A Connected Florida: Access, Opportunity, Workforce, Prosperity, Resiliency

Florida's Five-Year Action Plan

State of Florida

Florida Office of Broadband

Florida Department of Commerce

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Executive Summary

Reliable broadband Internet access is necessary for access, communication, job seekers and job creators in a modern community – in a connected economy – playing a central role in family and community connections, K-12 education, workforce education, job training, upskilling, job seeking, business development, industry and market sector growth, access to health care services, emergency preparedness and response, supporting the needs of Florida's federally recognized tribes, and – collectively – community resilience.

Along with access to digital devices and the required skills to use those devices, broadband is critical to an individual's economic mobility and overall quality of life. Individuals who lack broadband access cannot realize these economic and social benefits, and the expansion of broadband represents a tremendous opportunity. This is particularly true for rural, unserved, and underserved communities across Florida, where expanded access will encourage increased business growth, greater educational and employment opportunities, and better access to public and private programs and services.

Bottom line – broadband access has become an input that impacts all Floridians' outcomes.

Where Florida stands today

The creation of Florida's Office of Broadband in 2020 allowed the state to allocate more funding and resources to broadband expansion. Florida has already made significant progress in its broadband expansion efforts, reaching 94% coverage statewide. Part of this success can be attributed to the state's wide network of carriers and internet service providers (ISPs), as well as state and federally funded broadband programs that have helped bring much of the state online. Additionally, the state is unique in its development of statutorily created Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPTs) within all of Florida's 67 counties. These LTPTs:
- offer assistance helping their communities understand current broadband availability;
- locate unserved and underserved businesses and residents;
- identify assets relevant to broadband deployment; and
- build partnerships with broadband service providers.

However, this story of broadband success does not extend to the remaining 6% of the state. Approximately 406,000 locations in Florida still lack access to high-speed, reliable internet service.[1] For residents in these areas, the repercussions of the digital divide extend far beyond the inability to simply browse the Internet. Without reliable broadband access, impacted students are unable to:
- complete online homework;
- participate in virtual educational opportunities; or
- conduct online research to explore scholarship opportunities or apply for and pursue postsecondary educational pathways.

Reliable broadband access will increase the regional competitiveness of Florida's rural areas, bringing new job creators and allowing local small businesses access to resources to expand their reach. Further, by increasing reliable broadband access, underserved areas will become more resilient in the face of natural disasters, public health emergencies, and economic downturns. By increasing access to broadband, devices, and digital skills Florida's communities and families will thrive.

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[1] Based on analysis of December 2022 data from the FCC Broadband Data Collection (BDC) system.

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program will help address many of these challenges and build off the state's ongoing broadband expansion and digital literacy efforts. Through existing partnerships and incoming BEAD funds, Florida is prepared to address the following needs and gaps identified during the development of the Five-Year Action Plan:

- **Addressing unserved and underserved locations:** Based on analysis of data from the FCC Broadband Data Collection (BDC) system, 268,000 of Florida's Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) are unserved, while 138,000 are underserved.[2] Combining unserved and underserved estimates, this suggests that around 6% of BSLs in the state of Florida lack sufficient connectivity. Bringing access to these communities is a key priority for broadband deployment in the state.
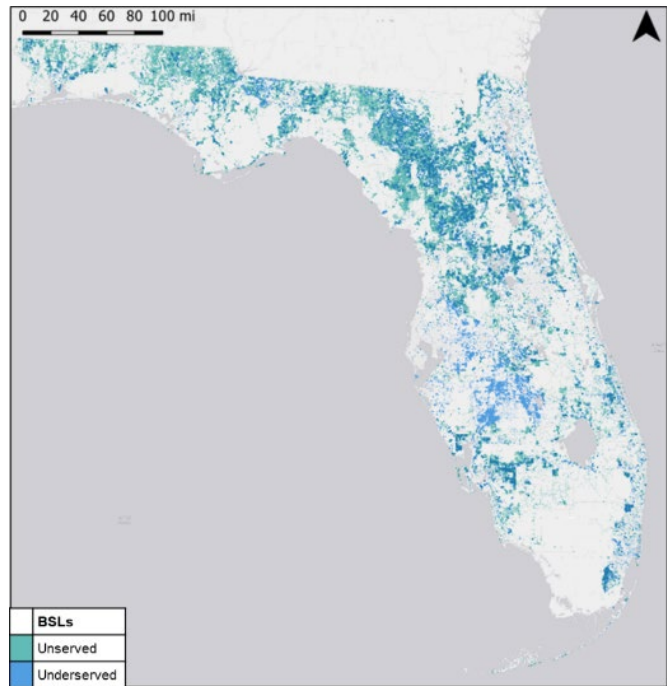
Figure 1. Unserved and underserved locations in Florida

- **Increasing broadband adoption rates:** Nearly a quarter of the state's population does not use the Internet, ranking Florida with the second highest rate of non-adoption among all states. In addition, 40% of the population does not use a digital device. According to the US Census, this percentage is the third highest rate of non-adoption among all states.[3] These statistics suggest that there is tremendous opportunity for the state to expand digital literacy and digital device programming to increase adoption among Floridians.

- **Broadening awareness around low-cost offerings:** Cost can be a significant barrier to broadband adoption for low-income households. While Florida's 37% enrollment rate in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is ahead of the U.S. state average of 34%, there is still opportunity to increase awareness around the availability of ACP as well as other low-cost service options.[4]

- **Preparing a skilled workforce:** One of the most common barriers to meaningful connectivity in the state includes lack of basic digital skills. According to third-party research, 33% of unemployed individuals lack foundational digital skills which are required for 75% of open jobs in the state.[5] Broadband deployment efforts will advance many of the state's top priorities, including Governor DeSantis' aim to promote the creation and growth of businesses through a supply of skilled workers from across the state.[6]

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[2] I.e., receives speeds less than 25/3 mbps (download/upload), receives speeds between 25/3 mbps and 100/20 mbps, respectively
[3] U.S. Census Digital Equity Act Population Viewer, https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865464a90ff1573c5072b42
[4] Education Superhighway, Affordable Connectivity Program Enrollment Dashboard, https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/no-home-left-offline/acp-data/. Enrollment rates of eligible households as of April 2023.
[5] National Digital Inclusion Alliance, state Digital Equity Scorecard, https://digital-skills-map.digitalinclusion.org/scorecard/by_state/FL
[6] State of Florida, Framework for Freedom Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24, http://www.boldvisionforabrighterfuture.com/PDFLoader.htm?file=HomeFY24.pdf

- **Catalyzing economic growth:** Deploying broadband infrastructure and connecting the more remote parts of the state will help catalyze many of the state's key economic goals, including expanding its economic footprint through access to new markets and creating a more competitive business climate.[7] Research has shown that for every 10% increase in broadband penetration[8], there is, on average, a 0.7% growth in GDP.[9] Aligning the state's broadband deployment and digital literacy efforts to the state's broader economic policy goals will create a positive ripple effect throughout the economy.

Where Florida is going

The ultimate goal of broadband expansion is to allow all Floridians and communities to reap the benefits of a connected economy. When more people are connected, opportunities for economic and social prosperity increase, and overall quality of life improves. Throughout this plan, the Office of Broadband has outlined how expanded broadband will bring about a more connected economy.

Vision

To foster a *Connected Economy* that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, resiliency, and telemedicine by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption.

Goals

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment	**G2**: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience	**G3**: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices

Objectives

1.1 Target deployment to unserved and underserved areas	**1.2** Attract multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet	**1.3** Develop a robust technology-trained workforce	**2.1** Expand availability of public Wi-Fi	**2.2** Encourage participation in affordable Internet service plans	**2.3** Equip communities to manage through emergencies	**3.1** Encourage development of new digital literacy programs	**3.2** Increase device use and ownership	**3.3** Expand availability of Digital Navigators

Strategies

S1.1 Develop quality and accurate data to inform deployment planning	**S1.2** Operate a transparent grant program and broadband planning process	**S1.3** Promote educational, accreditation & training resources and programs for workforce	**S2.1** Support CAIs with availability of high-speed Internet and devices for public use	**S2.2** Coordinate with ISPs to promote availability of low-cost offerings and programs to offset subscription costs	**S2.3** Assess broadband technologies to address county-level emergencies	**S3.1** Promote awareness of digital skills and cybersecurity courses	**S3.2** Regularly assess the device ownership of covered populations	**S3.3** Leverage LTPTs to expand awareness and use of digital navigation services

Figure 2. Florida's BEAD Strategic Framework

Figure 2 summarizes the state's plan to expand broadband and bridge the digital divide. This model will help guide the state's decision-making related to the allocation of BEAD funds. The state's first

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[7] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6

[8] Broadband penetration is defined as "the number of subscriptions to fixed and mobile broadband services, i.e. with advertised data speeds of 256 kbps or more, divided by the number of residents in each country," Connectivity | OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2017 : The digital transformation | OECD iLibrary (oecd-ilibrary.org)

[9] "The Contribution of Fixed Broadband to the Economic Growth of the United States between 2010 and 2020," https://www.teleadvs.com/wp-content/uploads/ContributionofFixedBroadbandtoEconomicGrowth_RaulKatz.pdf

priority is to launch broadband deployment projects that address unserved and underserved locations – with a special emphasis on ensuring the state has a trained, skilled workforce for both the initial buildout and ongoing maintenance. After serving all unserved and underserved locations, the state will promote 1 Gbps symmetrical speeds for identified Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs), with the knowledge that many CAIs will leverage the benefits of the first priority broadband deployment projects. Additional strategies will encompass efforts related to broadband affordability, community resilience, and broadband adoption.

In addition to the Strategic Framework, the state is guided by a few overarching principles; these principles are outlined below and will resonate throughout this Five-Year Action Plan:

Themes for Florida's Broadband Deployment

- **Take inspiration from the Strategic Plan for Broadband:** The inspiration for many of the goals, objectives, needs, and strategies found in this plan was taken from Florida's Strategic Plan for Broadband. Developing the Strategic Plan involved many of the same steps as this plan – including robust stakeholder engagement; leading practices research; and asset, needs, and gaps identification. The intent of this plan is to align as closely as possible with Strategic Plan where appropriate, while also including additional data and information as required by the BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).
- **Empower local governments:** The state serves as the administrator of BEAD funding; it must provide a statewide plan for deploying broadband; and it can help convene and facilitate relevant activities. However, local communities are ultimately the owners and drivers of how broadband deployment will be implemented over the next five years and beyond. This plan acknowledges the distinct roles of the state and local communities, in addition to other key players, within the outlined strategies and activities. Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPT) will be a key part of this approach. LTPTs are multi-disciplinary, on-the-ground groups in each of Florida's 67 counties that facilitate broadband expansion efforts. LTPTs continue to be a crucial asset in helping develop a current state analysis of broadband across Florida, and many of the objectives, strategies, and activities in this plan rely heavily on LTPT involvement.
- **Promote Sustainable Adoption:** Florida aspires to achieve the "sustainable adoption"[10] of broadband across the state, meaning that adoption and use levels are sufficient to allow service without the need for government subsidies. However, in some areas of the state, the cost of providing service is currently too high to be completely covered by customer charges. The state will use all available federal and state funding to bring broadband to all residents in the short-term, while employing a strategic, data-driven, and collaborative approach with ISPs and local communities to work toward a future of sustainable adoption.
- **Identify, and collaborate with, trusted community advisors:** A key tenet of this plan is its emphasis on trusted community advisors to help drive adoption and digital literacy. Stakeholder engagement highlighted an overwhelming belief and support for the power of community partners – to help ensure more Floridians have the skills to participate meaningfully in a digital world, and to increase the provision of Internet-enabled devices that meet each resident's unique needs. This plan outlines how it will utilize existing community programs and resources, as well as how the state will help expand and enhance community-based programming.
- **Align with the Digital Adoption and Use Plan:** The Five-Year Action Plan was developed concurrently with the Digital Adoption and Use Plan to encourage cohesion and avoid

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[10] *Sustainable adoption* implies that while public financial support may be important in the short term, the end goal is for providers to be able to obtain "adoption and use levels" that allow services to be offered without government subsidies. (§ 288.9961(2)(e), Fla. Stat.)

contradictory strategies. Many of the overarching themes and strategies included in this plan are emphasized in Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan to better prioritize efforts and emphasize the alignment of the two plans.

Next Steps

To increase the availability and accessibility of broadband Internet through the state, the Florida Office of Broadband was created in 2020. One of the Office's major accomplishments to date was the creation of a *Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband* in 2022, which lays out the vision of the Office, the roles for state and local participants, and the strategies to undertake as Florida works toward a fully connected citizenry, both economically and socially.

With the passing of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in 2021 and the subsequent release of billions of dollars to expand broadband and reduce the digital divide, the Office of Broadband can expand upon its existing programs, partnerships, and initiatives. The purpose of this Five-Year Action Plan is to provide both a framework and roadmap for how the Office will go about this process. The methodology used for completing the Five-Year Action Plan involved:

- qualitative and quantitative analyses to identify needs, gaps, assets, and barriers related to broadband and digital literacy; and
- ongoing in-person and virtual stakeholder engagement with internal and external partners; and
- prioritization of goals, objectives, strategies, priorities, and activities to address identified needs and gaps and harness existing assets and partnerships.

The final piece in the plan development process was developing a realistic, actionable, and detailed implementation plan for carrying out planned activities in alignment with the BEAD NOFO requirements.

Completion of this Plan is only one of many steps the Office will take in pursuit of its vision and goals. The Office will also be completing the Initial and Final Proposal, as well as the complementary Digital Adoption and Use Plan over the course of the next few months. Once these plans are finalized, the implementation work will begin and a process of ongoing program evaluation, stakeholder feedback, and progress assessment will ensue.

2   Overview of the Five-Year Action Plan

Florida's BEAD Five-Year Action Plan builds on the proven success of the Florida Office of Broadband. An overarching vision and set of goals and objectives provide both an aim for Florida's future of connectivity, and a framework for this Office's day-to-day activities. The following section outlines this vision and its associated goals and objectives in more detail:

- 2.1 Vision – Outlines Florida's vision of a connected economy through broadband expansion.
- 2.2 Goals and Objectives – Explains the State's goals and objectives to achieve its stated vision.

2.1 Vision

The vision of the Florida Office of Broadband is to **foster a connected economy that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, telemedicine, and resiliency by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption.** This vision comports with legislative findings in the Florida Broadband Deployment Act of 2021, "that the sustainable adoption of broadband internet service is critical to the economic and business development of this state and is essential for all residents

Figure 3: Steps to a Connected Economy

of this state, libraries, schools, colleges and universities, health care providers, and community organizations" (section 288.9961(1), Florida Statutes).

Realizing this vision brings together a fully connected economy that bolsters the central tenets of supporting a robust workforce, educational opportunities, and health care access. The Florida Office of Broadband's Strategic Plan outlines a three-step approach to a connected economy: 1) Availability; 2) Adoption; and 3) Use of digital content.[11] Each step will be undertaken with a high level of accountability to ensure positive impacts in business and job growth; development of workforce education and job training opportunities; healthier Floridians; and connected workforce housing.[12]

The Office of Broadband will build off existing efforts to work with local and state government agencies, community organizations, Tribal Governments, and private businesses to achieve this vision and carry out the goals, objectives, and activities detailed in this plan.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

Florida has three goals and nine objectives across the following six areas: broadband deployment, economic growth, broadband access, broadband affordability, broadband adoption, and digital literacy. To achieve these goals, FloridaCommerce will partner with state agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Transportation, as well as external stakeholders, including Internet service providers (ISPs), community anchor institutions (CAIs), and Florida's federally recognized tribes. Many of the overarching themes included below are emphasized in Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan to prioritize efforts and emphasize the cohesion of both plans. The goals and objectives outlined below will also inform the BEAD Initial and Final Proposals.

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[11] Florida Office of Broadband, Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband 2022, https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/community-planning-development-and-services/broadband/the-florida-broadband-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=f76e55b0_2
[12] Ibid.

Florida BEAD Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Vision

To foster a Connected Economy that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, resiliency, and telemedicine by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption.

Goals

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment	G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience	G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices

Objectives

1.1 Target deployment to unserved and underserved areas	1.2 Attract multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet	1.3 Develop a robust technology-trained workforce	2.1 Expand availability of public Wi-Fi	2.2 Encourage participation in affordable Internet service plans	2.3 Equip communities to manage through emergencies	3.1 Encourage development of new digital literacy programs	3.2 Increase device use and ownership	3.3 Expand availability of Digital Navigators

Strategies

S1.1 Develop quality and accurate data to inform deployment planning	S1.2 Operate a transparent grant program and broadband planning process	S1.3 Promote educational, accreditation & training resources and programs for workforce	S2.1 Support CAIs with availability of high-speed Internet and devices for public use	S2.2 Coordinate with ISPs to promote availability of low-cost offerings and programs to offset subscription costs	S2.3 Assess broadband technologies to address county-level emergencies	S3.1 Promote awareness of digital skills and cybersecurity courses	S3.2 Regularly assess the device ownership of covered populations	S3.3 Leverage LTPTs to expand awareness and use of digital navigation services

Figure 4: Florida's BEAD Strategic Framework

2.2.1 Broadband Deployment and Economic Growth

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment

1.1: Target deployment to unserved and underserved areas	1.2: Attract multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet in rural, unserved, and underserved communities	1.3: Develop a robust technology-trained workforce

Florida's goals and objectives related to broadband deployment and economic growth are inherently intertwined. Key stakeholders and communities from across the state identified low provider presence or unreliable existing service as factors hindering economic development by deterring larger businesses from establishing offices in their regions. Equipping each community with quality, reliable Internet, especially in Florida's rural areas, will encourage business retention and attraction, tourism, and access to education and workforce opportunities in alignment with the state's economic development goals. Additionally, as the state facilitates expansion of broadband to unserved and underserved communities, it will focus on opportunities to develop and train a skilled workforce. These

efforts will build and expand upon the work that Florida has already started to strengthen its talent pipeline and close the supply and demand gaps in the workforce.

2.2.2 Broadband Access and Affordability

G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience		
2.1: Expand availability of public Wi-Fi	**2.2:** Encourage participation in affordable Internet service plans	**2.3:** Equip communities to manage through emergencies
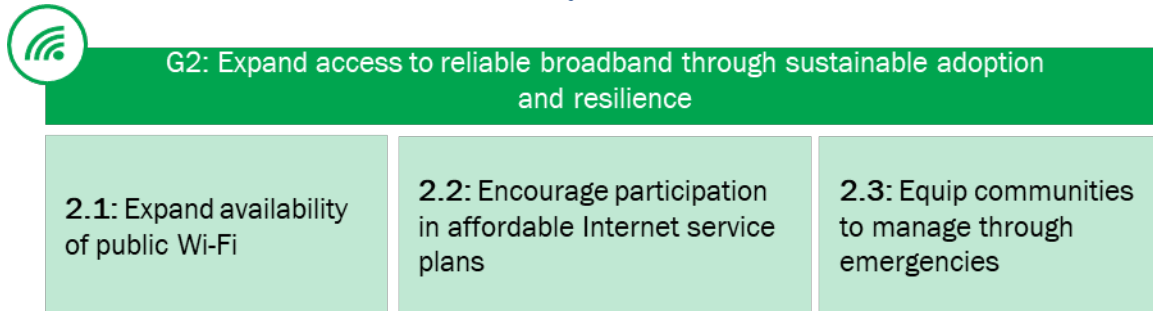
Over the past three years, the Office of Broadband has conducted outreach to key stakeholders and community members. A major theme from these interactions included how broadband access means different things to different communities, depending on their needs. As such, the state of Florida aims to increase access through the following activities:

- Expanding the availability of access both inside and outside the home, with a special focus on covered populations;
- Spreading awareness of the benefits of broadband to encourage expanded access and sustainable adoption over time; and
- Ensuring that, for each and every community, broadband access means resiliency in the face of natural disasters, public health emergencies, and economic downturns.[13]
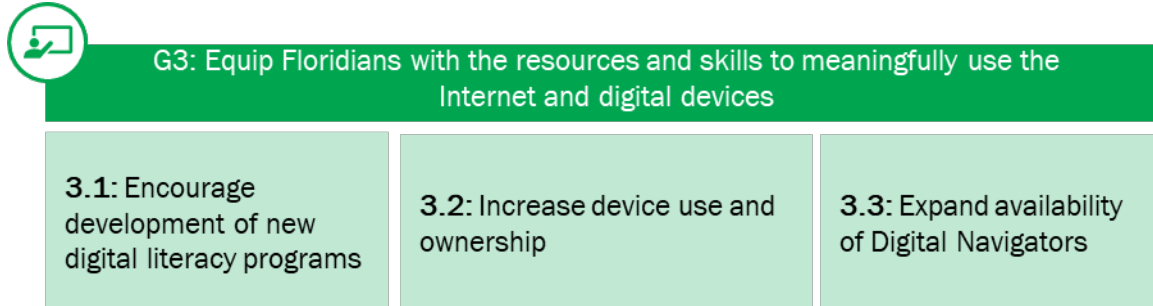
2.2.3 Broadband Adoption and Digital Literacy

G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices		
3.1: Encourage development of new digital literacy programs	**3.2:** Increase device use and ownership	**3.3:** Expand availability of Digital Navigators

The Public Health Emergency highlighted the disparities in broadband adoption that exist within Florida, especially for rural, low-income, and elderly populations. Discussions with community leaders, parents, and working-age individuals from rural and low-income areas revealed that many struggled to keep up with the demands of school and work due to a lack of reliable or affordable broadband subscriptions and devices. Additionally, it became apparent that many of Florida's senior population lacked the skills necessary to use the Internet and could not access the telehealth services they so vitally needed.[14]

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[13] The defined term "sustainable adoption" implies that while public financial support may be important in the short term, the end goal is for providers to be able to obtain "adoption and use levels" that allow services to be offered without government subsidies. (§ 288.9961(2)(e), Fla. Stat.)
[14] Florida Office of Broadband 2021 Workshop Summary. https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/2015-community-development/ocp/obworkshopsummaryfinal5f1c2da4cbbb61cbb02aff01004f56df.pdf?sfvrsn=a0a14cb0_10

These adoption challenges expressed by both the public and community leaders are also supported by the data:

- Nearly a quarter of the state's population does not use the Internet – this is the second highest rate of non-adoption among all states.
- 40% of Florida's population does not use a digital device – this is the third highest rate of non-adoption among all states.[15]

To tackle these adoption challenges, Florida will place an emphasis on digital literacy by:

- carrying out activities with community partners to ensure more Floridians have the skills to meaningfully participate in a digital world;
- focusing on the Internet-enabled devices that meet the unique needs of communities; and
- providing one-on-one support from digital navigators[16] for ongoing assistance with Internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support.

3 Current State of Broadband

Access to broadband is s a foundational building block for Florida's workforce, health, and education goals. For businesses and organizations, broadband is crucial for economic growth opportunities. For individuals, broadband helps connect people to opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and more.

Pursuant to section 288.9961, Florida Statutes, Florida's Office of Broadband (Office) was created within the Florida Department of Commerce ("FloridaCommerce") in July 2020.[17] The Florida Legislature created the Office of Broadband noting that "sustainable adoption of broadband Internet service is critical to the economic and business development of this state and is essential for all residents of this state, libraries, schools, colleges and universities, health care providers, and community organizations."[18]

In its first three years of establishment, the Office has laid the groundwork for broadband Internet expansion throughout Florida's communities through a focus on strategic planning, mapping, expanded funding for broadband deployment, and partnerships with community and industry stakeholders.

To establish the current state of broadband in Florida, the Office has collated an inventory of the state's programs, partnerships, and assets. This chapter details the following elements of the current state of broadband and digital literacy:

- 3.1 Existing Programs – Provides an overview of the current activities, employees, contractors, and funding supporting the Office of Broadband.
- 3.2 Partnerships – Outlines new or existing partnerships Florida will leverage to expand broadband access in the state.

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[15] National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Digital Equity Act Population Viewer, https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865464a90ff1573c5072b42
[16] The term "digital navigator" is used to describe "trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigation services include ongoing assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support" (National Digital Inclusion Alliance).
[17] On July 1, 2023, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity transitioned to the Florida Department of Commerce.
[18] *See* Fla. Stat. § 288.9961.

- [3.3 Asset Inventory](#) – Offers an overview of existing programs, partnerships, and assets related to broadband deployment, adoption, access, and affordability.
- [3.4 Needs and Gaps Assessment](#) – Presents the gaps and needs related to the current state of broadband, adoption, and use.

Florida is dedicated to building upon its inventory of existing broadband assets to ensure all businesses, organizations, and individuals have the knowledge and resources to access and utilize the Internet.

3.1 Existing Programs

The Florida Broadband Deployment Act of 2021 ("2021 Act"; Ch. 24, 2021 Fla. Laws, codified at sections 288.9961-288.9963, Florida Statutes directed the Office of Broadband to complete the following tasks listed in Table 1. Since then, the Office of Broadband has made significant progress standing up and implementing the wide range of activities outlined below.

Current Activities for the Broadband Program

Table 1: Current Activities for the Broadband Program/Office

Activity Name	Description	Outcome(s)
Marketing Broadband	Developing, marketing, and promoting broadband Internet services in the state	Improve public awareness of broadband access
Broadband Strategic Planning	Creating a strategic plan to increase the use of broadband Internet services in the state	Ensure Florida is strategically planning for its broadband future
Public Broadband Speed Tests	Reviewing and verifying public input regarding transmission speeds and availability of broadband Internet services throughout the state	Ensuring broadband speed test data is accurate
Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPTs)	Building and facilitating local technology planning teams or partnerships	Enabling community engagement and involvement in broadband planning
Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Proceeding Participation	Participating in the FCC proceedings that are related to the geographic availability and deployment of broadband Internet in Florida	Ensure Florida's voice is heard in FCC proceedings
Manage Broadband Opportunity Program	Establishing the Broadband Opportunity Program and rulemaking for the program to award grants to applicants who seek to expand broadband to unserved areas (subject to appropriations)	Support the deployment of broadband through the Broadband Opportunity Program
Broadband Mapping	Developing a map of broadband Internet service availability throughout the state	Ensure state leaders and ISPs are aware of unserved and underserved areas

Current and Planned Full-Time and Part-Time Employees

Since 2020, FloridaCommerce's Office of Broadband has expanded from one full-time position to nine full-time positions. Other FloridaCommerce positions in the areas of financial management, human resources, and information technology that support the Office of Broadband's work and are not included in Table 2.

Table 2: Current and Planned Full-Time and Part-Time Employees

Current/ Planned	Full-Time/ Part-time	Position	Description of Role
Current	Part-Time	Deputy Secretary, Division of Community Development	Oversees operations for the Division of Community Development that includes the Office of Broadband
Current	Full-Time	Office of Broadband Director	Leads the Office of Broadband
Current	Full-Time	Office of Broadband Deputy Director	Provides leadership and management support to Office of Broadband Director
Current	Full-Time	Chief of State Broadband Initiatives	Manages the Office of Broadband's stakeholder engagement and implementation of strategic priorities
Current	Full-Time	Chief of Broadband Funding	Manages the Office of Broadband's deployment of funding and finances
Current	Full-Time	Government Operations Consultant / Mapping Subject-Matter Expert	Supports Office of Broadband in developing mapping to show broadband access, availability, and funding
Current	Full-Time	Government Analyst	Supports the Chief of State Broadband Initiatives in stakeholder engagement activities
Current	Full-Time	Government Operations Consultant	Supports the Chief of State Broadband Initiatives in managing Local Technology Planning Team efforts
Current	Part-Time	Communications Liaison	Supports communications initiatives for the Division of Community Development

Current and Planned Contractor Support

The Office of Broadband works with various contracted entities to support the implementation of its various programs and activities. Current and planned contractor support for the Office of Broadband is included in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Current and Planned Contractor Support

Current/ Planned	Time	Position	Description of Role
Current	Full-Time	Consulting Team	Preparation and facilitation of relevant webinars; development of Florida Digital Adoption and Use Plan and BEAD Five-Year Action Plan
Current	Full-Time	Monitoring & Compliance	Monitoring and compliance for the Broadband Opportunity program and Capital Projects Fund
Current	Full-Time	Project Management	Project management and grant applications intake, review, and scoring
Current	Full-Time	Mapping	Mapping and identification of unserved and underserved locations not yet resolved by broadband deployment grants
Current	Full-Time	Application Portal	Grant application and awardee invoice submission hub; in addition, collection of grantee data for reporting
Current	Full-Time	Cost Analyzer	Cost analysis of the mapped and identified underserved locations not yet resolved by broadband deployment grants

Broadband Funding

While maintainable, reliable adoption of broadband Internet service is the long-term goal, in some areas of the state, the cost of providing service is too high to be completely covered by customer charges—at least in the short-term. The state has developed funding mechanisms and a plan to consider various federal funding streams with the goal of ensuring that broadband Internet services can be deployed in Florida communities. Table 4 lists current and previous broadband funding sources as of October 19, 2023.

Table 4: Broadband Funding

Source	Purpose	Total	Obligated	Expended	Available
Broadband Opportunity Program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023	Provides funding for the installation and deployment of broadband Internet infrastructure in unserved Florida communities, providing valuable telehealth, economic, educational, and workforce development opportunities[19]	380,000,000 [19]	$377,447,514	$2,552,486	$0
BEAD Program	Provides federal funding for broadband planning, deployment, mapping, and adoption.	$1,169,947,393	$4,301,558	$698,419 *admin funds	$1,164,947,416
Digital Equity Planning (DEP) Grant	Provides the state with resources necessary to research and create a plan to reduce or eliminate barriers to an individual's ability to access and understand information in our digital economy.	$2,407,224	$1,885,322	$521,902 *admin funds	$0
U.S. Treasury's Capital Projects Fund - Admin	Funding provided via the Capital Projects Funds grant for management of the grant funds.	$18,301,843	$14,635,956	$3,665,887	$0
Capital Projects Fund - Broadband Infrastructure Program	Provides funds for broadband infrastructure deployment in areas where broadband internet service is not available from a terrestrial provider.	$247,761,206	$247,503,055	$0	$258,151
Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act ESSER II – Technology Assistance Grant Program[20]	Provides funding for school districts used for costs associated with purchasing educational technology for students, including low-income students and students with disabilities	$3.1B[21]	See footnote 21 below	See footnote 21 below	See footnote 21 below

3.2 Partnerships

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[19] FloridaCommerce Office of Broadband: Broadband Opportunity Program, https://floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/broadband/office-of-broadband. Florida's Legislature originally appropriated $400 million to its Broadband Opportunity Program. The Legislature subsequently reduced the Broadband Opportunity Program's funding by $20 million pursuant to Section 233 of Senate Bill 2500 (2023).
[20] Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act ESSER II - Technology Assistance Grant Program was managed by the Florida Department of Education. Program obligations and expenditures can be viewed at the following web address: https://www.fldoe.org/covid-19/funding/esser.stml#:~:text=As%20with%20the%20initial%20ESSER,schools%20due%20to%20COVID%2D19
[21] United States Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, CRRSA ESSER II State Allocation Table, https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/Final_ESSERII_Methodology_Table_1.5.21.pdf

Partnerships are the foundation of the Office's activities and initiatives. Section 288.9961, Florida Statutes requires that the Office "build and facilitate local technology planning teams or partnerships with members representing cross-sections of the community." Each of our identified partners will support the execution of funded activities. Table 5 below lists identified partners.

Table 5: Partnerships

Partners	Description of Current or Planned Role in Broadband Deployment and Adoption
Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPTs)	As established under section 288.9961, Florida Statutes, LTPTs work with rural communities to help the communities understand their current broadband availability, locate unserved and underserved businesses and residents, identify assets relevant to broadband deployment, build partnerships with broadband service providers, and identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the community. There are 67 LTPTs for each of Florida's counties.
State Agencies (e.g., Departments of Education, Agriculture, Transportation, Health, and Children and Families)	State agency partners support broadband access and deployment through information-sharing on broadband availability, sharing community needs, and marketing broadband programs.
Internet Service Providers	Broadband Infrastructure and Service Providers partner with the state to market broadband, assist in broadband strategic planning, support Local Technology Planning Teams, and share information on the availability of broadband.
Broadband Infrastructure Providers	Advise and/or carry out infrastructure planning, development and implementation and provide insights on barriers and opportunities for coordination in relation to rights-of-way, permitting, pole attachments, and other issues related to the physical deployment of broadband networks.

3.3 Asset Inventory

This section provides an inventory of the available broadband assets in the State of Florida.[22] Assets have been provided for the following:

- 3.3.1 Broadband Deployment – Assets that are or can be utilized to deliver high-speed internet
- 3.3.2 Broadband Adoption – Assets and/or programs that increase the use of high-speed internet
- 3.3.3 Broadband Affordability – Assets and/or programs that increase the affordability of high-speed internet
- 3.3.4 Broadband Access – Assets and/or programs that facilitate greater access to broadband
- 3.3.5 Digital Literacy – Assets and/or programs that promote digital participation

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[22] Asset inventory is not exhaustive. Additional assets that support broadband deployment, adoption, accessibility, affordability, and digital literacy may be available in the State of Florida that are not currently captured in this plan.

3.3.1 Broadband Deployment

Through departments such as the Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Department of Transportation (FDOT), the state is well-positioned to provide partners with necessary information and resources on topics such as vertical assets, developable land, and more to support broadband deployment across the state.

Asset	Description

Vertical infrastructure	• Department of Environmental Protection collects data on the following vertical infrastructure assets that may be leveraged for broadband deployment:
	    ○ Public Water Supply (PWS) Tanks (Non-Federal) dataset; dataset differentiates between tank types (i.e., elevated vs. non-elevated)
	    ○ Florida Certified Transmission Lines; identifies routes of major electrical transmission lines across the state
	    ○ Florida State Park Structures: compilation of public structures within state parks in Florida
	• The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) tracks the current count of poles and structures owned by the investor-owned electric utilities that are regulated by the FPSC
	• Florida Division of Emergency Management tracks radio communications tower locations across the state in its critical facilities geospatial server for disaster response.

Public lands	• The Florida Departments of Environmental Protection and Management Services-owned FL-SOLARIS system contains record of "all lands that are 'owned, leased, or otherwise occupied' by any state government entity, except the Department of Transportation" in the State of Florida.
Existing rights of way	• Rights of way mapping is conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation. The department collects digital and paper records of road rights of way (ROWs) across the state on a county-by-county basis.
Conduits and dark fiber	• Data collection around conduits and dark fiber is ongoing as the Office continues to work with internal and external stakeholders to identify records of these assets.
Capital projects	• The Florida Department of Transportation's Five-Year Work Program inventories current and planned capital projects taking place across the state. This program can be filtered to identify projects that are complementary to state broadband deployment efforts.
Skilled workforce	• The Florida Department of Education features and highlights registered apprenticeship information and opportunities for telecommunications occupations involved in broadband deployment. • FloridaCommerce manages a number of workforce programs that can help support, expand, and maintain the roles and occupations required to enable widespread broadband deployment in the state. • The Florida Chamber Foundation's workforce study details the state's workforce needs and gaps that require

	addressing in order for the state to realize economic development targets and strategies that secure its future.

3.3.2 Broadband Adoption

The 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the United States Census Bureau estimates that the state of Florida is home to around 8 million households. Among these households, the ACS finds that **74%** of households have a broadband Internet subscription through fiber, cable, or DSL. This translates to some **2 million** households that have not adopted broadband wireline services such as fiber, cable, and DSL.[23] However, there are numerous existing programs and services within the state of Florida that are working to close this adoption gap, including community organizations offering digital skills training and affordable devices, low-cost Internet plans for select populations, and more.

Asset	Description
Programs that provide digital literacy and digital skills training	• **GetSetUp's Digital Literacy Program** is a digital literacy resource for seniors.[24] • **AARP Virtual Community Center – Tech Help Events** include a wide variety of virtually-led technology and digital skills training open to residents nationwide, and promoted by the local Florida AARP.[25] • **Florida Literacy Coalition's "Digital Literacy and Adult Learning Strategies for Success"** course helps adults learn digital literacy skills and strategies.[26] • **Comcast's Internet Essentials** program provides Internet security training to youth and seniors free of charge, as well as additional online digital literacy and skills training.[27] • **United Way's "Techquity" Program** raises funds and partners with digital literacy organizations and community anchor institutions to provide digital literacy training.[28] • **Hispanic Federation's Digital Accelerator Program** is an ongoing digital literacy training program that provides funding to local, Latino-led non-profits to enhance digital skills and literacy training; Florida's Miami Ed Tech was one of 20 organizations nationwide to receive this funding.[29] • **OIC of South Florida's Workforce Readiness Program** provides digital literacy assessments and trainings.[30]

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[23] American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2021: https://data.census.gov/table?q=b28011&g=040XX00US12&tid=ACSDT5Y2021.B28011
[24] GetSetUp: Live classes for older adults, https://www.getsetup.io/partner-with-us
[25] AARP Virtual Community Center, Tech Help Events - AARP Virtual Community Center - Find Free Online Events - AARP
[26] Florida Digital Literacy Coalition, Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, https://floridaliteracy.org/about_us_programs_and_services.html
[27] Comcast Internet Essentials, https://corporate.comcast.com/impact/digital-equity/internet-essentials
[28] United Way "Techquity Program," https://www.uwof.org/
[29] "Miami Ed Tech Receives Grant from Hispanic Federation and Comcast NBCUniversal to Close the Digital Divide That Disproportionately Impacts Latinos," Florida Internet and Television, https://internetandtvfl.com/miami-ed-tech-receives-grant-from-hispanic-federation-and-comcast-nbcuniversal-to-close-the-digital-divide-that-disproportionately-impacts-latinos/
[30] OIC of South Florida Workforce Readiness Program, https://oicsfl.org/training-education-division/

	• **Seniors on a Mission** operates a mobile unit that travels to senior adults to help them learn how to better use their cell phones and tablets.[31]
Programs that provide subsidized or low-cost devices (e.g., computers, tablets)	• **Comcast's Internet Essentials program** provides low-cost devices with low-cost access to Floridians.[32] • **Digital Literacy St. Pete's "Gadgets for Good"** program distributes refurbished devices to nonprofits and individuals in Florida.[33] • **CareerSource Florida** has computer donation programs in various counties, predominately serving rural, un/underserved regions.[34]
Digital Navigator programs	• **Comcast's Digital Navigator grant to Miami-Dade College** to train students to become digital navigators for their community.[35] • **Patterson Foundation's Digital Navigator Program** trains local organizations to connect asset-limited families and individuals with opportunities to obtain digital connectivity, devices, skills, and support.[36] • **Leon County's Digital Navigator Program** trains and deploys digital navigators to help expand enrollment in the Affordable Connectivity Program and other eligible discounts.[37] • **Community Tech House** provides digital literacy support and partners with community organizations in Florida to donate digital devices.[38]
Existing ISP programs that promote adoption (e.g., adoption campaigns, low-cost plans, digital literacy initiatives)	• **Charter Communication's K-12 Stay Connected Program** is a partnership with local governments and school districts that allows schools to offer high-speed, cable broadband Internet access direct to students, educators, and staff in their homes.[39] • **Comcast's Internet Essentials** provides low-cost plans, digital literacy training and outreach, low-cost devices and Wi-Fi "lift" zones to help bridge the digital divide.[40] • **CenturyLink's Lifeline** offers low-income families with access to broadband for $50 a month.[41] • **Cox's Connect2Compete** program provides access to a connection in all areas where Mediacom's broadband network

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[31] Seniors on a Mission, https://www.seniorsonamission.org/
[32] Comcast Internet Essentials, https://update.comcast.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/dlm_uploads/2021/03/IE-10-Years-Fact-Sheet-Press-Materials.pdf   Ibid.
[33] Digital Inclusion St. Pete, Devices, https://www.digitalstpete.com/devices
[34] CareerSource Florida, https://careersourceflorida.com/
[35] "Comcast Awards Miami Dade College $100,000 Grant to Advance Digital Equity," Comcast Florida, https://florida.comcast.com/2022/07/12/comcast-awards-miami-dade-college-100000-grant-to-advance-digital-equity/
[36] Patterson Foundation Digital Navigator Program, https://www.thepattersonfoundation.org/digital-navigator-program.html#:~:text=The%20Patterson%20Foundation's%20Digital%20Navigator,devices%2C%20skills%2C%20and%20support
[37] Leon County"Community Leaders Announce Plans with Comcast to Promote Digital Navigator ProgramInclusion," BusinessWire, https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230627184220/en/Community-Leaders-Announce-Plans-with-Comcast-to-Promote-Digital-Inclusion
[38] "Community Tech House Helps to Bridge the Digital Divide," The Weekly Challenger, https://theweeklychallenger.com/community-tech-house-helps-to-bridge-the-digital-divide/
[39] Spectrum Enterprise, "Stay Connected K-12," https://enterprise.spectrum.com/services/industries/k-12/stay-connected.html
[40] Comcast Internet Essentials, https://corporate.comcast.com/impact/digital-equity/internet-essentials
[41] CenturyLink Consumer Assistance Programs, https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html

	is present and is available for students who are on free or reduced lunch.[42]
	• **Spectrum's Internet Assist** program offers a low-cost, high-speed broadband service for eligible households, which include those who qualify for one of the following federal programs: National School Lunch Program; Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP; or Supplemental Security Income[43] • **Metro by T-Mobile** offers affordable data plans for various types of digital devices.[44]
Incentives (e.g., subsidies, tax benefits) for incorporation of broadband across different sectors (e.g., education, agriculture, economic development, telemedicine)	• **The Florida Digital Classrooms Program (DCP)** permits E-Rate eligible schools to request state match funding for broadband special construction infrastructure projects.[45]
Public computing labs	• **Florida Boys & Girls Clubs** have computing labs throughout the state of Florida.[46] • Appendix D lists public libraries throughout Florida that offer public computing labs.
Loaner computer/hotspot programs	• **Florida Public Library System** loans devices and hotspots for public use.[47] • **Appendix D** lists public libraries throughout Florida that offer loaner/hotspot programs.
K-12 school system one-to-one computer programs	• Various local school systems have adopted one-to-one computer programs for students.
Computer refurbishing programs	• **Areas Foundation** collects used computers and devices from businesses and universities to be redistributed to Florida communities.[48]
Digital adoption and use as well as digital literacy coalitions	• **Digital Inclusion St. Pete** is a collaboration of 40+ community organizations focused on eliminating the digital literacy gap through Internet access, device distribution, and technical support and training in St. Petersburg and Pinellas County, Florida.[49]

3.3.3 Broadband Affordability

Research shows that cost is a significant barrier to broadband adoption, especially for low-income households. According to polling conducted during a series of 10 virtual public workshops hosted by the Office of Broadband in 2021, cost was cited as the second most important factor to Florida

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[42] Cox Connect2Compete, https://www.cox.com/residential/internet/connect2compete.html
[43] Spectrum Internet Assist, https://www.spectrum.com/internet/spectrum-internet-assist?opredirect=browse-content-spectrum-internet-assist
[44] Metro by T-Mobile, Connected Devices, https://www.metrobyt-mobile.com/plans/connected-devices#:~:text=Choose%20your%20device%20data%20plan,your%20existing%20Metro%20phone%20plan.&text=Stream%2C%20scroll%2C%20and%20connect.,%2415%2Fmo.
[45] Florida Digital Classrooms Plan Guidance, https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Version-8176/dps-2015-130a.pdf
[46] BGCSDC Gene Matthews Club, https://bgcsdc.org/our-clubs/gene-matthews-club
[47] Florida Library Development Programs, https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/library-development/programs/
[48] Aeras Foundation, https://www.aeras.foundation/
[49] Digital Inclusion St. Pete, https://www.digitalstpete.com/

communities regarding their broadband Internet, with reliability being the most important factor.[50] The relationship between cost and Internet adoption has been well documented. A 2021 Pew Research Center study on Internet use in the United States found that while only **8%** of adults with annual household incomes of over $75,000 did not have a home broadband subscription, **43%** of adults with annual household incomes below $30,000 did not have one.[51]

The assets described below play an important role as Florida looks to continue to reduce cost barriers for residents.

Asset	Description
Number of residents eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)	• 3,531,189 eligible households as of April 2023[52]
% of eligible residents who have accessed the ACP	• 37% (1,311,707 eligible households enrolled out of 3,531,189 eligible households) as of April 2023[53]
Discounted/Discount or subsidized broadband service and equipment programs, and/or assistance accessing these programs	• **Florida's E-Rate Assistance Program** provides a team of E-Rate coordinators to assist Florida schools and libraries at no cost with applying for the E-Rate Program using master services contracts; the team also provides schools and libraries with updated news, resources, and information on the E-Rate Program[54] • **Charter Communication's K-12 Stay Connected Program** is a partnership with local governments and school districts that allows schools to offer high-speed, cable broadband Internet access direct to students, educators, and staff in their homes[55] • **Comcast's Internet Essentials** provides low-cost plans, digital literacy training and outreach, low-cost devices and Wi-Fi "lift" zones to help bridge the digital divide[56] • **CenturyLink's Lifeline** offers low-income families with access to broadband for $50 a month[57] • **Cox's Connect2Compete** program provides access to a connection in all areas where Mediacom's broadband network is present and is available for students who are on free or reduced lunch[58] • **Spectrum's Internet Assist** program offers a low-cost, high-speed broadband service for eligible households, which include those who qualify for one of the following federal programs: National

[50] Florida Office of Broadband 2021 Workshop Summary. https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/2015-community-development/ocp/obworkshopsummaryfinal5f1c2da4cbbb61cbb02aff01004f56df.pdf?sfvrsn=a0a14cb0_10
[51] Pew Research Center (published on April 7, 2021), Internet/Broadband Fact Sheet,. Accessed at: https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/internet-broadband/#panel-2ab2b0be-6364-4d3a-8db7-ae134dbc05cd.
[52] Affordable Connectivity Plan Dashboard, https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/no-home-left-offline/acp-data/#dashboard
[53] Ibid.
[54] Florida E-Rate Assistance Program, E-rate / SUNCOM / Telecommunications / Business Operations / Florida Department of Management Services - DMS (myflorida.com)
[55] Charter Communications K-12 Stay Connected Program, https://enterprise.spectrum.com/services/industries/k-12/stay-connected.html
[56] Comcast Internet Essentials, https://corporate.comcast.com/impact/digital-equity/internet-essentials
[57] CenturyLink Consumer Assistance Programs, https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html
[58] Cox Connect2Compete, https://www.cox.com/residential/internet/connect2compete.html

	School Lunch Program; Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP; or Supplemental Security Income[59] • Metro by T-Mobile offers affordable data plans for various types of digital devices[60]
Provider agreements and contracts that are near expiration (i.e., provide the opportunity for new agreements and contracts that provide more affordable broadband services)	• No current agreements have been identified but additional research is planned and relevant provider agreement information will be updated as possible

3.3.4 Broadband Access

Securing access to broadband enabled connectivity in Florida is facilitated through a combination of fixed and mobile broadband assets. Information on the availability of three assets – public access points (e.g., public wi-fi), cellular connectivity, and middle mile networks – in Florida is summarized below.

Asset	Description

Public Wi-Fi, networks, access points	• During emergencies, the state Division of Emergency Management coordinates with private sector partners to provide free, public Wi-Fi access locations throughout disaster impacted areas.
	• The Florida Department of Transportation offers free Wi-Fi access at all of its Welcome Centers and the Turkey Lake Service Plaza on the Turnpike, on a testing basis.
	• Appendix D lists public libraries throughout Florida that offer public Wi-Fi.
	• The following jurisdictions in Florida have been identified to offer public Wi-Fi hotspots and/or other forms of access points in public spaces and facilities:
	   • City of Boynton Beach
	   • City of Sunrise
	   • City of Lake Wales
	   • Broward County
	   • City of Lakeland
	   • City of Sunny Isles Beach
	   • City of Miami Beach
	   • City of Dunedin
	   • City of Coral Springs
	   • City of Atlantic Beach
	   • Palm Beach County
	   • Walton County
	   • Santa Rosa County

[59] Spectrum Internet Assist, https://www.spectrum.com/internet/spectrum-internet-assist?opredirect=browse-content-spectrum-internet-assist

[60] Metro by T-Mobile, Connected Devices, https://www.metrobyt-mobile.com/plans/connected-devices#:~:text=Choose%20your%20device%20data%20plan,your%20existing%20Metro%20phone%20plan.&text=Stream%2C%20scroll%2C%20and%20connect.,%2415%2Fmo.

	• City of Winter Park
Cellular connectivity (Mobile Broadband)	FCC 477 data provides mobile broadband connectivity levels for national service providers in the State of Florida
Middle mile networks	• ISP WANRack has received funding from the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program to build 44.8 miles of open access middle mile infrastructure in Hernando, Pasco, and Polk Counties. The route aims to augment connectivity and improve affordability for the communities residing in the project area. • Florida LambdaRail (FLR) is the state's independent statewide research and education fiber optic network. With 1,540 miles of fiber, FLR is owned and operated on behalf of its partner institutions and affiliates, providing direct connectivity to a wide range of domestic and international networks[61] • MyFloridaNet-2 (MFN-2) is a private communications network that connects state agencies and other eligible entities (city and county agencies, public/private K–12 school systems, public colleges and universities, libraries, first responders and community organizations (non-profit)) across the state. Managed by the Florida Division of Telecommunications within the Department of Management Services, MFN-2 is a reliable connectivity option for public and community anchor institutions across the state[62]

3.3.5 Digital Literacy

For full details on these assets and their impacts on the covered populations in Florida, please reference Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.

Due to the wide variety of community organizations in Florida, there are several digital adoption and use assets available. The Office will continue to rely on Local Technology Planning Teams to offer community-level perspectives and partnerships to understand these assets and consider methods of support already existing resources and programs.

Asset	Description
Workforce development training and employment services related to broadband adoption (e.g., computer/digital skills training, apprenticeships)	• Hispanic Federation offers workforce development programs and translation services to support communities with job applications and digital skills[63] • Wireless Infrastructure Association (WIA) provides a workforce development curriculum on varying subjects and, when needed subject matter is not available in WIA materials, partners with other organizations to provide trainings on those topics[64]
Technical assistance to support digital literacy (i.e., Digital Navigators who	• The public library system of Florida offers a variety of digital navigation and support programs depending on community

[61] While not open access, this asset is included as an example of a statewide network serving key community anchor institutions stakeholders in Florida
[62] While not open access, this asset is included as an example of a statewide network serving key community anchor institutions stakeholders in Florida
[63] Hispanic Federation: Workforce Initiatives, https://www.hispanicfederation.org/programs/economic_empowerment/#workforce
[64] Wireless Infrastructure Association: Workforce Curriculum, https://wia.org/workforce-solutions/

provide community members with support to access and utilize home Internet connectivity, devices, digital skills, etc.)	needs. Appendix D lists public libraries throughout Florida that offer technical assistance to support digital literacy. • [Division of Library and Information Services](#) often provide ad-hoc Digital Navigation support for individuals seeking assistance[65]
Civic and volunteer organizations that provide volunteer and advocacy assistance for digital literacy programs	• [United Way of Florida](#) partners with organizations to address the underlying causes and subsequent effects of technological inequities[66] • [Hispanic Federation](#) offers programming and case-by-case support for individuals seeking assistance[67]
Taskforces or place-based coalitions that work towards digital literacy and include a diverse group of stakeholders in the State or Territory (e.g., engagement with ISPs, state agencies, local community champions, local governments, tribal leaders, community- based organizations, libraries, educational institutions, local businesses, federal landowners, residents, etc.	• [Local Technology Planning Teams](#) are a key facilitator of broadband integration efforts at the local level in Florida, composed of representatives from various industries and organizations[68]

3.4   *Needs and Gaps Assessment*

With an understanding of the variety of assets across the state, Florida can better identify the needs and gaps to broadband service. Additional research, analysis, and stakeholder engagement also informed the state's understanding of the needs within its communities.

The following sections outline Florida's broadband needs and gaps related to:
- [3.4.1 Broadband Deployment](#) – Needs and gaps related to broadband deployment
- [3.4.2 Broadband Adoption](#) – Needs and gaps that might prevent the adoption of high-speed broadband
- [3.4.3 Broadband Affordability](#) – Needs and gaps that play a role in the affordability of high-speed broadband
- [3.4.4 Broadband Access](#) – Needs and gaps that might mitigate broadband access for households, businesses, and community anchor institutions
- [3.4.5 Digital Literacy](#) – Needs and gaps related to access, adoption and use by covered populations

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[65] Division of Library and Information Services: Stakeholder conversation, https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/
[66] United Way of Florida: "Tech Equity" Program, https://www.uwof.org/
[67] Hispanic Federation: Forging pathways into the digital economy for Latinos, https://www.hispanicfederation.org/media/press_releases/googlereinvestment/
[68] Local Technology Planning Teams, https://floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/broadband/office-of-broadband/local-technology-planning-teams

3.4.1 Broadband Deployment

Florida has made significant strides to increase service availability across the state. Still, key gaps remain, particularly in rural locations across the panhandle and north-central regions of the state. The below section considers outstanding issues with broadband deployment in Florida that require resolution in order for the state to continue its progress against broadband availability targets.

3.4.1.1 Unserved and underserved locations

The FCC Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) Fabric dataset estimates 7,289,582 locations, in the state of Florida, where either fixed broadband Internet access service exists or could be installed[69]. Based on analysis of data from the FCC Broadband Data Collection (BDC) system, 268,000 of these BSLs are unserved, in the state of Florida, while an additional 138,000 are underserved[70]. The remaining approximately 6.9 million of these locations are considered served. Combining unserved and underserved estimates, this suggests that around 6% of BSLs in the state of Florida lack sufficient connectivity. Figure 5. below visualizes the spatial distribution of unserved and underserved BSLs in the state of Florida.
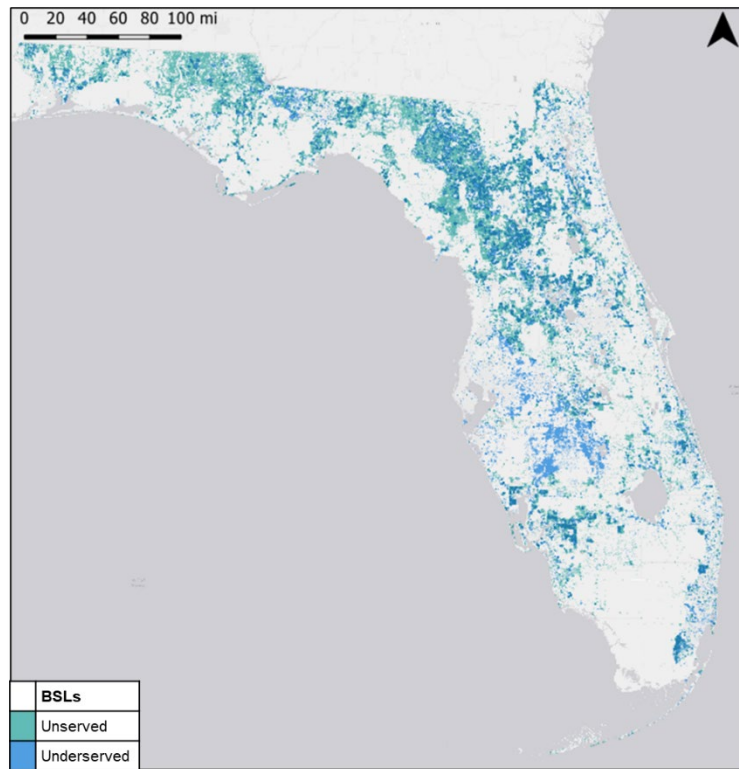
Figure 5: Unserved/Underserved Locations in Florida

Based on this visualization, larger clusters of BSLs with insufficient service are found in central and north Florida. These clusters correspond with rural areas within the state. Exemplifying this trend at the county level, the ten counties with the highest ratio of unserved/underserved locations to served locations are all rural counties as defined by section 288.0656, Florida Statutes[71] This same data for

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[69] Per December 2022 (Version 2) fabric data
[70] I.e., receives speeds less than 25/3 mbps (download/upload), receives speeds between 25/3 mbps and 100/20 mbps, respectively
[71] Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, defines a rural county as one with a population of 75,000, as well as one with a population of 125,000 or less that is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less

all counties is visualized in Table 6 below as well. The county level served ratio map similarly highlights how Florida's largest deployment gaps can be largely found in the state's panhandle, as well as central, inland, and rural regions. The cluster of counties in the north central region between Tallahassee and Gainesville stands out as a particularly large grouping of counties with relatively higher levels of BSLs with insufficient service relative to those that are considered served.

Table 6: Counties with Highest Unserved/Underserved to Served Location Ratios

Name	Unserved	Underserved	Served	Unserved/Underserved to Served Ratio
Dixie County	7,079	1,470	213	40.14
Jefferson County	5,422	1,379	309	22.01
Gilchrist County	4,955	1,635	1,191	5.53
Holmes County	6,745	597	1,770	4.15
Levy County	14,670	3,301	4,363	4.12
Lafayette County	1,739	746	983	2.53
Calhoun County	3,511	989	2,028	2.22
Hamilton County	2,791	1,209	2,088	1.92
Liberty County	1,836	371	1,182	1.87
Madison County	5,124	610	3,140	1.83
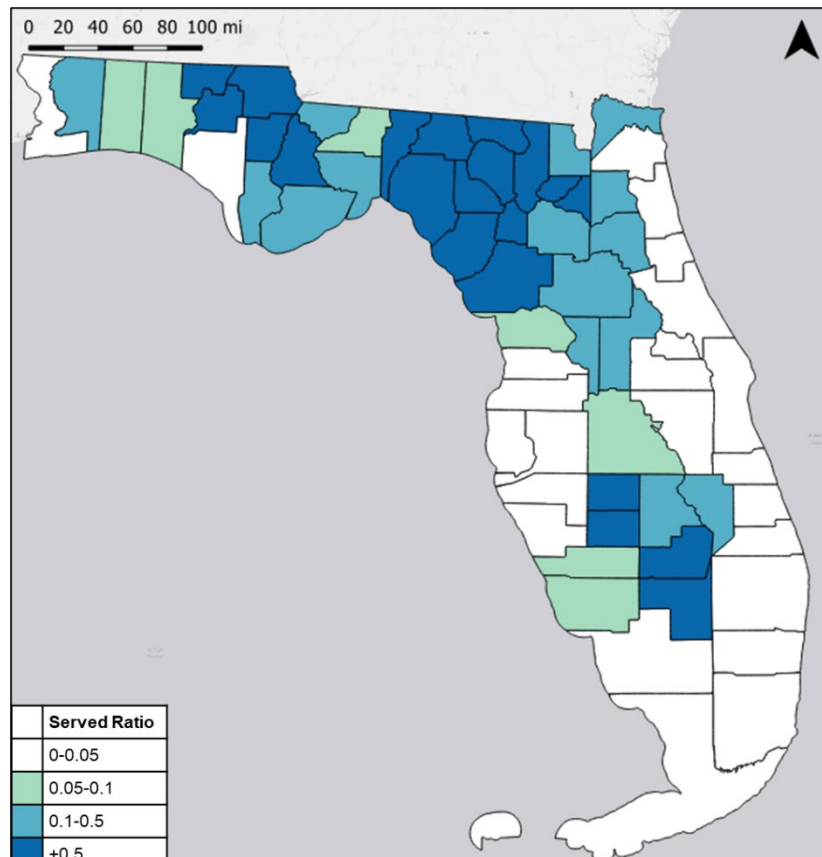
Figure 6: Underserved/Unserved to served BSLs by county in the state of Florida. Larger values indicate that more BSLs in each county lack service than possess

Still, it is important to note that in terms of absolute number of unserved and underserved BSLs, trends still generally follow population distributions across the state; the counties with the highest number of unserved and/or underserved locations include Marion, Lake, Levy, and Lee Counties, each with more than 15,000 unserved and underserved BSLs within their respective jurisdictions. Combining these findings with those discussed above provides an indication where relative and absolute gaps in service availability are highest.
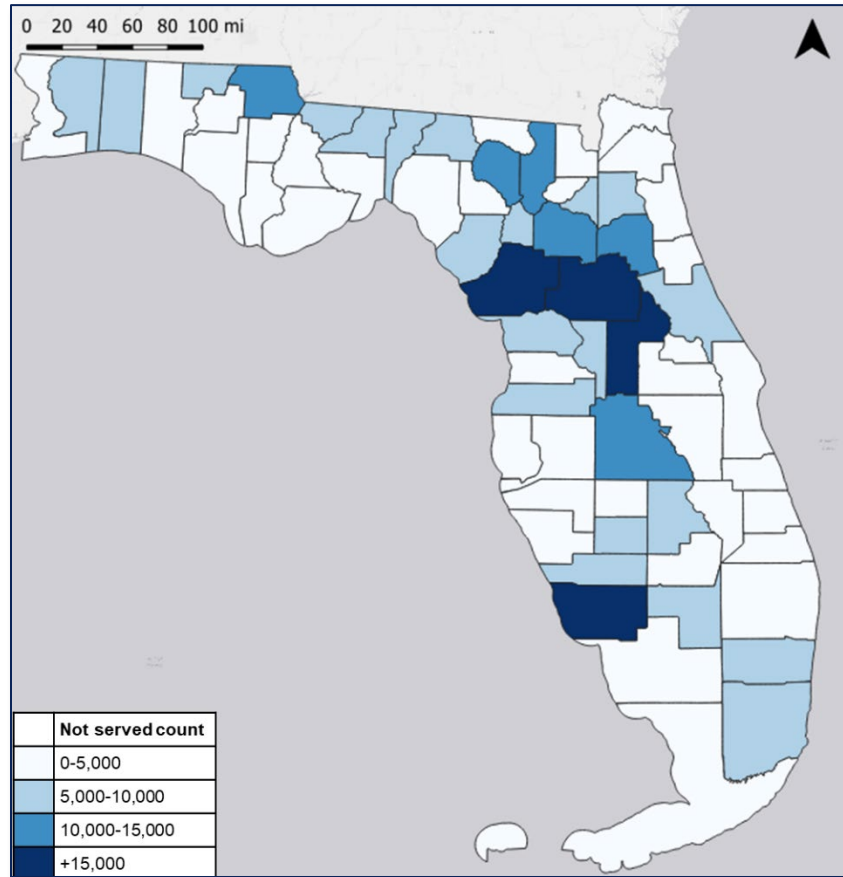
Figure 7: Unserved and Underserved BSL Count by County in the State of Florida

3.4.1.2 Service to Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) without gigabit service;

A review of publicly available data on anchor institutions in the state of Florida suggests that there are around 16,000 locations that could be classified as a 'Community Anchor Institution (CAI); under BEAD guidelines.[72]

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[72] BEAD defines a CAI as an entity such as a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals.

To estimate current levels of broadband service at these locations, CAIs are split into two types: mass market and non-mass market locations.[73] CAIs considered mass market locations are cross-referenced with the FCC CAI location fabric dataset to determine service. A sample of this set of CAIs were found to have the following trends:

- Most CAIs in the sample are served. Only around 2% of locations are underserved or unserved.
- A considerable number of CAI locations sampled are also able to receive gigabit service speeds in one direction: Around 96% of the CAIs can or do receive download speeds of greater than or equal to 1,000 Mbps.
- CAIs do not necessarily receive symmetrical gigabit service. Of the sampled served locations, just 31% had symmetrical gigabit service of speeds greater than or equal to 1,000 Mbps upload/download.
- Generally, rural CAIs appear worse off than their urban counterparts in terms of level of broadband service. Mapping the sampled CAI locations to counties in Florida, it emerges that the counties with more unserved/underserved CAI locations than served are all considered rural under Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes.

While just the results of a preliminary sample presented here, they offer a good indication of the outstanding gaps and needs when it comes to servicing Florida's CAIs with gigabit connectivity. Over the course of this planning and proposal process, the state will continue to verify and uncover additional trends associated with mass market CAI locations.

CAIs that are not considered mass market locations are more challenging to work with and represent a gap for the state as it continues to elucidate its deployment needs. Of the ~38.5K non-BSL locations in Florida, ~22% were identified to be CAIs. In other words, there are at least 3.6K CAIs that are considered non-mass market locations and thus excluded from FCC broadband data collection efforts.

In some cases, these non-mass market CAI locations- typically comprised of institutions such as libraries, schools, public safety organizations (e.g., police, fire, etc.)- may very well be served, with gigabit connectivity options, no less. For instance, there are over 50 members and/or affiliates of statewide research and education fiber optic network, Florida LambdaRail[74]. While primarily for higher education institutions, these LambdaRail affiliates include CAIs such as healthcare providers, community-based organizations, and public schools, as well.

Still, ascertaining the overall status of service to non-mass market CAI locations may require a more piecemeal approach; the lack of FCC BDC data for non-mass market locations may increase reliance on ad-hoc and qualitative sources of information to understand the shape of connectivity for these institutions. As such, understanding service in non-mass market CAI locations in a more structured, comprehensive way stands as a gap in enabling broadband deployment that Florida will take forward in its BEAD development process.

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[73] *Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric Methods Manual*, Costquest 2024. https://www.costquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/BroadbandServiceableLocationFabricMethodsManualPublic06302023Final_V3.pdf

[74] FLR Member and Affiliates, https://www.flrnet.org/flr-affiliate-participants/
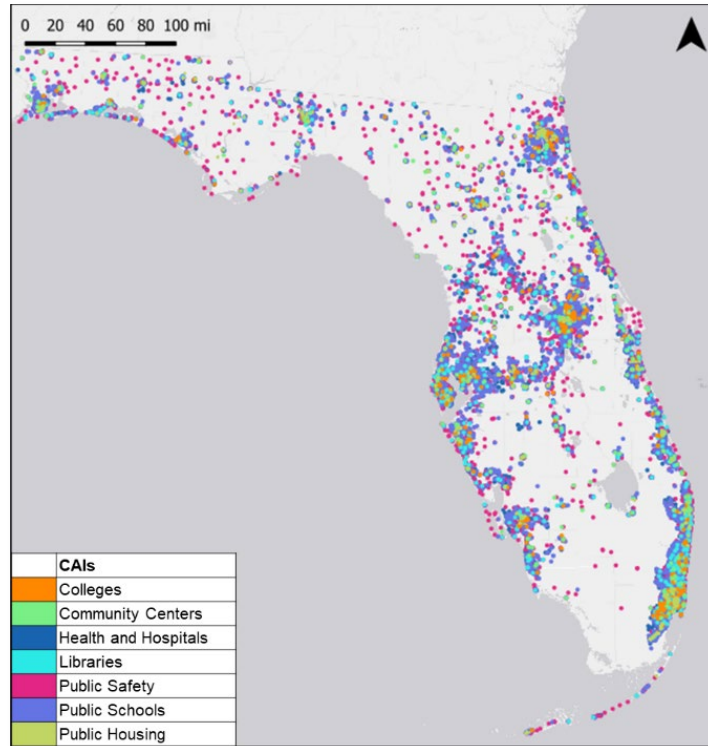
Figure 8: CAI locations in Florida

3.4.1.3 Development of a dedicated broadband office or governance structure to facilitate integration of broadband efforts in the State or Territory;

The Office is tasked with facilitating broadband integration efforts throughout the state[75], and works with local and state government agencies, community organizations, and private businesses to increase the availability and effectiveness (adoption and use) of broadband Internet in Florida. Sections 288.991-288.9963, Florida Statutes, provide FloridaCommerce with the authority to administer Federal broadband grant programs and assist rural communities with the expansion of broadband services, as well as provides directives for broadband mapping and the Broadband Opportunity Program. Furthermore, under these sections, the Office of Broadband is responsible for the following directives:

- developing, marketing and promoting broadband Internet services in the state;
- creating a strategic plan to increase the use of broadband Internet services in the state;
- reviewing and verifying public input regarding transmission speeds and availability of broadband Internet services throughout the state;
- building and facilitating local technology planning teams or partnerships[76];
- participating in the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proceedings that are related to the geographic availability and deployment of broadband Internet in Florida;

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[75] Additional details regarding the Office of Broadband (e.g., structure and staffing) is discussed in Section 3.2 of this document
[76] Under Section 288.9961(4)(b) of Florida Statutes, the Office of Broadband is mandated to build and facilitate local technology planning teams representing cross-sections of the community, which may include, but are not limited to: Libraries; K-12 education; colleges and universities; local health care providers; private businesses; community organizations; economic development organizations; local governments; tourism; parks and recreation; and agriculture.

- establishing the Broadband Opportunity Program and rulemaking for the program to award grants to applicants who seek to expand broadband to unserved areas (subject to appropriations); and
- developing a map of broadband Internet service availability throughout the state.

The statutorily required Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPTs) are a key facilitator of broadband integration efforts at the local level in Florida. The LTPTs support the Office of Broadband through the following activities:

- work with rural communities to help the communities understand their current broadband availability;
- locate unserved and underserved businesses and residents;
- identify assets relevant to broadband deployment;
- build partnerships with broadband service providers;
- identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the community; and
- Identify funding opportunities for fiscally constrained counties and provide assistance with applying for federal grants for broadband Internet service.

LTPTs are organized by county and are composed of representatives from the following organizations and industries: libraries; K-12 education institutions; colleges and universities; local health care providers; private businesses; community organizations; economic development organizations; local governments; tourism entities; parks and recreation; and agriculture.

3.4.1.4 Legislative and/or regulatory solutions to overcome barriers or to accelerate infrastructure deployment

The following legislative and regulatory actions by the State of Florida are supported the accelerated deployment of broadband infrastructure in the state.

- **Senate Bill 1000 (2019)** -Limit the state's communications-services tax (CST) and restricts the ability of local governments to collect fees from communications providers that use public roads or rights of way.
- **House Bill 969, "Broadband Internet Service" (2020)** -Created the Office of Broadband within the Department of Economic Opportunity (now Florida Department of Commerce) to oversee broadband policy development for the state. The bill also allocated up to $5 million in annual spending for the Turnpike Enterprise to assist in developing broadband infrastructure within or adjacent to multi-use corridors, particularly in rural areas.
- **House Bill 1239, The Florida Broadband Deployment Act (2021)** - A key piece of legislation that enabled infrastructure deployment in recent years. The bill also provided for
  - committing a one-time, $1.5 million appropriation to fund GIS mapping of broadband Internet service availability across the state;
  - creating the Broadband Opportunity Program;
  - drafting a strategic plan to increase the use of broadband Internet services in the state; and

- allowing the attachment of broadband facilities to municipal electric utility poles,[77] along with a discounted $1 per wireline attachment rate for providers looking to bring service into unserved/underserved areas within a given municipal electric utility service territory.

With respect to the strategic plan required by House Bill 1239, the state of Florida set its priorities regarding expansion of broadband infrastructure in the state. In particular, the Strategic Plan encourages "local communities to coordinate infrastructure projects, such as roads and broadband Internet, to reduce overall costs." This is enabled by promoting and adopting measures such as 'dig once' policies, as well as designating a utility coordinator with responsibility for facilitating the broadband Internet infrastructure right-of-way efforts in the state.

- **House Bill 1221, Broadband Internet Service Providers (2023)** -specified that rural electric cooperatives engaging in the provision of broadband service are subject to pole attachment regulation by the Public Service Commission.

3.4.1.5 Solutions to funding barriers in designated "high-cost areas," as defined by the BEAD NOFO, Section I.C.m

Even with the significant progress in expanding broadband access in Florida, both in organic expansion from providers, as well as the support and assistance through grant programs managed through the FloridaCommerce Office of Broadband, many of the locations that remain unserved, or underserved will fall in high-cost areas.

Florida understands the remaining areas requiring coverage are likely costly relative to the investment thus far. Additional analysis is required to understand, but Florida remains committed to fostering a connected economy that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, telemedicine, and resiliency by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption. As a result, the state will continue to explore scenarios where different broadband technologies would cover unserved and underserved areas at a cost that is feasible.

3.4.1.6 Improved databases and/or systems that enhance use of information to inform broadband deployment

House Bill 1239 provided an allocation of $1.5 million to develop geographic information system (GIS) maps of Florida's currently available broadband Internet service. From this investment, the state of Florida has built multiple systems to share information that can help deploy broadband more quickly and efficiently across the state. These include resources such as:

- [The Faster Florida Broadband Map](#): Collects and displays hard and soft asset data that enable broadband deployment in the state of Florida. Layers include broadband speed test results, demographics, broadband speeds and technology offerings, community anchor institutions, land ownership, rights of way, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- [ConnectedFlorida Map](#): Compilation of current broadband project areas in the state of Florida, by funding source. The map identifies project areas submitted in applications and project areas that were awarded grant funding (federal and state funding opportunities).
- [Broadband Availability Map](#): Identifies a location's speed, connectivity, and access to broadband services. These insights allow the state of Florida to better identify and reach

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[77] In 2023, Florida has continued regulatory action around pole attachments with the passage of [HB 1221](#). HB 1221 subjects electric cooperatives to pole attachment regulations by the Florida Public Service Commission ("FPSC") if they provide broadband service directly, through a third party, and/or if they accept public funding for expanding broadband access in unserved areas of the state.

unserved and underserved areas of the state. The map will be an asset to local communities and Internet service providers to assist with broadband planning efforts.

- Survey on the Availability and Accessibility of Broadband Internet: Public survey released by the Office to help identify the status of broadband Internet in local areas and understand how residents think about broadband expansion.

At the local level, LTPTs are also contributing to the identification, collection, and analysis of broadband deployment-related data. LTPTs are expected to take inventory of physical facilities and community resources, public and private, that would help with broadband deployment. These include assets for deploying fiber (e.g., conduits, abandoned gas line locations, telephone poles, etc.) and wireless broadband (e.g., water towers, existing cell towers, streetlight poles, etc.). In addition, throughout the course of collecting information that would enable broadband deployment in their areas, LTPTs are also expected to track:

- adoption programs,
- projects and processes,
- land and space, as well as service sectors and geographic areas in the community.

Finally, overarching these state and local sources of information that can help support broadband deployment, the state of Florida also leverages federal resources from the FCC and NTIA (e.g., the National Broadband Map, etc.) to enhance its repository of broadband infrastructure related data.

3.4.1.7 Increased workforce available to deploy broadband

Broadband deployment at this scale over the anticipated timeline will require a workforce that is trained but sizable enough to account for the implementation need. The Division of Workforce Services within FloridaCommerce partners with CareerSource Florida and the 24 Local Workforce Development Boards across the State.[78] Even with these resources in place, understanding the expected broadband need is essential for Florida. The NTIA researched and identified the roles that will be necessary to successfully complete BEAD deployment and categorized them into operational groups, listed in Figure 9 below:

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[78] About Workforce Services, Florida Commerce. https://floridajobs.org/office-directory/division-of-workforce-services/about-workforce-services
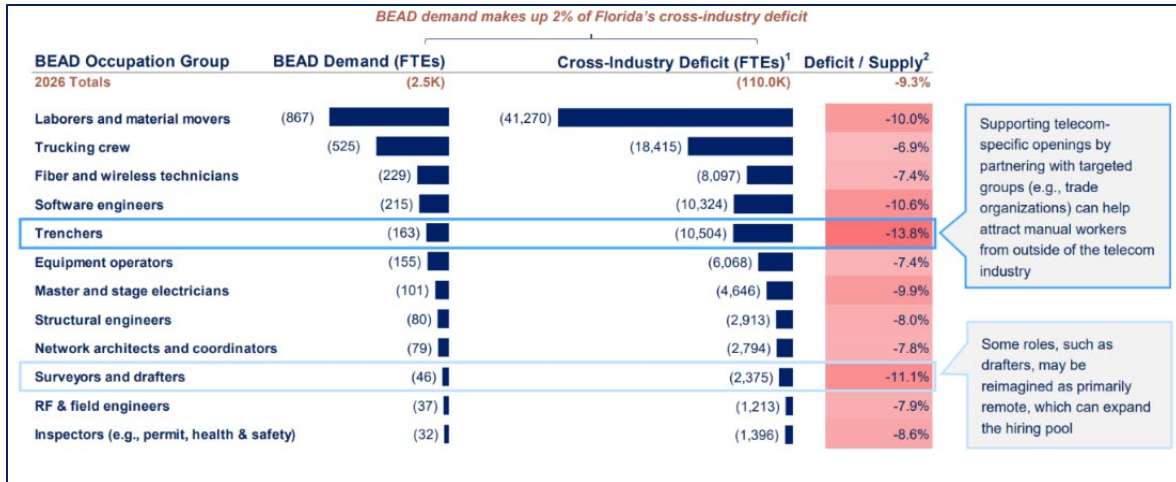
Figure 9: Forecasted Demand, Supply, and Deficit of BEAD Deployment Occupation Groups[79]

Laborers and material movers, software engineers, trenchers, and surveyors and drafters have the highest deficit/supply ratios. As the graphic mentions, there is an opportunity to attract workers from outside of the telecom industry and change some roles to remote status. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to upskill certain laborers, by collaborating with strategic partners (technical colleges, community organizations, etc.), to provide them access and training to complete required certifications and move up the job ladder. The gap can also be closed by standardizing licensing requirements and certifications across geographies, as well as offering competitive benefits to increase job desirability. A more detailed Broadband Workforce Landscape Analysis is in Appendix A.

3.4.2 Broadband Adoption

Adoption concerns refer to social barriers which limit Floridians' ability and/or willingness to take advantage of broadband Internet services even when such services are available in their areas. In terms of current broadband adoption and use, Florida is noteworthy in two ways. On the one hand, a significantly higher percentage of Floridians have access to broadband compared to the national average. This ranks Florida in the upper half of states in terms of broadband availability.
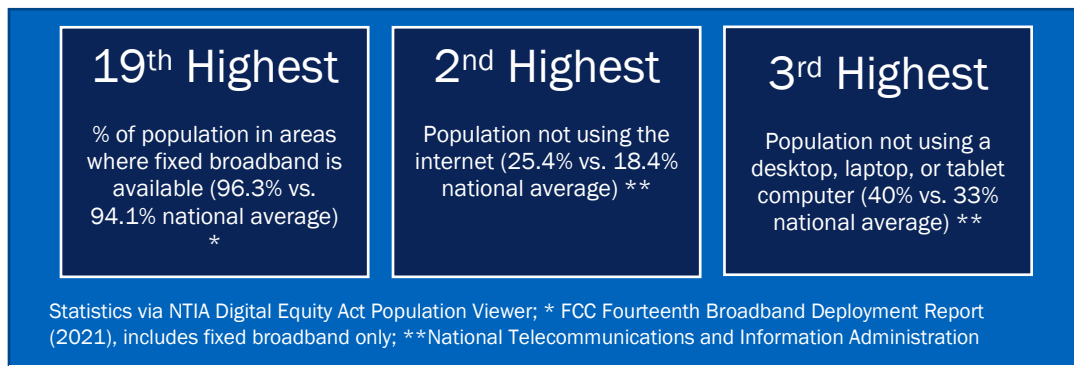
Figure 10: Overview of Broadband Adoption in Florida

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[79] NTIA State Workforce Research Findings: Florida

On the other hand, while Floridians enjoy a relatively high rate of broadband access, they also reflect some of the country's highest levels of residents not using either the Internet or digital devices (i.e., PCs, laptops, or tablet computers). Florida is second only to Nevada in the percentage of state residents who do not use the Internet and tied with Texas for the third-highest percentage of residents who do not use PCs, laptops, or tablets.

One set of barriers to broadband uptake are *adoption* barriers. Unlike affordability concerns, which stem from challenges rooted in supply-and-demand factors, adoption barriers can be addressed with increased education and communication. Adoption obstacles include:
- limited digital literacy;
- lack of accessible supporting resources (e.g., the unavailability of application materials in home language or a lack of technical support for individuals with visual or auditory impairments);
- community skepticism about government and/or private companies;
- limited household broadband subscription; and/or
- limited households, businesses, and CAIs with access to Internet-capable devices.

3.4.2.1   Limited Digital Literacy

Digital literacy refers to "the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills."[80] Individuals lacking in digital literacy skills find it difficult to effectively use or otherwise understand digital resources like computers or the Internet. It is important to note that deleterious effects of unequal levels of digital literacy threaten to grow as more work and educational opportunities have moved to remote and hybrid models. As digital telehealth services continue to expand, moreover, individuals who benefit from remote healthcare may be disproportionately harmed by poor digital literacy.

3.4.2.2   Lack of Accessible Supporting Resources

A lack of accessible supporting resources refers to materials related to information about how to apply for discounted broadband services, technical support, or learning opportunities. Such resources may be inaccessible for a variety of reasons –for example, they may only be offered in English or specific dialects of other languages. Translations also may be overly technical or lacking specificity. Similarly, resources may not be accessible for individuals with disabilities who may require audiovisual accommodations such as closed captioning. A lack of access can also stem from inappropriate communications strategies; institutions which rely primarily on social media or email communications may miss individuals with poor connectivity, while those who use in-person meetings may exclude people experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness.[81]

3.4.2.3   Community Skepticism

Another challenge to adoption stems from some communities' relationships with government and/or private companies. These relationships can be influenced by several factors. Communities may have endured negative experiences with government agencies in the past, for example, which inculcated an unwillingness to trust that or similar agencies' initiatives in the future. Low-income individuals may also mistrust ISPs if they have experiences of unexpected fees or disconnected service, while rural

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[80] Digital Literacy, American Library Association, https://literacy.ala.org/digital-literacy/
[81] Advancing Digital Equity for All: Barriers & Strategies, Department of Education, https://tech.ed.gov/advancing-digital-equity-for-all/barriers-and-strategies/

residents may be skeptical of interactions with previously unknown ISPs.[82] Exclusion of communities most affected by the digital divide may also engender skepticism – if the concerns of marginalized communities are not considered in the formulation of solutions, those solutions may be incomplete or ineffective. Concerted efforts to effectively communicate with and understand the interests of all communities will be crucial for successful broadband expansion in Florida.[83]

3.4.2.4 Limited Household Broadband Subscription

While large portions of Florida enjoy access to Internet download speeds of 100 Mbps and higher, access is not uniformly distributed (see Figure 11). Many of the barriers and obstacles outlined in this BEAD plan contribute to this unequal distribution. Rural communities reflect low numbers of broadband subscriptions, particularly in comparison to some of Florida's major metropolitan areas.
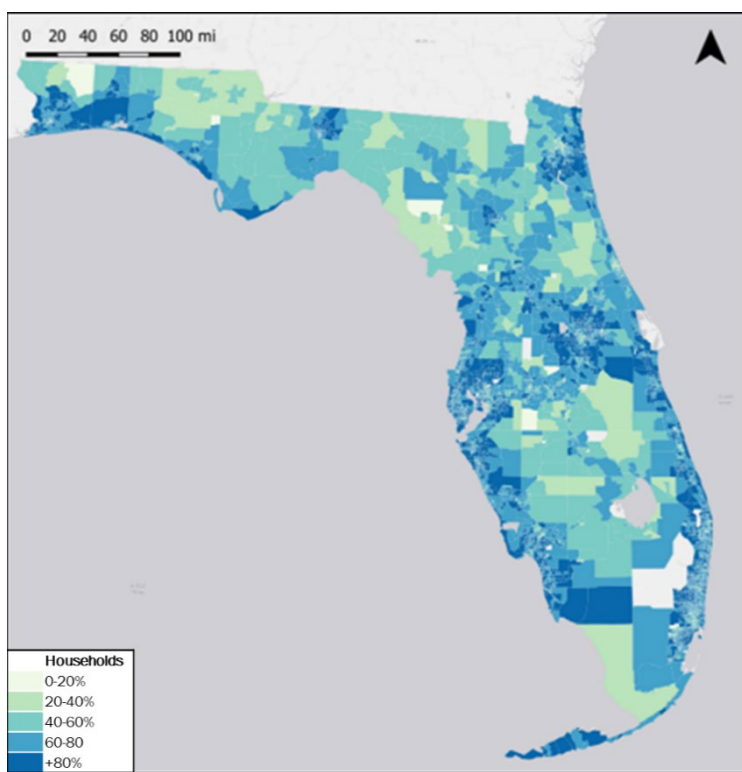
Figure 11. Percentage of households with fixed broadband (cable, fiber, DSL) Internet subscription by Census tracts in the State of Florida[84]

3.4.2.5 Limited households, businesses, and/or CAIs digital capacity

Even if individuals have access to broadband Internet services, limited digital capacity (i.e., access to or ownership of *I*nternet-capable digital devices) may restrict their ability to effectively use those services. Desktop and laptop computers are important tools to access information and to improve digital literacy, but they can be prohibitively expensive for less affluent families. Although those without

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[82] Broadband Challenges and Opportunities in Affordable Rental Housing, Pew Charitable Trusts, https://www.pewtrusts.org/zh/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2023/04/broadband-challenges-and-opportunities-in-affordable-rental-housing
[83] Advancing Digital Equity for All: Barriers & Strategies, Department of Education, https://tech.ed.gov/advancing-digital-equity-for-all/barriers-and-strategies/
[84] American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2021

personal computers can supplement their lack of access using a smartphone, "being limited to smartphone-only Internet access is associated with data cap limits, risk of service cancellations or suspensions due to financial constraints, and difficulty performing essential tasks such as applying for jobs or writing papers on a smartphone's small screen."[85] Expanding in-home, business, or CAI digital capacity is key to guaranteeing families reap the full benefits of Internet access.

For individuals without the ability to use broadband Internet at home, a lack of sufficient digital capacity on the part of CAIs may also prohibit their Internet access entirely. CAIs play an important role in connecting communities with reliable, high-speed Internet across the country. While expanding infrastructure to remote areas can be costly, expansion focused on CAIs can be a smart investment given the pre-existing reach and integration of CAIs in their local communities. Some CAIs, however, lack funding and the resulting capacity to meet community needs.

3.4.3   Broadband Affordability

In addition to challenges relating to adoption, the affordability of broadband provides a major hurdle to Internet access. Affordability refers to economic concerns which restrict Floridians' ability to acquire or otherwise use broadband Internet at an affordable cost. Several material conditions contribute to a lack of affordable Internet service options, such as:

- increased financial assistance for low-income consumers; and/or
- increased support for enrollment in assistance programs (such as ACP) for low-income consumers; and/or
- increased options for broadband services, including a wider range of low-cost services.

3.4.3.1   Financial assistance for low-income consumers

Beyond constrained supply, other factors may lead to a limited uptake of broadband by residents and businesses. One of these factors is cost: broadband service may be unaffordable due to a household's socioeconomic status. During a series of 10 regional workshops held by FloridaCommerce with industry leaders and statewide partners in 2021 to discuss broadband needs and opportunities, the issue of cost was identified as one of the most significant barriers to broadband accessibility.[86] .These findings, in conjunction with similar feedback from follow-up stakeholder and community outreach interviews and workshops held in 2023, suggest that broadband infrastructure alone may not be enough to help close the digital divide. Instead, it may be necessary to find ways to increase financial assistance for low-income consumers.

3.4.3.2   Support for enrollment in assistance programs

In addition to financial assistance, increased support for enrollment in assistance programs for low-income consumers can help connect potential consumers with existing resources aimed at making broadband more affordable. Programs such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) are valuable tools in making broadband more accessible to low-income Americans. To date, 18 million households are enrolled in the ACP. Those 18 million households represent more than 30% of eligible households. However, the "take up rate may not be indicative of demand, as awareness efforts to encourage signups are still ongoing."[87] Evidence suggests that increased assistance (e.g., limiting regulatory barrier to entry, providing more explicit marketing and supporting materials) for enrollment in programs

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[85] Digital Inequality and Low-Income Households, Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall16/highlight2.html

[86] Florida Office of Broadband 2021 Workshop Summary, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/2015-community-development/ocp/obworkshopsummaryfinal5f1c2da4cbbb61cbb02aff01004f56df.pdf?sfvrsn=a0a14cb0_10

[87] Closing the Digital Divide With the Affordable Connectivity Program, Pew Charitable Trusts, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2023/06/01/closing-the-digital-divide-with-the-affordable-connectivity-program

like ACP may increase uptake and work to increase the number of low-income Americans with access to high-speed, affordable Internet.

The map below shows the percentage of a county's population below 200% of the federal poverty line. While the specifics of ACP eligibility vary at a local level, this is a simple way to understand where expected eligible Floridians may reside. Gulf, Hamilton, Columbia, Polk, and Hardee counties all have 45% or more of the population below 200% of the federal poverty line.
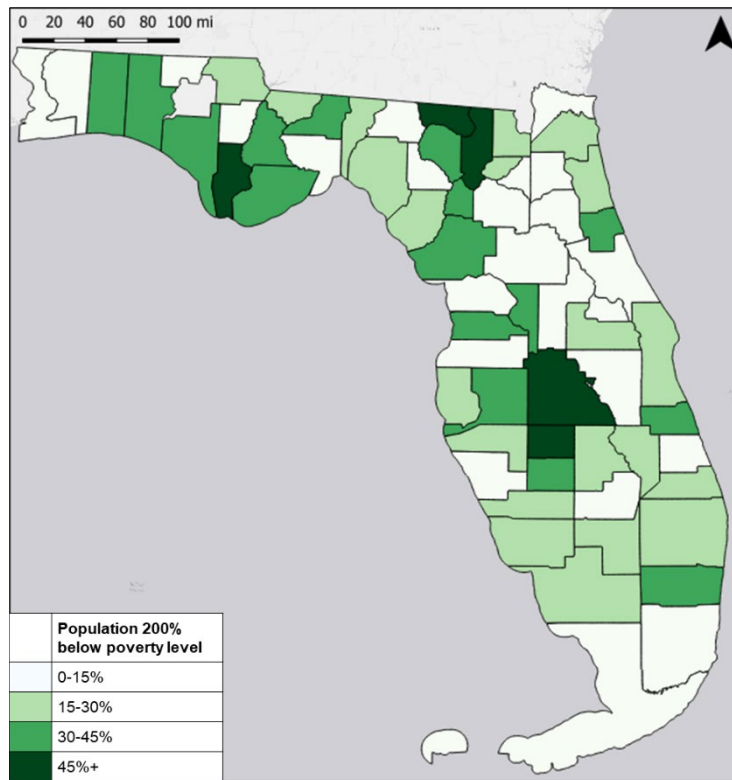
Figure 12: Population 200% below the federal poverty level by county in the State of Florida

3.4.3.3 Increased options for broadband services, including a wider range of low-cost services

Lack of competition between ISPs can have adverse effects on consumers. According to the think tank Public Knowledge, "most Americans have at most two options for a broadband provider and 35% only have one option. Studies show that prices for bundled packages with high-speed Internet connectivity are about $25 higher per month than they should be due to lack of competition."[88] Increased service options and competition across ISPs through removal of regulatory constraints may lead to better service and lower prices for consumers.

3.4.4 Broadband Access

In conceptualizing the issue of broadband access, connectivity on the go is as important to user experience as connectivity is in residential contexts. In Florida, public access points and mobile connectivity represent two key channels through which users may access broadband Internet outside their homes.

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[88] The Path to Broadband Affordability, Public Knowledge, https://publicknowledge.org/the-path-to-broadband-affordability/

3.4.4.1 Public access points

Data collection on public access points is ongoing. Initial analysis suggests that public institutions and spaces (e.g., libraries, schools, parks) are common locations in which public access to broadband Internet is offered. For instance, the state has more than 580 public libraries, each representing a critical anchor institution for the communities they serve.[89]

Overall, data on public access points is one area for further enhancement in the state's broadband assessment efforts. As of this report's drafting, no single, comprehensive source of information exists for cataloguing the entities that offer free, public-use, connection points, and/or the locations in which they are provided. Instead, much of this information can only be sourced on a local entity basis (e.g., individual municipalities in the state will choose to provide public wi-fi connections at various locations in their jurisdictions- see sample of municipalities provisioning public wi-fi in Section 3.3.4). The state expects to continue to compile knowledge on this topic and develop resources, pending ability to identify, document, and share sufficiently complete data on the subject.

3.4.4.2 Cellular connectivity (Mobile Broadband)

Cellular connectivity in Florida is primarily understood through FCC mobile broadband data. The below figures show 4G LTE and 5G NR coverage across the state, respectively.
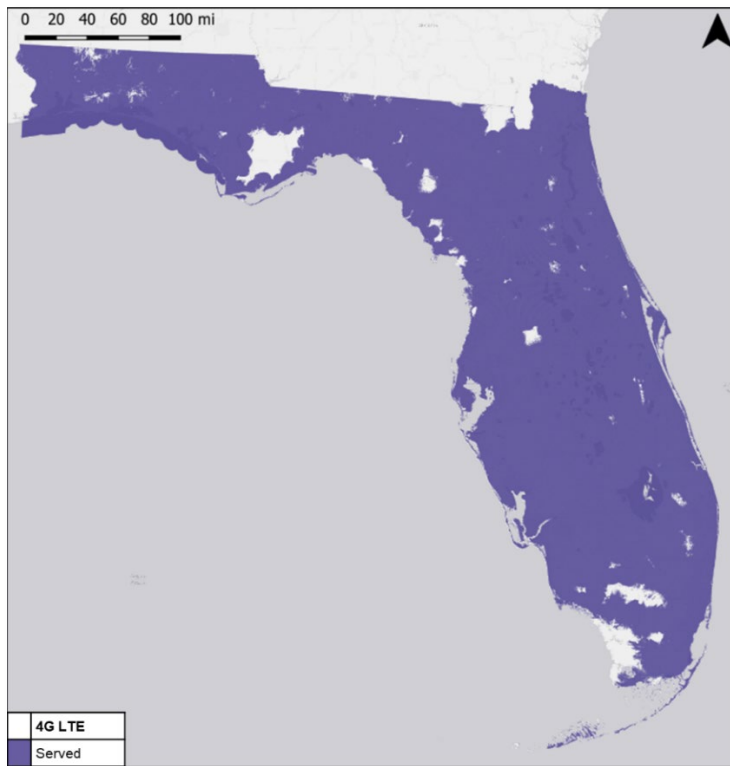
Figure 13: 4G LTE Coverage in the State of Florida

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[89] Interview with Division of Library Services, 7/12
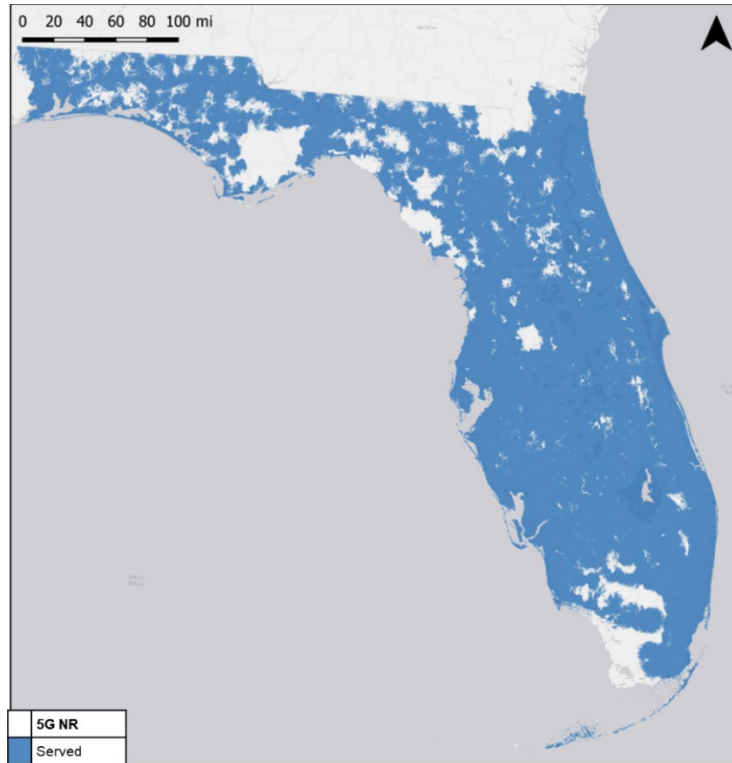
Figure 14: 5G-NR Coverage in the State of Florida

Overall, Florida is achieving the highest percentage of area covered with 4G broadband technologies (77.3%). The percentage of area covered for 5G-NR is relatively lower at around 66.1% for 5G-NR at 7/1 Mbps speeds and even lower still for 5G-NR at 35/3 Mbps speeds. Gaps in coverage are most noticeable in the Florida Panhandle around Franklin, Gulf, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties as well as in the South Florida wetlands, overlapping with Collier and Monroe Counties. The consistent overlap of areas with poor broadband coverage and environmentally difficult to build regions in the state reaffirms a key challenge/gap for Florida with respect to consideration of its geographical/environmental attributes as it continues efforts to close gaps in broadband connectivity across the state.[90].

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[90] This trend is most clearly evidenced by the gaps in coverage in and around Apalachicola National Forest in the Florida panhandle, as well as Big Cypress National Preserve and Everglades National Park in South Florida. However, similar trends exist for smaller remote, environmentally challenges areas across the state as well, particularly in the north-central region

3.4.4.3 Providers and market structure

In terms of providers, between 2-8 providers operate in each county in the state. Rural counties are more likely to have fewer provider options. Of the 17 counties in the state with just 2 providers offering fixed residential broadband services, 15 of them are rural.[91]
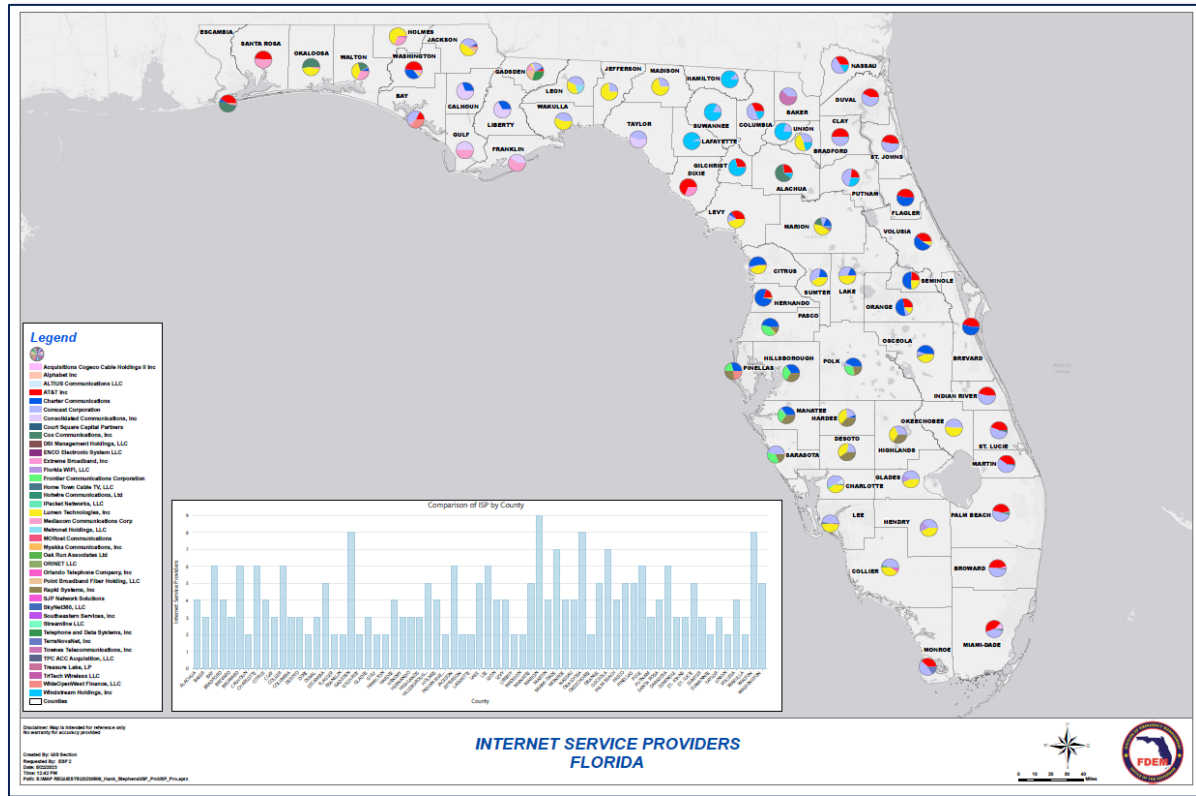
Figure 15: Residential, Fixed Broadband Providers in Florida[92]

3.4.5 Digital Literacy

For full details on these barriers and their impacts on the covered populations in Florida, please reference Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.

While barriers to broadband access stemming from adoption, affordability, and accessibility concerns may apply to any resident of Florida, these barriers affect individuals belonging to covered populations even more acutely. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) defines these groups in specific terms:[93]

- Low Socioeconomic Status (SES): individuals who live in a household in which the income for the most recently completed year is not more than 150% of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census (referred to as "covered households");
- Aging People: individuals who are 60 years of age or older;

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[91] As defined by Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes

[92] Procured from the Division of Telecommunications. ISP information shown reflects data from the FCC BDC

[93] Metrics for these categories come primarily from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) Estimates. The one exception is the "low literacy" group, which estimated from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) State and County Indicators of Adult Literacy and Numeracy. See 2019 Total Covered Populations Under the Digital Equity Act for details.

- Incarcerated People: incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility;
- Veterans: individuals who served in the military;
- People with Disabilities: individuals with a mental or physical disability;
- Language Barriers: individuals who
  - o Are English learners; and
  - o Have low levels of literacy;
- Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups: individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group; and
- Rural Communities: individuals who primarily reside in a rural area.

3.4.5.1   Low Socioeconomic Status (SES)

People with low socioeconomic status (SES) face the greatest number of obstacles to accessing broadband Internet of all covered populations. Anything affecting broadband affordability understandably limits the ability of this population to buy broadband services at a price that is not cost-prohibitive. The knock-on effects of these cost-based limitations, moreover, continue to limit adoption (e.g., limited digital literacy). Given that the price of broadband is a major limitation to uptake,[94] individuals living in covered households are a major focus of BEAD funding.

3.4.5.2   Aging People

Aging people are a significant group in the state of Florida, with a larger percentage of residents over the age of 60 than most other states. These residents are less likely to use the Internet than other groups[95]. As a result, aging individuals are particularly at risk of experiencing limited digital literacy. Because many members of this covered population are also retired and therefore rely on a fixed income, they may be vulnerable to losing access to broadband if prices increase.

3.4.5.3   Incarcerated People

Individuals in this population are oftentimes limited in their access to digital devices, which can limit their capacity to learn new digital skills. It is important to consider this population's eventual need for such skills to establish pathways to employment after their sentence to reduce recidivism.

3.4.5.4   Veterans

Veterans face a nuanced set of barriers to digital participation. While the overall population of veterans tend to fare well in American society –for example, they are less likely to be below the poverty line than nonveterans – they are at risk of lacking full access to broadband services due to their increased likelihood of being in additional covered populations. Veterans in Florida are more likely to be 55 or older compared to the rest of the population and are also more than twice as likely to have a disability than non-veterans. Other studies have shown that "rural Americans are disproportionately represented in the veteran population, comprising 19% of all U.S. veterans compared with 16% of the general population."[96] Issues that disproportionately affect people who are older, who have disabilities, and/or who live in rural communities, therefore, are more likely to impact veterans as well.

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[94] Digital Inequality and Low-Income Households, Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall16/highlight2.html
[95] Share of adults in the United States who use the Internet in 2021, by age group, Statista, https://www.statista.com/statistics/266587/%age-of-internet-users-by-age-groups-in-the-us/
[96] Rural Veterans at a Glance, Department of Agriculture, https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/42891/40612_eb25.pdf?v=0#:~:text=Thus%2C%20rural%20Americans%20are%20disproportionately,%%20of%20the%20general%20population.

3.4.5.5 People with Disabilities

People with disabilities may require accommodations to fully access broadband Internet. Such accommodations may include physical devices or supporting materials with assistive/adaptive technology. Without access to these technologies, people with disabilities may find it challenging to maintain or improve their digital literacy. If someone's disability limits their ability to commute to or otherwise work on-site, they may rely upon hybrid or remote working conditions that require digital literacy. Provision of these accommodations will allow people with disabilities to benefit from expanded broadband Internet services in Florida.

3.4.5.6 Language Barriers

People with language barriers face similar challenges to individuals with disabilities; namely, individuals facing language barriers may require supporting materials and/or digital devices that are available in their home language to access broadband. While there is a high number of Spanish-speakers in Florida, resources meant to improve digital literacy should aim to serve individuals regardless of language spoken.

3.4.5.7 Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups

Members of racial and ethnic minority groups tend to be more likely to be in other covered groups, such as people with low SES and people with language barriers. These individuals therefore are vulnerable to the challenges and issues facing those groups. Members of racial and ethnic minority groups may also feel greater skepticism toward working with private industry actors and may require targeted communications outreach strategies as a result to gain maximum buy-in to programs which improve broadband access.

3.4.5.8 Rural Communities

People living in rural communities face the most pressing challenges stemming from the lack of broadband infrastructure in non-metropolitan areas. This limited infrastructure has resulted in high Internet service prices in rural areas, which in turn has made broadband services more difficult for rural people or rural CAIs to access consistently. Investment in rural broadband infrastructure should improve uptake of these services significantly.

The experience of covered populations in Florida demonstrates that having access to the Internet is not the same as using and benefiting from the Internet. To connect all Floridians with this critical resource, decision makers must consider the unique needs of covered populations and the gaps in service to these residents.

4 Obstacles or Barriers to Address for Successful Implementation

To successfully narrow the digital divide and expand broadband in Florida, the state intends to identify and mitigate several barriers. These barriers cover wide-ranging topics and will require a muti-disciplinary approach when developing mitigation strategies. For those obstacles that relate to covered populations, additional detail is provided in Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.

Table 7 below outlines the key barriers and corresponding mitigation strategies Florida plans to explore to reduce the adverse effects of these anticipated obstacles. The obstacles are coded by accountability, availability, and adoption and use, three themes highlighted in the Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband.

Table 7: Barriers to Successful Implementation of the BEAD Program

Potential Barriers	Mitigation Strategies
Lack of coordination between utility assets and broadband deployment opportunities	1. Develop robust understanding of federal grant stipulations and appropriate stakeholder coordination mechanisms to reduce duplication and ensure best use of funds.
Interaction of federal and state laws may limit how funds can be used for infrastructure deployment	
Permitting complexity (federal, state, local, etc.)	2. Coordinate infrastructure installation projects and permitting efforts to attract providers to serve rural, low population density areas
Lack of economic incentive to serve rural, low population density areas	
Poor coordination between infrastructure installation projects, causing inefficiencies in deployment	
Lack of granular data where federal broadband Internet expansion funds have been used, as well as insights into organic provider investment	3. Develop an ongoing program to enhance the state broadband Internet dataset
Community skepticism toward broadband offerings and the value of high-speed Internet	4. Fund existing and new programs meant to address adoption and use of broadband Internet service through community organizations
Lack of technical skills to safely and meaningfully interact with the Internet	
Supply chain pressure or disruptions delay; extended deployment timeline of projects	5. Leverage expertise with industry and government to understand new and ongoing challenges to deployment efforts
Lack of affordable materials for deployment	

Need for skilled and specialized workers to deploy broadband Internet infrastructure projects	6. Prepare Florida's workforce for the jobs that will emerge from the national deployment of federal and state infrastructure projects
Insufficient training programs to enhance workforce	
Insufficient local technical support that limits adoption of broadband Internet- supported services	7. Utilize LTPT expertise and insights to understand local obstacles to adoption and to identify solutions tailored to each community
Topography and extreme weather considerations	
Environmentally sensitive lands	
Varied levels of knowledge and digital skills of diverse set of Florida communities	
Lack of specific community-level data to assess gaps and understand assets at county level	

5 Implementation Plan

To satisfy the goals of the Five-Year Action Plan, Florida developed the Implementation Plan outlined in the following sections. This Implementation Plan will be refined in the Initial Proposal based on ongoing engagement, additional information around data and mapping, as well as additional insights surfaced in the process. This chapter includes the following sections:

- **5.1 Stakeholder Engagement Process** – Outlines Florida's approach and process to stakeholder engagement to inform and garner feedback from invested entities
- **5.2 Priorities** – Explains Florida's high-level implementation priorities
- **5.3 Planned Activities** – Covers the State's planned implementation activities in relation to its stated Vision and Goals outlined in Section 2 as well as the key players and expected outcomes
- **5.4 Key Execution Strategies** – Provides an overview of the execution considerations around the BEAD implementation efforts
- **5.5 Estimated Timeline for Universal Service** – Details a general implementation timeline for expanding broadband deployment in Florida
- **5.6 Estimated Cost for Universal Service** – Outlines the methodology and estimated cost for providing broadband to all unserved and/or underserved communities in Florida
- **5.7 Alignment** – Explains alignment between the BEAD implementation efforts and existing policy initiatives in related areas
- **5.8 Technical Assistance** – Outlines considerations that would support Florida's implementation of the BEAD program through the full implementation timeline

5.1 Stakeholder Engagement Process

At its heart, this plan is a community-based approach to ensure service needs are identified and met in unserved and underserved areas. Thus, the stakeholder engagement process is a critical component in both the creation and implementation of this plan.

This section details the following elements of Florida's stakeholder engagement process:

- **5.1.1 Stakeholder Engagement Principles** – Describes how the stakeholder engagement process aligns to NTIA local coordination evaluation criteria.
- **5.1.2 Stakeholder Identification** – Describes process for identifying stakeholders.
- **5.1.3 Engagement Activities** – Describes specific engagement mechanisms and activities used in plan development.
- **5.1.4 Scale of Outreach** – Describes the magnitude of stakeholder engagement activities.
- **5.1.5 Plans for Future Engagement** – Describes how the stakeholder engagement process will continue into future BEAD phases.

5.1.1 Stakeholder Engagement Principles

The Office of Broadband referenced and considered the local coordination evaluation criteria included in the BEAD NOFO and guidance when developing its stakeholder engagement process. As displayed in Table 8 below, the Office of Broadband implemented key engagement principles identified by the NTIA throughout the engagement process.

Table 8: Implementing Stakeholder Engagement Principles

Stakeholder Engagement Principle	Implementation Activities During Plan Development
Provide opportunities for the entire state of Florida to participate in plan development process	• Hosted six public in-person workshops across Florida, as detailed in Figure 16 • Hosted three public virtual workshops and posted webinar recordings on website • Provided contact email for stakeholders and the public to ask Office of Broadband questions and provide feedback
Meaningfully engage diverse stakeholder groups	• As detailed in Table 9, diverse stakeholder groups received outreach to participate in plan development activities through questionnaires, interviews, and in-person and virtual workshops • The Office of Broadband engaged with stakeholder groups it had not previously engaged
Use multiple awareness and participation mechanisms to share information and outreach to stakeholder groups and Floridians	• The Office of Broadband and its contracted consulting team deployed several mechanisms to support public awareness of engagement opportunities as detailed in Section 5.1.3 • Public in-person and virtual workshop information was shared on the Office of Broadband's website during plan development process in June and July 2023. Information was also shared through FloridaCommerce's stakeholder listserv

Establish, document, and follow clear procedures to ensure transparent plan development process	• As detailed further in Section 5.1.3, the Office of Broadband:
	  o Shared virtual workshop recordings and presentations on Office of Broadband website
	  o Continues to maintain an email inbox for stakeholders and Floridians to ask questions or provide feedback about plan development
	  o Provided Spanish interpretation services at all in-person workshops
	  o Provided ASL interpretation services at all in-person and virtual workshops
	• Provided an updated map on Office of Broadband website that shows what areas have received funds under current or past grant programs to inform BEAD process

Engage and outreach to unserved and underserved communities, including historically underrepresented and marginalized groups and/or communities	• Identified and engaged with stakeholders it had not previously engaged with in the plan development process

5.1.2 Stakeholder Identification

Since its inception, the Office has engaged stakeholders on broadband deployment and digital use and adoption. The Office will continue to build on its previous stakeholder engagement successes and networks throughout the BEAD development process to ensure Florida's plan accounts for the varied and unique needs, barriers, and opportunities of its citizens and communities.

The Office specifically targeted the following types of stakeholder groups and entities to engage in the development process based on NTIA guidance:

- **Government entities** - State agencies, local governments
- **Community anchor institutions**[97] – Industrial, commercial and office park worksites, schools, libraries, medical and health care points of access, housing providers, public safety entities, institutes of higher education, and other community support organizations that provide outreach, access, equipment, and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband Internet service by the entire population and local governments
- **Local Technology Planning Teams** – Statutorily created[98] county-level teams devoted to technology and broadband planning for communities
- **Organizations supporting covered populations** – Non-profits, community organizations, etc. that specifically target to serve one or more covered populations
- **Workforce and economic development organizations** – Chambers of Commerce, Local Workforce Development Boards, Florida's Department of Education, and CareerSource Florida
- **Private industry** – Internet service providers and industry associations
- **Florida's Federally Recognized Tribes** – the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

The Office identified these types of specific stakeholder groups and entities through the following methods:

- **Previous engagement/contact** – Stakeholder groups that previously engaged with the Office through activities like developing its Strategic Plan or contacted the Office about Florida's BEAD plan development
- **Desk research** – Internet searches and research
- **Existing structures** – Local Technology Planning Teams, inter-agency collaborations
- **Recommendations/word of mouth** – Referrals from organizations or community members about other organizations or entities to engage in the planning process

Table 9 in Section 5.1.4 further details the scale of outreach efforts to stakeholder groups.

5.1.3 Engagement Activities

The Office used multi-faceted and varied stakeholder engagement tactics to outreach and solicit feedback. Engagement mechanisms include the following activities that are detailed further in this section:

- [5.1.3.1 Local Technology Planning Teams](#)
- [5.1.3.2 Office of Broadband Website](#)
- [5.1.3.3 In-Person Community Engagement Public Workshops](#)
- [5.1.3.4 Virtual Community Engagement Public Workshops](#)
- [5.1.3.5 Community and Broadband Events](#)
- [5.1.3.6 Questionnaires](#)

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[97] The Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband, https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/community-planning-development-and-services/broadband/the-florida-broadband-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=f76e55b0_2
[98] Fla. Stat. § 288.9961(4)(b)

5.1.3.1 Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPTs)

LTPTs serve as the bridge between communities and the Office. As established under section 288.9961(4)(b), Florida Statutes, LTPTs are county-level teams that "work with rural communities to help the communities understand their current broadband availability, locate unserved and underserved businesses and residents, identify assets relevant to broadband deployment, build partnerships with broadband service providers, and identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the community." The Office used the LTPT structure to disseminate information about plan development progress, public engagement opportunities to inform the plan, and to solicit local plans.

LTPTs can include representatives from libraries; K-12 education; colleges and universities; local health care providers; private businesses; community organizations; economic development organizations; local governments; tourism; parks and recreation; and agriculture.[99]

5.1.3.2 Office of Broadband Website

The Office used its website (link) to invite all interested stakeholders and Floridians to participate in six in-person and three virtual workshops. The website also includes the recordings and presentation from each of the three virtual workshops.

The Office website also shares a general contact inbox for the Office of Broadband that is regularly monitored to field stakeholder and community questions and feedback. Interested visitors can also subscribe to receive updates on the Office of Broadband's activities and initiatives, including many of the engagements outlined in this plan.[100]

5.1.3.3 In-Person Community Engagement Public Workshops

The Office hosted six in-person workshops across Florida that were open to the public, as detailed in Figure 16.

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[99] FloridaCommerce Office of Broadband, *Local Technology Planning Teams*, https://www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/broadband/office-of-broadband/local-technology-planning-teams
[100] FloridaCommerce Office of Broadband, *Sign-up to receive updates from DEO's Office of Broadband*, https://cloud.communications.deo.myflorida.com/Broadband
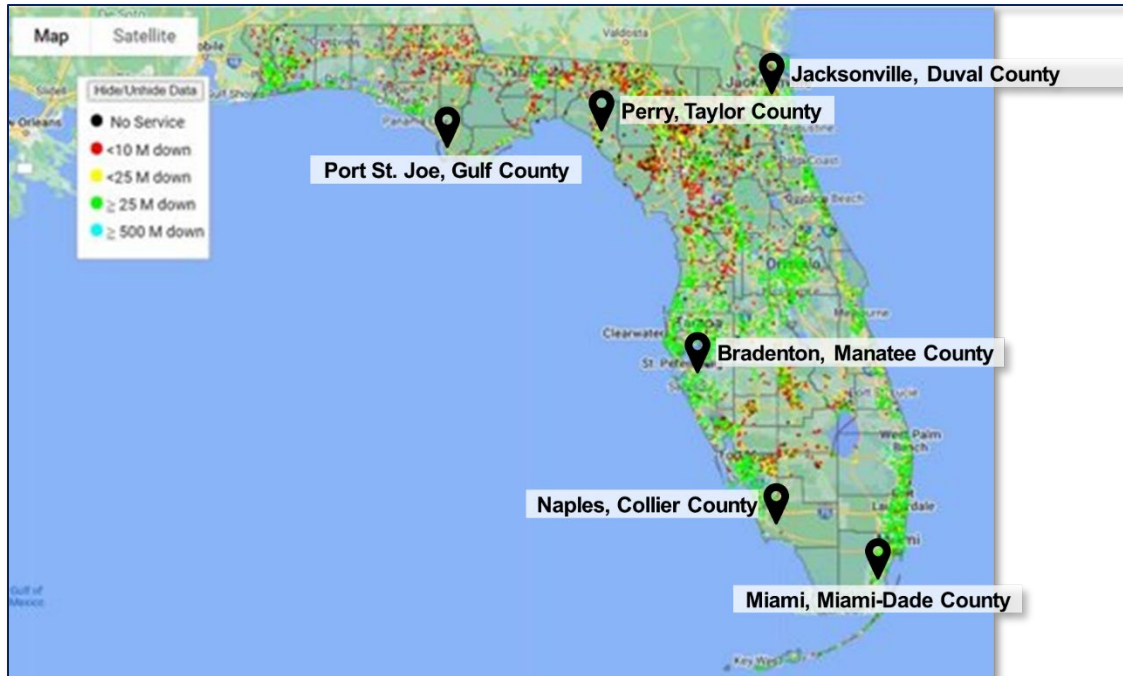
Figure 16: Map of Six Broadband Public Workshops

Workshops were scheduled for 90 minutes and focused on hearing directly from Floridians about barriers to Internet access and digital adoption and use. A sample workshop agenda is available in Figure 17.

Time	Activity
10 min	Welcome and Introduction
10 min	Broadband 101
20 min	Overview of Federal Broadband Programs
15 min	Group Discussion
20 min	Interactive Activity
15 min	Q&A / Public Comment

Figure 17: Sample In-Person Broadband Public Workshop Agenda

Workshops began with introductory remarks from FloridaCommerce and the Office of Broadband leaders. Workshop facilitators then gave an overview of broadband and its current state in Florida to ensure shared understanding about broadband concepts. Facilitators then shared information about BEAD and Digital Adoption and Use plans including timelines, eligible uses of funding, and program priorities. Facilitators then held a group discussion and activity with participants about what community members use the Internet for, barriers to accessing the Internet, and solutions to identified barriers. The Office then heard public comments and answered questions from workshop participants.

American Sign Language (ASL) and Spanish interpretation services were offered at each workshop. Additionally, the FLORIDA Channel, a public affairs programming service funded by The Florida Legislature and produced and operated by WFSU-TV, broadcasted three workshops on PBS multicast channels, cable systems, and public, education and government access channels across the state. The FLORIDA Channel also recorded and publicly posted the recordings of the three workshops it broadcasted on its website.

5.1.3.4 Virtual Community Engagement Public Workshops

The Office hosted three virtual workshops that were open to the public. Like the in-person workshops, the virtual workshops were scheduled for 90 minutes and focused on hearing directly from Floridians about barriers to Internet access and digital adoption and use. A sample workshop agenda is available in Figure 18.

Time	Activity
10 min	Welcome and Introduction
10 min	Broadband 101
20 min	Overview of Federal Broadband Programs
10 min	Interactive Activity
40 min	Q&A / Wrap Up

Figure 18: Sample Virtual Broadband Workshop Agenda

Workshops began with introductory remarks from FloridaCommerce and the Office of Broadband leaders. Workshop facilitators then gave an overview of broadband and its current state in Florida to ensure shared understanding about broadband concepts. Facilitators then shared information about BEAD and Digital Adoption and Use plans including timelines, eligible uses of funding, and program priorities. Using the Office's public inbox, the meeting poll and chat features, facilitators then conducted an activity with participants about what community members use the Internet for, barriers to accessing the Internet, and solutions to identified barriers. The Office then answered questions from workshop participants.

ASL interpretation services were offered at each workshop. Additionally, the FLORIDA Channel broadcasted the virtual workshops on PBS multicast channels, cable systems, and public, education and government access channels across the state. The FLORIDA Channel also recorded and publicly posted the recordings of the three workshops it broadcasted on its website.

5.1.3.5 Community and Broadband Events

Aside from participation in public events across the state, the Office also hosted the first Florida Broadband Summit from September 21-22, 2023, in Orlando to bring together industry leaders, local government officials, workforce and economic development professionals, and community advocates to discuss the expansion of broadband Internet and its impact on infrastructure, business and job growth in Florida. Because of the intersectional nature of broadband deployment efforts and the vast numbers of stakeholders involved in the efforts, the Office knows that multiple opportunities for public input and updates is a key step to delivering broadband coverage to the state.

5.1.3.6 Questionnaires

The Office developed questionnaires for stakeholder groups and Internet service providers to provide another feedback avenue.

The stakeholder questionnaire was sent to 262 stakeholder groups and 29 responses were received. The questionnaire focused on gathering information about the covered populations (if any) the organization serves, feedback on Florida's community anchor institution definition, community programs to support Internet access, and feedback on how the Office of Broadband can improve access to the Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills in Florida.

The ISP questionnaire was sent to 30 Internet service providers and four responses were received. The questionnaire focused on gathering information about workforce needs, challenges to expanding

broadband infrastructure, the ISP's current income-restricted or low-cost offerings, and feedback on how the Office of Broadband can improve access to the Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills in Florida.

5.1.3.7 Interviews

Using NTIA guidance and interview guide examples, the Office conducted individual interviews with 32 organizations. Interview questions were tailored based on the stakeholder group's unique focus and impact on broadband deployment and digital adoption and use. Interviews focused on identifying barriers the organization or its members face related to broadband and digital adoption and use, solutions, and direct feedback on plan development.

5.1.3.8 Tribal Engagement

To ensure the voices of Florida's federally recognized tribes were included in the plan development process, FloridaCommerce engaged the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. Through tribal consultation letters, in-person and virtual meetings, and questionnaires, FloridaCommerce was able to capture tribal perspectives on the broadband needs of their communities. FloridaCommerce is committed to continued engagement with both tribes, over the course of the BEAD development process, on strategies to expand broadband deployment and digital adoption for tribal populations.

5.1.4 Scale of Outreach

Table 9 displays the number of stakeholders invited to engage in the plan development process, categorized by entity type and engagement type. The Total column details the number of unique entities by type who were invited to participate in plan development in at least one of four engagement mechanisms. The Engagement Mechanism columns show the number of entities within that total who were invited to participate in those means. These summary numbers are subsets of the entity totals and demonstrate the extent of the Office's outreach to various parties.

Table 9: Number of Engagement Stakeholder Entities by Type and Engagement Mechanism

Entity Type	Total	Engagement Mechanism			
		Invited to Interview	Invited to Public Workshop (In-Person)	Invited to Public Workshop (Virtual)	Invited to Complete Questionnaire
Private industry	78	24	46	48	50
Community anchor institutions	144	13	79	23	76
Government entities	133	32	122	42	36
Local Technology Planning Teams	63	63	63	63	63
Organizations supporting	72	27	56	21	29

Entity Type	Total	Engagement Mechanism			
		Invited to Interview	Invited to Public Workshop (In-Person)	Invited to Public Workshop (Virtual)	Invited to Complete Questionnaire
covered populations					
Workforce and economic development organizations	25	6	16	7	6
Seminole Tribe of Florida	1	1	1	1	1
Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida	1	1	1	1	1
Grand Total	517	167	384	206	262

5.1.5 Plans for Future Engagement

Transparency and stakeholder engagement are key tenets by which the Office operates. During each phase of these broadband and digital adoption and use efforts, the Office will continue to be transparent and engage stakeholders to ensure program priorities are aligned to Florida's needs. Each new planning and implementation phase will be informed by more accurate mapping; local assistance to identify assets and address barriers; interdepartmental coordination; and workforce planning.

The Office will continue to use a variety of engagement activities and mechanisms to share information and updates about plan development and implementation, including but not limited to the Office of Broadband website, FloridaCommerce listserv, ongoing LTPT meetings, and community and broadband events.

Additionally, digital literacy program funding will be implemented in parallel with – and immediately following – broadband infrastructure deployment. Full detail of these initiatives and plans are available in Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.

5.2   Priorities

Along with an overarching vision, actionable goals, and measurable objectives (refer to Chapter 2) this plan outlines a set of priorities for broadband deployment and digital literacy. These priorities are inspired by ideas previously articulated in Florida's 2022 Strategic Plan for Broadband and are intended to provide key principles that guide the state as it pursues it goals. These priorities can be organized into four distinct phases: Research & Data-Gathering; Program Management & Workforce Development; Broadband Deployment & Adoption; and Accountability. While some activities within these phases will be executed concurrently, the phases are intended to provide a general framework for a more focused and streamlined implementation process.

Table 10: Priorities for Broadband Deployment and Digital Adoption and Use

Phase	Priority	Description
I. Research & Data-Gathering	Increase support for LTPTs to expand data-gathering, asset identification, and partnership development activities	Leverage LTPTs to gather community-level data on current state needs and gaps to inform future deployment and digital adoption activities.
	Develop and maintain an ongoing program to enhance the state broadband Internet dataset	Utilize various broadband Internet data resources, including data collected by LTPTs and local and regional organizations. Ensure the Office of Broadband collects, maintains, and analyzes data from grant activities to track progress on goals and objectives.
II. Program Management & Workforce Development	Implement a competitive, efficient grant process informed by Broadband Opportunity Program best practices	Design and manage a streamlined grant process to attract the largest number of applications (and therefore increase the possibility that un/underserved communities will be reached) without sacrificing quality standards and clear criteria and guidelines.
	Prepare the workforce for deployment of broadband infrastructure projects to ensure continuity of operations	Work with state partners and workforce development agencies on workforce development planning and initiatives to meet the construction, installation, and long-term maintenance needs of broadband deployment to ensure continued reliability and growth.
III. Broadband Deployment & Adoption	Attract providers to serve rural, low population density areas	Develop an approach to increase communities' purchasing power by attracting multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet in rural, and un/underserved areas in those communities. This may be achieved by aggregating service needs across jurisdictions or through state contracts.
	Guide and encourage communities to coordinate infrastructure projects	Help ensure infrastructure construction and improvement activities are coordinated and reported to the state. This coordination can reduce overall costs of installation and increase the effectiveness of the infrastructure improvement, leading to better opportunities to attract new businesses, enhance existing businesses, provide training to potential workforce, and

		deliver more methods for critical interconnectivity such as telemedicine.
	Utilize partnerships with CAIs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to build out digital literacy programming	Identify and expand upon existing digital literacy, digital device, and digital navigator programming offered by CAIs and CBOs. Also work to identify gaps in relevant programming to inform development of new programming, especially for Covered Populations.
IV. Accountability	Establish accountability measures to ensure state broadband goals are met, including accountability for the completion of infrastructure projects	Accountability must be built into the process of developing grant programs from the beginning, along with procedures for oversight of grantees.

5.3 Planned Activities

The Office has planned the following activities to meet its goals and objectives. The activities are organized into three sections according to the BEAD goal with which it is aligned. For example:

- Florida's first BEAD goal, "boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment" focuses on strategic grants management, broadband planning and deployment, as well as workforce readiness and economic growth;
- Florida's second goal, "expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience" focuses on increasing broadband access, promoting affordability and sustainable adoption, and increasing each community's resilience; and,
- Finally, Florida's third BEAD goal, "equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices" focuses on increasing broadband and digital device access and adoption rates, as well as increasing digital literacy, especially for covered populations.

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment

Planned Activities	Key Implementation Players	Potential Funding Sources	Expected Outcomes
Connect currently unserved locations	ISPs, Broadband Infrastructure Providers	BEAD[101], Broadband Opportunity Program, Capital Project Fund	Increase number of locations with broadband access
Upgrade currently underserved locations	ISPs, Broadband Infrastructure Providers	BEAD, Broadband Opportunity Program,	Increase number of locations with broadband access

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[101] BEAD is the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program, https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program

		Capital Project Fund	
Develop ongoing program to enhance the state broadband Internet dataset by leveraging multiple data sources and continually collecting and maintaining dataset	Office of Broadband, ISPs, LTPTs, Local Communities	BEAD	Avoid service redundancies and ensure reliable service for all locations; ongoing, collaborative relationship with key broadband stakeholders
Continue to update Office of Broadband's ConnectedFlorida map that identifies project areas submitted in applications and project areas that were awarded grant funding	Office of Broadband, ISPs, LTPTs	BEAD	Ensure transparency and accountability through enhancing maps and visuals for the public
Use broadband data to efficiently allocate funding	Office of Broadband	BEAD	Avoid service redundancies and ensure reliable service for all locations
Design competitive grant selection processes to ensure bidders can provide scalable and/or long-term viability of service	Office of Broadband	BEAD	Newly serviced locations with reliable, sustainable access to broadband
For un/underserved areas that fail to receive a competitive bid, design a negotiated provider-selection process	Office of Broadband	BEAD	All locations receive competitive bids
Develop a robust, prepared workforce for infrastructure deployment through workforce development planning and initiatives	Office of Broadband, Workforce Development Agencies, Private Companies	BEAD, DEA[102]	Efficient, successful deployment of broadband with minimal time delays or implementation issues
Attract multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet in un/underserved areas by aggregating service needs across jurisdictions or through state contracts	Local Communities, Office of Broadband	BEAD, Broadband Opportunity Program, Capital Project Fund	Un/underserved areas receive competitive bids
Prepare people for emerging information technology jobs and business opportunities	Office of Broadband, Workforce Development Agencies, Private Companies	BEAD, DEA	Economic growth and enhanced workforce development
Develop robust contracts and funding requirements that	Office of Broadband	BEAD	High-quality, timely, and reliable products and

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[102] DEA stands for the Digital Equity Act, https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/digital-equity-act-programs

			services for broadband-related contracts
ensure grant recipients have clear, measurable service commitments and make receipt of funding contingent on meetings those commitments			

G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience

Planned Activities	Key Implementation Players	Potential Funding Sources	Expected Outcomes
Develop approach to identify locations where sustainable broadband expansion/ improvement is not economically feasible	Office of Broadband, ISPs, Local Communities	BEAD, DEA	Use findings to develop alternative contract types or partnerships that increase likelihood of broadband expansion in identified locations
Promote existing affordable Internet plans on state website and through community partners, LTPTs, and ISPs	Office of Broadband, community organizations, LTPTs, ISPs	BEAD, DEA	Greater uptake of ACP and ISP low-cost service plans
Work with ISPs to identify improvements to existing affordable Internet service plans	Office of Broadband, ISPs	BEAD, DEA	Greater awareness, benefits, and uptake of ISP low-cost plans
With assistance from LTPTs, deploy assessments of available broadband speeds for all Community Anchor Institutions	LTPTs, Community Anchor Institutions	BEAD	Better Internet connectivity for the public to enhance productivity, allow more users, and allow for greater versatility of online services offered by CAIs
Expand broadband availability at Community Anchor Institutions	ISPs, Broadband Infrastructure Providers, Community Anchor Institutions	BEAD, Broadband Opportunity Program, Capital Project Fund	Increased access to Internet, especially for those who may be unable to afford at-home service; greater community resilience through enhanced public connectivity
Continue to engage stakeholders throughout planning and implementation phases (see section 5.1.5 for details)	ISPs, Broadband Infrastructure Providers, Community Anchor Institutions	BEAD, DEA	Maintain open communication and investment from community and business partners
Publish and/or make available information about the development, progress, and best practices employed by LTPTs and other local entities to	LTPTs, Office of Broadband	BEAD, DEA	Popularize and share best practices to encourage effective engagement with LTPTs and their communities

Planned Activities	Key Implementation Players	Potential Funding Sources	Expected Outcomes
identify and create plans for addressing the broadband Internet needs of their respective communities			
With assistance from LTPTs, deploy emergency readiness assessments to understand the emergency readiness needs and gaps of counties as it relates to broadband technologies	LTPTs, Local Communities	BEAD	County-level plans for increasing access to broadband technologies for emergency readiness informed by emergency readiness assessments
Support communities, where possible, with emergency readiness information and equipment	Office of Broadband, Florida Division of Emergency Management	BEAD	Improved local level preparedness for emergencies

G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices

Planned Activities	Key Implementation Players	Potential Funding Sources	Expected Outcomes
Assess current availability of digital literacy programming across the state	LTPTs, CAIs, Office of Broadband	BEAD, DEA	Priorities and strategies that increase availability and awareness of digital literacy programming informed by current state findings
Assess current digital device availability and refurbishment programs across the state	LTPTs, CAIs, Office of Broadband	BEAD, DEA, Capital Project Fund	Priorities and strategies that increase device availability and awareness informed by current state findings
Assess current availability of digital safety and cybersecurity programs across the state	LTPTs, CAIs, Office of Broadband	BEAD, DEA, Capital Project Fund	Priorities and strategies that increase availability and awareness of digital safety and cybersecurity programs informed by current state findings
Support digital literacy and digital safety programming at CAIs with limited courses	CAIs, Office of Broadband, LTPTs	BEAD, DEA	Increased availability of digital literacy and safety programming statewide
Understand adoption and use needs in areas of Florida with limited broadband availability	LTPTs, CAIs, Office of Broadband	BEAD, DEA	Greater public awareness and digital skills training as part of community priorities when broadband deployment nears completion
Identify ways to use existing positions or volunteers to create digital navigators	Community organizations, LTPTs, CAIs	BEAD, DEA	Trusted community partners to support increased end-user needs related to adoption and use

			of broadband Internet services
Work with key broadband stakeholders to increase online accessibility for websites, community programming, and other means by which Floridians interact with the Internet	Community organizations, CAIs, LTPTs, state agencies	BEAD, DEA	Improved access to digital content (e.g., language translations)

5.4 Key Execution Strategies

To meet Florida's goals and objectives, and to align with and maintain compliance with the statutory requirements of the BEAD program, the Office of Broadband intends to implement nine foundational strategies focused on successful plan implementation and execution. As detailed in the following sections, each of the nine strategies is directly linked to the nine objectives in Florida's BEAD Strategic Framework (Section 2 of this plan). Many of these strategies are derived from both the successful work of the Office of Broadband to date, and to the 2022 Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband.

Key Execution Strategies for BEAD

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment

S1.1 Develop quality and accurate data to inform deployment planning

S1.2 Operate a transparent grant program and broadband planning process

S1.3 Promote education, accreditation, & training resources and programs for workforce

G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience

S2.1 Support CAIs with availability of high-speed Internet and devices for public use

S2.2 Coordinate with ISPs to promote availability of low-cost offerings and programs to offset subscription costs

S2.3 Assess broadband technologies to address county-level emergencies

G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices

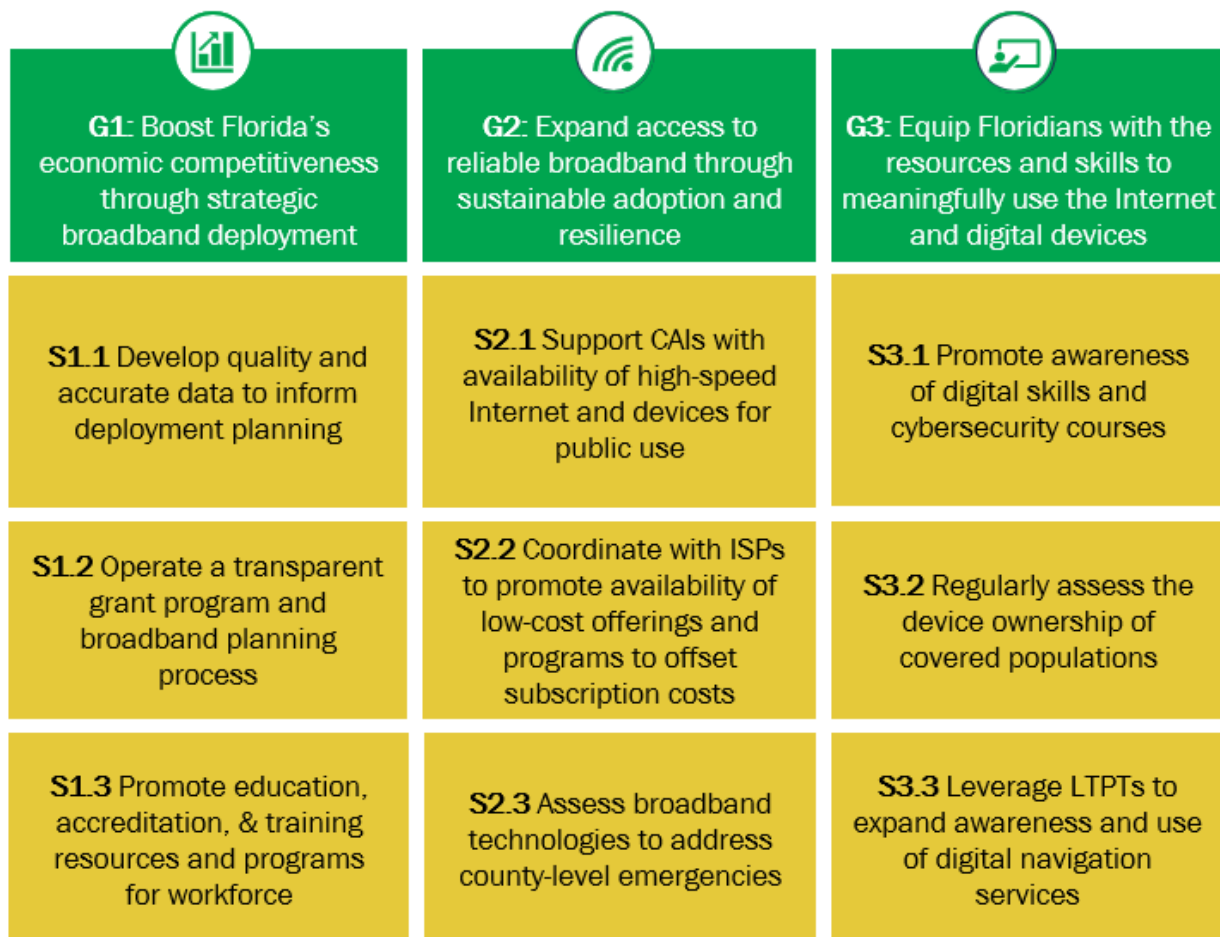S3.1 Promote awareness of digital skills and cybersecurity courses

S3.2 Regularly assess the device ownership of covered populations

S3.3 Leverage LTPTs to expand awareness and use of digital navigation services

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment

The state of Florida recognizes the important connection between broadband deployment and workforce development. The three strategies outlined below aim to harness this synergy by increasing the accuracy and understanding of service status to specific locations; continuing to enhance the grant process within the Office of Broadband to bolster effectiveness and transparency; and promoting the growth of the workforce required to both build and maintain broadband infrastructure.

Goal

G1: Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment

Objectives

1.1: Target deployment to unserved and underserved areas	1.2: Attract multiple providers to deploy broadband Internet in rural, unserved, and underserved communities	1.3: Develop a robust technology-trained workforce

Strategies

S1.1: Develop quality and accurate data to inform deployment planning	S1.2: Operate a transparent grant program and broadband planning process	S1.3: Promote education, accreditation, & training resources and programs for workforce

G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience

Expanding statewide access to broadband will require significant resources, time, and collaboration. Alongside these factors, the state will place an emphasis on ways to encourage sustainable adoption and community resilience, both of which are key to broadband expansion. To encourage the sustainable adoption of broadband and the resilience of each community, the Office will focus on three execution strategies: support for increased Wi-Fi availability and device availability programming at CAIs; coordination with community anchor institutions and ISPs to encourage public availability of connected devices and the promotion of low-cost service offerings for Floridians; and assessing

broadband technologies that can support county-level mobilization during natural disasters and bolster overall state emergency preparedness.

Goal		
G2: Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience		
Objectives		
2.1: Expand availability of public Wi-Fi	2.2: Encourage participation in affordable Internet service plans	2.3: Equip communities to manage through emergencies
Strategies		
S2.1: Support CAIs with availability of high-speed Internet and devices for public use	S2.2: Coordinate with ISPs to promote availability of low-cost offerings and programs to offset subscription costs	S2.3: Assess broadband technologies to address county-level emergencies

G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices

The execution strategies to achieve this goal are focused on supporting increased adoption of broadband Internet and digital devices, as well as wraparound services such as digital literacy and technical support. The Office intends to promote awareness of digital literacy and cybersecurity courses to enable confident and safe use of high-speed Internet; and to regularly assess the state of device ownership in the state across covered populations. Lastly, the Office will utilize the LTPTs and their local partners to build awareness of digital navigation services within each county. Relative to Goals 1 and 2, the strategies for Goal 3 most closely align with the themes and ideas in Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.

Goal		
G3: Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices		
Objectives		
3.1: Encourage development of new digital literacy programs	3.2: Increase device use and ownership	3.3: Expand availability of Digital Navigators
Strategies		
S3.1: Promote awareness of digital skills and cybersecurity courses	S3.2: Regularly assess the device ownership of covered populations	S3.3: Leverage LTPTs to expand awareness and use of digital navigation services

5.5 Estimated Timeline for Universal Service

Because of the institutional structures set up by state law, Florida is well-positioned to build on an existing program of success for grant disbursement. As of the beginning of August, the FloridaCommerce Office of Broadband awarded more than $473 million for 151 projects across 60 counties, bringing high-speed Internet to more than 309,000 homes and businesses across the state. The BEAD program will build on this momentum and existing grant processes. The timeline below shows a high-level approach to the progress toward achieving universal service in Florida, covering the component parts of the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan, Initial Proposal, Subgrantee Application Process, Final Proposal, and Deployment and Oversight.
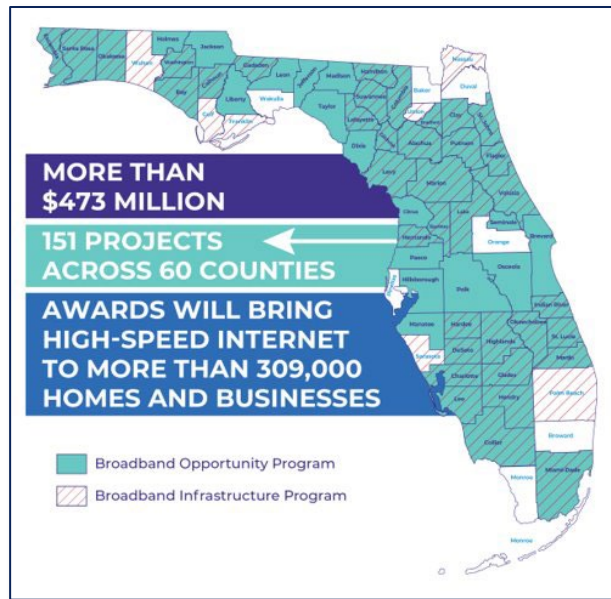
Figure 19: 2023 Project Awards in Florida

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Five Year Action Plan						
Engage in stakeholder engagement						
Complete BEAD Five-Year Action Plan draft and submission						
Initial Proposal						
Complete Initial Proposal draft and submission						
Manage Florida challenge process						
BEAD Subgrantee Application Process						
Request for applications						
Collect and review applications						
Conduct final review and award announcements						
Field appeals per Florida state law						
Final Proposal						
Complete Final Proposal draft and submission						
Deployment						
Disburse initial deployment funds						
Perform oversight and prepare reporting						
Disburse remaining deployment funds						
Perform oversight and prepare reporting						

Figure 20: Timeline for BEAD Program Management and Deployment

It is important to acknowledge this is early in the planning process. The Office plans to adjust the process to align with new guidance released from NTIA as well as feedback received from LTPTs, providers, local government leaders, and other sources.

5.6 Estimated Cost for Universal Service

Preliminary estimates suggest that universal broadband service in Florida may cost in the range of $1.5-1.6 billion.

This range is based on the results of two estimation approaches. The first assumes a constant-cost relationship between the number of locations that need service and the cost required to serve them. The following steps were applied:

1. **Number of unserved, underserved, and served locations.** Using the FCC National Broadband Map, the total number of unserved, underserved, and served locations was determined using the maximum advertised speeds reported through FCC Form 477.[103] Using the most recent release of the map, with information as of December 31, 2022, a summary of the starting total unserved, underserved, and served locations is provided below. A full breakdown by Florida's 67 counties is provided in Appendix C.

Table 11: Total Counts of Unserved, Underserved, and Served Locations

Location Speed Status	Total Starting Locations	% of Total Locations
Unserved	267,199	3.7%
Underserved	138,027	1.9%
Served	6,884,353	94.4%
TOTAL	**7,289,579**	**100%**

2. **Aggregate unserved, underserved, and served location counts by Florida census block.** While location counts are summarized by counties in this plan, they are grouped by census block for the purposes of this cost estimation exercise for use in subsequent components of the analysis.

3. **Estimate number of non-served locations that are expected to receive service through other planned and/or ongoing projects.** Accounting for federal and state projects that are planned or ongoing is important to develop accurate estimates of the remaining broadband serviceable locations that require funding. The following funding streams were accounted for in this estimate: Broadband Opportunity Projects, Capital Projects Fund, Connect America Funds, Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, Alternative Connect America Cost Model, and the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Fund.

Table 12: Total Planned or In-Progress Counts of Unserved, Underserved, and Served Locations

Location Speed Status	Total Planned or In-Progress Locations	Percentage of FCC Un(der)served Locations
Unserved	159,346	60%
Underserved	18,075	13%
TOTAL	**177,421**	**44%**

By removing the planned and in-progress locations from the original totals, a clearer understanding of the outstanding locations requiring service can be established.

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[103] FCC Broadband Map, Federal Communications Commission Fixed Broadband Deployment, https://broadband477map.fcc.gov/#/about

Table 13: Total Remaining Counts of Unserved, Underserved, and Served Locations

Location Speed Status	Total Remaining Locations	Percentage of Remaining Locations
Unserved	107,853	1.5%
Underserved	119,952	1.6%
Served	7,061,774	96.9%
TOTAL	**7,289,579**	**100%**

4. **Develop a cost to serve value based on existing project data.** Using project cost estimates of other broadband funding opportunities administered by the state, an indicative cost to serve value is constructed. Currently, this value is based on Capital Projects Fund projects, taking the total cost of the state's CPF funding opportunity and dividing it by the number of locations CPF projects are expected to serve, to arrive at an average cost to serve of around seven thousand dollars.

Table 14: Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Project Overview in Florida

CPF Total Cost	CPF Locations Served	Average
$411,995,465	59,090	$6,972

5. **Combine unserved/underserved counts with cost to serve value.** Multiply the unserved and underserved location counts in each census block by the cost to serve value to calculate cost to serve in each block. Sum across all census blocks.

6. **Account for locations already being served through other projects.** Subtract cost of serving locations that are a part of planned in-progress projects already bringing service there (cost to serve multiplied by number of locations that are in this category).

The second approach leverages a density-based model.[104] Often used in broadband development planning[105], the density-based model assumes there is an inverse relationship between location density and cost of broadband service; generally, the higher density, the lower the cost to serve. In the Florida context, density-based cost estimates were calculated as follows:

Repeat steps 1-4 from above.

5. **Calculate census block unserved/underserved location density.** Divide number of unserved/underserved locations in each census block by the census block square area (miles).

6. **Apply location density value to model and estimate cost for each block; aggregate costs across all census blocks.** For census blocks with high location density, apply a cost floor so that there is a minimum cost of service.[106]

7. **Calculate the average location density and apply to density model to find the cost to serve locations in areas of average density.** Multiply cost value by number of locations that are

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[104] Based on model developed by Cartesian, with cost minimums applied to census blocks with high location densities
[105] A review of available state broadband planning documents suggests that at least seven have considered a density-based cost model. States identified include Vermont, California, Washington, Kansas, Maine, North Dakota, and South Carolina
[106] Cost floor used is taken from Cartesian analysis, in which urban areas with high household density had a cost of service of $700 per home passed on the low end of the range calculated.

expected to be served by other projects and subtract from total cost to arrive at final cost to serve value.

The results of these analyses are summarized in Table 15 below. These represent preliminary cost estimates that indicate that around three quarters of the cost to bring universal broadband service to Florida may be covered by the state's current BEAD allocation. As the BEAD program progresses in Florida, the state expects to update and refine this estimate for universal broadband service using new and improved data obtained from stakeholders and partners.

Table 15: Estimated Costs for Universal Service in Florida

Approach	Estimated Cost for Universal Service	% Covered by BEAD allocation
Constant-cost	$1,588,319,208	74%
Density-based	$1,536,373,270	76%
Approach average	**$1,562,326,239**	**75%**

5.7   Alignment

The implementation efforts of the BEAD program align with existing and planned efforts to increase broadband availability to Florida communities and businesses. Further, these efforts impact broader policy initiatives of the state adjacent to the expansion of broadband availability. Below please find an overview of these related efforts, organized by broadband expansion efforts, workforce and economic development efforts, and efforts in affected sectors or industries (i.e., education, health, civic & social engagement, and essential service delivery).

Table 16: Alignment of BEAD Priorities and Existing Goals in Florida

Area	Key Florida Goals	Connection to Broadband Deployment
Broadband Expansion Efforts	• Connect all residents, libraries, schools, colleges, universities, healthcare providers, and community organizations.[107] • Florida's Digital Adoption and Use plan aims to close the digital skills gap and ensure the needs and opportunities for the NTIA-identified covered populations are understood and mitigated in Florida. **For full details, please see Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.**	The BEAD plan builds on existing programs, including mapping efforts, subgrantee process, and a strong community engagement approach through LTPTs and other invested parties. This plan is being informed by and developed in parallel to Florida's Digital Adoption and Use Plan.
Economic & Workforce Development [108,109]	• Expand Florida's economic footprint through access to new markets, public-private partnerships, and a competitive business climate. • Continue to develop high-quality, modern infrastructure. • Promote the creation and growth of businesses through efficient government,	Broadband Internet is a critical resource for economic and workforce development in the 21st century. Access to this resource drives innovation, grants access to new markets, investors, and human capital, and supports research and the exchange of market knowledge. With broadband, businesses are

[107] Section 288.9961(1), Florida Statutes, *The 2022 Florida Statutes (including 2022 Special Session A and 2023 Special Session B),* http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0288/Sections/0288.9961.html
[108] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6
[109] State of Florida, Framework for Freedom Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24, http://www.boldvisionforabrighterfuture.com/PDFLoader.htm?file=HomeFY24.pdf

	accessible capital, and a robust supply of skilled workers from across the state.	able to grow and compete at significant scale.
Education[110, 111,112,113]	• Align education and workforce development programs to foster employment opportunities and develop and retain talented workers with the skills to meet current and future employer needs. • Focus on the continued development of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), health and others to meet Florida's needs. • Promote greater access to educational opportunities, educational choice, and training programs to students and families, particularly in rural and underserved communities. • Strengthen quality and reputation of academic programs, scholarship, research, and innovation while continuing to build ties with communities and businesses.	The educational system benefits tremendously from broadband Internet. Broadband facilitates school choice and remote learning for individuals without alternatives and/or individuals with accessibility challenges associated with disabilities or language barriers. Students without broadband are at a distinct disadvantage compared to their broadband-enjoying peers. Broadband access also helps rural and underserved communities grow and thrive, while also providing businesses with the workforce of the future.
Health[114,115, 116]	• Create and sustain vibrant, safe, healthy and resilient communities that attract workers, residents, businesses and visitors. • Ensure Floridians in all communities and life stages have opportunities to achieve healthier outcomes and societal contributions. • Expand healthcare capacity throughout the state including access to telehealth opportunities.	Broadband internet connects individuals in underserved and/or rural areas with healthcare in a way not previously seen via telehealth and other public health services. These areas, in turn, are better able to attract businesses and employees to their communities.
Civic & Social Engagement[117]	• Strengthen local, regional and statewide partnerships to accomplish Florida's economic, quality of life and quality places goals. • Encourage local solutions to local problems with technical assistance, grant-based support, and continued communication with community organizations.	All areas of society – from civil society organizations to social clubs – are able to better engage via Broadband Internet. Broadband Internet facilitates richer, more connected, and more efficient communities.
Essential Service	• Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government agencies at all levels. • Continued investment in Florida's regulatory and government support functions by ensuring legal business	Broadband Internet makes government more efficient. Given broadband, citizens may access public services or contact their elected officials, communities can organize events or communicate about pressing

[110] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6

[111] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *The Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband*, https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/community-planning-development-and-services/broadband/the-florida-broadband-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=f76e55b0_2

[112] Florida Department of Education State Board of Education, Strategic Plan, https://www.fldoe.org/policy/state-board-of-edu/strategic-plan.stml

[113] State University System of Florida Board of Governors, 2025 System Strategic Plan, https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_05b_2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_Oct2019_CE.pdf

[114] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6

[115] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *The Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband*, https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/community-planning-development-and-services/broadband/the-florida-broadband-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=f76e55b0_2

[116] Florida Department of Health, Long Range Program Plan, http://floridafiscalportal.state.fl.us/Document.aspx?ID=24411&DocType=PDF

[117] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6

Delivery[118,119, 120]	practices, safeguarding taxpayer's personal data, protecting residents and visitors against financial crimes, and maintaining state owned infrastructure. • Guide, encourage, and where necessary direct, local communities to coordinate infrastructure projects, such as roads and broadband Internet, to reduce overall costs.	challenges, and law enforcement is better able to react to problems in real-time.

5.8   Technical Assistance

As Florida looks ahead to the implementation opportunities and challenges over the next five years, clarification and supplemental guidance are needed to ensure the Initial and Final Proposals align with the requirements.

- Additional guidance on the **letter of credit requirement for subgrantees** as outlined in the BEAD NOFO IV.D.2.ii. ("Letter of Credit" p. 76), and the circumstances whereby a waiver would likely be granted from the Secretary

- Additional guidance on the **affordability and low-cost plan requirements**, given the wide range of suggested methods to incentivize a middle-class affordability plan as outlined in the BEAD NOFO section c.i. ("Affordability and Low-Cost Plans" p.66)

- Greater clarification for how BEAD broadband deployments should comply with the **'Build America, Buy America' (BABA) requirements** and the methodology NTIA will employ to grant waivers where applicable

- Coordinated support to develop an understanding of **Internet speeds for community anchor institutions.** Whereas the FCC BDC map exists for broadband serviceable locations, there is no similar source or federally coordinated effort to understand internet speeds for CAIs.

- Guidance on how best to engage **communities and property owners who do not want broadband technologies** or high-speed Internet

6   Conclusion

Through this Five-Year Action Plan, the state of Florida has set forth its vision to foster a connected economy that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, telemedicine, and resiliency by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption. The comprehensive set of priorities, strategies, and activities delineated within this Plan will help Florida achieve its goals for broadband deployment and digital adoption across the state.

Developing Florida's BEAD Five-Year Action Plan has revealed that the task ahead for narrowing the digital divide is no small feat. According to FCC BDC data, over 400,000 locations (about ~6% of all locations in the state still lack access to reliable, quality broadband service[121]. The state's rural, hard-to- build areas in North and Central Florida stand out as regions that are particularly impacted. In

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[118] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Florida Strategic Plan for Economic* Development, https://floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/division-of-strategic-business-development/fl5yrplan/fl-strategic-plan-booklet-2.pdf?sfvrsn=376778b0_6
[119] State of Florida, Framework for Freedom Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24, http://www.boldvisionforabrighterfuture.com/PDFLoader.htm?file=HomeFY24.pdf
[120] Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *The Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband*, https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/community-planning-development-and-services/broadband/the-florida-broadband-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=f76e55b0_2
[121] As of December 2022

addition, the state is home to nearly 18 million residents that are a part of at least one covered population category, as defined by the Digital Equity Act of 2021[122]. Altogether, these locations and populations feature their own unique barriers and challenges to achieving universal connectivity. As such, Florida's approach to delivering quality, reliable broadband service to these remaining underserved and unserved populations are based on three goals:

- Boost Florida's economic competitiveness through strategic broadband deployment by focusing on activities like strategic grants management, broadband planning and deployment, as well as workforce readiness and economic growth;

- Expand access to reliable broadband through sustainable adoption and resilience by prioritizing activities that increase broadband access, promote affordability and sustainable adoption, and increase community resilience; and

- Equip Floridians with the resources and skills to meaningfully use the Internet and digital devices, facilitated by efforts to increase broadband and digital device access and adoption rates, as well as increasing digital literacy, especially for covered populations.

The successful implementation and execution of these goals and principles represent a critical avenue through which the state can help ensure that all Floridians have access to the digital resources needed to meaningfully participate in the state's modern economy. Expanding broadband access and adoption of digital connectivity, devices, and skills presents a tremendous opportunity to improve the overall economy, local communities, and Floridians' quality of life. FloridaCommerce and the Office of Broadband remain more committed than ever to realizing these opportunities for the future prosperity of all in Florida.

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[122] U.S. Census Digital Equity Act Population Viewer, https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865464a90ff1573c5072b42

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: Broadband Workforce Landscape Analysis

Introduction

As BEAD eligible entities follow similar broadband deployment timelines, there will be an increasing demand for workers who can fill broadband-specific job roles. The Five-Year Action Plan's 3.3 Asset Inventory and 3.4 Needs and Gaps Assessment sections provide a summary of Florida's current state of workforce development programs, resources, and existing workforce initiatives relevant to broadband. An analysis focused specifically on the expected deficit of broadband workers is presented here. The broadband workforce landscape analysis is broken into the following sections:

- 7.1.1 Florida Broadband Workforce Overview
- 7.1.2 Drawing New Entrants into the Workforce: BEAD Occupational Qualifications
- 7.1.3 Drawing from Adjacent Industries and Roles Within Florida: Close the Broadband Workforce Shortage
- 7.1.4 Drawing New Entrants from Other States
- 7.1.5 Tactics and Additional Considerations

The NTIA Workforce Analysis identified a predicted shortage of workers for all twelve broadband occupation categories in Florida. Because there is a labor supply issue for these specific broadband roles, Florida will need to find additional workers to grow its broadband workforce to meet future needs. There are three primary ways to increase the number of workers in broadband roles in Florida:

(i)   drawing new workers into the workforce,
(ii)   drawing workers from adjacent industries into the broadband workforce, and
(iii)   drawing workers in from other states.

7.1.1 Florida Broadband Workforce Overview

According to an NTIA analysis that forecasted labor demand and supply for Florida broadband roles in 2026, there is a predicted deficit across every key broadband occupational group, as depicted in Figure 21 below. Overall, the predicted demand for broadband workers induced by BEAD funding constitutes 2%, or 2,500 jobs, of Florida's total workforce shortage for these occupational groups.[123] While it is a small percentage of Florida's overall need for these occupational groups, it will be vital to create new pipelines and pathways to fill these roles for successful broadband deployment.

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[123] NTIA State Workforce Research Findings: Florida, NTIA provided draft to Florida in May 2023

BEAD Occupation Group	BEAD Demand (FTEs)	Cross-Industry Deficit (FTEs)	Deficit / Supply
2026 Totals	(2.5K)	(110.0K)	-9.3%
Laborers and material movers	(867)	(41,270)	-10.0%
Trucking crew	(525)	(18,415)	-6.9%
Fiber and wireless technicians	(229)	(8,097)	-7.4%
Software engineers	(215)	(10,324)	-10.6%
Trenchers	(163)	(10,504)	-13.8%
Equipment operators	(155)	(6,068)	-7.4%
Master and stage electricians	(101)	(4,646)	-9.9%
Structural engineers	(80)	(2,913)	-8.0%
Network architects and coordinators	(79)	(2,794)	-7.8%
Surveyors and drafters	(46)	(2,375)	-11.1%
RF & field engineers	(37)	(1,213)	-7.9%
Inspectors (e.g., permit, health & safety)	(32)	(1,396)	-8.6%

Figure 21. Forecasted Demand, Supply, and Deficit of BEAD Deployment Occupation Groups[124]

BEAD Occupation Group	BEAD Demand (FTEs)	Cross-Industry Deficit (FTEs)	Deficit / Supply
12 groups consisting of key roles for broadband deployment	Number of additional jobs anticipated to be created because of BEAD funding	The difference between the projected total workforce supply and projected total workforce demand in 2026	Workforce deficit relative to workforce supply

BEAD demand was determined by estimating the Florida broadband workforce in 2026, then calculating the incremental demand that will be created because of BEAD funding. The cross-industry deficit was determined by subtracting the total labor demand for that occupational group from the total labor supply for that occupational group. Lastly, the deficit/supply was determined by dividing the projected cross industry deficit by the total labor supply for that occupational group.

Laborers, trucking crews, and fiber and wireless technicians are expected to see the highest uptick in job creation from BEAD funding. While smaller in terms of the overall number of full-time employees (FTEs) required, trenchers, surveyors and drafters, and software engineers are expected to have the greatest deficits between supply and demand.

Florida will need new additions to the broadband workforce for a successful broadband implementation from BEAD funding. There are a multitude of ways that Florida can work to close these gaps. The first is drawing new Floridians into the workforce.

7.1.2 Drawing New Entrants into the Workforce: BEAD Occupational Qualifications

This section specifically focuses on attracting new entrants into the workforce that already reside in Florida, with a discussion in Section 4 of this appendix regarding new entrants from other states.

While Florida has workforce deficits across every BEAD occupational group, it has educational and accreditation institutions to make up ground and mitigate the gap. Florida can leverage its network of

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[124] NTIA State Workforce Research Findings: Florida, NTIA provided draft to Florida in May 2023

higher education institutions, technical schools, and workforce programs to collaborate with employers and workers to ensure it has the workforce for a successful broadband deployment.

For the educational qualifications, each qualification type is color-coded (see key below) based on the availability of programs offering those qualifications at public institutions and organizations. Several qualifications are grayed and marked as "No data available". For these qualifications, aggregated data was not readily available, but the qualifications are included to provide a more holistic picture of the qualifications for each occupational group. There is a high availability of most programs across the spectrum, with low availability in a few Bachelor's, Master's, and certification programs.

Table 17 below outlines the qualifications for each BEAD occupational group and the availability of public institutions and organizations in Florida that offer programs to attain those qualifications. The qualifications are divided into three categories:

- **Required:** the qualifications often required to be able to work in that occupational group
- **Typical:** the qualifications that workers in that occupational group typically have, but are not required
- **Helpful:** the qualifications that are helpful for workers to successfully complete and be promoted in their roles

For the educational qualifications, each qualification type is color-coded (see key below) based on the availability of programs offering those qualifications at public institutions and organizations. Several qualifications are grayed and marked as "No data available". For these qualifications, aggregated data was not readily available, but the qualifications are included to provide a more holistic picture of the qualifications for each occupational group. There is a high availability of most programs across the spectrum, with low availability in a few Bachelor's, Master's, and certification programs.

Table 17. Required, Typical, and Helpful Educational Qualifications for BEAD Occupational Groups[125,126,127]

Occupational Group	FTE Needed	Deficit / Supply	Required			Typical			Helpful	
Trenchers	163	-13.8%	High School Degree			Commercial Driver's License	Apprenticeship	On-the-job training	Fiber Optic Certification	
Surveyors and drafters	46	-11.1%	Bachelor's in Geomatics	On-the job training		Certification (ASPRS, GIS, or Drafting)	Engineering and Mathematics coursework	Associate's in Applied Science		
Software engineers	215	-10.6%				Bachelor's in Computer and IT	Bachelor's in Engineering	Bachelor's in Mathematics		
Laborers and material movers	867	-10.0%				On the job training			Commercial Driver's License	
Master & Stage Electricians	101	-9.9%	High School Degree	Apprenticeship	State certification	Technical school	Ongoing on-the-job training		Certification in specific concentration	
Inspectors	32	-8.6%	High School Degree	State certification		Associate's Degree	Commercial Driver's License	On-the-job training	Bachelor's Degree	
Structural engineers	80	-8.0%	Bachelor's in Civil engineering	State licensure		Bachelor's in General engineering	Bachelor's in Mechanical engineering		Professional engineering license	
Radio Frequency & Field engineers	37	-7.9%	Bachelor's in Electrical engineering			Postsecondary education in telecommunication	On-the job training		Master's	Cooperative program
Network architects and coordinators	79	-7.8%	Bachelor's in Computer & IT	Bachelor's in engineering		Certifications in products used (ex: SQL)	Ongoing training		Master's in Business Administration	Master's in Database Management
Equipment operators	155	-7.4%	High School Degree	Commercial Driver's License	Specialized certification for equipment	Apprenticeship	On-the-job training			
Fiber & Wireless technicians	229	-7.4%	Postsecondary education in electronics	Postsecondary education in telecommunication	Postsecondary education in computer networking	On-the-job training			Fiber optic certification	
Trucking crew	525	-6.9%	Commercial Driver's License	High School Degree		On-the-job training				

Note: Availability is based off FloridaShines database of public institutions in Florida

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[125] NTIA State Workforce Research Findings: Florida, NTIA provided draft to Florida in May 2023
[126] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook, https://www.bls.gov/ooh/
[127] FloridaShines: Database of Public Institutions, https://courses.flvc.org/Colleges/Search/#/

Key: Availability of Educational Institutions

HIGH AVAILABILITY	MODERATE AVAILABILITY	LOW AVAILABILITY	NOT APPLICABLE
20+ relevant programs identified across Florida institutions	10-19 relevant program identified across Florida institutions	1-9 relevant programs identified across Florida institutions	Data on program availability is not readily accessible

Furthermore, many of the roles that have the highest shortages relative to supply have either low barriers to entry, no required entry level credentials, or minimal educational requirements (e.g., high school degree). There is an opportunity for Florida to build on its strong educational foundation to tap into the several pools of potential workers to join the broadband workforce. With its high availability of most programs, Florida can build strong talent pipelines to meet demand for its broadband workforce. There are three primary labor pools identified within Florida to gain new entrants into its workforce:

i. New Graduates
ii. Disconnected Youth
iii. Former Offenders

i. New Graduates

From 2017 to 2022, Florida had an annual average of 183,800 high school graduates.[128] Since many of the broadband roles in Table 17 have requirements for high school or bachelor's degrees, new high school graduates in Florida can be a key pipeline for filling these roles. Developing strong connections with school districts and college and career readiness programs to ensure Florida's high school graduates know about these broadband opportunities can help reduce some of the gaps that currently exist.

Additionally, there are approximately 241,900 college graduates annually in Florida, with 18.2% of those graduates earning advanced degrees.[129] Combined with the annual amount of high school graduates, there is an opportunity to build talent pipelines into broadband roles.

One strategy to build these talent pipelines is to embed broadband programming and job opportunities into career fairs at schools. Building awareness of the variety and availability of career options that new graduates have in technology and broadband roles can help increase the number of new graduates entering these fields, reducing the current labor supply shortage.

ii. Disconnected Youth

Another potential source of workers to fill in-demand roles are disconnected youth. Disconnected youth are generally defined as teenagers and young adults aged 16 through 24 who are neither working nor in school; this group is also measured with the age bounds of 16 and 19.[130,131] Florida has nearly 266,000 individuals (approximately 12% of this age group) that are considered disconnected youth.[132] Nearly 73% of Floridians in this group already have a high school diploma, a required qualification

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[128] High School Graduation Cohort: Outcomes, https://knowyourdatafl.org/views/PK12-HighSchoolGraduationCohort/HIGHSCHOOLGRADUATIONCOHORT-BUILDATABLE?%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=n&%3AshowVizHome=n&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y

[129] College Graduation Statistics, https://educationdata.org/number-of-college-graduates

[130] Youth Disconnection, https://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-landing/

[131] FRED Economic Data, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Disconnected Youth: | FRED | St. Louis Fed (stlouisfed.org)

[132] 2023 Florida Business & Economic Mid-Year Report, https://www.flipsnack.com/flchamber/2023-florida-business-economic-mid-year-report.html

criteria for many of Florida's in-demand broadband occupational groups.[133] Table 18 below highlights the ten counties with the highest proportions of the age 16-19 population that are considered disconnected youth, representing a potential pipeline of talent to help fill gaps in supply for broadband roles.

Table 18. Top Ten Counties with Highest Proportion of Disconnected Youth Age 16-19[134, 135]

County	Total Population	Age 16-19 Population	Age 16-19 Disconnected Youth	Disconnected Youth Percentage
Glades	12,454	433	158	*36.5%*
Madison	18,198	790	196	*24.8%*
Columbia	71,908	3,459	852	*24.6%*
Jefferson	15,042	700	164	*23.4%*
Okeechobee	40,412	2,264	509	*22.5%*
Gadsden	43,403	1,953	337	*17.3%*
Union	15,460	699	114	*16.3%*
Calhoun	13,464	507	74	*14.6%*
Putnam	74,731	2,835	413	*14.6%*
Hendry	41,339	2,155	281	*13.0%*

Understanding the location and learning modes (i.e., in-person, online, or blended) of the educational institutions available to this population is key to developing the skills and know-how of this demographic. The Florida Department of Education tracks the counties served through the Florida College System and supports young Floridians across the state.[136] While a deeper exploration of curricula and enrollment in related degree and certification programs related to broadband roles may be needed, connecting these existing institutions with disconnected youth remains an area for consideration.

There is an opportunity to create partnerships among educational institutions, employers, and counties with the highest proportion of disconnected youth to offer more opportunities for this subset of the population to become more involved in the workforce, specifically in key broadband roles with the highest shortages. The disconnected youth population presents a compelling opportunity that matches the workforce needs for successful broadband deployment through BEAD.

iii. Former Offenders

A third source of new workforce entrants within Florida is former offenders. From 2013-2022, an annual average of 29,100 inmates were released from prisons in Florida.[137,138] Both nationally and in Florida, recidivism rates are high. Providing former offenders with educational and certification

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[133] 2023 Florida Business & Economic Mid-Year Report, https://www.flipsnack.com/flchamber/2023-florida-business-economic-mid-year-report.html
[134] 2021, Florida Annual Disconnected Youth, https://fred.stlouisfed.org/release/tables?rid=408&eid=176104
[135] 2021, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables for Florida: SEX BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS FOR THE POPULATION 16 TO 19 YEARS, https://data.census.gov/table?q=B14005:+SEX+BY+SCHOOL+ENROLLMENT+BY+EDUCATIONAL+ATTAINMENT+BY+EMPLOYMENT+STATUS+FOR+THE+POPULATION+16+TO+19+YEARS&g=040XX00US12$0500000&tid=ACSDT5Y2021.B14005
[136] Florida Department of Education, About Us – Our Colleges, https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/colleges.stml
[137] Florida Prison Recidivism Report: Releases from 2008 to 2020, https://fdc.myflorida.com/pub/recidivism/RecidivismReport2022.pdf
[138] Florida Department of Corrections Quarterly Recidivism and Inmate Admissions Reports, https://fdc.myflorida.com/pub/recidivism/index.html

opportunities to get back into the workforce is beneficial for both the individual and Florida's broadband workforce. Former offenders get the chance to re-integrate into the workforce with a stable and consistent salary, while Florida's broadband workforce gap shrinks. Florida could also benefit from potentially less recidivism. Research has shown that having a job can reduce recidivism, and that individuals are less likely to commit crimes when they have stable, full-time employment.[139],[140],[141],[142]

7.1.3 Drawing from Adjacent Industries and Roles Within Florida: Close the Broadband Workforce Shortage

Another strategy to combat predicted workforce shortages for broadband deployment from BEAD funding is to recruit Floridians from adjacent industries and roles to fill these positions. For example, in 2021 FloridaCommerce released a Workforce Needs Study that highlights some of the lower wage, oversupplied roles like maintenance and product demonstration jobs that have transferrable skills into high demand, high wage roles like construction management.[143] Table 19 shows Florida's predicted demand for additional roles from BEAD funding, as well as the current employment numbers for adjacent roles, and the number of adjacent roles.

Table 19. Florida 2026 BEAD Demand and Adjacent Roles[144],[145]

BEAD Occupational Group	2026 BEAD Demand	Adjacent Role Employment	Number of Adjacent Roles
Network Architects and Coordinators	79	538,600	22
Software Engineers	215	171,480	14
Structural Engineers	80	52,360	8
Radio Frequency and Field Engineers	37	90,490	10
Surveyors and Drafters	46	95,670	24
Equipment Operators	155	101,520	4
Master and Stage Electricians	101	81,200	10
Inspectors	32	173,340	10
Fiber and Wireless Technicians	229	64,100	4

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[139] A better path forward for criminal justice: Training and employment for correctional populations, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-better-path-forward-for-criminal-justice-training-and-employment-for-correctional-populations/#:~:text=Having%20a%20job%2C%20however%2C%20has,stable%2C%20full%2Dtime%20employment
[140] Post-release employment and recidivism in Norway, https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2012-29484-004
[141] Work and crime: The effects of labor stratification, https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-00184-004
[142] Ex-offenders and the conformist alternative: A job quality model of work and crime, https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1999-10775-002
[143] Florida Workforce Needs Study, https://www.flchamber.com/floridaworkforceneedsstudy
[144] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, https://www.bls.gov/ooh/
[145] NTIA State Workforce Research Findings: Florida, NTIA provided draft to Florida on May 2023

| Trucking Crew | 525 | 309,810 | 6 |
| Laborers and Material Movers | 867 | 534,820 | 14 |

Note: Adjacent roles determined by referencing the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Handbook, then matching those adjacent roles with current employment to get the adjacent role employment numbers.

Florida can explore opportunities to draw talented workers from adjacent industries into the necessary BEAD roles. Many of the BEAD occupational groups offer:
- more mobile working opportunities as well as above-average salaries, and
- a temporary badging program that can provide temporary certification for workers to start their new roles while they continue further training and mentorship.

7.1.4 Drawing New Entrants from Other States

Aside from existing talent pools in Florida, new entrants to the workforce can come from out of state. Florida has already experienced historic levels of migration over the past few years, with both its population and per capita income increasing.[146] In 2021, Florida led all states with a net migration gain of 27,600 individuals making $200,000 or more.[147] The second highest state, Texas, had 9,000 individuals fitting that criterion. Furthermore, Florida's population grew at the fastest rate of any state from 2021 to 2022, increasing 1.9% to just over 22 million people.[148] There are a variety of potential reasons for this population growth, including:

- **Economic Opportunities:** Florida has a robust labor market, with unemployment rates lower than the national average. Florida's current unemployment rate is approximately 2.7%, while the national unemployment rate is approximately 3.8%.[149]
- **Affordability:** Florida has no personal income tax, and many recent new residents have come from states with higher personal tax rates like New York and California.
- **Weather:** The weather is often cited as one of the main reasons that people move to Florida. With its more favorable climate, the build season for broadband deployment is longer, allowing more opportunities for workers than they may have in other states that experience more cold and wintry extremes.

While Florida should continue to capitalize on these existing strengths, other levers might be considered to attract out-of-state workers. With one of the largest economies in the United States, Florida may consider offering programs to assist members of the broadband workforce that want to relocate to Florida. Providing relocation support and resources may expand the workforce by increasing Florida's already historic in migration numbers. Access to childcare is often cited as one of the top barriers and deterrents to enter the workforce. Exploring opportunities to expand availability of childcare programs, particularly in areas with greatest broadband workforce need, could mitigate this challenge and allow additional individuals to enter the workforce.

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[146] California and New York Saw Exodus of High Earners in the Pandemic, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-07-25/lower-taxes-in-florida-rich-americans-left-new-york-california-during-pandemic
[147] Ibid.
[148] Florida Fastest-Growing State for First Time Since 1957, https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2022/12/florida-fastest-growing-state.html#:~:text=Florida%27s%20population%20increased%20by%201.9,its%201946%20population%20of%202%2C440%2C000.
[149] Florida Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research August 2023 Figures, https://lmsresources.labormarketinfo.com/library/press/release.pdf

7.1.5 Tactics and Additional Considerations

The purpose of this Broadband Workforce Landscape Analysis is to provide a list of the available labor pools that Florida can tap into to close the labor supply gap that is predicted to occur in 2026 for its broadband workforce.

The key takeaways from the analysis are as follows:

- There will likely be a national competition for broadband labor as all fifty states follow similar timelines for broadband deployment from BEAD funding
- Florida currently has predicted shortages for key broadband roles, but is well positioned to build out its workforce
- To attract resident workers to fill broadband roles, the state can consider developing pipelines for recent graduates, disconnected youth, former and soon to be released offenders, as well as workers in adjacent industries
- Florida can also capitalize on existing migration trends by enhancing its workforce attraction activities and benefits

While Florida is predicted to have a labor supply shortage of 2,500 for broadband roles from BEAD funding, it is well positioned to fill this shortage from several workforce areas. Table 20 shows the labor supply shortage, as well as the cumulative number of potential workers in the workforce areas discussed above. This analysis does not include headcount from workers relocating from outside of the state because of the variability of factors for workforce migration. Additional research is needed to understand the skills profile and specific educational credentials of migrants to Florida.

Table 20. Annual Headcount of Workforce Areas Compared to Predicted Role Demand from BEAD Funding

Workforce Area	Annual Headcount		Total BEAD 2026 Demand
New Graduates	425,700		
Disconnected Youth	266,000		2,500
Former Offenders	29,100		
Adjacent Industries	2,213,390		

Table 21 below summarizes workforce attraction recommendations within each of the three workforce areas discussed above, as well as rationales for each recommendation.

Table 21. Recommendations and Rationales for Workforce Areas

Workforce Area	Recommendations	Rationale
Drawing New Entrants into the Workforce	**Partner with school districts and high school, college, and career readiness programs** to market broadband roles and careers through job fairs and technology competitions that can showcase the variety of broadband roles	Create awareness and excitement among high school and college-aged students to expand awareness and form a pipeline to meet current and future workforce needs
	Create regional teams or workforce groups to partner with organizations already working in counties with high proportions of disconnected youth	Build on the existing work and trust that local organizations have already formed

	Offer more hybrid and remote educational and certification opportunities to reach more Floridians	Develop diverse modes of accessing education for workers and disconnected youth in areas that do not have a lot of broadband educational opportunities will enable greater flexibility for learning and create new pathways to the broadband workforce
	Expand training and certification opportunities for soon-to be released offenders in partnership with technical and community colleges and broadband employers	Ensure that former offenders have the tools, resources, and skills to immediately enter and find success in the workforce
Drawing from Adjacent Industries and Roles	**Create partnerships to offer free or reduced certifications** with Florida's vast network of universities, technical schools, and employers	Create less friction for workers in oversupplied or adjacent industries within Florida to receive the credentials and education necessary for a broadband career
	Expand credentialing systems to match supply with demand more efficiently and allow broadband certifications to be valid across the state	Improve mobility of roles so that supply can better meet demand geographically
	Institute badging programs that can quickly provide broadband workers with temporary certifications	Ensure that a trained workforce can meet timing needs from employers for successful broadband deployment
Drawing New Entrants from Other States	**Fund and develop program** for worker relocation to Florida. States and cities around the U.S. have developed programs to target workers to relocate to the area. Incentives include cash payments, access to co-working spaces, community programming, and other perks	Accelerate the current trend of population growth in Florida and ensure Florida is gaining the population it needs to meet broadband job demand
	Build out a platform or website that houses information regarding relocation incentive program, relocation guidance, career site, and availability of jobs	Create awareness and a one-stop-shop for people looking to relocate to Florida

In addition to the proposed recommendations discussed above, there are additional considerations that should be accounted for, including:

- the timing that it will take to upskill the potential new entrants to the workforce and Floridians who are transitioning from oversupplied areas into broadband-focused roles; and
- how these potential solutions work in tandem with other initiatives and policies of the state of Florida, FloridaCommerce, local counties, and local organizations.

It is important to note that Florida has legislation, policies, programs, and studies to inform and help close its overall workforce shortage. While the focus of this analysis was the magnitude of the broadband workforce shortages, the recommendations and tactics discussed align with initiatives currently underway in Florida. Table 22 shows a sampling of some these overall workforce initiatives.

Table 22. Sample of Florida Initiatives to Enhance Workforce

Legislation & Policy	**REACH Act** positions Florida to help people with barriers to education and employment become self-sufficient through enhanced access to good jobs and career pathways that offer economic opportunity. **Future of Work Florida** brings together job creators, industry leaders, and education and workforce partners to showcase the careers of the future and the industries with growth potential. **Apprentice Florida** is a statewide initiative to expand apprenticeships in targeted industries and increase apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for underrepresented populations. **CareerSource Florida** connects employers with qualified, skilled talent and Floridians receive employment and career development opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. A comprehensive list of Florida's Workforce Programs can be found here.
Research & Studies	**2023 Mid-Year Business and Economic Report** analyzes the local and national economic trends impacting the way Florida does business. **Florida Workforce Needs Study** provides a comprehensive look at the skills Floridians need to possess to shift from oversupplied occupations to in-demand occupations with higher wages.

7.2 Appendix B: Questionnaire

Stakeholder Questionnaire – Questionnaire Text:
Thank you for participating in the Florida Broadband Stakeholder Questionnaire. Your responses will be used to help Florida accelerate work to bring access to high-speed Internet to Floridians. This questionnaire does not request or seek to collect any personal identifying information, and we ask that you not provide any in any of the open responses.

1) What organization do you represent?
   Text box response

2) Please provide the name, position, and email address of a contact person for the organization that we can contact with any additional questions.
   Text box response

3) What Florida counties does the organization serve?
   Text box response

4) Which of the following populations (if any) does the organization serve in Florida?
   a. None of the below
   b. Aging individuals (60+)
   c. Individuals with disabilities
   d. Individuals with language barriers
   e. Racial or ethnic minorities
   f. Veterans
   g. Individuals who are incarcerated

     h. Low-income individuals
     i. Individuals living in a rural area
     j. All of the above

5) Which of the following challenges (if any) do populations that the organization serves in Florida face in accessing Internet? Select all that apply.
     a. Internet is too slow
     b. Internet is not available
     c. Internet is too expensive
     d. Internet is unreliable
     e. Limited access to digital devices
     f. Limited digital skills
     g. Limited options to switch to a different Internet Service Provider
     h. The populations the organization serves do not face any challenges
     i. Other (please specify)

6) Florida defines community anchor institutions as industrial, commercial and office park worksites, schools, libraries, medical and health care points of access, housing providers, public safety entities, institutes of higher education, and other community support organizations that provide outreach, access, equipment, and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband Internet service by the entire population and local governments.

Entities that meet the definition of a community anchor institution may receive funding for deploying and/or upgrading broadband network facilities. Does your organization have any feedback on Florida's definition of community anchor institutions?
Text box response

7) What benefits would you expect to see if the people your organization serves in Florida had better access to Internet and digital devices? Select all that apply.
     a. Participation in the digital economy
     b. Access telemedicine
     c. Access to online banking or financial services
     d. Access government services
     e. Access to courses/trainings to improve job skills
     f. Communicate with family and friends
     g. Other (please specify)

8) To the best of your knowledge, what are the reasons people your organization serves in Florida do not have an Internet connection at home? Select all that apply.
     a. They can't afford the Internet subscription cost
     b. They don't know how to connect to the Internet
     c. They don't have sufficient digital literacy skills
     d. They don't want to subscribe to the Internet because its slow at their home
     e. They don't think the Internet is worth the subscription cost
     f. They can't subscribe because their home is not served by any Internet Service Provider
     g. They have online privacy or cybersecurity concerns
     h. They don't want digital devices (e.g., computers) that connect to the Internet
     i. They can't afford digital devices that connect to the Internet
     j. They have other means of accessing the Internet (e.g., at the library)
     k. Other (please specify)

9) Please list or provide a link to the plans/programs your organization offers in Florida that are focused on increasing access to the Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills (e.g., local plans, digital literacy trainings, computer labs, outreach to drive Affordable Connectivity Program [ACP] Enrollment, loaning or donating digital devices to organizations or individuals). Please also include the approximate number of Floridians served annually by each of your programs.
Text box response

   a. Sharing best practices
   b. Device donations
   c. Forums to connect with other organizations on similar goals
   d. Grant funding
   e. Technical support
   f. Other (please specify)

10) Please provide any additional feedback on any of your responses or provide additional ideas to help increase access to Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills in Florida.
Text box response

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. Please contact Broadband@deo.myflorida.com *with any questions.*

ISP Questionnaire – Questionnaire Text:
Thank you for participating in the Florida Broadband Stakeholder Questionnaire for Internet Service Providers. Your responses will be used to help Florida accelerate work to bring access to high-speed Internet to all Floridians. This questionnaire does not request or seek to collect any personal identifying or confidential information, nor does it request or seek to collect any proprietary data or documentation. We ask that you not provide any in any of the open responses.

1) What Internet Service Provider (ISP) do you represent?
Text box response

2) Please provide the name, position, and email address for an ISP staff member or representative that we can contact with any additional questions.
Text box response

3) Does your ISP understand where expanded service opportunities exist should appropriate broadband infrastructure be expanded to serve currently unserved locations?
Text box response

4) What are the biggest challenges faced by the ISP you represent when trying to expand its broadband infrastructure in Florida? Select all that apply.
   a. Burdensome costs or processes for access to poles
   b. Supply chain constraints (e.g., timeline or cost of fiber or other materials)
   c. Financial constraints – business case is negative due to expected low uptake from residents because of low-income levels
   d. Financial constraints – business case is negative due to expected low uptake from residents because of low density of subscribers
   e. Financial constraints – business case is negative due to expected low uptake from residents because of competition from other ISPs
   f. Financial constraints – access to capital

g.   Costs for existing middle-mile options are too high
h.   Lack of middle-mile options that are near residents
i.   Burdensome process and/or costs to obtain permits, rights of way, or easements
j.   Unable to access conduit (costs or availability)
k.   Labor shortages
l.   Other regulatory challenges (please specify)
m. Other (please specify)

5) Has the ISP you represent faced challenges in hiring staff for broadband deployment in Florida?
   a.   Yes – *routes to question 6*
   b.   No – *routes to question 7*

6) Please list the specific positions and the biggest obstacle in hiring for each position.
   Text box response

7) Does the ISP you represent offer training for staff involved in broadband deployment in Florida? If so, please describe.
   Text box response

8) Does the ISP you represent offer (or plan to create) an income-restricted or low-cost offering for customers in Florida?
   a.   Yes – *routes to question 9*
   b.   No – *routes to question 10*

9) Please provide details on that offering (e.g., service type, monthly cost, speeds, eligibility).
   Text box response

10) The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) developed the FCC National Broadband Map to show the availability of broadband in Florida ([available here](#)). What feedback, if any, does the ISP you represent have on the accuracy of Florida's map?
   Text box response

11) If the ISP you represent has participated in broadband grants in the past, what practices or processes worked well for the entities involved?
   Text box response

12) If the ISP you represent has engaged in an FCC fabric or availability challenge process, or a Florida Broadband grant application challenge process, what practices or processes worked well for the entities involved?
   Text box response

13) Please list or provide a link to the programs the ISP you represent offers in Florida that are focused on increasing access to Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills (e.g., digital literacy trainings, computer labs, outreach to drive Affordable Connectivity Program [ACP] enrollment, loaning or donating digital devices to organizations or individuals). Please also include the approximate number of Floridians served annually by each of your programs.
   Text box response

14) What are the main types of support the ISP you represent needs from the Florida Office of Broadband or other state entities to continue increasing access to Internet, Internet-capable devices, and digital skills? Select all that apply.
    a. Supply chain resilience initiatives for broadband deployment
    b. Technical assistance
    c. Increased funding/grants for broadband deployment
    d. Expanded access to middle-mile infrastructure
    e. Expanded access to middle-mile infrastructure at competitive rates
    f. Ensuring skilled workforce for broadband roles
    g. Other (please specify)

15) Please provide any additional feedback from the ISP you represent about its responses or provide additional ideas to help increase access to Internet, Internet capable devices, and digital skills in Florida.
    Text box response

7.3 Appendix C: Unserved, Underserved, and Served Locations

County Name	Unserved Locations	Underserved Locations	Served Locations	Total Locations
Alachua	9,849	4,352	68,123	82,324
Baker	1,983	618	7,153	9,754
Bay	2,704	379	79,509	82,592
Bradford	4,485	1,732	5,149	11,366
Brevard	850	629	239,341	240,820
Broward	1,297	6,499	451,547	459,343
Calhoun	3,511	989	2,028	6,528
Charlotte	4,445	3,196	90,134	97,775
Citrus	6,709	803	75,602	83,114
Clay	4,205	3,237	71,644	79,086
Collier	1,904	682	138,089	140,675
Columbia	7,963	2,563	17,704	28,230
DeSoto	727	8,513	5,985	15,225
Dixie	7,079	1,470	213	8,762
Duval	634	316	328,723	329,673
Escambia	2,635	572	118,924	122,131
Flagler	733	445	49,905	51,083
Franklin	645	196	8,137	8,978
Gadsden	2,857	3,078	13,634	19,569
Gilchrist	4,955	1,635	1,191	7,781
Glades	2,555	1,589	3,580	7,724
Gulf	1,661	813	7,333	9,807
Hamilton	2,791	1,209	2,088	6,088
Hardee	4	3,638	6,821	10,463
Hendry	4,190	1,296	10,732	16,218
Hernando	1,448	581	85,608	87,637
Highlands	1,155	7,205	46,507	54,867

County Name	Unserved Locations	Underserved Locations	Served Locations	Total Locations
Hillsborough	495	3,333	449,482	453,310
Holmes	6,745	597	1,770	9,112
Indian River	1,322	831	69,258	71,411
Jackson	9,828	1,334	10,713	21,875
Jefferson	5,422	1,379	309	7,110
Lafayette	1,739	746	983	3,468
Lake	12,962	6,995	141,192	161,149
Lee	11,462	6,495	296,587	314,544
Leon	3,864	1,155	90,046	95,065
Levy	14,670	3,301	4,363	22,334
Liberty	1,836	371	1,182	3,389
Madison	5,124	610	3,140	8,874
Manatee	628	430	158,364	159,422
Marion	18,375	11,659	139,779	169,813
Martin	1,228	593	61,164	62,985
Miami-Dade	2,558	2,668	529,722	534,948
Monroe	296	123	42,895	43,314
Nassau	2,741	1,246	34,517	38,504
Okaloosa	4,521	1,554	74,652	80,727
Okeechobee	3,178	1,583	13,870	18,631
Orange	2,328	1,622	384,631	388,581
Osceola	3,129	805	130,138	134,072
Palm Beach	2,158	1,839	431,134	435,131
Pasco	3,250	1,952	235,843	241,045
Pinellas	12	108	339,461	339,581
Polk	9,565	5,275	275,696	290,536
Putnam	8,521	3,907	25,877	38,305
St. Johns	2,118	1,329	102,632	106,079
St. Lucie	1,809	1,445	127,183	130,437
Santa Rosa	5,605	1,624	65,643	72,872
Sarasota	1,101	1,657	193,866	196,624
Seminole	976	715	147,556	149,247
Sumter	5,325	1,951	70,452	77,728
Suwannee	8,355	3,944	6,891	19,190
Taylor	3,803	913	6,063	10,779
Union	1,803	1,133	2,067	5,003
Volusia	4,877	1,411	218,937	225,225
Wakulla	3,008	591	10,993	14,592
Walton	2,646	233	42,369	45,248
Washington	3,842	335	7,529	11,706
TOTAL	267,199	138,027	6,884,353	7,289,579

7.4   Appendix D: Public Library Resources

The appendix below lists available digital adoption and use resources in Florida public libraries but may not include all public libraries or resources.

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
Alachua County Library District	Computer Lab and Device Loaner Program	Offers a computer lab for public use, provides free Wi-Fi throughout the library, and implemented a hotspot loaner program.	All; low-income	https://www.aclib.us/wifi2go https://www.aclib.us/computers
Apalachicola Margaret Key Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers four computers and four laptops for public use. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building and parking lot.	All; low-income	https://www.apalachicolalibrary.com/
Bay County Library	Adult Digital Literacy Courses, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers digital literacy courses to teach how to use smart devices. Offers a computer lab for public use, and provides free Wi-Fi throughout the library.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.nwrls.com/wireless/ https://www.nwrls.com/computers/ https://www.nwrls.com/computer-classes/
Boca Raton Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.myboca.us/1041/Computer-Use
Boynton Beach City Library	Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.boynton-beach.org/library/library-policies
Brevard County Library System	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.brevardfl.gov/PublicLibraries

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
Broward County Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.broward.org/Library/Services/Pages/GearToGo.aspx
Burton Memorial Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.plantcitygov.com/library/page/computers-and-technology
Charlotte County Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://charlottefl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/libraries/?rm=COMPUTERS0%7C%7C%7C1%7C%7C%7C0%7C%7C%7Ctrue
Citrus County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.citruslibraries.org/services-resources/computers-wifi/
City of Fort Walton Beach Library	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.fwb.org/parksrec/page/library
Clay County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.claycountygov.com/community/library/computers-and-internet

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Public Wi-Fi Access			
Crestview - Robert L.F. Sikes Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.cityof crestview.org/186/Classes-Clubs-and-Services
Cybrarium (Homestead)	Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://cybrarium.org/technology/
Delray Beach Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://www.delray library.org/classes-category/technology/
Destin Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses and computers for free public use.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.cityof destin.com/172/Available-Computer-Resources
Dixie County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	http://3riverslibrary.com/docs/pac-policy.html
Dundee Public Library	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use.	All; low-income	https://townofdundee .com/departments/cultural-affairs/libraries/
Dunedin Public Library	Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.dunedingov.com/city-departments/library/technology
Eagle Lake Public Library	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use.	All; low-income	https://www.eaglelakefl.gov/library
Emily Taber Public Library	Computer Lab	Offers a computer lab for public use.	All; low-income	https://www.newriver library.org/etpl/etpl-using-the-library/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
Flagler Beach City Library	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.cityofflagler beach.com/125/Library
Glades County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://myhlc.org/internet-policy-disclaimer/
Gulf Beaches Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, adult digital literacy courses, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://gulfbeaches library.org/help/
Gulf County Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, adult digital literacy courses, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.nwrls.com/
Hardee County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://myhlc.org/internet-policy-disclaimer/
Heartland Library Cooperative	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://myhlc.org/internet-policy-disclaimer/
Helen Lehmann Memorial Library (Montverde)	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://www.mylakelibrary.org/services/training_programs.aspx
Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://hcplc.org/events

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
Jacksonville Public Libraries	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/services
Jefferson County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building and parking lot.	All; low-income	https://jcpl.wilderness coast.org/technology-internet
Lake Alfred Library	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.mylakealfred.com/193/Public-Library
Lake County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://www.mylakelibrary.org/services/training_programs.aspx
Lake Worth Beach City Library	Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://lakeworth beachfl.gov/lake-worth-beach-city-library/
Lakeland Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://www.lakeland gov.net/departments/library/programs-classes/
Lantana Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.lantanalibrary.org/public-computing-wifi/
Leon County Public Library	Computer Lab, Device Loaner	Offers computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free	All; low-income	https://cms.leoncountyfl.gov/Library/Library-Services/Computers-and-Internet#26850459-laptops

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.		
Maitland Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.maitland publiclibrary.org/internet-use/
Manatee County Public Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://manateelibrary. libcal.com/calendar/events ?cid=14834&t=g&d=0000-00-00&cal=14834&inc=0
Marion County Public Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://library.marionfl.org/ programs-events/programs-and-events/programs-and-events-calendar
Martin County Library	Device Loaner Program	Implemented a hotspot and device loaner program.	All; low-income	https://www.martin.fl.us/ take-home-tech
Martin County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.martin.fl.us/take-home-tech
Miami-Dade Public Library System	Mobile Device Lending Program	Gives access for Miami-Dade residents to borrow tablets, Wi-Fi hotspots, and Chromebooks for up to 30 days free with a library card.	All; low-income	https://mdpls.org/ mobile-device
Miami-Dade Public Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs,	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for	All; low-income; aging populations	https://mdpls.org/mobile-device

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	free public use, laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building and parking lots.		
Monroe County Public Libraries	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://keyslibraries.org/public-access-computers-and-wi-fi/
Mulberry Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building and parking lot.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://mulberrylibrary.com/services/free-wi-fi/ https://mulberrylibrary.com/adult-services/
Nassau County Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://nassaureads.com/services/ https://nassaureads.com/library-policies/
New Port Richey Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.nprlibrary.org/cln%7b000001%7dfaqs.html
Niceville Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://cityofniceville.org/192/Adult-Services
North Miami Library	Computer Lab and	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is	All; low-income	https://www.northmiamifl.gov/207/Library

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Public Wi-Fi Access	available throughout the library building.		
Northwest Regional Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.nwrls.com/computer-classes/ https://www.nwrls.com/computers/
Oakland Park Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://oaklandparkfl.gov/213/Public-Computer-Use
Okeechobee County Library	Device Loaner Program	Implemented a hotspot loaner program.	All; low-income	https://myhlc.org/2020/06/29/take-home-free-wi-fi-from-the-okeechobee-library-llevate-a-casa-wi-fi-gratis-de-la-libreria-de-okeechobee/
Okeechobee County Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.co.okeechobee.fl.us/departments/community-services/library
Oldsmar Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	http://www.oldsmarlibrary.org
Orange County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://ocls.info/learning-research
Osceola Library System	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available	All; low-income	https://www.osceolalibrary.org/printing-wifi-computers/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
		throughout the library building.		
Palm Beach County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	http://www.pbclibrary.org/services
Pasco County Libraries	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://pascolibraries.org/services/technology/
Pinellas Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.pinellas-park.com/1471/Computer-Use-and-Wireless-Policy https://www.pinellas-park.com/calendar.aspx?CID=22&Keywords=&startDate=&enddate=&
Polk City Library	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use	All; low-income	https://mypolkcity.org/departments/administration/library/
Riviera Beach Public Library	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use	All; low-income	https://www.rivierabch.com/government/library/about
Robert L.F. Sikes Public Library - Crestview	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.cityofcrestview.org/204/Library-Policies
Safety Harbor Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://events.safetyharborlibrary.org/events/upcoming?age_groups%5B46%5D=46&age_groups%5B97%5D=97&age_groups%5B98%5D=98 https://cityofsafetyharbor.com/876/Wi-Fi-Hotspot-Policy https://cityofsafetyharbor.com/868/Computer-Use-Wireless-Internet-Policy
Sanibel Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy	Offers adult digital literacy courses,	All; low-income;	https://sanlib.org/services/technology/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building and parking lot.	aging populations	
Santa Rosa County Library System	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.santarosa.fl. gov/600/Policy-6-Computer-Use-Guidelines
Sarasota County Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Computer Lab, Device Loaner Program, and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers adult digital literacy courses, computers for free public use, Wi-Fi hotspot loaners, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.scgov.net/ government/libraries/services -and-policies https://scgovlibrary.library market.com/events/month
Seminole Community Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.myseminole.com /website/library-computer-use.html#gsc.tab=0
Seminole County Public Library System	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.seminolecountyfl. gov/departments-services/leisure-services/seminole-county-library/library-information/policies/computer-use.stml https://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/ departments-services/leisure-services/seminole-county-library/library-information/
St. John County Public Library System	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://sjcpls.org/about/ policiesplans/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
St. Lucie County Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.stlucieco.gov/ departments-and-services/library/faq-s
St. Pete Beach Public Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs	Offers adult digital literacy courses.	All; aging populations	https://www.spblibrary.com/ calendar.aspx?CID=25,26
St. Petersburg Library System	Public Wi-Fi Access and Device Loaner Program	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners.	All; low-income	http://splibraries.org/ wireless_info.html https://splibraries.libguides. com/hotspots
Sumter County Library System	Computer Lab and Device Loaner Program	Offers computers for free public use and Wi-Fi hotspot loaners.	All; low-income	https://sumter.librarycatalog.info/ polaris/library/userdef/services-policy.aspx
Suwannee River Regional Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://suw.ent.sirsi.net/ client/en_US/default/?rm= SERVICES0%7C%7C%7C1% 7C%7C%7C0%7C%7C%7Ctrue
Tarpon Springs Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://tarponlibrary.org/services/
Three Rivers Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use, and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	http://3riverslibrary.com/
Three Rivers Library	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	http://3riverslibrary.com/
Union County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.newriverlibrary. org/ucpl/about-ucpl/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
Valparaiso Community Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.valp.org/library/page/library-services
Valparaiso Community Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.valp.org/library/page/library-services
Volusia County Public Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.volusialibrary.org/VCPLpolicies.html
Wakulla County Public Library	Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers free Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://wcpl.wildernesscoast.org/services
Walton County Public Library System	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use	All; low-income	https://waltonlibraries.com/library-information/
Washington County Public Library	Computer Lab	Offers computers for free public use	All; low-income	https://www.wcplfl.com/policies/
West Florida Public Libraries	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://mywfpl.com/technology#computers
Wilton Manors Library	Computer Lab and Public Wi-Fi Access	Offers computers for free public use and free Wi-Fi is available throughout the library building.	All; low-income	https://www.wiltonmanors.gov/168/Library
Winter Haven Library	Adult Digital Literacy Programs and	Offers adult digital literacy courses and computers for free public use.	All; low-income; aging populations	https://www.mywinterhaven.com/library/services/seedlab/

Organization Name	Asset Name	Description	Covered Population	Link/Additional Information
	Computer Lab			