

BEAD and Digital Equity Planning Quarterly Update Webinar

June 8, 2023

N.C. Department of Information Technology
Division of Broadband and Digital Equity



ANGIE BAILEY

DIRECTOR
BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE OFFICE



EMILY GANGI

POLICY DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY



ANNETTE TAYLOR

DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF DIGITAL EQUITY AND LITERACY



MAGGIE WOODS

DIGITAL EQUITY MANAGER
OFFICE OF DIGITAL EQUITY AND LITERACY

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. State of the State: Access and Equity
3. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) & Digital Equity Planning
4. Themes We've Heard So Far
5. State's First Digital Equity Survey
6. What's Next

IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN NORTH CAROLINA

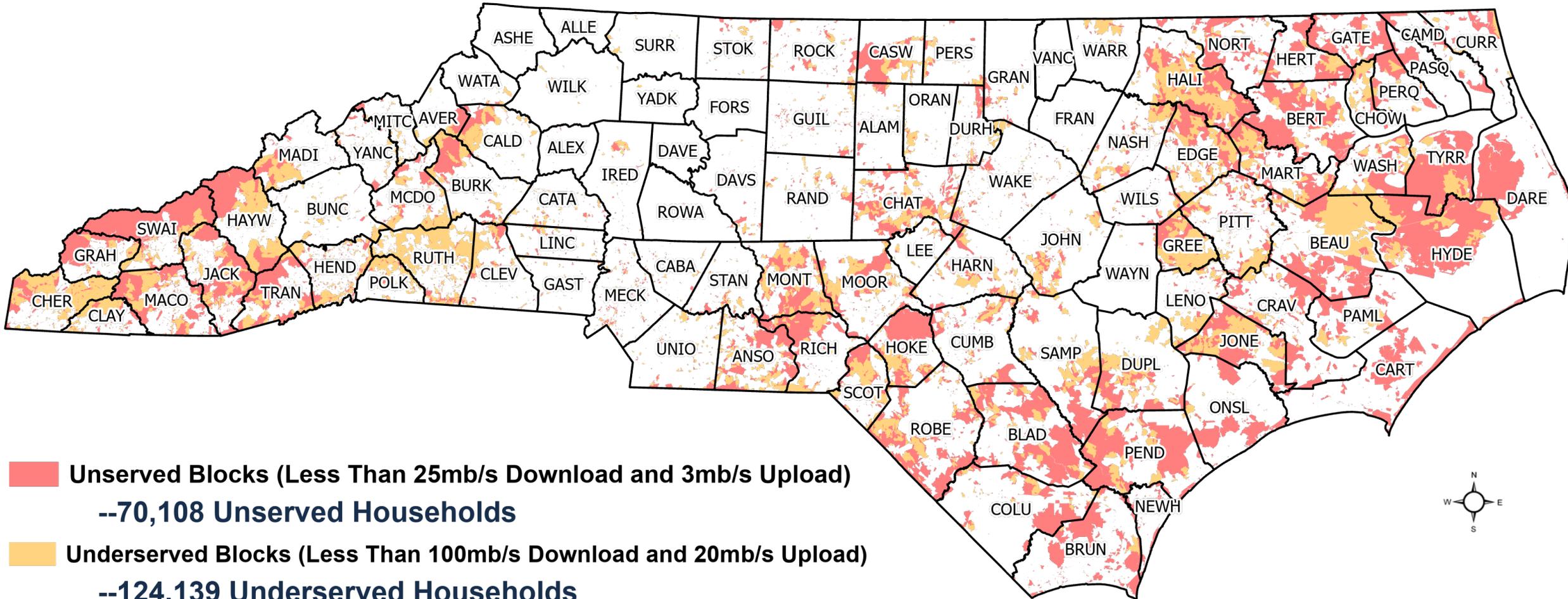
At least 1.1 million North Carolina households lack access to high-speed internet, cannot afford it or do not have the skills needed to take advantage of the digital economy. Gov. Roy Cooper has prioritized closing the digital divide to achieve digital equity for all North Carolinians.



NC BROADBAND PROFILE

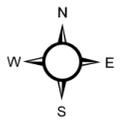
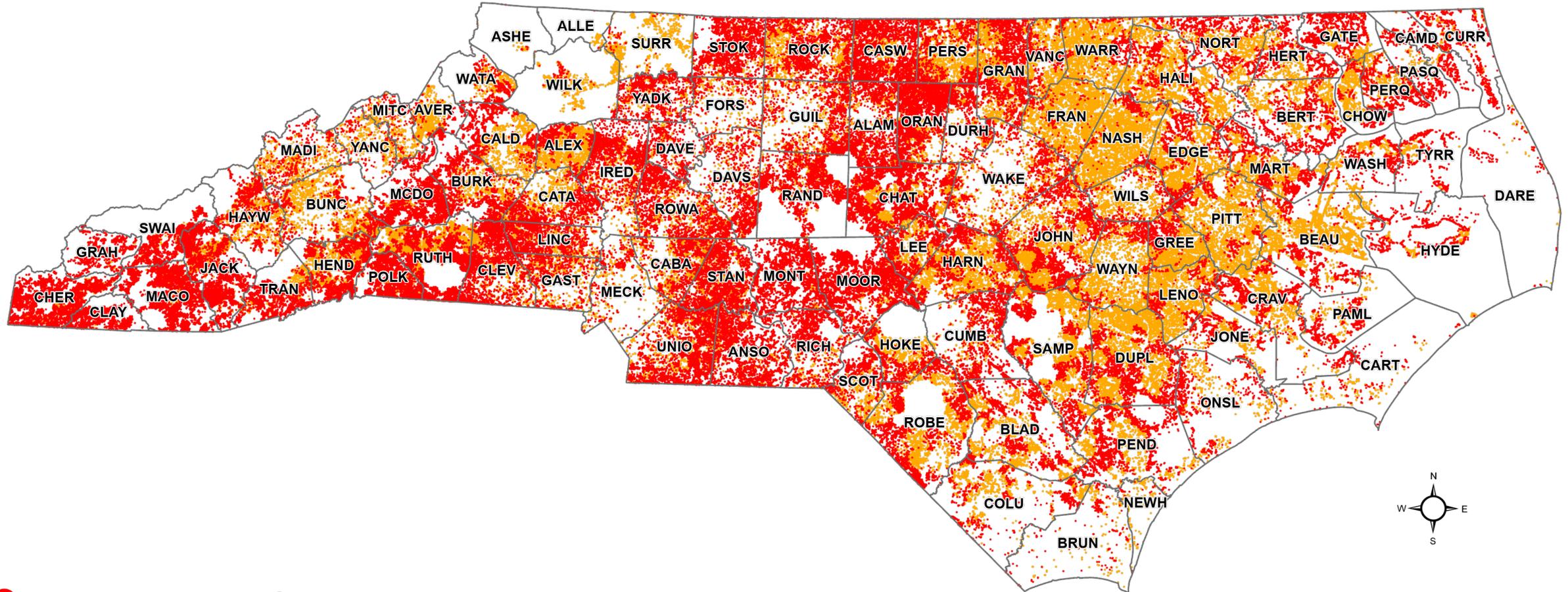
Evolving identification of Unserved Locations

Form 477 - Census Block Level Reporting - December 2021



NC BROADBAND PROFILE

New FCC Broadband Data Collection Serviceable Location Fabric - **June 2022**

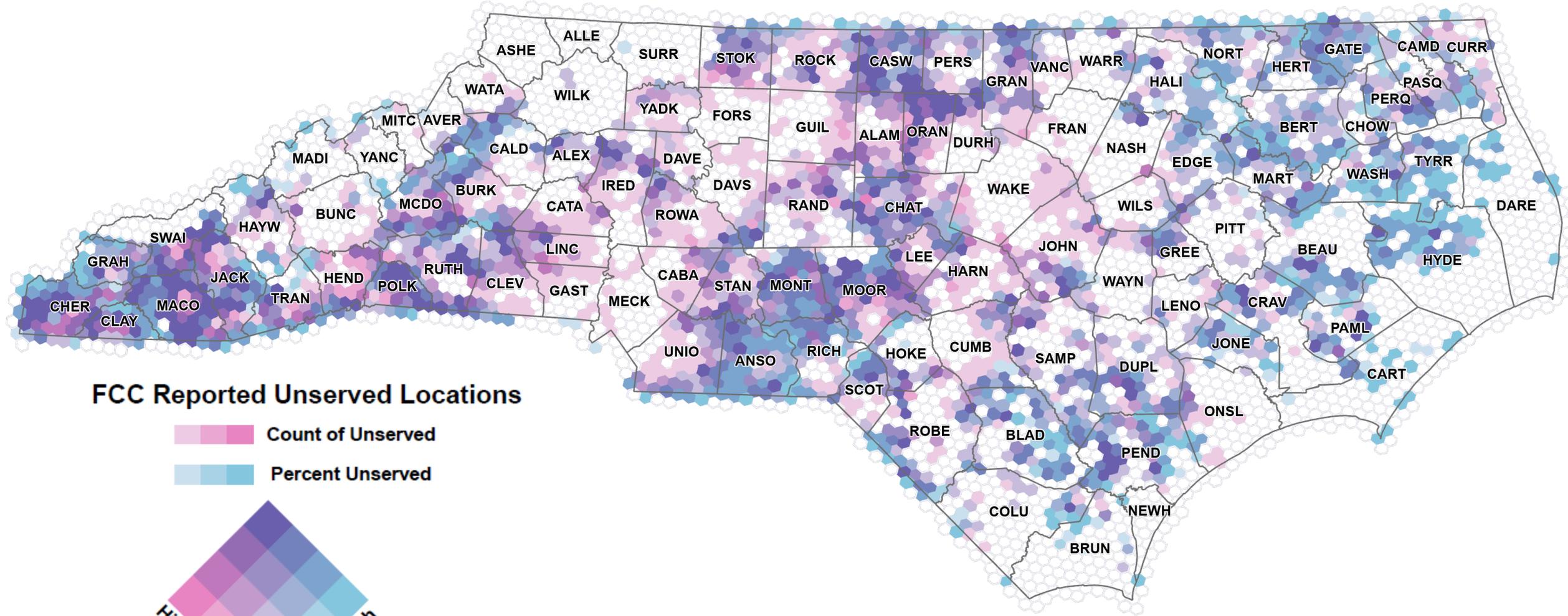


● Unserved Broadband Serviceable Location (Less Than 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload)
--253,409 Unserved BSLs

● Underserved Broadband Serviceable Location (Less Than 100mb/s Download and 20mb/s Upload)
--266,998 Underserved BSLs

NC BROADBAND PROFILE

Defining Eligible Project Areas



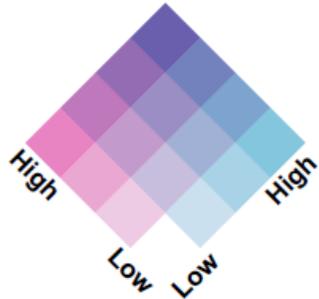
COUNTY BROADBAND PROFILES

Defining Eligible Project Areas

FCC Reported Unserved Locations

Count of Unserved

Percent Unserved

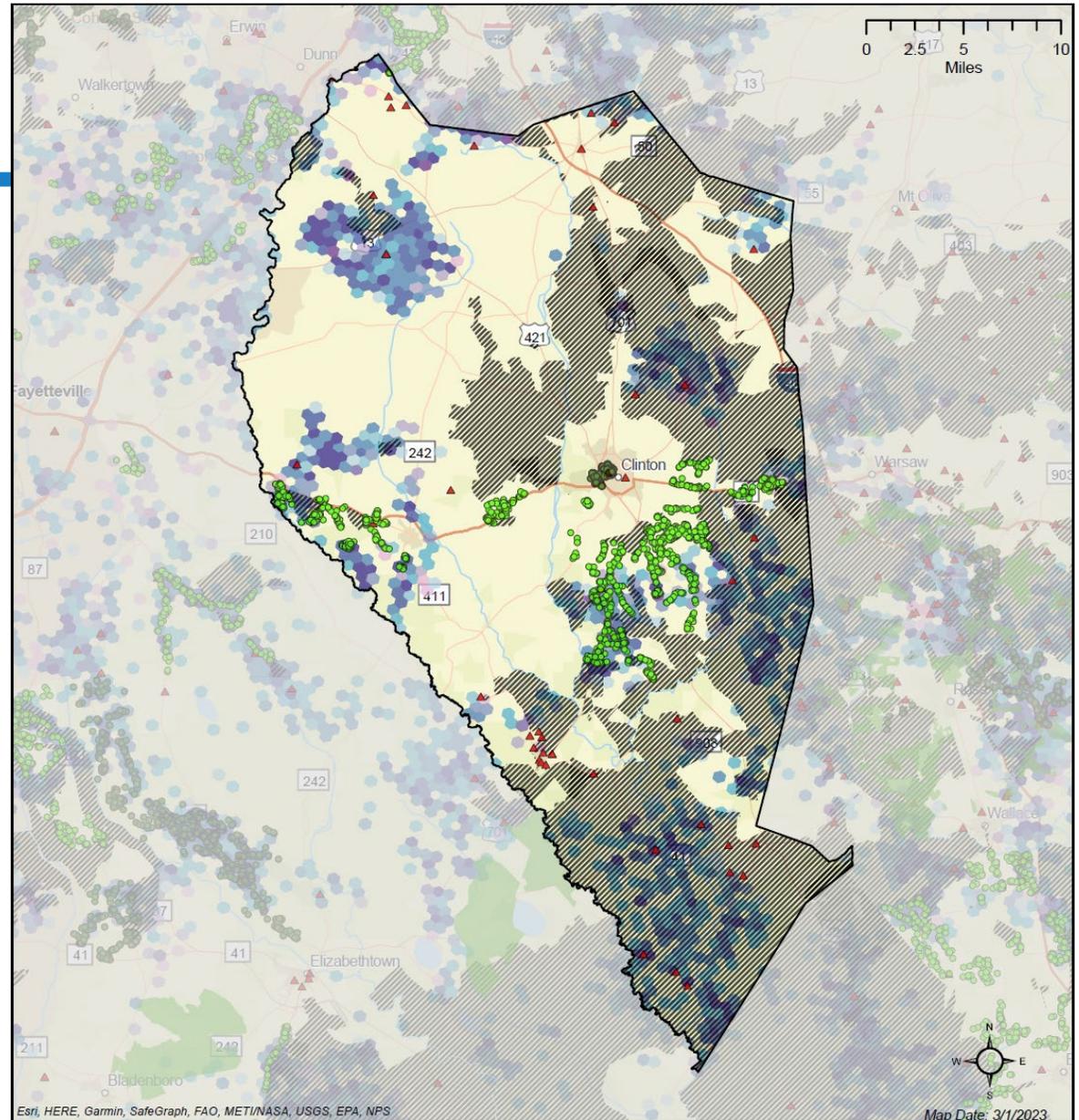


- ▲ NC Broadband Survey - Unserved Responses
- GREAT Contingent Award Locations (Federally Funded)
- GREAT Award Locations (State Funded)
- GREAT Award Areas (State Funded)
- ▨ Other Federal Grants

<https://www.nconemap.gov/pages/broadband>

County Profiles

Overviews of broadband service and funding for each county in North Carolina.



N.C. BROADBAND SURVEY

- Critical to have up-to-date data on homes and businesses that still need high-speed internet access
- <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/survey>
- Takes about five minutes to complete and is available in both English and Spanish
- Includes an internet speed test to connect survey data with broadband speed information
- **NEW:** If you include your contact information, we can also use this data to challenge high-speed internet service availability that is incorrectly listed for your submitted location in the FCC's National Broadband Map

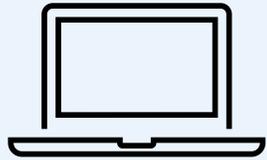
No Internet Service?

Text "internet" to 919-750-0553; standard text messaging rates will apply

Can't Text?

Call 919-750-0553 to be guided through questions to get your address and register it in the database as having no internet capability

DIGITAL DEVICES, SKILLS & AFFORDABILITY



430,000

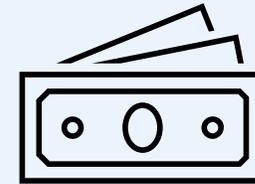
Estimated N.C. households without a home laptop or desktop computer

91%

of N.C. jobs require some digital skills

1/3

of U.S. workers don't have foundational digital skills



1.3M

N.C. households would have to pay more than 2% of their annual income to afford broadband cost of \$60/month

AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP)

- The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provides:
 - Up to a \$30 per month discount on internet services
 - Up to a \$75 per month discount for households on tribal lands
 - \$100 discount for a laptop, computer or tablet bought through a participating provider
- Goal for 1 million households to enroll by December 2023
- 767,729 households enrolled as of June 8
- Encouraging internet service providers to participate and provide \$30/month plan



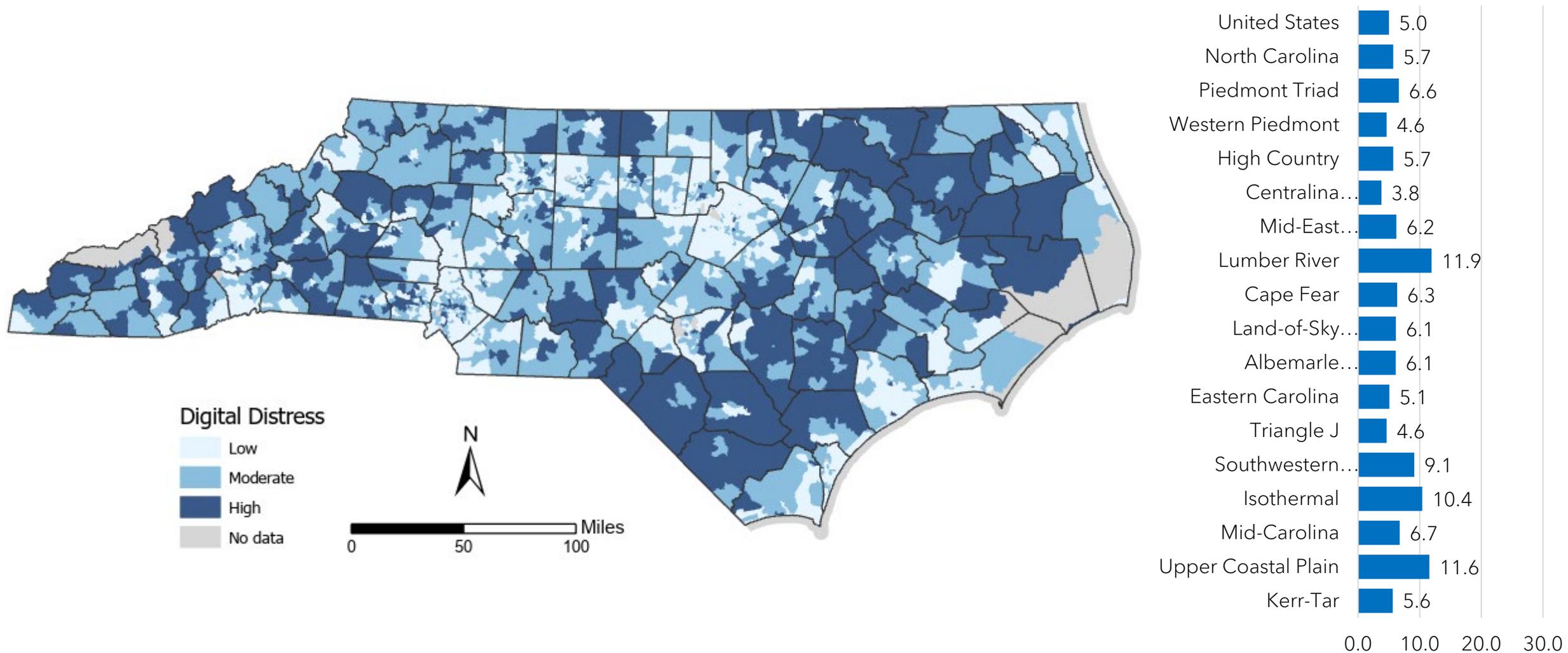
DIGITAL EQUITY BASELINE DATA



- Dr. Roberto Gallardo, director of the Purdue Center for Regional Development
- National expert on the intersection between digital equity and economic development
- History of partnership with our office; authored the N.C. Broadband Access and Adoption Indices
- Developing a statewide data baseline using American Community Survey data
- Statewide and regional data profiles will be published at www.ncbroadband.gov soon

DIGITAL DISTRESS

Percent Households in High Digital Distress

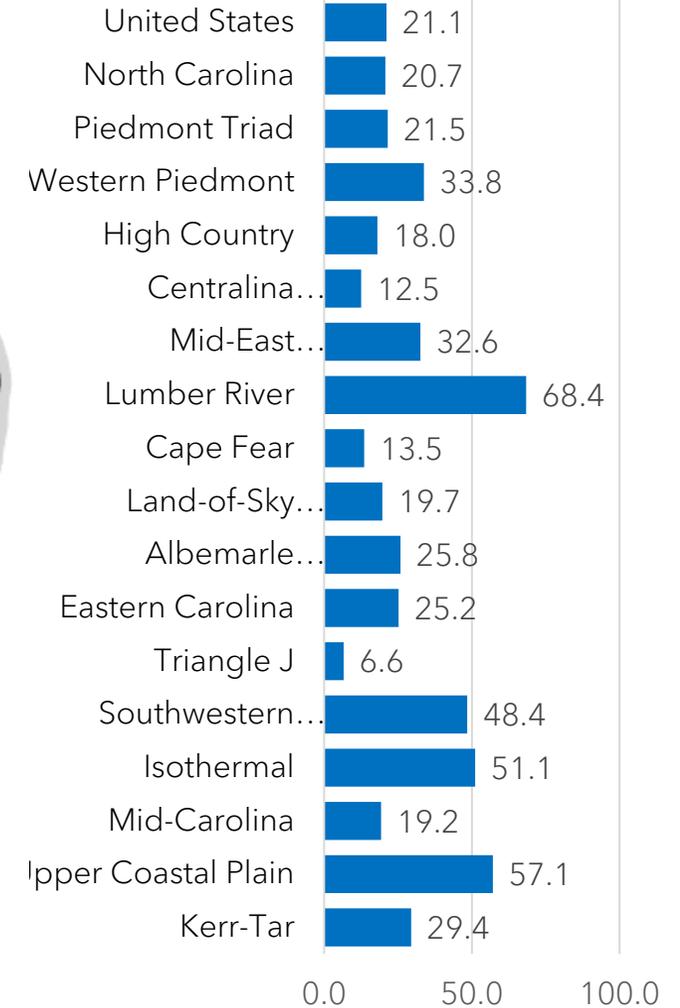
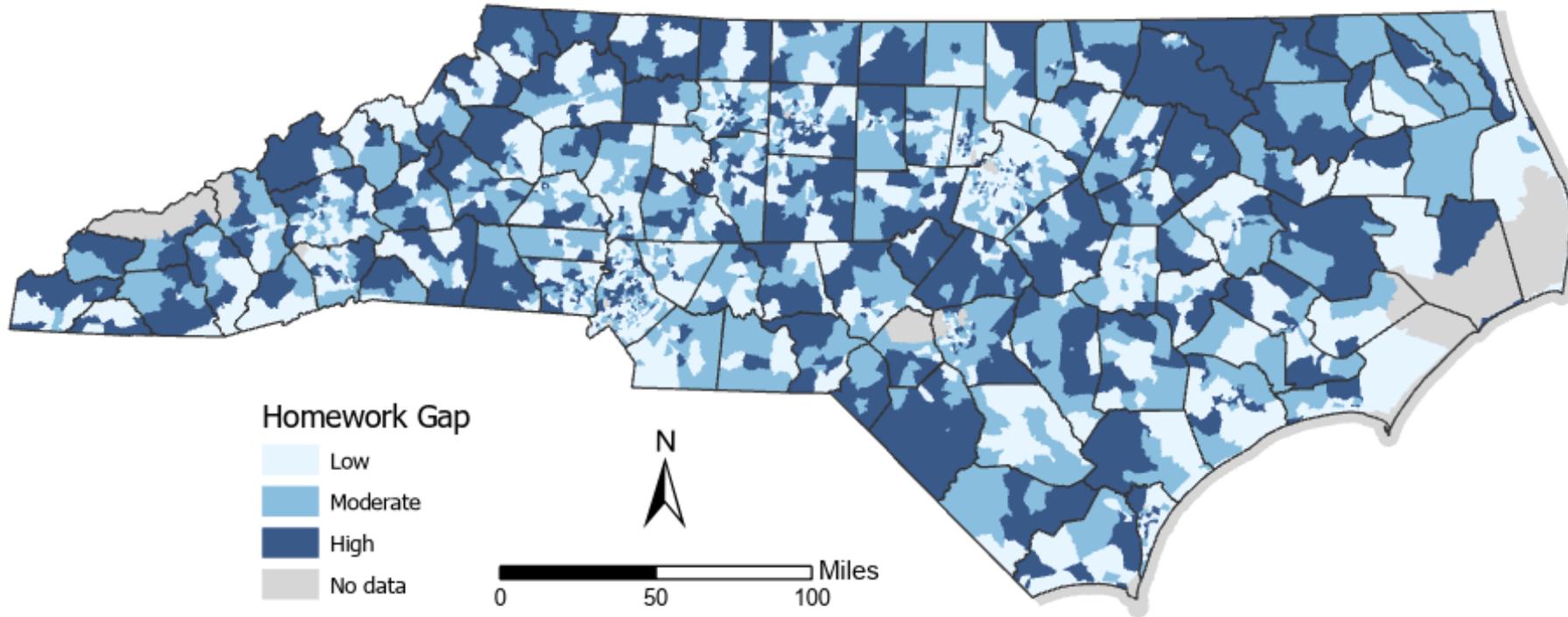


Source: 2017-2021 Census 5-Year ACS; Purdue Center for Regional Development

Digital distress refers to a situation where homes rely on mobile devices only or have no computing devices as well as no internet access or rely on cellular data only.

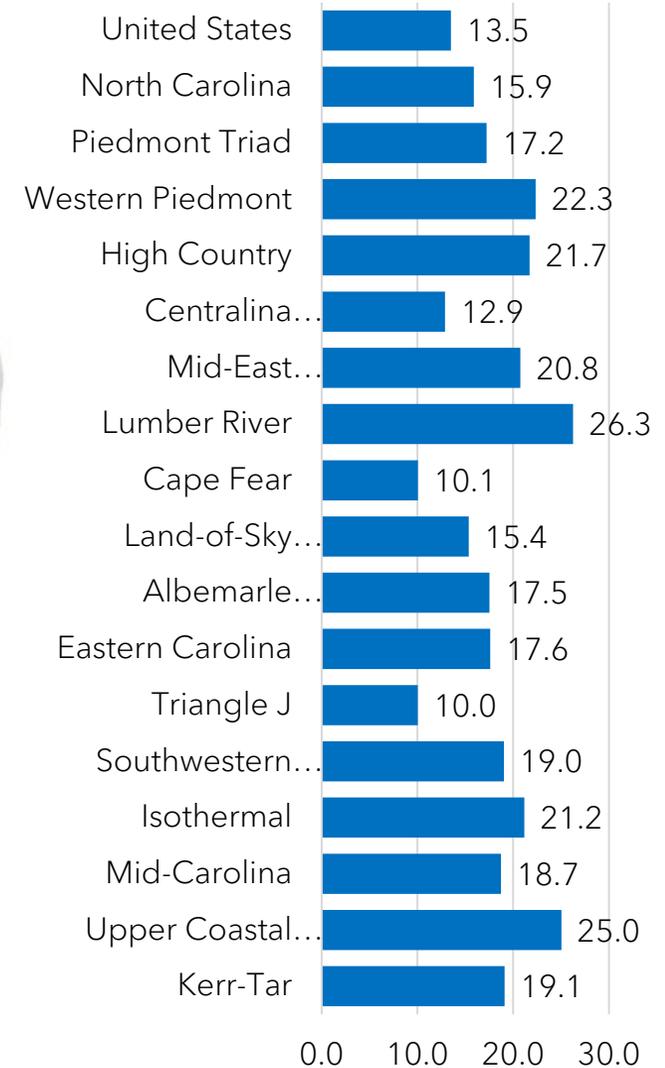
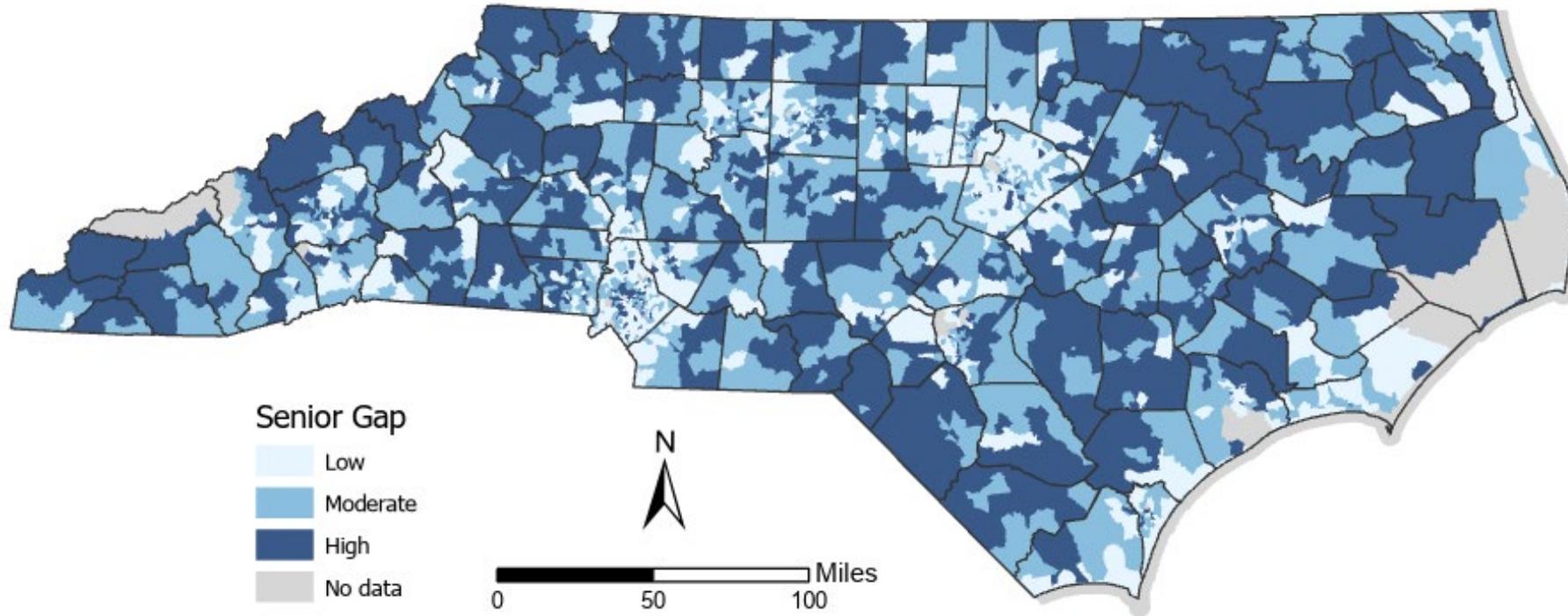
HOMWORK GAP

Percent Children with Computer, No Internet



SENIOR GAP

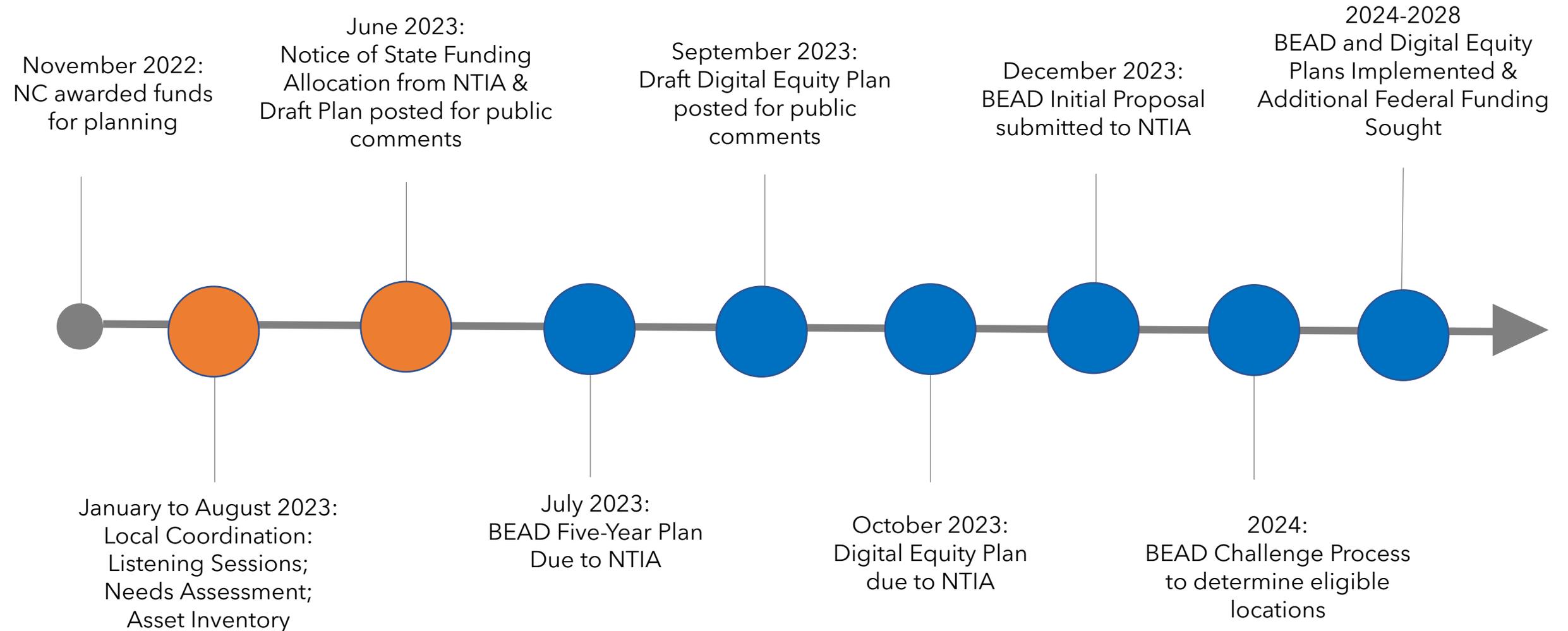
Percent Seniors (Age 65 or older) with No Computer



Source: 2017-2021 Census 5-Year ACS

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT & STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING

BEAD & DIGITAL EQUITY TIMELINE



ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDING

- Infrastructure for homes and businesses
- Upgrades to infrastructure for Community Anchor Institutions
- Mapping and data collection
- Internet and Wi-Fi infrastructure for multi-family residential buildings
- Broadband adoption, including affordable internet capable devices and sign-up assistance
- Training and workforce development
- Digital equity programs such as digital safety training, remote learning and telehealth services, digital literacy and upskilling, cybersecurity education programs, and other activities from the Digital Equity plan.
- Education for individuals who are incarcerated
- Digital navigators
- Direct subsidies for internet subscription

STATE PLANNING

Year-long state broadband and digital equity planning process to set policy priorities for next five years

- Identify barriers to digital equity for general and covered populations
- Develop measurable objectives for overcoming barriers
- Asset Inventory and Needs Assessment
- Integrate local digital inclusion plans into the state plan
- Interagency coordination
- Workforce planning
- Mapping



COVERED POPULATIONS

These programs jointly cover the needs of all North Carolinians with focus on these populations, according to federal guidelines:

- Aging individuals
- Immigrants
- Individuals who live in households at or below 150% of Federal poverty level
- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners and have low levels of literacy
- Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
- Individuals who primarily reside in a rural area
- Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility
- LGBTQI+ people
- Veterans

STATE'S FIRST DIGITAL EQUITY SURVEY

- Share individual needs for accessibility and affordability of digital devices and the internet as well as digital skills needed to safely access online resources
- Will help the state create a Digital Equity Plan that best meets the needs of all North Carolinians
- Takes approximately 10 minutes to complete; no data will be released or used that can identify participants
- Available in top languages/dialects spoken in the state
- Paper copies will be available

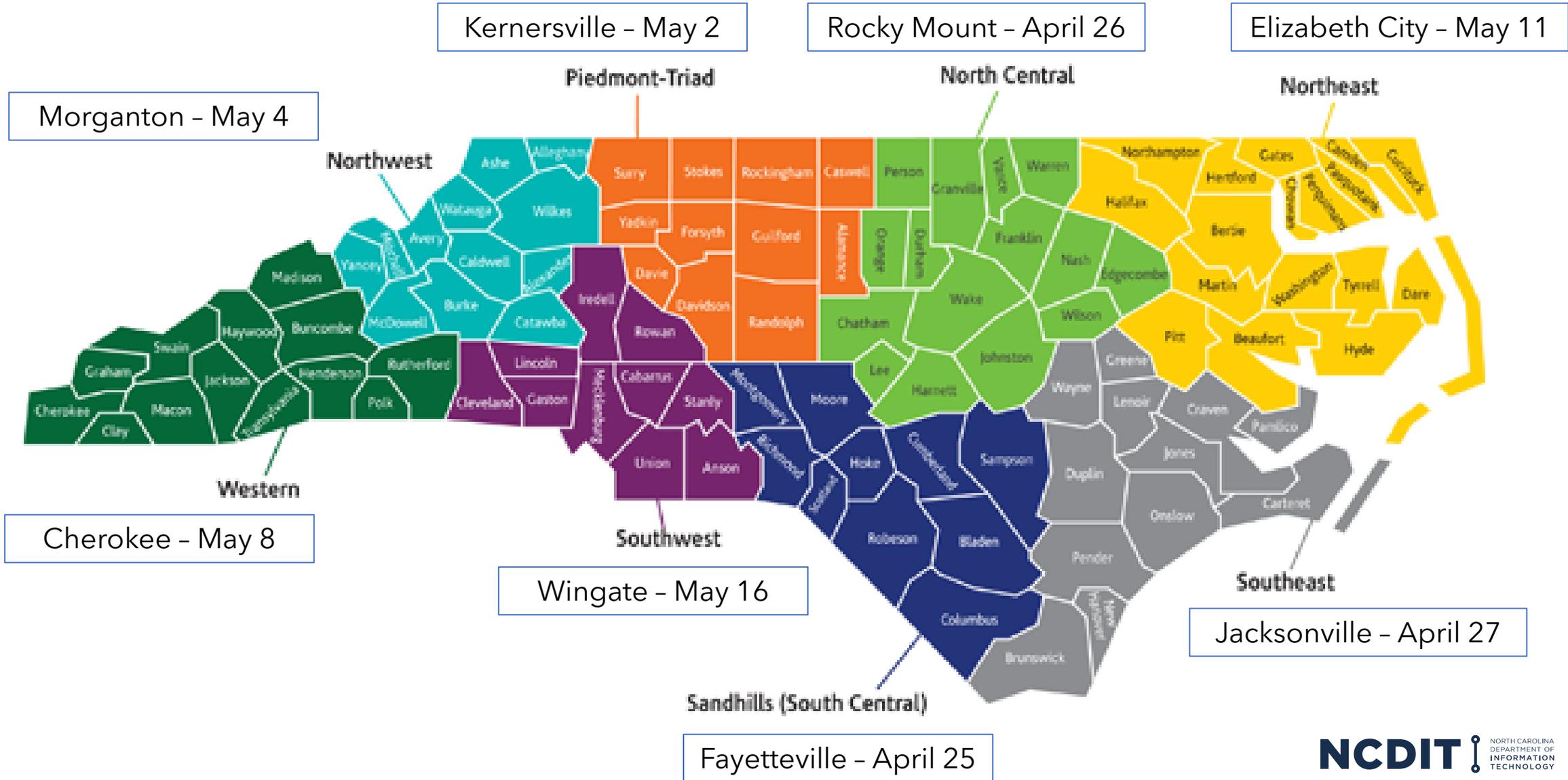


<https://go.ncsu.edu/DESurvey>

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE INPUT

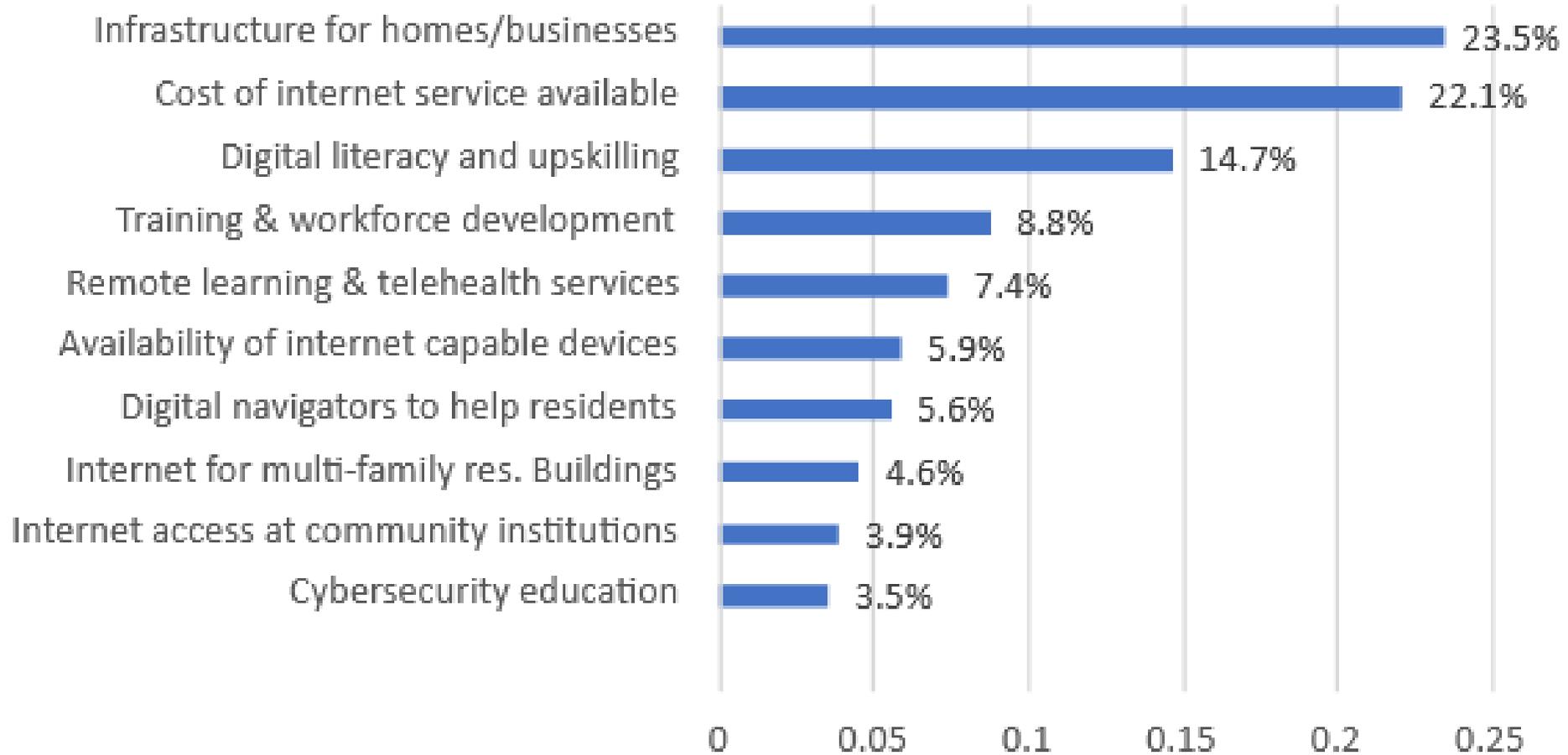
- Hosting quarterly webinars: Next one in August
- Listening sessions with partner organizations for covered populations
- Surveys
- Interagency coordination
- Closing the Digital Divide: From Mountains to Coast Regional Sessions and virtual session on June 5
- May 23 Closing the Digital Divide: Internet for All in NC event cohosted with NTIA, NC Association of County Commissioners and NC League of Municipalities - recordings will be posted soon
- Website: www.ncbroadband.gov/BEAD

REGIONAL SESSIONS



THEMES WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

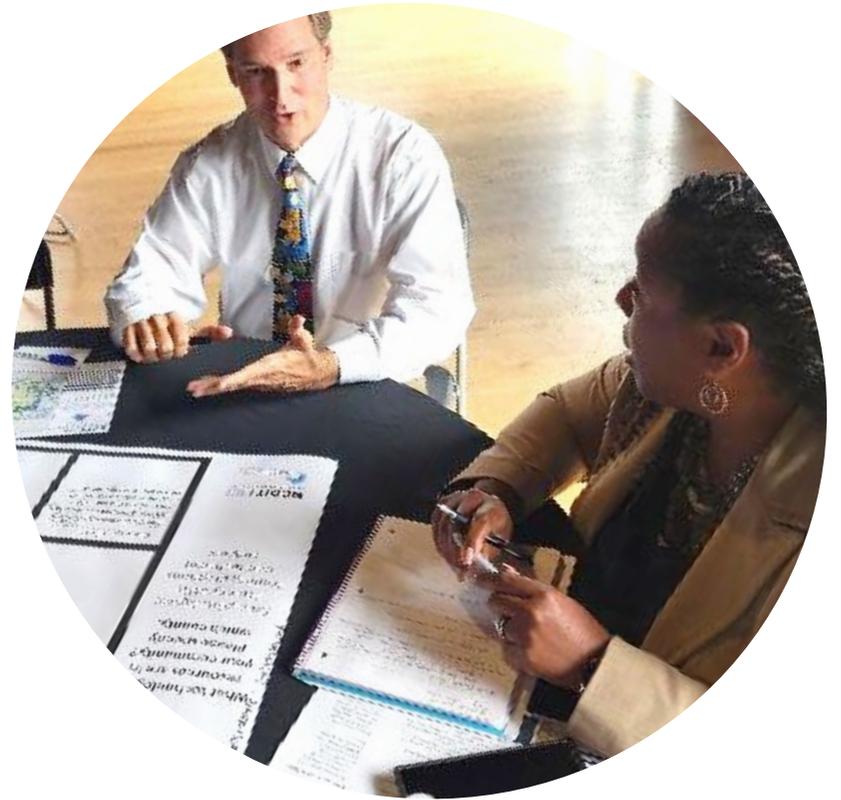
Three Biggest Community Broadband Issues



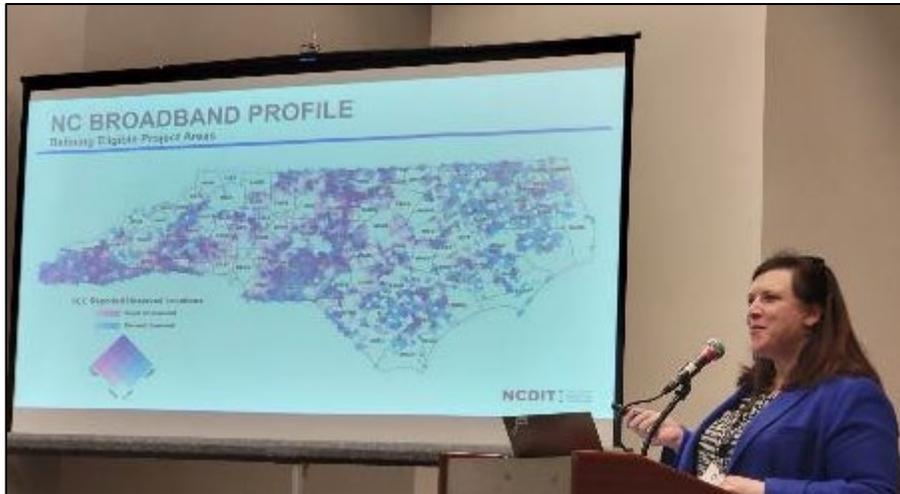
Feedback received from attendees at 8 regional sessions, Rural Summit, and virtual listening session

COMMON ASSETS

- Libraries
- Hospitals (including device loans through Veterans facilities)
- Community centers, senior centers, churches
- Local and national businesses
- Parks, schools, downtowns
- Community colleges & universities
- Nonprofits and social service providers
- 4H Tech Changemakers
- Goodwill Industries
- NC Works
- N.C. Cooperative Extension
- Northstar Digital Literacy
- Councils of Government, Aging Services
- Kramden Institute and E2D



CONCERNS & CHALLENGES



- Affordability of internet
- Access to internet (speed, cost, and reliability)
- Access to devices
- Last mile infrastructure
- What internet service providers say vs. actual service
- Poverty
- Transportation to get free Wi-Fi
- Phishing/cybersecurity knowledge
- Tech support
- Confidence and trust
- Stigma of assistance programs
- Matching funds for grants
- Bilingual services for literacy training
- Telehealth

HOW TO DEPLOY RESOURCES

- Subsidies to individuals
- Subsidies to providers
- Use fiber and cell towers
- Do more to promote Affordable Connectivity Program and make it easier to apply
- Tech support
- Entities that will refurbish and distribute used technology
- Advocates/digital navigators
- Infrastructure such as fiber that is “future proof” for upgrades
- Resource guides (digital and print) for counties/prosperity regions
- Coordination with state education system
- “Zoom rooms” at libraries, community centers (for telehealth, interviews, etc.)
- Free “digital help center” in every county



WHAT'S NEXT?

- Ongoing:
 - Asset inventory and needs assessment
 - Digital equity survey responses through August
 - Listening sessions with covered populations through July
- June:
 - Notice of state funding allocation from NTIA
 - Draft BEAD plan posted for public comments
- July:
 - BEAD Five-Year Plan Due to NTIA
- August:
 - Quarterly Update Webinar
- September:
 - Draft Digital Equity Plan posted for public comments
- October:
 - Digital Equity Five-Year Plan Due to NTIA



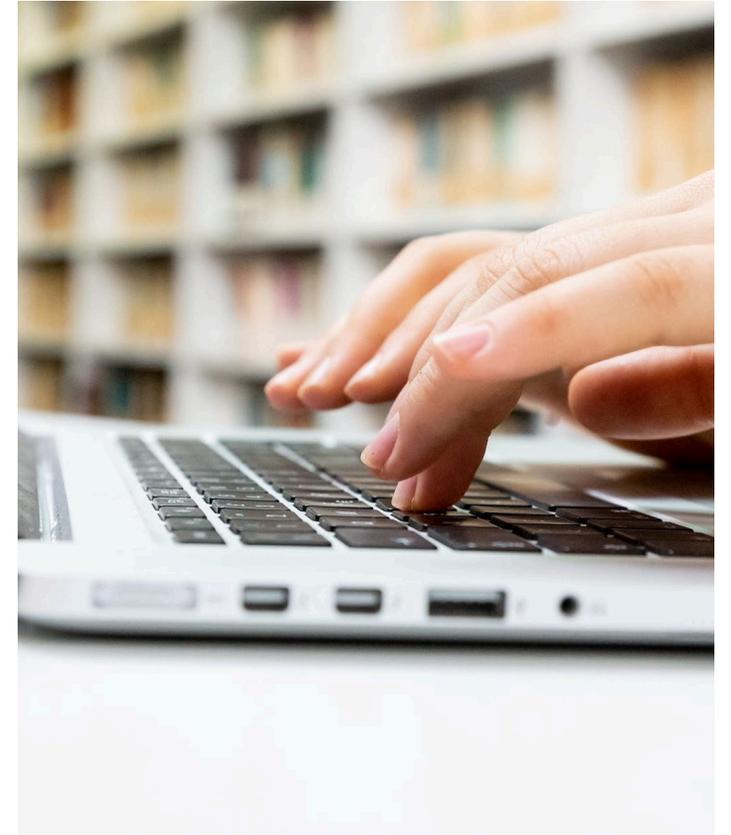
Questions?

Place your questions in the chat feature

Visit the Division's website to learn more: www.ncbroadband.gov/BEAD

RESOURCES

- BEAD and Digital Equity planning information:
<https://www.ncbroadband.gov/BEAD>
- Digital Equity Survey
<https://go.ncsu.edu/DESurvey>
- Broadband Mapping & Data:
<https://www.nconemap.gov/pages/broadband>
- Affordable Connectivity Program materials:
<https://www.ncbroadband.gov/ACP>
- N.C. Broadband Survey:
<https://www.ncbroadband.gov/north-carolina-broadband-survey>
- FCC Broadband Funding Map:
<https://fundingmap.fcc.gov/home>



CONTACT INFORMATION



www.ncbroadband.gov

EMILY GANGI

POLICY DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY

emily.gangi@nc.gov

MAGGIE WOODS

DIGITAL EQUITY MANAGER
OFFICE OF DIGITAL EQUITY AND LITERACY

maggie.woods@nc.gov