

# DIRT ROADS *to* DIGITAL ROADS

Mississippi's Journey to High-Speed Internet



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Director, BEAM · June 15, 2026

WHERE WE STARTED

# Mississippi Broadband — 2020



**49th**

in the nation for overall  
internet access

**21.5%**

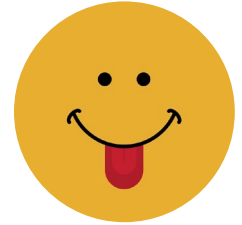
of locations had fiber

**41%**

had NO high-speed  
option at all

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

# Mississippi Broadband — 2026



**20th**

in the nation for fiber coverage

**61%**

of locations now have fiber

**10th**

for RURAL fiber coverage

**7%**

still without a high-speed option

HOW WE GOT HERE

# Federal Dollars Already in Mississippi



**4**

funding programs



**3**

federal agencies



**\$667.1M**

invested to date



**248,000**

locations funded

ADMINISTERED BY YOUR STATE BROADBAND OFFICE

# BEAM Programs

**2**

federal programs

**\$152.5M**

in grant funding

**56,000**

locations served

# BEAD

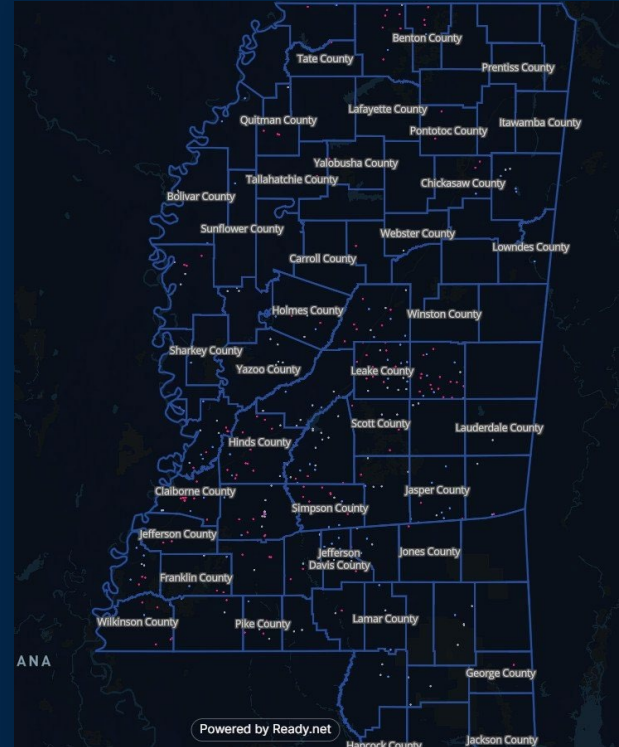
Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment

**\$508 million** for Mississippi

**93,000** locations connected

**13,000 miles** of new fiber

**Construction starts THIS YEAR**



## WHERE THE WORK IS CONCENTRATED

# BEAD: Top 10 Counties

- 1 Hinds
- 2 Neshoba
- 3 Leake
- 4 Copiah
- 5 Rankin
- 6 Warren
- 7 Attala
- 8 Claiborne
- 9 Simpson
- 10 Jefferson Davis



WHO'S BUILDING

# BEAD Providers

**AT&T**

**Bruce Telephone  
Company**

**Comcast**

**C Spire**

**Conexon Connect**

**Franklin Telephone  
Company**

**MediaComm**

**Swyft Fiber**

**TEC of Jackson**

## THE HARDEST-TO-REACH LOCATIONS

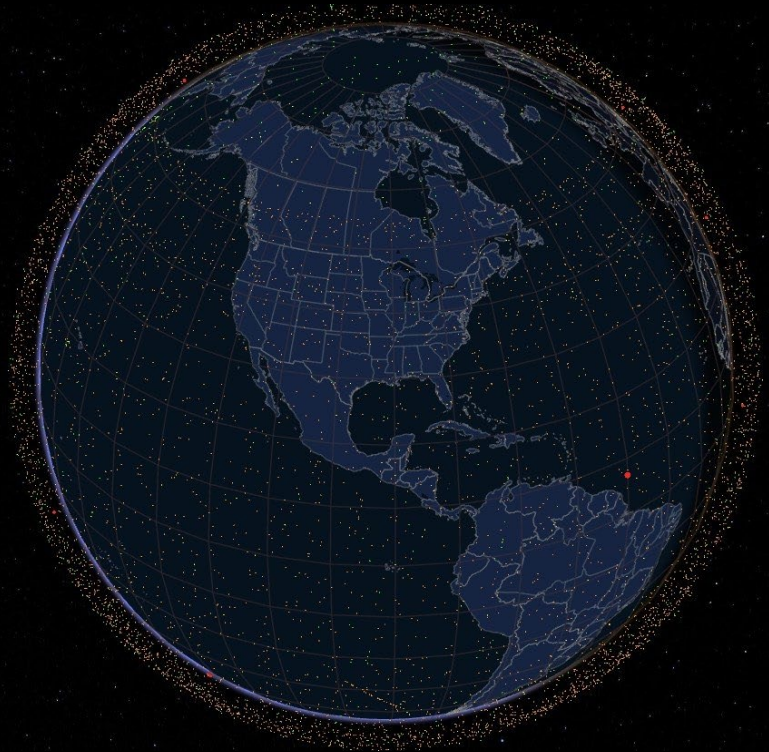
# Satellite

### Amazon Kuiper

8,300 locations · \$5.3 million

### Starlink

5,200 locations · \$4.4 million





OK...

What do we *do*  
now?

COORDINATION MATTERS

# Choose Your Own Adventure!



Surprises

OR



Coordination

IT STARTS HERE

# 811 Pre-Construction Meetings



*Providers, contractors, utilities, and county officials — at one table, before the first shovel.*

## BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

# Your County's Role

*Providers make the construction decisions — your role is to know what's coming and help everyone coordinate*

**1** The Routes

**2** The Space

**3** Local  
Knowledge

**4** Coordination

# The Routes Are Already Set



## Providers have chosen their routes

Engineering and design are done — no decisions needed from you



## Some construction means digging

Expect boring and trenching in rights-of-way, not just crews on poles



## Know what's coming in your county

We'll make sure you know who is building where, and when



# Work With Providers on Space



## Staging & laydown yards

Providers will ask about places for crews, trucks, and fiber reels to set up



## Permanent equipment sites

Cabinets and huts that stay after construction — work through siting together



# Share What Only Locals Know



## Streams, wetlands & protected areas

A quick heads-up to the provider can save weeks of redesign



## Places that don't show on any map

Cemeteries, historic sites, sensitive areas — mention them early



# Help Connect the Right People



## Existing utilities

Point providers to your water, gas, and power contacts before crews dig



## Railroads

Crossing agreements take the longest — early introductions help everyone



MAKING IT EASIER

# BEAD Permitting

# Coming **SOON!**

A streamlined process so providers get permits right — and your road crews aren't left guessing.



BOXES WE HAVE TO CHECK

# Federal Requirements



**Cultural Resources Survey**  
MS Department of Archives & History



**Environmental Review**  
NEPA compliance on every project



*Yes — crews really do find mastodon fossils.*

CONNECTIVITY AFTER BEAD

**1.4 MILLION**

served locations across Mississippi

WHAT'S NEXT

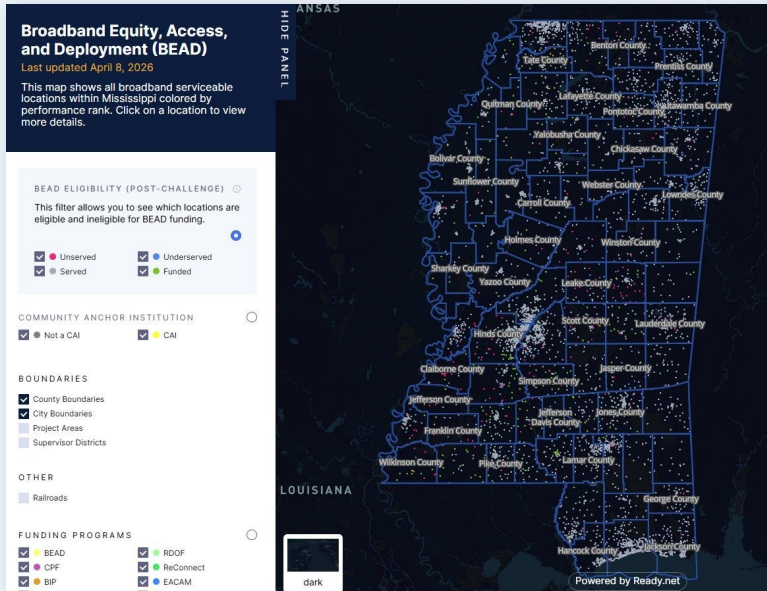
# BEAD 2 ???



*If Commerce allows a second round,  
Mississippi will be ready.*

TRACK EVERY PROJECT

# beam.ms.gov



- ✓ See BEAD projects mapped in your county
- ✓ Check which provider is building where
- ✓ Follow construction progress over time

WHY WE DO THIS

**The next generation  
shouldn't have to leave  
Mississippi to be  
connected.**





*Fiber on a dirt road. That's the whole story.*

THANK YOU



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