



Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) City Endorsement

Meeting Date	Staff Contact	Email
May 13, 2025	Adam Hanks, City Administrator	Adam.Hanks@ci.coburg.or.us

SUMMARY AND REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

As a member of the Regional Fiber Consortium, the City has been asked to support two applications that, in part, address Coburg area deficiencies in equitable broadband access. Attached to this staff report is a summary document provided by the Regional Fiber Consortium regarding the BEAD program, as well as two individual letters of support that have been drafted for signature of Mayor Bell if Council concurs with formally supporting the applications.

Suggested Motion

I move to provide formal endorsement from the City of Coburg Council for BEAD applications being submitted by Douglas Fast Net (DFN) and HYAK and communicate this support through the Mayor's signature and submittal of the attached letters of support for each applicant.

BACKGROUND

What is BEAD?

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment ([BEAD](#)) Program is a historic federal initiative aimed at closing the digital divide by investing in high-speed internet infrastructure across underserved and unserved areas of the United States. The Program was established under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

Oregon, through the [Oregon Broadband Office](#) (OBO), has been actively participating in this program, and the state is expected to receive nearly \$700 million dollars to expand broadband access—with a focus on rural, low-income, and tribal communities. The state opened BEAD Selection process in February 2025, with a pre-qualification phase. Entities that have pre-qualified are now eligible to apply for grants starting April 22, 2025 (and ending May 22, 2025).

BEAD Proposals

BEAD awards are made only at the geographic scale of school districts. This means that any BEAD application must deliver service to every unserved (> 25 mbps download and 3 mbps upload) or underserved (25 – 100 mbps download and 3-20 upload) location in each proposed school district.

Applicants must make a separate application for every school district area. Geographic BEAD details can be observed on OBO's [Oregon Broadband Map](#).

BEAD Benefits for Families, Students, and the Broader Community:

- Access to Education: Ensures that all students—regardless of ZIP code—have reliable internet for remote learning, homework, online testing, and educational enrichment.
- Affordable: Requires pricing packages that are affordable to a wider range of families.
- Parental Engagement: Allows parents to engage more fully with their children's schools.
- Supports network upgrades in schools located in underserved areas, enabling access to modern digital tools and resources.
- Supports Remote & Hybrid Learning Models: Strengthens infrastructure needed to support blended instruction models and emergency learning transitions.
- Economic Development: Enables local businesses to compete in the digital economy and supports remote work opportunities.
- Healthcare Access: Facilitates telehealth services, especially vital for rural residents.
- Public Safety & Emergency Response: Enhances communication tools for first responders and emergency management systems.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Council support of the BEAD applications as presented.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPACT

No budgetary impacts

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

None

NEXT STEPS

If approved, staff will assist Mayor Bell in completing and distributing the letters of support.

ATTACHMENTS

1. BEAD Information Sheet
2. DFN Letter of Support – Draft
3. HYAK Letter of Support - Draft