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**BROADBANDUSA**

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## **Building Connected Regions: An Overview of BroadbandUSA**

**Aimee Meacham, Director of Outreach, BBUSA**

February 14, 2017 National Association of Regional Councils

# The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

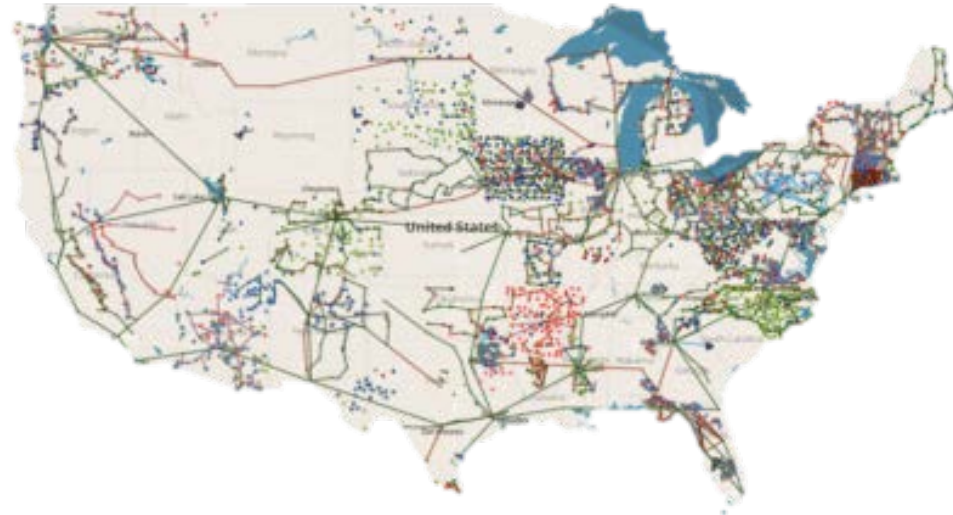
- NTIA is the Executive Branch agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce that is principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues
- NTIA's programs and policymaking focus largely on:
  - Expanding broadband Internet access and adoption in America,
  - Expanding the use of spectrum by all users, and
  - Ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for continued innovation and economic growth.



# NTIA's broadband investments

In 2009, ARRA created one-time grant programs that invested \$4.2 billion in broadband advancement:

- Comprehensive Community Infrastructure\*
- Public Computing Centers\*
- Sustainable Broadband Adoption\*
- State Broadband Initiative and the National Broadband Map

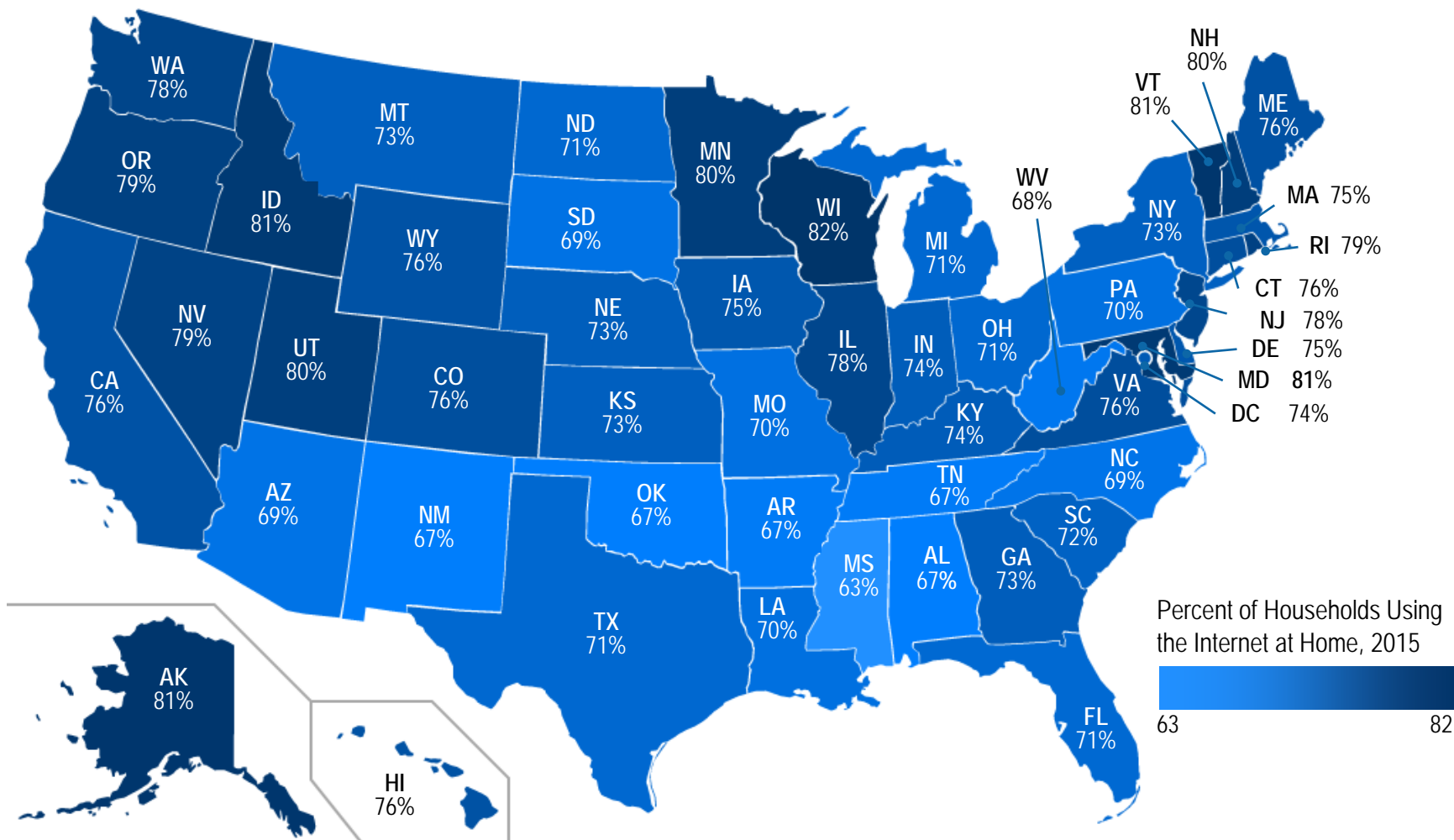


Source:

*Connecting America's Communities Map*  
<http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/BTOPmap/>

\*Together the first three programs are known as the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)

# Over 33 million households do not use the Internet at home



## NTIA launched BroadbandUSA to:

- *Arm stakeholders & community leaders with information* to make the right decisions
- *Develop guidance for pursuing solutions* to broadband challenges.
- *Convene and facilitate the right conversations* with the right people to increase project success.

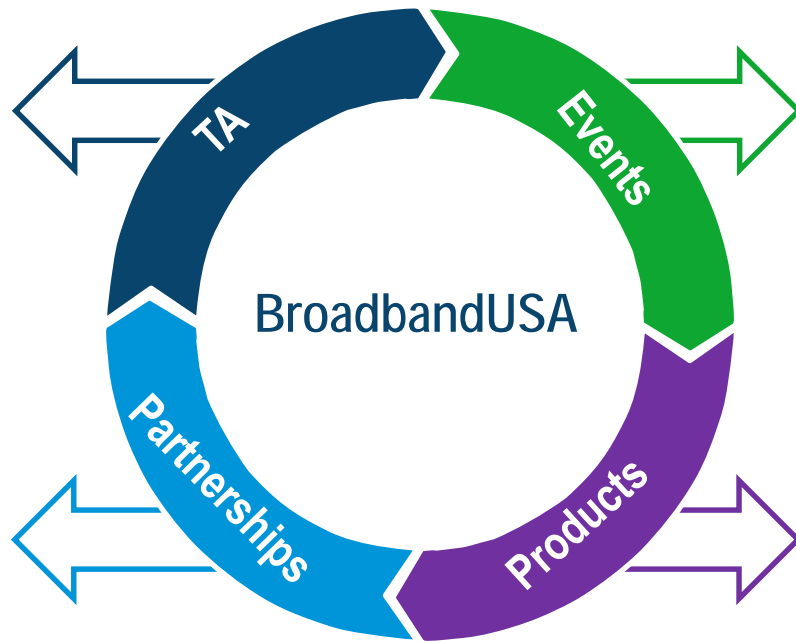


# How can BroadbandUSA help?

BBUSA provides assistance and expertise to regions, communities, and private entities implementing broadband deployment and adoption programs.

Direct, hands-on assistance to communities interested in planning and implementing broadband initiatives.

Establish partnerships with federal and state governments, industry organizations and broadband thought leaders.



Events that bring together government officials, community leaders and other broadband stakeholders to share broadband success stories and lessons learned.

Products and planning frameworks that can help you jumpstart your broadband.

# Broadband Interagency Working Group

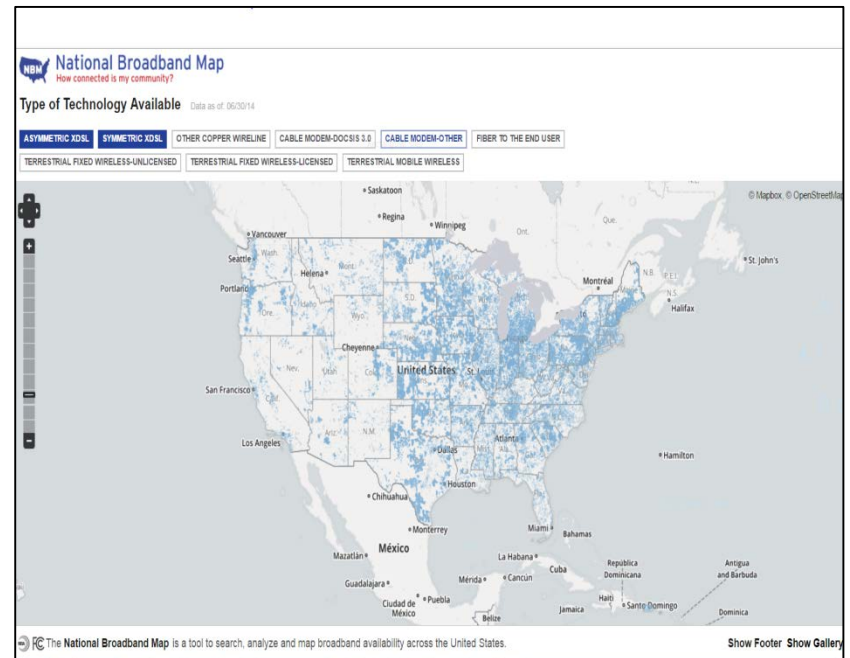
- Broadband Opportunity Council (BOC): established March 2015 and co-chaired by DOC and USDA, with 25 member agencies
- Focused on executive actions to streamline broadband efforts across the federal government
- Released a report in August 2015, which included 36 action items
- As of February 2016, agencies have completed 16 of the 36 action items:
  - Elevated broadband as a critical issue across the federal government
  - Transitioned coordination efforts to career-level Broadband Interagency Working Group

See: <https://www.ntia.doc.gov/blog/2017/agencies-making-progress-connect-america>



# State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN)

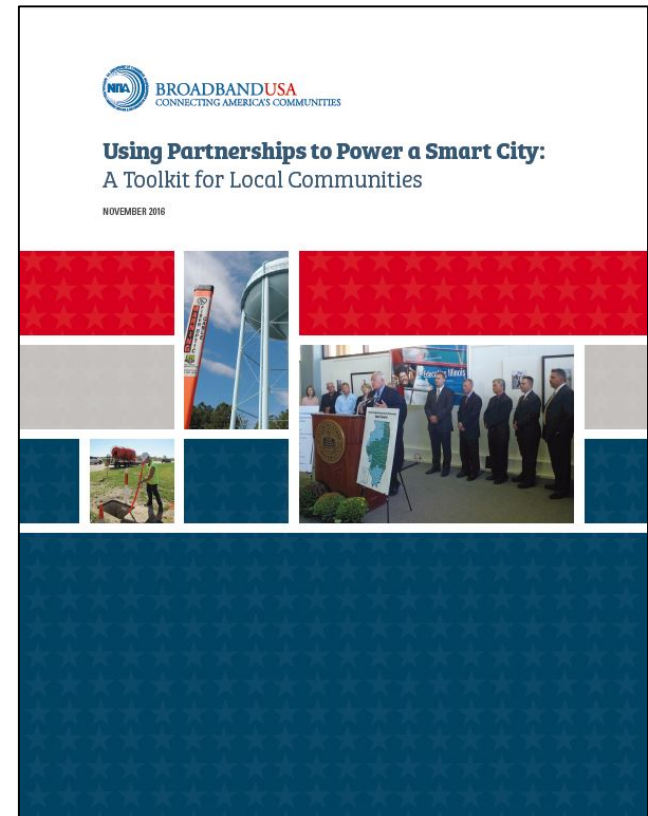
- Continues the collaborative exchange that NTIA and states established while collaborating on the National Broadband Map and state broadband programs
- Regional councils played an important role in the mapping and planning efforts
- SBLN is a vehicle for exchanging information on broadband issues





# Using Partnerships to Power Smart Cities Tool-kit

- Toolkit equips local and regional leaders with a plan for building partnerships that enable connected communities
- Smart City initiatives require extensive planning and funding
- Collaborations help defray costs, provide technical knowledge, improve operational efficiency and increase buy-in from the larger region and community





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# Building Connected Regions: Broadband Planning

Laura Spining, Director, BBUSA

February 14, 2017 National Association of Regional Councils

# BroadbandUSA: Connectivity Initiative (CI)

Accelerate broadband planning, action, and progress.

- Better outcomes in less time
- Engage more communities and constituencies
- Increase resource relevance and usability



**Quick Start**



**Framework**



**Assessment**



**Local Report**



**Resources**

# Builds on great work happening across the country

- ConnectME
- Intelligence Community Checklist
- Mississippi State Extension
- Blandin Foundation
- E-Participation Index
- North Carolina Index
- World Economic Forum Network Readiness Index
- Next Century Cities
- National Equity Index
- Berkman Internet Monitor
- The Web Index
- Google Checklist
- Building Digitally Inclusive Communities – IMLS
- Library Edge – Urban Library Council
- Resilient Cities– Rockefeller Foundation and HUD
- Connected – Connected Nation
- Kids Count – Annie E. Casey
- Resilient Communities Scorecard - Vermont National Resources Council
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - USGBC

# Connectivity Initiative: Tool to facilitate progress

- Encourage robust conversations
- Bias for action
- Fall to local
- Support flexible paths
- Facilitate partnership
- Encourage continuous improvement
- Surface relevant resources





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## Building Connected Regions: Broadband Funding and Technical Assistance

Scott Woods, Director, BBUSA Technical Assistance

February 14, 2017 National Association of Regional Councils



# Five general categories of federal broadband-related funding opportunities

## Infrastructure Deployment

Facilitates the buildout of community connections and technology. This can include network cables, facilities and structural upgrades.

## Planning

Provides communities and municipalities assistance in creating regional improvement plans directly incorporating broadband.

## Research

Strives to improve research and data collection to provide new knowledge surrounding broadband and evidence based solutions.

## Adoption & Digital Literacy

Offers training to maximize patron knowledge, adoption, and usage of broadband capabilities. Focuses on both usage and understanding.

## Public Computer Access

Targets funding efforts that provide public computer access to broadband hubs in locations such as community centers, schools and libraries.





# Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs

## Category: Infrastructure Deployment

- The Community Development Block Program (CDBG) provides a critical funding stream for local development efforts
- Broadband infrastructure development may be eligible in the CDBG program as a public facility or improvement, as a private utility, or as a public service, depending on the nature and design of the project.
- Grants or loans to for-profit businesses to support job creation or retention, including businesses involved in broadband deployment or other technologies, are eligible as economic development activities.

# Economic Development Administration (EDA)

## Category: Planning

- EDA's Economic Adjustment Program provides Strategy Grants to support the development, updating or refinement of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
- Strategy Grants are great for broadband funding because it funds the following:
  - Broadband infrastructure
  - Smart Grid technology

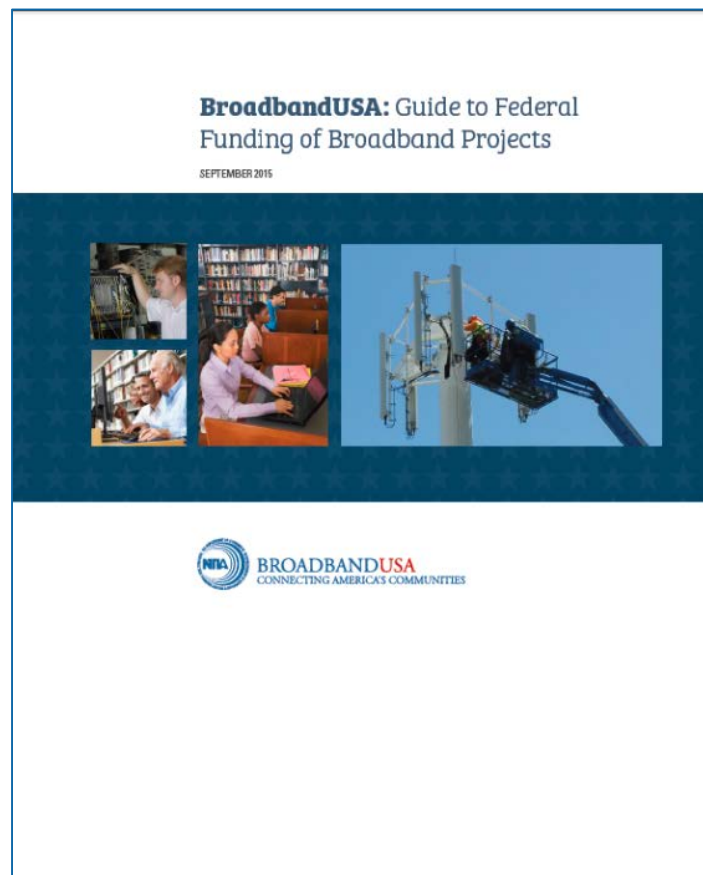
## National Science Foundation (NSF)

### Category: Research (advancing advanced wireless)

- NSF's Platforms for Advanced Wireless Research (PAWR) program explores new wireless devices, communication techniques, networks, systems.
- PAWR is ideal for Universities and Colleges, non-profits, independent museums, observatories, research labs and professional societies.
- PAWR aims for its research to support the following:
  - Improve broadband connectivity
  - Leverage the Internet of Things (IoT)

## BroadbandUSA: Federal Funding Guide

- Provides communities with information about federal funding for broadband planning
- The toolkit also includes best practices related to federal projects, including:
  - Information regarding the purpose of each program
  - Potential restrictions on funding
  - Rules for eligibility



# BroadbandUSA: Technical Assistance



## Planning

(e.g., RFP Development/Review, Preliminary Network Design, Asset Inventory)



## Funding

(e.g., Partnership Facilitation, Funding Option Assessments)



## Implementation

(e.g., Network Design, Regulatory Approvals, Interconnection, Permitting)

90% of TA requests involve broadband planning and  
62% involve questions related to funding



## BroadbandUSA: Additional information

- For more information, email at [broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov)
- Visit us on the web at <http://www2.ntia.doc.gov>
- TA Resource Guides at <http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/Broadband-Resources>

