



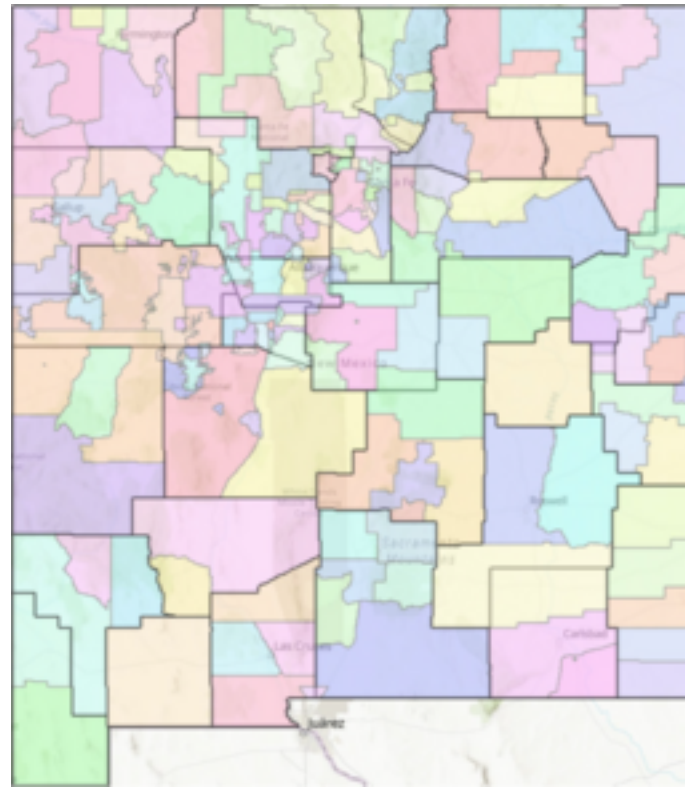
Deadline Sept. 30 for BEAD Public Comments on PAUs

New Mexico Office of Broadband Access & Expansion sent this bulletin at 09/11/2024 02:58 PM MDT

Bringing Connectivity to Your Community



Public Comment Period Ends September 30 for BEAD Project Area Units



The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion wants to remind everyone that the deadline to submit comments for the BEAD Project Area Units (PAUs) is September 30.

PAUs are regions across the state for which stakeholders will bid for BEAD funding for broadband projects. They were designed using existing administrative boundaries, including Tribal lands, school districts, census blocks and tracts, and high-cost areas defined by the federal government.

The public is encouraged to provide feedback on the PAUs.

Stakeholders and others can view the draft PAU boundaries and public comment materials on OBAE's [website](#). There, you'll be able to download documents, fill out forms and upload comments back to OBAE. OBAE wants to know if there are any issues in these PAUs that might deter applicants from applying or impede broadband deployment and how changing the PAU boundaries could resolve such issues.

If you have questions or concerns about PAUs and the process, you're welcome to attend OBAE's virtual office hours:

- Tuesday, 9/17 from 10-10:30am
- Tuesday, 9/24 from 10-11am

[CLICK HERE](#) to join office hours. Meeting ID: 836 5673 9175 Passcode: 620529

IMPORTANT: ALTERNATIVE PERCENTAGE

In addition to BEAD applicants' 100% percentage bid, there is also something called an **Alternative Percentage** bid. Providers can submit a second bid for a lower percentage of the unserved locations in a Project Area. The applicant can choose which locations and at what percentage to remove for their **Alternative Percentage** proposal. The idea is that there are some locations in New Mexico's geographically challenging terrain that will be too difficult or too expensive to serve.

These bids will also be considered by OBAE.

OBAE has received numerous questions from providers about the size of Project Areas and the challenges of serving the most difficult to reach unserved locations. This **Alternative Percentage** mechanism exists to address this concern.

Watch this [short video explanation](#) from BEAD Coordinator Andrew Wilder to learn more.

If you have any questions, please contact OBAE at broadband@connect.nm.gov.

If you have questions about any of these opportunities, please contact us via email at Broadband@doit.nm.gov.

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