



BROADBAND OFFICE

January 12, 2024

FUNDED PROJECT REGISTER

As the SC Broadband Office (SCBBO) prepares to deploy the remainder of South Carolina's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) broadband infrastructure allocation, we are affording each Internet Service Provider (ISP) or County government a final opportunity to share their fully funded projects through a process called the Funded Project Register (FPR).

The FPR allows the SCBBO to accelerate broadband deployment in unserved areas of the State and simultaneously reduces the potential for duplication of facilities. These goals are achieved by collecting geospatial information and construction-related detail for any of the following investments:

- 1) Privately Funded Projects
- 2) FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Investments
- 3) FCC Enhanced A-CAM Investments
- 4) USDA's ReConnect Program Investments
- 5) County ARPA Investments

Properly documented projects will be maintained in the FPR for the duration of the indicated construction period. However, by accepting applications for the FPR, the SCBBO is not making any affirmation or commitment that it will not fund those unserved areas for which there is an identified need for additional broadband infrastructure. Qualifying needs include, but are not limited to, more robust infrastructure that will provide broadband at higher speeds and accelerated deployment of facilities.

Subject to the provisions set forth below, the SCBBO will evaluate future grant applications against all projects in the FPR.

It is in the SCBBO's sole discretion to accept a project into the FPR and, if accepted, **no contract or agreement is made or implied by such acceptance.** All accepted FPR projects will be made public and included future SCBBO broadband maps.

Rules for submitting a project to the FPR:

- 1) Eligible projects must be submitted by **Feb. 12, 2024.**
- 2) Eligible projects must be construction complete and operational by **Dec. 31, 2025.**
- 3) Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible project.
- 4) Separate applications must be submitted for all project areas that are construction complete, operational, and available for customer sign-up by **Dec. 31, 2023.** These areas must be reported in upcoming BDC submissions that are currently due to the FCC and the SCBBO on March 1, 2024.

- 5) Applications must be submitted by an eligible ISP, and the ISP must present evidence of an existing fully funded wireline broadband project that will deliver minimum speeds of 100/20 Mbps download/upload that is scalable to 100/100 Mbps.
- 6) In the event of a County Funded ARPA Project, the County must submit documentation indicating a firm commitment to an eligible South Carolina ISP. Examples of suitable documentation would be binding Council resolutions together with a signed contract indicating the name of the ISP. In addition, as part of the contract, the County should submit a list of funded Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSL). Each contract ISP is then responsible to complete items #6 through #9 below.
- 7) All BSL information must utilize version 3.2 of the FCC BSL Fabric.
- 8) The ISP must present a shapefile, together with a matching Excel worksheet, that clearly shows the census 2020 blocks that will be impacted by the project and the number of locations that will be provided access.
- 9) The ISP must present a shapefile that clearly shows the fiber routes and Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSL) of every home, business, and community anchor institution that will be impacted by the project. Each BSL must be attributed by the funding source, FCC tech code, and designed max download/upload speeds.
- 10) BSLs that are included in FPR submissions must be excluded from ARPA grant applications from the same ISP.
- 11) An affidavit shall be provided by an officer of the ISP that the project is fully funded and has no remaining contingencies (e.g., financial, environmental and/or historical preservation) that would impact construction schedules.
- 12) At the time the project is filed, the ISP must present a detailed, quarter by quarter, 2020 Census Block Group engineering timeline that demonstrates project completion by **Dec. 31, 2025**. This report must be filed by the ISP's engineering/construction team leader and separately endorsed by a corporate officer. Please download and utilize associated templates on the ORS website.
- 13) The existence of x-DSL, fixed wireless, or satellite service in a Census 2020 block will not prevent the addition of properly documented projects to the FPR that can achieve minimum speeds of 100/20 Mbps (download/upload).
- 14) Each ISP must report on the progress of their FPR projects within 30 days of the end of each calendar quarter. The construction progress report must be filed by the engineering/construction team leader. Failure to report will result in the project being removed from the FPR.
- 15) The SCBBO has the option to:
 - a. Inspect any project contained in the FPR with a 48 business-hour notice period to the engineering/construction team leader or officer of the ISP; and/or,
 - b. Request geo-tagged construction photos demonstrating current construction progress.
- 16) The FPR only applies to current ARPA grant programs and will not be carried forward to BEAD. BEAD Planned Service Commitments will likely require additional documentation to satisfy NTIA requirements.

- 17) Failure of the ISP to hit designated construction dates or complete reporting as described above, absent a force majeure event, shall reflect negatively on an applicant's ability to participate in BEAD. At any time, if the ISP is deemed to be submitting false documentation, the SCBBO will notify the ISP that the documentation is considered false, and SCBBO may release remaining funds, if available, to deploy broadband in the same area.
- 18) To participate in the FPR, an ISP must be current on all other reporting requirements. This includes the obligation to submit their most-recent FCC BDC submissions, served BSLs, and other related detail as may be requested from time-to-time.

In addition, any federal reporting as to construction timelines shall be provided to SCBBO at the same time it is provided to any federal agency. If the SCBBO learns that the construction timelines reported to federal agencies differ from that reported to SCBBO, SCBBO will consider using any available funding to deploy broadband infrastructure in the same area.
- 19) Upon completion of any portion of the FPR project, ISPs must include all newly served BSLs in their next FCC BDC submission.
- 20) Regardless of entries in the FPR, where necessary to serve immediate and urgent public needs, the SCBBO retains the authority and flexibility to accelerate internet deployment consistent with ARPA requirements.
- 21) Once complete, all FPR applications should be securely uploaded to your provider-specific Citrix Sharefile location. Example: ARPA 3.0 \ [ARPA - ISP Name] \ FPR
- 22) Please submit all questions in writing to broadband@ors.sc.gov