



# COMMERCE NEWS

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**SECRETARY LOCKE ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT INVESTMENTS TO EXPAND  
BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS AND SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

*Announcement Completes Round One of Commerce Department Recovery Act  
Broadband Funding*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke today announced nine American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investments to help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve education and healthcare across the country. The investments, totaling more than \$114 million in grants, will increase broadband access and adoption in more than a dozen states. The grants will fund projects that lay the groundwork to bring enhanced high-speed Internet access to thousands of households and businesses and link hundreds of schools, hospitals, libraries, and public safety offices to the information superhighway.

“In a globalized 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, when you don’t have regular access to high-speed Internet, you don’t have access to all the educational, business and employment opportunities it provides,” Locke said. “These critical Recovery Act investments will create jobs and lay the groundwork for long-term sustainable economic growth in communities across America.”

The Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the Recovery Act, provides grants to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

Today’s announcement marks the final grant awards from the first round of BTOP applications. All told, NTIA awarded 82 BTOP grants worth \$1.2 billion that will expand broadband access and adoption through projects in a majority of states and territories. A total of 45 states and territories will be affected by this round of BTOP grants. NTIA recently began reviewing second round applications with the goal of making the first round two grant announcements this summer.

“The level of interest in this program has been extraordinary, and is yet another indicator of the critical role broadband plays in achieving durable, sustainable economic growth,” said Lawrence

E. Strickling, NTIA administrator and assistant secretary for communications and information. “I am proud of the grants we have awarded in the first round of funding. These are projects that will have a real, lasting impact on communities across the country.”

*The following grants were announced today:*

**Multiple states: One Economy Corporation: \$28.5 million** sustainable broadband adoption grant with an additional \$23 million applicant-provided match to implement a comprehensive program of computer training, wireless Internet access, broadband awareness marketing, and online content and applications to residents of 159 affordable and public housing developments and low-income communities in 50 cities and towns across 31 states and the District of Columbia.

*States impacted by this grant are:* Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.

**Idaho: Digital Bridge Communications: \$1.9 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$466,000 applicant-provided match to bring affordable wireless broadband service to rural, underserved communities in Cassia County, Idaho, including the towns of Albion, Burley, Declo, Malta, and Oakley. The project would expand Digital Bridge Communications’ existing network by adding five towers, 46 miles of new fiber, and a nine-mile microwave link. The project also proposes to offer speeds of up to 3 Mbps using both fixed and mobile wireless technology, as well as directly connect approximately 25 community anchor institutions at no charge.

**Idaho: Digital Bridge Communications: \$980,000** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$246,000 applicant-provided match to bring affordable wireless broadband service to rural, underserved communities in Jerome County, Idaho, including the towns of Barrymore, Falls City, Greenwood, Haytown, Hunt, Hydra, Jerome, McHenry, and Sugar Loaf. The project would expand Digital Bridge Communications’ existing network by adding three towers, 15 miles of new fiber, and two microwave links. The expanded network intends to offer speeds up to 3 Mbps using both fixed and mobile wireless technology, as well as directly connect approximately 25 community anchor institutions at no charge.

**Idaho: Digital Bridge Communications: \$1.4 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$340,000 applicant-provided match to bring affordable wireless broadband service to underserved communities in Twin Falls County, Idaho, including the towns of Buhl, Burger, Clover, Deep Creek, Fairview, Filer, Godwin, and Hansen. The project would expand Digital Bridge Communications’ existing network by adding eight towers, three miles of new fiber, and nine microwave links. This expanded network intends to offer speeds up to 3 Mbps using both fixed and mobile wireless technology, as well as directly connect approximately 25 community anchor institutions at no charge.

**Kentucky: City of Williamstown, Kentucky: \$535,000** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$134,000 applicant-provided match to deploy a high-speed fiber-to-the-home broadband network to unserved and underserved communities south of its existing network in Corinth, and north of its existing network to areas of Grant and Owen counties in northern Kentucky. The project intends to offer broadband speeds up to 10 Mbps and directly connect the three municipal organizations within the service area – Corinth City Hall, the Corinth Water District, and the Corinth Volunteer Fire Department – free of charge. In addition, the project expects to offer broadband Internet access for local consumers, including approximately 680 households and 20 businesses, and spur economic growth and job creation in the region.

**Oklahoma: Pine Telephone Company, Inc.: \$9.5 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$2.4 million applicant-provided match to deliver affordable wireless broadband service to underserved areas of Southeastern Oklahoma, including the Tribal lands of the Choctaw Nation and its 10 counties. The project intends to directly connect 20 community anchor institutions, including Choctaw Nation agencies, public schools, public safety agencies, fire and police departments, and a health clinic. The project's last mile network plans to offer broadband speeds ranging from 1 Mbps to 3 Mbps to as many as 7,000 households and 75 businesses.

**Puerto Rico: Critical Hub Networks, Inc.: \$25.8 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$6.7 million applicant-provided match to provide fast, affordable broadband connectivity for last-mile Internet service providers and underserved areas of Puerto Rico, including of the islands of Culebra and Vieques. The project plans to purchase a 10 Gbps undersea fiber-optic cable directly connecting to Miami and deploy more than 180 miles of terrestrial middle-mile microwave network using 11 towers. The network will offer speeds from 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps to anchor institutions, including more than 1,500 K-12 schools, and local Internet service providers.

**Virginia: Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative: \$19 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$5 million applicant-provided match to bring high-speed affordable broadband services to 15 underserved counties and the cities of Emporia and Franklin in South Central Virginia by expanding and enhancing its existing high-speed broadband and voice communications wireless network. The BIT Wireless project intends to offer wireless broadband at speeds of up to 10 Mbps to as many as 100,000 households, 14,800 businesses, and 800 community anchor institutions. In addition, the project will promote broadband adoption by discounting the cost of the equipment necessary to subscribe at home.

**Washington: Public Utility District of Pend Oreille County: \$27.2 million** broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$6.8 million applicant-provided match to bring high-speed, affordable broadband to underserved areas of Pend Oreille County in northeastern Washington State, which borders Idaho and Canada. The proposed fiber-to-the-premises network would deploy approximately 526 miles of fiber-optic cable to deliver last-mile broadband Internet services and facilitate critical network redundancy in this rural area. The project plans to offer affordable, high-speed broadband access to as many as 3,200 households, 360 businesses, and 24 community anchor institutions.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided a total of \$7.2 billion to NTIA and the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to fund projects that will expand access to and adoption of broadband services. NTIA will utilize \$4.7 billion of that funding for grants to deploy broadband infrastructure in the United States, expand public computer center capacity, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service. NTIA will announce all grant awards by September 30, 2010.

*Fact sheets with further information about all BTOP grants are available on the NTIA Web site [here](#).*

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