

RESOLUTION**ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**Ad Hoc Broadband Committee
INITIATED BY2/18/2022
DATE DRAFTED**Adopting Broadband Project Guiding Principles**

WHEREAS, the Ad Hoc Broadband Committee was established per Resolution #21-7A-285 to evaluate potential uses of American Rescue Plan Act funding for broadband expansion throughout Rock County, coordinate with other local units of local government, the State, and private sector organizations; and serve as the focus of public input into broadband needs; and

WHEREAS, the Ad Hoc Broadband Committee has been diligently pursuing the duties and roles outlined in the establishing resolution; and,

WHEREAS, a set of Guiding Principles has been developed by the Committee to provide guidance for broadband investment recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors.

NOW, THEREFORE IT RESOLVED by the Rock County Board of Supervisors assembled this 24th day of February, 2022, adopt the following Guiding Principles regarding broadband investment recommendations:

1. Investment strategies must recognize there is not a singular, perfect plan. Priority should be given for pilot vs. wholesale projects, as broadband technologies and the industry are continually evolving.
2. Investments should balance, as well as address, the needs of non-served and under-served areas through an economic and practical lens as it concerns maximizing connectivity opportunities for business, education, healthcare, households, and public services. Additional consideration will be given for investments that are aligned with addressing broadband affordability.
3. Investments should be evaluated and prioritized for forward-looking, future-proofing technologies (i.e., fiber-to-the-home).
4. Investments should seek to leverage external and/or non-County financial resources, but not at the expense or detriment of advancing projects that have positioned themselves as “shovel-ready”.
5. Investments should acknowledge federally designated Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) projects; and consider opportunities for capitalizing on the economies of scale to address non-designated RDOF areas.
6. Investments in middle-mile, build-out projects should be prioritized for telecommunication and/or Internet Service Providers that agree to any of the following partnership conditions:
 - a. Commit to the allocation or dedication of a portion of the middle-mile that is financed by the County, for TBD public sector designated uses.
 - b. Commit to selling a portion of County-financed middle-mile, to the County, when / where it's in the County's best interest to be a broadband owner vs. a consumer.
 - c. Commit to utilizing the County's public works bidding procedures for middle mile projects that are financed by the County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in addition to these guiding principles, these recommendations are also predicated on the adoption and implementation of a countywide “dig once” philosophy or standard; thereby, providing a consistent and efficient means for accessing public Right-of-Way permitting and related approval processes. If these processes represent a direct or delegated function, the County will assume responsibility for the administrative and enforcement of those processes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will be an advocate, as well as a champion, for pursuing the State of Wisconsin's Telecommuter Forward and Broadband Forward certifications.

FISCAL NOTE:

Fiscal impact is yet to be determined.

Sherry Oja
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to §§ 59.01 & 59.51, Wis. Stats.

Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended. Having a set of guiding principles in place will help make prioritized and consistent decisions on potential broadband projects, as well as be useful when seeking state and federal grants.

Josh Smith
County Administrator

Committee Action

Planning & Development Committee

The Planning & Development Committee recommended this resolution for approval by a unanimous voice vote. Supervisor Potter was absent.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee recommended this resolution for approval by a unanimous voice vote. Supervisor Fox was absent.

Adopting Broadband Project Guiding Principles

Executive Summary

The Ad Hoc Broadband Committee has been meeting and received several proposals from large and small broadband-related companies.

The following principles are intended to provide guidance to the Ad Hoc Broadband Committee as it formulates its broadband investment recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors:

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2. Investments should balance, as well as address, the needs of non-served and under-served areas through an economic and practical lens as it concerns maximizing connectivity opportunities for business, education, healthcare, households, and public services. Additional consideration will be given for investments that are aligned with addressing broadband affordability.
3. Investments should be evaluated and prioritized for forward-looking, future-proofing technologies (i.e., fiber-to-the-home).
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In addition to these guiding principles, these recommendations are also predicated on the adoption and implementation of a countywide “dig once” philosophy or standard; thereby, providing a consistent and efficient means for accessing public Right-of-Way permitting and related approval processes. If these processes represent a direct or delegated function, the County will assume responsibility for the administrative and enforcement of those processes.

Lastly, the County will be an advocate, as well as a champion, for pursuing the State of Wisconsin's Telecommuter Forward and Broadband Forward certifications.