# ERIE COUNTY, PA BROADBAND EXPANSION PROJECT

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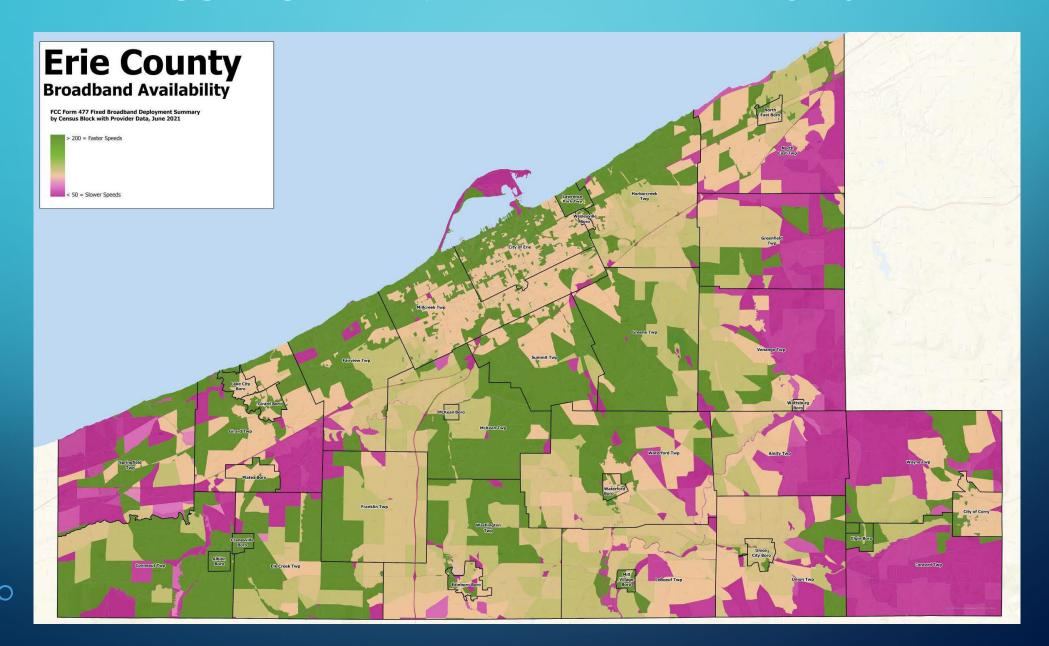


## GOAL AND MISSION

HIGHSPEED BROADBAND AVAILABILITY FOR ALL 269,011 RESIDENTS OF ERIE COUNTY

CLOSING ALL GAPS IN INTERNET COVERAGE TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL ACCESS

## FCC BROADBAND AVAILABILITY MAPS 2021



## PARTNERS AND APPROACH

## Partners:

- Erie Area Council of Governments
- 38 municipalities
- Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development
- Erie County GIS Team
- Feasibility Study Consultant: ECC Tech
- Northwest Commission
- 8 Counties in Northwest Pennsylvania

## Approach:

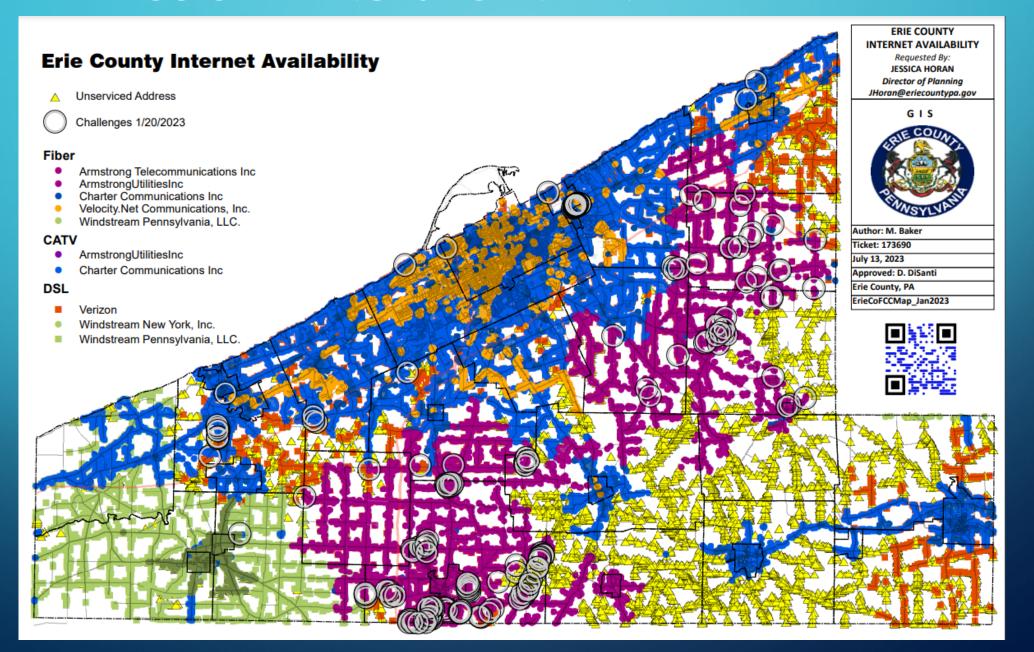
Prior to FCC map release and challenge period:

- Apply for funding for a countywide feasibility study: to identify all un and underserved addresses by field assessment of infrastructure
- Hire consultant to complete feasibility study
- Lead challenge to both phases of FCC maps to ensure highest funding possible to PA from BEAD

After FCC challenge periods:

- Use Feasibility findings and recommendations to build Broadband Expansion strategy
- Reserve \$2.5 M in ARPA funding to support expansion

## FCC CHALLENGES TO INTERNET AVAILABILITY



# BROADBAND AVAILABILITY **Broadband Availability** Erie County, PA **Serviceable Locations** Internet Provider Armstrong Charter Velocity.Net Windstream Underserved Unserved

# DATA AND MAP CHALLENGES **PBDA** Submitted Challenges Erie County, PA ArmstrongUtilitiesInc: 54 O Charter Communications Inc: 46 Windstream Pennsylvania, LLC: 216

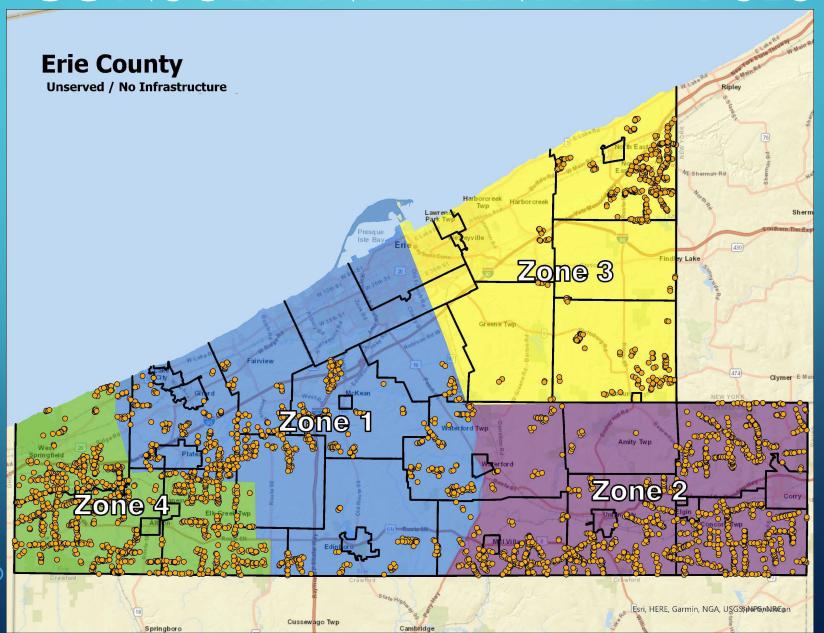
3586 UNSERVED ADDRESSES 526 UNDERSERVED ADDRESSES = (4112)
375+ MILES OF INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED

## **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

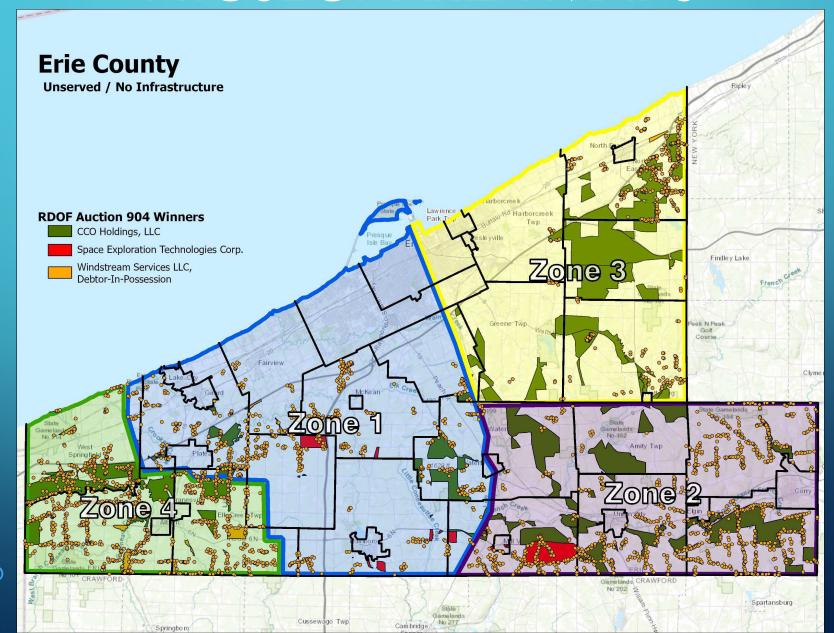
**OPTION 1:** RFP TO SOLICIT RESPONSES FROM NEW AND EXISTING PROVIDERS TO EXTEND INFRASTRUCTURE

- DIVIDE THE COUNTY INTO ZONES AND RELEASE AN RFP FOR CARRIERS TO BID ON ONE OR ALL OF ZONES.
- ✓ UTILIZE COUNTY GIS TEAM TO MAP BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS AND CREATE PROJECT AREAS
- ✓ PREPARE RFP AND SOLICIT BROADBAND EXPANSION PROPOSALS FROM INCUMBENT ISPS

## CONSULTANT IDENTIFIED BSLS



## PROJECT AREA MAPS



## **RFP RESULTS**

	Zone 1	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 4
PROVIDER	VNET	Charter	Charter	Charter	Charter	Windstream
Start Date	1/1/2024	Upon Award	Upon Award	Upon Award	Upon Award	
Completion Date	1/1-6/1/25	By 12/31/26	By 12/31/26	By 12/31/26	By 12/31/26	12/31/26
Technology (fiber, wireless, copper, etc.) (Minimum of 100Mbps x 100Mpbs service offered).	Fiber Optic	Fiber	Fiber	Fiber	Fiber	Fiber
# households in RFP	770	770	1,303	468	1045	1045
# of potential households served	436	498	1,733	462	744	185
# of potential businesses served	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Amount of grant funds requested from EACOG and the County	\$506,584.40	Asking contribution to make the grant application more competitive				
Amount of funds from ISP	\$506,584.40	\$1,743,000	\$6,065,500	\$1,617,000	\$2,604,000	\$234,547.50
Total project cost	\$4,050,835.25	\$5,179,828	\$10,940,708	\$2,934,864	\$5,020,717	\$938,190
Minimum Speed	200 Mb	300 Mb	300 Mb	300 Mb	300 Mb	500 Mb
Maximum Speed	1 Gb	1 Gb	1 Gb	1 Gb	1 Gb	1 Gb
Monthly cost of least	\$60	\$79.99 Standard	\$79.99 Standard	\$79.99 Standard	\$79.99 Standard	\$49.98-79.98 Promo
expensive residential plan		\$49.99 Promo	\$49.99 Promo	\$49.99 Promo	\$49.99 Promo	
Monthly cost of low- income residential plan	\$0 (w/ACP)	\$19.99 (w/ACP)	\$19.99 (w/ACP)	\$19.99 (w/ACP)	\$19.99 (w/ACP)	ACP eligible
Standard (drop) install fee	No charge up to 200 ft., then case by case	\$59.99 up to 2,500 ft, then case by case				No charge up to 2,500 ft

## **FEASIBILITY RECOMMENDATION OPTION 1 RESULTS:**

ERIE COUNTY SUPPORTS APPLICATIONS FOR PA CPF BIP FUNDING

OFFERS FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ENSURE LONG DROPS RESULT IN CONNECTION

- WINDSTREAM: ONLY ERIE COUNTY ISP AWARDED FUNDING TO BUILD OUT TO 185
  BSLS
- CHARTER/SPECTRUM: WITHDRAWS APPLICATION
- VELOCITY.NET: APPLIED UNSUCCESSFULLY

LEAVING 3927 BSL UN/UNDERSERVED

### **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

**OPTION 2:** DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH EXISTING PROVIDERS

- CAN BE ONE PROVIDER OR SEVERAL
- ✓ MET WITH ARMSTRONG TO UNDERSTAND EXPANSION PLANS AND DISCUSS NATURAL AREAS FOR THEM TO ADD UN/UNDERSERVED CUSTOMERS: CURRENTLY BUILDING IN NORTHEASTERN ERIE COUNTY WITH CAF 2
- ✓ MET WITH WINDSTREAM TO UNDERSTAND EXPANSION PLANS AND DISCUSS NATURAL AREAS FOR THEM TO ADD UN/UNDERSERVED CUSTOMERS: CURRENTLY BUILDING IN WESTERN COUNTY RDOF AND CPF BIP
- ✓ MET WITH CHARTER/ SPECTRUM. LEARNED THAT THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN EXPANDING OR SEEKING AVAILABLE FUNDING IN PA DUE TO PREVAILING WAGE RATES

#### **RESULT:**

YET TO BE DETERMINED BASED ON WHETHER THEY APPLY FOR BEAD

#### **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

**OPTION 3:** PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH A PROVIDER TO BUILD THE NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE

- COUNTY TO OWN INFRASTRUCTURE (PA LAW DOES NOT ALLOW CURRENTLY) POSSIBLE LDC OWNERSHIP
- PROVIDER TO OWN INFRASTRUCTURE AND COUNTY PROVIDES FUNDING SUPPORT
- POTENTIAL REVENUE SHARE TO RECOUP COUNTY INVESTMENT
- ESTIMATED COST = \$32 M

#### **RESULT:**

PA LAW DOES NOT ALLOW COUNTIES TO OWN BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

**UPDATE NUMBERS TO REFLECT PBDA'S FINAL MAPS:** 

3676 BEAD ELIGIBLE BSLS

685 MILES OF INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED

#### **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

**OPTION 4:** COUNTY DEVELOP AN OPEN ACCESS NETWORK THROUGH NOT-FOR-PROFIT LDD

NOT-FOR-PROFIT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OWN NETWORK

ESTIMATED ERIE COUNTY COST = \$43 M

- ✓ CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING THIS OPTION
- ✓ WORKING WITH NORTHWEST COMMISSION AND 8 COUNTY CONSORTIUM
- ✓ DEVELOPED CORECONNECT CONCEPT
- ✓ CONSULTANT STUDIED AND PREPARED PLAN TO REACH ALL ELIGIBLE BROADBAND SERVICEABLE LOCATIONS

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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