

Completing Access to Broadband Program

Webinar for Counties

Broadband Infrastructure Office
NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

Goals for Today's Webinar

- Review highlights and status of the **CAB Program**
- Review highlights from the **Stop-Gap Solutions Program** Notice of Funding Availability and Program Guidance at <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/stop-gap>
- Focus on the **County Match for CAB Projects**
- Update on the CAB Planning Tool (mapping data)
- Review County Responsibilities and timing for participation
- Review County Participation Form
- Answer questions from counties

Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) Process

\$400 million to make sure all North Carolinians can access reliable high-speed internet

- 2023: Prequalified 41 broadband providers
- Counties partner with NCDIT to identify areas that need access and create a scope of work
- NCDIT posts scopes of work to solicit proposals from prequalified internet service providers at ncbroadband.gov/active-cab-proposals
- Counties meet with NCDIT to review proposals and make selection
- Awardees must agree to provide high-speed service that reliably meets or exceeds speeds of 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload

Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) Awards

- Previously awarded \$26 million in 2023
- Awarded \$96 million in June that will connect 41,738 households and businesses in 34 counties to high-speed internet
- Projects are being paid for through ARPA funds awarded by NCDIT, as well as funding from counties and selected broadband providers
- Legislation from the N.C. General Assembly to remove the program's county match requirement did not pass into law

Significant County Contributions Overall

- 48 counties participated in the GREAT grant or funded previously unfunded GREAT grant projects via CAB only
- 31 counties participating in GREAT grant and CAB program
- 5 counties participating in CAB program only
- 16 counties have not participated in NCDIT programs
Several of these counties have either conducted a local project, have a significant federal award, or have telephone cooperatives that developed significant connectivity coverage over the years.

Stop-Gap Solutions Program

- **\$86 million in total ARPA funding**
- Issued notice of funding availability and program guidance Aug. 12
- “The Department of Information Technology shall use the funds appropriated in this act for Stopgap Solutions–Federal Broadband Funds to **provide grants to internet service providers, local government entities, and nonprofits** for the provision and installation of infrastructure, as that term is defined in G.S. 143B-1373(a), that will expand the provision of broadband service to unserved and underserved households, businesses, state facilities, and community anchor institutions in this state. The department shall ensure that grant funds are awarded and utilized in compliance with applicable federal guidelines. No more than 5% of the funds described in this section may be granted for broadband projects located in any single county.”

Stop-Gap Solutions Program Funding

- Session Law 2022-6 allows the flexibility to transfer funding between the three primary broadband infrastructure programs – the GREAT grant, CAB and Stop-Gap Solutions programs, as long as the total allocations for the programs remain the same
- With this flexibility, we plan to utilize State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) for the \$86 million allocation for the Stop-Gap Solutions program
- Program funding will be awarded for the following purposes:
 - **County Match for CAB Projects**
 - **Broadband Line-Extension Projects**

Stop-Gap Solutions Funding for CAB County Match

- Counties will need to request matching funds **by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 9** using the County Participation Form
- Baseline amount for each eligible county requesting a match for CAB projects is \$500,000 with the goal of making matching county funds available to all counties that wish to participate
- Baseline amount may be adjusted up or down based on overall demand for funding, as well as the following priorities, listed in order of importance:
 - Counties receiving less than \$8M in ARPA funding (in direct county allocation)
 - Counties that participated in the CAB program in FY2023-2024
 - Counties that provided matching funds for the GREAT grant program
 - Counties with the largest number of un/underserved locations in the state

Stop-Gap Solutions Funding for County Match for CAB

- NCDIT may provide funding above the baseline to counties that participated in the CAB program in FY2023-2024 and provided matching funds of more than \$500,000 to those CAB projects
- For each CAB program award, the required percentage of matching funds from the county and the broadband provider are based on state session law
- Those percentages also determine the maximum project size for a county
- CAB Program Guidance available at ncbroadband.gov/CAB-guidance

County Match for CAB

- Matching requirements are set in the CAB statute and separated into the following categories:
 - Counties receiving \$8M or more in ARPA funding
 - Counties receiving \$4-\$8M in ARPA funding
 - Counties receiving \$250,000 to \$4M in ARPA funding

NC CAB Planning Tool

nconemap.gov/pages/broadband

NC Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) Planning Tool

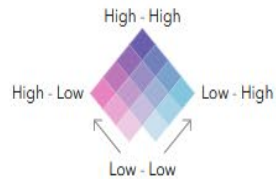
County Filter:
ALL COUNTIES

NC Broadband Eligible Locations - Aggregated

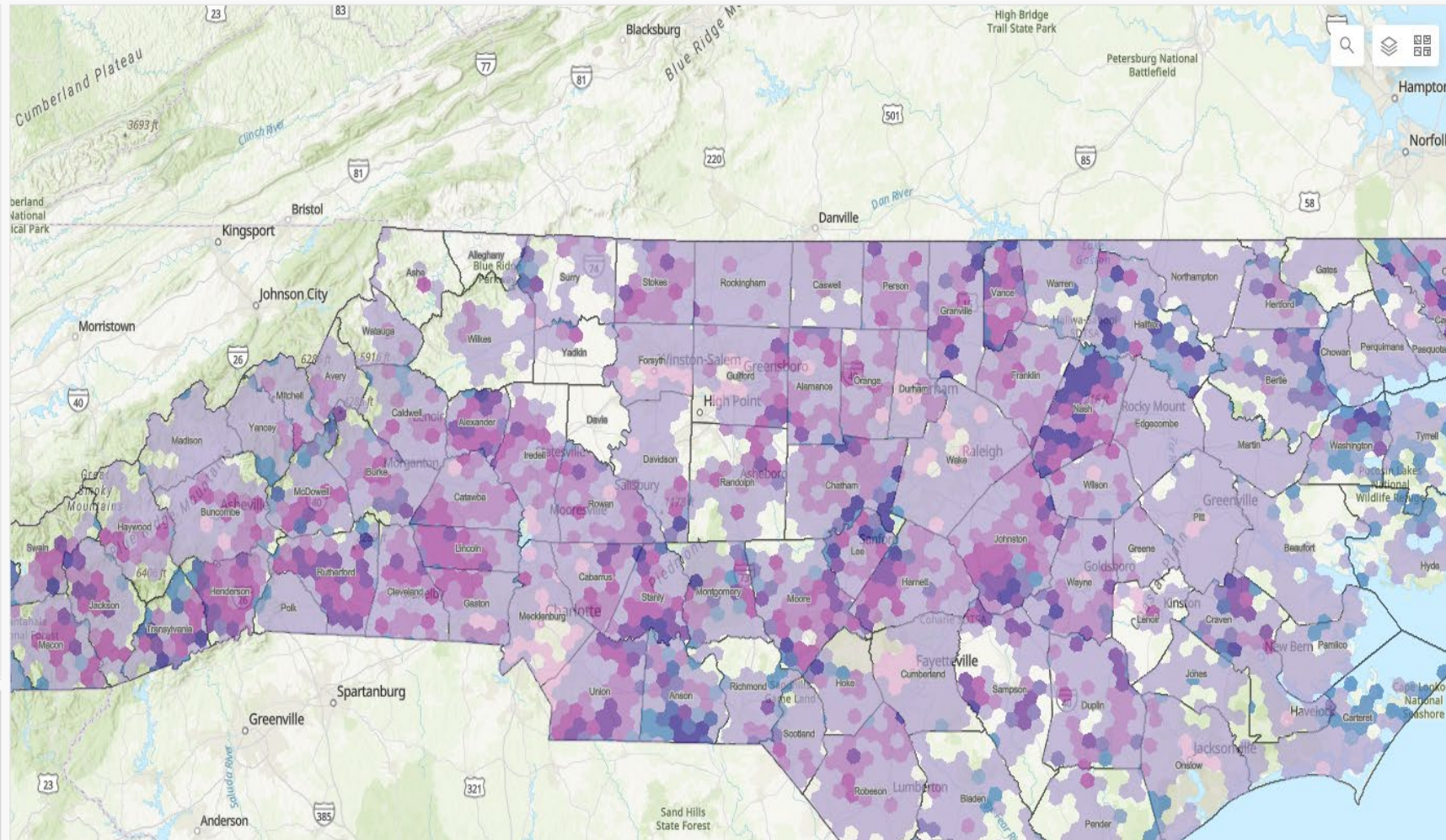
NC FCC Broadband Data Collection Aggregated Level 6

Relationship

- ↖ Count of CAB Eligible Locations
- ↗ Percent Eligible Out of All Locations in Area



For detailed instructions for this tool and additional information on the data included in this map, use the [NC CAB Planning Tool Help](#).



Filter by County and then Select list item to see Broadband Provider Reported Service Area in the Unserved and Underserved Maps*

Selection required on one or more elements

*Locations reported as served at any speed level in latest FCC Broadband Data Collection.

Timing for County Match for CAB and CAB Program

- CAB Participation Form due to NCDIT by **11:59 p.m. on Sept. 9**
- Protest window for mapping data (10 days)
- CAB program scopes of work will be posted by **Oct. 1** with responses due in November
- Evaluations will take place **November - December**
- CAB Program Guidance is available at ncbroadband.gov/CAB-guidance

Summary of County Responsibilities

- Stop-Gap Solutions Program Notice of Funding Availability and Program Guidance:
 - **Appendix A: County Match for CAB Projects – NCDIT/County Collaboration Process**
- The county will be responsible for the following steps as part of the CAB program:
 - Reviewing the CAB program Scope of Work template
 - Completing the CAB County Participation Form and returning the form by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 9 to CABprogram@nc.gov
 - Submitting any priority location data through the NC BIO Data Exchange by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 9 (Optional – county is not required to prioritize areas)
 - Selecting evaluation team members, completing and submitting the Evaluation Team Members Form to CABprogram@nc.gov by Sept. 9 (Optional – county is not required to participate in the evaluation of scope of work responses.)
 - Participating in review of responses by members of the evaluation team (Optional)
 - Upon issuance of a CAB award to a broadband provider by NCDIT, complete a Memorandum of Understanding with NCDIT related to funding

County Participation Form

STOP-GAP SOLUTIONS: COUNTY MATCH FOR CAB PROJECTS COUNTY PARTICIPATION FORM

Through submission of this form, _____ County requests funding under the Stop-Gap Solutions program from the N.C. Department of Information Technology to assist in meeting the county match requirement for participation in the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program.

The county understands that:

- Funding amounts for the county match for CAB program projects will be made based on overall demand for funding as well as using the prioritization criteria outlined in the Stop-Gap Solutions Program Guidance;
- NCDIT will review this County Participation Form and determine an “up to” amount for the county match, which will determine the project size for the CAB program scope of work; and
- The specific county match amount will be finalized once the scope of work responses are received and the project(s) selected.

County Participation Form

(Optional)

In addition to funding from NCDIT through the Stop-Gap Solutions program, the county intends to contribute up to \$ _____ for the issuance of a CAB scope of work soliciting eligible broadband providers to build broadband infrastructure within the county. The county will use the funding source indicated below for this purpose (indicate one or multiple sources of funds below):

_____ American Rescue Plan Act Funds

_____ Nonrestricted General Funds

Signature, Authorized Representative

Next Steps and Questions

- Outreach and technical assistance
 - Jeffrey Brooks – CABprogram@nc.gov
- Questions on the County Participation Form and funding amounts
 - Shanon Gerger – CABprogram@nc.gov
- Questions on prioritization of mapping data
 - Gretchen Ramirez – CABprogram@nc.gov
- Other programmatic questions
 - CABprogram@nc.gov



CABprogram@nc.gov