



August 1, 2021

Report to the General Assembly

Indiana Code 4-4-38.5-13(a) requires the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (“OCRA”) to submit an annual report to the Indiana General Assembly regarding activities during the most recent fiscal year associated with the Broadband Grants for Rural Areas program. The following report includes information required under the statute from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Staff members

- Matt Crouch, OCRA Deputy Director
- Jodi Golden, Chief of Agency Operations, Lieutenant Governor’s Office
- Adam Servies, Grant Services Program Manager, Lieutenant Governor’s Office
- Mary Shaw, NLC Broadband Program Director (July 6, 2020 – June 1, 2021)
- Rokshana Shireen, OCRA Program Manager
- Denny Spinner, OCRA Executive Director
- Matt Wakefield, OCRA CDBG Program Director
- Megan Zarazee, OCRA Director of Operations

1. The number, amounts, and recipients of grants awarded from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021:

Applicant	Total Census Blocks	Grant Request	Cost Share	Total Amount	Residential Passings	Business Passings	Total Passings	Counties
Jackson County REMC	74	\$239,309	\$358,964	\$598,273	154	9	163	Jennings
Jackson County REMC	37	\$192,273	\$288,407	\$480,680	111	7	118	Jennings
SCI REMC	84	\$1,892,257	\$1,892,257	\$3,784,513	420	4	424	Brown, Monroe, Owen
SCI REMC	36	\$866,580	\$446,420	\$1,313,000	207	9	217	Owen
Tipmont REMC	60	\$1,016,410	\$1,016,410	\$2,032,820	167	21	189	Fountain
Tipmont REMC	85	\$1,738,263	\$1,738,263	\$3,476,526	434	24	461	Fountain
Tipmont REMC	71	\$880,418	\$880,418	\$1,760,837	16	5	22	Fountain
Tipmont REMC	90	\$1,251,767	\$1,251,767	\$2,503,535	75	35	113	Fountain
Tipmont REMC	34	\$400,694	\$400,694	\$801,388	12	2	14	Montgomery
Tipmont REMC	60	\$821,969	\$821,969	\$1,643,938	65	19	85	Fountain, Montgomery
Tipmont REMC	75	\$722,034	\$722,034	\$1,444,067	58	17	75	Fountain, Montgomery
Tipmont REMC	73	\$566,822	\$566,822	\$1,133,644	23	5	28	Fountain
Tipmont REMC	76	\$673,956	\$673,956	\$1,347,912	39	10	49	Montgomery
Tipmont REMC	63	\$617,400	\$617,400	\$1,234,800	28	5	33	Montgomery

Tipmont REMC	74	\$394,033	\$394,033	\$788,066	9	7	17	Montgomery
Tipmont REMC	42	\$439,186	\$439,186	\$878,372	9	6	15	Montgomery
SEI Communications	350	\$5,000,000	\$8,407,708	\$13,407,708	2,263	199	2,486	Dearborn, Jefferson, Jennings, Ripley
SEI Communications	140	\$4,341,177	\$6,511,766	\$10,852,943	522	27	557	Dearborn, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Switzerland
SEI Communications	123	\$3,217,153	\$4,825,729	\$8,042,881	447	58	560	Dearborn, Franklin, Ripley
Eastern Indiana Wifi	8	\$31,983	\$8,502	\$40,485	12	0	13	Grant
Eastern Indiana Wifi	14	\$251,756	\$66,923	\$318,679	103	28	131	Grant
SEI Communications	17	\$439,560	\$226,440	\$666,000	5	1	9	Dearborn
Lakeland Internet	2	\$30,830	\$34,874	\$65,703	40	0	40	Steuben
Tipmont REMC	72	\$1,344,762	\$1,344,762	\$2,689,524	203	57	261	Fountain, Tippecanoe
Tipmont REMC	48	\$1,298,390	\$1,298,390	\$2,596,779	298	19	318	Fountain, Tippecanoe
Tipmont REMC	50	\$546,303	\$546,303	\$1,092,607	30	3	33	Tippecanoe
Tipmont REMC	15	\$814,985	\$814,985	\$1,629,970	150	12	163	Clinton, Tippecanoe
Tipmont REMC	41	\$1,169,512	\$1,169,512	\$2,339,025	163	34	197	Clinton
Tipmont REMC	84	\$981,803	\$981,803	\$1,963,607	39	4	46	Clinton, Montgomery, Tippecanoe
Tipmont REMC	56	\$737,613	\$737,613	\$1,475,226	9	6	20	Tippecanoe, White
Comcast	22	\$673,155	\$174,171	\$847,326	210	0	210	Montgomery
Endeavor Communications	14	\$851,085	\$438,438	\$1,289,523	120	18	138	Hendricks
Johnson County REMC	4	\$68,193	\$108,932	\$177,125	32	2	34	Morgan
Mercury Wireless	27	\$110,040	\$348,460	\$458,500	130	5	135	Allen, Dekalb, Whitley
Joink	7	\$263,402	\$65,851	\$329,253	17	1	18	Vigo
Joink	40	\$351,002	\$87,750	\$438,752	72	1	73	Parke
Joink	6	\$338,642	\$84,660	\$423,302	36	0	36	Vigo
Joink	8	\$284,172	\$71,043	\$355,215	26	0	26	Parke
Joink	5	\$298,081	\$74,520	\$372,601	18	0	18	Parke

Joink	22	\$252,979	\$63,245	\$316,224	22	1	23	Vermillion
Joink	1	\$135,155	\$33,789	\$168,944	3	0	3	Vigo
New Lisbon Broadband	1	\$10,649	\$16,657	\$27,306	4	2	6	Henry
PSC	70	\$5,000,000	\$2,812,600	\$7,812,600	558	121	679	Dubois
Mainstream Fiber Networks	258	\$3,316,208	\$2,940,789	\$6,256,997	678	32	718	Posey
Mainstream Fiber Networks	274	\$3,062,626	\$2,715,914	\$5,778,540	1,041	128	1,194	Crawford
Central Indiana Communications	23	\$361,711	\$194,767	\$556,478	70	10	80	Henry
Orange County REMC	18	\$809,441	\$1,072,806	\$1,882,247	84	15	99	Lawrence, Orange, Washington
Orange County REMC	38	\$702,967	\$1,644,214	\$2,347,181	123	21	144	Lawrence, Orange
Orange County REMC	36	\$680,993	\$417,382	\$1,098,375	7	6	15	Dubois
Totals	2,928	\$50,489,699	\$52,850,298	\$103,339,997	9,362	996	10,506	

2. The status of any funded qualified broadband projects as of July 2021:

Applicant	Round	On track- (project is currently planned to be completed in 24-month period)	Completed- (Provider has completed construction and submitted closeout documents)	Delayed- (Provider has received an approval for time extension)
LigTel Communications Inc. (Noble County)	Round 1	On track		
Miles Communications (Southeastern Indiana)	Round 1	On track		
New Lisbon Broadband (Wayne County)	Round 1	On track		
Washington County Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Starlight, IN)	Round 1	On track		
Perry Spencer Rural Telephone Cooperative (Spencer County Rural Areas)	Round 1	On track		
Perry Spencer Rural Telephone Cooperative (Perry County)	Round 1	On track		
Perry Spencer Rural Telephone Cooperative (Spencer County Unserved Towns)	Round 1	On track		
Perry Spencer Rural Telephone Cooperative (Unserved SIP Areas)	Round 1	On track		
Smithville (Monroe County)	Round 1	On track		

Smithville (Sharpsville area)	Round 1	Completed
Tipmont REMC (Tippecanoe County)	Round 1	Completed
Mainstream Fiber Networks, LLC (Floyd County)	Round 1	On track
Mainstream Fiber Networks, LLC (Benton County)	Round 1	On track
Jackson County REMC (Jackson County)	Round 1	On track
Jackson County REMC	Round 2	On track
Jackson County REMC	Round 2	On track
SCI REMC	Round 2	On track
SCI REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
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Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
SEI Communications	Round 2	On track
SEI Communications	Round 2	On track
SEI Communications	Round 2	On track
Eastern Indiana Wifi	Round 2	On track
Eastern Indiana Wifi	Round 2	On track
SEI Communications	Round 2	On track
Lakeland Internet	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Tipmont REMC	Round 2	On track
Comcast	Round 2	On track

Endeavor Communications	Round 2	On track		
Johnson County REMC	Round 2	On track		
Mercury Wireless	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
Joink	Round 2	On track		
New Lisbon Broadband	Round 2	On track		
PSC	Round 2	On track		
Mainstream Fiber Networks	Round 2	On track		
Mainstream Fiber Networks	Round 2	On track		
Central Indiana Communications	Round 2	On track		
Orange County REMC	Round 2	On track		
Orange County REMC	Round 2	On track		
Orange County REMC	Round 2	On track		
Totals			61	2
				0

Each funded project is provided a 24-month period as part of the grant agreement to complete the approved scope of work including engineering, acquiring site control, construction, and providing service to customers. While all funded projects are within the original grant period, many of the grantees are facing challenges due to supply chain and work force issues. These issues are likely to require the grantees to request time extensions. OCRA has a procedure in place to accept and review time extension requests for the program.

3. Expenses incurred and funds spent by the office in administering the program:

OCRA and Grant Services have spent \$180,452.74 in administrative staff time for the Next Level Connections Program during FY21. The following staff have contributed to this total including the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Operations Director, Program Director, Program Managers, Community Liaisons and Grant services staff.

4. A list of entities that the office collaborated in administering the program:

OCRA has consulted with partners at Governor’s Office, Lt. Governor’s Office, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Rural Health Association, Indiana Department of Health, State Budget Agency, Indiana Office of Technology, Indiana Department of Education, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, and the Indiana Broadband Office.

5. Accounting of funds including funds awarded as grants:

An accounting of funds for Next Level Connections fund includes the following expenses for the fiscal year, \$13,065,244.25 on grants to providers and \$180,452.74 spent on salary and fringe benefits for staffing for FY21. A total of \$289,495.39 has been spent on administrative expenses for FY 20 and 21 with a total of \$13,742,545.72 has been paid out in claims to providers for FY 20 and 21. An additional \$65,161,266.41 has been obligated to grantees that hasn't spent.

6. The number of locations in Indiana to which broadband infrastructure has been deployed with the use of grant funds under this chapter, including address level information for newly connected locations:

Currently, Tippecanoe and Tipton counties have successfully deployed broadband and completed grant closeout within the terms of this chapter. The actual speeds offered in these areas is 1Gbps/1Gbps and the adoption rate is approximately 81%. The number of locations being served due to the grant funds is 122. The cities / towns / townships represented are Sharpsville and West Lafayette.

7. The overall progress of the deployment of broadband infrastructure for the provision of qualified broadband service in unserved areas in Indiana:

The NLC grant program is a component of Gov. Holcomb's Next Level Connections initiative, a \$1 billion statewide infrastructure program announced in 2019. The first round of the program awarded 14 projects, with grants totaling \$28.41 million, \$23.27 million in local match contributions, for a total project value of \$51.68 million. All projects will provide service of up to 1 GB download and upload speeds to end users. A total of 18 counties were represented.

The second round of funding awarded 49 projects \$51 million in grants with \$53.39 million in matching contributions resulting in more than \$104 million in total investment. At total of 32 counties were represented.

All Round one and two projects are progressing with no major issues. However, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic some awardees are seeing changes to their day-to-day business operations resulting in minor delays. Overall, most projects should be completed within the scheduled timeframes according to the information provided by the grantees.

OCRA has worked with the Governor's Office and Lt. Governors Office to develop the following goals and metrics for the program. A dashboard to share the status towards meeting the goals is currently being researched and will be displayed on the agency's website once complete.

Indiana Broadband Goals

- Increase access to unserved or underserved households, businesses, health clinics and schools.
- Increase adoption of school buildings and rural health clinics receiving 1GB of service.
- Increase adoption of households and businesses receiving greater than 25/3.
- Create a public dashboard demonstrating metrics used to measure goals.
- Increase public sector/philanthropic engagement in broadband service deployment projects.

Indiana Broadband Metrics

Number of Locations served.

Private/local dollars leveraged/invested.

Number of Schools with new access.

Number of schools increased to 1GB.

Number of Rural health clinics with new access.

Number of Rural health clinics increased to 1 GB.