manner: the highest scoring projects will be awarded using funds from the State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) first. Upon exhaustion of any allocated SFRF dollars, remaining projects scoring highest to lowest may be awarded funding from any available CPF dollars. The Broadband Infrastructure Office will confirm the funding source with applicants at the time of any awards, or sooner. All applicants accepting awards must adhere to any and all federal funding requirements.

B. Eligible Applicants/Recipients

- **Eligible Recipients:** Eligible grant recipients are private providers of broadband services, including cooperatively organized entities, or any partnerships formed between cooperatively organized entities, private providers, or any combination thereof.

C. GREAT Projects and Scoring

The GREAT Grant Program is a competitive grant program. Applications must propose to deploy broadband infrastructure to unserved households and businesses at certain speed thresholds. Applications are scored based upon the Scoring Matrix outlined within the GREAT Grant legislation which primarily assesses numbers of locations, speed and cost. Applications receiving the highest score receive priority status for the awarding of grants.

The following definitions apply:

- **Eligible Project:** An eligible project is a discrete and specific project located in an unserved economically distressed area seeking to provide broadband service to homes, businesses, and community anchor points not currently served. Eligible projects do not include middle mile, backhaul, and other similar projects not directed at broadband service to end users. If a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.
- **Prospective broadband recipient:** A household, home, business, community anchor point, agricultural operation, or agricultural processing facility that is currently unserved and is identified in an application submitted in accordance with this section.
- **Household:** A house, apartment, single room, or other group of rooms, if occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, and where the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall.
- **Business:** Any lawful trade, investment, or other purpose or activity, whether conducted or undertaken for profit. The term also includes community anchor points, agricultural operations, and agricultural processing facilities.
- **Agriculture:** Activities defined in N.C.G.S. § 106-581.1.

In the enabling GREAT Grant legislation, applications received points for serving agricultural operations or agricultural processing facilities, and for serving Community Anchor Institutions. Ag Operations and Community Anchor Institutions are no longer called out separately in the revised scoring matrix and should be treated as businesses for the purposes of capturing numbers of locations included within an application.

Access the full scoring matrix in the [Scoring Section](#).

D. Broadband Service/Unserved Areas

- **Broadband Service:** For the purposes of the GREAT Grant program: terrestrially deployed Internet access service that delivers transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload (25:3). Terrestrially deployed technologies are generally understood to include wired infrastructure (such as fiber, coax, copper) and fixed wireless.

In assessing the delivery of transmission speeds for purposes of defining unserved areas, the federal concept of “reliably”, within the American Rescue Plan Act provisions related to broadband funding, should also be considered. Areas where broadband transmission speeds are not delivered *reliably*, may be considered unserved.

- **Reliably:** U.S. Treasury FAQ 6.11 addresses this. Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Frequently Asked Questions, as of July 19, 2021; <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRPFAQ.pdf>. The FAQ states, “The use of ‘reliably’ in the IFR provides recipients with significant discretion to assess whether the households and businesses in the area to be served by a project have access to wireline broadband service that can actually and consistently meet the specified thresholds of at least 25Mbps/3Mbps—i.e., to consider the actual experience of current wireline broadband customers that subscribe to services at or above the 25 Mbps/3 Mbps threshold. Whether there is a provider serving the area that advertises or otherwise claims to offer speeds that meet the 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speed thresholds is not dispositive.” The Final Rule states, “Consistent with further guidance issued by Treasury, in determining areas for investment, recipients may choose to consider any available data, including but not limited to documentation of existing broadband internet service performance, federal and/or state collected broadband data, user speed test results, interviews with community members and business owners, reports from community organizations, and any other information they deem relevant. In evaluating such data, recipients may take into account a variety of factors, including whether users actually receive internet service at or above the speed thresholds at all hours of the day, whether factors other than speed such as latency, jitter, or deterioration of the existing connections make their user experience unreliable, and whether the existing service is being delivered by legacy technologies, such as copper telephone lines (typically using Digital Subscriber Line technology) or early versions of cable system technology (DOCSIS 2.0 or earlier), and other factors related to the services to be provided by the project. In addition, recipients may consider the actual experience of current broadband customers when making their determinations; whether there is a provider serving the area that advertises or otherwise claims to offer broadband at a given speed is not dispositive.”
- **Broadband Access:** Broadband access is considered available if the internet carrier can provide broadband service to a Location immediately or within ten (10) business days upon request and without cost to the customer other than standard connection fees.
- **Unserved Area:** A designated geographic area that is presently without access to broadband service, meaning terrestrially deployed Internet access service that delivers transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload, offered by a wireline or fixed wireless provider. Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other State or federally funded programs designed

specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months or for the duration of the federal funding program for that area, or if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency's regulations governing the funding program.

- **Unserved household or business:** A household or business that does not presently have access to broadband service, as defined in this subsection.

E. Speed Requirements for Deployments

The Base Speed Multiplier in the GREAT legislation allows for the submittal of applications at the following Minimum Download/Minimum Upload speeds:

- 100:20 Mbps up to 100:100 Mbps
- 100:100 Mbps symmetrical
- Greater than 100:100 Mbps

However, the 2021 GREAT Grant legislation (Session Law 2021-180) also requires project speeds be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload on or before Dec. 31, 2026, or the project is subject to repayment provisions.

An applicant proposing minimum download and minimum upload speeds of less than 100 Mbps symmetrical shall provide an attestation to the Broadband Infrastructure Office that, upon project completion, the completed infrastructure will be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload on or before Dec. 31, 2026, subject to the return of all federal American Rescue Plan Act funds received under this program and all of the grant forfeiture provisions in N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373(I).

In assessing speed capabilities for the purposes of defining transmission speeds for completed infrastructure, the federal concept of “reliably”, within the American Rescue Plan Act broadband funding, should be considered. Areas where broadband transmission speeds cannot be delivered *reliably*, may not meet the speed requirements above.

- **Per the US Treasury Final Rule:** Eligible projects must be designed to, upon completion, *reliably* meet or exceed symmetrical 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload speeds. In cases where it is not practicable, because of excessive cost of the project or geography, or topography of the area to be served by the project, eligible projects may be designed to reliably meet or exceed 100 Mbps download speed and between at least 20 Mbps and 100 Mbps upload speed and be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps download speed and 100 Mbps upload speed.

F. Definition of Infrastructure and Infrastructure Costs

The GREAT Grant program is designed to fund infrastructure builds to unserved areas. Note: infrastructure must meet the speed thresholds outlined in the legislation.

- **Infrastructure:** Existing facilities, equipment, materials, and structures that an entity has installed either for its core business or public enterprise purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to, copper wire, coaxial cable, optical cable, loose tube cable,

communication huts, conduits, vaults, patch panels, mounting hardware, poles, generators, battery and cabinet, network nodes, network routers, network switches, microwave relay, microwave receivers, site routers, outdoor cabinets, towers, easements, rights-of-way, and buildings or structures owned by the entity that are made available for location or collocation purposes.

- **Infrastructure costs:** Costs directly related to the construction of broadband infrastructure for the extension of broadband service for an eligible project, including installation, acquiring or updating easements, backhaul infrastructure, and testing costs. The term also includes engineering and any other costs associated with securing a lease to locate or collocate infrastructure on public or private property or structures, but not including actual monthly lease payment. The term does not include overhead or administrative costs.

G. Partnerships

The GREAT Grant program encourages partnerships, as defined within the GREAT Grant legislation, to maximize opportunities to leverage support for these infrastructure deployments.

Projects proposing a partnership shall be given points in their application score. Applicants must meet the definition and criteria to qualify for up to four Partnership Points.

- **Partnerships:** A project for which an Internet service provider affirms that a formalized, written agreement exists between the provider and one or more unaffiliated partners where the partner is one of the following:
 - a. A separate Internet service provider.
 - b. A nonprofit or not-for-profit, or a for-profit subsidiary of either, and the internet service provider is being allowed access and use of the partner's infrastructure, on special terms and conditions designed to facilitate the provision of broadband services in unserved areas.
 - c. A county that is not engaged in providing consumer broadband service may qualify as a nonprofit for the purpose of this section.
- To qualify for Partnership points in the scoring criteria, a proposed partnership shall be in writing, provide the specific terms and conditions, and be signed and attested to by the parties.
- A county or nonprofit may enter into proposed agreements with more than one applicant.
- One point shall be given for a proposed partnership that will make available existing infrastructure that has been installed for the partner's enterprise, non-consumer broadband purposes, or any other property, buildings, or structures owned by the partner, for a proposed project.
- One point shall be given for a county or nonprofit entity that proposes to provide a financial match. Notwithstanding Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, or any provision of law to the contrary, a county may use unrestricted general funds or federal American Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to it for the purpose of improving

broadband infrastructure for a financial match.

- An applicant shall receive two additional points for a proposed partnership where the county's financial match is comprised *entirely* from federal American Rescue Plan Act funds intended for broadband infrastructure.
- Nothing in the partnership language shall be deemed to authorize a county to provide broadband service.
- For projects where the application includes a proposed partnership, the grant agreement contract with the State will contain a provision requiring a certification of the existence of the partnership prior to disbursement of grant funds.

H. Required Matching Funds and Match Reduction

Grant recipients are required to provide matching funds under the GREAT Grant program. Matching fund requirements are based primarily upon the application score as follows:

SCORE	MATCHING REQUIREMENT
12.0 points or less	50%
Greater than 12.0 points, but less than 17.5 points	45%
17.5 points, up to 22.0 points	40%
Greater than 22.0 points	30%

However, in cases where counties are providing a portion of matching funds to a grant recipient, this GREAT funding round (funded by federal ARPA dollars) allows for an across-the-board matching requirement/match reduction for the grant recipient, regardless of score, as follows:

- A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of matching funds is *partially* comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed, reduced to a maximum of 25 percent.
- A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of matching funds is *entirely* comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed, reduced to a maximum of 15 percent.

Source of Matching Funds: Up to 50 percent of matching funds paid by the grant recipient may be comprised of third-party funding, including funds from other grant programs or federal funds to the extent applicable rules permit.

- Access match and match reduction details in the [Application Materials and Summary Section](#).

I. Awards and Grant Agreements

- An eligible project is a discrete and specific project located in an unserved economically distressed area seeking to provide broadband service to homes, businesses, and

community anchor points not currently served. One application should be submitted for each project in which deployment is being proposed. An application should encompass any/all proposed services within that project area.

If a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.

- A broadband provider should submit multiple applications if applying to deploy in multiple counties (without contiguous projects).
- A single grant award shall not exceed \$4 million.
- No combination of grant awards involving any single county may exceed \$8 million in a fiscal year.
- Any project that is applied for and not funded in an award round shall be eligible for funding under the Completing Access to Broadband Program pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373.1(c).
- Matching funds are required. There may be an opportunity for match reduction. Access details in the [Application Materials and Summary Section](#).
- Awarded projects require a five-year service agreement.
 - **Five-Year Service Agreement:** For awarded projects, all executed agreements are required to have a Five-Year Service Agreement. This term is understood to mean a five-year grant agreement and consists of a Deployment Project Period (“Construction Period”) and Maintenance Period. The agreement will contain terms and conditions such as the required scope of work, progress reporting schedule, payment schedule, and federal compliance requirements. Consistent with the Final Rule, the deadline by which funds must be obligated is Dec. 31, 2024. Please note that U.S. Treasury states all funds must be expended by Dec. 31, 2026.

The agreement will contain specific project milestones or benchmarks related to federal compliance requirements and activities during the Construction Period. If federal compliance requirements are not met, it may result in the cancellation of the grant award. If the project milestones or benchmarks related to the Construction Period are not met without a valid explanation or if there are periods of inactivity without a valid explanation, this may be considered a material breach of the project and subject to the repayment provision.

- **Effective Date:** The date of the last signature on Grant Agreement.
- **Deployment/Construction Project Period:** For awarded projects, the Deployment Project Period is the time from execution of the Grant Agreement to the time that service is available to the prospective broadband recipient under the grant. The timeline for this construction period is two years from the effective date of the grant agreement, but no

later than Dec. 31, 2024. All funds related to the project are required to be expended during the Construction Period.

- **Maintenance Period:** Begins on the end date of the Construction Period or two years from the contract effective date, whichever is earlier. Service must be continually available to the locations specified in the grant agreement's Scope of Work through the Maintenance Period until the Termination Date.
- **Repayment Provision:** A grant recipient shall forfeit the amount of the grant received if it fails to perform, in material respect the obligations established in the agreement. Grant recipients that fail to provide the minimum connection speed for which a reduction in matching funds was applied, shall forfeit the amount. A grant recipient that forfeits amounts disbursed through the GREAT Grant program is liable for the amount disbursed plus interest at a rate established in the General Statutes, computed from the date of disbursement. The number of subscribers that subscribe to broadband services offered by the provider in the project area is not a measure of performance under the agreement. In addition, since this application round is using federal American Rescue Plan Act funds, if an applicant is proposing a minimum download and minimum upload speeds of less than 100 Mbps, symmetrical, an attestation is required upon project completion that the completed infrastructure will be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps, symmetrical, on or before Dec. 31, 2026. Failure to provide 100 Mbps, symmetrical, will result in a repayment of federal funds.

2. ELIGIBLE PROJECT AREAS

The GREAT Grant program is a competitive grant program. In developing projects in eligible project areas, applicants must consider the following:

- Projects must make service available to *unserved areas* (meaning locations unserved with terrestrial broadband of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload);
- Projects must be in eligible counties or eligible areas of counties;
- Projects cannot fall in designated Ineligible or Protected Areas.

Unserved Areas

Applications must propose to deploy broadband infrastructure to **unserved** households and businesses at specific locations. Applicants must consider several relevant definitions in developing their project areas including definitions for **Broadband Service**, **Unserved Area** and **Eligible Project**. These definitions are repeated below for emphasis.

- **Broadband Service:** For the purposes of the GREAT Grant Program, terrestrially deployed Internet access service that delivers transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload (25:3). Terrestrially deployed technologies are generally understood to include wired infrastructure (such as fiber, coax, copper) and fixed wireless.

In assessing the delivery of transmission speeds for purposes of defining unserved areas, the federal definition of “reliably”, within the American Rescue Plan Act’s broadband funding, should also be considered. Areas where broadband transmission speeds are not delivered reliably, may be considered unserved.

- **Unserved Area:** A designated geographic area that is presently without access to broadband service, meaning terrestrially deployed Internet access service that delivers transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload, offered by a wireline or fixed wireless provider. Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other State or federally funded programs designed specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months or for the duration of the federal funding program for that area, or if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency’s regulations governing the funding program.
- **Eligible Project:** An eligible project is a discrete and specific project located in an unserved economically distressed area seeking to provide broadband service to homes, businesses, and community anchor points not currently served. Eligible projects do not include middle mile, backhaul, and other similar projects not directed at broadband service to end users. If a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.

Eligible Counties

In addition, all projects must fall within an Eligible Economically Distressed County, as outlined below.

- **Eligible Economically Distressed County:** A county designated as a development Tier One or Tier Two area, as defined in N.C.G.S. § 143B-437.08, or a rural census tract, as defined in N.C.G.S. § 143B-472.127(a)(2), located in any other county. **With the exception of funds expected to be expended in this GREAT Grant application round or under the Completing Access to Broadband Program (CAB), as authorized by N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373.1, a county that has utilized federal funding for broadband infrastructure on or after May 1, 2021, shall be ineligible.**

The term “federal funding” within this definition is interpreted to mean a county’s use of Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (LFRF) from the American Rescue Plan Act for the purpose of broadband infrastructure (on or after May 1, 2021). Counties that have chosen to use their ARPA LFRF dollars for broadband infrastructure, outside of the GREAT or CAB Programs, are ineligible for participation in the CAB program. In addition, the county as a geographic area is ineligible for GREAT projects.

**Note: The tier designation that is in effect as of the beginning of a fiscal year shall be applied for all grants awarded for that fiscal year. For this GREAT Grant round, the N.C. Department of Commerce’s 2021 Tier Designations can be found at [2021-Tiers-memo asPublished 113020.pdf \(nc.gov\)](https://www.nc.gov/2021-Tiers-memo%20asPublished%20113020.pdf)*

Ineligible Areas/Protected Areas

In addition, projects cannot be located in an Ineligible or “Protected” Area.

Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other State or federally funded programs designed specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if:

1. such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months, or
2. for the duration of the federal funding program for that area, or
3. if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency's regulations governing the funding program.

The Protected Area process is described below:

A private provider receiving State or federal funds to deploy broadband service in unserved areas may qualify such area for protection by submitting a listing of the census blocks, or portions thereof, comprising the State or federally funded project areas in a manner prescribed by the Broadband Infrastructure Office. The Office shall only utilize this data to update maps of census blocks to reflect these census blocks, or portions thereof, as being served. Failure on the part of a provider to submit the listing of census blocks by the cutoff date shall result in those areas being eligible for inclusion under the GREAT Grant program during subsequent program years.

The Broadband Infrastructure Office shall use the census block data provided only for mapping of unserved areas. A project area shall remain protected for a period of 18 months from the submission of the listing information; provided, however, a private provider that has received protection for a project area shall submit written documentation by April 30 of the year following the program year that broadband deployment has begun, been completed, or is otherwise in good standing, in the census blocks, or portions thereof, that have been deemed ineligible by the Office. Upon submission of documentation satisfactory to the Office, a protected project area shall remain protected until project completion. A project area where a private provider has forfeited or otherwise defaulted on an agreement in connection with receipt of funds to deploy broadband service shall be eligible for inclusion in this program in subsequent program years. Information provided to the Broadband Infrastructure Office pursuant to this subdivision is not a public record, as that term is defined in N.C.G.S. Chapter 132.

The Office accepts the available information and may not verify the accuracy of information provided by other grant or funding programs or sources. Failure on the part of a provider to submit the relevant project areas may result in those areas being eligible for funding for the current program year. The Office may also compile publicly available data on award areas, and maps previous GREAT Grant Awards within this dataset. These ineligible, or protected areas, are part of the ineligible data layer within the GREAT Grant Mapping Tool.

Planning Your Project Areas

Applicants must apply for funding to serve specific unserved locations (households or businesses). All applications should utilize the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool and locations are required to be mapped utilizing the NC Statewide Address data (AddressNC) referenced below. (See section *Application Materials Summary* for more detailed information on submission of locations where service is proposed to be made available.)

GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool

The Broadband Infrastructure Office and its partner, the NCDIT Center for Geographic Information & Analysis (CGIA), have created the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool to provide, in one place, many datasets useful for planning purposes. This online map does not identify all individual locations that may be eligible for the GREAT Grant but can be used as a foundation to begin planning potential service areas.

- Access the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool at:
<https://nconemap.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=72f01e944bde425ca07523d06a59c232>
 - See [Appendix D](#) for instructions on how to use this mapping tool.
- **Downloadable Data Sets/Shapefiles**
The following data sets reflected within the mapping tool can be downloaded as shapefiles from NC One Map at: <https://data-nconemap.opendata.arcgis.com/search?q=GREAT2022>
 - Census blocks with less than 25:3 Mbps, according to the FCC Form 477 Data (entire blocks)
 - NC Broadband Survey Data
 - GREAT Ineligible Areas
 - NC Statewide Address Data (AddressNC)

The downloadable datasets are described further below. Additional detail on methodologies can be found in the mapping tool itself. Note that some datasets within the mapping tool may receive periodic updates. An explanation of any updates will be included in the methodology:

- **Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477 Data Census blocks with less than 25:3 (entire blocks):**
Broadband availability data is collected twice per year by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), from providers of facilities-based broadband services through their Form 477 data submissions. This data is granular to the census block level. If one household within a census block is shown as being served, the full census block is reflected as being a served block. Census blocks that are entirely unserved with technologies that lack capabilities to serve locations at 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload, or with advertised speeds below that threshold, can be identified through the FCC Form 477 data. These unserved census blocks have been mapped by BIO using the latest FCC data (December 2020) and are available within the GREAT Grant Mapping Tool and for download for grant planning purposes.
- **NC Broadband Survey Data**
The NC Broadband Survey has been a collaboration between the Broadband Infrastructure Office and the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at NC State University to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in the state. The survey, combined with a speed test, focuses on broadband access at a particular location. Respondents can report on one of the following locations: Home, Business, or Farm. Full survey results are available on NC One Map <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/4096f70b64474e85a6646969902e514d>. Results indicating unserved locations have been compiled and are reflected within the

GREAT Grant Mapping Tool.

- **GREAT Ineligible Areas**

This layer includes multiple data sources. It includes areas that are ineligible due to:

- *Eligible Economically Distressed County criteria
- Protected Areas ineligible due to other broadband funding awards
- Previous GREAT Grant Awards

*Counties that are ineligible due to expending LFRF dollars on broadband infrastructure are not reflected in this layer.

- **NC Statewide Address Data (AddressNC)**

All applicants are **required** to utilize the *AddressNC point data* in identifying and mapping the households and businesses for submission within the application. Using the online map, a potential applicant can select address locations in the map, export those locations to a .CSV format, and include the exported file as the address-level data required. Applicants can also download the full AddressNC dataset for mapping locations locally and exporting the proposed service locations to a .CSV. (See the [Application Materials Summary section](#) for more detailed information on submission of locations where service is proposed to be made available.)

While the Broadband Infrastructure Office cannot provide a listing of all household or business locations within the state that are unserved and eligible for GREAT Grant deployments, the Office encourages applicants to utilize datasets within the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool as a starting point for identifying potential project areas.

Additional Unserved Locations

In determining eligible locations, applicants may choose to utilize other sources of data, such as internal data, online data from other providers, and field data, as part of their planning and application development, to identify unserved households or business locations outside of the fully unserved census blocks provided.

If utilizing other data sources to identify unserved locations, applicants must provide a detailed narrative describing the data methodology for determining the proposed funding area is unserved and eligible for funding in this GREAT Grant application round. Back-up data demonstrating that a location is unserved may be requested from applicants.

Other examples of data include:

1. Scrubbed data (no raw data) from citizen survey results or demand aggregation results with speed tests, if applicable. This data must identify the areas that have less than 25:3 Mbps.
2. Affidavits from citizens or other individuals certifying one or more of the following:
 - they are not able to receive broadband service
 - the only available service is cellular or satellite
 - the only broadband service available by the existing providers is less than 25:3 service.

Any data submitted for consideration should be relevant to the proposed service area. Data points must be tied to specific locations and must be geo-coded utilizing the AddressNC

Dataset. Please refer to the [Application Materials Summary section](#) for detailed instructions on formatting of data for the application.

Protest Process

The GREAT Grant program also relies on the Protest Process to provide additional verification of eligible locations by receiving feedback from relevant service providers. See additional details in the Protests of Applications section.

3. APPLICATION MATERIALS SUMMARY

Applicants must apply for funding through the State of North Carolina's Enterprise Business Services (EBS) platform and its online grants management system. To access the EBS platform, applicants will need to follow the instructions on the GREAT Grant webpage for directions. Applicants must register for an NCID and complete a User Authentication Process to receive an account. Applicants who have completed the User Authentication Process can then access the "Start Your Application" link to enter the Application Portal itself.

Applicants must be registered as official companies with the N.C. Office of the Secretary of State and cannot appear on the Suspension of Funds list under the N.C. Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM). Applicants must also adhere to the requirements for a DUNS number and Sam.gov registration, as referenced in [Appendix A](#).

See [Appendix C – GREAT Grant Program Checklist](#) for additional details.

Please note the following:

- Applicants will not self-score in the application portal as they are not guaranteed points without the official review and approval by the Broadband Infrastructure Office.
- Applicants are required to plan their proposed projects based on providing the maximum match amount of 50% of the total project costs.
- The Office will review all application materials and provide the final score. All applicants will be notified of the final score. The applicant then will be able to access the application portal to allocate funds to the eligible activities and source (GREAT and Match).
- All final scores provided upon request.
- A checklist is provided for all required documents ([see Appendix C](#)). **If an application is missing any of the required information or does not meet the requirements detailed in this guidance document, then the application may not be considered for review.**
- The Office requires unredacted information for the application. All application information is considered public record and will be posted as they are received with certain exceptions defined within Chapter 132 of the N.C. General Statutes. **It is the applicant's responsibility to identify documents or information that are not subject to public record. Please work with your legal counsel to identify portions of the application that are not public record as defined in N.C.G.S. Chapter 132**

A deployment schedule demonstrating deployment progress and project milestones.

The GREAT Grant application must include the following items:

- **Applicant Information, Statement of Qualification & Partnerships**
- **Project Area & Locations to be Served**
- **Technical Report**
- **Project Costs, Budget and Match**
- **Proposed Services, Marketing, Adoption & Community Support**

A. Application Materials - Detailed Instructions

1. Applicant Information, Statement of Qualification, & Partnerships must include the following:

- The identity of the applicant and its qualifications and experience with the deployment of broadband.
- The identity of any Partners or Affiliates, as defined at the beginning of these guidelines under Partnerships.
- Explanation on whether eligible activities such as engineering services or construction will be contracted or completed by in-house staff.

2. Project Area & Locations to be Served must include the following:

- A map and description of the area to be served, identifying the number of households and businesses that will have access to broadband as a result of the project, including any available addresses, geospatial location or other identifying information. In the event that the Broadband Infrastructure Office is unable to identify the proposed project area with specificity, the Office may exclude locations or areas from consideration for award. If construction of the proposed project would result in the provision of broadband service to areas that are not eligible for funding, those ineligible areas should be identified in the application along with the eligible areas.
- The description should note any businesses with 31 or more full-time employees

Map and Description of the Area to be Served

The Broadband Infrastructure Office requires granular data on household and business locations to be served to confirm that the project is serving eligible locations, accurately score the application, and track progress and completion of the project if awarded. One of the scoring components for the grant program is the number of unserved households and unserved businesses to be served as a result of the project. In addition, for the proposed area to be served, the infrastructure cost *per location (households and businesses)* must be provided.

The Office is now **requiring** that all location data submitted for consideration within an application utilize the **AddressNC Data** provided through the **GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool**. Utilization of one dataset for geocoding purposes assures that locations can be accurately mapped and compared among data submissions from multiple applicants. Applicants can either identify and select address locations directly within the Mapping Tool or download the full AddressNC dataset for mapping locations locally and exporting the proposed service locations to a .CSV. In the case of any households or locations that are missing within the AddressNC dataset, those locations should be submitted as parcel data per the parameters below.

See the data submission requirements below.

Applicants must submit data in the following ways, or in combination.

- **Address-Level Data**

Data shall be submitted as address points of locations where service will be made available through the grant build. All addresses must use the AddressNC dataset. The GREAT Grant Online Mapping tool can be used to select address points and export the selected addresses to a .CSV file to be included with the application. The AddressNC dataset is also available for download through [NC OneMap](#) if an applicant has mapping capabilities to select and export a subset of the dataset to be submitted with the application.

- **Parcel-Level Data**

If a location proposed to be served is not represented in the AddressNC dataset, data must be submitted that represents the parcel containing the location to be served. The GREAT Grant Online Mapping tool can be used to select the parcels and export them to a .CSV file to be included with the application. The latest NC statewide parcels dataset is also available for download through [NC OneMap](#) if an applicant has mapping capabilities to select and export a subset of the dataset to be submitted with the application. Parcel-data should only be submitted for locations that cannot be identified within the AddressNC dataset. The expectation is that most Applicants will be able to submit Address-Level Data only.

Digital Format of Data

Locations of households and businesses projected to be served must be digitally submitted in a comma delimited (.csv) file exported from the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool or as a GIS shapefile. The files must contain a subset of points from the AddressNC dataset. If a location proposed to be served is not represented in the AddressNC dataset, an applicant may submit the parcel data for the missing location in same digital formats listed above. Please reference [Appendix D](#) for instructions on how to use this mapping tool.

Project scoring will consider the number of households and businesses served by a project, and the cost-per-location (Households or Businesses). As part of the grant agreement, applicants awarded grants will be required to pass the number of prospective broadband recipients stated in their application.

- **An assessment of the current level of broadband access in the proposed deployment area.** The application requires an assessment of the current level of broadband access in the proposed deployment area. Within this section of the application, the applicant should describe what they believe to be the current level of

service within the area and provide the data source or methodology used to capture this information. Raw data can be submitted as part of the assessment as well.

- **An attestation to the Office that the proposed project area is eligible.** The attestation statement and required signature is included as part of the application form. Applicants are required to sign this statement to signify that the area(s) identified within the application are eligible, to the best of their knowledge.
- **Identification of a county government that has used federal funding for broadband infrastructure on or after May 1, 2021.** If a county uses ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (LFRF) dollars for broadband infrastructure on or after May 1, 2021, an applicant may not apply for that county.

3. Technical Report

Applicants must provide a narrative report detailing the technology/technologies to be used to serve the prospective broadband recipient at the premises. Applicants must indicate the technology that will serve the prospective broadband recipient as wired or fixed wireless.

- **For Wired Infrastructure Deployment the technical report must include the following:**
 - Description of the general design of this project and deployment plan including plan for backhaul;
 - Description of the design work needed for deployment such as but not limited to pole work, acquiring or updating easements, or property acquisition;
 - Explanation of the existing networks and equipment to be used for this project:
 - If the applicant requires assets owned by another entity, the applicant should explain how the assets will be used for this project and, if applicable, provide a copy of the agreement between the applicant and the owner; and
 - Detailed explanation of how the new or upgraded infrastructure will serve the prospective broadband recipients. In the case of the installation or upgrade of a specific site infrastructure, such as a point of presence or fiber hut, the applicant must include:
 - Number of prospective broadband recipients that will be served by that site infrastructure,
 - The distance from the specific site infrastructure such as a POP or pedestal, to the end user(s) and the expected broadband speed that will be effectively delivered.
- **For Fixed Wireless Deployment, the technical report must include the following:**
 - Description of the general design of this project and deployment plan including plan for backhaul;
 - Description of the design work needed for deployment, such as, but not limited to acquiring access to existing vertical assets, acquiring or updating easements, or

property acquisition;

- Explanation of the existing networks and equipment to be used for this project:
 - If the applicant requires assets owned by another entity, the applicant should explain how the assets will be used for this project and, if applicable, provide a copy of the agreement between the applicant and the owner;
- Detailed explanation of how the new or upgraded infrastructure will serve the prospective broadband recipients. In the case of the installation or upgrade of a specific site infrastructure, such as a vertical asset, the applicant must include:
 - Description and specific location of the vertical asset,
 - Owner of the vertical asset,
 - Number of prospective broadband recipients that will be served by that site infrastructure, and,
 - The distance from the vertical asset to the end user(s) and the expected broadband speed that will be effectively delivered;
- Description and specific type of the equipment used for deployment and the capable speed of the equipment, and description and specific type of equipment to be used for the customer premise equipment and the capable upload speed of the equipment; and
- Explanation of the frequency/frequencies to be utilized for the deployment, whether the deployment will use licensed or unlicensed technologies, as well as mitigation of line-of-sight challenges (which should tie to the number of households to be served).

For all applicants, the technical report must include the following:

- Clear statement on whether the project will *reliably* provide a minimum of 100 Mbps symmetrical service at the end of the construction period. If not, a detailed explanation of how minimum reliable service of 100 Mbps symmetrical will be achieved on or before Dec. 31, 2026.
- Clearly explain how your broadband service will *reliably* provide the minimum upload and minimum download speeds, claimed in the Base Speed Multiplier in the scoring matrix, to all the proposed locations in this application.
- If the applicant is claiming one point for a proposed partnership that will make available existing infrastructure that has been installed for the partner's enterprise, non-consumer broadband purposes, or any other property, buildings, or structures owned by the partner's enterprise, please provide a detailed description of how these assets will facilitate the deployment of the proposed broadband infrastructure.
- A general explanation of whether work will be performed in-house or through contractors.
- A proposed construction timeline and duration of the Deployment Project Period. The Deployment Project Period is the time from execution of the Grant Agreement to the time that service is available to the targeted prospective broadband recipients under

the grant. If the project is to be completed in phases, please describe deployment roll out and include the number of end users to be served in each phase as well as an estimated timeframe for each phase.

Note: Applications that do not adequately explain how they can *reliably* provide the broadband speeds indicated, or do not adequately address scalability of service to 100 Mbps symmetrical by Dec. 31, 2026, may be deemed ineligible for consideration.

4. Project Costs, Budget & Match

- Project Budget Applicants should plan their proposed projects based on providing the maximum match amount of 50% of the total project costs. The Broadband Infrastructure Office will provide the final score and if awarded allow the applicant to allocate funds to activities and source (GREAT Grant and match)
- The total cost of the project to include a summary of activities (See Table below).
- Please provide an Excel spreadsheet that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates. Please provide an explanation of how you estimated the costs.
- For the proposed area to be served, the infrastructure cost per location for the project, and how this was calculated.

Eligible Project Costs

Costs directly related to the construction of broadband infrastructure, including installation, acquiring or updating easements, backhaul infrastructure, testing costs, engineering, and other costs associated with securing a lease to locate or collocate infrastructure on public or private property or structures, but not including the actual monthly lease. The term does not include overhead or administrative costs. Funding limitations for certain eligible activities are as follows:

1. Acquiring or updating easements are limited to 5% of the grant amount or \$25,000, whichever is less.
2. Testing costs are limited to one percent of the grant amount or \$5,000, whichever is less.

Project Funds (GREAT Grant funds and match) should be utilized for the deployment phase of the project, not the subsequent years of service. Eligible costs do not include recurring operating costs or maintenance, or sales and marketing of services.

PROJECT EXPENSE	TOTAL (\$)
Easements (one-time fees) 5% of grant amount or \$25,000, whichever is less	
Materials (fiber, equipment, etc.)	
Construction/Installation	
Testing 1% of grant amount or \$5,000, whichever is less	
Engineering	
Lease/Collocation Fees (one-time fees)	
Other 1 Specify	
Other 2 Specify	
Other 3 Specify	
TOTAL	

Note regarding middle mile and backhaul:

Per the GREAT Grant legislation, “eligible projects do not include middle mile, backhaul, and other similar projects not directed at broadband service to end users.” However, the eligible costs do allow for construction/equipment of “backhaul infrastructure.” While costs for building backhaul infrastructure can be included in the project budget, the build must facilitate last-mile service towards specific end-users and cannot include recurring operating costs.

Note regarding towers:

While costs for building towers are not expressly ineligible, applicants are encouraged to utilize vertical assets already in place or easily installed as much as possible. Including new macro towers in a project may create lengthy construction timelines, especially around land purchase and environmental regulations.

Matching Funds

Grant recipients are required to provide matching funds as part of the GREAT program. The Broadband Infrastructure Office will determine the final score and match requirement for the applicant. **Initially, all applicants should plan to provide 50 percent of the total project costs.** Eligible Project Costs for matching funds are the same as Eligible Projects Costs for the GREAT State grant funds. **Grant and match funds can only support project costs in the eligible project area. The match amount is determined by the application scoring.** A sample scoring sheet is provided as part of the application for a reference. After the review and scoring of all applications, the Broadband Infrastructure Office will notify and confirm match requirements with applicants as part of the application process.

Matching Requirements are as follows:

APPLICATION SCORE	MATCHING REQUIREMENT
12.0 points or less	50%
Greater than 12.0, but less than 17.5 points	45%
17.5, up to 22.0 points	40%
Greater than 22.0	30%

Up to 50 percent of matching funds paid by the grant recipient may be comprised of third-party funding, including funds from other grant programs or federal funds to the extent applicable rules permit. The source of the matching funds should be included in the applicant’s budget narrative. **In-kind contributions are not eligible to satisfy the match requirement. All matching funds must be consistent with the terms and conditions of the GREAT Grant Program grant agreement. The match can only be used for the eligible activities in the program and within the timeframe of the grant agreement.**

Match Reduction

A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of matching funds is partially comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2) funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed under this subdivision reduced to a maximum of 25 percent. A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of

matching funds is entirely comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2) funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed under this subdivision reduced to a maximum of 15 percent.

Proof of Financial Solvency

Per the authorizing legislation, an applicant must show evidence of financial solvency and organizational strength to successfully meet the terms of the grant requirements and the ability to meet the potential repayment of grant funds. The Broadband Infrastructure Office will consider one or more of the following documents as evidence of financial solvency:

- a. 3 years of audited financial statements or if a publicly traded company, a link to the online statements
- b. 24 consecutive months of banking statements that show a positive cash flow
- c. Letter from a financial institution(s) indicating the amount of available funds
- d. Letter of Credit that states the available amount
- e. Proof of access to available personal lines of credit and the available amounts

Other types of documentation may be considered upon request.

Proof of Match

Prior to or at the time of execution of the grant agreement, the grantee must submit commitment letters that total the required match amount. If loan or other grant funds are pledged, the Office requires a copy of the loan/grant commitment letter that specifies the amount of funding available from each source of funds. This includes any commitments from counties.

Per the authorizing legislation, up to 50 percent of matching funds paid by the grant recipient may be comprised of third-party funding, including funds from other grant programs or federal funds, to the extent applicable rules permit. A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of matching funds is partially comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed under this subdivision reduced to a maximum of 25 percent. A grant recipient receiving a portion of matching funds from a county, where the county portion of matching funds is entirely comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, may have the grant recipient's portion of the matching requirement imposed under this subdivision reduced to a maximum of 15 percent.

5. Proposed Services, Marketing, Adoption & Community Support

- A description of services to be provided, including the proposed upstream and downstream broadband speeds to be delivered and any applicable data caps. Any applicant proposing a data cap below 150 Gigabytes of usage per month shall provide justification to the satisfaction of the Broadband Infrastructure Office that the proposed cap is in the public interest and consistent with industry standards.
- The proposed advertised speed to be marketed to end users (broken out by households, businesses, and community anchor institutions).
- A plan to encourage users to connect that incorporates, at a minimum, community education forums, multimedia advertising, and marketing programs.

- Evidence of support for the project from citizens, local government, businesses, and institutions in the community. The applicant may provide letters or other correspondence from citizens, units of local government, businesses, and institutions in the community that supports this project.
- Any low-income household service offerings or digital equity or literacy support or programs or partnerships to provide these services. Note that federal rules may require participation in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program.
- Proposed pricing structure for a prospective broadband recipient once the project is complete. This is supplemental information that will help the Broadband Infrastructure Office evaluate the effectiveness of the program in closing the digital divide.

4. PROTESTS OF APPLICATIONS

A. The Protest Process

The GREAT Grant legislation requires the N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) to make all applications publicly available by posting on the department's website for a period of 20 calendar days prior to award. During the 20-calendar day period, any interested party may submit comments to the Secretary of NCDIT concerning any pending application. **A broadband service provider currently providing broadband service in a project area proposed in an application may submit a protest of any application on the grounds the proposed project covers an area that is a protected area under the Ineligible Areas section of this guidance document or that the proposed project area contains 10 percent or more of total households with access to broadband service, as defined within the GREAT Program. *This is the only criteria by which an application may be challenged.***

Protests shall be submitted in writing, accompanied by all credible and relevant supporting documentation, including specific addresses, and detailed mapping demonstrating that the protesting broadband provider has installed infrastructure sufficient to provide broadband service to the specific addresses provided in the protest, along with an attestation that broadband service is available *to the exterior of the structure* at the specific addresses indicated. The protest shall be considered by the Broadband Infrastructure Office in connection with the review of the application. ***The protesting party bears the burden of proof.***

Upon submission of evidence satisfactory to the Office that the proposed project area includes a protected area or prospective broadband recipients that are presently served, as measured using a methodology satisfactory to the Office, the Office may work with an applicant to amend an application to reduce the number of unserved prospective broadband recipients in the project area to reflect an accurate level of current broadband service.

The Broadband Infrastructure Office may revise application scores in accordance with amended applications; however, the Office may reject any amended application resulting in a lower application score to the extent that the lower score would have impacted the ranking of the application in the initial scoring process.

For applications with filed protests, the NCDIT Secretary shall issue a written decision to the

protesting party at least 15 days prior to the approval of that application. Following a protest that is granted for a portion of the application, the Office may release to an applicant the locations or areas declared ineligible. The information released to the applicant is not a public record, as that term is defined under N.C.G.S. 132--1 and shall remain confidential.

Any provider submitting a protest shall verify that the information in the protest is accurate and that the protest is submitted in good faith. The Broadband Infrastructure Office may deny any protest or application that contains inaccurate information.

As a means of resolving a protest, the Office may utilize speed tests to determine if the protested area or individual households or businesses currently have access to broadband service as defined within the GREAT Grant Program. NCDIT shall publish the speed test methodology it uses to assess speed levels pursuant to this process. All decisions regarding the speed test to be utilized and the manner by which the speed tests are applied shall be made by the NCDIT Secretary or the Secretary's designee.

B. Data Submission Requirements

The Office requires granular data for any Protest submissions. **All protest submissions must contain address-level data or parcel-level data of disputed locations deemed by the protesters to have service currently available.**

The Office is now **requiring** that all location data submitted for consideration within an application, **or within a protest**, utilize the **AddressNC dataset** provided through the **GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool**. Utilization of one dataset for geocoding purposes assures that locations can be accurately mapped and compared among data submissions from multiple applicants. Protesters can either identify and select address locations directly within the Mapping Tool or can utilize the NC OneMap geocoding service to map locations against an external list of addresses. In the case of any new households or locations that are not included within the AddressNC dataset, those locations should be submitted as parcel data per the parameters below.

Protesters must submit data in the following ways, or in combination.

- **Address-Level Data:** Data shall be submitted as address points of locations deemed by the protester to have service currently available. All addresses must use the AddressNC dataset. The GREAT Grant Online Mapping tool can be used to select address points and export the selected addresses to a .CSV file to be included with the application. The AddressNC dataset is also available for download through [NC OneMap](#) if a protester has mapping capabilities to select and export a subset of the dataset to be submitted with the protest.
- **Parcel-Level Data:** If a location deemed by the protester to have service currently available is not represented in the AddressNC dataset, data must be submitted that represents the parcel containing the location to be served. The GREAT Grant Online Mapping tool can be used to select the parcels and export them to a .csv file to be included with the protest. The latest NC statewide parcels dataset is also available for download through [NC OneMap](#) if a protester has mapping capabilities to select and export a subset of the dataset to be submitted with the protest. Parcel-data should only

be submitted for locations that cannot be identified within the AddressNC dataset. The expectation is that most protesters will be able to submit Address-Level Data only.

- **Digital Format of Data:** Protest data must be digitally submitted in a comma delimited (.csv) file exported from the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool or as a GIS shapefile. The files must contain a subset of points from the AddressNC dataset. If a location proposed to be served is not represented in the AddressNC dataset, a protester may submit the parcel data for the missing location in same digital formats listed above.

The Office will reject protests containing data that does not meet the submittal requirements.

Details on timeline of the protest window, where to view applications, how to submit comments, or for broadband providers to submit protests, will be available on the NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity's GREAT Grant program web page at <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/grants/great-grant-federal>

Applications will be posted as .pdfs with corresponding digital files posted as well.

5. SCORING

The GREAT Grant is a competitive grant program. Applications shall be scored based upon a system that awards a single point for criteria considered to be the minimum level for the provision of broadband service with additional points awarded to criteria that exceed minimum levels. **Applications receiving the highest score shall receive priority status for the awarding of grants. As a means of breaking a tie for applications receiving the same score, the Broadband Infrastructure Office shall give priority to the application proposing to serve the highest number of new households at the lowest cost per household or business.**

Project Applications will be scored as follows:

- **Partnership:** All applicants must meet the definition of a partnership as defined in Section 38.4.(a)(8) of Session Law 2021-180. To qualify for Partnership points, a proposed partnership shall be in writing, provide the specific terms and conditions of the partnership, and be signed and attested to by the parties. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to authorize a county to provide broadband service. For projects where the application includes a proposed partnership, the grant agreement contract with the State will contain a condition requiring the submittal of the partnership agreement prior to disbursement of grant funds. Applicants must meet the definition and criteria to qualify for up to 4 Partnership Points as follows.

Partnership	Points
*Infrastructure	1

*One point shall be given for a proposed partnership that will make available existing infrastructure that has been installed for the partner's enterprise, non-consumer

broadband purposes, or any other property, buildings, or structures owned by the partner, for a proposed project.

Partnership	Points
**Financial Match	1

** A county or nonprofit entity that proposes to provide a financial match shall be given one point. Notwithstanding Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, or any provision of law to the contrary, a county may use unrestricted general funds or federal American Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to it for the purpose of improving broadband infrastructure for a financial match.

Partnership	Points
***County ARP Match	2

***An applicant shall receive two additional points for a proposed partnership where the county's financial match is comprised entirely from federal American Rescue Plan Act funds intended for broadband infrastructure.

- **Unserved Households (HH):** The Broadband Infrastructure Office shall give additional points to projects based upon the estimated number of unserved households within the eligible economically distressed county, as determined by the most recent data published by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) or any other information available to the Office. Points shall be given to projects that will be located in counties with estimated unserved households as follows:

Unserved HH	Points
500 or less	1
501-1400	2
Over 1400	3

For this section, the Office is utilizing FCC data to estimate the number of unserved households per county. This data is available for use and can be found in Appendix E.

If applicable, the applicant must identify the county on record using the following standard: if a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.

- **Unserved Households (HH) To Be Served:** The Office shall give additional points to projects that will provide broadband service based upon the percentage of the total unserved households within the eligible economically distressed county that the project will serve. The number of unserved households shall be determined using the most recent data of the FCC or any other information available to the Office. Points shall be

given to projects that will serve a percentage of unserved households within the project area as follows:

Unserved HH to be Served	Points
Less than 15%	1
15% to 25%	2
Over 25%	3

The Broadband Infrastructure Office has used FCC data to estimate the number of unserved households per county. This data is available for use and can be found in Appendix E.

The definition for households is as follows:

- **Household:** A house, apartment, single room, or other group of rooms, if occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, and where the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall.

Applicants should ensure that their applications clearly outline the number of unserved households where service will be made available through an eligible project.

If applicable, the applicant must identify the county on record using the following standard: if a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.

- **Unserved businesses:** The Broadband Infrastructure Office shall give additional points to projects that will provide broadband service to unserved businesses located within the eligible economically distressed county, as determined by the most recent data published by the FCC or any other information available to the Office. Points shall be given to projects that serve unserved businesses within the project area as follows:

Unserved Business	Points
Between 1 and 4	1
5 and 10	2
a) more than 10 or c) Business w/31 or more f/t employees	3

Applicants should ensure that their applications clearly outline the number of unserved businesses where service will be made available through an eligible project. Businesses with 31 or more full-time employees should be noted.

- **Cost Per Household or Business:** The Office shall give additional points to projects that minimize the infrastructure cost of the proposed project per household or business, based upon information available to the Office. Points shall be given to projects based upon the estimated cost per household or business as follows:
For projects proposed in the *Piedmont or *Coastal Plain Regions:

Estimated Cost perLocation	Points
Up to \$3,500	9
\$3,500, up to \$5,000	8
\$5,000, up to \$6,000	7
\$6,000 and over	0

**Piedmont Region* – The portion of the State lying west of and including Franklin, Lee, Moore, Richmond, Wake and Warren Counties, to the eastern boundaries of Alleghany, Burke, Caldwell, Rutherford and Wilkes Counties.

**Coastal Plain Region* – The portion of the State lying east of the eastern boundaries of Franklin, Lee, Moore, Wake and Warren Counties.

For projects located in the **Mountain Region*:

Estimated Cost perLocation	Points
Up to \$4,500	9
\$4,500, up to \$6,000	8
\$6,000, up to \$7,000	7
\$7,000 and over	0

**Mountain Region* – The portion of the State lying west of and including Alleghany, Burke, Caldwell, Rutherford, and Wilkes Counties.

Cost per location should be calculated using the total locations in a project area even in the case where a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties.

- **Base Speed Multiplier:** Projects that will provide* minimum download and minimum upload speeds shall have the aggregate points given under items 1-5, multiplied by a factor at the level indicated below:

Minimum Speeds	Score Multiplier
100:20 Mbps up to 100:100 Mbps	1.00
100 Mbps, symmetrical	2.00
Greater than 100:100 Mbps	3.00

*Note: “Provide” a particular speed is understood to mean that this calculation should be based on the planned “typical speeds” to be provided, not the advertised speeds.

An applicant proposing minimum download and minimum upload speeds of less than 100 Mbps., symmetrical, shall provide an attestation to the Office that, upon project completion, the completed infrastructure will be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps. download and 100 Mbps. upload on or before December 31, 2026, subject to the return of all federal American Rescue Plan Act funds received and all the grant forfeiture provisions in N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373(l).

If an applicant cannot meet the minimum speeds of the base speed multiplier, the application will not be scored with the multiplier.

- **Additional Points after Calculating the Score with the Base Speed Multiplier**

- **Community Broadband Planning:** The Broadband Infrastructure Office shall also award an additional point to projects where a county has a Community Broadband Planning Playbook that meets the guidelines established by the Office. A county must meet (and be able to document) *at least one* of the following criteria to receive a point for the Community Broadband Planning Playbook scoring item:
 - A county must have a current Broadband Planning Committee;
 - A county must have undertaken some type of active broadband project or study within the past two years (in 2020 or 2021);
 - A county official or county leader must have worked actively with the Broadband Infrastructure Office within the past two years (in 2020 or 2021) to begin developing a broadband planning committee or broadband goals; or have begun implementing strategies aligned with the Community Broadband Planning Playbook;
 - To receive the Community Broadband Planning point, the Office must be previously aware of the work being undertaken by the county, or it must be outlined within the application. Applicants are encouraged to obtain letters from the relevant counties describing this work.

Community Broadband Planning Playbook	Points
Planning	1

- **Additional Points after Calculating the Score with the Base Speed Multiplier**

- **County Match:** Additional points shall be awarded to counties providing a portion of a project's matching funds entirely from federal American Rescue Plan Act funds the county received directly from the federal government.

For counties that received an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) or more directly from the federal government, the following points shall be added to the application score:

COUNTY MATCH	POINTS
\$1,000,000, up to \$2,000,000	1
More than \$2,000,000, up to \$4,000,000	2
More than \$4,000,000, up to \$6,000,000	3
More than \$6,000,000, up to \$8,000,000	4
More than \$8,000,000, or greater	5

For counties that (i) received less than an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) directly from the federal government from the American Rescue Plan Act and (ii) are providing a portion of a project's matching funds using the entirety of

the federal funds the county received, together with any other unrestricted general fund monies, if needed, the following points shall be added to the application score:

County Match	Points
\$250,000, up to \$6,000,000	6
More than \$6,000,000, up to \$8,000,000	7

6. APPENDICIES

A. Appendix A - Program Definitions

This Appendix provides a listing of key definitions within the GREAT Grant Program. Please refer to the full guidance document for context around these definitions.

- **Agriculture:** Activities defined in G.S. 106-581.1.
- **Broadband Access:** Broadband access is considered available if the internet carrier can provide broadband service to a Location immediately or within 10 business days upon request and without cost to the customer other than standard connection fees.
- **Broadband Service:** For the purposes of the GREAT Grant Program, terrestrially deployed Internet access service with transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload (25:3). Terrestrially deployed technologies are generally understood to include wired infrastructure (such as fiber, coax, copper) and fixed wireless.
- **Business:** Any lawful trade, investment, or other purpose or activity, whether conducted or undertaken for profit. The term also includes community anchor points, agricultural operations, and agricultural processing facilities.
- **Eligible Economically Distressed County:** A county designated as a development Tier One or Tier Two area, as defined in G.S. 143B-437.08, or a rural census tract, as defined in G.S. 143B-472.127(a)(2), located in any other county.* **With the exception of funds expected to be expended in this GREAT Grant Application Round or under the Completing Access to Broadband Program (CAB), as authorized by G.S. 143B-1373.1, a county that has utilized federal funding for broadband infrastructure on or after May 1, 2021, shall be ineligible.**
- **Eligible Project:** An eligible project is a discrete and specific project located in an unserved economically distressed area seeking to provide broadband service to homes, businesses, and community anchor points not currently served. Eligible projects do not include middle mile, backhaul, and other similar projects not directed at broadband service to end users. If a contiguous project area crosses from one eligible county into one or more eligible adjacent counties, for the purposes of this section, the project shall be deemed to be located in the county where the greatest number of unserved households are proposed to be served.
- **Eligible Recipient:** Eligible grant recipients are private providers of broadband services, including cooperatively organized entities, or any partnerships formed between cooperatively organized entities, private providers, or any combination thereof.
- **Household:** A house, apartment, single room, or other group of rooms, if occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, and where the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall.

- **Ineligible Areas:** Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other State or federally funded programs designed specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months or for the duration of the federal funding program for that area, or if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency's regulations governing the funding program.
- **Infrastructure:** Existing facilities, equipment, materials, and structures that an entity has installed either for its core business or public enterprise purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to, copper wire, coaxial cable, optical cable, loose tube cable, communication huts, conduits, vaults, patch panels, mounting hardware, poles, generators, battery and cabinet, network nodes, network routers, network switches, microwave relay, microwave receivers, site routers, outdoor cabinets, towers, easements, rights-of-way, and buildings or structures owned by the entity that are made available for location or collocation purposes.
- **Infrastructure costs:** Costs directly related to the construction of broadband infrastructure for the extension of broadband service for an eligible project, including installation, acquiring or updating easements, backhaul infrastructure, and testing costs. The term also includes engineering and any other costs associated with securing a lease to locate or collocate infrastructure on public or private property or structures, but not including actual monthly lease payment. The term does not include overhead or administrative costs.
- **Partnerships:** A project for which an Internet service provider affirms that a formalized, written agreement exists between the provider and one or more unaffiliated partners where the partner is one of the following:
 - a. A separate Internet service provider.
 - b. A nonprofit or not-for-profit, or a for-profit subsidiary of either, and the internet service provider is being allowed access and use of the partner's infrastructure, on special terms and conditions designed to facilitate the provision of broadband services in unserved areas.
 - c. A county that is not engaged in providing consumer broadband service may qualify as a nonprofit for the purpose of this section.
- **Prospective broadband recipient:** A household, home, business, community anchor point, agricultural operation, or agricultural processing facility that is currently unserved and is identified in an application submitted in accordance with this section.
- **Reliably:** This term is defined in FAQ 6.11. Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Frequently Asked Questions, as of July 19, 2021; <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRPFAQ.pdf>. The Final Rule states, "Consistent with further guidance issued by Treasury, in determining areas for investment, recipients may choose to consider any available data, including but not limited to documentation of existing broadband internet service performance, federal and/or state collected broadband data, user speed test results, interviews with community members and business owners, reports from community organizations, and any other information they deem relevant. In evaluating such data, recipients may take into account a variety of factors, including whether users actually receive internet service at or above the speed thresholds at all hours of the day, whether factors other than

speed such as latency, jitter, or deterioration of the existing connections make their user experience unreliable, and whether the existing service is being delivered by legacy technologies, such as copper telephone lines (typically using Digital Subscriber Line technology) or early versions of cable system technology (DOCSIS 2.0 or earlier), and other factors related to the services to be provided by the project. In addition, recipients may consider the actual experience of current broadband customers when making their determinations; whether there is a provider serving the area that advertises or otherwise claims to offer broadband at a given speed is not dispositive.”

- **Unserved Area:** A designated geographic area that is presently without access to broadband service (meaning terrestrially deployed Internet access service with transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload), offered by a wireline or fixed wireless provider. Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other State or federally funded programs designed specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months or for the duration of the federal funding program for that area, or if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency’s regulations governing the funding program.
- **Unserved household or business:** A household or business that does not presently have access to broadband service, as defined in this subsection.

*Note: The tier designation that is in effect as of the beginning of a fiscal year shall be applied for all grants awarded for that fiscal year. For this GREAT Grant round, the N.C. Department of Commerce’s 2021 Tier Designations can be found here: [2021-Tiers-memo asPublished 113020.pdf \(nc.gov\)](#)

B. Appendix B - Summary of Federal Compliance Requirements

The Broadband Infrastructure Office will administer these funds in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law. The Office will set out specific requirements in the terms and conditions of the contracting agreement with all awardees. Federal compliance requirements include but are not limited to the following:

1. For projects funded by the State Fiscal Recovery Fund, SFRF compliance requirements are set out in the [U.S. SFRF Treasury Guidance](#), including the [Final Rule](#), [the FAQs](#), and [the Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#). Please note the following:
 - a. Projects funded by the SFRF Funds are exempt from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, though they may still be subject to NEPA review if they are also funded by other federal financial assistance programs. There is no checklist provided by U.S. Treasury.
 - b. Projects funded solely by the SFRF Funds are exempt from the Davis-Bacon Act labor requirements unless the project cost is over \$10 million. Projects under \$10 million may still be subject to the Davis-Bacon Act if they are also funded by other federal financial assistance programs. See [SFRF Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#) (pages 21-22).
 - c. Awardees funded through the SFRF must participate in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) or otherwise provide access to a broad-based affordability program to low-income consumers in the proposed service area that provides benefits to households commensurate with those provided by the ACP.
2. For projects funded by the Capital Projects Fund, CPF compliance requirements are set out in the [U.S. CPF Treasury Guidance](#) and [the CPF FAQs](#). Please note the following:
 - a. Generally, NEPA does not apply to projects funded by the Capital Projects Fund. Prior to funding a Capital Project, awardees may complete an [environmental checklist](#) to determine whether certain environmental laws apply. Projects funded by CPF may still be subject to NEPA review if they are also funded by other federal financial assistance programs.
 - b. Projects funded solely by the CPF Funds are exempt from the Davis-Bacon Act labor requirements, though they may still be subject to the Davis-Bacon Act if they are also funded by other federal financial assistance programs. See [CPF Treasury Guidance](#) (pages 11-12).
3. All federally funded grant programs will follow compliance requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as the [Uniform Guidance \(2 CFR 200\)](#).
4. Awardees must have a Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S number. If your organization does not have a D-U-N-S number, please register at this link: [SAM Webform: Home \(dnb.com\)](#) (Required for SAM.gov).

5. Awardees must have an active System Award Management (SAM) ID. If your organization does not have a SAM unique ID, please register at this link: [SAM.gov | Home](#) (2 CFR 200.206).
6. Awardees must provide a certification that the applicant is not debarred from receiving federal funds. The Office will provide a certification form and verify through SAM.gov (2 CFR 200.206) and through the suspension of funds list with the N.C. Office of State Budget and Management.

C. Appendix C - GREAT Grant Program Checklist

Eligibility Checklist: If any of these provisions are not met, the application will be considered ineligible for review.

- Is the applicant a private provider of broadband service, including cooperatively organized entities, or any partnerships formed between cooperatively organized entities, private providers, or any combination thereof?
- Have the applicant's authorized representatives registered for an NCID? ([Register Here](#))
- Have the applicant's authorized representative completed an EBS registration form to access the application portal? ([Register Here](#))
- Is the applicant's project located in an eligible area of an economically distressed county?
- Has the applicant registered for a Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S Number? ([Register Here](#))
- Does the applicant have an active federal System Award Management (SAM.gov) Identifier? ([Register Here](#))

The list below shows key requirements that must be included with any application. If any of these items are not included or if the application is received after the due date, it will not be considered for review. Please refer to the full Guidance for a complete list.

- Basic information identifying the applicant
- The proposed number of households with improved access on the application
- The proposed number of businesses with improved access on the application
- A description of the project area, identification of locations to be served, relevant maps, and mapping files **consistent with requirements of the program**
- The base speed that will be provided to all locations throughout the project area
- The total project cost
- An Excel spreadsheet that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates to include an explanation of how the costs were estimated
- The methodology or explanation of how the cost per location was calculated
- Proof of financial solvency **consistent with the requirements of the program**
- Evidence or proof of a proposed partnership, if applicable
- The technical report
- Evidence of support for the project from citizens, local governments, businesses, and institutions within the community
- The Statement of Qualifications
- An assessment of the current level of broadband access in the proposed deployment area
- A description of proposed services, advertised speeds, and proposed pricing structure for a prospective broadband recipient once the project is complete
- A description of the adoption plan
- Confirmation of whether eligible activities such as engineering services or construction will be contracted or completed by in-house staff

D. Appendix D - NC GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool Instructions

NC GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool:

<https://nconemap.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=72f01e944bde425ca07523d06a59c232>

About

Zoom in on the map to display the North Carolina AddressNC Data. Address data can only be selected if the address points are visible in the map.

In the **Select Tool** (located at the bottom of the map), check the box next to the AddressNC Layer (located underneath green Select Button), ensure the **Select Button** is activated (Dark Green), and then click to create a polygon around Address points to select those locations. Double-click to finish drawing your selection area and the selected address points will be highlighted in blue. To add to the selection without losing your previous selection, hold the Shift button when drawing additional polygons. Number of selected address points are displayed in the bottom right of the select tool.

Once all locations to be submitted are selected, click the **(...)** button (located in bottom right corner of the Select Tool) to view options for exporting the selection. Select 'Export to CSV' to download the selected points as a comma delimited excel file.

The red polygons on the map represent census blocks in which the FCC Form 477 data (December 2020 release) report service that is less than 25 mb/s Download and 3 mb/s Upload

Legend

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC County Boundary
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined
- GREAT Ineligible Tracts from Legislation
- FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload
- Census Block with community surveys reporting Less Than 25/3 Service

Layer Visibility

Layers

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations
- AddressNC_v1
- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined

The screenshot displays the web application interface for the NC GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool. The main map area shows a geographic view of North Carolina with various data layers overlaid. A search bar at the top right allows for finding addresses or places. The legend on the left side provides a key for the different map layers, such as 'Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas' (blue), 'NC County Boundary' (black outline), and 'FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload' (red). The layer visibility panel at the bottom left shows a list of layers with checkboxes, all of which are currently checked. The 'Select' tool is active, indicated by a green bar at the bottom of the map, and a 'Click to start drawing' tooltip is visible on the map. The map itself shows a mix of red and blue areas, representing different service and grant-related zones, with county boundaries clearly marked.

Important Layers:

Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations



AddressNC_v1



Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas



NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service (FASTEST AVAILABLE)



Other NC Broadband Survey Responses Reporting Speeds less than 25/3 (May not be fastest available)



FCC RDOF Auction 904 Phase1 Results - INELIGIBLE FOR GREAT



Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined - INELIGIBLE FOR GREAT



Tier3 Counties' Non-Rural Tracts from Legislation - INELIGIBLE FOR GREAT



- **Previous GREAT Grant Award Locations and Awarded Areas**
 - *Addresses, parcels, and census blocks that have been funded in a previous round of GREAT Grants and will be ineligible for the current funding round.*
- **AddressNC**
 - Address data required for use when submitting locations proposed to be served in a grant application.
 - *Will only be visible in map when zoomed in to street level*
- **NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service (FASTEST AVAILABLE)**
 - Locations of all surveys received through the NC Broadband Survey that report lack of 25/3 Service and have indicated that it is the fastest available service at that location.
 - *Will only be visible in map when zoomed in to street level*
- **FCC RDOF Auction 904 Phase I Results AND Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined**
 - These areas represent federal broadband grant award areas that will not be eligible for the current GREAT Grant round as outlined in the enabling legislation (S.L. 2021-180).
- **Tier3 Counties' Non-Rural Tracts from Legislation**
 - Areas not meeting criteria outlined in the enabling legislation for the GREAT Grant Program within S.L. 2021-180 and the amending legislation.

Parcel Boundaries



Census Block with NC Broadband Surveys reporting Less Than 25/3 Service (Indicated Fastest Available)



FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload



- **NC Statewide Parcel Dataset**
 - Land records data aggregated from counties to provide additional context to the address data locations.
 - *Will only be visible in map when zoomed in to street level*
- **Census Block with NC Broadband Surveys reporting Less Than 25/3 Service**
 - Any census block that contains at least one NC Broadband Survey response that reports lack of service at the 25/3 threshold and indicated that it is the fastest service available at that location.
 - Once a user zooms in, actual locations with community survey responses that report less than 25/3 service or no service will be visible.
- **FCC Less than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload*****
 - Derived from the FCC Form 477 December 2020 Release to show where provider reported service cannot reliably serve the census block with 25/3 service.

*** The **FCC Less than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload** layer was created from the NC_Broadband_BlockSummary web service on NC OneMap by filtering for 'Less Than 25/3' in the [Speed Tier] field. The NC_Broadband_BlockSummary web service was created from the FCC Form 477 Data by summarizing consumer service in each census block to outline what technologies were deployed. The data for each block will have the number of providers listed in the attributes and will have a value of 1 in the technology available fields ([Fiber_Available], [Cable3_0_Available], [ADSL_Available], etc.) for those technologies that have reported service in that block. The technology with the highest speed capabilities in each block is then used to categorize that block as either 'Less Than 25/3' or 'Greater Than 25/3'. If Fixed Wireless is the best available technology in a particular census block, then additional analysis was performed to determine whether the fixed wireless deployment could reliably provide access to 25/3 speeds. Some Fixed Wireless blocks may be listed at 'Less Than 25/3' for this reason.

- The layers in the map can be turned on/off using the 'Layer Visibility' section (Red Rectangle in screenshot below) at the bottom left:

The screenshot displays an ArcGIS web application interface. On the left, there is an 'About' section with instructions on how to use the 'Select Tool' and 'Select Button' to interact with address points. Below this is a 'Legend' section listing various data layers with corresponding symbols. At the bottom left, a red rectangle highlights the 'Layer Visibility' section, which contains a list of layers with checkboxes. The map area shows a selection of address points and a polygon. The interface includes a search bar at the top right, a 'Select' tool at the bottom, and a 'Clear' button. The map shows a selection of address points and a polygon.

Legend:

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations
- AddressNC_v1
- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined
- GREAT Ineligible Tracts from Legislation
- FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload

Layer Visibility:

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations
- AddressNC_v1
- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined

Select:

- AddressNC_v1
- Parcel Boundaries

1. Zoom in to the area of interest by using your mouse wheel or the +/- buttons in the upper left of the map
 - a. Zooming in to a neighborhood level will turn on layers for Address Points, Parcel Boundaries, and imagery.



About

Zoom in on the map to display the North Carolina AddressNC Data. Address data can only be selected if the address points are visible in the map.

In the **Select Tool** (located at the bottom of the map), check the box next to the **AddressNC Layer** (located underneath green **Select Button**), ensure the **Select Button** is activated (Dark Green), and then click to create a polygon around Address points to select those locations. Double-click to finish drawing your selection area and the selected address points will be highlighted in blue. To add to the selection without losing your previous selection, hold the Shift button when drawing additional polygons. Number of selected address points are displayed in the bottom right of the select tool.

Once all locations to be submitted are selected, click the (...) **Button** (located in bottom right corner of the Select Tool) to view options for exporting the Selection. Select 'Export to CSV' to download the selected points as a comma delimited excel file.

The red polygons on the map represent census blocks in which the FCC Form 477 data (December 2020 release) report service that is less than 25 mb/s Download and 3 mb/s

Legend

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations
- AddressNC_v1
- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined
- GREAT Ineligible Tracts from Legislation
- FCC Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload

Layer Visibility

Layers

- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations
- AddressNC_v1
- Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas
- NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service
- Auction 904 Phase1 Results Defaults Removed
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined

Select

Select

Clear

Layer

- AddressNC_v1
- Parcel Boundaries

2. To select address data, use the Select widget at the bottom of the map:



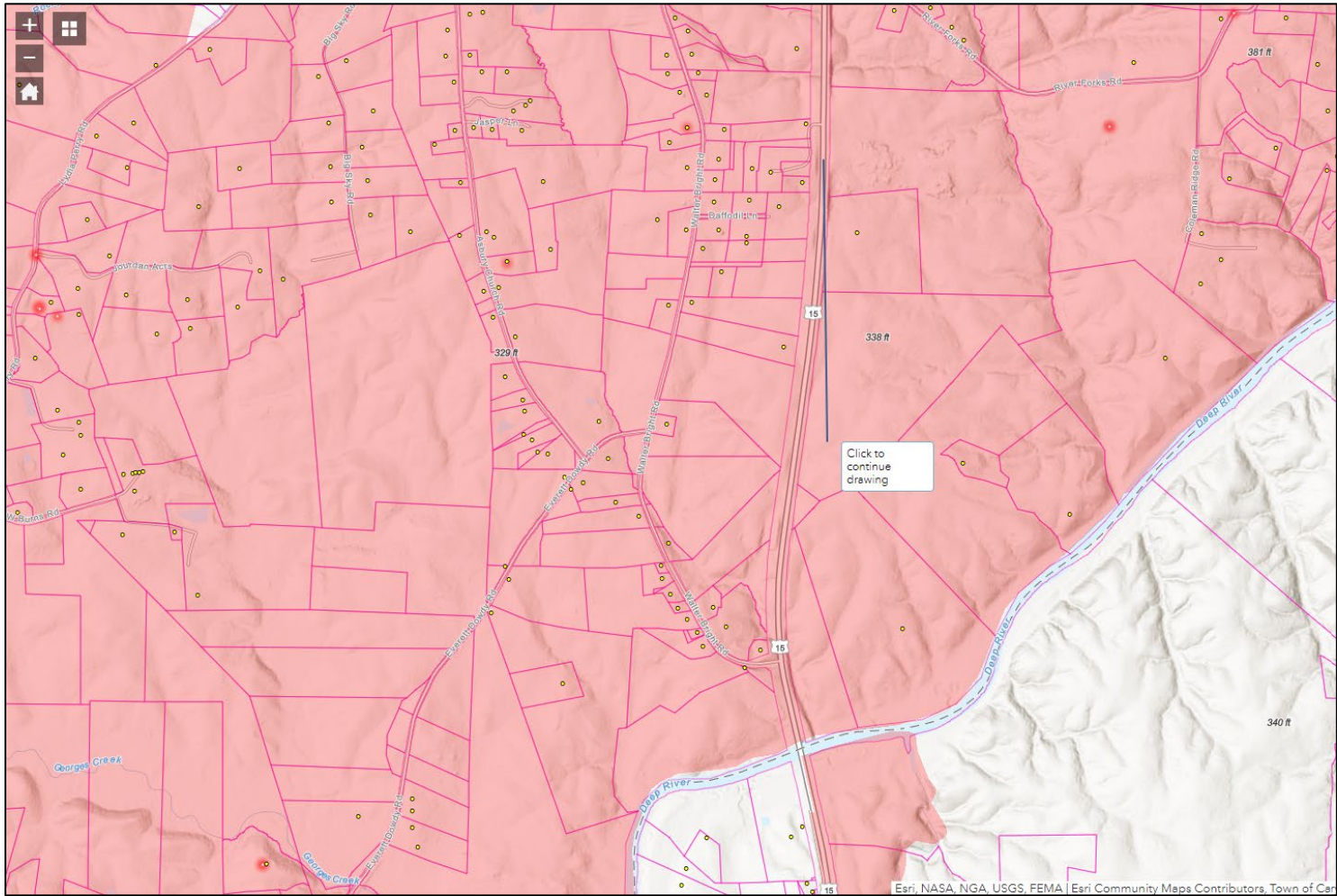
- First, check the box for the AddressNC_v1 to set this layer as the selectable dataset:



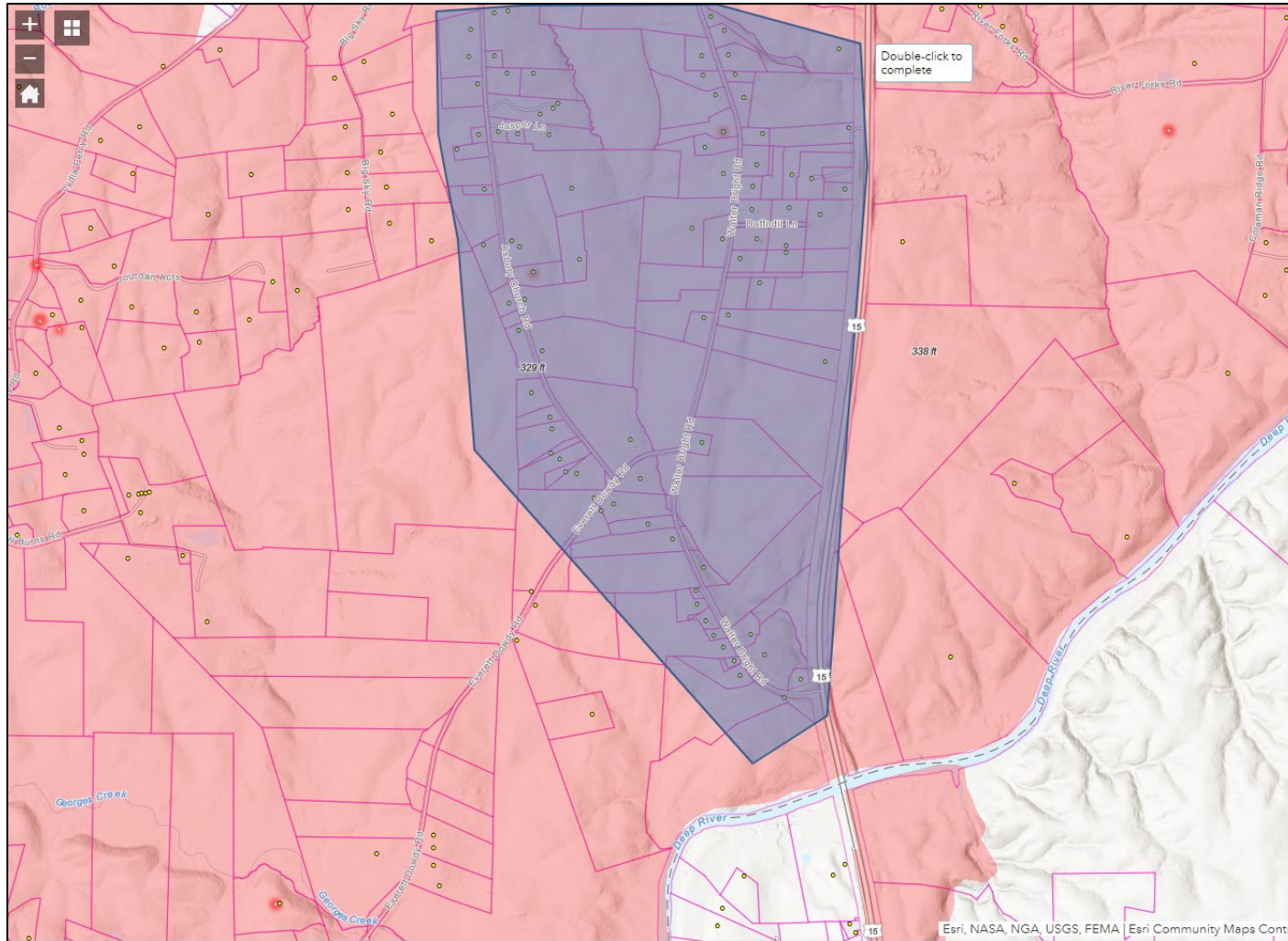
3. The Select Tool should be active by default, but if it is not active, click the green Select button.

- Active:
- Inactive:

4. With the Select Tool active, click once on the map to start drawing on the map:



- Continue clicking on the map to draw a blue/purple polygon around the points you want to select (all points within the polygon will be selected):

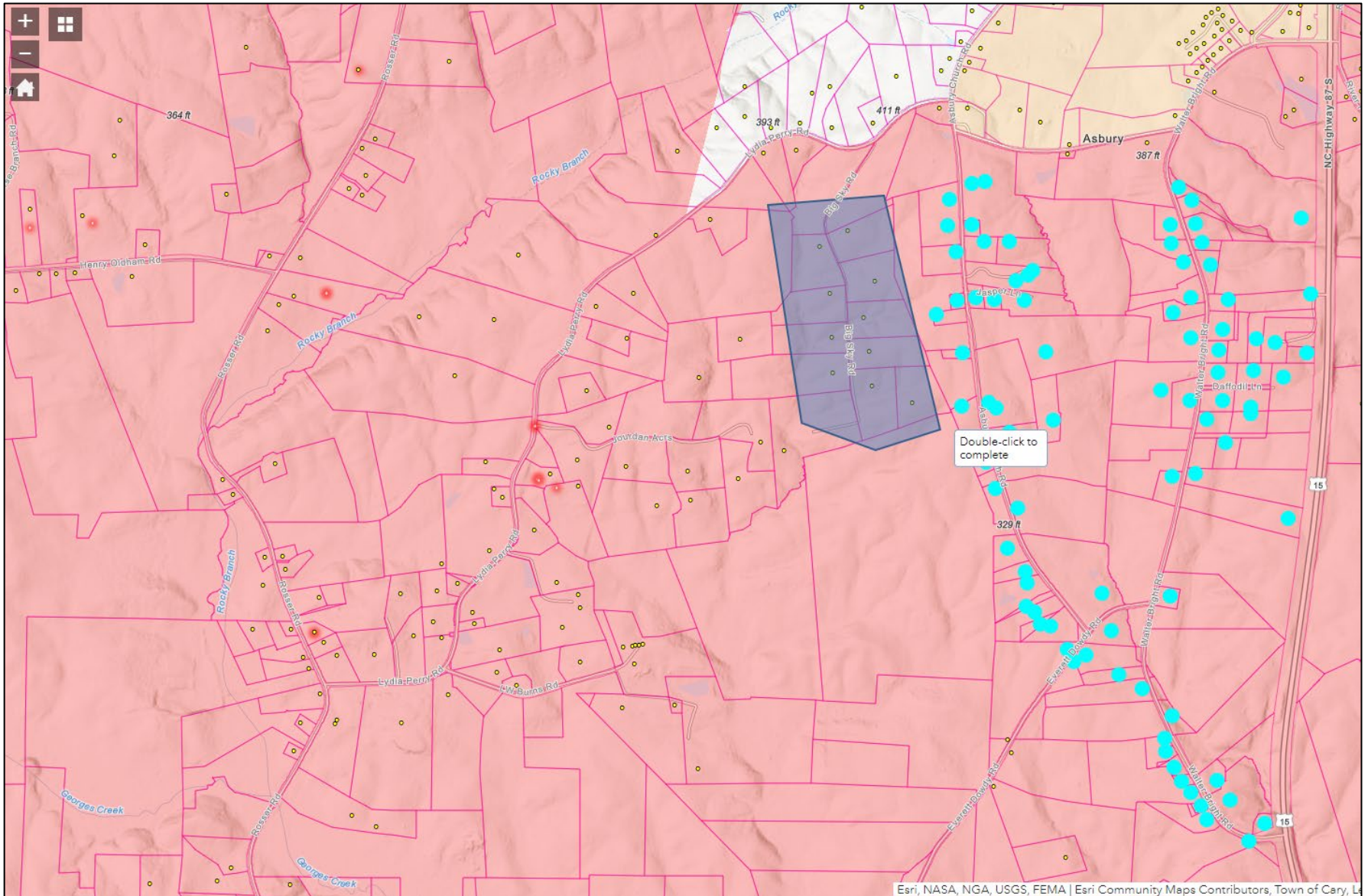


- Double-click to complete drawing the polygon and select all points within the polygon. Selected points will now show in light blue/cyan, and the total number of selected addresses will be displayed in the Select Tool next to the address dataset (Red Rectangle in screenshot below):

The screenshot displays a GIS application interface with the following components:

- About Panel (Top Left):** Contains instructions for displaying North Carolina AddressNC Data and using the Select Tool. It notes that address points are highlighted in blue when selected and that red polygons represent census blocks.
- Legend Panel (Middle Left):** Lists several layers including 'Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations', 'AddressNC_v1', and 'Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Areas'.
- Map (Center):** Shows a topographic map with address points (yellow dots) and a selection polygon (cyan dots) drawn around a cluster of points. Red polygons represent census blocks.
- Layer Visibility Panel (Bottom Left):** Shows a list of layers with checkboxes. The 'AddressNC_v1' layer is checked.
- Select Tool Panel (Bottom Center):** Features a green 'Select' button and a text field displaying the number '86', which is highlighted with a red rectangle. A 'Clear' button is also present.
- Map Controls (Bottom Right):** Includes a search bar with the text 'Find address or place' and an 'esri' logo.

7. To add more address points to the current selection, draw another polygon while holding down the **Shift** key on your keyboard (hold the Shift key until you double-click to complete the polygon):

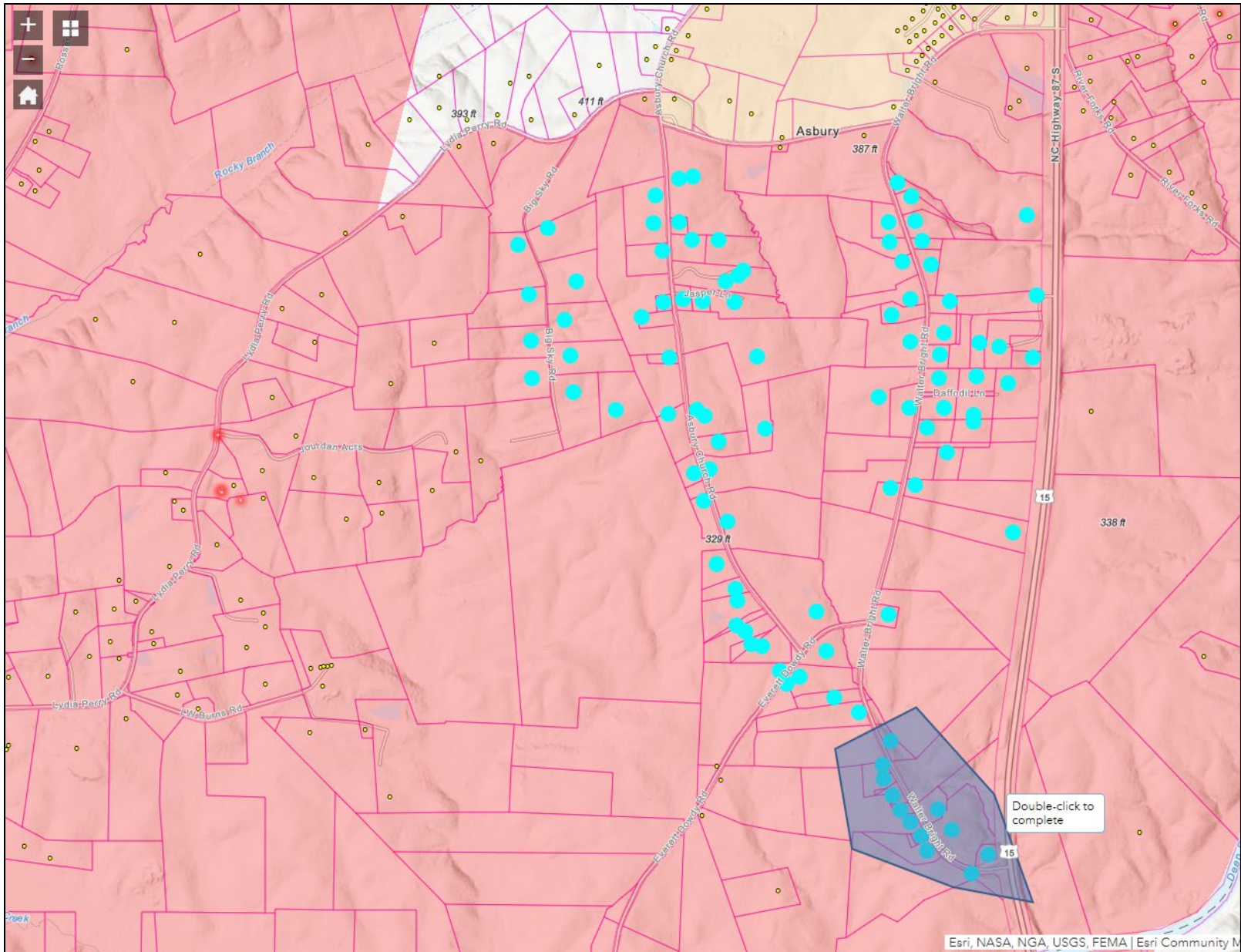


8. The selection now contains the additional address points (Count is shown in Red Rectangle below):

The screenshot displays a GIS application interface with the following components:

- Top Left Panel:** Contains instructions for zooming in on the map to display North Carolina AddressNC Data. It details the 'Select Tool' process, including activating the 'AddressNC Layer' (dark green button), creating polygons around address points, and using the 'Export to CSV' button to download the selection.
- Map:** Shows a geographic area with pink polygons representing census blocks. Numerous cyan dots represent address points. A red rectangle highlights a specific area on the map, indicating the current selection. A 'Click to start drawing' tooltip is visible over the map.
- Legend:** Lists various layers such as 'Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations', 'AddressNC_v1', and 'NC Broadband Survey Response Reporting Less Than 25/3 Service'.
- Layer Visibility:** A panel on the left showing a list of layers with checkboxes, all of which are currently checked.
- Select Panel:** Located at the bottom, it features a 'Select' button, a search bar, and a 'Clear' button. Below this, a list of layers is shown with checkboxes, including 'AddressNC_v1' (checked) and 'Parcel Boundaries' (unchecked).
- Bottom Right:** A red rectangle highlights the number '84', which represents the count of selected address points.

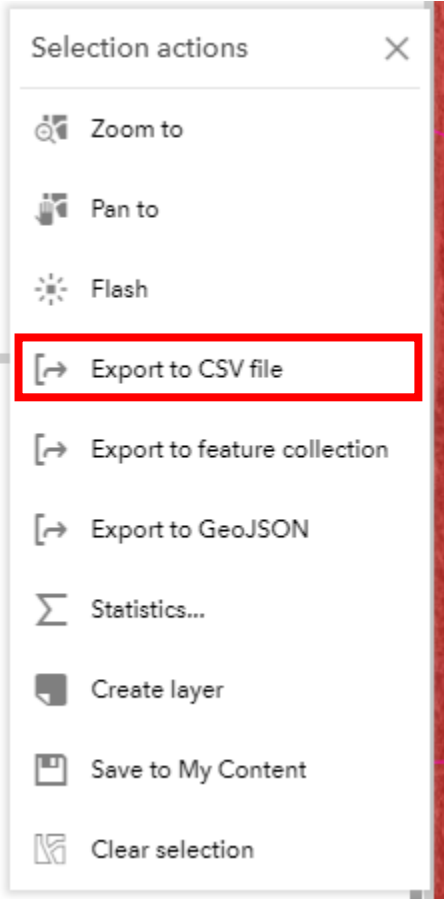
9. To remove locations from the selection, hold the **Ctrl** key on your keyboard and click on the map to draw a polygon around the locations to be removed (hold the Ctrl key until you double-click to complete the polygon):



10. Once all the address points are selected, using the '...' button (Red Rectangle in screenshot below) next to the number of selected locations within the Select Tool will provide tools for exporting the selection:

The screenshot displays a web-based mapping application interface. On the left side, there is a sidebar with several sections: 'About' (containing instructions on zooming and using the Select Tool), 'Legend' (listing various map layers like 'Previous GREAT Grant Awarded Address Locations' and 'AddressNC_v1'), and 'Layer Visibility' (showing a list of layers with checkboxes). The main map area shows a geographic region with pink polygons representing census blocks and blue dots representing address points. A red rectangle highlights a specific area on the map. At the bottom of the map, there is a 'Select' tool interface with a search bar, a 'Select' button, and a list of layers. A red rectangle highlights the '...' button next to the number '8' in the Select tool, indicating the export options.

11. Choose the option to 'Export to CSV file' and the address data will be downloaded to your computer. This .CSV file is to be submitted with the grant application and is a required to be included with the application materials.



- Data from the GREAT Grant Online Mapping Tool can be downloaded locally through NC OneMap here: <https://data-nconemap.opendata.arcgis.com/search?q=GREAT2022>

The screenshot shows the NC OneMap search results page. The header includes the NC OneMap logo and navigation links: DATA PROJECTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, TERMS, CONTACT US, and ABOUT. Below the header, there are tabs for All, Events, Data, Documents, and Apps & Maps. The 'All' tab is selected.

On the left side, there are filter sections:

- Filters**: Includes a 'Reset' button and a 'Relevance' dropdown menu.
- Source**: A list of sources with checkboxes:
 - NC OneMap
 - U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Geography Division
- Tags**: A dropdown menu.
- Last Updated**: A dropdown menu.

The main content area displays 1 - 4 of 4 results. Each result is a data layer with the following information:

- AddressNC v1**: NC OneMap | nconemap. Type: Feature Layer. Rows: 4,843,719. Last Updated: January 19, 2022. Tags: North Carolina, NC, Address, GREAT2022.
- GREAT IneligibleTracts 2022**: NC OneMap | bdshelton. Type: Feature Layer. Rows: 569. Last Updated: January 19, 2022. Tags: North Carolina, NC, Broadband, GREAT2022.
- Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined**: NC OneMap | bdshelton. Type: Feature Layer. Rows: 25. Last Updated: January 20, 2022. Tags: North Carolina, NC, Broadband, GREAT2022.
- NC Broadband BlockSummary**: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Geography Division | bdshelton. This data is derived from the U.S. Federal Communications Commission Form 477 data, current as of June 2020. The data has been queried to represent only those census blocks that have at least ... Type: Feature Layer. Rows: 275,032. Last Updated: January 20, 2022. Tags: NC, North Carolina, NC Department of Information Te...

At the bottom of the results area, it says '1 - 4 of 4 results'.

- To download the layers, first select an individual layer from the list:

The screenshot shows the NC OneMap Data Projects interface. The top navigation bar includes the NC OneMap logo and links for DATA PROJECTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, TERMS, CONTACT US, and ABOUT. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for All, Events, Data, Documents, and Apps & Maps. The 'Data' tab is selected, and the page displays a list of data projects. On the left side, there are filter options for Source, Tags, and Last Updated. The main content area shows four data projects, with the first one, 'AddressNC v1', highlighted by a red rectangular box. The 'AddressNC v1' project details include: NC OneMap | nconemap, Type: Feature Layer, Last Updated: January 19, 2022, Rows: 4,843,719, and Tags: North Carolina, NC, Address, GREAT2022. The other three projects are 'GREAT IneligibleTracts 2022', 'Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined', and 'NC Broadband BlockSummary', each with their respective details.

Source	Name	Type	Last Updated	Rows	Tags
<input type="checkbox"/> NC OneMap	AddressNC v1	Feature Layer	January 19, 2022	4,843,719	North Carolina, NC, Address, GREAT2022
<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Geography Division	GREAT IneligibleTracts 2022	Feature Layer	January 19, 2022	569	North Carolina, NC, Broadband, GREAT2022
	Federal Broadband Grant Award Areas Combined	Feature Layer	January 20, 2022	25	North Carolina, NC, Broadband, GREAT2022
	NC Broadband BlockSummary	Feature Layer	January 20, 2022	275,032	NC, North Carolina, NC Department of Information Te...

- After selecting an individual layer, it will redirect you to a new page for that layer. Use the Filter and Download Tools on the left to download the files in various formats.

The screenshot displays the NC OneMap interface for the 'AddressNC v1' dataset. The top left shows the dataset name and a record count of 4,843,719. A warning box states 'Too Many Records' with the message 'This dataset has a lot of records, try zooming in.' The left sidebar features a 'Filter and Download' menu with icons for edit, info, zoom, refresh, star, and download. The main map area shows a light blue overlay over a map of North Carolina. The bottom right corner has navigation controls for zooming in and out.

E. Appendix E - Estimate of Unserved Households (HH) per County

Compiled for Scoring for GREAT Grant Program

These numbers are estimates based on the latest FCC data available; and are being provided for informational purposes, for use by applicants in estimating their scoring to determine match requirements.

Number of households in census blocks less than 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload according to the December 2020 FCC form 477 data release

COUNTY	Total Households	Estimated # of Unserved HH @ 25/3	Percent Unserved HH @ 25/3
ALAMANCE	66,576	852	1.28%
ALEXANDER	16,189	1083	6.69%
ALLEGHANY	8,094	88	1.09%
ANSON	11,576	4815	41.59%
ASHE	17,342	3	0.02%
AVERY	13,890	456	3.28%
BEAUFORT	24,688	2539	10.28%
BERTIE	9,822	2639	26.87%
BLADEN	17,718	5927	33.45%
BRUNSWICK	77,482	321	0.41%
BUNCOMBE	113,365	1210	1.07%
BURKE	40,879	1778	4.35%
CABARRUS	71,937	1072	1.49%
CALDWELL	37,659	955	2.54%
CAMDEN	4,104	285	6.94%
CARTERET	48,179	33	0.07%
CASWELL	10,619	4220	39.74%
CATAWBA	67,886	1015	1.50%
CHATHAM	28,753	5597	19.47%
CHEROKEE	17,515	3062	17.48%
CHOWAN	7,289	288	3.95%
CLAY	7,140	1143	16.01%
CLEVELAND	43,373	2849	6.57%
COLUMBUS	26,042	4077	15.66%
CRAVEN	45,002	2699	6.00%
CUMBERLAND	135,524	1439	1.06%
CURRITUCK	14,453	872	6.03%
DARE	33,492	130	0.39%
DAVIDSON	72,655	497	0.68%
DAVIE	18,238	123	0.67%
DUPLIN	25,728	5703	22.17%
DURHAM	120,217	741	0.62%
EDGECOMBE	24,838	4751	19.13%
FORSYTH	156,872	50	0.03%
FRANKLIN	26,577	472	1.78%
GASTON	88,686	299	0.34%
GATES	5,208	2259	43.38%

COUNTY	Total Households	Estimated # of Unserved HH @ 25/3	Percent Unserved HH @ 25/3
GRAHAM	5,930	1636	27.59%
GRANVILLE	22,827	4010	17.57%
GREENE	8,213	7358	89.59%
GUILFORD	218,017	520	0.24%
HALIFAX	25,781	4483	17.39%
HARNETT	46,731	3506	7.50%
HAYWOOD	34,954	2458	7.03%
HENDERSON	54,710	6525	11.93%
HERTFORD	10,635	1683	15.83%
HOKE	18,211	2904	15.95%
HYDE	3,347	2188	65.37%
IREDELL	69,013	1647	2.39%
JACKSON	25,948	13016	50.16%
JOHNSTON	67,682	4692	6.93%
JONES	4,838	2130	44.03%
LEE	24,136	1416	5.87%
LENOIR	27,437	2410	8.78%
LINCOLN	33,641	643	1.91%
MCDOWELL	20,808	3945	18.96%
MACON	25,245	9007	35.68%
MADISON	10,608	2137	20.15%
MARTIN	11,704	3015	25.76%
MECKLENBURG	398,510	8	0.00%
MITCHELL	8,713	269	3.09%
MONTGOMERY	15,914	5236	32.90%
MOORE	43,940	4635	10.55%
NASH	42,286	3703	8.76%
NEW HANOVER	101,436	72	0.07%
NORTHAMPTON	11,674	2056	17.61%
ONslow	68,226	737	1.08%
ORANGE	55,597	1548	2.78%
PAMLICO	7,534	1408	18.69%
PASQUOTANK	16,833	15	0.09%
PENDER	26,724	5149	19.27%
PERQUIMANS	6,986	868	12.42%
PERSON	18,115	2126	11.74%
PITT	74,990	3135	4.18%
POLK	11,432	3406	29.79%
RANDOLPH	61,041	1821	2.98%
RICHMOND	20,738	1516	7.31%
ROBESON	52,751	8107	15.37%
ROCKINGHAM	43,696	1457	3.33%

COUNTY	Total Households	Estimated # of Unserved HH @ 25/3	Percent Unserved HH @ 25/3
ROWAN	60,211	1551	2.58%
RUTHERFORD	33,878	6091	17.98%
SAMPSON	27,234	7020	25.78%
SCOTLAND	15,193	1664	10.95%
STANLY	27,110	1195	4.41%
STOKES	21,924	778	3.55%
SURRY	33,667	359	1.07%
SWAIN	8,723	2820	32.33%
TRANSYLVANIA	19,163	1837	9.59%
TYRRELL	2,068	971	46.95%
UNION	72,870	2402	3.30%
VANCE	20,082	152	0.76%
WAKE	371,836	887	0.24%
WARREN	11,806	2036	17.25%
WASHINGTON	6,491	1137	17.52%
WATAUGA	32,137	733	2.28%
WAYNE	52,949	1089	2.06%
WILKES	33,065	290	0.88%
WILSON	35,511	607	1.84%
YADKIN	17,341	185	0.52%
YANCEY	11,032	170	0.98%