



FLORIDA
COMMERCE

**Public Input for the BEAD
Initial Proposal Volume I and II
Webinar**

December 7, 2023

Introductions

- Meredith Ivey, Deputy Secretary, Division of Community Development
- Paul Wotherspoon, Acting Director, Office of Broadband
- Tonya Pryor, Deputy Director, Office of Broadband
- Sean Lewis, Chief of Broadband Initiatives

Agenda

- BEAD Recap
- BEAD Initial Proposal Overview
- How to Submit a Public Comment
- Questions and Answers

Mission Statement

- The vision of the Florida Office of Broadband is to foster a connected economy that supports workforce and community development, education opportunities, telemedicine, and resiliency by increasing broadband availability, accessibility, and adoption. This vision comports with legislative findings in the Florida Broadband Deployment Act of 2021, "that the sustainable adoption of broadband internet service is critical to the economic and business development of this state and is essential for all residents of this state, libraries, schools, colleges and universities, health care providers, and community organizations" (section 288.9961(1), Florida Statutes).
- The Office of Broadband works with local and state government agencies, community organizations and private businesses to increase the availability and effectiveness of broadband internet throughout the state, specifically in small and rural communities. Through these partnerships, the Office of Broadband encourages investment in grant funding opportunities and shares information on how the expansion and adoption of broadband across the State directly impacts the future of Florida's economy.



Broadband Impacts All Components of Economic Development in Florida



Workforce

- Trained
- Adaptable

Infrastructure

- Ready
- Resilient

Housing

- Accessible
- Modern

Finance

- Confident
- Public-Private



Community Outreach

- FloridaCommerce held six public meetings and three webinars to hear directly from Floridians about barriers to accessing broadband Internet service. The meetings and webinars focused on discussing our goal to ensure all Florida communities can easily access Internet service, online devices, and digital skills training.
- In July, FloridaCommerce leadership met with the Seminole Tribe and Miccosukee Tribe to discuss their unique perspective in preparation for the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD).
- These meetings provided an opportunity for the Office to receive feedback on the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Five-Year Action Plan and helped inform the BEAD Initial Proposal.



Alex Kelly, Secretary of the Florida Department of Commerce, addresses those gathered at a broadband workshop July 7. [Wendy Weitzel | The Star]



Preparing Florida's Workforce for BEAD

- FloridaCommerce hosted the inaugural Florida Broadband Summit in Orlando on September 21 & 22, 2023.
- The Florida Broadband Summit featured panels on topics including Cybersecurity Programs for communities, Broadband Workforce, Local Workforce Development Boards and Federal Regulations & Compliance.
- Recently, the Office of Broadband attended a roundtable on workforce development hosted by Miami Dade College. The discussion focused on identifying skills, credentials, and pathways needed to support the industries talent pipeline.



What is BEAD?

- The principal focus for the BEAD Program is to deploy broadband service to unserved locations (those without broadband service or service offering speeds less than 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload), and underserved locations (those without broadband service offering speeds of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload).
- Florida received a formula allocation of \$1.16 billion in federal funding for these activities.
- Florida's BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposal are due to the federal government this calendar year.
- 30-Day Public Comment Period before final submission.
- Building out a highly skilled broadband workforce is critical to achieving Florida's goal of 100 percent broadband connectivity within the next five years.



Overview of BEAD

Program Overview

- Funding for **partnerships** between states/territories, communities, and stakeholders for building broadband infrastructure

Program Priorities

- **Unserved locations** (those below 25/3 Mbps)
- **Underserved locations** (those below 100/20 Mbps)
- **Community Anchor Institutions** (without gigabit connections)
- **Workforce and training** programs and initiatives

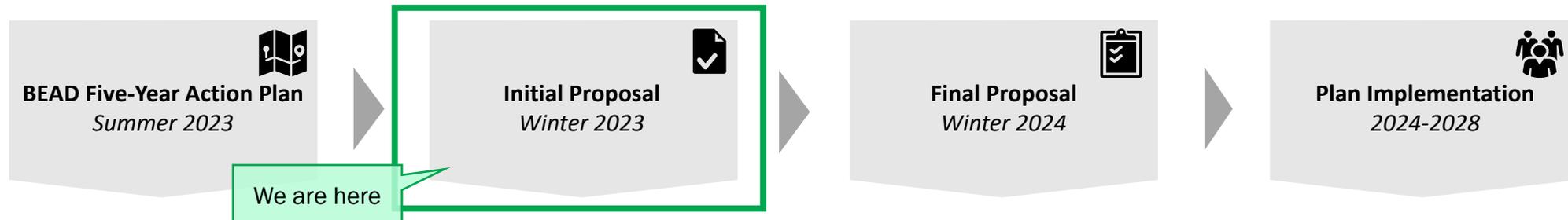
Eligible Uses of Funding

- **Planning** for deployment of Internet
- **Deploying/upgrading** Internet
- **Installing** Internet in multi-tenant buildings
- Implementing **digital adoption and use programs**
- Implementing **workforce and job training**

Subgrantee Selection Process

- Subgrantee selection process **must be competitive** and open to non-profits, cooperatives, P3s, private companies and more
- States **set selection criteria** using NTIA parameters

BEAD Plan Development Process



BEAD: Available, Diverse, & Highly-Skilled Workforce

- Ensure that award recipients support the development and use of a highly-skilled workforce.
- Develop and promote sector-based partnerships among employers, education and training providers, workforce partners and community-based organizations.
- Create on-ramps into broadband-related jobs and maintain job quality for new and incumbent workers engaged in the sector.
- Ensure that job opportunities are available to all Floridians.



BEAD: Industry Workforce Challenges

- Florida is experiencing record low unemployment and robust labor force growth.
- Broadband infrastructure jobs will require new skills such as fiber cable splicing that do not yet have a Standard Occupational Code (SOC), as well as more traditional utility and construction skills.

BEAD: Intentional Workforce Strategy

- Broadband jobs often do not require traditional 4-year degree and can be a very lucrative career path.
- Broadband related industries are going to have to market to a mix of:
 - Employed Floridians in need of hard skills;
 - Unemployed and job-seeking Floridians who likely need hard skills; and
 - Floridians who are not actively in the workforce (including students) but could be enticed if a clear pathway was presented to them.



Purpose of the Initial Proposal

In 2023, the state of Florida was allocated more than \$1 billion through the federal BEAD program to facilitate the expansion of broadband Internet and service access across the state.

Background

Prior to launching the full BEAD program in 2024, the State of Florida must first develop an Initial Proposal to be submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

Purpose

The Initial Proposal describes how Florida will ensure that every resident has access to a reliable, affordable and high-speed broadband connection. It is the “first draft” of Florida’s Final Proposal to secure BEAD federal funding.

Contents

The Initial Proposal contains two volumes.

- **Volume I:** Describes the state’s plan for the Challenge Process and includes existing broadband funding.
- **Volume II:** Contains the remainder of the state’s BEAD implementation plan.

Deadlines

The Initial Proposal is due **December 27, 2023**.

The Final Proposal is due **no later than 12 months** after the date upon which the Assistant Secretary approves the state’s Final Initial Proposal.



Initial Proposal Volume I

Volume I was published for public comment on [November 15, 2023](#), and includes four key components. Today we will be diving into two components in more detail.

1

Existing Broadband
Funding in the State
of Florida

2

A listing of unserved
and underserved
locations in the state

3

Defining Community
Anchor Institutions

4

The Office of
Broadband's plan for
the Challenge Process

Today's focus

Please refer to [Initial Proposal Volume I](#) on the Office of Broadband's website for details regarding additional components of Volume I.



Community Anchor Institutions

Florida's Definition

An entity such as a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, unemployed individuals and aged individuals.*

Purpose of definitions



The purpose of defining Community Anchor Institutions is to identify organizations eligible for fiber connections of at least 1Gbps symmetrical speeds.

Identification of these institutions facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations and advances the goals of the BEAD program.

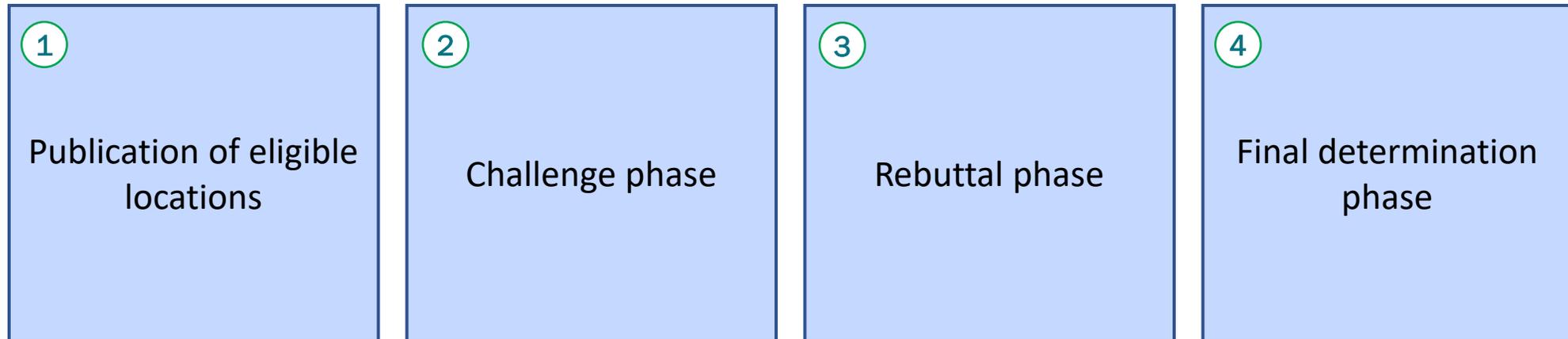
*Based on the statutory definition of “community anchor institutions” as defined in 47 USC 1702, (a)(2)(E), the Office adopts the definition of “community anchor institutions”



Challenge Process

During the challenge process, a unit of local government, non-profit organization, or broadband service provider may challenge a determination made by the state in the Initial Proposal as to whether a particular location or Community Anchor Institution is eligible for BEAD funds, including whether a particular location is unserved or underserved.

Florida will adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, which includes four phases, spanning up to 120 days.



The Office will treat locations serviced via digital subscriber line (DSL) as “underserved.” This modification will better reflect the locations eligible for BEAD funding because it will facilitate the phase-out of legacy copper facilities and ensure the delivery of “future-proof” broadband service.



Initial Proposal Volume II

Volume II was published for public comment on [November 22, 2023](#), and includes the remaining Initial Proposal requirements. Today we will cover three of the key components of Volume II.

1

BEAD Application
Process and Scoring
Criteria



2

Project Area
Development



3

Non-Deployment
Activities



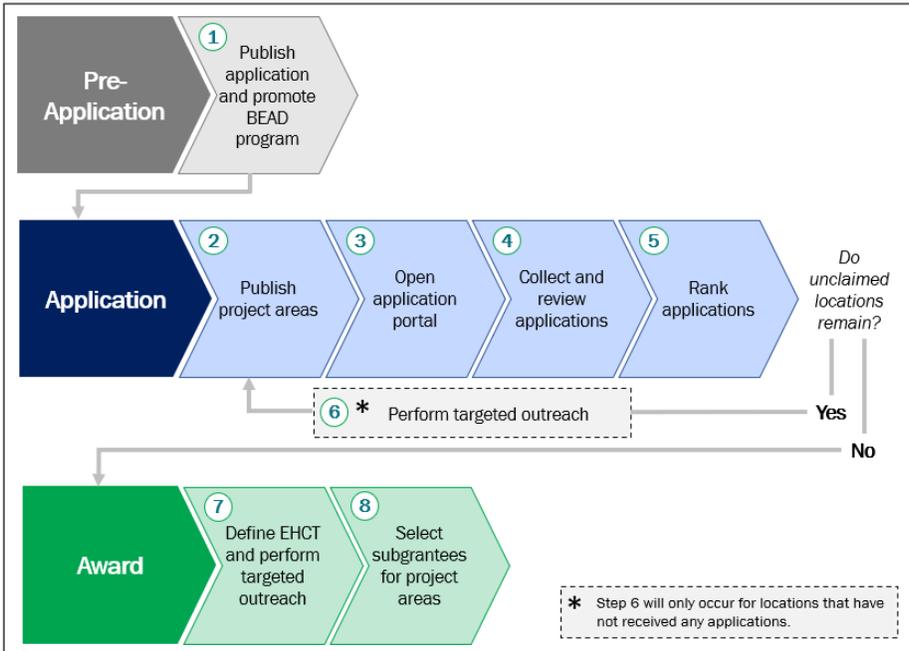
Please refer to [Initial Proposal Volume II](#) on the Office of Broadband's website to read about each component of Volume II.



Application Process and Scoring Criteria

Application Process

- Three-Phase Process: Pre-Application, Application, and Award
- Application phase repeats until all locations are covered



Scoring Criteria

- Two separate scoring criteria for “Primary Projects” and “Other Last Mile Projects”
- Leverage, Affordability, and Fair Labor Practices make up 75% of total score

Primary Projects*			
Scoring Criteria	Criteria Components	Maximum Points (400)	%
1. Leverage - Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	1.1 Leverage of non-BEAD funding 1.2 Verified financial commitment from community members and organizations 1.3 Leverage of existing infrastructure to reduce deployment costs	200	50%
2. Affordability	2.1 Pricing of 1G symmetrical service option 2.2 Entry level tier and/or discounted rates for low income, small business, and community anchor institutions 2.3 Participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)	60	15%
3. Fair Labor Practices	3.1 Proven track record of and/or specific plans and commitments for adhering to fair labor standards 3.2 Detailed, reasonable project schedule	40	10%
4. Speed to Deployment			
5. Meeting Prior Federal Commitments			
6. Workforce Development and Job Training			
7. Local and Tribal Coordination			
8. Open Access			

Scoring Criteria	Criteria Components	Maximum Points (480)	%
1. Leverage - Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	1.1 Leverage of non-BEAD funding 1.2 Verified financial commitment from community members and organizations 1.3 Leverage of existing infrastructure to reduce deployment costs	260	54%
2. Affordability	2.1 Pricing of 1G symmetrical service option 2.2 Entry level tier and/or discounted rates for low income, small business, and community anchor institutions 2.3 Participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)	60	13%
3. Fair Labor Practices	3.1 Proven track record of and/or specific plans and commitments for adhering to fair labor standards	40	8%

8 criteria total*

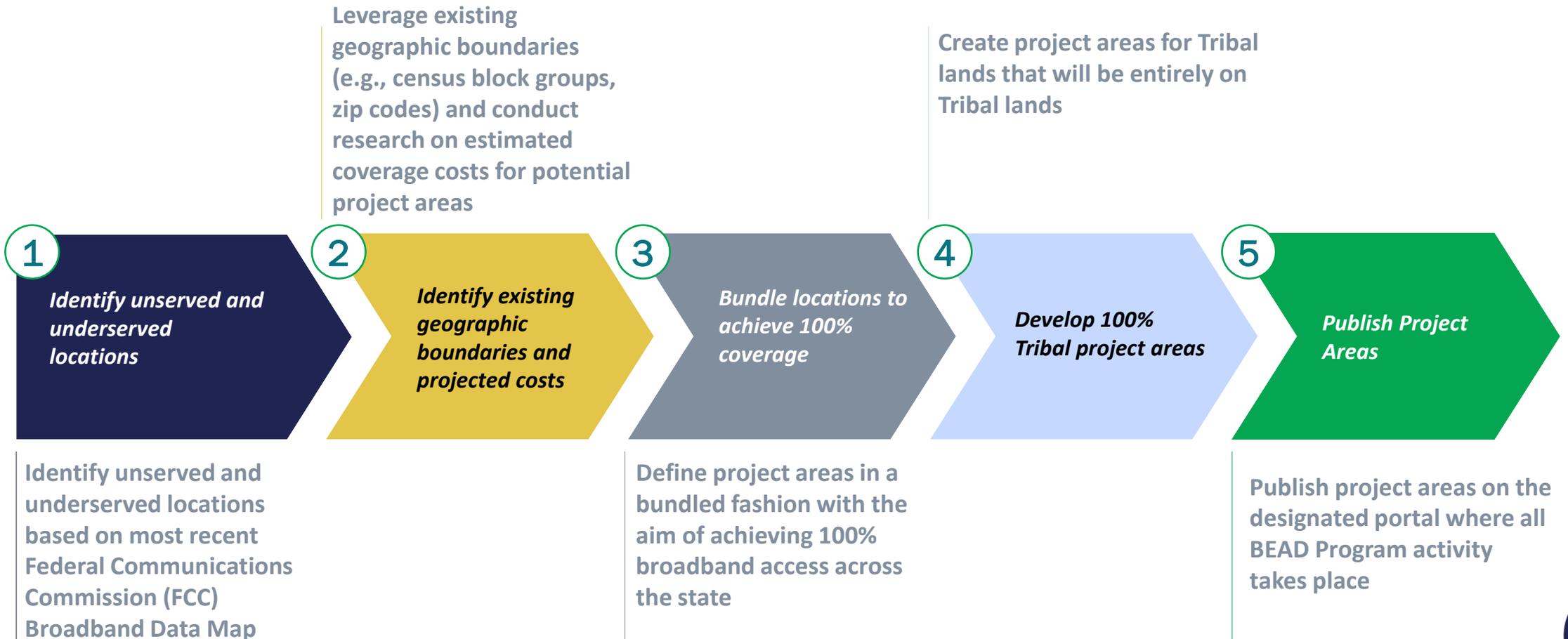
3 Primary Criteria

*Number of criteria for Primary Projects. Other Last Mile Projects have a separate scoring rubric that can be found on page 25 of **Initial Proposal Volume II**.



Project Area Development

The Office of Broadband intends to define project areas eligible for bids in advance of opening the application window, giving providers the ability to select the specific project areas for which they will apply.



Please note: for full details on the project area definitions, please see section 2.4.6 of *Initial Proposal Volume II*.



Non-Deployment Activities

NTIA guidance states that if additional BEAD funds remain after covering all unserved and underserved locations, states may dedicate this funding to other non-deployment activities. Florida proposes to use this funding to support critical workforce and training initiatives.

BEAD Workforce and Training Initiatives & Programming

Proposed Categories

1

Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs that prepare a pipeline of workers for broadband jobs

2

Training and Formal Degree Offerings for entry-level, management, supervisor and foreman positions

3

Pathway Programs that define the pathways to a career in broadband and support on-ramps to these jobs

4

Marketing Initiatives to increase awareness of high-quality broadband jobs and training opportunities

Proposed Scoring Criteria

01

Minimal BEAD Program Funding

02

Alignment with Workforce Objectives

03

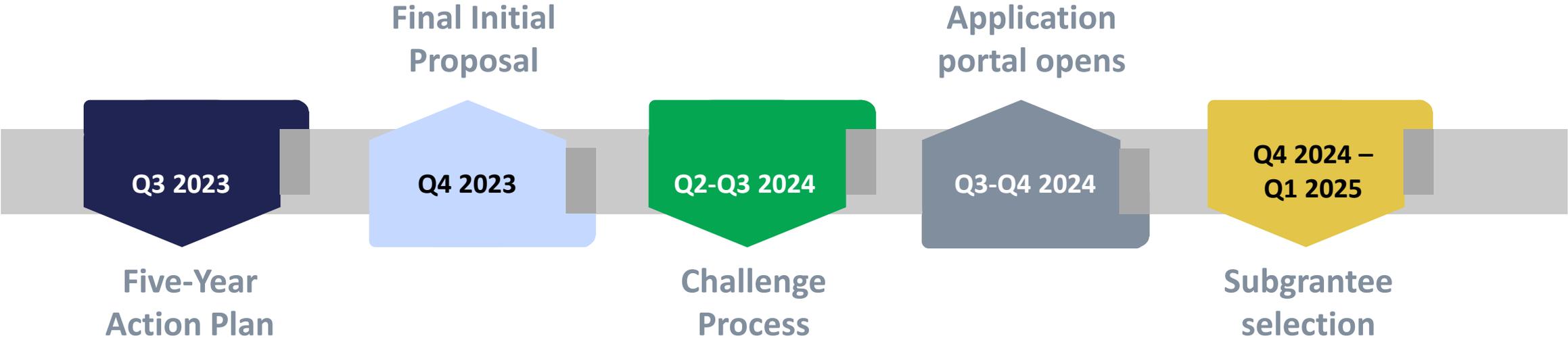
Partnerships and Collaboration

04

Sustainability and Magnitude of Impact



Next Steps to Achieving 100% Access Across the State



How to Submit a Public Comment

Public comments on the Initial Proposal may be submitted to FloridaCommerce via email or postal mail by the following deadlines:

Volume I: **Friday, December 15, 2023**, at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time

Volume II: **Friday, December 22, 2023**, at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time

Email

Mail

*Methods for
comment
submission*

Broadband@Commerce.fl.gov

FloridaCommerce, Office of Broadband
The Caldwell Building
107 East Madison Street, MSC-400
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Technical Assistance is also available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, by contacting the Office of Broadband at Broadband@Commerce.fl.gov. For more information, visit the Office's webpage at www.FloridaJobs.org/Broadband.



Questions & Answers



Contact Us

Thank you for your time today!

If you have questions or comments about this presentation, please contact us at:



Florida Office of Broadband

Email: Broadband@Commerce.fl.gov

For additional information, visit www.FloridaJobs.org/Broadband

