

Broadband Mapping Initiative

THE BROADBAND MAPPING INITIATIVE CONSORTIUM:

- USTelecom - The Broadband Association
- ITTA - The Voice of America's Broadband Providers
- Wireless Internet Service Providers Association (WISPA)
- AT&T
- CenturyLink
- Consolidated
- Frontier
- Riverstreet
- TDS
- Verizon
- Windstream

The future of connectivity requires a comprehensive, harmonized, and nationwide map of broadband deployment to create an accurate picture of where broadband is currently available and where it is unavailable. Policymakers at the federal and state level recognize current broadband mapping needs reinvention. They also realize they need strong industry partners to get this done. Broadband providers are seizing the opportunity to lead the charge on an innovative approach to broadband availability reporting.

USTelecom – The Broadband Association, joined by ITTA, WISPA and a diverse consortium of broadband companies and associations are reinventing broadband mapping by launching a new initiative to better map broadband deployment nationwide and close the digital divide. The results will arm policymakers with granular data to identify where broadband service is lacking and better target scarce funding.

STATE OF PLAY

Where broadband has been deployed is generally known, but not much is known about where it hasn't. Broadband providers have made tremendous investments in the deployment, growth and innovation of our digital economy. However, no comprehensive map of America's broadband serviceable locations exists because there is no single, available, comprehensive data source of U.S. addresses/structures.

WHY A NEW BROADBAND MAP?

Currently, the FCC collects deployment data from broadband providers by census block. Unfortunately, location data on homes and businesses too often are not accurately reflected in census block or other available data. This issue is particularly acute in rural areas where census blocks are far larger than their urban and suburban counterparts and data sources are lacking.

You can't manage what you can't measure. For network providers, you can't deploy what you can't map. The Broadband Mapping Initiative will:

- Harnesses the power of new digital resources, mapping databases and crowdsourcing platforms combined with existing provider service address information;
- Improve understanding of unserved/served areas, resulting in better cost estimates, deployment time, and progress;
- Enable more effective targeting of funds in current and future government programs;
- Speed rural America's access to broadband benefits including eCommerce, eLearning, and telehealth.

BROADBAND MAPPING INITIATIVE PILOT

The Broadband Mapping Initiative pilot will aggregate all locations in Missouri and Virginia, identify their geolocation, and create a Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric to identify locations that require access to broadband. Initial pilot participants include multiple companies of different sizes and technology types. Additional companies will be able to participate once launched. Here's how the pilot will work:

- Multiple sources of address, building, and parcel data will be used to develop and validate a comprehensive database of all broadband serviceable locations in the two pilot states.
- A vendor will conform address formats, remove duplicates, and using a georeferencing tool assign a unique latitude and longitude to the actual building where broadband service is most likely to be installed.
- Customer address lists provided by participating companies will augment the validation process and will be automatically indexed to the final database to facilitate accurate broadband availability reporting. Different methods for reporting service availability will be tested.
- The pilot will also develop and test a mediated crowdsourcing platform that will enable consumers to submit information to improve the accuracy of the database.

GOING NATIONAL

Based on proof of concept, the FCC, or other government agency, will be able to replicate the Broadband Mapping Initiative pilot nationwide.

The result? A detailed map of America's broadband availability, enabling policymakers and industry to efficiently and accurately deploy broadband to truly unserved areas of the country.