BEAD and Digital Equity Update

Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

April 8, 2024

Digital Equity Plan Approved!

- Refined draft plan based on 180 public comments received and submitted it to NTIA on Feb. 28, 2024

- Digital Equity Plan was **ACCEPTED** by NTIA in March 2024

- Plan is available at ncbroadband.gov/Digital-Equity-Plan
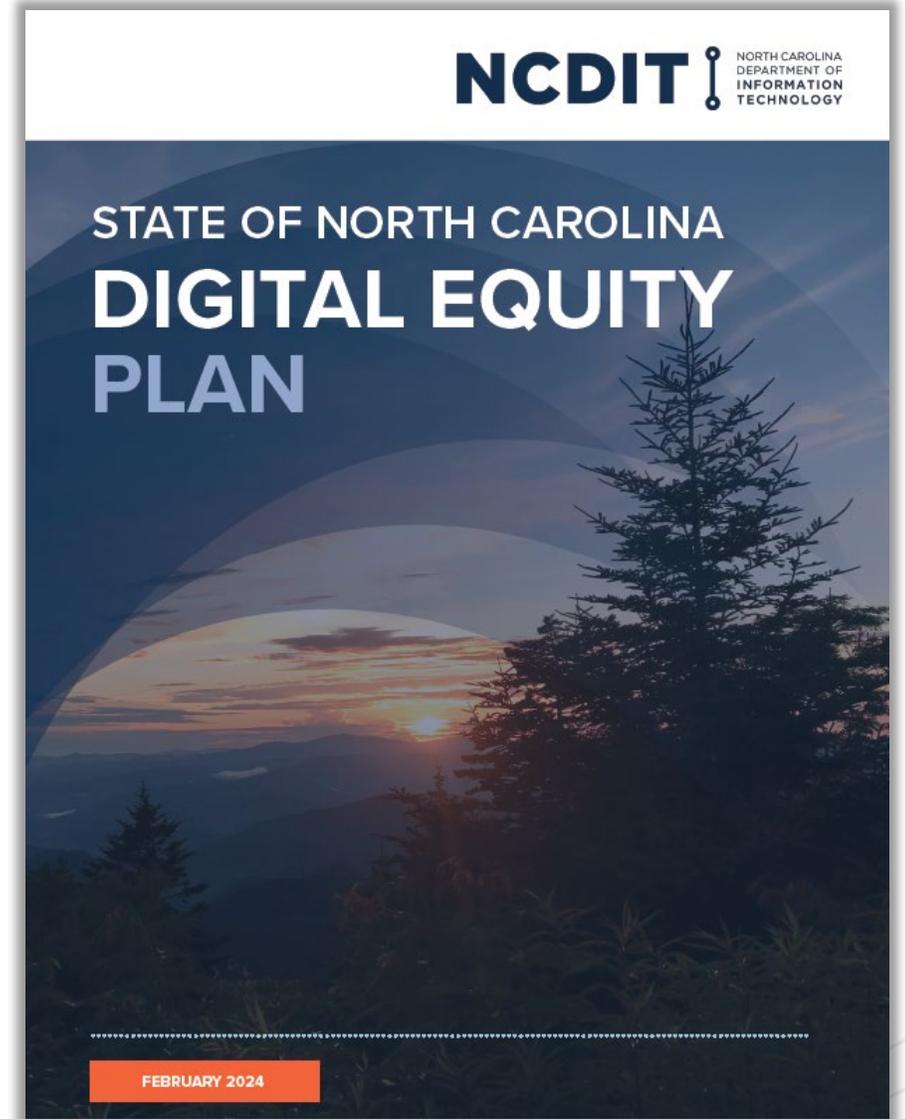
What's Inside

We envision a future where all North Carolinians have access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet and the digital tools, resources, and skills to fully and equitably participate in our society, democracy and economy.

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Digital Equity Plan – Barriers and Needs Identified

1. Access to and affordability of high-speed internet

2. Accessibility and inclusivity of online public resources

3. Digital literacy

4. Cybersecurity and privacy

5. Availability and affordability of devices and technical support

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Measurable Objectives & Implementation Strategies

Strategy 1: All North Carolinians have access to high-speed internet and to affordable, low-cost internet services

Strategy 2: Promote practices that support online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services

Strategy 3: Ensure that North Carolinians can acquire the digital skills and understanding to meet their personal needs and the workforce needs of the state

Strategy 4: Promote practices and leverage tools to ensure online privacy and security

Strategy 5: Ensure that North Carolinians have access to digital devices to meet their needs

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What's next?

Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO released by NTIA

- $22 million for the State of North Carolina (only the state can apply)
- Application due May 28
- Expected award date: Fall 2024

Asset Inventory

- Interactive database being developed by NCDIT
- Expected publish date: Summer 2024

Digital Equity Competitive Grant released by NTIA

- Organizations in the state will be eligible to apply
- Expected release date: September 2024

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NC Broadband Profile

Evolving identification of Unserved Locations

New FCC Broadband Data Collection Serviceable Location Fabric – June 2023

🔴 Unserved Broadband Serviceable Locations (Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload)
- 283,420 Locations

🟠 Underserved Broadband Serviceable Locations (Less Than 100mb/s Download and 20mb/s Upload)
- 138,903 Locations

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County Broadband Profiles
Defining Eligible Project Areas

https://www.nconemap.gov/pages/broadband

FCC Reported Unserved Locations

Count of Unserved

Percent Unserved

High   Low   Low   High
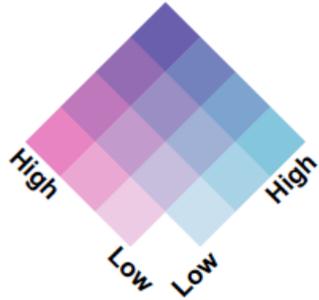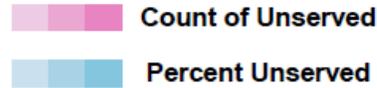
▲ NC Broadband Survey - Unserved Responses

○ GREAT Contingent Award Locations (Federally Funded)

● GREAT Award Locations (State Funded)

GREAT Award Areas (State Funded)

Other Federal Grants

County Profiles

Overviews of broadband service and funding for each county in North Carolina.

[   ] ⇕   Download

Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Map Date: 3/1/2023

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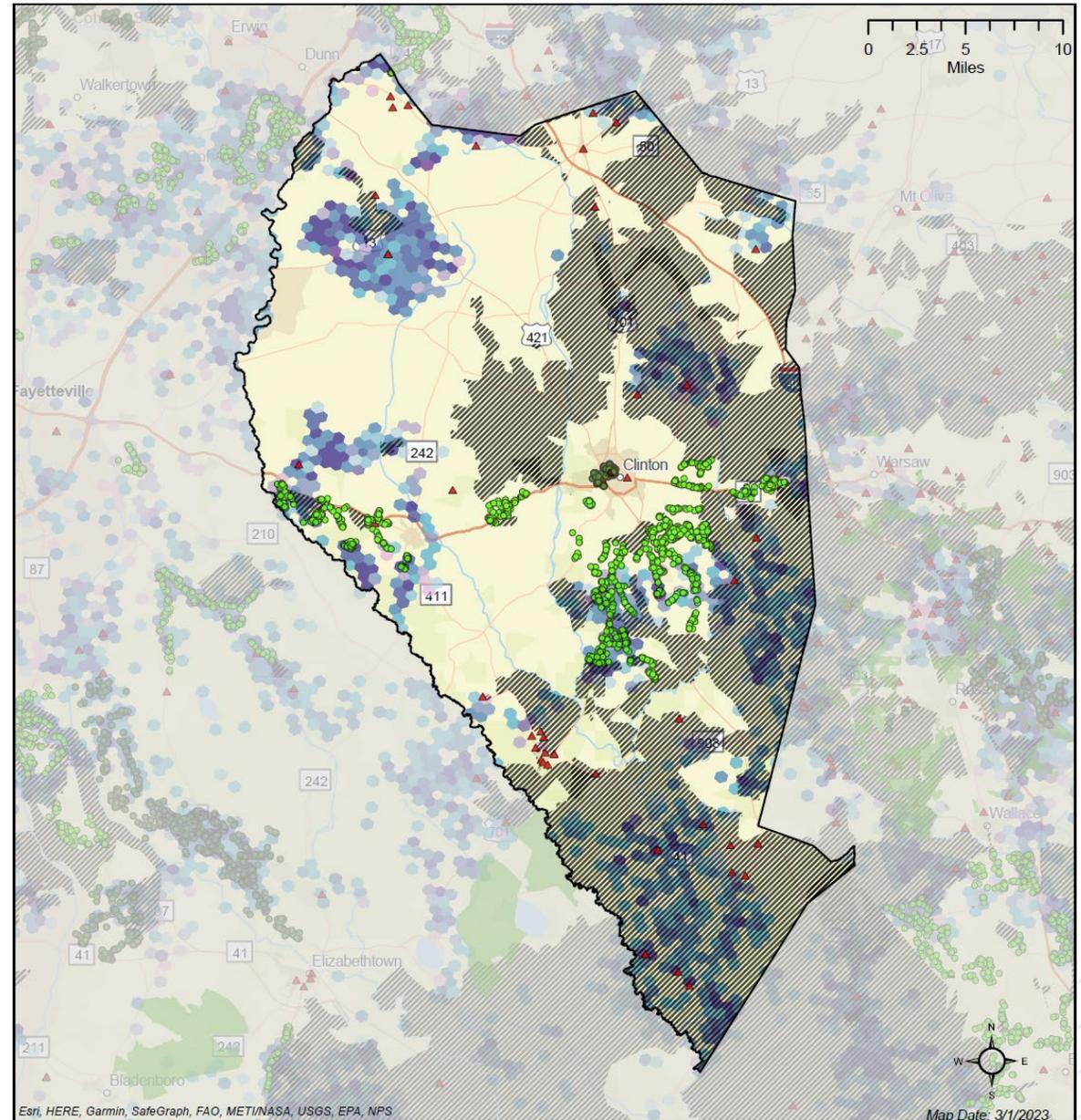
Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Funding

$1.5 billion from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to make sure all North Carolinians can access reliable high-speed internet

Eligible uses of funding include:

- Infrastructure for homes and businesses

- Upgrades to infrastructure for community anchor institutions

- Mapping and data collection

- Internet and Wi-Fi infrastructure for multi-family residential buildings

- Broadband adoption, including affordable internet capable devices and sign-up assistance

- Training and workforce development

- Digital equity programs

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BEAD and Digital Equity Timeline

November 2022:
NC awarded funds
for planning

June 2023: Notice of
State Funding Allocation
from NTIA; Draft BEAD
Plan posted for public
comments

November 2023:
BEAD Initial Proposal
posted for public
comments

January 2024:
Digital Equity Plan
due to NTIA

2025-2028:
BEAD Subgrantee Selection
process continues
BEAD Final Proposal due in
2025
Implementation of BEAD and
Digital Equity Plans

January to August 2023:
Local Coordination:
Listening Sessions;
Needs Assessment;
Asset Inventory

July 2023: BEAD Five-
Year Plan submitted to
NTIA; N.C. Broadband
Workforce Advisory
Committee began
meeting

December 2023:
Draft Digital Equity Plan
posted for public comments
& BEAD Initial Proposal due
to NTIA

2024:
BEAD Challenge Process to determine
eligible locations
Subgrantee Selection Process begins
NTIA launches Digital Equity Capacity
and Competitive Grant programs

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BEAD Five-Year Plan

- Refined draft plan based on public comments received (partners listed in plan), and then submitted it to NTIA on July 28, 2023

- Plan was approved by NTIA in August 2023

- Approved plan is available at: ncbroadband.gov/BEAD

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BEAD FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

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Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

www.ncbroadband.gov

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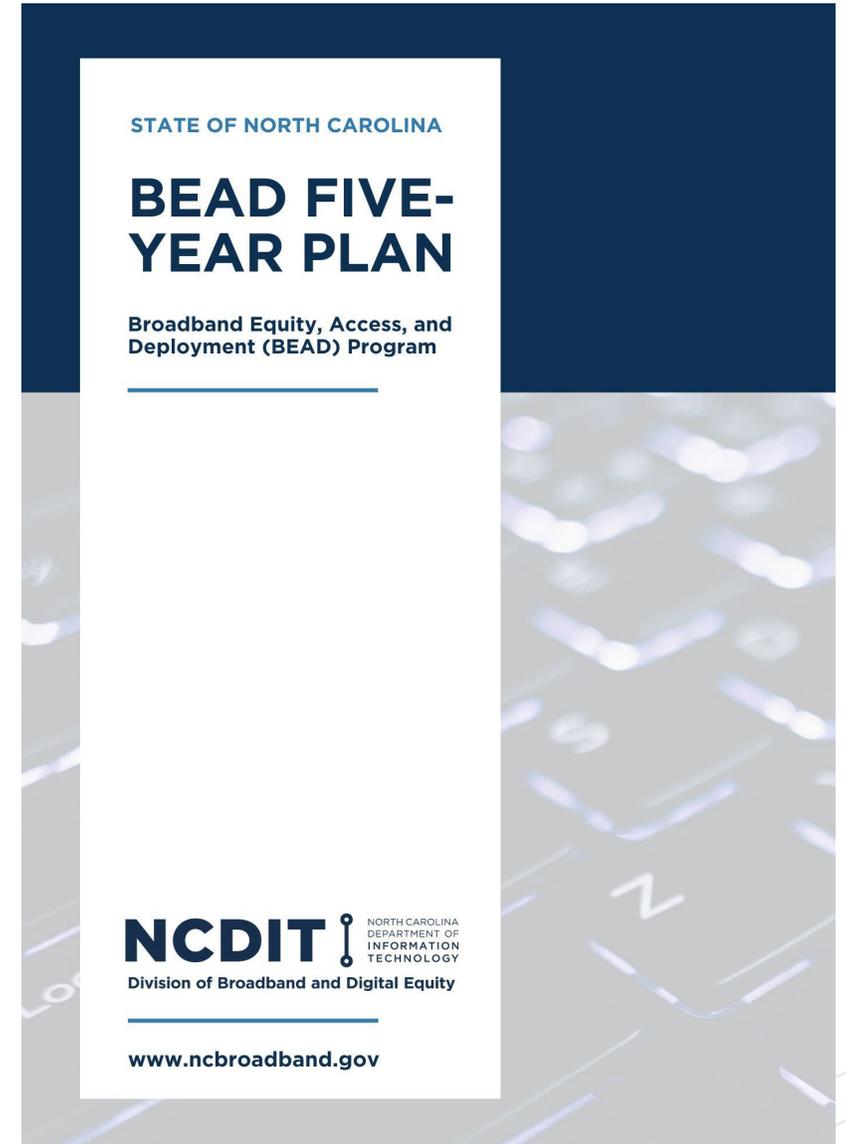
BEAD Initial Proposal (Submitted, Not Yet Approved)

- Includes two volumes submitted Dec. 22, 2023
  - **Volume 1 Draft**
  - **Volume 2 Draft**
  - **Workforce Development Draft Plan**

- NTIA "curing" process for BEAD Initial Proposal continues (likely until May); Updated versions will be posted online once NTIA approves them

- Challenge Process may not begin until Volume 1 is approved by NTIA

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Timeline of Existing Programs & BEAD Implementation

	2024				2025				2026				2027				2028				2029			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4

Final Proposal Due

BEAD Curing	Prequalification and Challenge Process	Award BEAD Grants	Deployment
			Monitoring

GREAT Deployment
Monitoring

Award CAB Grants	Deployment
	Monitoring

Stop-Gap Under development, TBD
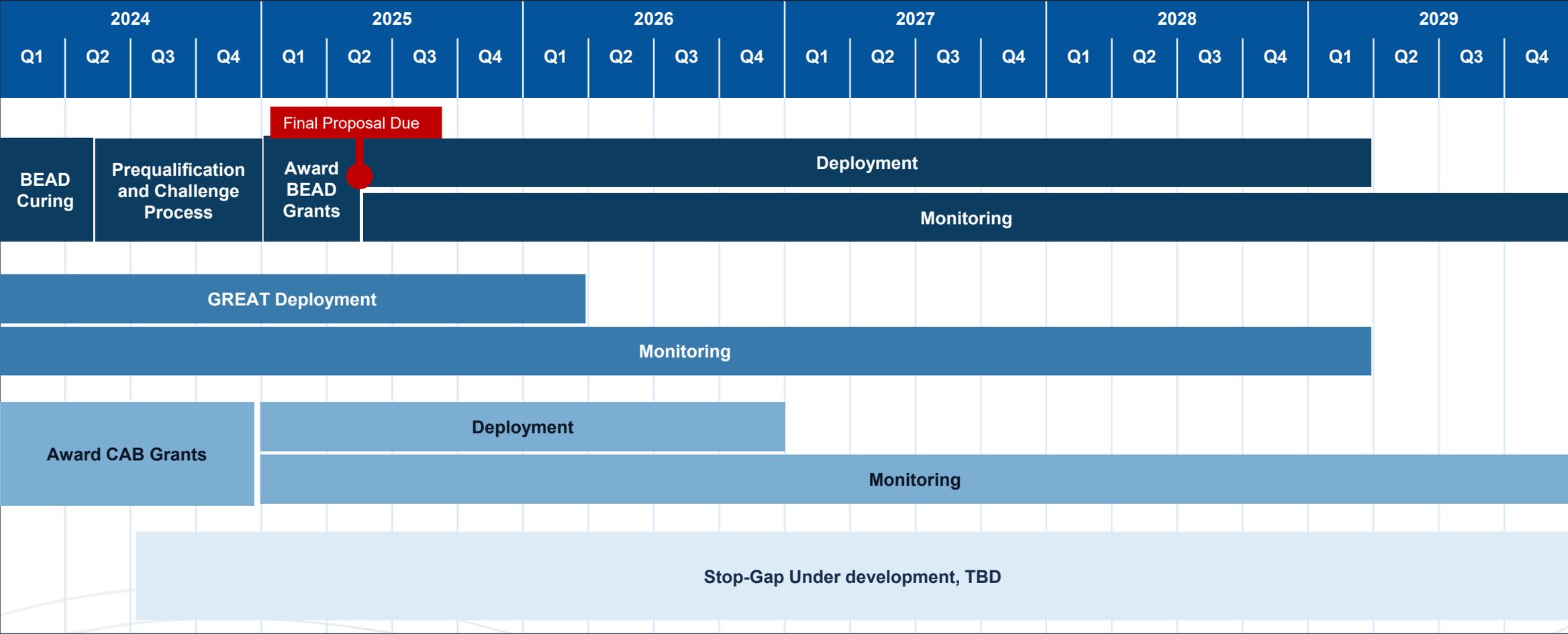
● BEAD Program   ● GREAT Grant   ● CAB Program   ● Stop-Gap Solutions Program

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Challenge Process (estimated fall 2024)

Deduplication with previous federal and state funding including GREAT and CAB → Modifications → Submission of challenges including speed tests → Adjudication → Final deduplication → Submit locations to NTIA for approval

Eligible Challengers

- Unit of local government
- Nonprofit organization
- Internet service provider

Challenge Portal

- All challenges will be submitted, rebutted and adjudicated through a web portal
- Additional information on access to the portal will be available prior to the launch of the challenge process

Timing

- Challenge process will be 90 days
- Estimated to begin in fall 2024

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Phases of the BEAD Subgrantee Selection Process

Prequalification requirements
(tentatively summer 2024)

Multiple Funding Rounds
(2025)

Negotiations and award
(2025)

• Financial, Managerial, Technical and Operational

• Priority vs. non-priority
• Extremely high-cost location threshold setting
• Best and final offer concept
• Deconfliction

• Broadband Serviceable Locations with no applications
• Inducements

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QUESTIONS?

Place your questions in the chat feature

Visit the division's website to learn more and see additional resources: www.ncbroadband.gov

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