

AMENDED AGENDA

Eau Claire County
Broadband Committee
Thursday, April 25, 2024
4:00 P.M.

Location: Eau Claire County Courthouse 721 Oxford Ave., Room #3312, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703

*Event link below can be used to connect to meeting and interact (by the chair) from computer or through the WebEx Meeting smartphone app.

Join WebEx Meeting: <https://eauclairecounty.webex.com> Meeting ID: 2532 212 3706
Password: 9F5TcuvHMd6

*Meeting audio can be listened to using this Audio conference dial in information.

Audio conference: 1-415-655-0001 Access Code: 25322123706##

A majority of the county board may be in attendance at this meeting, however, only members of the committee may take action on an agenda item.

For those wishing to make public comments, you must email Rod Eslinger at rod.eslinger@eauclairecounty.gov at least 60 minutes prior to the meeting to the start of the meeting.

*Please mute personal devices upon entry.

1. Call to order and confirmation of meeting notice by designated Chair, Supervisor Brett Geboy. Introduction of designated Vice-Chair, Mark Zuber (County Code: 2.04.150 Rule 15-Select and special committees. Section B)
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment (limit to 3 minutes per person)
4. Review/Approval of March 21, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes – **Discussion - Action**
5. Internet Service Provider (ISP) Updates – **Discussion**
6. BEAD Planning Process Update (Dave Hayden) – **Discussion**
7. Town of Drammen Request Withdrawal – **Discussion**
8. Town of Lincoln and Ludington white space coverage area – **Discussion - Action**
9. United Way Digital Equity & Inclusion Update – Amber Scharenbroch – **Discussion**
10. Next Steps and future meetings – **Discussion - Action**
 - a. Future Meeting date: TBD
11. Adjourn

MEETING MINUTES
Eau Claire County
Broadband Committee
Thursday, March 21, 2024
4:00 P.M.

Courthouse – Room #3312
721 Oxford Avenue – Eau Claire, WI

*Event link below can be used to connect to meeting and interact (by the chair) from computer or through the WebEx Meeting smartphone app.

Join WebEx Meeting: <https://eauclairecounty.webex.com> Meeting ID: 2531 666 6810

Password: JSjtSxbS248

*Meeting audio can be listened to using this Audio conference dial in information.

Audio conference: 1-415-655-0001 Access Code: 25316666810##

For those wishing to make public comments, you must email Rod Eslinger at rod.eslinger@eauclairecounty.gov at least 60 minutes prior to the meeting to the start of the meeting.

*Please mute personal devices upon entry.

Members Present: Don Mowry, Todd Meyer, Brian Berres, Collin Pomplun, Luke Hanson, Lynn Thompson, Monica Obrycki, Tom Lange.

Staff Present: Rodney J. Eslinger, Director of Planning and Development, Greg Dachel, Director of Information Systems, Dave Hayden, Broadband Consultant.

Others Present: Terri Hatchell, Chris Crawford, Travis McFarlane, Ryan Ludy, Buck Webb

1. Call to order and confirmation of meeting notice.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. and the meeting notice was confirmed.

2. Roll Call – Members present are noted above. A quorum was present.
3. Public Comment (limit to 3 minutes per person) – None
4. Review/Approval of February 15, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes – **Discussion/Action**

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes of February 15, 2024.

Luke Hanson motioned to approve the minutes as presented, motion carried on a voice vote with all in favor of approving the February 15, 2024, committee minutes (8-0).

5. Internet Service Provider (ISP) Updates – **Discussion**

Buck Webb of Tri-County Communications gave updates of their PSC projects. He indicated that the Town of Clear Creek project will commence on April 8th and work on the Fairchild project will resume in May. Both projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Clerk Eslinger provided an update from Jeff Emery with 24/7 Telecom. He noted the company's construction crews are currently placing main line fiber in Town of Union and it was noted that the 24/7 employees are going door to door to encourage sign ups during the active grant period.

Chris Crawford, from Charter/Spectrum gave a RDOF update. He shared a map of the RDOF areas in Eau Claire County. Todd Meyer said he was informed that two locations in Ludington were missed with the first passing. Chris was going to follow up with the construction crews to see what happened.

Travis McFarlane of Bloomer Broadband said the Seymour project is wrapping up.

No other internet service providers (ISPs) were present.

6. BEAD Plan Process (Dave Hayden) – **Discussion**

Dave Hayden noted that there wasn't much to update related to BEAD. He reiterated that according to the coverage maps there are 719 serviceable locations that are still considered un or underserved.

7. Town of Lincoln and Ludington white space area – **Discussion – Action**

Travis McFarlane of Bloomer Broadband indicated that they were not awarded a PSC broadband infrastructure capital project grant for the remaining white space areas in Lincoln and Ludington. He noted that their application scored just outside of those applications that were awarded.

As an alternative to the PSC grant, Travis presented the committee with two options to provide high speed internet coverage in the Lincoln and Ludington white space areas. Option one included the original PSC request (218 locations), but also added 66 locations in the Village of Fall Creek along the main line through the downtown area of the village. Option two included providing coverage in Lincoln along with the 66 locations in the village. He provided the committee with the financial breakdown of each option. Travis said that his construction crews could build the project, yet this summer and he has access to adequate supplies.

Dave Hayden and Greg Dachel noted that there could be additional savings with the project if Bloomer Broadband could swap fiber with CINC. Travis agreed to work with Dave, Greg and CINC to see if an agreement could be reached which may help reduce the overall cost of the project. The committee also wanted to know if the Lincoln and Ludington had additional funds to allocate toward the project, along with the Village of Fall Creek.

Travis McFarlane agreed to bring back a better financial proposal next month for the committee to consider.

8. Broadband Planning Tools for Rural Farming Communities – **Discussion**

Don Mowry led the discussion on Broadband Planning Tools for agriculture. He noted the importance of broadband to percussion agriculture. Ryan Ludy noted a publication on wireless technology for rural communities.

9. United Way Digital Equity & Inclusion Update – Amber Scharenbroch – **Discussion**

Ryan Ludy, Executive Director for the United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley gave an update to the committee. Ryan mentioned that Amber Scharenbroch was giving a presentation on their Digital Equity & Inclusion Initiative programming at the Great River Conference in Milwaukee. He noted that work continues with the Chippewa Valley Digital Inclusion Partnership and their next meeting was scheduled for April 11th.


10. Next Steps and future meetings

- a. April 25, 2024
- b. Develop a white paper that outlines the committee's successes.

11. Adjourn

Adjourn Action: Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:24 p.m.

Respectively submitted by,



Rodney J. Eslinger
Broadband Committee Clerk
Director of Planning and Development



Towns of Lincoln, Ludington and Village of Fall Creek updated Fiber to the Home Proposal

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this project is to expand broadband access in the Towns of Lincoln, Ludington, and Village of Fall Creek industrial park and business district, addressing the largest concentration of unserved locations remaining in Eau Claire County. While our grant application for PSC Capital Funds was unsuccessful, we are grateful for the broadband committee's allocation of \$420,000 in matching funds towards this project. We are now seeking Eau Claire County's continued support, along with Bloomer Broadband, to make up the difference. With this combined support and potential additional resources, we aim to complete construction by the end of this year and begin installations in early 2025. This project will enable Eau Claire County to achieve close to 99% broadband coverage, significantly enhancing connectivity for residents and businesses.

Project Area:

The project area remains largely consistent with the CPF grant application, utilizing the State of WI county list of eligible BEAD locations to identify locations needing service. Based on this data, we have expanded the project area to include four more locations on Railroad Dr. and three locations in Ludington township that were initially missed. The list of the 205 unserved BSLs located in this project is provided in Appendix A. A map of the project area is included in Appendix B, highlighting unserved locations with blue pins and indicating service areas with white polygons and address points with white dots. In addition to the unserved BSLs, any address point within the service area will receive the option to receive a free drop as well.

CINC Fiber Swap

To optimize the project's cost and efficiency, we propose a fiber swap with the CINC network. CINC has spare fiber capacity with an established bridge attachment over the Eau Claire River on Highway K. If approved, CINC will swap four fibers to Bloomer Broadband through this 2.4-mile section. In return, Bloomer Broadband will provide four fibers from Chippewa Crossing Blvd and Stilson Rd. to Beaver Creek Reserve. This fiber swap will reduce the project cost by \$165,419 and provide much-needed redundancy for the County. A potential future swap could connect Beaver Creek Reserve to an area near Hwy 27 and County NL, further enhancing redundancy to reduce outages.

Internet Service Provided:

The project will be served by a 100Gb backbone and 10Gb XGSPON subscriber network. Similar to that in the Town of Seymour. Speeds offered to customers will range from 100Mbps/100Mbps to 2.5Gbps/2.5Gbps. Our pricing, available at <https://bloomer.net/internet/>, offers the same rates in all areas without contracts or data caps. Higher speeds tailored to businesses can also be provided upon request.

Financial Considerations and Funding:

The overall cost of the project is \$2,358,963. An increase in the project cost has come from adding the 4 locations on Railroad Dr. Reducing the cost of the original CPF grant application has come from the CINC fiber swap, securing reduced pricing on materials, and securing a bid from our construction team for 2024.

The proposed funding of the project would be as follows:

Bloomer Broadband: \$972,802

Town of Lincoln: \$10,000

Town of Ludington: \$10,000

Village of Fall Creek: TBD

(2 proposals have been offered to the Village. One for 30k for this project. A second for 130k to expand service further in the Village)

Eau Claire County: \$1,366,161

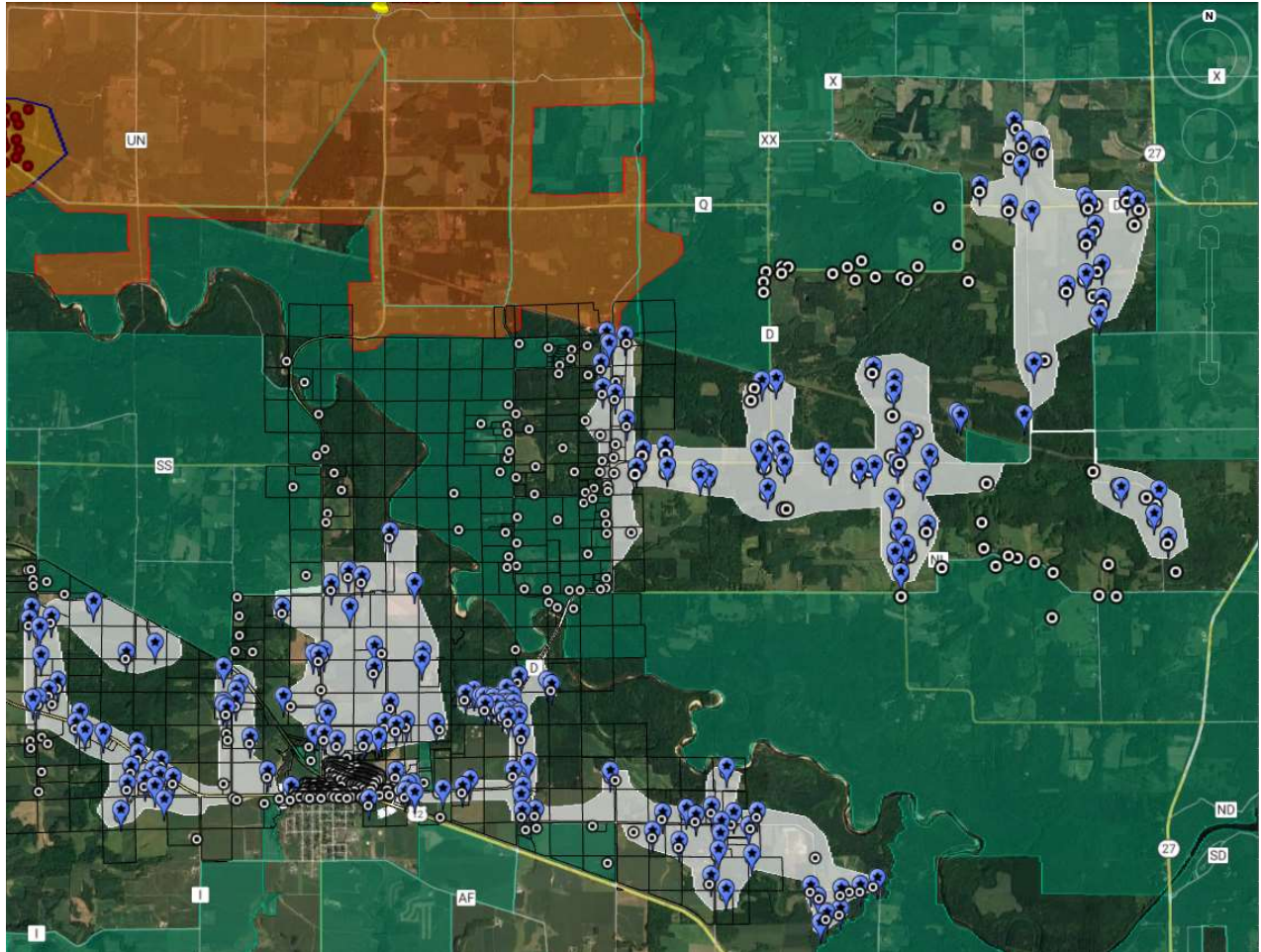
(Could be reduced to \$1,336,161 if Village of Fall Creek approves)

Appendix A: Listing of un/underserved BSL's in project

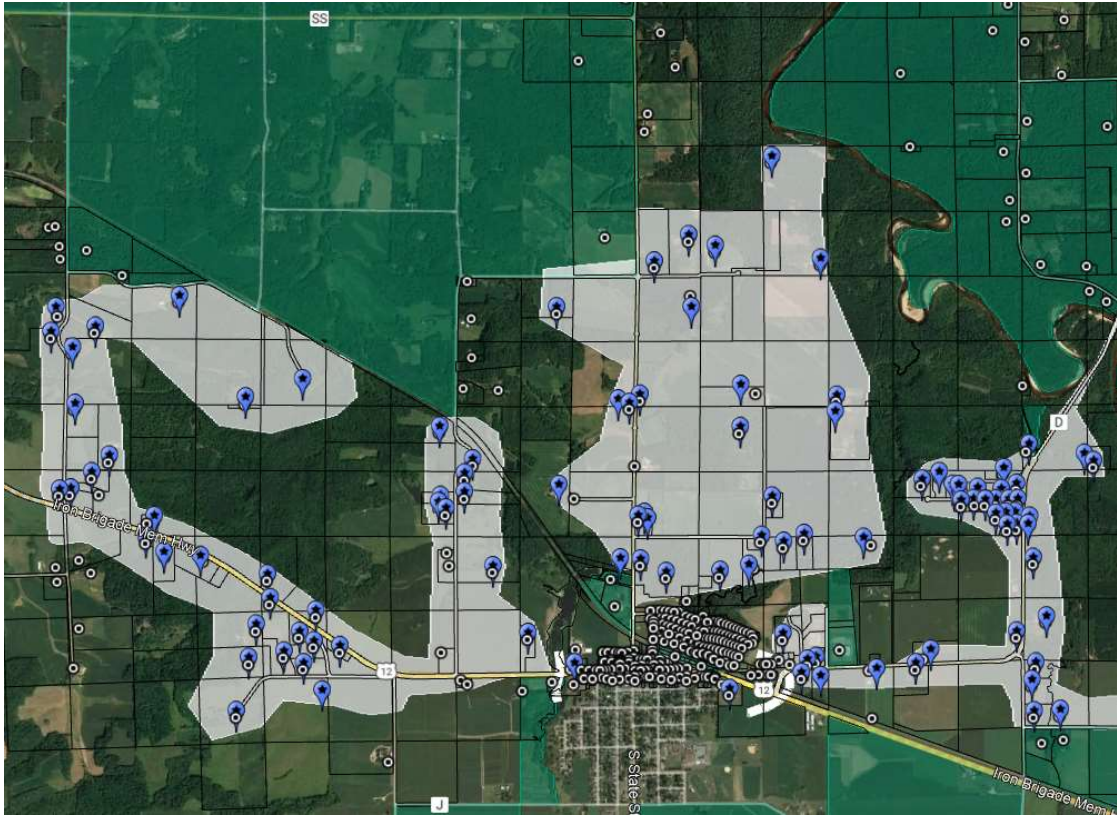
1078475676	1078481924	1078483228	1078483944	1078484328
1078475685	1078481925	1078483229	1078483945	1078484329
1078480808	1078481926	1078483230	1078483946	1078484333
1078480809	1078481927	1078483231	1078483947	1078484334
1078480810	1078481928	1078483232	1078483948	1078484335
1078480811	1078481931	1078483233	1078483949	1078484336
1078480815	1078481932	1078483234	1078483950	1078484337
1078480817	1078481933	1078483235	1078483951	1078484343
1078480947	1078482079	1078483236	1078483952	1078484344
1078480948	1078482086	1078483248	1078483953	1078484345
1078481031	1078482087	1078483551	1078483954	1078484346
1078481032	1078482088	1078483553	1078483955	1078484348
1078481033	1078482719	1078483554	1078483987	1078484349
1078481037	1078482723	1078483555	1078484050	1078484507
1078481038	1078482724	1078483556	1078484056	1078484508
1078481040	1078482725	1078483557	1078484057	1078484509
1078481041	1078482789	1078483562	1078484058	1078484510
1078481048	1078482822	1078483563	1078484059	1078484512
1078481105	1078482823	1078483708	1078484060	1078484513
1078481106	1078482825	1078483860	1078484061	1078484514
1078481107	1078483011	1078483864	1078484062	1078484515
1078481109	1078483014	1078483878	1078484063	1078484516
1078481110	1078483015	1078483879	1078484064	1078484518
1078481111	1078483016	1078483880	1078484065	1078484520
1078481112	1078483020	1078483881	1078484066	1078484521
1078481113	1078483024	1078483928	1078484067	1078484522
1078481303	1078483036	1078483929	1078484068	1078484524
1078481360	1078483037	1078483930	1078484070	1078484629
1078481362	1078483039	1078483931	1078484130	1078484633
1078481449	1078483207	1078483932	1078484131	1078484635
1078481909	1078483208	1078483933	1078484135	1078484636
1078481910	1078483209	1078483934	1078484137	1411789111
1078481911	1078483210	1078483935	1078484318	1412409705
1078481913	1078483211	1078483936	1078484319	1412409708
1078481914	1078483214	1078483937	1078484320	1414889949
1078481915	1078483216	1078483938	1078484321	1414889974
1078481916	1078483217	1078483939	1078484323	1414889975
1078481919	1078483219	1078483940	1078484324	1414890344
1078481920	1078483225	1078483941	1078484325	1414890227
1078481921	1078483226	1078483942	1078484326	1414889963
1078481922	1078483227	1078483943	1078484327	

Appendix B: Map of Project Area

- Orange – Bloomer Current Serving area
- White- Polygon of proposed project
- Blue Pins – Un/Underserved BSL's from State of WI
- White Circles – Address Points
- Green Polygon – Areas served by RDOF funding



Project Detail – West



Project Detail East

