

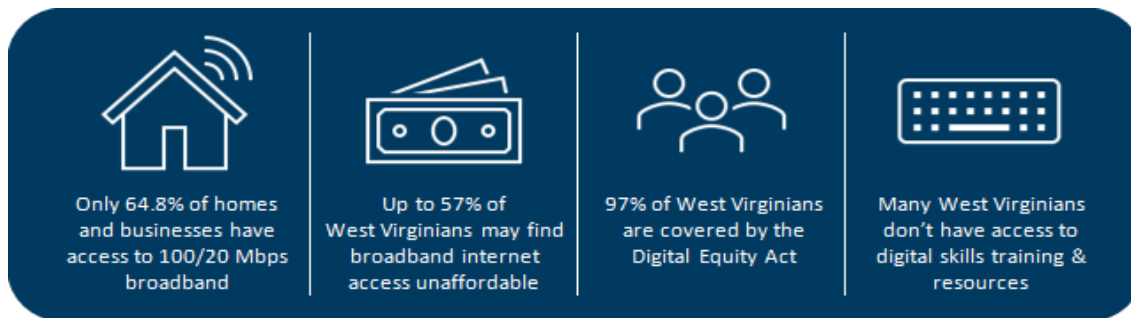
WV NTIA BEAD Five-Year Action Plan One-Pager

West Virginia's \$1.2 Million Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program

The State of West Virginia is taking monumental steps to bring broadband to every West Virginian and to close the divide between people who have access to computers and the internet and those who do not. With the \$1.2 billion allocation from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program, West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED) will leverage these funds to complement and expand upon its existing \$236 million worth of broadband projects. This Five-Year Action Plan describes how WVDED will invest these new BEAD funds.

Where We're Starting

West Virginia ranks 3rd from the bottom of all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico for the percentage of broadband serviceable locations that have high-speed internet. Additionally:



What We'll Do

WVDED will use a waterfall funding approach to determine how money will flow down from its highest priority projects:

- a) **Unserved and Underserved Locations:** Expand its competitive grant process to fill West Virginia's remaining broadband gaps.
- b) **Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs):** Connect CAIs that lack access to 1 Gbps/1 Gbps broadband service.
- c) **Increase Digital Equity and Inclusion:** Address affordability issues, increase digital literacy and access to devices.

Obstacles & Opportunities

West Virginia will need to address regulatory barriers and labor shortages to expedite broadband infrastructure projects. Regulatory priorities include advancing Dig Once policies, communicating clear standards, and simplifying the pole attachment application process. West Virginia will develop its talent pipeline to meet broadband industry needs.

WVDED and the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council have a strong track record of engaging stakeholders and the public and supporting broadband expansion through grant programs, planning, and advocacy. Partners in the public and private sectors and at the state and local level will be needed to leverage the opportunities that universal high quality affordable broadband can create. Together, these partners can expand economic opportunity and improve public services for all.