

GREAT Grant Information Session

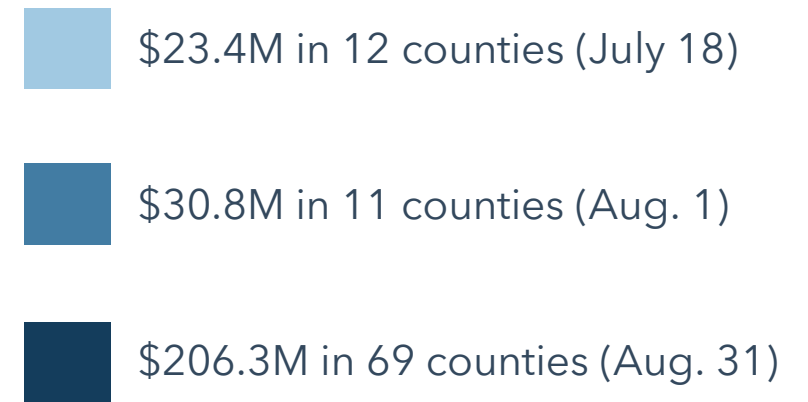
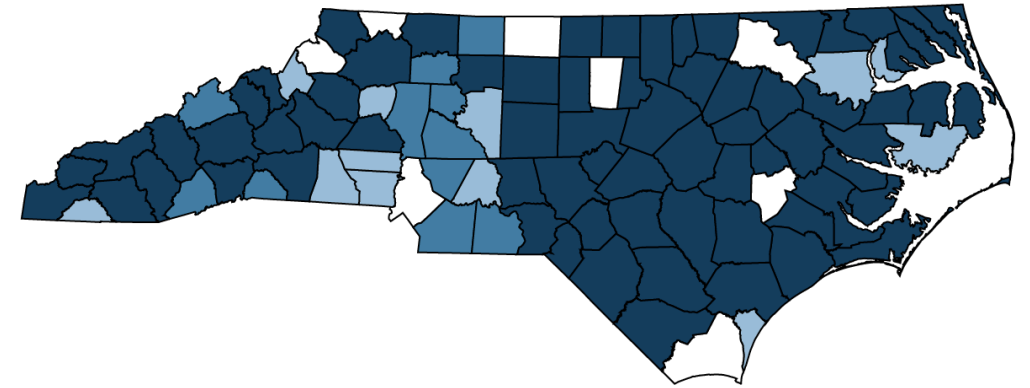
Sept. 13, 2022

N.C. Department of Information Technology
Broadband Infrastructure Office



2022 GREAT Grant Award Details

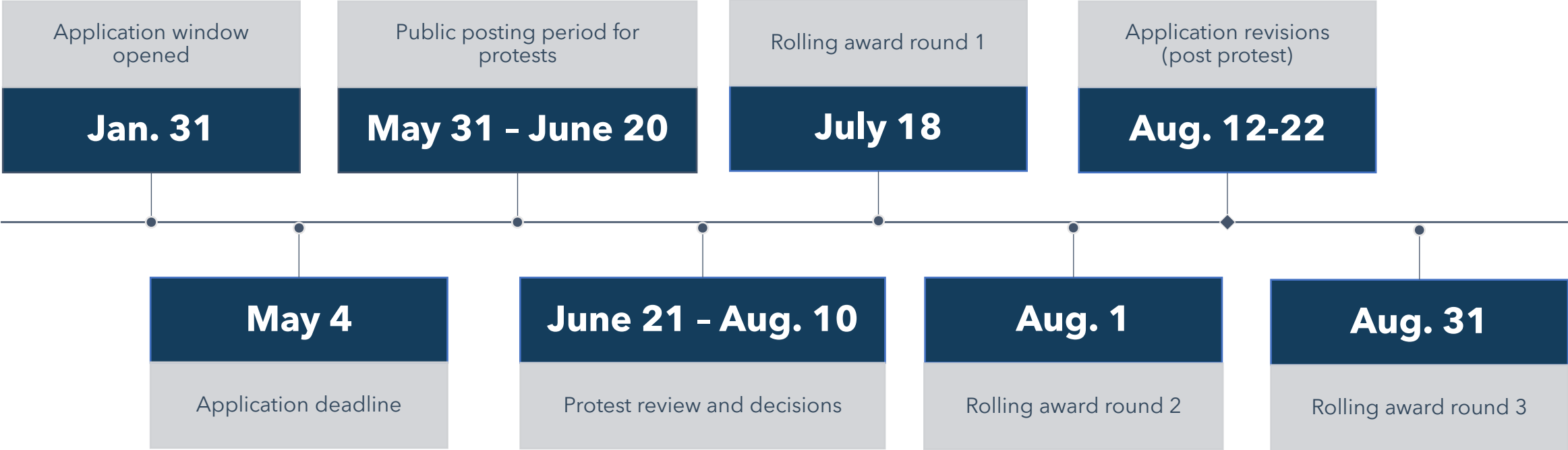
- \$350 million in American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Fund dollars
- Total awards to date: 92
- One project in each of the 92 counties
- Total Awards - \$267 million
- Total awarded locations: 112,112
- Total match amount: \$146,692,467.78



Process for Rolling Awards

- Awards for the 2021-2022 GREAT grant program are being awarded on a rolling basis
- All awards are based on the scoring matrix dictated by statute
- Upon scoring all final applications within an individual county, the Office will make one award per county to the highest scoring eligible application
 - Will score applications within a county as soon as all the applications within a county have received a completed review process, protest resolution, and updated application data (as needed)
- Rolling process will continue until one award has been made in all 93 participating counties
- Following awards to all 93 counties, we will evaluate the amount of funding remaining of the initial \$350 million GREAT grant funds to:
 - Identify the highest-scoring remaining projects statewide
 - Ensure that there are no overlapping areas
 - Make awards to the next highest scoring applicant, with a maximum of one additional award per county until the balance of the funds is allocated
- The tie-breaker provisions posted in the GREAT Grant Guidance FAQs will apply to all awards

How Did We Get to the \$267 Million?



How Did We Get to the \$267 Million?

As of 05/04/2022

- 305 applications received on 05/04/2022
- 488,000 location points represented
- 93 counties represented
- 37 internet service provider applicants

As of 08/31/2022

- 216 protests received and adjudicated
- 280 applications scored in 93 counties
- 15 internet service providers awardees (one award in each of 92 counties)
- Total awards: \$267 million
- Total proposed locations: 112,112 (households and businesses)

Application Review Categories

- Application Eligibility Review
- Financial Solvency
- Technical Review
- Partnerships
- Mapping/Eligible Locations

Protests of Eligible Locations

- 216 protests received
- More than 200,000 location points
- Protesting internet service provider can only submit a protest if the:
 - Proposed project covers an area that is a protected area as defined in our GREAT Grant Guidance Document
 - OR
 - Proposed project area contains 10% or more of total households with access to broadband service

Protests of Eligible Locations

Protest Analysis

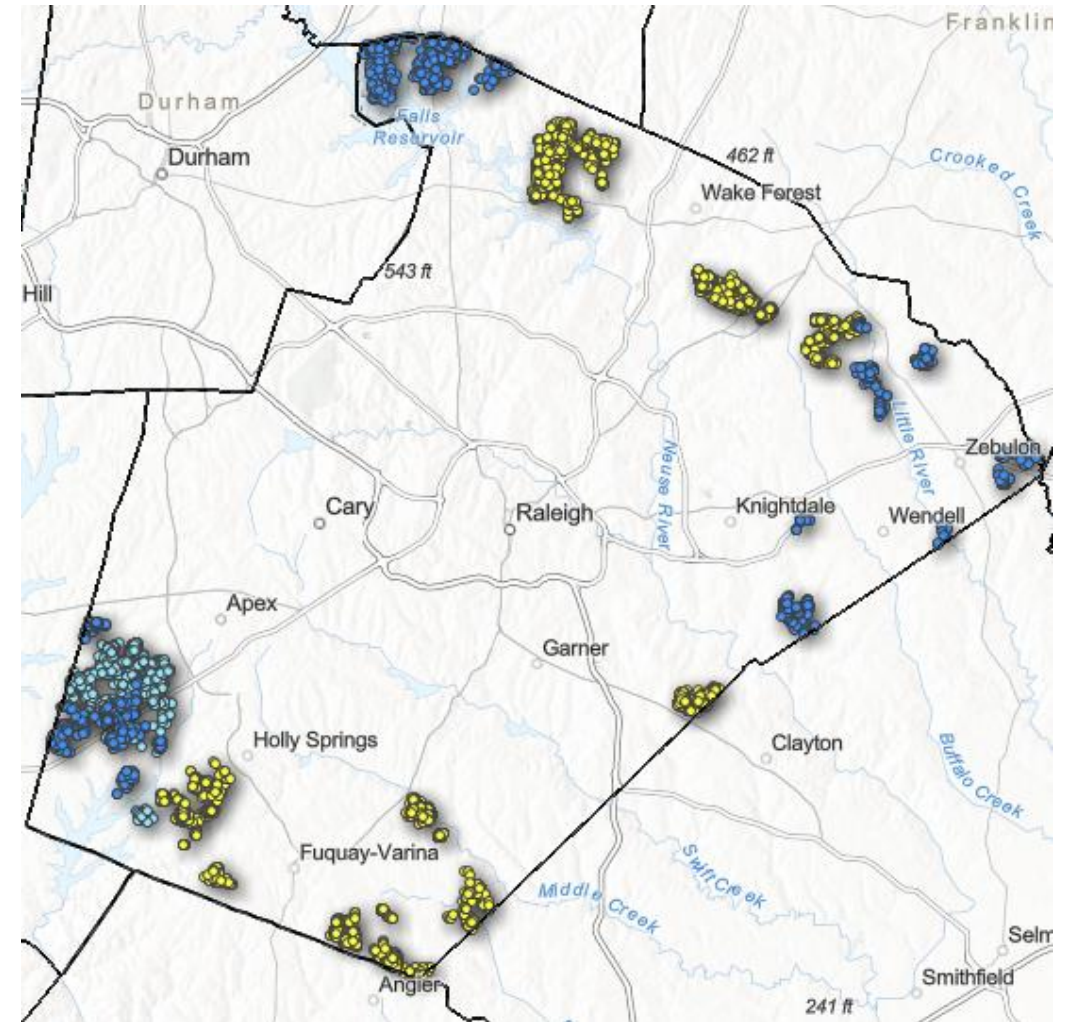
- Each Protest is reviewed individually
- Data Submitted by Protester is analyzed for the following:
 - Granularity of information submitted by the protesters
 - Protected areas
 - 10% threshold
 - “Self-protests”
 - Comparison with FCC Form 477 Data
 - Comparison with Speed Test Data (N.C. Broadband Survey)
- Protest decisions are exempt from the contested case provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act
- Some protest information is deemed confidential per statute

Moving Forward: Identifying Eligible Areas

- New FCC Broadband Data Collection Process
 - Serviceable Location Fabric
 - Broadband Availability Data
 - Challenge Processes
- State Collection of FCC Broadband Data
- Continuation of N.C. Broadband Survey
- Goal of receiving protests/challenges to map prior to grant rounds

What's Next in GREAT?

- Working to award remaining \$80 million
- Making awards to the next highest scoring applicant, with a maximum of one additional award per county until the balance of the funds is allocated
- Will use the same process as described in the FAQ document
- Projects with overlap between awarded area and second-highest scoring project, will require application revisions



What about the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) Program?

- CAB allows for selection of “unfunded” GREAT Grant projects
- From CAB Guidance document:

Once the GREAT Grant awards have been finalized, the Office will make available a list of the unfunded eligible projects. **Because these projects will have been part of a competitive grants process, have passed eligibility requirements for the GREAT Grant Program, have been vetted for eligible areas, and have been part of a protest process for eligible locations, the remaining viable projects may be considered under the CAB Program.** (Some of these unfunded projects may be ineligible for consideration because of duplication with funded GREAT grant projects, making the remaining project infeasible.)
- Based on the eligible projects list, counties will then be able to determine whether they wish to fund an unfunded GREAT grant project or move forward with a new competitive process under the CAB Program
- If a county wishes to fund an unfunded GREAT grant project, the matching fund requirements will be calculated based on the total project cost and the matching requirements under the CAB program

What about Contracting for GREAT Awards?

- All award announcements are contingent awards
 - Working through conditional items needed to enter into a grant agreement
 - Will be verifying matching funds first
- Grant agreements are forthcoming upon further guidance/clarifications from U.S. Treasury
- Notified counties to wait for additional guidance from NCDIT before finalizing partnership agreements
 - MOU Concept: fiscal and administrative compliance monitoring - NCDIT and counties
- Objective is for one set of compliance measures for all grantees

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