



State of New Mexico
Report on Broadband Knowledge
and Digital Equity
Analysis and Plan

Pursuant to Section 5 of the Connect New Mexico Act

August 4, 2023



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1. Introduction

This State of New Mexico Report on Broadband Knowledge and Digital Equity Analysis and Plan (BKDEAP Report) has been prepared by the Connect New Mexico Council in collaboration with the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE), pursuant to Section 5 of the Connect New Mexico Act (NMSA 1978, 63-9K-5(B)).¹

The BKDEAP Report documents the extensive broadband and digital equity consultation, analysis, and planning underway and performed on the Council's behalf in 2022 and 2023 by OBAE and members of the Council and Working Groups.

Guided by the legislation, OBAE began collecting data and consulting with local governments, Tribal Nations, public educational institutions, State agencies, and community stakeholders to gather input and insights to develop a digital equity plan to address the three key topics identified in the Connect New Mexico Act:²

1. **Challenges:** The challenges to digital inclusion that are posed by the lack of affordable quality service, broadband-enabled devices, or the knowledge of how to use the devices effectively in different age, cultural or geographic populations across the State;
2. **Funding:** The federal and private sector programs that could be applied to by State agencies or local or Tribal governments to address the challenges identified above; and
3. **Programs:** Existing State programs or State programs that could be established that address or could leverage federal and private sector programs to address the challenges identified.

¹ HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

HB 10 - The Connect New Mexico Act (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978) created the Connect New Mexico Council: (63-9K-3) and created the Connect New Mexico Fund: (63-9K-6). A separate bill, Senate Bill 93 - the Broadband Access and Expansion Act: (63-9J-1 to 63-9J-4 NMSA 1978) created the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (63-9J-3). The act that created the Council was the Connect New Mexico Act; and the act that created OBAE is the Broadband Access and Expansion Act.

HB 262 amended the Connect New Mexico Act to make the Council advisory to OBAE and transferred the duties of implementing the grant program (under the Connect NM Fund) from the Council to OBAE.

² HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

2. Digital equity in New Mexico: definition and focus

Increasingly, all New Mexicans require a broadband internet connection to live, work, and interact. Yet numerous individuals, many of whom are members of marginalized and underserved communities, lack the connection, devices, skills, and support needed to take advantage of the opportunities made available using digital technologies and online resources. It has also become clear that access alone is insufficient for effective use of broadband. Expanding access to reliable high-speed internet is the necessary first step for accessing those opportunities, but access alone is not enough. In addition, individuals and communities need to have the full capacity, including affordability and the tools, knowledge, and skills, to ensure they can fully participate in the educational system, the economy, and their local, social, and cultural networks. This capacity is referred to as “digital equity.”

The New Mexico State Legislature defined Digital Equity in House Bill 10 as: “information technology needed for civic and cultural participation, employment, business and economic development, life-long learning and access to essential services generally available to residents regardless of their racial grouping, socioeconomic status or cultural identity.”

Digital Equity means everyone has an equal opportunity and access to the educational, economic, employment, and health benefits that the internet affords. The New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update³ identifies several preconditions for Digital Equity that are “necessary for individuals to make meaningful use of the internet” including:

1. Access to affordable service
2. Ownership of a sufficient and appropriate device
3. Working knowledge of how to use the Internet (also known as “digital literacy”)
4. Basic understanding of online privacy and security issues

Section 5(A)(1) of the Connect New Mexico Act⁴ directs the Connect New Mexico Council to address these preconditions and to “consult local and tribal governments, public educational institutions and State agencies to develop a digital equity analysis and plan to address the challenges to digital inclusion that are posed by the lack of affordable quality service, broadband enabled devices, and the knowledge of how to use the devices effectively...”

³ State of New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, January 1, 2023, <https://www.doit.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/01/State-of-New-Mexico-Three-Year-Broadband-Plan-1-1-23-Version-1.0-File-011723.pdf>.

⁴ HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation, <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

As OBAE proceeds with ongoing community engagement and data collection, these pre-conditions provide a valuable framework and baseline for tracking broadband adoption and use and are being used to develop measurable objectives and long-term metrics that will be outlined in the forthcoming State Digital Equity Plan that is due for submission to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on November 30, 2023, and currently being developed by OBAE with funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce through NTIA, thanks to the U.S. Digital Equity Act.⁵

3. U.S. Digital Equity Act

The U.S. Digital Equity Act of 2021⁶ was created to achieve digital equity by promoting a diverse array of digital inclusion projects at the state and local level, such as making access and devices affordable or providing the training and support needed for the meaningful use of technology.

Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA),⁷ the U.S. Digital Equity Act authorizes three initiatives that provide funding for planning and implementation programs that support digital inclusion activities and advance digital equity for all. Designed to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed internet to meet their needs and improve the lives of residents, these three federal programs include two state formula grants and one competitive grant administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce, through NTIA:

- **Digital Equity State Planning Program:** released in provided initial funding for states, territories, and tribal governments to develop a State Digital Equity Plan.
- **Digital Equity State Capacity Program:** provides support for initial implementation of the State Digital Equity Plan by providing some funding for states, territories, and tribal governments to design and coordinate an annual grant program for five years in support of digital equity projects.
- **Digital Equity Competitive Program:** A \$1.25 billion competitive grant program. It will fund annual grant programs for five years to implement digital equity projects. Several types of entities can apply for these funds including local non-profits.

⁵ Digital Equity Act of 2021, US Legislation, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/community-resilience-estimates/partnerships/ntia/digital-equity.html>.

⁶ Digital Equity Act 2021, US Legislation, <https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ58/PLAW-117publ58.pdf#page=781>.

⁷Bipartisan Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA), US Legislation, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/08/02/updated-fact-sheet-bipartisan-infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/>.

4. State Digital Equity Plan

In December 2022, New Mexico was awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce through the NTIA Digital Equity State Planning Program to develop the State Digital Equity Plan. OBAE is preparing the State Digital Equity Plan for submission to NTIA on November 30, 2023, as required for the state to be eligible for funding from the NTIA Digital Equity State Capacity Program.

Simultaneously, the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD), is a parallel yet complimentary grant program that will provide funding for infrastructure to expand the Internet access for unserved and underserved households and provide the Internet access necessary to support Digital Equity goals.

As required by NTIA, considerable data collection, stakeholder engagement, and tribal engagement, including formal tribal consultation, is underway to support the development of both the State Digital Equity Plan and BEAD 5-year Action Plan. The first draft of the State Digital Equity Plan will be published for public comment in the fall of 2023 and submitted to NTIA by November 30, 2023.

Table 1: Key Dates for OBAE Broadband & Digital Equity Proposals, Awards, Reports, and Plan Submittals

DATE	DOCUMENT	SUBMIT TO
December 1, 2022	Digital Equity State Planning Grant Award Announcement	NTIA
December 1, 2022	BEAD Planning Grant Award Announcement	NTIA
January 31, 2023	New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update	State of NM
March 1, 2023	BEAD Planning Grant 90-Day Initial Report	NTIA
April 30, 2023	Digital Equity Planning Grant Semi-Annual Report	NTIA
June 30, 2023	New Mexico BEAD Allocation Announcement	NTIA
July 30, 2023	BEAD Planning Grant Semi-Annual Report	NTIA
August 1, 2023	New Mexico Broadband Knowledge and Digital Equity Analysis and Plan Report	State of NM



August 28, 2023	BEAD 5-year Action Plan	NTIA
October 1, 2023	New Mexico Broadband Access, Equity and Data Collection report	State of NM
November 30, 2023	State Digital Equity Plan	NTIA
December 27, 2023	BEAD Initial Proposal	NTIA
January 1, 2024	State of New Mexico Three Year Broadband Plan Update	State of NM

Determining measurable objectives

NTIA requires that the state of New Mexico identify local challenges to digital equity and set specific measurable objectives informed by the primary barriers and needs revealed through the extensive stakeholder engagement and data collection efforts that are currently underway. These goals and objectives will inform future funding allocations and provide a framework for monitoring progress, ensuring accountability, and continuously improving digital inclusion initiatives across the State. Digital equity measurable objectives and the strategies to achieve those objectives are still in development as the initial series of stakeholder engagements, data collection, and tribal consultations continue through the summer and fall of 2023. Key measurable objectives will be outlined in the State Digital Equity Plan due November 30, 2023, and will include measurable objectives to address the following among each of the covered populations as required by NTIA:⁸

1. Availability and Affordability
2. Online Accessibility and Inclusivity
3. Digital Literacy
4. Online Privacy and Cybersecurity
5. Device Availability and Affordability

The OBAE team, members of the Connect New Mexico Council and working groups, and a wide range of local community stakeholders will determine, review, and refine measurable objectives for the State Digital Equity Plan, which will be submitted for public review in the fall of 2023.

⁸ "Internet for All: Digital Equity Plan Guidance," U.S. Department of Commerce, NTIA, https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/Digital_Equity_Plan_Guidance.pdf

5. Office of Broadband Access & Expansion (OBAE)

To better coordinate broadband deployment efforts among different entities in the state of New Mexico, key Legislation was passed in 2021. The Broadband Access, and Expansion Act (OBAE Act), 63-9J NMSA 1978, established the Office of Broadband Access & Expansion. The Connect New Mexico Act, NMSA 1978, 63-9K, established the Connect New Mexico Council.

Kelly Schlegel was appointed Director of OBAE in July 2022. Over the past 12 months, Director Schlegel has worked diligently to develop the OBAE office, build a team, and coordinate efforts statewide to support accessible, reliable, affordable, and equitable Internet for all New Mexicans. On a mission to provide “passionate leadership to drive bold, equitable, and inclusive broadband solutions,” OBAE committed to the vision to: “achieve enterprising, affordable broadband solutions for New Mexicans that honor the state’s rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.” Seven values define OBAE’s people, processes, planning, and programs including: “courageous, honest, curious, innovative, respectful, collaborative, and analytically rigorous.”



Ramping up over the last 12 months, OBAE is building the team. In addition to the Director, Operations Manager, and multiple Project Managers, OBAE has also hired three more Project Managers, a Grants Manager, a Compliance Manager, General Counsel, a Geographic Information Officer, an Executive Assistant to the Director, and a Public Information Officer. OBAE is in the process of hiring a Tribal Liaison, a Digital Equity Manager, and will be posting additional positions, as well. OBAE also oversees a team of consultants and partner organizations that support broadband and digital equity efforts, including a Tribal Engagement consultant. OBAE has also coordinated integration and management of a broadband team of 5 to oversee

the Broadband Development Connectivity Program (BDCP) and development of the Statewide Education Network (SEN) that was initiated under the Public Schools Facilities Administration (PSFA).

6. Connect New Mexico Council & working groups

The Connect New Mexico Council was established by the legislature through the Connect New Mexico Act, NMSA 1978, 63. The Connect New Mexico Council has 15 appointed members and currently meets monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 1:30pm MT. OBAE works closely with the Department of Information and Technology (DoIT) to support the Connect New Mexico Council and six working groups that meet regularly including:

- **Digital Equity & Inclusion working group**
Chair Eli Guinee and Co-Chair Catherine Nicolaou
Meets every other Thursday 11 am -12 noon MT
- **Mapping, Data & Evaluation working group**
Chair Peter Mantos and Acting Chair Natalie Runyan
Meets every other Tuesday 1:30 pm --2:30 pm MT
- **Regional Planning & Community Engagement working group**
Chair Katherine Crociata and Acting Chair Jerry Smith
Meets every other Wednesday 11 am - 12 noon MT
- **Tribal working group**
Chair Godfrey Enjady and Administrative Support Stephine Poston
Meets every other Wednesday 12 noon - 1pm MT
- **PROP working group: Permits, Right of Way, Pole Attachments**
Chair: Ovidiu Viorica
Meets every other Tuesday 10 am - 11am MT
- **Connect New Mexico Grant Program and Rule Making working group**
Chair Kimball Sekaquaptewa and Lead Vanessa Willock
Meets every Monday 4 pm - 5 pm MT

7. Connect New Mexico initiative

In 2022, OBAE branded Connect New Mexico with a logo, color palette, fonts, and style guide and launched a Map Challenge campaign. OBAE began development of the Connect New Mexico website, <https://connect.nm.gov>, which has more than 130 public and private pages. The website provides access to broadband information in both English and Spanish and is used to promote and coordinate events and opportunities. To date, more than 14,500 unique visitors have accessed information and engaged with OBAE online through the website. OBAE also launched a social media page at <https://www.facebook.com/NMOBAE>.

OBAE also regularly distributes both a general Connect New Mexico newsletter and a Tribal Broadband newsletter. On February 15, 2023, OBAE hosted Broadband Day at the Legislature to kick-off a robust series of stakeholder engagements and data collection activities known as the Connect New Mexico Spring Sprint. Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham opened the day with an announcement of her formal Proclamation of March as Connect New Mexico Month.

8. The FCC Map Challenge

In June 2022, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) updated its mapping system to show where high-speed service is-and is not-available across the U.S. Aware that the initial draft of the FCC map, known as the “FCC Fabric,” was incomplete and inaccurate, the FCC invited the public to dispute the map by challenging information believed to be inaccurate. Challenging inaccuracies within the FCC map has been especially important for New Mexico, where gaps in service, speed, availability, and data have been particularly large. Initial review by OBAE, DoIT, and their support team including GIS specialists from the University of New Mexico Earth Data Analysis Center (EDAC), revealed significant inaccuracies with some areas overestimating coverage at an estimated overreport rate of 18.27%. In other cases, internet access may be reported as available for areas, yet the actual technology isn’t accurately reported for that area or locations are missing or misrepresented.



Since correction of the FCC map is critical to proper infrastructure planning and prioritization and directly impacts federal funding allocations and eligibility, OBAE launched a Map Challenge Campaign to educate and support households and communities in New Mexico to effectively challenge the FCC map. This was essential to receiving the fullest possible financial impact and narrowing the digital divide for the most unserved and underserved community members, since

it was estimated that each time a map challenge was successfully submitted, New Mexico could receive more than \$4,700 in additional funding for broadband expansion projects.

In September 2022, OBAE hosted a Broadband FCC Map Challenge Coordination Meeting in Albuquerque and followed with one GIS data and mapping webinar and two Map Challenge working sessions to assist local tribes and governing agencies in securing free licenses to access the fabric and to support them in learning how to submit bulk challenges for their community. OBAE also co-hosted an industry focus group and mapping workshop in spring 2023 and featured a session on data and mapping at the statewide summit in May 2023.

In the late fall of 2022, OBAE developed and launched a public Map Challenge campaign to educate, encourage, and assist individual residents in submitting a Location Challenge, Availability Challenge, and/or a Mobile Challenge.

- **Location Challenge:** When clicking on a point on the FCC map, location information will appear on the right, including: the address, the business or residential status of the location (or both), and the number of separate units associated with that location. Community members are encouraged to submit a Location Challenge if they believe that any of the location information is incorrect or missing.
- **Availability Challenge:** According to the FCC, Service is “available” at a location if an Internet Service Provider (ISP) has, or previously had, an Internet service connection to the location, or if the ISP could initiate service through a routine installation within 10 business days of a request with no extraordinary monetary charges or delays attributable to the extension of the provider’s network. Community members are encouraged to submit an Availability Challenge if they believe the services listed by an ISP for their location on the FCC map are not available or contain inaccurate information.
- **Mobile Challenge:** The FCC map also reflects where subscribers should be able to receive 3G, 4G, and 5G mobile connectivity when outdoors or in a moving vehicle but does not display indoor mobile coverage. Community members are encouraged to submit a Mobile Challenge if they believe that any of the information submitted by a mobile provider doesn’t match the experience at a location and are willing to dispute that information by taking an outdoor or in-vehicle speed test on a mobile device using the FCC Speed Test App.

The Map Challenge campaign included development of website landing pages for the Map Challenge, an online form to request department assistance, and a Map Challenge Media Toolkit

including social media posts, ads, public service announcements, press releases, and mailers. OBAE also coordinated a targeted direct mail campaign to promote map challenges to 295,635 households in unserved areas and with underserved constituents.

On behalf of the state, the OBAE team submitted a total of 246,692 availability and location challenges of which 174,499 were successful and accepted by NTIA (“accepted” meaning they ultimately were decided in favor of New Mexico, or the internet service provider conceded). The number of OBAE challenges reported here as submitted and accepted only reflect the challenges that OBAE submitted directly and do not include challenges submitted by individual municipalities, counties, and tribes directly, nor challenges submitted by individual residents directly.

9. Challenges to digital inclusion in New Mexico

The following section reviews the federal baseline data and initial assessment of the extent to which New Mexican residents are adopting and meaningfully using the Internet as noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update,⁹ This review also serves as an initial framework and baseline for tracking broadband adoption and use in the future. A robust and precise set of metrics will be designed based on input from the extensive community engagement and data collection process currently underway as the State Digital Equity Plan is developed and designed, as noted in Section 5(A)(1) of the Connect New Mexico Act, “to address the challenges to digital inclusion that are posed by the lack of:

1. affordable quality service
2. broadband-enabled devices or
3. the knowledge of how to use the devices effectively”¹⁰

“Access to high speed internet is crucial in the 21st Century, yet it only benefits those who can afford it and have the knowledge of how to use it.” [Mamacitas Cibernéticas](#)

⁹ State of New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, January 1, 2023, <https://www.doit.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/01/State-of-New-Mexico-Three-Year-Broadband-Plan-1-1-23-Version-1.0-File-011723.pdf>.

¹⁰ Connect New Mexico Act 2021, New Mexico Legislation <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>.

9.1 Lack of affordable, quality service

Affordability is a significant challenge to meaningful use.

The correlation between internet subscriptions and household incomes shows that affordability is a significant challenge to meaningful use. This is consistent with the Pew Research Center’s study of patterns of home internet adoption and use nationwide, which indicates that although the percentage of adoption at all income levels has risen notably since Pew began tracking those rates in 2000, income-based disparities continue to exist.¹¹

Subscription to broadband service at home is heavily correlated with household income.

The 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) revealed that New Mexicans across all income groups lag all neighboring states and national averages. Additionally, the discrepancy between income groups is larger in New Mexico than neighboring states and the nation. New Mexico households making \$20,000 to \$75,000 a year subscribe to internet services at a rate 18 percentage points higher than those making less than \$20,000. Nationally, the gap is lower at 14 percentage points.

Table 2: Internet subscription usage rates New Mexico and neighboring states¹²

	New Mexico	Texas	Arizona	Colorado	Utah	U.S.
Statewide	84%	90%	91%	93%	94%	90%
More than \$75,000	94%	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
\$20,000 – \$75,000	84%	89%	90%	91%	92%	88%
Less than \$20,000	66%	74%	76%	78%	78%	74%

Assessing additional factors

Additional factors that can contribute to low adoption and subscription rates include:

- lack of interest in using the Internet
- lack of confidence in using the internet
- lack of competence in using the Internet

¹¹ PEW Research Center Broadband Fact Sheet, April 27, 2021. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/internet-broadband/>.

¹² 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), 2021.

- lack of reliable or adequate Internet service options
- receipt of satisfactory service from a cellular provider
- receipt of free Internet access through a communal source
- distrust of federal subsidy programs
- concern for privacy, safety, and sovereignty
- complications and confusion around options available
- advertising that is misleading or easily misunderstood
- lack of understanding of the choices available and the differences in types of service
- complicated onboarding processes
- hidden and unexpected costs, fees, and data caps
- long-term contracts, penalties, deposits, and hefty start-up costs
- installation complications and barriers, especially for renters, multi-unit dwellings, and hard-to-reach households

“In rural New Mexico, high-speed internet is satellite internet and extremely expensive, yet the socioeconomic status of our families prevents them from obtaining it.”

school superintendent, who participated in 2023 stakeholder engagement

ACS and NTIA’s Internet Use Survey both reflect polling results from 2021 and both surveys are expected to publish more contemporary results in early 2024.¹³ Meanwhile, a statewide, scientific Resident Survey is currently underway in New Mexico. Responses will be assessed in relation to geographic regions, subscription needs, and demographic information, to provide insights on how barriers and needs may vary by geographic region, covered populations, and at-risk groups. The FCC’s National Broadband Map is also expected to publish service pricing data that will create additional opportunities for geospatial and demographic analysis and to enable an understanding of how coverage footprints interact with available service prices and constituent groups. This Resident Survey currently underway is collecting data on:

1. The portion of households in the State that subscribe to internet service.
2. Self-reported barriers to purchasing home internet subscriptions for those households that do not subscribe to home internet service.
3. The price that households not subscribed to home internet service would be willing to pay for high speed, reliable, internet service.
4. The distribution of current costs of subscription for households subscribed to home internet service.
5. The portion of households that subscribe to home internet service and would describe it as “reliable.”

¹³ The American Community Survey is anticipated to release results from their 2022 survey at this time, while the NTIA’s Internet Use Survey would reflect more recent 2023 results.

9.2 Lack of broadband-enabled devices

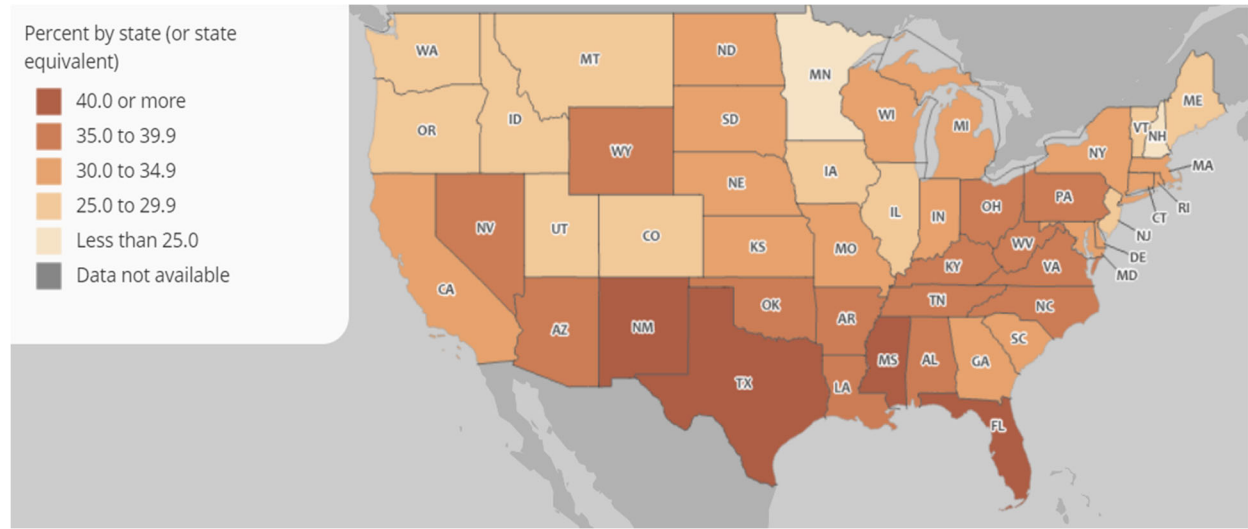


Figure 1: Portion of population not using a laptop or desktop device¹⁴

New Mexico ranks highest in the nation for the percentage of residents who do not use a laptop or desktop computer.

As noted in the 2021 Census CPS Internet Use Survey, 40.9 percent of New Mexicans do not use a laptop or desktop.¹⁵ According to an analysis of U.S. census data reported by the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC), American Indians have the single lowest computer ownership and broadband adoption rates of any racial/ethnic group.¹⁶

24% of New Mexicans do not own a laptop or desktop computer, which is the only internet-enabled device currently sufficient for fully engaging in the digital economy.

Laptop or desktop computer ownership is heavily correlated with household income.

Low-income households have significantly lower device ownership rates compared to higher-income households. According to American Community Survey (ACS) data, only 53 percent of

“the majority of the population we serve do not own computers...many of the students rely on their phones for internet access...and if students are assigned Chromebooks, they must return them at the end of the school year.”
 school staff member, who participated in 2023 stakeholder engagement

¹⁴ Source: U.S. Census Bureau and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), Digital Equity Act Population Viewer (2021 NTIA/Census CPS Internet Use Survey), <https://mtgisportal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865464a90ff1573c5072b42>.

¹⁵ NTIA. Digital Equity Act Population Viewer. <https://mtgisportal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a0013a9dcbb9419e855f563d78e892ef>.

¹⁶ “Weaving Our Web: The State of Digital Inclusion in Urban Indian America Report,” National Urban Indian Family Coalition.

households earning less than \$20,000 per year own a laptop or desktop computer.¹⁷ See Figure 2.

Table 3: Device ownership and income in New Mexico

	Owns computer of any kind	Owns desktop or laptop computer	Owns a tablet computer	ONLY owns a smartphone device	Percentage of New Mexico households
Statewide	93%	76%	59%	12%	100%
More than \$75,000	98%	91%	77%	4%	36%
\$20,000 – \$75,000	94%	75%	54%	13%	45%
Less than \$20,000	82%	53%	36%	23%	19%

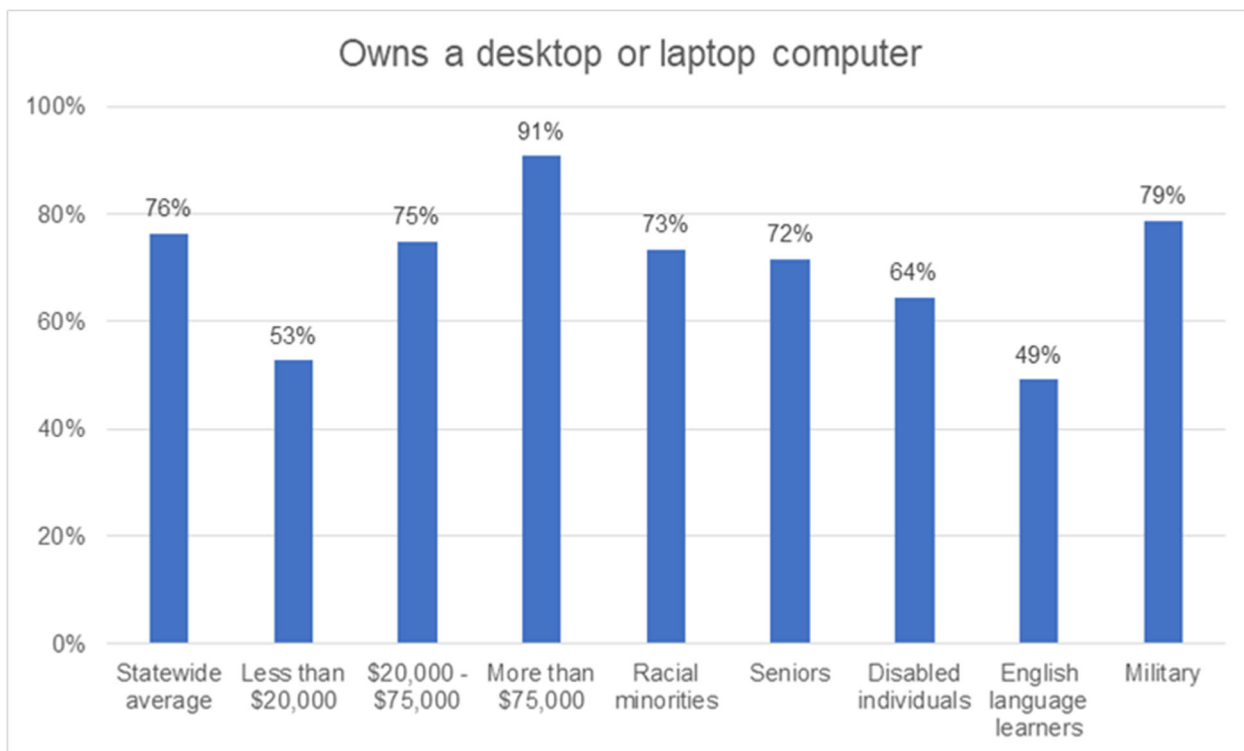


Figure 2: Desktop or laptop computer ownership in New Mexico¹⁸

¹⁷ American Community Survey (ACS), 2021.

¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

Assessing additional factors

Additional factors that can contribute to lack of broadband-enabled devices include:

- lack of knowledge of the type of device to purchase
- lack of knowledge where to purchase it
- confusion or overwhelm with the wide range of choices and features to choose from
- need for multiple devices (a single device may not be sufficient for households with multiple individuals)
- need for help getting started with a device
- need for helping loading and running software on a device
- need for regular updates of the software and hardware and troubleshooting
- need for access to on-going tech support
- need for access to user-friendly and applicable educational resources
- need for access to maintenance and repair support

“Most of my patients use their cell phone as a computer and this can become a problem in that so much of today's health care coordination, including scheduling and messaging providers, is online. The cell signal is just not reliable and many systems will not work on a phone-based web browser.”

physician, who participated in 2023 stakeholder engagement

9.3 Lack of knowledge of how to use devices effectively

According to baseline data from the U.S. Census Bureau, less than a third of New Mexico residents reported using the internet: to take classes or participate in job training online, to telecommute or work remotely using the Internet, and to search for a job online. Although New Mexico residents reported a level of engagement like residents of other states based on the digital activity indicators assessed, the findings from the US Census Bureau survey noted here do not address digital confidence or competency, nor identify learning needs, styles, or spirations, which are all factors that affect digital literacy. Digital literacy is a vast and emerging field that includes developing digital skills for a wide range of personal and professional tasks and learning to use a variety of devices and platforms, which are constantly changing and increasing in number, options, and complexity.

Table 4: Comparison of digital activities in New Mexico, the U.S., and neighboring states¹⁹

Digital activity	NM	Gap from nation	USA	AZ	CO	UT
Uses Email	90%	-2%	92%	92%	95%	96%
Uses Online Financial Services Like Banking, Investing, Paying Bills	76%	2%	74%	79%	83%	83%
Uses Online Social Networks	74%	0%	75%	74%	73%	77%
Shops, Makes Travel Reservations, or Uses Other Consumer Services Online	74%	0%	74%	79%	85%	82%
Participates in Online Video or Voice Calls or Conferencing	65%	-1%	66%	64%	71%	74%
Takes Class or Participates in Job Training Online	30%	4%	26%	25%	33%	36%
Telecommutes Using the Internet	28%	0%	28%	28%	35%	29%
Searches for a Job Online	20%	-1%	21%	20%	22%	20%

More data collection is needed AND OBAE is working to develop creative ways to do that. Local assessments are not only shedding light, but also building the local structure that helps deploy local solutions.

Community members who participated in the Southern Doña Ana County Needs Assessment identified benefits of technology, described barriers, and highlights some of the skills they want to learn which included: understanding how to use Hotspots, QR codes, and smartphones, plus basic computer software applications and online meeting platforms used by schools, businesses, and healthcare providers for online education, remote work, and telehealth appointments.²⁰ Community members want to learn platforms for maintaining connections and communication with family members or managing a small business online but also noted that fear and the stigma of not knowing how to use digital devices and the internet can be

Participants identified digital literacy skills for basic needs including:

- to set up medical appointments, review lab work and manage prescription drugs
- to complete and submit employment applications
- to pay bills on-line and address other financial needs, like on-line banking
- to conduct business, shop, or manage a small business
- to process immigration status for residency and U.S. citizenship
- to complete vehicle registration or set up transportation services for those who don't drive anymore or can't use public transportation
- to register for social services such as food stamps, social security, or vaccinations
- to make travel arrangement for work or leisure

¹⁹ US Census Bureau. November 2021, Current Population Survey, Computer and Internet Use Supplement.

²⁰ "Findings and Recommendations Report of Southern Doña Ana County," Mamacitas Cibernéticas, July 11, 2023.

- to download and upload documents from the internet
- to download and upload photos from the phone
- to complete schoolwork or help children or grandchildren complete schoolwork

The way learning takes place also needs to be explored and possibilities expanded to accommodate a wide range of learning options and needs. Here are initial recommendations: provide training in languages other than English, expand the schedule of learning opportunities to include evening and weekends, ensure training options are available for free, and diversify the location of training to include both non-conventional and conventional places to include schools, colleges, and libraries, plus community centers, senior centers, chapter houses, churches, health centers, or neighborhood “digital hubs.” Mentors, tutors, coaches, and “digital navigators,” that can meet one-on-one or with small groups in a home or common space are growing in popularity and impact, especially for community members in most need of support, who lack transportation, or who are homebound. Digital literacy training needs to be bite-sized and digestible and go at the pace and comfort level of the community, and, as a focus group participant noted, “should be hands-on and practical and based on what people need to learn, not theory or lecture.”

“The public needs training and better access to laptops or desktop computers for best use of internet resources..”

library staff,
who participated in 2023
stakeholder engagement

10. Digital equity in New Mexico: baseline analysis

A review of initial baseline data included in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update provides a foundation for tracking broadband adoption and use moving forward. Community engagement and data collection are on-going, however, and will continue through the fall of 2023 to inform development of the measurable objectives, metrics, and strategies required in the State Digital Equity Plan to be submitted to NTIA on November 30, 2023.

10.1 Internet service adoption rates

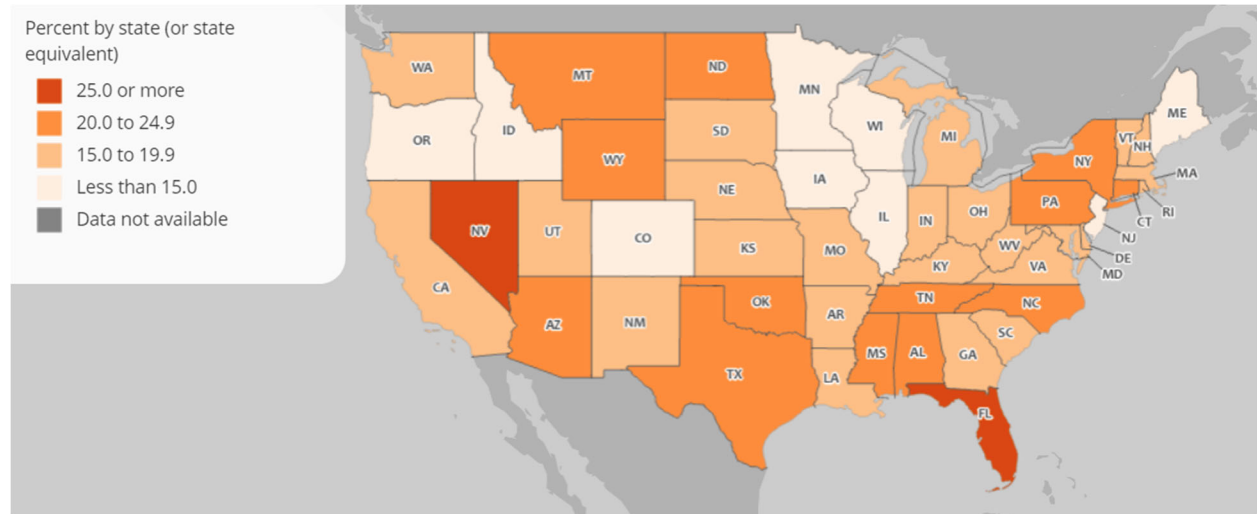


Figure 3: Percentage of population 3 years and older who do not use the internet²¹

The digital divide encompasses not just access to internet services and the infrastructure and technologies that provide them, but also the adoption and meaningful use of those services and devices. In that light, evaluating broadband adoption patterns among residents who have access to reliable, high-speed broadband options is critical for articulating a data-driven policy framework for the State. Based on data collected through NTIA Census CPS Internet Use Survey, an estimated 19.5 percent of New Mexico residents do not use the internet. (Figure 3).²²

As noted in New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, there is wide variability in internet adoption rates within the State. Figure 4 shows the percentage of New Mexico households without any type of internet subscriptions. There is a 75% non-adoption rate in Mora County in the north, an area that was devastated by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fire in 2022. Non-adoption rates are also high in McKinley, Catron, and Socorro.

²¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), Digital Equity Act Population Viewer (2021 NTIA/Census CPS Internet Use Survey), <https://mtgisportal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865464a90ff1573c5072b42>.

²² Digital Act Population Viewer, <https://arcg.is/8vGLv> (accessed December 21, 2022).

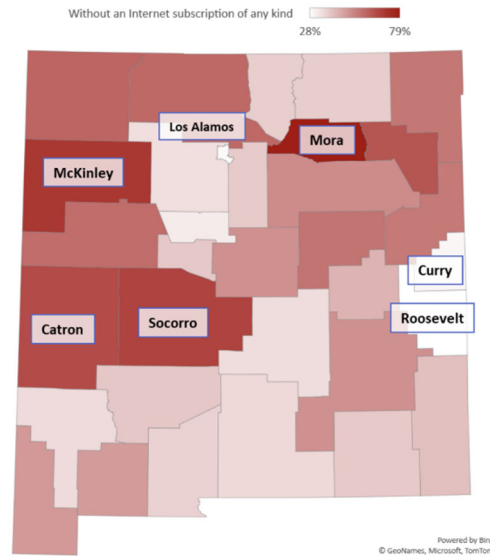


Figure 4: Map of New Mexico households without internet subscription of any kind²³

Figure 5 shows the percentage of New Mexico households without a subscription to DSL, cable, or fiber. There is a clear lack of adoption along the western edge of the State. The rates of wireline non-adoption are highest in McKinley, Catron, and Mora Counties. Meanwhile, Los Alamos County stands out with only 16 percent of residents who do not subscribe to wireline internet service (Figure 5).

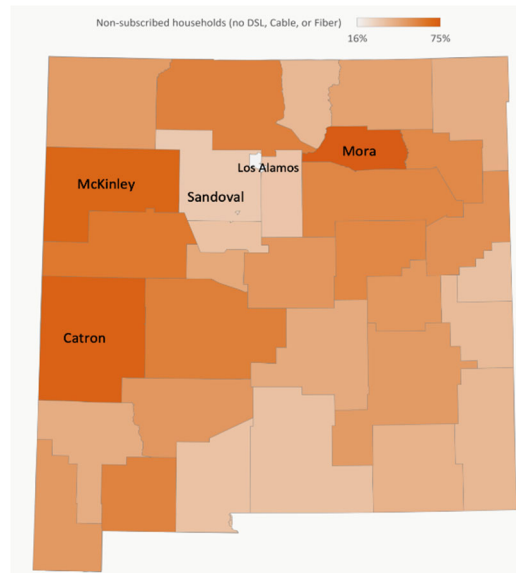


Figure 5: Map of New Mexico households without wireline internet subscriptions (fiber, cable, or DSL)²⁴

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

²⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

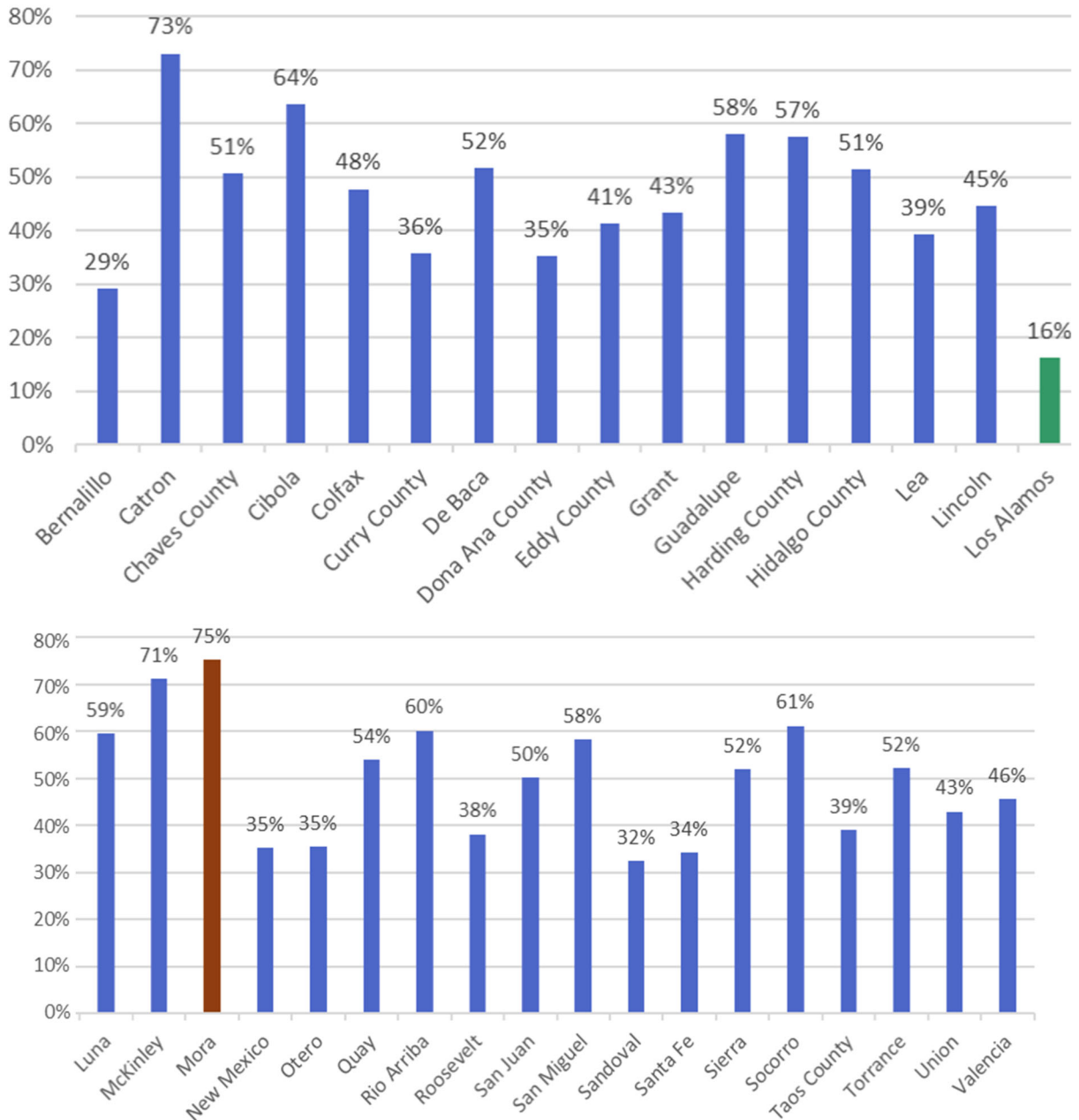


Figure 6: New Mexico households without wireline internet subscriptions (by County)²⁵

As noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, only about 60 percent of households making less than \$75,000 a year in New Mexico have a wireline internet subscription, compared to roughly 81 percent of households with higher incomes. Subscription rates drop even

²⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

lower for very-low-income households, both for wireline internet subscriptions (Figure 7) and for all internet subscriptions (Figure 8).

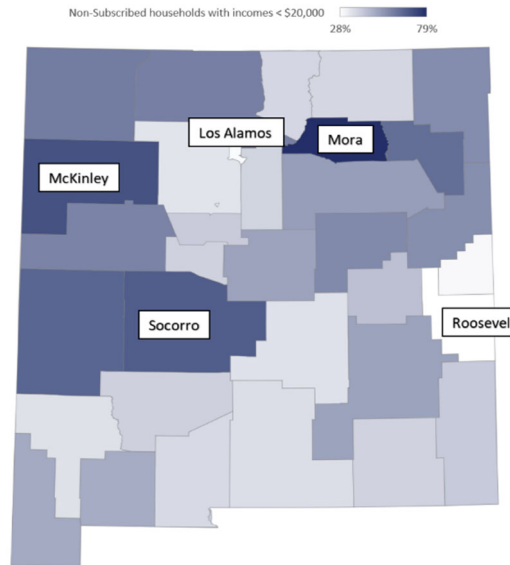


Figure 7: Lowest-income households without a wireline internet subscription: non-subscribed households with annual incomes less than \$20,000²⁶

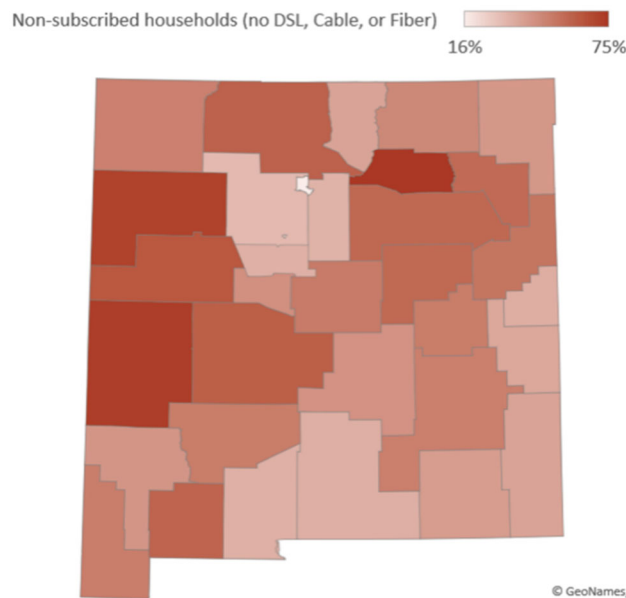


Figure 8: Very low-income households without internet subscriptions of any kind (no DSL, Cable, or fiber)²⁷

²⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

As noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, the gap in internet subscription rates among low-income and middle-income households also varies across the State (Figure 9), with the largest difference in Catron County (Figure 10)

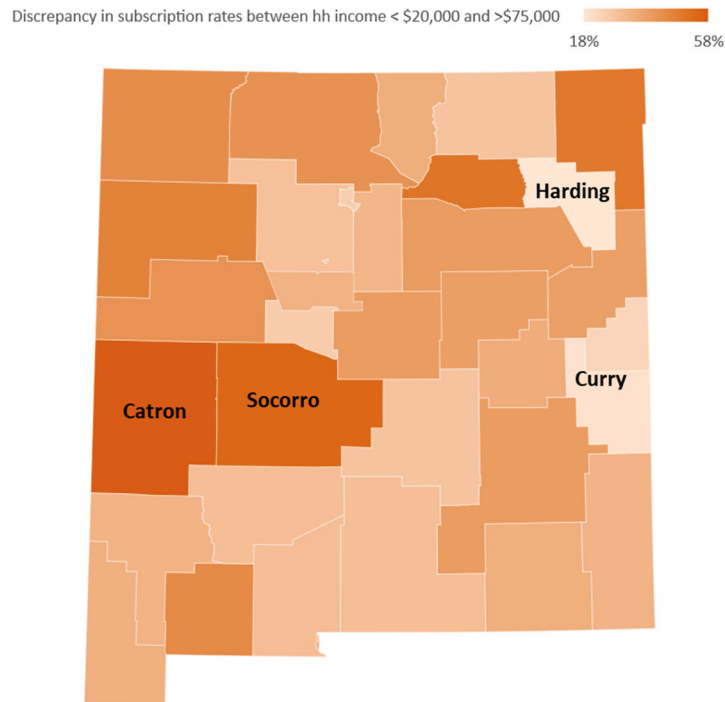


Figure 9: Map of subscription inequality between lowest and highest income households: discrepancy in subscription rates between household incomes less than \$20,000 and greater than \$75,000²⁸

²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

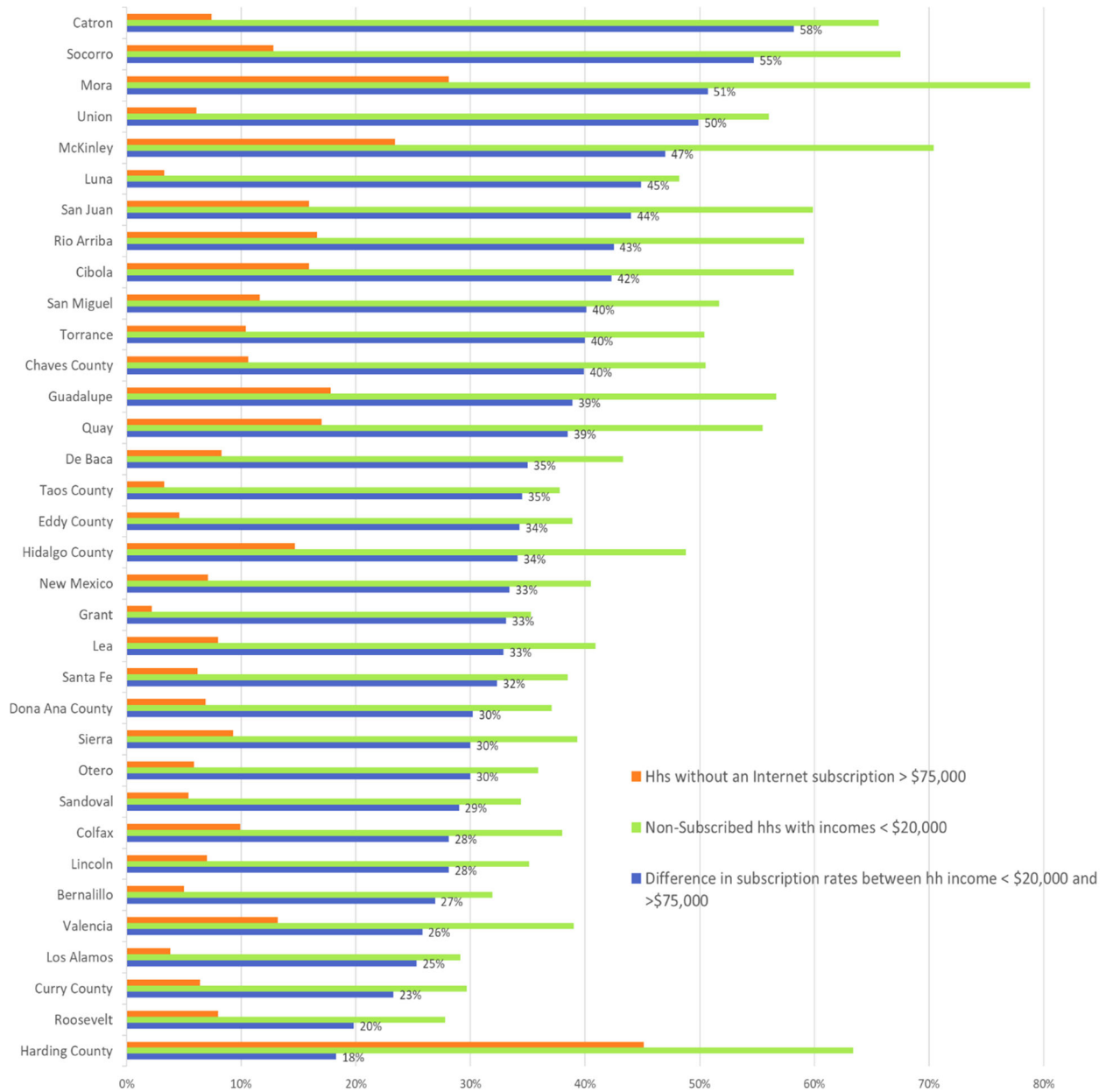


Figure 10: Comparison of subscription rates between lowest and highest income households²⁹

²⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

In addition, as noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, some at-risk demographic groups reveal a lower rate of wireline internet access than the statewide average, including racial and ethnic minorities, individuals living with disabilities, and English language learners.³⁰ See Figure 11.

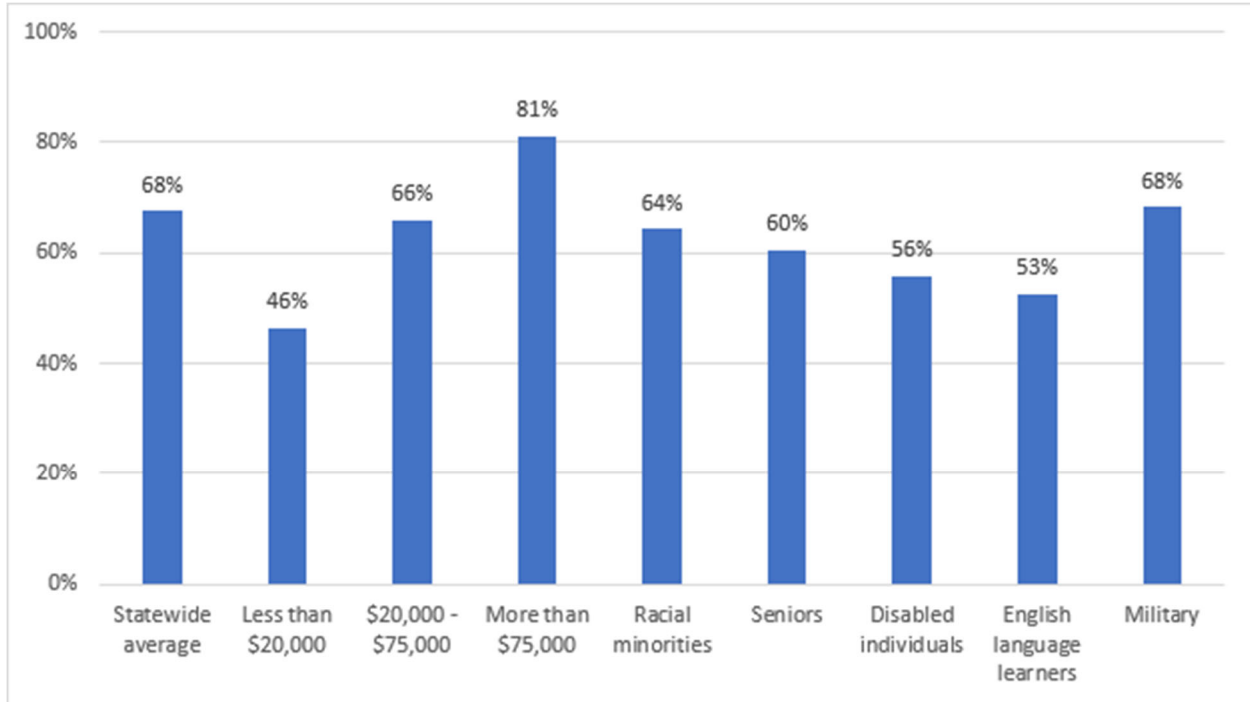


Figure 11: Access to wireline internet at household³¹

10.2 Affordable Connectivity Program enrollment

The federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)³² provides a monthly subsidy toward home internet subscriptions for qualifying households that enroll. Although qualifying households can receive a subsidy of \$30/month or \$75/month for tribal households, the ACP program is known to be significantly undersubscribed. Although New Mexico is among the leaders in the nation in ACP enrollment with the seventh-highest ACP adoption rate among the states, many eligible households have not enrolled in ACP, and additional initiatives are required to encourage

³⁰ “English language learners” included those who reported a level of proficiency of speaking English “not well” or “not at all,” which amounted to roughly 4 percent of State residents. It is possible that survey results of this population are skewed by language barriers in the survey design.

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata (2021), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>.

³² Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), FCC, <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>

enrollment. In New Mexico, it is estimated that 450,000 households are eligible to enroll and receive the ACP subsidy for Internet services.³³

According to the FCC, 32 percent of eligible households (142,156 households) in New Mexico were enrolled in ACP as of November 1, 2022. By June 19, 2023, however, the percentage of eligible households enrolled grew to 37 percent (167,136 households), increasing by roughly 25,000 newly subsidized households. While this figure is substantial and ACP enrollment in New Mexico exceeds the national enrollment average of 33 percent, 282,864 eligible households are not yet enrolled.³⁴

Table 5: ACP adoption in New Mexico and the U.S.³⁵

Date of data	Factor	New Mexico	U.S.
November 1, 2022	Enrolled	142,156	14,148,326
	Eligible	450,000	55,267,000
	Percent of eligible enrolled	32%	26%
June 19, 2023	Enrolled	167,136	18,251,925
	Eligible	450,000	55,267,000
	Percent of eligible enrolled	37%	33%

As noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, enrollment rates vary by county across the state (Figure 12). Perhaps most notable, only 7 percent of eligible households have enrolled in Catron County, which has the largest gap in internet service adoption rates between low- and middle-income households. Of significance is also the high enrollment rate in McKinley County. This may be due, in part, to the large number of households on Tribal land there, as the

³³ Estimates are based on 2021 American Community Survey reported data on household income and participation in assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, and public assistance income. This estimation does not take into account qualification via Tribal assistance programs, and therefore may underestimate the size of eligible populations throughout the State.

³⁴ Source: “ACP Enrollment and Claims Tracker,” Universal Service Administrative Corp., <https://www.usac.org/about/affordable-connectivity-program/acp-enrollment-and-claims-tracker/>.

³⁵ Source: “ACP Enrollment and Claims Tracker,” Universal Service Administrative Corp., <https://www.usac.org/about/affordable-connectivity-program/acp-enrollment-and-claims-tracker/>.

ACP has additional criteria and potentially fewer barriers to eligibility for households on “Qualifying Tribal lands.”³⁶

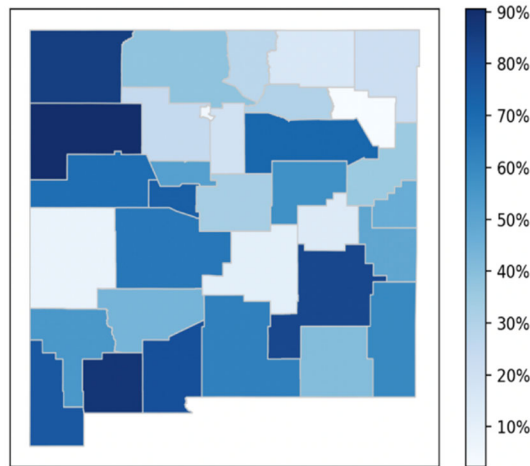


Figure 12: Map of ACP enrollment in New Mexico³⁷

The relatively low enrollment rates across the United States are largely ascribed to a lack of knowledge of the program, extensive requirements, a cumbersome and time-consuming enrollment process, and lack of ease and accessibility in the sign-up process. For many households without internet service, the process may require travel to an area outside of the home to start the registration process. Concerns about privacy and potential distrust of government-sponsored programs also play a role.

As a result, many local governments, non-profits, and service organizations are actively engaged in outreach to candidate populations to make them aware of the program and to assist in the registration process. Municipal, non-profit, and Tribal entities in New Mexico are among the recipients of ACP outreach funding awards by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) through two Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Programs:

National Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)

- City of Albuquerque – \$400,000
- New Mexico Black Leadership Council, Albuquerque – \$400,000
- El Paso Community Foundation – \$300,000
(multi-state award to Texas includes Las Cruces)

³⁶ Source: “ACP Enrollment and Claims Tracker,” Universal Service Administrative Corp.

³⁷ Source: “ACP Enrollment and Claims Tracker: Enrollment and Claims by ZIP Code and County,” Universal Service Administrative Corp., <https://www.usac.org/about/affordable-connectivity-program/acp-enrollment-and-claims-tracker/#enrollment-and-claims-by-zipcode-and-county> (accessed June 19, 2023).

Tribal Competitive Outreach Program (TCOP)

- Pueblo of Jemez – \$379,234
- Pueblo of Zuni – \$325,000

Grant funds may be used to conduct digital campaigns and door-to-door canvassing, operate phone banks, distribute direct mail, and host ACP application enrollment and outreach events. While outreach may increase ACP enrollment in some areas, there will always be a portion of the eligible population who are uninterested or unwilling to participate. This may be the case if a household feels no need to use the internet, receives satisfactory service from a cellular provider, receives free internet access through a communal source, or does not trust federal subsidy programs.

The survey and stakeholder engagements that are currently underway may reveal more about why community members choose not to participate in ACP. In the meantime, it is important to be aware of the challenges ahead that states, communities, and families will face when the ACP funding expires. Projections anticipate federal funding could run out within 1-2 years if not renewed by Congress. States and communities will need innovation and collaboration to find creative and sustainable solutions to overcome the affordability challenge.

10.3 Security and privacy

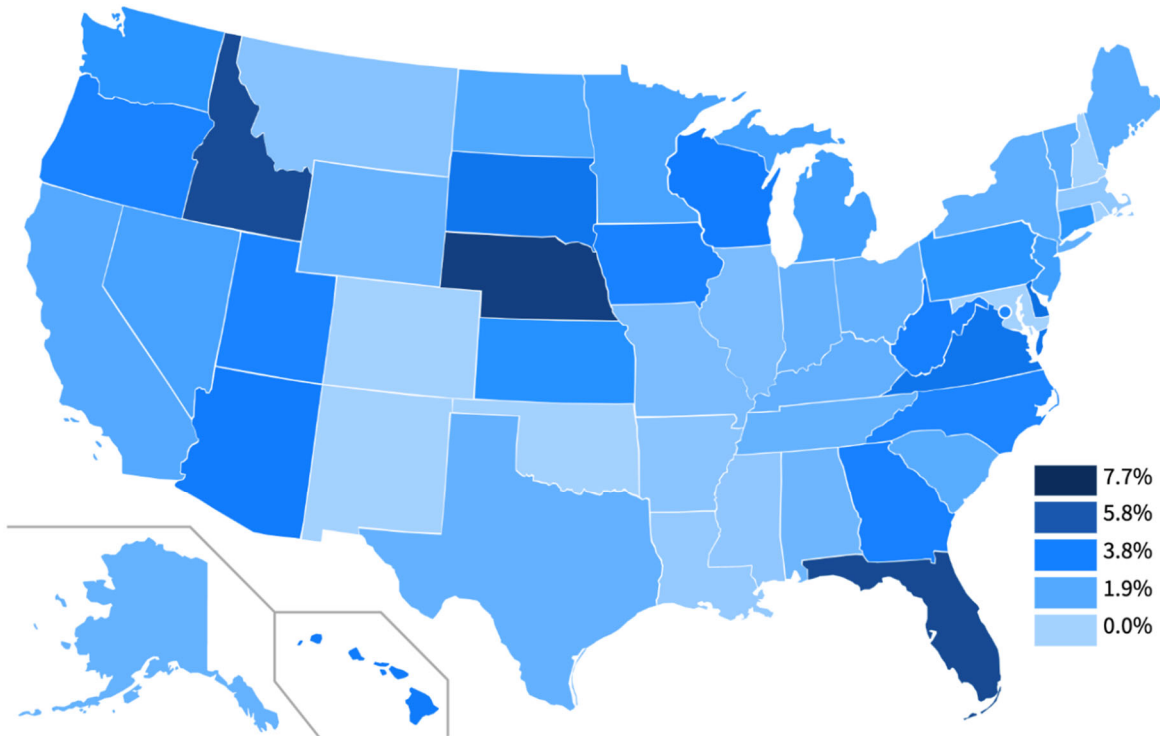


Figure 13: Privacy or security concerns as primary reason for lack of broadband adoption³⁸
 “Main Reason Not Online at Home: Privacy or Security Concerns - Households without any Home Internet Users November 2021”

“Most of the population we work with are older (50+)... multiple people knew absolutely nothing about online safety... It was brand new information to them because they never had a computer so they didn't know what they needed to do to protect themselves online.”
 Service Organization Staff, who participated in 2023 stakeholder engagement

³⁸ US Census Bureau. November 2021, Current Population Survey, Computer and Internet Use Supplement.

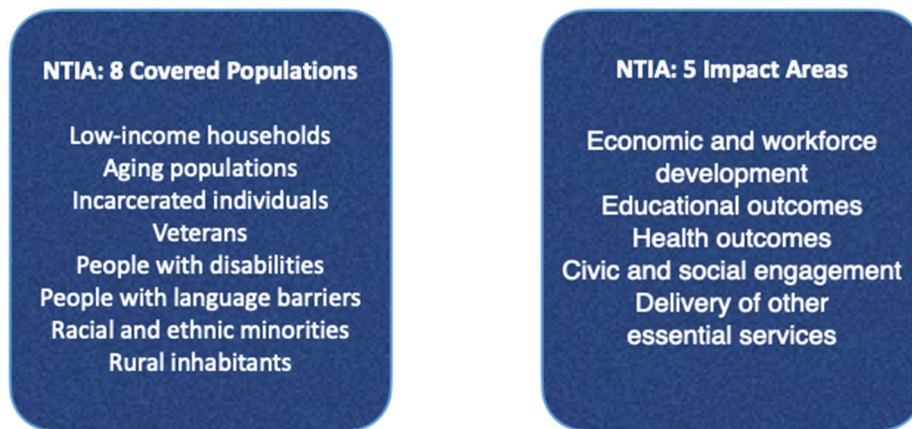
At the time the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update was developed, there was little available data about the effect of security and privacy issues on broadband adoption and use in New Mexico. User concerns about internet security or privacy including issues around identity theft, data breaches, and data sovereignty can be discouraging. New Mexico currently lacks accessible data about the effect of online security and privacy issues on broadband adoption in the State. The little available data shows that, of households that do not currently subscribe to internet services, the respondent reported having made that decision due to concerns about security and privacy (Figure 13). This does not imply that those unsubscribed households had robust knowledge of security and privacy best practice, nor is there clarity on rates at which New Mexico residents are falling prey to security or privacy vulnerabilities.

The Resident Survey currently underway provides an opportunity to gather preliminary data on security and privacy concerns that can inform strategies for improving the safety of New Mexicans using the internet. Tribal concerns regarding data sovereignty and digital sovereignty have also been raised for further study.

Robust and extensive community engagement, especially with stakeholders who are unserved and underserved, is a critical effort to truly achieve bold NM broadband solutions,

11. Stakeholder engagement to gather digital equity input and insights

OBAE began collecting data and consulting with local governments, Tribal Nations, public educational institutions, State agencies, and community stakeholders to gather input and insights. OBAE launched an extensive series of stakeholder engagement events and activities known as the Connect New Mexico Spring Sprint. In accordance with state legislation and federal requirements to access the next waves of national broadband and digital equity funding, outreach and engagement was designed to reach unserved and underserved communities and to connect with organizations and individuals representing the “8 Covered Populations” and “5 Impact Areas” identified by NTIA.



11.1 Highlighted stakeholder engagement

Broadband Day

On February 15, 2023, OBAE hosted Broadband Day at the Legislature. Despite a blizzard, over 400 people participated. Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham opened and officially proclaimed March as Connect New Mexico Month; she acknowledged local champions and kicked-off the Spring Sprint of stakeholder engagement events. Additionally, remarks were made by OBAE Director Schlegel, the Connect New Mexico Council Chair Kimball Sekaquaptewa, and Tribal Working Group Chair Godfrey Enjady, as well as a video message from Senator Ben Ray Lujan. Nineteen information tables were set up to share information and educational materials from broadband organizations, agencies and working groups statewide. Ten organizations and grassroots community champions shared community broadband projects and updates from around the state during midday presentations in the Rotunda, followed by an evening Broadband Reception with more than 80 attendees.

Regional Meetings

Six Regional Meetings were held across the state based on Economic Development regions, with information, including announcements, posters, QR codes, and registration forms, distributed in both English and Spanish:

- April 17 - Southeast Region 5 meeting in Alamogordo (Otero County)
- April 18 - Central Region 3 meeting in Los Lunas (Valencia County)
- May 11 - Northeast Region 4 meeting in Springer (Colfax County)
- May 12 - Southwest Region 5 meeting in Las Cruces (Doña Ana County)
- May 15 - Northwest Region 1 meeting in Farmington (San Juan County)
- May 16 - North Central Region 2 meeting in Hernandez (Rio Arriba County)

Listening Sessions (Webinars)

OBAE facilitated 13 Listening Session with 168 participants targeting a range of impact areas and covered populations including Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs), Health Centers and Alliances, Digital Equity Organizations, Organizations serving Covered Populations, Workforce Development, Tribal Governments and Agencies, Business & Economic Development, Internet Service Providers, State Leadership, and Local and Regional Governments.

Industry Focus Group

OBAE collaborated with the Permian Strategic Partnership and their GIS lead Natalie Runyan to facilitate a focus group and data and broadband asset mapping workshop in Carlsbad with industry leaders and 15 attendees from the Permian Basin on May 1, 2023.

Network Operators' Conference

OBAE also co-hosted the first ABQNOG Network Operators Conference in Albuquerque at the New Mexico Expo African American Pavilion. 58 participants attended this technical conference centered on broadband and networking, which was run by networking professionals to help other networking professionals.

Statewide Summit

The “Internet for All: New Mexico Broadband Summit” occurred on May 24, 2023, at Buffalo Thunder, Pojoaque Pueblo in Santa Fe County. There was a total of 372 participants, with 260 attending in-person and 112 virtually, which was the highest-attended local coordination broadband event with NTIA in the nation. This summit was a collective endeavor hosted by OBAE in collaboration with the Connect New Mexico Council, NTIA, New Mexico Association of Counties, and New Mexico League of Municipalities. Attendees included local government leaders, Tribal leaders and representatives, and a multitude of community and industry members.

The agenda emphasized the necessity for comprehensive coordination at all levels to ensure the successful roll-out of the broadband initiative across the state. Sessions ranged from high-level strategy discussions to technical updates on the progress made in the connectivity and mapping efforts. The event spotlighted the importance of collective action in addressing digital equity challenges and fostering state-wide broadband development. Participants had the opportunity to meet federal and state officials, learn about broadband initiatives and funding opportunities, share local stories, and participate in development of the statewide New Mexico Broadband and Digital Equity Plans. After the close of the summit, a private Tribal Roundtable was held with Alan

Davidson, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, U.S. Department of Commerce, as well as a broadband site visit to Santa Clara Pueblo.

Let's Get Going Bootcamps

Two one-day boot camps were facilitated by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance with 78 participants. One was held in the south at Doña Ana Community College in Anthony, and one was held in the north at Tesuque Pueblo.

11.2 Tribal consultation and engagement

Tribal consultation, engagement, support, and investment is a priority and essential to the overall success of the statewide broadband initiatives. OBAE has invested in a Tribal Engagement consultant who is supporting the CNMC Tribal Working Group, Tribal meetings, Tribal Convenings, Pueblo mapping work sessions, and direct tribal community visits and leadership meetings, as well as development of a comprehensive Tribal contact database and a regular Tribal Broadband newsletter. The first Tribal Convening was held on September 12, 2022, with 72 participants. The next Tribal Convening is tentatively scheduled for September 22, 2023. The Tribal Working Group meets every two weeks and is chaired by Godfrey Enjady (Mescalero).

OBAE has regular ongoing, weekly contact with tribal leaders, tribal IT/broadband staff, and tribal consultants in areas of technical assistance, project management, grant writing, training, and general educational sharing. OBAE participates in weekly meetings with Navajo Nation representatives and with the NM Indian Affairs Department. OBAE regularly presents at the monthly Broadband Initiative on Navajo Nation meetings and Connect New Mexico Tribal Working Group meetings (TWG). In addition, OBAE hosted a data webinar, a digital equity webinar, and two hands-on mapping workshops for tribal members. OBAE is also participating in meetings to better understand and support development of the Pueblo Education Network, (PEN) a native-led initiative to link Pueblos and tribal schools and build an educational middle mile, 15 electronic tribal newsletters have been published since November 2022 reaching more than 300 subscribers with each distribution.

Additionally, OBAE has presented at the NM Indian Affairs Department State Tribal Leaders Summit, the All-Pueblo Council of Governors, Ten Southern Pueblos Council, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, OBAE has also Presented at the National Tribal Telecommunications Association Conference. OBAE also collaborated with NTIA to host a Tribal Roundtable at the May 24, 2023, statewide meeting.

Twenty-two tribes in New Mexico applied to NTIA for Tribal Digital Equity Planning grants; funding has yet to be announced. New Mexico is required to address the needs and challenges of tribal communities in the State Digital Equity Plan. OBAE is in the process of scheduling official government to government tribal consultation. Leading up to scheduling tribal consultation a letter was sent to all tribal leaders in New Mexico requesting consultation.

There is extensive ongoing learning with tribes that needs further development and distilling; this initial engagement marks the beginning of substantial work that must be done to ensure digital equity with the tribal nations of New Mexico. Additionally, the May 2021 Yazzie Technology Order mandates improved access to technology and internet resources for all at-risk students to facilitate learning and digital literacy that is fundamental to an adequate educational opportunity.

11.3 Other engagement

Focus groups, interviews, community meetings, and consultations are still underway, and OBAE team members have presented at a wide range of events hosted by other agencies including the Department of Transportation, New Mexico Association of Counties, and New Mexico Technology Council, as well as tribal agencies. In December 2023, OBAE co-hosted the “Federal Broadband Funding 101: Resources for Local Government” webinar and was featured at the Next Century Cities “Build Broadband Together” event in Albuquerque. In January 2023, OBAE teamed with the City of Albuquerque Office of Broadband to facilitate an Internet for All NTIA Press Conference in the International District Public Library with OBAE Director Kelly Schlegel and NTIA Senior Advisor Barbara Cottam. Director Kelly Schlegel and Tribal Broadband Working Group Chair Godfrey Enjady attended the NTIA BEAD Allocation Announcement at the White House on June 26, 2023. Following the initial announcement in Washington, D.C., OBAE coordinated a local press conference on July 6, 2023, at Santa Fe Indian School with Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, White House designee Mitch Landrieu from Washington D.C., Senator Ben Ray Lujan, Representative Teresa Leger-Fernandez, NTIA Deputy Assistant Secretary April McClain-Delaney, and OBAE Director Kelly Schlegel.

To support local mobilization and capacity-building, OBAE staff and Project Managers have been making site visits and meeting with communities across the state to identify and address broadband infrastructure gaps and technical assistance needs. As OBAE grows its team, a full-time Project Manager has made multiple visits to the Pueblo Education Network (PEN) and Statewide Education Network (SEN) nodes including NMSU, Highlands University, UNM Gigapop, San Juan College, and Santa Fe Indian School, as well as TAP participants including Pecos, Luna County, Laguna Pueblo, and San Ildefonso Pueblo, plus Navajo nation, Sierra County and more.

OBAE is building partnerships and an interagency broadband and digital equity team to identify, engage and support data and information gathering on (1) broadband access; (2) accessible and inclusive online content; (3) digital literacy; (4) personal data and cyber security; and (5) devices and tech support.

OBAE has also supported local and regional coalition-building and is collaborating extensively with communities in the border region including Borderplex Connect and the Colonias of Southern New Mexico. Stakeholders of the colonias have met regularly and developed an informal Broadband Action Team (BAT) also known as “Los Colonias Empowered by Broadband”, hosted a Town Hall in Anthony, and developed educational broadband materials geared for Spanish-speaking residents. OBAE has also co-facilitated numerous Award Ceremonies and presentations including:

- Doña Ana County (Comcast)
- Truth or Consequences (SWC Telesolutions - aka Ethos Broadband)
- Mountainair (Central NM Electric Cooperative)
- Magdalena (Socorro Electric)
- West Alamogordo, Bent, Sun Valley (Tularosa Communications)
- Columbus (Valley Telephone Cooperative)
- West Gallup and Thoreau (SWC Telesolutions - aka Ethos Broadband)

12. Digital Equity data collection efforts

12.1 Asset inventories and surveys

To comply with state and federal data-gathering and community engagement requirements, six asset inventories and surveys were designed and distributed to collect information from government agencies, community organizations, employers, and local stakeholders about their experience and needs in access, adoption, and use of broadband. Data-gathering is still underway, but 155 responses have been collected so far. Responses will help shape the state's long-term broadband infrastructure expansion and digital equity planning efforts. State, county, tribal, and local government agencies, employers, internet service providers, and community organizations (nonprofit, school, library, health, housing, faith-based, etc.), and broadband stakeholders have been invited to complete one or more surveys from the following list:

- Vulnerable Populations Broadband Barriers Inventory
- Digital Equity Program Asset Inventory
- Community Anchor Institution Broadband Access Inventory

- New Mexico Infrastructure Asset Inventory
- Workforce Development Opportunity Inventory
- Internet Service Providers Survey

12.2 Resident survey

As advised and facilitated by CTC Technology & Solutions, a telephone survey of New Mexico residents was launched July 15 to gather statistically valid data on the use of broadband to better identify barriers and potential solutions. This survey is currently underway and was designed to include responses from a representative sampling of New Mexico residents to yield detailed, statistically meaningful data that will be weighted based on region, household income, ethnicity, and age of the respondent. Analysis of the phone survey responses should be completed in August 2023 and will be instrumental in the development of measurable objectives and the completion of the State Digital Equity Plan currently in development for submission to NTIA as required to access the next wave of Digital Equity funding available to the state through the Digital Equity Capacity Grant program.

12.3 Ongoing data collection efforts

Extensive research is underway and scheduled to continue past the submission of this BKDEAP Report. This research is critical to help OBAE understand and measure challenges to broadband connectivity and identify unique local circumstances that may impact connectivity, adoption, and use for covered populations and unserved and underserved community members. The quantitative and qualitative data collected through the fall of 2023 will facilitate the design of measurable objectives, effective strategies, and clear metrics for strategizing and assessing Digital Equity efforts over time. The data collection and stakeholder engagement activities that are a part of the current research underway are critical to the development of the State Digital Equity Plan and required by NTIA to access the next wave of federal Digital Equity funding.

A short constituent survey is being planned for deployment through partner agencies in August, as well as the continuation of a series of focus groups and interviews with representatives of key impact areas, covered populations, and partner agencies.

OBAE is also actively collecting and synthesizing local and county-level broadband assessments, surveys, planning documents and reports to integrate input, insights, and data gathered at the local level. collected as of the writing of this report include:

- Bernalillo County (Bernalillo County Broadband Plan incorporating a Broadband Feasibility Study prepared for the County, June 2023)
- Cibola County (Cibola County Broadband Feasibility Report July 2022)

- San Juan County (San Juan County and Farmington Broadband Roadmap commissioned by the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG) and published in September 2020)
- Doña Ana County (Doña Ana County Broadband Feasibility Study, Doña Ana Broadband Survey Report 2021, and Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County Broadband Survey Report)
- Los Alamos County (Community Broadband Survey and Speed test 2022)
- Chaves County (Broadband Feasibility Study for Chaves County December 2022)
- Luna County
- Sierra County (Sierra County Broadband Study Final Report)
- Municipalities including Albuquerque, Los Lunas, Roswell
- Highlands University
- City of Sunland Park (Mamacítas Cibernéticas’ Findings and Recommendations Report based on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment to increase Digital Literacy Skills of the Residents of Southern Doña Ana County funded by the City of Sunland Park through American Rescue Plan Funds)
- New Mexico State Library (New Mexico State Library 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan, Technology Survey, and Erate Annual Report)
- Indian Affairs Department broadband survey report
- State of New Mexico Office of Economic Development (“Empower and Collaborate - New Mexico's Economic Path Forward: A Summary of Findings and Recommendations from the Center for Innovation Strategy & Policy @ SRI International” published October 2021)

“To close the digital divide, communities must be part of the assessment and planning process to guide services and educational activities that will be utilized.” Mamacítas Cibernéticas

13. Insights from stakeholder engagement and data collection

Insights gathered from stakeholder engagement and digital equity data collection will help shape the State Digital Equity Plan being prepared for public review in the fall and submission to NTIA November 30, 2023. Excerpts from what the community is telling us so far follow.

Lack of reliable broadband access is a fundamental barrier to digital equity in New Mexico

Organizations across the state reported lack of reliable, affordable, high-speed internet access among the communities they serve—particularly in rural areas where infrastructure is lacking or non-existent. Many households rely on slow DSL service, satellite, or mobile coverage, and in areas with challenging topography such as hills, mountains, mesas, and canyons, it can be difficult to access even a mobile signal.

In the Vulnerable Populations Broadband Barriers Survey, Health care providers noted that a lack of reliable internet access in rural areas and Tribal communities makes it difficult for individuals to access their services, from scheduling appointments online to accessing telehealth and calling for emergency services.

A physical therapist noted that dropped calls due to poor service can “disrupt a session and at times frustrate the patient and increase resistance to teleconferencing” - meaning that lack of access to reliable broadband or other communications technology might have a negative impact on a patient’s well-being.

In sparsely populated areas, residents without internet service at home must travel significant distances to access service at a public library or other community anchor institution. An organization that works in the Navajo Nation, explained that participants “may have to drive miles to get cell service to attend a training via their cell phone or drive to borrow the public Wi-Fi at a business.” Getting to a location with internet access is even more difficult for individuals without reliable access to transportation and for individuals with disabilities or limited mobility.

Broadband Affordability is a significant barrier for many New Mexicans.

Many households cannot afford the internet service that is available, especially when satellite service is the primary—or only—option. Echoing several stakeholders, a school superintendent noted in a response to the Vulnerable Populations Broadband Barriers Survey, “In rural New Mexico, high-speed internet is satellite internet and extremely expensive, yet the socioeconomic status of our families prevents them from obtaining it.”

A library staff member also noted: “Availability and affordability are the top reasons that 70 percent of locals don't have home internet.”

“High-speed internet is very expensive and low-speed internet is affordable but not reliable,” summarized another respondent.

Stakeholders consistently cite affordability as a main concern, with some noting both the “cost to entry” as well as the monthly recurring expense as a key barrier for low-income households.

“Affordability is a major barrier,” said one respondent. “Many vulnerable and marginalized groups live in poverty or have low incomes that make even basic broadband service unaffordable. They may lack disposable income for home internet or devices. Some cannot afford the upfront costs of equipment and installation fees.”

Lack of device ownership is preventing the use of available broadband services in New Mexico.

During OBAE’s ongoing outreach efforts, stakeholders also noted that many households lack the devices needed to access or navigate online content.

One physician in the Santa Fe area, who reported that available DSL service is insufficient and ranges from 1.5 Mbps to 8 Mbps, said that device ownership is also a barrier—noting that many patients rely on a smartphone to access the internet. “Most of my patients use their cell phone as a computer and this can become a problem...so much of today's health care coordination, including scheduling and messaging providers, is online. The cell signal is just not reliable, and many systems will not work on a phone-based web browser.”

A school staff member noted that many of the students in their district also rely on their phones for internet access, reporting that “the majority of the population we serve do not own computers,” and added that if students are assigned Chromebooks, they must return them at the end of the school year.

For many households, the cost to buy and maintain a reliable and adequate device is not affordable.

“Financial limitations are a major barrier to home computer ownership and use for vulnerable populations,” said one survey respondent. “Many people in rural, low-income, and limited-English-speaking communities cannot afford the upfront cost of purchasing a home computer and software. Lack of disposable income and financing options puts computers out of reach.” They also noted that residents in some rural areas would have to travel to an urban center to locate a device or software retailer.

A service organization in Navajo Nation noted that many program attendees did not own a laptop or desktop computer when the organization began moving their courses online at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Organizations working with individuals with disabilities also emphasized that a lack of access to assistive technology can prevent the people they serve from utilizing computing devices and participating in online activities.

A lack of digital skills limits the use of broadband for many New Mexicans.

The digital divide is deepening when community members lack access to adequate internet at home and do not have a device they can use to learn and practice on their own.

The coordinator for an organization that received grant funding to distribute computers acknowledged that participants continue to struggle with using the devices.

“Most of the population we work with are older (50+) and many had never had to attend an online class until that was what we started to offer because of the pandemic. Even after three years of training virtually, we still encounter [participants] who have issues accessing Zoom or can't troubleshoot issues with their devices.”

Cybersecurity and online privacy are also concerns, with many individuals lacking the knowledge and skills to protect themselves or avoid danger online. As a representative from a program distributing Chromebooks explained, “There were multiple people that knew absolutely nothing about online safety... It was brand new information to them because they never had a computer, so they didn't know what they needed to do to protect themselves online.”

Multiple stakeholders described “generational gaps” in digital literacy, noting that aging individuals can be less skilled or comfortable with using devices and completing tasks online, even as they increasingly must do so to access health care and government services, for example.

Stakeholders also noted the impact of language barriers, stating that individuals with limited English fluency may find it challenging to navigate English-centric software, computer interfaces, and content—and may have more difficulty finding training and support in their preferred language, as well as educational content that is culturally relevant and representative.

“Without culturally competent digital skills training tailored to their needs, vulnerable populations struggle to build the technical capabilities required to fully participate in modern society,” one respondent emphasized.

Available digital skills training can also be inaccessible for individuals with disabilities, with one stakeholder adding, “lack of training on disability etiquette or accommodation needs can create barriers.”

Those living in rural areas can find it even more difficult to access appropriate digital literacy training and support, with resources, coaches, and tech support being limited outside of the larger cities in the State.

14. Community input and mobilization: examples

As the state mobilizes to connect New Mexico, OBAE is working to educate, inspire and engage communities and community members across the state. As local champions arise and local community members get involved, informal and formal community groups are working together to identify and address local needs, build local capacity, start local coalitions, and develop creative and collaborative local solutions to the challenges of broadband access, adoption, and use. Local and regional community efforts and insights are important and critical to development and implementation of both the BEAD and DE plans for the state. A few community examples are included to highlight and acknowledge some of the effort and progress being made at the community level, as local communities mobilize for connectivity and work together regionally to address challenges collectively. It is also an important reminder of how resilient and creative our communities can be when determined to bridge the digital divide.

14.1 Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County

In the fall of 2021, the Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County was contracted to conduct 1,200 surveys of households that did not have access to the internet in Doña Ana County. The survey contained 14 questions and took an average of 6- 8 minutes. Surveys were available in English and Spanish. The Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana is a strong believer of the valuable work Community Health Workers (CHW) bring to the health care system and seven Community Health Workers were contracted to assist in gathering community input. The CHWs live mainly in Sunland Park, Anthony, Vado, and Las Cruces New Mexico. This facilitated the ability to learn from the communities because the CHWs were from the community. Empowerment Congress staff and Community Health Workers received Broadband Survey training by the Doña Ana County government and received program implementation training by the Empowerment Congress. Community health workers collected data Mondays through Thursdays and on Saturdays, increasing the likelihood of finding individuals at home. CHWs observed all social distancing policies when approaching community members, as well as safety policies while in the field. Surveys were collected in Doña Ana Colonias including Garfield, Salem, Hatch, Rincon, Organ, Mesilla, Mesquite, Vado, Chamberino, La Mesa, San Miguel, Anthony, Sunland Park, La Union, Berino, Chaparral and Las Cruces New Mexico. In the six-week period, CHWs collected 1,164 surveys from community members.

The Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County Broadband Survey Report included some of the following observations and findings:

- Individuals that had the internet in the past and do not have it now, reported feeling that not having it is bad.

- Many individuals do not have internet access in their homes and use their internet cell phone service.
- Many individuals expressed dissatisfaction with internet service. They said it was too slow and unreliable and would go away when they most needed it.
- Some households have the internet because of government funded programs, but they say the services are also poor quality.
- Community members with a disability and elderly populations are on fixed income and often cannot afford the internet.
- Many of the residents that do have internet said it was very expensive and the service was horrible.
- Households with school age children had many issues during pandemic shutdown. The internet was too slow when everyone was trying to use it.
- Some people thanked us for doing this because they really need the internet.

"I have internet but I don't know how to use it." Community Member

Some recommendations from the Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County Broadband Survey Report included:

1. When Broadband is made accessible to all, training must be included on how to use the Internet.
2. There is great variation in the quality and service of the internet providers. It is vital that these companies are regulated to provide good quality service in all the communities, to eliminate broadband inequities.
3. Internet access needs to be available in rural communities and made affordable for all.

"I did have internet but it's so expensive I had to cancel it" Community Member

14.2 Mamacitas Cibernéticas

In mid-2021, local community members participated in a digital story policy lab project that culminated in creation of a grassroots community video called "Closing the Digital Divide in Border Communities."³⁹ Not only did the video bring awareness to local internet challenges, but

³⁹ "Closing the Digital Divide in Border Communities," UNM HSC TREE Center, Health Sciences, Transdisciplinary Research, Engagement, and Equity Center, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJlyL4dyCDw>

the video gained positive reception and support from Borderland broadband advocacy groups. This prompted the creation of the grassroots workgroup Mamacítas Cibernéticas with the hope of increasing the digital literacy skills of residents of Southern Doña Ana County.

Thanks to support from the City of Sunland Park and funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Mamacítas Cibernéticas developed and implemented a plan to gather input from residents regarding barriers to improving digital literacy knowledge and skills with two aims:

- To collect primary qualitative data and use community-driven findings to inform state and local digital equity planning efforts as well as efforts to leverage federal funding through NTIA's Digital Equity Capacity Building and Digital Equity Competitive Grant Programs.
- To listen to community voices and use the findings to create and adapt digital literacy education and services to fit the needs of communities.

The outcomes included the following:

- Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CCNA)
- Findings & Recommendations Report
- Informational video for community residents to see and witness how their voices can impact future digital literacy services in their community

The *Mamacítas Cibernéticas' Findings and Recommendations Report of Southern Doña Ana County*⁴⁰ was formally presented at the Sunland Park City Council meeting on July 11, 2023,⁴¹ and the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) on July 28, 2023. The report was published in both English and Spanish. The project and findings explored:

- Lack of Digital Literacy Skills for Basic Needs
- Barriers to Learn Digital Skills
- Lack of Knowledge and terminology of Devices and Uses
- Benefits of Technology
- Barriers to Attending Structured Classes
- Barriers to Getting the Word out about Digital literacy classes and services
- What the Community Wants to Learn
- Solutions to Getting the Word Out
- Utilizing Services and Maintaining Participation
- Family Support and Helpers/Lack of Helpers
- Youth Helpers

⁴⁰ "Findings and Recommendations Report of Southern Doña Ana County," Mamacítas Cibernéticas, July 11, 2023.

⁴¹ "Local Organizations Work to Get Rural Communities Access to Internet Services," Jonny Coker, KRWG, July 21, 2023, <https://www.krwg.org/krwg-news/2023-07-21/local-organizations-work-to-get-rural-communities-access-to-internet-services>

Prioritizing locally led processes from the start means that the networks for deploying solutions are already in place and actively involved, allowing communities to decide what is their main priority and match what is available to the needs in their own community. With trusted community members facilitating, participants knew their voices would be included in something important and are poised for next steps. Powerful guidelines for digital equity success statewide are embedded in the lessons learned from this project including the power of valuing community knowledge, investing in local capacity, and honoring community-driven assessment and solutions. As noted by the Mamacitas Cibernéticas, “It is important not to get held up by the technology. We need boots on the ground and should not discount or under-estimate the power of people.”

14.3 Las Colonias Empowered by Broadband

Las Colonias Empowered by Broadband is a grassroots and informal initiative to support broadband access, adoption, and use in the Colonias of southern New Mexico. The Colonias are unincorporated areas that often lack the basics, such as paved streets, lighting, sidewalks, readily available public safety, and other services, including broadband. Many of these Colonia families live in housing that they have constructed on their own or with the help of friends, and of these families many have children living at home of ages ranging from infants to young adults. These Southern New Mexico communities currently without broadband services tend to be Hispanic, rural-based, low-income, many are Veterans, many have disabilities, many are elderly, and many lack access to regular health care. Health Action New Mexico is stewarding local efforts to develop the Las Colonias Empowered by Broadband initiative and is coordinating a collaboration with many local organizations, agencies, and individuals, as well as OBAE, to build support for broadband access, adoption, and use in the southern colonias including: Anapra, La Union, Chamberino, La Mesa, San Miguel, and Mesquite off Hwy 28, and Vado, Del Cerro, Berino, Anthony (unincorporated), El Bosque, and Chaparral off Hwy 478. Local efforts underway include:

- Increasing the awareness of broadband opportunities among Colonia residents using community circles of culture (discussion groups) in Colonia settings.
- Providing bilingual orientations and encouragement for Colonia residents to participate in broadband planning and input sessions hosted by counties or the state Office of Broadband.
- Guiding and motivating young adults to get involved in preps for jobs of the future created to build and maintain local broadband infrastructures.
- Securing the help and input from Colonia residents to design an optimum, fiber optics to homes broadband network to serve las Colonias families.

- Showing residents how to keep learning about broadband opportunities and how to share this awareness with others in las Colonias so that, together, they can be involved in planning, implementing, and monitoring the effectiveness of broadband coming to their local Colonias homes.
- Working with the Office of Broadband Mapping Team to obtain the best and latest mapping done for las Colonias areas in Southern New Mexico verifying the need for broadband/internet services.
- Working in collaboration with the Doña Ana County Broadband Office to help distill the latest information on broadband projects being considered to serve the needs of the residents of las Colonias.
- Meeting with and encouraging Doña Ana Community College administration to partner with ISP's and the state Workforce Solutions to develop a first-class job training program for the jobs in broadband.

14.4 Cultivating Our Own to Lead (C.O.O.L.)

Cultivating Our Own to Lead (C.O.O.L.) is a project of the Santa Fe Indian School, which is owned and operated by the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico. Whether as an economic development venture or to provide basic home Internet as a public good, network performance must be reliable and with clear sustainability plans. This project grows the capabilities of tribes, tribal members, and tribal staff to own and operate a broadband network and be their own solution to the Digital Divide by training and supporting a cohort of technical and administrative teams to build and manage their own broadband networks. National and local support for this program, including funding from Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation, has made this pilot possible.

15. Funding for broadband and digital inclusion

Federal, state, and private funding can help address digital inclusion challenges. Federal, state, and private funding opportunities are available to support Tribal, State, and local governments and utilities in their efforts to expand broadband infrastructure and develop effective digital equity programs. Federal funding opportunities target a wide variety of goals and end users, and encompass infrastructure buildout, service subsidies, technical assistance, planning, and other broadband and digital equity efforts. Consistent with Section 5 of the Connect New Mexico Act,⁴² the State is currently using available funding to support broadband goals and continues to seek funding, as noted in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, while preparing for additional grant opportunities through the NTIA BEAD and Digital

⁴² HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation.
<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

Equity programs. Some of the key federal, state, and private/philanthropic funding sources are highlighted here.

16. Federal funding for broadband and digital inclusion

In the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, OBAE described key priorities, initiatives, and strategies to enable broadband deployment and the creation and implementation of a Digital Equity plan using NTIA planning grant funding with a public-private partnership approach.

As discussed, the lack of a financially viable business case for funding solely with private capital is a major obstacle to deployment of reliable, high-speed, terrestrial broadband networks. Factors including the high costs of network deployment and operations and low population densities limit the opportunity for revenue and spread the high costs across relatively few customers. Public entities can make ISP investment more attractive through grants in return for enforceable commitments to deploy broadband.

There are two general types of funding opportunities: those targeted toward private entities, generally ISPs, and those targeted at other partners, including public entities and nonprofit entities. In some instances, such as the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, grant design entails involvement of both public and private partners. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Commerce's National telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) have grants to help build network infrastructure in rural and unserved areas.

The following two sections address federal grant and funding opportunities and State-level grants that the State of New Mexico makes available. Appendix C lists previously awarded federal funds across a variety of programs and recipients.

16.1 U.S. Department of Agriculture grants (USDA)

The ReConnect program

The Department of Agriculture's ReConnect program offers financing to facilitate broadband deployment in areas that lack access of at least 100/20 Mbps and may fund both public and private entities including cooperatives, mutual associations, nonprofits, state or local governments and subdivisions, and federally recognized tribes. Service areas must be rural, and 50 percent of households must lack access to fixed, terrestrial service of at least 100/20 Mbps. ReConnect financing can be used for the construction or improvement of broadband facilities,

the acquisition of an existing system, and reasonable pre-application expenses, but not for operating costs. Awards range considerably in size and the required match varies by type of award. There have been four rounds of funding so far.⁴³ Details on a potential next round of the ReConnect program funding are expected in late summer 2023, but no details are confirmed as of the writing of this report. Initially, seven ISPs serving New Mexicans received USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) ReConnect awards ranging from \$3.68 million to \$34.8 million to deploy broadband infrastructure.

The Community Connect program

The Department of Agriculture’s Community Connect program gives priority to areas demonstrating “economic necessity.” Eligible entities include corporations, cooperatives, non-profits, state or local governments and subdivisions, and federally recognized tribes. The application process is rigorous and competitive (with awards given to only 10 percent of applicants) and once awarded, program requirements are demanding (e.g., requiring last-mile service for all households in the service area). Funding is geographically limited to rural areas that lack any existing broadband speed of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream. The most recent application deadline was in June 2023.⁴⁴

Distance Learning and Telemedicine program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Distance Learning and Telemedicine program provides communications equipment for public health and education entities. Grants are available for projects that “meet the educational and health care needs of rural America.” Funds can be awarded to both public and private entities (including corporations or partnerships, Tribes, state or local units of government, consortia, and private for-profit or not-for-profit corporations), if they provide the requisite services. Individuals are not eligible. Eligible entities must either directly operate a rural community facility or deliver distance learning or telemedicine services to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas. The application deadline is now closed.⁴⁵

⁴³ See, e.g. [ReConnect Loan and Grant Program | USDA, https://www.usda.gov/reconnect](https://www.usda.gov/reconnect)

⁴⁴ “Department of Agriculture – Community Connect Grant Program,” Broadband USA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/federal/federal-funding/departement-agriculture-community-connect-grant-program>.

⁴⁵ “Department of Agriculture - Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program,” BroadbandUSA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/federal/federal-funding/departement-agriculture-distance-learning-and-telemedicine-dlt>; Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grants,” USDA Rural Development, <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>.

16.2 U.S. Department of Commerce, NTIA grants (NTIA)

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program (BEAD)

New Mexico will receive approximately \$675.4 million from the NTIA’s Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program—out of a total of \$42.45 billion in nationwide broadband infrastructure funding—to implement the State’s BEAD Five-Year Action Plan.⁴⁶ That allocation will be distributed by OBAE to ISPs and other subrecipients through a State-designed and administered competitive grant program.

Eligible costs will include those associated with deploying or upgrading network infrastructure, data collection, installing internet and Wi-Fi in residential buildings, training and workforce development, and broadband adoption programming.⁴⁷

NTIA earlier allocated \$5 million in BEAD planning funds to New Mexico to develop a required BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposal in 2023 and a Final Proposal in 2024.⁴⁸ As of the writing of this report, OBAE is leading the preparation of the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan—using the planning funds to perform the data collection, stakeholder engagement, and planning process currently underway.

The federal government provides broadband funding opportunities for state and local governments and other public entities through several programs. BEAD, which was addressed in the preceding subsection as a program providing private funding, also has a public element since the private funding takes the form of state grants.

⁴⁶ “Biden-Harris Administration Announces State Allocations for \$42.45 Billion High-Speed Internet Grant Program as Part of Investing in America Agenda,” Internet for All, June 26, 2023, <https://internetforall.gov/news-media/biden-harris-administration-announces-state-allocations-4245-billion-high-speed-internet>; “Funding Recipients,” https://www.internetforall.gov/funding-recipients?program_status=0&state=NM&form_build_id=form-DAXK2x83ymL1QUtoDMCtUnJWMvuC2d-1ZS_nzJdib84&form_id=ntia_interactive_map_state_and_program_selection; “Biden Administration awards more than \$675 million to New Mexico to expand broadband access statewide,” Office of the Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, June 26 2023, <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2023/06/26/biden-administration-awards-more-than-675-million-to-new-mexico-to-expand-broadband-access-statewide/>.

⁴⁷ See generally explanation of BEAD spending priorities in BEAD NOFO, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/BEAD%20NOFO.pdf>; “Digital Equity Act – State Planning Grant Program,” Internet for All, June 2022, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/DE-App-Guidance-Webinar-Presentation.pdf>.

⁴⁸ “Biden-Harris Administration Awards More Than \$5.7 Million to New Mexico in ‘Internet for All’ Planning Grants,” NTIA, Press Release, December 22, 2022, <https://ntia.gov/press-release/2022/biden-harris-administration-awards-more-57-million-new-mexico-internet-all>.

Tribal Broadband Connectivity program (TBCP)

The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) is a \$3 billion program, to support Tribal governments bringing high-speed Internet to Tribal lands, including infrastructure, telehealth, distance learning, affordability, and digital inclusion initiatives.⁴⁹ Since August 2022, 17 Tribes in New Mexico have received TBCP awards through this program:

Table 6: Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program grant recipients⁵⁰

TBCP Grant recipient	TBCP Funded Amount
Mescalero Apache Tribe-MATI	\$43,943,116.00
Jicarilla Apache Nation-JAPNA	\$6,935,801.00
Navajo Nation-NTUA	\$50,830,943.87
Fort Sill Apache	\$500,000.00
Pueblo of Acoma	\$14,346,244
Pueblo of Isleta	\$26,033,972.74
Pueblo of Jemez	\$500,000.00
Kewa- Santo Domingo	\$12,775,576.64
Pueblo of Zia	\$4,695,868.82
Pueblo of Nambe	\$500,000.00
Pueblo of Picuris	\$3,742,991.00
Pueblo De San Ildefonso	\$4,925,582.00
Ohkay Owingeh	\$500,000.00
Pueblo Of Santa Clara	\$9,175,946.00
Pueblo Of Taos	\$477,817.00
Pueblo Of Tesuque	\$413, 479.00
Santa Fe Indian School	\$57,298,683.09
Total So Far:	\$237,182,542

** The Pueblo of Cochiti, Pueblo of San Felipe, Pueblo of Sandia, Pueblo of Santa Ana, Pueblo of Zuni, Pueblo of Pojoaque, and Pueblo of Laguna are not yet funded through the TBCP and/or may not have submitted a TBCP Round 1 application or may be in review.*

⁴⁹ Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, BroadbandUSA, NTIA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/tribal-broadband-connectivity>

⁵⁰ TBCP Awards, BroadbandUSA, NTIA <https://broadbandusa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/07f987529ae24273aec3320e5033d503>

Digital Equity Grant programs (DE)

NTIA's three Digital Equity Act grant programs will distribute \$2.75 billion to promote digital equity and inclusion.⁵¹ States eligible to participate in the Digital Equity (DE) programs are also eligible to participate in the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program.

State Digital Equity Planning Grant program

The State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program provided \$60 million for formula-based funding for States, DC, Territories, and Tribal entities to develop a Digital Equity Plan, which is a prerequisite to participation in the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program. New Mexico received a State Digital Equity Planning grant of \$740,534.91, which is supporting research and development of the State Digital Equity Plan.⁵²

Digital Equity Capacity Grant program

The Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program is designed to support implementation of the State Digital Equity plan and promote digital inclusion. It will provide \$1.44 billion in grants to participating states and territories on a formula basis. As part of the application process, the State is required to submit the State Digital Equity Plan produced through the Digital Equity Planning Grant Program.⁵³

Digital Equity Competitive Grant program

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$1.25 billion to establish the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. The law requires NTIA to establish the program “not later than 30 days after the date on which the Assistant Secretary begins awarding State Digital Equity Capacity Grants, and not before that date.” In general, grant awards in this program may be used for digital inclusion activities, broadband adoption facilitation, training and workforce development activities, and to support digital equity programs targeting covered populations.

Connecting Minority Communities program

The NTIA Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program is a \$268 million grant program to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) for the purchase of broadband internet access service and

⁵¹ “Digital Equity Act Programs,” Internet for All, <https://internetforall.gov/program/digital-equity-act-programs>
<https://internetforall.gov/program/digital-equity-act-programs>.

⁵² “Digital Equity Act Programs,” BroadbandUSA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/funding-programs/digital-equity-act-programs>;
“Funding by State/Territory,” Internet for All, https://www.internet4all.gov/funding-by-state-territory?program_status=0&state=Nm&form_build_id=formd6qKuKeV0tUemvOsz1x0UiYBa6G_E9K2igHGAYXTwh0&form_id=ntia_interactive_map_state_and_program_selection.

⁵³ Digital Equity Act of 2021, 42 US Code Section 1724(1).

eligible equipment or to hire and train information technology personnel.⁵⁴ Four New Mexico institutions have received grants pursuant to this program since 2022:

Table 7: NTIA Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program grant recipients⁵⁵

Grant recipient	Grant amount
New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) in Las Vegas, New Mexico	\$2,988,682
Eastern New Mexico University Roswell	\$1,945,329
New Mexico State University (NMSU)	\$1,686,620
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute	\$1,645,133

16.3 Economic Development Administration programs (EDA)

The Economic Development Administration oversees a few economic development grant programs that can also contribute to broadband expansion.

Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance program

The Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program⁵⁶ is focused on advancing economic development through projects that address equity, workforce development, and climate change resiliency, with preference given to geographical areas that can demonstrate need and project feasibility. Any infrastructure applications must be oriented towards public or non-profit ownership. Awards are generally between \$150,000 and \$1 million and can cover construction, loans, and studies, as well as other projects designed to address local economic issues. In most cases, grantees are required to provide matching funds. Applications are evaluated on a rolling basis until the funds are exhausted or a new Notice of Funding Opportunity is issued.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ “Connecting Minority Communities Program,” Broadband USA, NTIA <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/connecting-minority-communities#:~:text=The%20Connecting%20Minority%20Communities%20Pilot,or%20to%20hire%20and%20train>

⁵⁵ “Award Recipients” Broadband USA, NTIA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/connecting-minority-communities/award-recipients>

⁵⁶ “Economic Adjustment Assistance,” U.S. Economic Development Administration, <https://www.eda.gov/economic-adjustment-assistance>.

⁵⁷ “Fiscal Year 2023 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA) Application Submission and Program Requirements,” U.S. Economic Development Administration, <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2023-public-works-and-economic-adjustment-assistance>.

Public Works Planning and Local Technical Assistance program

The Economic Development Administration's Public Works Planning and Local Technical Assistance Program supports economic development projects such as those that stimulate job creation, private investment, workforce development, and foreign direct investment.⁵⁸ Eligible entities include District Organizations of an Economic Development District, tribal entities, governments or subdivisions, educational entities, and nonprofits working with governments. Available funding includes \$33 million for planning and \$10 million available for technical assistance in 2023. Awards are made as a grant or a cooperative agreement with the EDA. In almost all cases, cost sharing is required.⁵⁹

16.4 Federal Communications Commission programs (FCC)

The FCC is the source for several significant sources of broadband funding for both public entities and individual households. The Federal Communications Commission Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) has issued broadband awards to New Mexican recipients, the largest of which was \$55 million for broadband network expansion. The FCC also facilitated the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Window program, which is now closed, which provided an opportunity for Tribal communities in rural areas to access unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum over their rural Tribal lands. Fifteen Tribal communities in New Mexico applied for and received spectrum awards.

E-Rate program

The E-Rate program provides subsidies for broadband to public and private schools, school districts, libraries, and consortia, with funds awarded through subsidies issued by the Universal Service Fund. The program has an annual funding cap of \$4.15 billion.⁶⁰

Healthcare Connect and Rural Healthcare programs

The FCC's Healthcare Connect and Rural Healthcare programs provide subsidized service for hospitals and clinics. The Healthcare Connect and Rural Healthcare Program funds broadband connections to healthcare providers, with a specific goal to reduce the disparity in costs between rural and urban internet (and therefore medical) costs. Eligible entities include public and

⁵⁸ "Local Technical Assistance," U.S. Economic Development Administration, <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/local-technical-assistance>.

⁵⁹ "Fiscal Year 2021-2023 EDA Planning and Local Technical Assistance Program," U.S. Economic Development Administration, <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2021-2023-eda-planning-and-local-technical-assistance> <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2021-2023-eda-planning-and-local-technical-assistance>

⁶⁰ "E-Rate: Universal Service Program for Schools and Libraries," Federal Communications Commission, <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries-e-rate> <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries-e-rate>.

nonprofit healthcare providers (HCP), and consortia of HCPs. Priority among applicants is determined by the degree of rurality. Eligible costs include those associated with procuring telecommunication services and broadband connectivity.⁶¹

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is an FCC program administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) that subsidizes broadband services for low-income households.⁶² The program provides eligible households with a monthly subsidy of up to \$30 per month toward internet service and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands, which is paid directly to the subscriber's participating ISP. ACP also provides a one-time discount of up to \$100 on the purchase of a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers; this discount addresses some of the challenges around device ownership for low-income residents.

A household is eligible for ACP if the household income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or if a household member meets at least one of the criteria specified by the FCC (e.g., a household member is enrolled in a government benefit program like Medicaid, SNAP, or WIC).⁶³ Participants are eligible for one monthly service discount and one device discount per household. A subscriber can apply online through the official ACP enrollment site or, in some cases, by contacting a participating ISP or outreach partner. Once enrolled in ACP, a subscriber can choose a plan with a participating ISP.⁶⁴

USAC provides an online tool that locates ISPs offering discounts using location data provided by a subscriber; however, information on plans that are free or discounted with the ACP benefit must be obtained directly from providers, along with information on prices and other terms and conditions.⁶⁵

As of June 19, 2023, the FCC reports that 167,136 New Mexico households (37 percent of eligible households) are receiving the ACP subsidy for internet services, while an estimated 450,000 households (54 percent of all households in New Mexico) may be eligible to receive the subsidy.)

⁶¹ "Federal Communications Commission - Rural Health Care Program," BroadbandUSA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/federal/federal-funding/federal-communications-commission-rural-health-care-program>; "Rural Health Care - Universal Service Administrative Company," USAC, <https://www.usac.org/rural-health-care/>.

⁶² *In the Matter of Affordable Connectivity Program, Emergency Broadband Benefit Program*, WC Dockets N. 21-40, 20-445. FCC. <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-releases-rules-implement-affordable-connectivity-program>

⁶³ "Affordable Connectivity Program," FCC, <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>.

⁶⁴ "Save on your internet bill," FCC, <https://www.getinternet.gov/apply>.

⁶⁵ "Does your cable company participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program?," Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, February 11, 2022, <https://www.benton.org/blog/does-your-cable-company-participate-affordable-connectivity-program>.

17. State funding for broadband and digital inclusion

OBAE has deployed federal and State funds as the basis for grant programs designed to bridge the digital divide in a variety of ways. The State will continue to develop grant programs to achieve its digital equity goals—most notably through \$675.4 million in BEAD funding allocations just announced in late June 2023.

17.1 Connect New Mexico Fund (CNMF)

Section 6 of the Connect New Mexico Act established the Connect New Mexico Fund in December 2021.⁶⁶ Section 17 of Senate Bill 377 appropriated \$100 million from State funds to establish the Connect New Mexico Fund (CNMF), specifying that \$70 million was “to plan, design, engineer, construct, purchase and equip broadband infrastructure statewide, \$5 million was “for strategic planning and grant writing support for broadband service in unserved areas,” and \$25 million was “to plan, design, engineer, construct, purchase and equip broadband infrastructure for public schools statewide.”⁶⁷

Table 8: Breakdown of funding in the Connect New Mexico Fund

Source	Purpose	Total	Encumbered	Expended	Available
CNMF Broadband Infrastructure	Connect New Mexico Fund for infrastructure, design, and planning	\$70,000,000	\$172,520	\$705,400	\$69,122,080
CNMF Education	Connect New Mexico Fund for Education	\$25,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000,000
CNMF Tribal, Local Government, and Co-ops	Connect New Mexico Grant writing fund for Tribal and local governments, and telephone and electric co-ops	\$5,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000,000

⁶⁶ Connect New Mexico Act, <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/bills/house/HB0010.html>.

⁶⁷ “An Act Making General Appropriations and Authorizing Expenditures,” <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/SB0377.PDF>.

OBAE in conjunction with the Connect New Mexico Council, is developing the full Connect New Mexico Grant program.⁶⁸ The purpose of the Connect New Mexico Grant program, as established by the Connect New Mexico Act,⁶⁹ is to “develop, expand and support digital inclusion.” These grants are to be awarded on a competitive basis with proposals submitted by local governments, State agencies, public educational institutions, and Tribal governments. Factors to be considered in awarding grants, include “the extent to which the project connects unserved and underserved populations of New Mexico,” with priority given to projects that will connect unserved populations, and “the degree to which the project fosters digital inclusion.” The Connect New Mexico Act⁷⁰ requires rulemaking to establish the application procedure, required qualifications, and the purposes for which grants may be used. This rulemaking was completed in mid-April of 2023.

17.2 Connect New Mexico Pilot program (CNMP)

Utilizing a Capital Projects fund grant from the Department of Treasury’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) program,⁷¹ OBAE deployed the Connect New Mexico Pilot program as part of its strategy to address challenges to broadband deployment and digital equity. It designed the Pilot program to leverage \$117 million for what was described at the time as the largest broadband expansion effort in the State’s history.⁷²

The Notice of Funding Opportunity for the first round of Pilot program grants described the program’s purpose as to “bridge the digital divide and foster socioeconomic progress by providing infrastructure grants for broadband deployment to unserved and underserved communities.” OBAE established performance standards, including a requirement that networks deliver 100 Mbps symmetrical speeds and support low latency to enable real-time, interactive

⁶⁸ “Governor announces broadband expansion funding for initial Connect New Mexico Pilot Program awardees,” November 10, 2022, <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2022/11/10/governor-announces-broadband-expansion-funding-for-initial-connect-new-mexico-pilot-program-awardees/>.

⁶⁹ HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation. <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

⁷⁰ HB10- Connect New Mexico Act 2021 (63-9K-1 to 63-9K-7 NMSA 1978), New Mexico Legislation. <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/21%20Regular/final/HB0010.pdf>

⁷¹ The Department of Treasury approved New Mexico’s plan to invest \$117 million in the program, described in the funding sheet as “The Connect New Mexico Broadband grant program is a competitive grant program designed to build broadband infrastructure to areas of the state without access to reliable wireline service. The program is designed to provide internet service with speeds of 100/100 Mbps symmetrical to households and businesses upon project completion.” Capital Projects Fund Award Fact Sheet New Mexico, <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Batch-6-State-Award-Fact-Sheet-NM-Dec-2022.pdf>; “Capital Projects Fund,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/capital-projects-fund#Funding%20Amounts>.

⁷² “Gov. Lujan Grisham launches statewide broadband grant pilot program,” News Release, August 10, 2022, <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2022/08/10/gov-lujan-grisham-launches-statewide-broadband-grant-pilot-program/>. The Pilot Program was created as a “forerunner to the Connect New Mexico Broadband Grant Program,” established in 2021 under the Connect New Mexico Act.

applications.

In cases involving geographic, topographic, or excessive cost barriers, the guidelines allowed an applicant to propose at least 100/20 Mbps with scalability to 100 Mbps symmetrical. The Pilot Program's grant focus is last-mile networks and complementary facilities such as middle-mile and community Wi-Fi networks.⁷³

OBAE announced a total of eight Connect New Mexico Pilot program awards so far, in the first two rounds of funding, Waves 1 in November 2022 and Wave 2 in March 2023. Awards were granted to ISP projects to extend broadband service to areas categorized as unserved or underserved, including in some instances, "small, isolated communities and villages." Most awards were matched with some amount of non-State funding. The application period for Wave Three closed in April 2023.⁷⁴

Wave 2 Funding Awards Announced March 27, 2023

- SWC Telesolutions (DBA Ethos Broadband) - \$1.04 million plus \$1.05 million match
West Gallup and Thoreau
- Tularosa Communications - \$7.44 million plus 2.4 million match
West Alamogordo Valley, Bent, Sun Valley
- Valley TeleCom Group - \$3.7 million plus \$1.99 million match
Columbus

Wave 1 Funding Awards Announced November 11, 2022

- Comcast Corporation
Phase 1: \$8.26 million with 50% match
Phase One: Anthony, Chamberino, La Mesa, Vado
- Comcast Phase 2: \$8.84 with 50% match
Phase Two/Three: Chaparral, La Union, Santa Teresa
- Central New Mexico Electric Cooperative - \$6.57 million with 25% match
Estancia, Mountainair

⁷³ Connect New Mexico Pilot Program Notice of Funding Opportunity, NOFO #: OBAE-2022.001, <https://api.realfile.rtsclients.com/PublicFiles/16569e3bf98c467e95901b46fd511499/4de96794-cd8c-4811-b3f9-89f864aeb042/pilot-program-nofo-2022-08-10.pdf>.

⁷⁴ "New Mexico Funding Awards," [Funding Awards - CONNECT NEW MEXICO \(nm.gov\)](https://connect.nm.gov/funding-awards.html), <https://connect.nm.gov/funding-awards.html>; "Governor announces broadband expansion funding for initial Connect New Mexico Pilot Program awardees," November 10, 2022, <https://www.doit.nm.gov/2022/11/10/governor-announces-broadband-expansion-funding-for-initial-connect-new-mexico-pilot-program-awardees/>; "Governor Lujan Grisham Announces \$17 Million in Broadband Grant Awards to Bridge the Digital Divide in Unserved, Economically Distressed Communities," May 28, 2023, <https://www.doit.nm.gov/2023/03/28/governor-lujan-grisham-announces-17-million-in-broadband-grant-awards-to-bridge-the-digital-divide-in-unserved-economically-distressed-communities/>.

- Ethos Broadband \$8.48 million with 42% match
Truth or Consequences, Williamsburg
- Socorro Electric Cooperative - \$6.475 million with 32% match
Village of Magdalena

17.3 Additional details on state-funded programs

There are additional State-funded programs that can provide support for broadband availability and solving digital equity challenges. Some of these were outlined in the New Mexico Three-Year Broadband Plan Update, and others will be detailed in the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Five-Year Action Plan. These current programs, funded by State appropriations or grants, are summarized in the table below (Table 9).

Table 9: State-funded programs in New Mexico supporting broadband availability and digital equity.

Source	Purpose	Total	Encumbered	Expended	Available
BEAD Planning funds (federal)	BEAD planning	\$5,000,000	\$2,948,386	\$195,766	\$1,885,848
Digital Equity Planning funds (federal)	Digital Equity planning	\$740,534	\$500,000	\$0	\$240,534
Connect New Mexico Pilot Program (ARPA CPF funds)	CNMP Pilot Program (Wave 1 and 2 awarded; applications in review for Wave 3)	\$117,000,000	\$37,173,659	\$0	\$79,826,341
ARPA administrative funds (federal)	Administrative funds for CNMP Program	\$6,066,812	\$2,104,313	\$307,790	\$3,654,709
Rural Broadband Fund (State funds)	For infrastructure and planning in rural New Mexico	\$10,000,000	\$2,360,092	\$6,967,736	\$672,172



Navajo ROW Match (State funds)	Money for State match for Navajo Nation project	\$3,000,000	\$2,166,099	\$833,901	\$0
Capital Outlay (State funds)	Severance Tax Bond for infrastructure, design, and planning	\$7,048,000	\$2,413,848	\$47,745	\$4,586,407
Northern NM STB	Severance Tax Bond (STB) for REDInet project in Rio Arriba County	\$372,900	\$372,900	\$0	\$372
State DE	State funding for digital equity	\$1,000,000	\$738,675	\$261,325	\$0
CNMF Broadband Infrastructure	Connect New Mexico Fund for infrastructure, design, and planning	\$70,000,000	\$172,520	\$705,400	\$69,122,080
CNMF Education	Connect New Mexico Fund for Education	\$25,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000,000
CNMF Tribal, Local Government, and Co-ops	Connect New Mexico Grant writing fund for Tribal and local governments, and telephone and electric co-ops	\$5,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000,000

Other programs are partially or wholly outgrowths of federal funding initiatives to extend broadband to unserved and underserved areas and to address challenges to digital literacy.

The New Mexico Department of Information Technology (DoIT) established the New Mexico Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP) through a U.S. Economic Development Administration (US EDA) CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant to provide technical assistance to qualified government entities including Tribal governments, utility coops, companies, non-profits, and communities who are seeking to deploy or expand broadband infrastructure and/or services. So

far, 11 counties and municipalities have received assistance through the program.

DoIT used a \$4.8 million grant awarded by the NTIA through the State Broadband Initiative to provide mapping, planning, capacity building, and technical assistance for broadband access and services. It supports the creation of the New Mexico Broadband Map, which has the objective of mapping broadband availability throughout the State. The grant also supported programs to develop plans to expand and promote broadband use in unserved areas and to support digital literacy training.

DoIT also provides technical assistance to New Mexico community institutions to help them provide vital services, such as telehealth, to people who might otherwise not have access to them. For example, DoIT worked with a private insurer to deploy an enhanced form of telehealth dependent on strong broadband connectivity at safety-net health clinics in rural communities near the Navajo Nation in northwest New Mexico in Cuba, Counselor, Torreon, Ojo Encino, and Thoreau—some of the State's most underserved communities. With the connectivity DoIT facilitated, the clinics will be able to perform specialty care that would not be possible through a standard telehealth appointment.

In addition to promoting broadband expansion, these grants illustrate the State's ability to develop programs to target and solve challenges.

Due to recent passage of the Digital Equity in Education Act⁷⁵ by the state legislature, the New Mexico Digital Equity in Education Act Advisory Committee is preparing to hold its first meeting in August to begin developing parameters for distributions from the Educational Technology Fund and advising the Public Education Department (PED) on implementation of the Digital Equity in Education Act. This will include assessing educational technology needs and promoting collaborative best practices for the use of educational technology. HB401 defines digital equity in education as “a condition in which every learner has the information, support and skills to equitably access affordable, reliable and high-speed internet; adequate internet- enabled devices; digital literacy training; quality technical support; and evidence-based applications and content designed to facilitate both self-sufficient and collaborative learning.” HB401 will require school districts and charter schools to develop an educational technology plan, which must include descriptions of the following:

- How digital equity is being addressed for students;
- The replacement and repair process for devices issued to students, teachers, and families;

⁷⁵ HB401, Digital Equity in Education Act,
<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/23%20Regular/LESCAnalysis/HB0401.PDF>

- Internet service connectivity support, including access to internet services for at-risk students;
- Information technology support available to students, teachers, and parents;
- Professional development provided to teachers regarding digital citizenship;
- Cybersecurity protection provided for the devices and applications issued to teachers and students; and
- Identity protection provided to teachers and students.

18. Philanthropy and other funding resources

Federal and state funding for broadband, though historic and critical, is currently not enough to ensure the goals of Internet access and digital equity for all New Mexicans. Collective effort and investment, as well as collaboration, creativity, and commitment from all stakeholders, including Industry and philanthropy, is essential. A few examples are included here.

18.1 New Mexico Broadband Equity Fund

The mission of the New Mexico Foundation is to “steward community resources, build partnerships, and create opportunities that transform lives throughout New Mexico.” The New Mexico Foundation is home to the New Mexico Broadband Equity Fund, the Broadband Equity Grant, and the New Mexico Broadband Collective. The New Mexico Broadband Collective was established in March 2021 to begin to address the challenge of broadband access and equity for all. Recognizing the necessity of a collaborative, statewide approach to ensuring high-speed broadband connectivity for all residents of New Mexico, a diverse group of funders, tribal, nonprofit, and government representatives across the state came together to form the New Mexico Broadband Collective with leadership from Groundworks New Mexico, New Mexico Foundation, and Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation (LANL Foundation). Thanks to their initial efforts and vision, informal broadband working groups were established prior to the development of the Connect New Mexico Council and members worked together to build the foundations of a robust broadband ecosystem, raise awareness of community needs and opportunities, survey municipalities, counties, and tribes, and begin to raise initial funds to support grassroots digital equity initiatives and to support local organizations working on-the-ground to build modern Internet connectivity systems and support services for their communities. In the inaugural 2022 grant cycle, \$455,000 was distributed from the New Mexico Broadband Equity Fund through the New Mexico Broadband Equity Grant Program to the following nine organizations and tribes:

- **Colores United** (Luna County) \$75,000 - To increase connectivity by amplifying Wi-Fi at key locations in Columbus, New Mexico, such as the town library, city hall, senior center,

Borderlands Café, and other locations, over two years. The town of Columbus has a population of 1,600 residents, many of whom do not have access or reliable access to Wi-Fi.

- **Jicarilla Apache Nation Power Authority** (Rio Arriba & Sandoval Counties) \$19,740 To upgrade the tribal office's computer systems. The JAN is working to upgrade the fiber optic infrastructure throughout the entire community and the tribal office computer system upgrades are needed to better integrate the technology for the overall broadband improvements.
- **Picuris Pueblo** (Taos County) \$59,904 - To develop, install and operate high-speed broadband service that would be 100 percent owned and operated by the tribe. The pueblo has been closed since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and many residents, especially tribal students, do not have access. The tribal utilities department will take the lead on this two-year project.
- **Pueblo of Cochiti** (Sandoval) \$40,500 - To expand the pueblo's IT department, which currently comprises two people, and the completion of fiber to homes of Cochiti Pueblo residents. The Pueblo consists of approximately 1,800 residents, all of whom are served by a single T1 connection.
- **Pueblo of Laguna Utility Authority** (Cibola County) \$71,596 - To continue to expand the reach of broadband in the Laguna Pueblo community. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a need for network upgrade, as the current system serves 500 tribal members.
- **El Valle de Anton Chico Library** (San Miguel and Guadalupe County) \$35,540 - To purchase equipment and supplies that will allow the library to implement various programs, including coding for girls, early literacy and bilingual programs, as well as basic computer applications to support the community.
- **REDINet** (Santa Fe and Rio Arriba County) \$44,720 - For system equipment that will allow the group to have an uninterrupted power supply. REDINet is a high-speed, open access community broadband network located in Northern New Mexico and owned and operated by a consortium of local and tribal governments. The consortium was set up to bring broadband services at affordable prices to constituencies.
- **True Kids 1** (Taos County) \$33,000 - For a "laptop library" and to train a "Student Squad," comprised of students in Taos County schools on different operating systems and reduced and free internet service available to community members. The students will then train other senior citizens, families and community members.
- **Yee Ha'oolniidoo** (San Juan and McKinley Counties) \$75,000 - To primarily bridge the digital divide in the Navajo communities of Ramah and Sheep Springs. This grant will support a community planning process, broadband needs assessment and strategic plan.

18.2 National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) - Digital Navigators Corps

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) is working collaboratively with more than 850 digital inclusion practitioners and advocates across the nation to support broadband access, tech devices, digital skills training, and tech support. NDIA launched the National Digital Navigator Corps program and in the fall of 2022, awarded 18 grants as part of a \$10 million investment by Google.org to fund the hiring and training of community-based digital navigators, alongside programmatic and technical support to further develop NDIA’s digital navigator model for rural and Tribal communities, which provides a holistic, community-based digital inclusion program that empowers the community with local capacity-building and support for long-term sustainability and community self-reliance.⁷⁶

According to NDIA, Digital Navigators are defined as “trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigation services include ongoing one-on-one assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support.”

The Pueblo of Jemez is a sub-grantee included in the NDIA National Digital Navigator Corps program. Funding and support will go toward hiring community-based digital navigators alongside programmatic and technical support for developing a pilot for tribal and rural communities.

“Digital Navigators, like promotoras, to make home visits would be a big help, especially for the elderly because many don’t drive anymore or don’t have cars.” Focus Group Participant

18.3 The Federal Reserve Bank System

Aware that digital equity serves a foundational role in building strong economies, members of the Federal Reserve Bank System, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis - Denver branch, are collaborating with NDIA to facilitate free trainings and support, including a series of State Digital Equity Plan Workshops that provide OBAE and other states with the knowledge, tools and resources necessary to develop a comprehensive State Digital Equity Plan, build peer support, and deepen understanding of plan requirements, while cultivating a suite of tactics, tools, and best practices for completing an effective State Digital Equity Plan.

⁷⁶ National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/blog/2022/09/07/ndia-awards-18-national-digital-navigator-corps-grants-in-rural-tribal-areas/>

Meanwhile, in 2022, the existing digital inclusion collaboratives, Digital El Paso and Doña Ana Broadband were merged to form a regional coalition of partners across two states, two community foundations, two counties, and a cross-sector of public and private partners. The regional coalition is working together to launch and manage projects to close the digital divide and create a Borderplex Region that is a leader in digital inclusion, accessibility, and broadband affordability. El Paso and Doña Ana Counties are two of four communities partnered with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas through their Advancing Digital Inclusion Community Initiative.⁷⁷ Borderplex Connect is a regional coalition of public, private, and nonprofit partners dedicated to promoting digital inclusion through outreach, action, and advocacy in the Borderplex region, including El Paso and Doña Ana counties. Borderplex Connect’s mission is to support and provide access to broadband internet, including without limitation internet services, access to devices and digital skills training the rural and/or underserved, economically challenged areas of Far West Texas and Southern New Mexico.

19. Digital Equity programs in New Mexico

19.1 Internet service provider affordability programs

Internet service Providers (ISPs) that participate in the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) are a significant part of the effort to improve digital equity in New Mexico. Many ISPs operating in New Mexico are actively facilitating the State’s digital equity goals not just by participating in the ACP, but also by promoting enrollment and offering low-cost services and devices to low-income households.

As reflected in Appendix B, more than 100 ISPs in the State (including mobile providers) participate in the ACP and about 30 offer low-cost plans for eligible low-income subscribers. The low-cost programs are designed to deliver reliable service at effectively no cost for subscribers who are enrolled in the ACP. New Mexico residents can identify ISPs offering discount plans by using the USAC search tool.⁷⁸ Many ISPs also advertise their participation and conduct outreach to notify eligible customers. As is generally the case elsewhere, ISPs offer various levels of service at different prices; while not all will align with the ACP discount to result in a very low-cost or no-cost subscription, many will, as shown in Appendix B, including some of the largest providers.

⁷⁷ Borderplex Connect, <https://www.borderplexconnect.org/about>

⁷⁸ “Affordable Connectivity Program: Companies Near Me,” USAC, <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/companies-near-me/>.

This circumstance makes ACP participation a valuable tool in reducing the impact of affordability on broadband adoption in the State.

19.2 Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach Grant

The FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Outreach Grant provides funding for governmental and non-governmental partners to conduct a wide range of outreach activities to raise awareness of and increase enrollment in the ACP.

Four New Mexico entities were allotted grants under the program's first funding opportunity:

- City of Albuquerque received \$400,000
- New Mexico Black Leadership Council received \$400,000
- Pueblo of Jemez received \$379,234
- Pueblo of Zuni received \$325,000.⁷⁹

19.3 Digital equity programs - examples

Information on digital equity programs is being collected through research, working groups, and outreach efforts, as well as surveys and asset inventories currently being distributed through stakeholder engagement and data collection activities currently underway in preparation of the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and State Digital Equity Plan. OBAE will continue to engage these and other digital equity partners as OBAE grows the Digital Equity ecosystem of support. Table 10, below, provides a representative sample of digital equity programs identified in the State of New Mexico, including programs run by nonprofits, schools, local governments, and other entities. These programs include workforce development and digital skills training and support services related to broadband adoption and use; technical assistance programs aimed at supporting digital inclusion; and initiatives and coalitions that work toward digital equity.

⁷⁹ "N.M. Delegation Announces Over \$1.5 Million in Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grants," News Release, March 16, 2023, <https://www.lujan.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/n-m-delegation-announces-over-1-5-million-in-affordable-connectivity-outreach-grants>.

Table 10: Representative sample of digital equity programs in New Mexico

Program name	Description
Professional Readiness and Technical Experience for Careers (PROTEC)	<p>PROTEC provides a range of training and certification intensives to help individuals improve Business Skills and find paid internships and entry-level employment opportunities through Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) Office of Continuing Education and Contract Training. This program was developed in partnership between Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe County, the City of Santa Fe, and New Mexico Workforce Connection and offers a range of non-conventional training opportunities that build “Professional Readiness and Technical Experience for Careers.”</p>
SFCC Fiber Optic Technician Certification training; Fiber to the Home Certification training, and Broadband Academy and Career Pathways	<p>Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) has held seven Fiber Optic Technician certification training intensives in 2022 and 2023 (six in Santa Fe County and one in Luna County), serving 117 students so far. Two additional sessions are planned for late summer and fall 2023. The training provides three certifications recognized by the Fiber Optic Association (FOA) and the U.S. Department of Labor: 1) Certified Fiber Optic Technician 2) Certified Fiber Optics Specialist in Testing and Maintenance, and 3) Certified Fiber Optics Specialist in Splicing. SFCC also offers students OSHA Safety, Customer Service, and Digital Business Skills through PROTEC.</p> <p>SFCC also held two Fiber to the Home Certification training sessions in Santa Fe County in 2022, with 33 students participating. One additional session is planned for 2023. Program training and certification are recognized by FOA and the U.S. Department of Labor.</p> <p>Broadband training through SFCC has been made possible thanks to funding provided by Santa Fe County, as well as the Southwest Council of Governments for students in Luna County.</p> <p>In 2022, 24 Native students and more than 24 Hispanic students participated in SFCC fiber optic certification training programs. Credentials earned are valid for three years and recognized by the national Fiber Optic Association (FOA) and the US Department of Labor.</p>
Be Pro Be Proud New Mexico	<p>The New Mexico Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Be Pro Be Proud, a technical workforce development organization active in several states, on an initiative in which a mobile tour bus will make stops across the State to showcase and provide information about various career opportunities—including those related to broadband deployment. Nationally, fiber optic cable splicing is the organization’s third most popular career module choice.</p>



<p>New Mexico Broadband Equity Fund of the New Mexico Foundation</p>	<p>A diverse group of funders, tribal, nonprofit, and government representatives across the State came together to support a community-driven and statewide approach to ensuring that broadband services are available to all New Mexicans. The NM Foundation, Groundworks, and the LANL Foundation led initial development of the Broadband Collective, which facilitated initial broadband working groups and established the New Mexico Broadband Equity Fund at the New Mexico Foundation, through which Broadband Equity grants totaling \$455,000 were distributed to nine organizations and tribes in 2022.</p>
<p>Pueblo of Jemez Digital Navigators Award</p>	<p>Pueblo of Jemez is a sub-grantee included in the National Digital Inclusion Alliance’s (NDIA) Digital Navigators Award. Funding and support will go toward hiring community-based digital navigators alongside programmatic and technical support to further develop INDIA's digital navigator model for rural and Tribal communities.</p>
<p>New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) – "Building Sustainable Technology and Equity Connected Communities through Youth and Adult Workforce Development: the Acequia and Land Grant Education" (ALGE) Project</p>	<p>The University received an award of \$3 million through the Connecting Minority Communities pilot program to use digital technology to deliver a culturally responsive curriculum to underserved populations in Northern New Mexico (NNM), and culturally sustaining pedagogy to teachers of students in underserved populations.</p>
<p>Eastern New Mexico University Roswell (ENMUR) – “Creating Connected Communities to Provide Opportunities (Project C-3PO)”</p>	<p>ENMUR received \$1.9 million through the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program to increase broadband access and digital skills in its community, including training minority business owners on software to grow their businesses and operating a technology support hotline.</p>
<p>New Mexico State University (NMSU) – “Bringing Broadband to New Mexico State University and Surrounding Counties”</p>	<p>The University was awarded \$1.7 million through the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program to increase broadband access on campus and in the surrounding community.</p>



<p>Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) – “Parallel Network Upgrade”</p>	<p>SIPI received \$1.6 million through the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, which it will use to implement an upgraded campus wide network.</p>
<p>Borderplex Connect – Digital Equity</p>	<p>Digital inclusion collaboratives from Doña Ana County in New Mexico and El Paso County in Texas merged to form a regional partnership to support broadband access and equity. In addition to supporting broadband outreach, education, mobilization, and capacity-building, projects in New Mexico include Opportunity Las Cruces, an initiative led by New Mexico State University to provide Las Cruces residents with digital skills training; Mamacitas Cibernéticas, a grassroots effort in which Sunland Park parents teach other parents digital skills; and ACP promotion.</p>
<p>Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP)</p>	<p>TEDP, a program of the State of New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing, provides telecommunications devices at no cost to qualifying residents with speech or hearing loss who need assistance with communication. iPads are included in the program, if the purpose is to access telecommunications, whether by email, video call, Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) Applications, etc.</p>
<p>New Mexico State Library – Broadband for Libraries Program</p>	<p>The New Mexico State Library, a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs serving 100 public and Tribal libraries throughout the State, notes in its 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan that “support for broadband infrastructure and digital equity are now an important part of NMSL operations.”</p> <p>Broadband For Libraries provides funding and consultant support for public and Tribal libraries to maximize use of federal E-Rate funding and ensure library networks are up to date. This program ensures affordable and dependable access to high-speed internet in communities statewide.</p>
<p>Comcast and United Way New Mexico</p>	<p>As part of Project UP, Comcast’s \$1 billion nationwide digital equity initiative, the company supported the United Way of New Mexico in staffing its 2-1-1 call center with digital navigators who can provide information about the ACP.</p>
<p>UNM-Taos Hub of Internet-based Vocation and Education (HIVE)</p>	<p>HIVE offers coworking space, individualized business coaching, and digital skills classes to help individuals grow their career or business through online opportunities. The program is a public-private partnership and a project of the Taos Community Foundation; it has received national recognition, including being selected for the Rural Innovation Initiative.</p>



<p>CNM Ingenuity</p>	<p>The “enterprise arm” of Central New Mexico Community College provides accelerated training in key growth sectors, including technology, and wrap-around support for learners.</p>
<p>Yee Ha’ólníi Doo – Ramah, N.M. and Sheep Springs, N.M. broadband strategic plan</p>	<p>This Utah-based organization, which focuses on empowering Navajo and Hopi communities, received a \$75,000 grant from the New Mexico Broadband Collective in 2022 to lead a needs assessment, community planning process, and broadband strategic plan development to bridge the digital divide in the Navajo communities of Ramah, N.M. and Sheep Springs, N.M. As discussed in Section 3.3.4, the organization also plans to open two Innovation Hubs in these communities with support from a Kellogg Foundation grant.</p>
<p>New Mexico Family and Community Engagement Solutions (NM FaCES)</p>	<p>A public-private collaboration that builds on the New Mexico Public Education Department’s (NMPED) work to support home connectivity for students, this initiative takes a community-focused approach to promote digital equity. The program is designed to work alongside the State’s broadband expansion effort and prepare residents to benefit from broadband by helping individuals “[connect] as learners and creators” and growing a diverse STEM/IT workforce to provide well-paid, stable employment for New Mexicans living in marginalized communities.</p>
<p>Cultivating Coders</p>	<p>This nonprofit brings coding bootcamps to rural, Tribal, and inner-city communities with the goal of reaching communities underrepresented in the tech field. The organization reports that it has held seven trainings in New Mexico cities, as well as one in the Navajo Nation, and was awarded \$45,000 through the New Mexico Foundation’s workforce equity initiative in April 2023.</p>

In addition, many of the activities associated with broadband access have digital equity aspects. Examples are programs that give or loan devices, provide computer tech support or training, or provide free Wi-Fi access in public areas and/or places that are visited by people who may not have adequate home Wi-Fi service. Entities providing these services include large ISPs such as AT&T and Comcast, groups associated with Tribal entities and pueblos, small ISPs, and libraries. The tables below list a representative sample of broadband adoption and broadband affordability programs.

Table 11: Representative sample of broadband adoption programs in New Mexico

Program name	Description
NM Student Connect	Beginning in 2021, this initiative launched a multilingual Public Education Department (PED) Help Desk that helps students and teachers who lack high-speed broadband internet service or devices get access to the internet. The program conducted outreach to more than 16,000 student households to engage families on the federal Emergency Broadband Benefit, and assisted 110 school districts, tribal affiliated schools and charter schools in applying for over \$65 million in Emergency Connectivity Fund funding.
Broadband For Education/NM Homework Gap Team	The initiative supported deployment of 700 hotspots, 6,200 Chromebooks, and 102 Cradle Points to Tribal communities. The program also collected more than 51,000 quotes from ISPs for broadband solutions for up to 19,000 students (12,000 addresses) and created an online portal for school districts to shop quotes. Districts could use funding from the CARES Act Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund to cover the cost of service for students without access at home.
Teeniors	This nonprofit connects teens with older adults with the goal of empowering senior citizens to understand and use technology. Donations, grants, and local sponsorships allow Teeniors to provide coaching to seniors who cannot afford to pay.
Adelante/DiverselT	DiverselT is a program coordinated by the nonprofit organization Adelante that provides training and employment opportunities to help people with disabilities, seniors, people of color, and women enter the technology field. The computers refurbished through this program are donated to individuals or organizations in need or made available at a low cost to the public. The organization also offers cost-effective computer repair services, IT support, and digital skills training.
Santa Fe Public Library – Tech Connect	Libraries in the Santa Fe Public Library System have a free laptop and internet hotspot lending program for residents with library cards who are over 18, supported by CARES Act funding.

<p>El Valle de Anton Chico Library (San Miguel and Guadalupe County)</p>	<p>The El Valle de Anton Chico Library was awarded a \$35,000 grant by the New Mexico Broadband Collective, a statewide group of funders, nonprofits, and Tribal and municipal entities, in 2022 for the purpose of “purchasing equipment and supplies that will allow the library to implement various programs including coding for girls, early literacy and bilingual programs, as well as basic computer applications to support the community.”</p>
<p>City of Albuquerque Wi-Fi in Neighborhoods Program</p>	<p>The City of Albuquerque provides free Wi-Fi at public City facilities and outdoor Wi-Fi hotspots.</p>
<p>Information Technology Disaster Resource Center (ITDRC)</p>	<p>Through Project Connect and initially in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the national nonprofit ITDRC installed more than 180 Wi-Fi access points at community facilities to provide free internet access —with a focus on connecting students in rural and underserved communities. The group completed several installations across New Mexico, including The Tribal High School in Santa Fe, NM; Santa Fe Indian School; Tesuque Pueblo; Santa Clara Pueblo; and more.</p>
<p>True Kids 1 (Taos County)</p>	<p>True Kids 1, “a youth media education nonprofit,” was awarded a grant of \$33,000 by the New Mexico Broadband Collective in 2022 to create a laptop lending program, as well as “train students in Taos County schools on different operating systems and reduced and free internet service available to community members.” The students then go on to share their knowledge with senior citizens, families, and other community members.</p>
<p>LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc. (LNESEC) Albuquerque</p>	<p>LNESEC, a national nonprofit that offers education and leadership programs for Hispanic and Latino students, provides technology-focused programs at its Albuquerque educational center, including a youth-focused introductory digital skills course called Digital Literacy, Intro to Network and Computers (D-LINC).</p>
<p>Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico (CAASNMM)</p>	<p>CAASNMM, a community action agency that serves low-income residents in Southern New Mexico, offers free computer literacy classes including “Basic Computer Skills” and “Introduction to the Internet.”</p>
<p>Goodwill Industries of New Mexico</p>	<p>As part of its employment and career development services, Goodwill provides free computer skills training, available online and in person at its Albuquerque services center. It also provides full scholarships for two professional certification courses from Google: Data Analytics and IT support.</p>

Encuentro	Encuentro, an Albuquerque-based nonprofit that supports the Latino immigrant community through education and career development opportunities, offers beginner and intermediate computer literacy courses and plans to install a computer lab at its facility (opened in 2023). In December 2022, Comcast partnered with Encuentro and Albuquerque nonprofit Working Classroom to donate 200 laptops to families and students and share information about Comcast Internet Essentials at an event hosted by Encuentro.
Public library computer classes	Many public libraries in the State offer computer skills classes, such as Public Library of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County branches (several of which offer one-on-one tech support and training in English and Spanish); Thomas Branigan Memorial Library in Las Cruces, N.M.; Silver City Public Library in Silver City, N.M.; Corrales Community Library in Corrales, N.M.; and Española Public Library in Española, N.M.
Public library computer access	All of the State’s public libraries have computers available for use within the library, including Santa Fe Public Libraries in Santa Fe, N.M.; Ruidoso Public Library in Ruidoso, N.M.; Clovis-Carver Public Library in Clovis, N.M.; Roswell Public Library in Roswell, N.M.; Taos Public Library in Taos, N.M.; Socorro Public Library in Socorro, N.M.; and Alamogordo Public Library in Alamogordo, N.M. (which also offers Chromebooks for checkout).
New Mexico Black Leadership Council (NMBLC)	NMBLC provides information on a dedicated page of its website to help eligible households obtain discounted or subsidized internet services and devices by enrolling in Comcast Internet Essentials, the ACP, and/or Lifeline.

Table 12: Representative sample of broadband affordability programs in New Mexico

Program name	Description
City of Albuquerque – National Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)	The City received a \$400,000 award through the FCC’s NCOP, which provides grants to trusted community institutions to perform ACP outreach.
New Mexico Black Leadership Council – National Competitive	The Council received a \$400,000 award through the FCC’s NCOP, which provides grants to trusted community institutions to perform ACP outreach.



Outreach Program (NCOP)	
El Paso Community Foundation– National Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)	The Texas-based foundation will use a portion of its \$300,000 NCOP award to conduct ACP outreach in Las Cruces.
Pueblo of Jemez– Tribal Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)	The Pueblo of Jemez received approximately \$379,000 through the FCC’s TCOP to conduct ACP outreach.
Pueblo of Zuni– Tribal Competitive Outreach Program (NCOP)	The Pueblo of Zuni received \$325,000 through the FCC’s TCOP to conduct ACP outreach.
Access from AT&T	Eligible low-income households can receive up to 100 Mbps symmetrical speeds through the Access from AT&T plan for \$30 per month, or at no cost with the ACP subsidy. Qualifying DSL customers who have speeds of 10 Mbps or less available may be able to get this plan at a lower cost (\$5-10 per month, with a data cap.)
Comcast Internet Essentials	Comcast’s Internet Essentials program allows qualified low-income customers to purchase up to 50 Mbps service for \$9.95 per month, or up to 100 Mbps service for \$29.95 per month; both plans are effectively free for customers enrolled in the ACP. Eligible customers can also purchase laptops/desktop computers at a subsidized price of \$149.99.
Spectrum Internet Assist	Spectrum Internet Assist offers qualifying low-income customers 30/4 Mbps service for \$19.99 per month, or no cost with the ACP subsidy.
Verizon Forward Program	The Verizon Forward Program provides an additional discount on Verizon Home Internet plans for customers enrolled in the ACP, offering Verizon’s 300/300 Mbps Fios fiber plan at no cost and plans with higher speed tiers at a discounted rate. (The program also offers Verizon 5G Home Internet at no cost where available.)

20. Reflections and next steps

20.1 Reflections

The BKDEAP Report represents a comprehensive and collaborative effort by the Connect New Mexico Council and the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) to address the critical issues of broadband knowledge and digital equity in the State of New Mexico. This report documents the consultation, analysis, and planning underway with broadband stakeholders, including local State governments, Tribal Nations, state agencies, public educational institutions, and community members.

Throughout this process, we are working to clarify the pressing challenges hindering digital inclusion across the State. The lack of affordable, high-quality broadband service, the lack of broadband-enabled devices, and the lack of knowledge how to use them effectively are barriers to digital equity impacting all ages, cultures, and areas. Understanding these challenges is necessary groundwork for formulating effective strategies to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all New Mexicans can participate fully in the digital age.

Additionally, as noted by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in their Key Takeaways from the Internet for All New Mexico Broadband Summit in the spring of 2023, "Broadband is integral to New Mexico's socio-economic development, with the Broadband Expansion and Digital Equity programs aiming to enhance connectivity and drive digital equity in New Mexico."

Emphasizing a strategic plan that encompasses universal broadband availability, adoption, meaningful usage, plus future-ready networks, responsible program stewardship, and innovative thinking, OBAE is aligning efforts with a vision that places equitable and inclusive broadband solutions at the forefront.

NTIA's insight into addressing digital equity challenges further reinforces our approach. We recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and each community within the state has unique needs, challenges, and barriers to broadband adoption. As we move forward, we are committed to building tailored community-informed and community-led solutions that meet the specific requirements of each locality, ensuring that digital equity is attainable for all.

In pursuit of digital equity in New Mexico, we acknowledge the significance of building robust infrastructure which provides reliable and high-speed connectivity to underserved areas. Moreover, we understand the importance of encouraging private companies to support broadband activities through well-designed programs and incentives. By fostering community partnerships, we aim for long-term sustainability and collective growth, recognizing that broadband accessibility and digital literacy are fundamental in empowering communities,



promoting economic growth, and enhancing the quality of life, particularly for remote and underrepresented groups.

20.2 Next Steps and What is Ahead

As Connect New Mexico working groups, interviews, focus groups, surveying, ISP meetings, and Tribal consultations continue, OBAE is in the process of expanding staff, building support for communities as they mobilize for connectivity, and drafting both the BEAD and DE plans that will be submitted to NTIA and open the doors to the next wave of federal funding authorized through the U.S. Digital Equity Act.

Meanwhile, OBAE is gearing up for the second Tribal Convening in September and National Digital Inclusion Week events statewide in October including a launch of the Connect New Mexico speed test campaign in the fall. Education, communication, and public awareness are key components of broadband and digital equity success. In addition to investing in local efforts, expertise, and capacity-building, outreach to inform citizens about the available digital resources, training opportunities, and support networks and empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the digital world are fundamental to achieving lasting digital equity in New Mexico. A Broadband Workforce Development Discussion Group is convening this fall and a new Tribal Broadband Task Force is also coming together to support development of a Tribal Broadband Dashboard and to work with OBAE to continue to support tribes and in implementing their own visions for broadband access and equity. OBAE is committed to building successful working relations and collaborating to support local communities mobilizing for connectivity and equity while developing policies, regulations, priorities, and partnerships that coordinate agencies, leverage assets, strengthen security and resiliency, address long-term sustainability, expand on best practices, provide for greater flexibility and continuity in planning and deploying solutions, and ensure visionary, responsible, and reliable funding streams are in place to support current and future needs.

Appendix

Appendix A: Summary of OBAE digital equity stakeholder engagement

Demonstrating the State’s established commitment to stakeholder outreach and engagement, the following table identifies working group meetings, community listening sessions, workshops, forums, and local and Tribal stakeholder sessions OBAE facilitated in 2022 and 2023 to build awareness, inspire action, and mobilize local, regional, and statewide support for broadband improvement and BEAD and Digital Equity planning. As of this writing, considerable additional stakeholder engagement and outreach is underway in preparation of the State’s BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and State Digital Equity Plan.

Table 13: Stakeholder engagement (regularly scheduled, 2022 and 2023)

Event date/ time period	Program name	Engagement description	Stakeholders involved
Monthly	Connect New Mexico Council (CNMC)	Meeting of members of the CNMC	Statewide
Twice monthly	CNMC Digital Equity & Inclusion	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
Twice monthly	CNMC Mapping, Data & Evaluation	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
Twice monthly	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
Twice monthly	CNMC Regional Planning & Community Engagement	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
Weekly	CNMC Grants Management & Rulemaking Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide

Table 14: Stakeholder engagement (specific events, 2022)

Event date/ time period	Program name	Engagement description	Stakeholders involved
1/5/2022	Broadband Collective Legislators Broadband Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
1/12/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
1/14/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
1/26/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
1/27/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
2/4/2022	Broadband Spotlight: Lessons Learned in Chattanooga	Statewide	Statewide
2/9/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
2/18/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
2/23/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
2/24/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
3/16/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
3/23/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide



3/24/2022	NM Meeting with FCC Commissioner Carr hosted by Ben Ray Lujan's Office	Statewide	Statewide
3/30/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
3/31/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
4/6/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
4/12/2022	Broadband Listening Session Reserve/Catron County	Local	Local Agencies, Associations, Organizations
4/13/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
4/20/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
4/20/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
4/27/2022	Listening Session with Hatch School Board	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
4/27/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
4/28/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
5/4/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
5/11/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
5/12/2022	Listening Session in Albuquerque	Local	Regional Agencies,



			Associations, Organizations
5/17/2022	Deming Town Hall	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/18/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
5/18/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
5/20/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
5/24/2022	County Listening Session for Luna County and Columbus	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/25/2022	Listening Session in Village of Cuba	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/25/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
5/25/2022	Listening Session in Deming	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/26/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
5/26/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
5/31/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide



6/1/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/2/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
6/3/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/7/2022	County Listening Session in Lordsburg	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
6/8/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
6/8/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/9/2022	County Listening Session in Silver City	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
6/9/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
6/14/2022	NM. Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/15/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/15/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
6/16/2022	Annual Conference for Association of Counties	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations



6/22/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
6/22/2022	City Managers Meeting in Ruidoso	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
6/23/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
6/28/2022	Southwest Region Broadband Support Session	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
6/29/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
6/30/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
7/6/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
7/7/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
7/20/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
7/20/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
7/21/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
7/21/2022	Tribal Government to Government Meeting	Statewide	Tribes
7/27/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
7/27/2022	North Central NM Economic Development Broadband Meeting in Santa Fe	Regional	Regional Agencies,



			Associations, Organizations
7/28/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
7/29/2022	Doña Ana Broadband Reconnect Meeting in Las Cruces	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
8/3/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
8/4/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
8/8/2022	Statewide Science and Technology Subcommittee Meeting in Socorro		Statewide
8/10/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
8/11/2022	NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Award Announcement at Isleta Casino	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
8/17/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
8/17/2022	NM Pilot Grant Webinar: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Overview	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
8/17/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
8/18/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
8/19/2022	NM Pilot Grant Webinar: Application Overview	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations,



			Organizations
8/22/2022	NM Pilot Grant Webinar: Scoring Guide Overview	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
8/23/2022	NM Pilot Grant Webinar: Interactive Broadband Map Overview	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
8/23/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
8/24/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
8/25/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
8/31/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/1/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/6/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/7/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
9/12/2022	NM Tribal Broadband Convening	Statewide	Tribes, FCC, NTIA, DOT
9/13/2022	National Tribal Broadband Summit – virtual	National	Tribes
9/13/2022	Listening Session in Hobbs	Regional	Regional Agencies,



			Associations, Organizations
9/14/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/15/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/15/2022	Application Intake Portal Overview	Statewide	Statewide
9/19/2022	Regional Broadband Meeting for Southern NM	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
9/20/2022	National Tribal Broadband Summit Part 2	National	Tribes
9/20/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/21/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
9/21/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
9/21/2022	Experience IT Conference – "Internet for All" Session	Statewide	Statewide
9/23/2022	New Mexico Data Mapping Meeting	Statewide	Statewide
9/26/2022	NM Governor's Statewide Conference on Economic Development in Albuquerque	Statewide	Statewide
9/27/2022	National Tribal Broadband Summit	National	Tribes
9/28/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide



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9/28/2022	State CIO Forum	Statewide	Statewide
9/29/2022	Exploring Partnerships	Local	Statewide
9/29/2022	Mamacitas Cyberneticas Planning Meeting	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
9/29/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
9/29/2022	NM Broadband Collective Steering Committee	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
9/30/2022	New Mexico Broadband Summit	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
9/30/2022	Summit Watch Party (Broadband Collective Event)	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
9/30/2022	Summit Watch Party (Broadband Collective Event)	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/3/2022	Planning free fixed wireless deployment	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/4/2022	Small group from Grant, Luna, Doña Ana	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/4/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/5/2022	5th Meeting of the Indian Affairs Committee	Statewide	Tribes



10/5/2022	NM. Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
10/6/2022	Broadband Expansion Plans for Luna County	County	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/7/2022	Project Thor – How a Region Built a System	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/8/2022	Digital Inclusion Week Internet Resource Fair at International District Library in Albuquerque	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/11/2022	Intelligent Transportation Conference (ITS) in Albuquerque	Statewide	Statewide
10/12/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/13/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/18/2022	Town Hall on Broadband in Anthony	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/18/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/19/2022	Community Broadband Forum in Los Alamos	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/19/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide



10/19/2022	Tribal Education Committee Meeting	Tribal	Tribes
10/20/2022	County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/20/2022	UNM Gallup Community Workshops – GEER II and HED	Local	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
10/21/2022	CNMC: Tribal Broadband Convening 2: Digital Equity & Inclusion	Statewide	Tribes, NTIA
10/26/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/27/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/1/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/2/2022	SWNM DOH meeting	Regional	DOH county reps Doña Ana and Luna
11/7/2022	NM Broadband Collective Regional Projects Working Group Meeting	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
11/9/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/10/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/10/2022	Zuni – Red Bolt Broadband Event	Tribal	Tribes
11/11/2022	CNMC Tribal Working Group Meeting	CNMC Working Group	Tribes



11/15/2022	NM Tribal Workgroup: Data and Map Challenge Meeting	Statewide	Tribes
11/15/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/16/2022	Connect New Mexico Council	CNMC	Statewide
11/18/2022	Southern Broadband Action Team (BAT) monthly meeting	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
11/24/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/28/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
11/29/2022	CNMC Mapping, Data & Evaluation	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
11/29/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/1/2022	NM Broadband Collective Grant Review meetings for Equity Fund and TA fund	NM Broadband Collective	Statewide
12/1/2022	Library Meeting with FCC Commissioner Rosenthal	Statewide	Libraries
12/1/2022	Fed reserve/Regional ACP meeting	Regional	Borderplex/Luna/Doña Ana/Hidalgo
12/1/2022	CNMC: NM Tribal Workgroup #2: Data and Map Challenge Meeting	Statewide and National	Tribes
12/3/2022	Eastern Navajo Agency Council	Regional	Eastern Navajo Chapters



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12/7/2022	"Broadband for New Mexico" Series with Senator Lujan	Statewide	Statewide
12/7/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/7/2022	Next Century Cities "Build Broadband Together"	Regional	Statewide, City of ABQ, Next Century Cities
12/8/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/8/2022	Regional Community Collaboration of nonprofit service agencies	Regional	30 Public Service Agencies
12/8/2022	Regional ACP funding and outreach meeting	Regional	Doña Ana, Borderplex, Hidalgo & Luna counties
12/13/2022	CNMC Mapping, Data & Evaluation	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/13/2022	CNMC PROP Working Group (Poles, Right of Way, Permits)	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/16/2022	Southern Broadband Action Team (BAT) monthly meeting	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
12/20/2022	Pueblo Map Challenge Working Meeting	Tribal	Pueblos
12/21/2022	CNMC Regional Projects & Engagement Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
12/22/2022	CNMC Digital Equity Working Group	CNMC Working Group	Statewide
10/12/2022 to 10/14/2022	SHLB AnchorNETS Conference in Crystal City, Virginia	National	CNMC

10/24/2022 to 10/28/2022	Indigenous Connectivity Summit 2022 (ICS 2022)	National	Tribes
10/26/2022 to 10/28/2022	NMLA Library Strong Conference in Albuquerque	Statewide	Libraries
11/30/2022 to 12/1/2022	NDIA and Federal Reserve Bank – Training in Denver	National	OBAE, NDIA, Federal Reserve Bank

Table 15: 2023 stakeholder engagement events (past and planned)

Event date/ time period	Program name	Engagement description	Stakeholders involved
1/10/2023	Internet for All Press Conference (Albuquerque)	Statewide	Statewide
1/19/2023	Association of Counties Conference – Broadband Presentation (Santa Fe)	Statewide	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organization
1/20/2023	NM Health Action Network Broadband Action Team – Monthly Meeting (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
2/15/2023	Broadband Day at the Roundhouse (Santa Fe)	Statewide	Statewide
2/16/2023	Broadband Industry Meet-Up – Vexus & PROTEC Fiber Technician students (Santa Fe)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
2/17/2023	Health Action New Mexico Broadband Action Team – Monthly Meeting (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
3/1/2023	New Mexico Tech Council Digital Inclusion Peer Group (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry



3/2/2023	Broadband Initiative on Navajo Nation (Virtual & Gallup)	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
3/23/2023	OBAE presents at the All Pueblo Council of Governors	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
3/29/2023	NM Pilot Grant Award Event- Tularosa Communications (Tularosa)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
3/31/2023	NM Pilot Grant Award Event- Tularosa Communications (Tularosa)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
4/3/2023	USDA ReConnect Grant Award Event – Kelly Cable (Albuquerque)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
4/4/2023	NM Pilot Grant Award Event – Sacred Wind (Gallup)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
4/5/2023	New Mexico Tech Council Digital Inclusion Peer Group (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
4/6/2023	NTIA Tribal Broadband Leaders Network – Community Engagement & Digital Equity	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
4/13/2023	NTIA Broadband Leaders Network Monthly Meeting (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide
4/17/2023	Southeast Region 6 Broadband Meeting in Otero County (Alamogordo)	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
4/18/2023	Central Region 3 Broadband Meeting in Valencia County (Los Lunas)	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
4/18/2023	NTIA National Spectrum Strategy Tribal Consultation Session (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal



4/19/2023	Broadband Initiative on Navajo Nation (Dine College Ned Nathalie Center in Tsaile, AZ)	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
4/20/2023	NTIA National Spectrum Strategy Tribal Consultation (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
4/20/2023	UNM Tech Days at UNM Student Union Building (Albuquerque)	Regional	Regional, Universities
4/21/2023	Health Action New Mexico Broadband Action Team – Monthly Meeting (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
4/27/2023	Broadband Groundbreaking Midway Elementary (Polvadera)	Regional	Regional, K12
5/2/2023	NM Dept. of Transportation Opportunity Fair (virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
5/3/2023	New Mexico Tech Council Digital Inclusion Peer Group (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
5/4/2023	ABQNOG Network Operators Conference – (Albuquerque)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
5/5/2023	NMC Board of Directors Meeting (Angel Fire Resort- Arbor Room)	Statewide	Statewide, Regional Governments
5/8/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Local and Regional Governments (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Local and Regional Governments
5/10/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Local and Regional Governments (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Local and Regional Governments
5/11/2023	Northeast Region 4 Broadband Meeting in Colfax County (Springer)	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations



5/12/2023	Southwest Region 5 Broadband Meeting in Doña Ana County (Las Cruces)	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/16/2023	North Central Region 2 Broadband Meeting in Rio Arriba County (Hernandez)	Regional	Regional Agencies, Associations, Organizations
5/16/2023	Connect NM Pilot Grant Wave Two – Mapping Review Process Webinar (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide
5/19/2023	New Mexico Behavioral Health Providers Association – "Behavioral Health Services on Tribal Lands: How Technology Plays a Role" (Santa Fe)	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
5/19/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Community Anchor Institutions (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Community Anchor Institutions
5/19/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Health Centers, Health Alliance (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
5/22/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Digital Equity/Covered Populations (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Covered Populations
5/24/2023	Internet for All New Mexico Broadband Summit (Buffalo Thunder)	Statewide	Statewide
5/25/2023	Site Visit – Santa Fe Indian School (Santa Fe)	Regional	Regional, K12, Tribal
5/25/2023	Site Visit – Santa Fe School for the Deaf (Santa Fe)	Regional	Regional, K12, Covered Populations
5/26/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Digital Equity/Covered Populations (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Covered Populations



5/30/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Workforce Development (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
5/31/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Workforce Development (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
6/5/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Internet Service Providers (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
6/7/2023	New Mexico Tech Council Digital Inclusion Peer Group (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
6/8/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Internet Service Providers (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
6/9/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Tribal Government and Agencies (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Tribal
6/12/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Business & Economic Development (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Business, Economic Development
6/14/2023	NMC Annual Conference – Joint Affiliate Meeting (Farmington)	Statewide	Statewide, Local and Regional Governments
6/14/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Business & Economic Development	Statewide	Statewide, Business, Economic Development
6/16/2023	Health Action New Mexico Broadband Action Team – Monthly Meeting	Statewide	Statewide, Healthcare
6/22/2023	Broadband Listening Session: Human Services Department (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Business, Industry
6/28/2023	Let's Get Going Broadband Bootcamp (Las Cruces)	Statewide	Statewide

7/5/2023	New Mexico Tech Council Digital Inclusion Peer Group (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Industry
7/19/2023	NMDOT STAR Small Business Training and Webinars: "Broaden your Opportunities Through Broadband" (Virtual)	Statewide	Statewide, Small Business

Appendix B: ISPs participating in ACP and offering device discounts

The following table lists ISPs in the State (including mobile service providers) that participate in the ACP. The table also indicates providers that offer a plan that provides service at effectively no cost with the application of the ACP subsidy (“no cost with ACP”), and whether the provider offers eligible customers the option to purchase a device at a discount.

Table 16: ISPs participating in ACP (including no-cost plans and device discounts)

Provider name	Service type	No cost with ACP	Device discount
Access Wireless	Mobile internet		
AFNET, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Airtalk Wireless	Mobile internet		Yes
ALLDATA COMMUNICATIONS CORP.	Mobile internet		Yes
Assurance Wireless*	Mobile internet	Yes	
AT&T Mobility LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	
Boomerang Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Boost Mobile	Mobile internet		Yes
Cellular One of Northeast AZ*	Mobile internet		Yes
CenturyLink or Quantum Fiber (Lumen)	Home internet	Yes	



Chaparral CableVision	Home internet		
Cintex Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Clear Wireless, LLC	Home internet		Yes
Clear Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Comcast Xfinity	Home internet	Yes	
Comcast Xfinity	Mobile internet	Yes	
Comlink Total Solutions Corp	Mobile internet		
Commnet Four Corners, LLC*	Home internet	Yes	Yes
Commnet Four Corners, LLC*	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Cricket Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	
Culture Wireless	Home internet		Yes
Culture Wireless	Mobile internet		Yes
Culture Wireless Group, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Daillytel Inc.	Mobile internet		
Delcom, Inc	Home internet		
Dell Telephone Cooperative. Inc	Home internet		
Digital Aid, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
EARTHLINK, LLC	Home internet		
Easy Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	
ECOMOBILE, INC.	Home internet		Yes



ECOMOBILE, INC.	Mobile internet		Yes
ENMR Telephone Cooperative*	Home internet		
Excess Telecom, Inc.	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Fidelity Cablevision, LLC	Home internet		
Figgers Communication Inc.	Home internet		Yes
Freemo	Mobile internet		Yes
Frontier Communications Corporation	Home internet		
Global Connection Inc. of America	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Hello Mobile Telecom LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	
Hoop Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Hughes Network Systems, LLC	Home internet		
human-I-T	Mobile internet		Yes
IDT Domestic Telecom, Inc.	Mobile internet		Yes
IJ Wireless	Home internet		Yes
IJ Wireless	Mobile internet		Yes
Infiniti Mobile	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Insight Mobile, Inc.	Mobile internet		Yes
Integrated Path Communications, LLC	Home internet		Yes
InterConnection	Mobile internet		Yes
JackRabbit Wireless	Home internet		



K20 Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
K'awaika Hanu Internet	Home internet		
Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Inc	Home internet		
La Canada Wireless Association	Home internet		
La Jicarita Rural Telephone Cooperative*	Home internet		
Leaco Rural Telephone Company*	Home internet		
Life Wireless	Mobile internet		
Lingo	Home internet		
Lokket Inc.	Home internet		
Maxsip Telecom Corporation	Home internet		
Mescalero Apache Telecom, Inc.*	Home internet	Yes	
Metro by T-Mobile	Home internet	Yes	
National Wireless	Mobile internet		Yes
NewPhone Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Nexus Telecom	Home internet		Yes
Nexus Telecom	Mobile internet		Yes
NMSurf, Inc.	Home internet		Yes
North American Local, LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	
NTUA Wireless, LLC*	Home internet	Yes	Yes
NTUA Wireless, LLC*	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes



Optimum	Home internet		
Oso Internet Solutions, LLC	Home internet	Yes	
PCs for People	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Penasco Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc*	Home internet		
Plateau	Home internet		
Pueblo of Jemez	Home internet		
Q Link Wireless LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Red Bolt Broadband	Home internet		
Red Pocket & FreedomPop	Mobile internet		Yes
Resound Networks, LLC	Home internet		
Roosevelt County Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.*	Home internet		
Rural4G	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Sacred Winds Communications, Inc.	Home internet		
Sacred Winds Communications, Inc.*	Home internet		
SafetyNet Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Sage Telecom Communications, LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Sano Health LLC	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Santo Domingo ISP	Home internet		
Sarver Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes



Selectel Wireless	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Sierra Communications, Inc*	Home internet		
Snapfon	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Sparklight	Home internet		
Spectrum (Charter Communications Operating, LLC)	Home internet	Yes	
Spot On Networks, LLC	Home internet		
Straight Shot Wireless	Home internet		
Straight Talk, Total Wireless, Simple Mobile, Walmart Family Mobile, TracFone, Net10, Page Plus & Go Smart*	Mobile internet		Yes
SW DinehNet LLC	Home internet		
SWA Connect, LLC	Home internet		Yes
Tablet Mobile	Mobile internet		Yes
TaosNet, LLC	Home internet		
TCI*	Home internet		
TDS	Home internet		
Ting Internet	Home internet		Yes
Tone Communication Services LLC	Mobile internet		
Torch Wireless	Mobile internet		Yes
TransWorld Network, Corp.	Home internet		
Tularosa Basin Telephone Company*	Home internet		



Twigby	Mobile internet		
Unity Wireless Inc.	Mobile internet	Yes	Yes
Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	Home internet		
Verizon Wireless	Home internet		
Verizon Wireless	Mobile internet		
Via Wireless, LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Viasat	Home internet		
Visionary Communications, Inc.	Home internet		
Whoop Connect Inc.	Mobile internet		Yes
Windstream Communications, LLC	Home internet		
WNM Communications Corporation	Home internet		
Wrizzle, Inc.	Mobile internet		Yes
Xchange Telecom LLC	Mobile internet		Yes
Yucca Telecommunications Systems	Home internet		
Ztar Mobile, Inc.	Mobile internet		Yes