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## **NM broadband office submits \$675 million infrastructure plan** *Mix of technologies showcases state's tech-neutral approach*

SANTA FE – Today, the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) submitted a landmark, comprehensive broadband infrastructure proposal to the federal government, aiming to connect more than 43,000 unserved and underserved homes and businesses with a striking variety of broadband technologies.

OBAE's Final Proposal has preliminarily awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in grants through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. BEAD is the state's largest broadband funding program.

"Reaching this milestone demonstrates our state's firm commitment to delivering broadband service to every New Mexico family and business," said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. "The investment priorities announced today will help many more New Mexicans attain the educational, economic, and healthcare opportunities they deserve."

The NTIA says it will review and approve all state Final Proposals within 90 days.

"Our Final Proposal developed over the past eight months will substantially close the digital divide in New Mexico, providing essential broadband services to rural and Tribal communities," said **Jeff Lopez**, director of OBAE. "Healthcare, education and other crucial opportunities will soon be available to thousands of families in underserved communities."

OBAE has approved 32 infrastructure projects for 17 entities from nearly 90 applications. They include:

- Nine internet service providers and low Earth orbit satellite companies
- Five cooperatives
- Three Tribal communities

“We believe New Mexico has the best mix of technologies of any state’s BEAD program,” said **Andrew Wilder**, OBAE’s BEAD Coordinator.

OBAE awarded 44% of eligible locations to fiber, 40% to fixed wireless projects, and 16% to low Earth orbit satellite.

“We took 'tech neutrality' to heart,” said Wilder. “We chose the right tool for the job to connect every corner of our state.”

The state’s BEAD proposal will be a dramatic life changer for New Mexico’s Tribal communities. The Navajo Nation is poised to receive a \$111 million award, the largest single project supported by OBAE.

“What an extraordinary time for the Navajo Nation and the Navajo people,” said **Sonia Nez**, manager of the Navajo Nation Broadband Office. “Connectivity and mobility have risen to being on par with water, and Water is life. Thank you to OBAE and the Connect Dine team for empowering the Navajo people, through BEAD, to take advantage of broadband opportunities in education, entrepreneurship, art and music and to help our elderly and veterans.”

OBAE’s Final Proposal also demonstrates balance, ensuring a fair and transparent process so that small, local providers can participate. Several local entities were provided grants. Rural electric and telephone cooperatives also stepped up to the plate to connect New Mexicans, and a handful of them will receive BEAD dollars.

Five companies that make up the New Mexico Exchange Carrier Group were also awarded BEAD grants.

“We congratulate OBAE and commend the Office’s strong commitment to bridging the digital divide and look forward to continued collaboration,” said **Matejka Santillanes**, Executive Director of the New Mexico Exchange Carrier Group. “This vital funding will help our providers continue expanding high-speed internet access, unlocking economic opportunities and improving quality of life in New Mexico’s rural and underserved communities.”

The low cost per location is another testament to OBAE’s strong Final Proposal. The latest round of bidding resulted in an average cost per location of \$10,162, about one-third of the cost in the first application round.

In that round, which ended in March 2025, OBAE received a total of \$732 million in grant requests, which exceeded its total BEAD allocation of \$675 million. The earlier bids would have resulted in a statewide average cost of nearly \$27,000 per location. At the time, some broadband project requests came in at more than \$100,000 per location.

As a result of this latest Benefit of the Bargain Round in July and the Final Proposal, New Mexico is preliminarily awarding \$432,729,878 to serve just over 43,000 unserved and underserved households and small businesses. The average cost to serve every serviceable location is \$10,162.

With the final proposed deployment cost of \$432.7 million, OBAE proposes to use the remaining BEAD funds for other eligible activities under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, including support for community anchor institutions, tower deployments for 5G wireless, and middle mile network infrastructure across the state.

New Mexico received \$675 million which represents part of the \$42.5 billion BEAD program funding passed by Congress in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and allocated across all 50 states and six territories to connect unserved and underserved locations nationwide.

For a complete list of BEAD grant recipients, [click here](#).

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*The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE's mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state's rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.*