MADISON COUNTY
BROADBAND INITIATIVE – PHASE 2
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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MADISON
COUNTY

Table of Contents

Background

The Madison County Board of Supervisors (MCBOS) has identified the need to provide Fiber to Home (FTH) broadband service to a largely rural area in the northwest portion of Madison County. During the July 5, 2022, board meeting, the MCBOS engaged Waggoner Engineering, Inc. to assist with the Madison County Broadband Program Phase 2. The identified area consists of approximately 6,622 premises.

While the nearby cities of Jackson and Madison are rated in the top five in the state for broadband access, Mississippi is ranked 42nd in the U.S. This is largely due to the rural nature of the state, exemplified by the project area in Madison County.

To determine the current state of FTH broadband service in the phase 2 section of Madison County, the project team will evaluate current broadband infrastructure and services available from telecommunications service providers in the market, including wireline and local and regional middle-mile telecommunications infrastructure and services.

Broadband technologies currently available in the Phase 2 area are:

- Copper
- Fiber to the Premises
- Cable
- Satellite Broadband
- Wireless Broadband

The purpose of this Public Involvement (PI) Plan is to outline the planned outreach efforts encouraging participation in and completion of the Phase 2 Broadband Initiative Survey by stakeholders in Madison County. Information gathered from the survey will help identify broadband access and adoption challenges and help inform an action plan to improve broadband access in Madison County.

Audience Analysis

Key audiences are the primary targets for key messages, strategies, and tactics for the purpose of further understanding regional broadband needs and identifying gaps in broadband availability, accessibility, and affordability. The following are identified as key audiences.

GOVERNMENT
- Madison County
  - Supervisor Districts 4 & 5
    - Karl Banks – District Four Supervisor
    - Paul Griffin – District Five Supervisor
  - Greg Higginbotham – County Administrator
  - Na'Son White – County Comptroller
- Town of Flora
  - Mayor Leslie Childress
  - Chamber of Commerce
- Kearney Park Community

SCHOOLS
- Madison County School District
- East Flora Elementary School
- Tri-County Academy
- Mannsdale Elementary School
  - Mannsdale Upper Elementary School
- Reuben b. Myers Canton School of Arts & Sciences
- Accelerated Academy | Dental Assisting

NONPROFITS
- Madison County Business League & Foundation
- Sunnybrook Cares

FAITH ORGANIZATIONS
- Saint James Missionary Baptist Church
- Shady Grove Baptist Church
- Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church
- Wilson Grove Baptist Church
- Union Hill Church
- Mount Center Missionary Baptist Church
- Greater Livingston Missionary Baptist Church
- Flora Methodist Church
- Hebron Baptist Church
- Holy City Church

- North Flora Church in Christ

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
- Flora Public Library
- Kearny Park Community Center
- Madison County Senior Center

LOCAL BUSINESSES
- The Kids World Center (Daycare)
- Winterview Farm
- The Resting Place Retreat

OTHER
- Residents

Key Messages

Key messages will be used in communications to stakeholders during outreach efforts to ensure the project team is clearly conveying the most important information:

1. Access to Fiber to Home (FTH) broadband service is critical to full participation in daily public life.
   - Access to FTH broadband service is no longer a luxury, but an essential utility.
   - FTH broadband service connects those living, working, or visiting Madison County the ability to connect to essential services like education, health care, and commerce.
2. Broadband infrastructure costs and access can be prohibitive in remote, rural areas. Madison County is grossly underserved with limited options for reliable FTH broadband service.
   - By definition, a served location has access to a provider with service speed of at least 100 Mbps download speed and 20 Mbps upload speed.
3. Madison County will work with stakeholders and communities to identify areas with low or no access to FTH broadband service and develop strategies to expand access and adoption across the county.

Strategy and Tactics

The PI team will use the following tactics to communicate with key stakeholders. In the table below, the strategy identifies an action, and the tactics describe the method or tool that will be used to complete that action.

STRATEGY

Identify key stakeholders and widely distribute the Phase 2 Broadband Initiative Surveys to obtain necessary feedback to aid in the creation of the Phase 2 Broadband Assessment.

Strategy Tactics	Completion Date
Coordinate with identified community organizations, service providers, businesses, nonprofits, and schools to understand their connectivity needs and identify critical gaps in services.	Ongoing
Create and provide an outreach package (newsletter, website, and social media content) regarding the Phase 2 Broadband surveys for Madison County to provide to partnering entities to share.	May 2024
Create and distribute outreach content (website, newsletter, and email blast) regarding the broadband survey to be distributed through existing Madison County assets.	May 2024
Create an overview flyer and social media images for the broadband survey and assessment in Madison County.	May 2024
Draft and deploy the Community Partner Survey.	May 2024
Draft and deploy the General Public Survey.	May 2024
Create and distribute a press release highlighting the broadband survey and planning initiatives in Madison County.	June 2024
Create and deploy geotargeted social media content regarding the broadband survey through Madison County-owned social media platforms	June 2024
Create and distribute one mailer with survey information.	June 2024
Close the surveys.	July 2024
Analyze survey results and create a final report on the survey results and outreach for inclusion in the Phase 2 Broadband Assessment.	July 2024

Distribution Channels

- Websites
  - [Madison County](#)
  - [Town of Flora](#)
- Social media
  - Facebook Pages
    - [Madison County, MS Government](#)
    - [Leadership Madison County](#)
    - [Madison County Chamber of Commerce](#)
    - [Madison County Business League and Foundation](#)
    - [Town of Flora, MS – Government](#)
    - [The Flora News](#)
  - Facebook groups
    - [Madison County, MS](#)
    - [Flora, MS, My Hometown](#)
    - [The Real Flora](#)
    - [Real Talk ~ Flora, MS](#)
  - Nextdoor
    - [Flora, MS](#)
    - [Kearney Park](#)
    - [Cox Ferry Road, Flora](#)
- News Outlets
  - [WLBT3](#)
  - [Madison County Journal](#)

Survey Outlines

To gather qualitative data from the public about their experience with internet connectivity, the Phase 2 Broadband Initiative Surveys will be created and distributed to the public and partnering public and private agencies. Questions in these surveys will cover topics such as current internet connections, service availability, connectivity speeds, and costs.

Two surveys will be offered: 1. General Public Survey and 2. The Community Partner Survey. The General Public Survey will be aimed more generally at residents and businesses of Madison County and be used to gather data on available providers, internet speeds, and affordability. The Community Partner Survey will be provided to partnering entities such as government agencies, cities, libraries, churches, towns, internet service providers (ISPs), etc. and be used to identify existing programs and planned efforts related to broadband expansion.

GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY

1. What is your address?
    a. Street address: _____
    b. City: _____
    c. ZIP Code: _____
    d. Name (optional): _____
    e. Email (optional): _____
    f. Phone (optional): _____
2. Do you have an internet connection at your residence?
    a. Yes, I have an internet connection at my residence
        i. What kind of internet connection you have?
            1. Cable or digital subscriber line (DSL)
            2. Fiber
            3. Satellite, mobile, or other wireless
            4. Other: (*add text box)*
        ii. What speed is your internet service (download speed)? (Megabits per second = Mbps.) Test and verify your internet speed by completing a speed test at the Broadband Expansion and Accessibility of Mississippi website- broadbandms.com.
            1. 10 Mbps or less
            2. Up to 25 Mbps
            3. Up to 100 Mbps
            4. Up to 1 gigabit
            5. I don't know
        iii. Which company do you use for internet? (AT&T, Xfinity (Comcast), T-Mobile, Earthlink, C Spire, Verizon, Viasat, HughesNet, Always On, Starlink, etc.)
        iv. What is the monthly charge for your internet service?
        v. Does your internet bill include other services such as phone, TV, or premium content?
            1. Yes

2. No
vi. What do you use the internet for? Check all that apply.
1. Remote working
2. Remote learning
3. Remote health care/telehealth
4. Video conferencing/chatting
5. Entertainment/streaming services
6. Gaming
7. Other: (please list)
b. No, I don't have an internet connection at my residence
i. Why don't you have internet access at your residence? (Check all that apply.)
1. Initial connection fees are too expensive
2. Monthly charges are too expensive
3. I don't have a computer or tablet to use
4. I don't know how to use a computer or tablet
5. I don't know how to get internet service
6. I don't need it/am not interested in it
7. I have physical limitations
8. I'm worried about privacy and others getting my information
9. An internet connection isn't available in my area
10. I access the internet at a public internet source, such as a library or community center
ii. How much would you pay for internet per month if it were accessible to you at your residence?
iii. If you are willing, please share how FTH broadband service would improve your quality of life.

Key Demographic information (Optional)
1. What is your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply.
a. American Indian or Alaska Native
b. Asian
c. Black or African American
d. Hispanic/Latino or Spanish Origin
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
f. White
g. Other: _____
2. What language is spoken most often in your household?
a. Arabic
b. Chinese
c. English
d. Native American
e. Spanish
f. Other: _____
3. What is your household's gross income?

        a. $0-$24,999

        b. $25,000-$49,999

        c. $50,000-$74,999

        d. $75,000-$99,999

        e. $100,000-$149,999

        f. $150,000 or more

4. Which age groups live in your home? Select all that apply.
   a. 0-10
   b. 11-20
   c. 21-30
   d. 31-40
   e. 41-50
   f. 51-60
   g. 61-70
   h. 71 or older

5. Do any students live at your household?
   a. Yes
      i. Which education level? Select all that apply.
         1. Elementary school (kindergarten to 6th grade)
         2. Middle school (7th grade to 9th grade)
         3. High school (9th grade to 12th grade)
         4. College or university
         5. Adult education or technical training
   b. No

6. What is the highest level of education completed by someone in your household?
   a. 12th grade or less (no diploma)
   b. High school diploma or equivalent (GED)
   c. Career or technical education certificate
   d. Some college but no degree
   e. Associate degree
   f. Bachelor's degree
   g. Master's degree or doctorate

COMMUNITY PARTNER SURVEY

Madison County is working to connect all their residents to affordable and reliable Fiber to Home (FTH) broadband service. Your responses will help identify existing broadband programs and inform solutions to ensure that all residents have broadband access. We value and respect your privacy. Responses and data collected from the survey will be kept private and will not be sold or made available to third parties. https://broadbandms.com

Organization Information

1. Contact Information
    a. Name:
    b. Organization:
    c. Department:
    d. Phone:
    e. Email:
    f. City/Town:
    g. Brief description of involvement with broadband:

Broadband Projects

1. Do you currently have any broadband or digital access projects, plans, or initiatives underway?
   (If no, go to Broadband Staffing section.)
    a. Broadband Project Information
        i. Broadband project name:
        ii. Project manager or company:
        iii. Project manager's email (if known):
    b. What is the status of this broadband project?
        i. Information-gathering
        ii. Community engagement
        iii. Network planning/engineering
        iv. Pre-construction
        v. Active construction
        vi. Completed
        vii. Other:
    c. Estimated duration of project (by months):
    d. Estimated total project cost:
    e. Is funding for this project secured? If so, please describe amounts and sources.
    f. Describe the economic benefits of your project(s) and how these benefits can be measured.

Broadband Staffing

1. Does your organization have any dedicated positions related to broadband expansion?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
        i. If yes, please list the position, employment status, and roles for any dedicated broadband positions.
            1. Title
            2. Department
            3. Status (full-time, part-time, volunteer)
            4. Role(s)
            5. Contact

2. Has your organization explored or had interest in additional, broadband-specific staffing?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

Broadband Planning
1. To your knowledge, have any local county, city organizations, or entities in your area undertaken any data collection efforts as it relates to broadband? If yes, please select the efforts undertaken.
   a. I'm not aware of any data collection efforts
   b. Community broadband survey
   c. FCC Map Challenges
   d. Internet Speed Test
   e. Utility mapping
2. Outline any known policy and/or regulatory impediments to the expansion of broadband in your organization.
   a. Does your area have any plans to create policies that allow aid to be given in broadband expansion?
3. Are there areas in your city or county where you commonly hear complaints regarding the lack of FTH broadband service?

Partner Coordination
1. Broadband expansion may be expedited through shared resources and access to existing physical resources to cut costs and quicken expansion. What physical infrastructure does your organization have that it could leverage for broadband expansion?
   a. Existing tower space
   b. Dark fiber
   c. Existing rights-of-way
   d. Public lands
   e. Utility poles
   f. Not interested in sharing resources at this time
   g. I don't know
   h. Other:
2. Does your organization have any upcoming capital projects that could be leveraged to deploy broadband infrastructure (conduit or fiber)? (For example, any road construction, sewer system repair, or new building projects that could be coupled with broadband deployment.)
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know
      i. If yes, list the upcoming capital projects that could be coupled with broadband expansion in your community.

Broadband Coalition

1. Does your organization have a broadband committee or similar working group tasked with expanding broadband?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
2. If a community or broadband action team has been established, select the organizations or sectors that are represented in that group. Select all that apply.
    a. State, county, or municipal entities
    b. Schools
    c. Libraries
    d. Tribal entities
    e. Health care organizations
    f. Public safety or emergency management
    g. Economic development organizations
    h. Local internet service providers
    i. Other governmental entities
    j. Other:

Digital Equity

Digital equity is the condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in society. This includes affordable internet, connected devices, and digital skills needed to safely navigate the internet.

1. Does your organization provide any programs, policies, funding, or resources that expand digital access, affordability, or availability? *(If no, go to Affordability and Accessibility section.)*
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
        i. *If yes*, please answer the following:
            1. Program name:
            2. Organization type:
                a. Federal government
                b. Foundation/philanthropic,
                c. Higher education
                d. Housing authority
                e. Internet service provider
                f. K-12 school
                g. Library
                h. Local government
                i. Local nonprofit
                j. National nonprofit
                k. Private sector
                l. State government

   m. Other:
  3. Website:
  4. Location (if any):
  5. Street address:
  6. City:
  7. State:
  8. ZIP:

ii. What location(s) does this program serve geographically?

iii. What population(s) does this program focus its digital inclusion services on? (Check all that apply.)
  1. Households below 150% of the federal poverty level
  2. Aging individuals
  3. Incarcerated individuals
  4. Veterans
  5. Individuals with disabilities
  6. Individuals with a language barrier
  7. Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
  8. Rural residents
  9. New Americans
  10. Other: *(add text box)*

iv. Which digital equity category does this program address? (Check all that apply.)
  1. Broadband access and affordability
  2. Device access
  3. Digital skills and internet access
  4. Public device and internet access
  5. Digital inclusion funding
  6. Other: *(add text box)*

v. How is this program funded?
  1. Grant
  2. In-kind
  3. Loan
  4. Donations
  5. Other: *(add text box)*

vi. How does your organization advertise existing broadband related programs? (Check all that apply.)
  1. In person
  2. Online ads
  3. Social media
  4. Events
  5. Phone
  6. Newsletter or newspaper
  7. Printed materials (flyers, mailers, posters, etc.)

8. Other: *(add text box)*

Affordability and Accessibility

1. Does your organization provide subsidized or low-cost devices such as tablets or laptops? *(If no, go to Digital Skills & Technical Support Section.)*
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
        i. *If yes,* what devices do your organization provide? (Check all that apply.)
            1. Accessible/adapted devices
            2. Desktops
            3. Laptops
            4. Peripherals (monitors, keyboards, mice, webcams, etc.)
            5. Smartphones
            6. Tablets
            7. Hot spots
            8. Other: *(add text box)*
2. What are the criteria used to determine who qualifies to receive a device?
3. Does your organization provide subsidies for broadband service subscriptions?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
4. How many people does your organization provide devices to each month (specific to digital access)?
    a. Less than 10
    b. 10-25
    c. 25-50
    d. 50-100
    e. 100-500
    f. More than 500

Digital Skills & Technical Support

1. Does your organization provide training for digital skills? *(If no or I don't know, move on to next question.)*
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
        i. *If yes,* how does your organization provide training for digital skills?
            1. In-person classes
            2. Online classes
            3. One-on-one tutoring
            4. Workshops
            5. We don't provide training for digital skills
            6. Other: *(add text box)*

        ii.   What training subjects do you cover relating to digital skills?

2. Does your organization provide any technical support to people? *(If no or I don't know, end survey.)*
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know
      i. *If yes*, please select all technical support provided (select all that apply).
         1. Computer operations (turning on and logging in, connecting to Wi-Fi, etc.)
         2. Computer speed-up/clean-up
         3. Connecting virtually (video calls, chat, etc.)
         4. Hardware support/repair
         5. Internet browsing
         6. Key software packages (Microsoft Office, Google Drive)
            a. Other privacy, security, and data protection support
         7. Social media
         8. Software installation and updates
         9. Virus and malware removal
         10. Other: *(add text box)*