CONNECTING THE HEARTLAND

ILLINOIS EXTENSION

BENTON INSTITUTE for BROADBAND & SOCIETY

Broadband for All
Ogle, Lee, Boone, & Putnam
Counties

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
OFFICE OF BROADBAND
JB Pritzker, Governor

Broadband for All – Plan for Ogle, Lee, Boone & Putnam Counties

Team Members

- **Ogle County**
  - Patricia Nordman, Vice-Chairman of the Ogle County Board
  - Marcia Heuer, Ogle County Board
  - Don Griffin, Ogle County Board
  - Kris Gilbert, GIS Ogle County
  - Jodi Hekamp GIS Ogle County
  - Larry Callant, IT Department Manager
  - John Finfrock, Chairman of the Ogle County Board
  - Chris Manheim –Economic Development Director of Ogle County
  - Paula Diehl –Economic Development Assistant of Ogle County
  - Ron Kern, Ogle County Farm Bureau
  - Mike Delany, UI Extension Analyst

- **Lee County**
- Wendy Ryerson, Lee County Administrator
- John Nicholson, Vice-Chairman Lee County Board

- **Putnam County**
  - Steve Malavolti – Vice Chairman of the Putnam County Board
  - Charlie Lenkaitis - PC Board Chairman
  - Kevin Lindemen - Economic Development (UCCI)

- **Growth Dimensions, Inc. Economic Development (Boone County)**
  - Pamela Lopez-Fettes, Executive Director
  - Ginna DeLarose

Vision Statement

To "Ensure availability of reliable, high-performing, high-speed, **affordable broadband to all residents, businesses, organizations** and **farms** in the north central Illinois region that promotes educational, economic and information opportunities."

Scope of Work

- Identifying existing broadband networks in the region, both private and public;

- Identifying underserved areas by means of a needs assessment, community survey and other tools;

- Identifying funding opportunities, both public and private; and

- Identifying physical, policy and other barriers to network development.
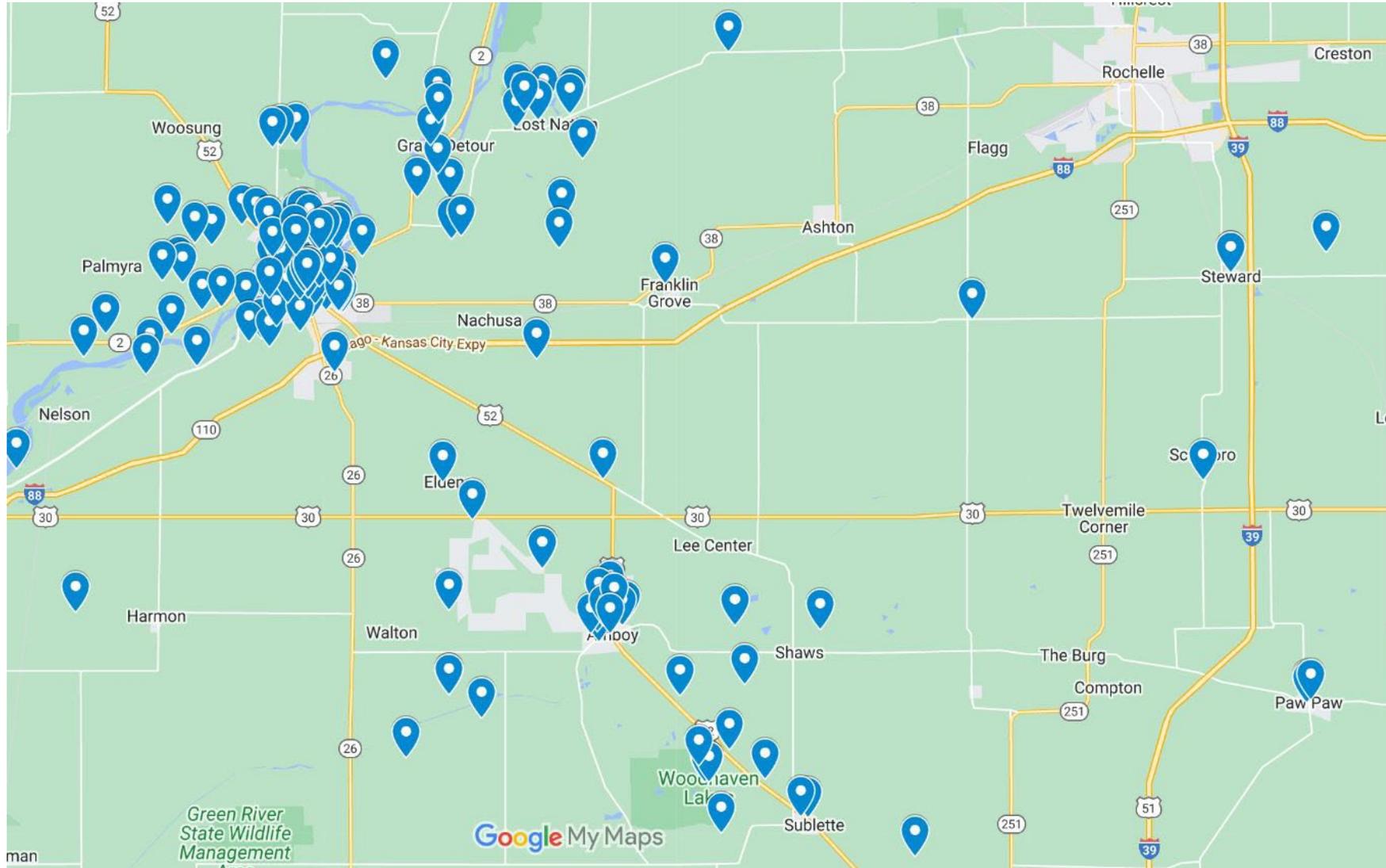
Survey Comments

County Totals = 791 complete responses (out of 1,324 submissions)

- Ogle   224
- Lee   315
- Boone   94
- Putnam   172

   As of Aug. 6, 2022

- *"All I know is we desperately need fiber optic internet in this area. And affordable service, as well."*

- *"Seeing that the school districts and courthouses have gotten fiber optics in my region, it can [be] helpful to increase speeds in rural regions that are often ignored due to lower income, lower population, and overall lower educational opportunities. Increasing broadband options to the public in rural areas can greatly reduce the disparity between rural and urban demographics."*

Lee County – 309 complete responses

"Would love to have a high-speed choice. When we currently try and stream, we have a lot of buffering. When we try and watch my son's high school games on the TV it is horrible with buffering."

Key Survey Findings

Lee County:

"We have called and begged and offered any solution we can think of to all area providers. We've even offered to pay for additional infrastructure to bring reliable internet to our house. No success. We tried satellite internet but our geographical location made the connection exceedingly unreliable."

"Multiple times a day my internet just stops working, even when you are in the middle of something, so you have to click refresh internet when a box pops up. On average about every 3 months the service goes out sometimes for 3-5 days. We live in the country so there isn't much choice."

Key Survey Findings

- Availability of service

- Delivery of service

- Term "qualifying broadband service" means broadband service with:
  - a download speed of not less than 25 megabits per second; and
  - an upload speed of not less than 3 megabits per second; and
  - a latency sufficient to support real time

What's Next?

- All Cohort Participants present findings to respective boards

- Resolution passed and signed by boards supporting enhancing and goal of Broadband for All (BFA)

- Regional or county by county effort?
  - Follow NTIA and IL Connect process of emphasizing regional effort
  - Multiple year effort

Funding Opportunities

- Local
  - American Rescue Plan funds
  - Local funding
- State
  - Connect Illinois
  - Infrastructure programs through the Dept. of Transportation
- Federal
  - American Rescue Plan
  - **NTIA – Department of Commerce**
  - USDA
  - EDA

NTIA GRANT
National Telecommunications and Information Administration

"Middle Mile" Broadband Infrastructure Grant

ELIGIBLE USES

- Construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities, equipment
- Engineering design, permitting and work related to project reviews
- Personnel costs, incl. salaries for staff and consultants
- Other Costs necessary for programmatic activities

NTIA GRANT

IMPORTANT DATES

- Application Due: 9/30/2022

- Lee County approval: 9/22/2022

- Notice of Award: 3/1/2023

- Complete buildout: Within 5 years

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

- Develop the middle mile infrastructure
- Regional Effort with multiple Counties
- Largest infrastructure development in Ogle/Lee
- Private Partner: Syndeo
  - CEO Amit Patel

Lee County Broadband