



Go Utah Launches “Connecting Utah,” a Planning Process To Provide All Utahns With High-speed Internet

November 29, 2022

Today, the Utah Broadband Center (UBC), an initiative of the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity, launched “Connecting Utah.”

Utah received planning funds through the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program and the Digital Equity Act to develop a five-year action plan to expand access to affordable high-speed internet in unserved and

underserved areas of the state.

“Access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet for every Utahn is our goal,” said Gov. Spencer J. Cox. “High-speed internet allows our communities to access online opportunities for work, education, healthcare, commerce, and other essential quality-of-life services.”

Many Utahns do not have access to high-speed internet. Lack of infrastructure, devices, and digital skills, along with affordability issues, make it difficult for some Utahns to access online resources. According to the 2021 American Communities Survey, more than 70,000 Utah households do not have internet connectivity; even more do not have high-speed or broadband internet access.

Utah is ready to answer, and the Utah State Library Division is excited to help. “We will continue to serve alongside the Broadband Center as leaders in the state planning process for full digital connectivity,” said Chaundra Johnson, state librarian and division director. “We will ensure that every Utahn sees themselves represented in this plan. Together, we’ll ensure the tools to succeed in the 21st century are where they belong: in the hands of every Utahn.”

Over the next year, the UBC will work with stakeholders, communities, and tribal members to identify areas with low or no access to high-speed internet and develop strategies to increase internet access in those areas. We will include these strategies in a statewide five-year action plan. Once the plan is complete, the state will apply for additional funding from the BEAD program to implement those strategies and increase broadband infrastructure in Utah.

The Center seeks the public’s help in identifying areas lacking digital connectivity. The public can provide input by visiting AllOnline.utah.gov or by calling 435-264-8880.

Administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the BEAD Program funds projects that help expand high-speed internet access and use. According to "Internet for All," the \$42.45 billion program aims to expand internet access to priority areas, including underserved locations with no access to 25/3 Mbps and underserved locations with no access to 100/20 Mbps.