Alaska Statewide Broadband Advisory Board

Information Packet for the General Meeting occurring on July 17, 2023

Purpose of the Statewide Broadband Advisory Board

The purpose of the advisory board is to provide technology-neutral input, recommendations, and advice regarding

1) state broadband policy, goals, and objectives;
2) project proposal processes and criteria for project selection;
3) mapping and data collection and sharing efforts; and
4) progress made on the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband established under Administrative Order No. 322.

The board does not have regulation-making authority but may recommend regulatory changes to the director of the State Broadband Office.

Invited Attendees

➢ Glenda Ledford, Chair, *Local Government Representative*
➢ Tara Sweeney, Vice-Chair, *Member of the Business Community*
➢ Michael Brase, *Member of the University of Alaska*
➢ Charles Carpenter, *Technology Neutral Consultant*
➢ Bryce Edgmon, *Ex-Officio/ House Speaker (non-voting)*
➢ Anastasia (Ana) Hoffman, *Member of Alaska Native Corporation*
➢ Lyman Hoffman, *Ex-Officio/ Senate President Appointee (non-voting)*
➢ Thomas Lochner, *Commissioner DCCED or Designee, Director of Alaska Broadband Office*
➢ Travis Million, *Representative for Rural Energy Systems*
➢ Kathleen Moran, *Broadband Consumer*
➢ Steven Noonkesser, *Member of a School District*
➢ Christine O'Connor, *Member of the Board of the Broadband Industry*
➢ Laurel Shoop, *Commissioner DEED or Designee*
➢ Charlene Stern, *Member of Tribal Government*
➢ Anessa Feero, *Administrative Assistant* (Board Secretary)

Alaska Statewide Broadband Advisory Board – July 17, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development
July 17, 2023, at 10:00 AM AKDT to 12:00 PM AKDT

Meeting Details: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NjNhODAwMTYtYmM2OC00Zjk3LWFiMTYtOTViODJiNDUyNTk4%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2220030bf6-7ad9-42f7-9273-59ea83fcfa38%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22d2b433dd-fef1-4448-8cca-dff5c66bc3b3%22%7d

Meeting ID: 260 135 558 029
Passcode: b53ArA
Call In: 907-202-7104; Phone Conference ID: 523667163#

AGENDA

I. Call to Order and Roll Call   10:00 am

II. Review/Approve Agenda   10:02 am

III. Review/Approve Minutes for Prior Meeting   10:05 am

IV. Update from the Subcommittee to Establish a Technical Working Group   10:10 am

    a) Candidate Introductions
    b) Appointment Recommendations
        a. Expert in Microwave- Michael Willmon
        b. Expert in Satellite- Martin Marshall
        c. Expert in Fiber Optics- Matt Peterson
        d. Expert in Telecommunications- Daniel Kerschbaum
    c) Discussion

V. Requests from the Alaska Broadband Office   10:45 am

    a) State Broadband Policy, Goals, and Objectives
        a. Consumer Protections
        b. Digital Equity
    b) Project Proposal Processed and Criteria for Project Selection
        a. Tribal Entity Consent Landscape
        b. Permitting and the Imposition of Reasonable Access Requirements
        c. Interconnection Requirements and Wholesale Access
    c) Mapping and Data Collection and Sharing Efforts
        a. Instate Mapping Challenge
    d) Projected Timeline for the Statewide Broadband Advisory Board Recommendations
    e) Digital Equity Considerations

VI. Announcements   11:35 am

VII. Scheduling for Future Meetings   11:42 am

   a) Set Meeting Schedule
      Board Member Requests for Future SBAB Meetings
                                                                     11:50 am
VIII. Public Comment

IX. Adjournment   12:00 pm

Next meeting date: TBD

ALASKA STATEWIDE BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD
2023 Calendar of Expected Milestones

2023

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Inportant Dates

01/23: Broadband Advisory Board Appointed
03/22: Broadband Advisory Board Meeting
04/11: Broadband Advisory Board Meeting
05/02: Broadband Advisory Board Meeting
05/25: Start of ABO Tribal Consultations
06/30: Announcement of BEAD Funding Allocation
07/15: Five Year Action Plan Due to NTIA
07/31: Initial Proposal and In-State Challenge Submitted for Public Comment
08/01: Digital Equity Plan Submitted for Public Comment
09/15: Submit Initial Proposal and In-State Challenge
09/29: Digital Equity Plan Due to the NTIA
01/05/2024: Final Proposal Due to the NTIA

Requested Deadlines for the SBAB:
08/30: Recommendation on In-State Challenge Due
08/31: Recommended Changes Submitted for ABO Digital Equity Plan Due
09/01: Recommendation on Footnote 70 and Tribal Consent Question Due
11/20: Recommendation on Changes to ABO O&M Model Due

KEY
Advisory Board and Subcommittee Meetings
Deadlines from NTIA
Deadlines for the Alaska Broadband Office
Requested Deadlines for SBAB

Questions can be directed via mail, phone, or email to:
Statewide Broadband Advisory Board
C/O Alaska Broadband Office
550 W. 7th Ave, Ste.1535
Anchorage, AK 99501-3587

907-269-8159
ced.abo.general@alaska.gov
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web
/abo/StatewideBroadbandAdvisoryBoard.aspx

According to Sec. 44.33.920 (b), the purpose of The Statewide Broadband Advisory Board is to provide input, recommendations, and advice on the following:

(1) State broadband policy, goals, and objectives.

(2) Project proposal processes and criteria for project selection.

(3) Mapping and data collection and sharing efforts; and

(4) Progress made on the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband established under the Administrative Order No. 322.

The Alaska Broadband Office would like to request that the Statewide Broadband Advisory Board create subcommittees as appropriate to consider the challenges listed below to provide recommendations.

The following is a summary of the different challenges facing the Alaska Broadband Office (ABO). Many are directly defined by the text in the Broadband, Equity Access, and Deployment Program Notice of Funding Opportunity.

(1)   State Broadband Policy, Goals, and Objectives (Sec. 44.33.920 (b)(1))

a. Consumer Protection, Access to Service and Public Notice

"ii. Consumer Protections

Each Eligible Entity shall ensure that each prospective subgrantee does not impose data usage caps on any plans offered over a Funded Network or impose unjust or unreasonable network management practices. [89] Subgrantees shall certify through the semiannual reporting requirements described in Section VII.E of this NOFO that the plans offered over Funded Networks do not contain data usage caps for subscribers.

iii. Access to Service

Operators of Funded Networks shall provide access to broadband service to each customer served by the project that desires broadband service on **terms and conditions that are reasonable and non-discriminatory**.

iv. Public Notice

Eligible Entities shall **require subgrantees to carry out public awareness campaigns in their service areas that are designed to highlight the value and benefits of broadband service in order to increase the adoption** of broadband service by consumers. Awareness campaigns must include information about low-cost service plans and any federal subsidies for low-income households such as the Lifeline Program, the Affordable Connectivity Program, and any successor programs. Further, awareness campaigns must be conducted in an equitable and nondiscriminatory manner. Subgrantees must utilize a variety of communications media (e.g., online, print, radio) and provide information"

Footnote 89:" Providers may apply otherwise-applicable acceptable use policies to BEAD-funded networks."

b.   Digital Equity: How to Encourage Adoption

i. Review of the draft Digital Equity Plan (see attachment 1 for the Digital Equity Planning Document)?

(2) Project Proposal Processes and Criteria for Project Selection (Sec. 44.33.920 (b)(2)

a. **Tribal Entity Consent Landscape (see attachment 2 for full "Notice of Funding Opportunity")**

   i. **Footnote 70 on page 48 of BEAD reads as follows:**

   Below is the footnote 70 language from section IV.B.9.b.15. of the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that the ABO is working through with the NTIA (highlighting and "[State of Alaska]" reference added).

   We believe that the language in subsection 15 works for Alaska without the additional encumbrances of footnote 70, and that footnote 70 actually is harmful to the program.

   Paragraph 15:

   IV. Program Structure, Sequencing and Requirements

         B. Program Sequencing

               9. Final Proposal

                     b. Form and Content of Final Proposal

   15. To the extent an Eligible Entity's Final Proposal includes plans to deploy broadband to Unserved Service Projects or Underserved Service Projects on Tribal Lands, the Eligible Entity must submit a Resolution of Consent from each Tribal Government, from the Tribal Council or other governing body, upon whose Tribal Lands the infrastructure will be deployed[70].

   Footnote 70:

   [70] In the case of consortiums, a Tribal resolution is required from each Tribal Government on whose Tribal Lands the infrastructure will be deployed. For projects deploying to locations on Tribal Lands in Hawaii, consent must be obtained from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. **For projects deploying to locations in Alaska,** with the exception of deployments on the Metlakatla Reservation, **an Eligible Entity *[State of Alaska]* must gain the consent (by Tribal resolution) of 51 percent or more of the federally recognized tribal governments in the Alaska Native Region in which the infrastructure will be deployed.** Consent from the Metlakatla Reservation will not be required for deployments in the Southeast Alaska Region Village. Conversely, deployments within the Metlakatla Reservation will require only the consent (via Tribal resolution) of the Metlakatla Reservation's Tribal Government. If a Tribal Government is not meeting due to COVID-19 restrictions or will not meet between release of this NOFO and submission of the Eligible Entity's Initial Proposal, NTIA will allow the submission of a Letter of Consent from the Governing Body of the Tribe with the Eligible Entity's Final Proposal.

b. **Permitting and the Imposition of Reasonable Access Requirements**

   i. **Item #14 required by the NTIA in the Initial Proposal reads as follows:**

"Identify steps that the Eligible Entity will take to reduce costs and barriers to deployment, promote the use of existing infrastructure, promote and adopt dig-once policies, streamlined permitting processes and cost-effective access to poles, conduits, easements, and rights of way, including the imposition of reasonable access requirements."

Footnote 42 to Item #14: "Consistent with the goal that Eligible Entities seek to minimize the BEAD funding outlay on a particular project, Eligible Entities and their political subdivisions are strongly encouraged to remove time and cost barriers associated with BEAD projects, including by expediting permitting timelines and waiving fees where applicable, where doing so does not undermine other critical policy goals."

c. Interconnection Requirements and Wholesale Access
Page 69 of BEAD NOFO

"Any subgrantee receiving funds to deploy Middle Mile Infrastructure under this Program in connection with service to an Unserved Service Project or an Underserved Service Project shall permit other broadband service providers to interconnect with its funded Middle Mile Infrastructure network facilities on **a just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory basis.** An Eligible Entity **awarding funds for construction of Middle Mile Infrastructure shall require the subgrantee, via contract or other binding mandate, to allow such interconnection at any technically feasible point on the Middle Mile Infrastructure network** (without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated capacity limitations). This duty includes, **at a minimum, the physical interconnection of the subgrantee's Middle Mile Infrastructure to a requesting party's facilities for the exchange of traffic**. In addition, subgrantees shall connect to the public internet directly or indirectly and provide requesting parties with an ability to connect to the internet. Rates and terms for interconnection shall be reasonable and nondiscriminatory. Each Eligible Entity shall require each subgrantee that obtains funding for the deployment or upgrade of Middle Mile Infrastructure to negotiate in good faith with any requesting party (including public, Tribal, private, non-profit, or other parties) making a bona fide request for interconnection. Subgrantees shall report through the subgrantee reporting process established in Section VII.E.2 of this NOFO any interconnection requests made to the subgrantee during that year and the status of those requests. In selecting subgrantees for last-mile deployments to Unserved Service Projects and Underserved Service Projects, NTIA encourages Eligible Entities to give preference to prospective subgrantees who commit to offering wholesale broadband services at rates and terms that are reasonable and nondiscriminatory. Eligible Entities shall require that if a subgrantee, at any time, is no longer able to provide broadband service to the end user locations covered by the subgrant at any time on a retail basis remedial action be taken to ensure continuity of service. In consultation with NTIA, the Eligible Entity shall require the subgrantee to sell the network capacity at a reasonable, wholesale rate on a nondiscriminatory basis to one or more other broadband service providers or public-sector entities or sell the network in its entirety to a new provider who commits to providing services under the terms of the BEAD Program."

(3)   Mapping and Data Collection and Sharing Efforts (Sec. 44.33.920 (b)(3)
a. **Instate Mapping Challenge Process (see attachment 3 for the NTIA guidance on Instate Challenge Process)**

(4)   Progress Made on Taskforce Recommendations (Sec. 44.33.920 (b)(4)
        (see attachment 4 for full Broadband Taskforce Report)

NTIA will administer ~$48B through four programs that drive high-speed Internet access, affordability, and adoption

NTIA will administer ~$48B of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

BEAD	DIGITAL EQUITY	TRIBAL	MIDDLE MILE
$42.45B	**$2.75B**	**$2.00B**	**$1.00B**
Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program	**Digital Equity Act**	**Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments**	**Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure**
A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.	Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.	A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed Internet access and adoption on tribal lands.	A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

FCC to administer $14.2B
For Affordable Connectivity Program, which replaced the EBB program

USDA to administer $2.0B
Via the Rural Utilities Service

Private Activity Bonds $0.6B
Authorizes State and local governments to use private activity bonds for rural broadband

1

Name and Purpose	Total	Available	Comments from the Alaska Broadband Office
Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund Total -- *US Department of Treasury* Purpose: Invest in capital assets that meet communities' critical needs with a key emphasis on making funding available for broadband infrastructure	$111,799,968	$111,799,968	**Who's eligible:** States, Territories, Freely Associated States, and Tribal Governments **Timeline:** Applications from Tribal Governments were due 06/01/22, All other applications were due 12/27/21. No awards made in the State of Alaska to date.
Community Connect Total -- *US Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Utility Service (RUS)* Purpose: help rural residents tap into the enormous potential of the Internet for jobs, education, healthcare, public safety, and community development.	$14,339,341	$0	N/A
ReConnect Total -- *US Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Utility Service (RUS)* Purpose: Furnishes loans and grants to provide funds for the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas.	$282,503,227	$180,662,358	**Who's eligible:** Corporations, LLC and Limited Liability Partnerships, Cooperatives or Mutual Organizations, States or local governments, U.S. Territories, and An Indian Tribe (25 U.S.C. §450b) For Alaska Native Corporations, Tribal Governments, Conias, Persistent Poverty Areas, and Socially Vulnerable Communities: 100% grant up to $35 million, no match required for 100 Mbps symmetrical service Awards can also be 50/50 Loan Grant Combinations, 100% Loans, etc.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans & Loan Guarantees Total -- *US Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Utility Service (RUS)* Purpose: Furnishes loans to provide funds for the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas.	$30,000,000	$0	N/A
Distance Learning & Telemedicine Total -- *US Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Utility Service (RUS)* Purpose: Uses the unique capabilities of telecommunications to connect to each other and to the world, overcoming the effects of remoteness and low population density.	$4,684,528	$0	N/A
Tribal Broadband Connectivity (TBCP) Total -- *National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA)* Purpose: Improve the quality of life, spur economic development and commercial activity, create opportunities for remote employment and online entrepreneurship, remote learning, and telehealth by expanding broadband access and providing digital training and inclusion programs to Native American communities.	$386,140,121	$0	N/A
Enabling Middle Mile Total -- *National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA)* Purpose: Expand and extend middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting areas that are unserved or underserved to the internet backbone.	$0	$0	N/A

Connecting Minority Communities Program Total -- National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) Purpose: Enabling the purchase of broadband internet access service and eligible equipment or to hire and train information technology personnel.	$4,544,546	$4,544,546	**Who's eligible:** Historically Black College or University, Tribal College or University, Minority-serving institution, or a consortium led by any of those three entities that also includes a minority business enterprise or an organization listed as a 501(c)(3). **Timeline:** Applications were due 12/01/21, with projected awards beginning in 03/14/22 One award was made in Alaska for $2.9 million to UAF as ANNH/NASNTI
E-Rate Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Provides discounts to assist eligible schools and libraries to obtain affordable internet access and telecommunications services.	$590,713,953	$0	N/A
Online with Libraries (OWL) Total -- *State of Alaska/Alaska State Library* Purpose: Through libraries, provide rural Alaskans with high-speed internet access that urban Alaskans have long been using for education, employment, and enjoyment.	$769,237	$0	N/A
School Broadband Assistance Grant (School BAG) Total -- *State of Alaska/Alaska State Library* Purpose: To assist schools to increase internet download speeds.	$21,100,981	$0	N/A
Emergency Connectivity Fund Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Help schools and libraries support remote learning.	$55,183,278	$0	N/A

Rural Healthcare Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Improve the quality of health care available to patients in rural communities by ensuring that eligible health care providers. have access to telecommunications and broadband services.	$627,765,383	$411,225,823	**Who's eligible:** Public or not-for-profit hospitals, rural health clinics, community health centers, health centers serving migrants, community mental health centers, local health departments or agencies, post-secondary educational institutions/teaching hospitals/medical schools, or consortia of the above
Lifeline Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Provides a discount on phone service for qualifying low-income consumers to ensure that all Americans have the opportunities and security that phone service brings, including being able to connect to jobs, family and emergency services.	$34,653,864	$0	N/A
Alaska Plan Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Provides support to rate-of-return carriers, and their wireless affiliates, to maintain, extend, and upgrade broadband service across the state. The Alaska Plan gave carriers the option to receive a fixed amount of support over ten years (2017-2026) for both fixed and mobile voice and broadband service in high-cost areas.	$543,762,240	$217,504,896	**Recipients:** Adak Eagle Enterprises LLC, American Broadband Communications et al., Artic Slope Telephone Association Cooperative, Inc., Bristol Bay Telephone Cooperative, Bush-Tell, Inc. , Cicle Telephone & Electric, Cooper Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc., City of Ketchikan, Matanuska Telephone Association, Inc., Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative, Inc., OTZ Telephone Cooperative, Inc., General Communications, Inc.

Connect America Fund II (CAF II) Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Provides support to price-cap carriers based on a forward-looking model of the cost of constructing modern networks for deploying voice and broadband services in states with unserved areas.	$177,247,872	$0	N/A
Alternative Connect America Cost Model (ACAM) Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: Provides funding to rate-of-return carriers that voluntarily elected to transition to a new cost model for calculating High-Cost support in exchange for meeting defined broadband build-out obligations. (Carriers that elected ACAM support following the 2016 order, but did not elect the new Revised ACAM offer, continue to participate in the original ACAM program, or ACAM I.) ACAM models the forward-looking economic costs of deploying a high-speed network and delivering broadband service. Carriers that elected this option receive predictable monthly payments to provide voice and broadband service to all funded locations over the program's 10-year support term (2017-2026).	$73,731,590	$29,492,636	Carriers that elected ACAM funding must meet the deployment obligations: deploy at least 10/1 Mbps service to eligible locations according to yearly milestones -100% of fully funded locations by end of year 10, in addition to meeting final deployment to deploy 25/3 Mbps

Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program Pilot Programs Total -- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/ Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC)* Purpose: To facilitate the promotion of the ACP to increase awareness of and participation among eligible households by providing assistance with the completion and submission of the ACP application.	$1,311,635	$1,311,635	The application window is closed, and the FCC is currently processing submitted applications.
Totals	$2,960,648,754	$956,541,862	

Alaska Statewide Broadband Advisory Board

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development
Alaska Broadband Office Progress Report on Taskforce Recommendations
Updated 07-05-23

The following is a progress report from the Alaska Broadband Office on all the recommendations made by the Governor's Task Force on Broadband in their Final Report.

Recommendations			ABO Progress
1.1	Define the Gaps	The following benchmarks should be used to determine if any location has access to end-user and last-mile broadband infrastructure or if a gap exists: 1-Unserved Area: an area that does not have access to broadband speeds of at least 25 Mbps (downstream) and 3 Mbps (upstream) 2-Underserved Area: an area that does not have access to broadband speeds of at least 100 Mbps (downstream) and 20 Mbps (upstream) 3-Latency: must be sufficient for real-time applications such as telemedicine and distance education (less than 100ms) 4-Data Usage Allowance: must be comparable to broadband packages offered in urban Alaska markets (Anchorage/Fairbanks) 5-Reliability: must be available 24/7 with minimal downtime and be resistant to single points of failure	Complete
1.2	Identify Middle-Mile Needs	Broadband policy and program analyses should include data gathering and research to identify where additional middle-mile capacity is needed to meet established or potential last-mile service availability speed targets, recognizing that any established standards will need to evolve with the growing demands of technology and consumer usage over time.	Ongoing
1.3	Analyze High-Priority Routes & Hubs	Broadband analyses should identify routes and hub locations from which fiber-optic backbone infrastructure should be extended in order to support higher capacity, more resilient services across Alaska.	Ongoing
1.4	Target the Unserved & Underserved	Robust broadband services should be available to all Alaskans. Policymakers should expand buildout objectives to deploy infrastructure to meet the needs of unserved and underserved locations across Alaska.	Ongoing
1.5	Ensure Accurate Maps to Locate Rural & Urban Gaps	Accurate, granular broadband availability and infrastructure maps should define where unserved and underserved areas exist due to gaps in broadband infrastructure, regardless of whether those areas have physical proximity to urban centers. The state's broadband deployment and program management should be data-driven to respond to all unserved and underserved areas.	Ongoing
1.6	Recognize That Affordability Creates Gaps	Policymakers should recognize that affordability is an important element in defining where gaps in broadband infrastructure exist. Policymakers should also recognize that affordability is driven by underlying costs associated with Alaska's unique operational environment and that partnerships between service providers and state and federal programs are important in achieving affordable service delivery to end-users.	Ongoing and required by BEAD NOFO

1.7	Prioritize Local Workforce Development	Additional priority should be given to broadband infrastructure projects that include support for local workforce development. Beyond on the job training opportunities, the State should partner with existing workforce development programs offered through the university system, technical schools, or apprenticeships. Opportunities to partner with broadband companies to develop job-shadowing programs or other types of training should be pursued.	Ongoing
1.8	Don't Let Progress Widen the Digital Divide	When developing requirements for project development, policymakers should recognize that broadband service needs will continually evolve, and bandwidth demand will continue to increase at a rapid pace. Policymakers should also recognize the importance of minimizing the disparity in access to broadband service that may develop because of fast-paced technological evolution and strive to ensure that equitable development continues to occur.	Ongoing
1.9	Maximize Federal Partnerships	An Alaska broadband office must work closely with state and federal agencies and other policymakers to maximize resources available for broadband expansion in Alaska.	Ongoing
2.1	Support the Alaska Universal Service Fund	The long-term stability of the Alaska Universal Service Fund is needed to ensure the sustainability of telecommunication operations in Alaska.	N/A
2.2	Establish a Federal Grant-Matching Fund	Establish a state matching fund as an option to support applicants who require all or a portion of matching funds in order to apply for federal broadband infrastructure grant programs such as the USDA ReConnect Grant Program.	**Need Recommendation from SBAB**
2.3	Streamline State Permitting	Policymakers should take steps to reduce the lengthy and costly state permitting burden on broadband projects and eliminate or reduce fees that state agencies charge for such projects. A broadband project coordinator or permitting official that can streamline or accomplish intergovernmental and interdepartmental permitting processes may be necessary	Ongoing
2.4	Advocate for Improved Federal Permitting	State officials should actively support Alaska's federal congressional delegation in their efforts to reduce federal permitting burdens for broadband infrastructure projects.	Ongoing
3.1	Give Preference to Fiber Middle Mile	Due to its unparalleled bandwidth, latency, upgradeability, and reliability, fiber-optic cables should be deployed wherever feasible and practical to facilitate middle-mile connections.	Ongoing and required by BEAD NOFO
3.2	Balance Last-Mile & Middle-Mile Upgrades	Policymakers should maintain a balanced focus on upgrading and extending last-mile AND middle-mile technologies, given rural Alaska's unique challenges and needs.	Ongoing and required by BEAD NOFO
4.1	Prioritize Accurate Data; Efficiently Obtained	The Office of Broadband Deployment should commit to the utilization of world-class broadband data and mapping analytics, leveraging available data sources to avoid a duplication of efforts.	Ongoing

4.2	Establish an Office of Broadband Deployment	An Alaska Office of Broadband Deployment should be established to provide leadership and direction to the state's efforts to ensure the expansion of broadband access and digital equity for all Alaskans.	Complete
4.3	Establish a State Broadband Advisory Board	The State should establish a State Broadband Advisory Board (SBAB) to provide guidance to the Office of Broadband Deployment, representing local, Tribal, education, health, business, and the general public's interests.	Complete
4.4	Establish Regional Broadband Planning Committees	Regional Broadband Planning Committees (RBPCs) should be established as regional planning bodies to formalize the engagement of local government, Native leaders, and the general public in the advancement of broadband connectivity and digital equity in a given region. Their purpose will be to identify local broadband connectivity needs, conduct planning efforts, provide assistance to local government and Native leaders, and integrate into the statewide broadband planning process in collaboration with the SBAB and the Office of Broadband Deployment.	N/A
4.5	Create Broadband Development Planning Areas	RBPCs should be formed in accordance with broadband development planning areas, the boundaries of which are to be defined by the Office of Broadband Deployment. These boundaries should be consistent with federal definitions, following established borough or census area boundaries or some combination thereof.	**Need Recommendation from SBAB**
4.6	Ensure and Strengthen Tribal Partnerships	The Office of Broadband Deployment should work closely with Tribal governments, consortia, and other Alaska Native entities to identify ways in which to collaboratively address the gaps that may be experienced across the state, leverage available resources, and to ensure equitable development.	Ongoing
4.7	Write an Equity Plan	The Office of Broadband Deployment should prioritize the creation of a durable digital equity plan that includes speed test comparisons, pricing data, and physical network gap details broken down by location. The plan should indicate locations and methods to improve broadband equity.	Ongoing
4.8	Partner with Alaskans	Community-level engagement should be a priority when it comes to data collection efforts, including local speed-testing and the validation of provider-reported data.	Ongoing
5.1	Establish a Vision for State Broadband Policy	The state's vision is to make it possible for every Alaskan to participate and be competitive in the global community by facilitating access to the full benefits of broadband with improved quality of service and lower costs.	Complete
5.2	Set Long-Term Goals	The immediate goal is that all Alaska homes and businesses shall have access to broadband service that provides minimum download speeds of at least 25 megabits per second and minimum upload speeds of at least three megabits per second; 2. Within five years, all Alaska homes and businesses shall have access to broadband service that provides minimum download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second and minimum upload speeds of at least 20 megabits per second; and 3. Rates for consumer broadband service should be transparent and	Ongoing

		offset, or otherwise adjusted, to ensure equitable affordability for all Alaskans.	
5.3	Establish a Broadband Parity Adjustment	In recognition of the scale of the investment necessary to bring adequate broadband infrastructure into every Alaska community, policymakers should create a Broadband Parity Adjustment that supports equitable broadband costs across Alaska's high-rate areas as compared with those in low-rate communities. The program could be structured similarly to Alaska's Power Cost Equalization program or the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit program.	Within HB363, currently unfunded
5.4	Enhance Public Safety & Cybersecurity	The State should work to enhance broadband services for first responders, coordinate with the FirstNet Network Authority, develop plans for broadband infrastructure recovery in the event of a disaster, and include cybersecurity considerations during project development.	Ongoing, in partnership with the State of Alaska Office of Information Technology
5.5	Improve Infrastructure Processes	Streamlined permitting processes, smart policies like "dig once" and the designation of rights of way as public assets, and partnerships with Canadian telecom networks along Alaska's border should be pursued in order to reduce broadband deployment times.	Ongoing, in partnership with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources
5.6	Strengthen Alaska's Broadband Capacity & Competency	Create or augment existing training programs for Alaska's students and workforce through the Department of Education and Early Development, University of Alaska, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development that provide the skills needed to build, repair, maintain, and operate Alaska's broadband network	Ongoing
6.1	Prioritize the Unserved & Underserved	The State should prioritize broadband deployment that lowers costs and increases the speed and quality of broadband services in unserved and underserved communities, basing decisions on a variety of factors determined by the Office of Broadband Deployment with input from the State Broadband Advisory Board and Regional Broadband Planning Committees.	Ongoing
6.2	Balance Middle- & Last-Mile Investment	Broadband investment should be balanced between establishing a robust fiber backbone to serve all parts of Alaska and the utilization of appropriate technologies for improved last-mile service delivery.	Ongoing
6.3	Develop a Cohesive Investment Strategy	The Office of Broadband Deployment, the State Broadband Advisory Board, and the Regional Broadband Planning Committees should carefully and methodically consider eligibility rules and limitations for federal broadband funding programs to ensure that adequate funding is directed appropriately toward both middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure needs. A focused, strategic approach should be employed to ensure the most effective use of these funds.	Ongoing

6.4	Prioritize Public-Private Partnerships	Grant programs and state broadband processes in general should be structured to incentivize providers to invest private capital and to establish ways in which public investment can be leveraged alongside private sector activity with outcomes that are in the public interest.	N/A
6.5	Create a Fair Grant Application Process	The Office of Broadband Deployment should establish a grant application process in which broadband service providers and other eligible entities may submit project proposals to expand the state's middle-mile or last-mile infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas. The Office of Deployment should work in consultation with the Regional Broadband Planning Committees and the State Broadband Advisory Board.	Ongoing
6.6	Ensure Ongoing Funding	The task force recommends that, if necessary and feasible, the Legislature should provide adequate funding to the Office of Broadband Deployment for its own operations, the implementation of a grant program to fund priority infrastructure projects, and for the establishment of the Broadband Parity Adjustment program.	Not Started
6.7	Engage Alaskans	The State should engage all Alaskans in its work to improve broadband service, quality, and affordability, from the identification of needs to the pursuit of viable projects to address them. The state's Office of Broadband Deployment should establish and maintain a website that is updated frequently and incorporates the use of social and traditional media to seek input and communicate progress transparently toward the goal of achieving universal, affordable access across Alaska.	Ongoing