



**Broadband, Equity, Access
and Deployment**

3.6.2023

A serene landscape photograph of two people kayaking on a calm body of water during the "golden hour" of sunset. The kayakers are silhouetted against the bright, low sun, which creates a shimmering reflection on the water's surface. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange near the horizon. In the background, dark, silhouetted hills or mountains are visible. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

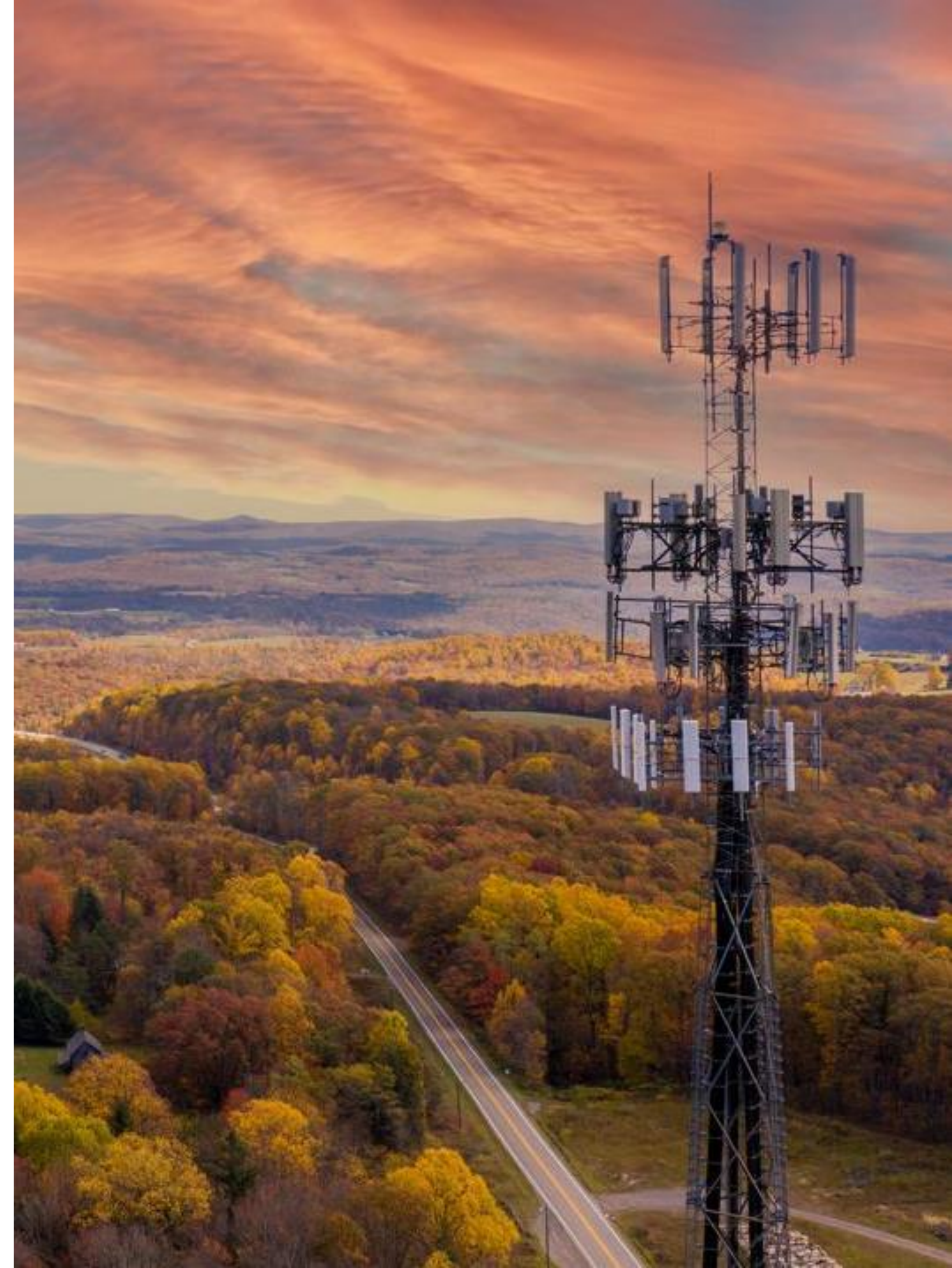
The Office of Rural Prosperity seeks to foster vibrant, prosperous, and resilient rural communities across Wisconsin

Overview

➤ Office of Rural Prosperity deliverables

- GeoPartners speed testing contract
- Regional Technical Assistance
- Regional toolkit

➤ Overview of regional planning assistance



WEDC ORP deliverables

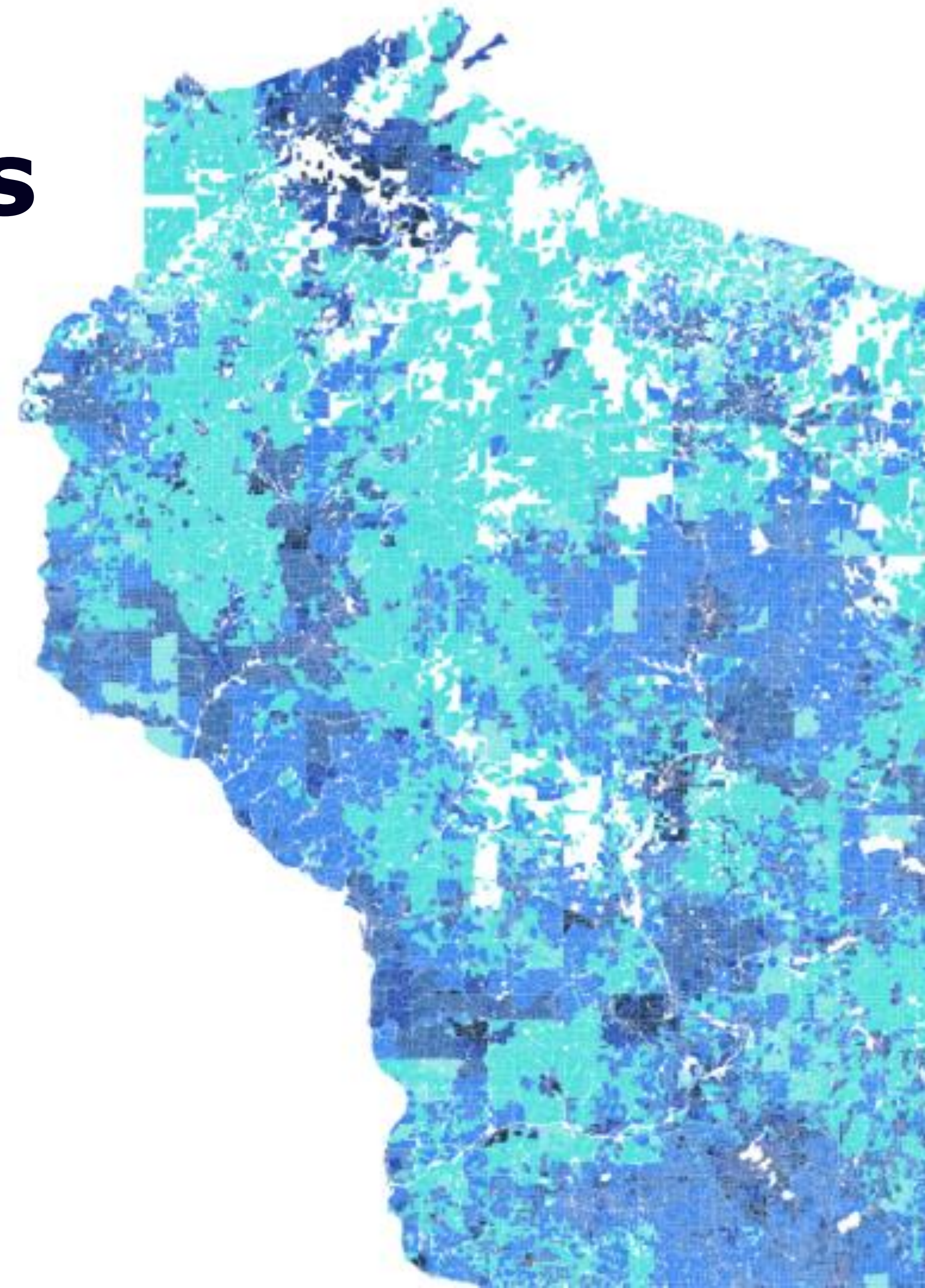
➤ GeoPartners one year contract extension

- Working with North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- Contract extension for the GeoPartners software – to the end of CY 2023
- Provides:
 - Statewide speed testing and mapping
 - Granular address level data and mapping in nearly real time for counties and the state
- Anticipating contract finalized within the next several weeks

WEDC ORP deliverables

➤ Regional Technical Assistance

- Convening meetings with Regional Economic Development Organizations (REDOs) and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs)
 - What are regional challenges with broadband deployment planning?
 - What types of technical assistances are needed?
 - What are current knowledge gaps
 - What has been successful to date
- **“Broadband does not stop at the county line.”**



WEDC ORP deliverables

➤ Toolkits

- Shared with the Division of Extension
- Information on the process
- Templates
- Best practices and case studies
- FAQs
- Contact information for providers
- Information sheets – funding/financing, statutes
- Innovative ideas

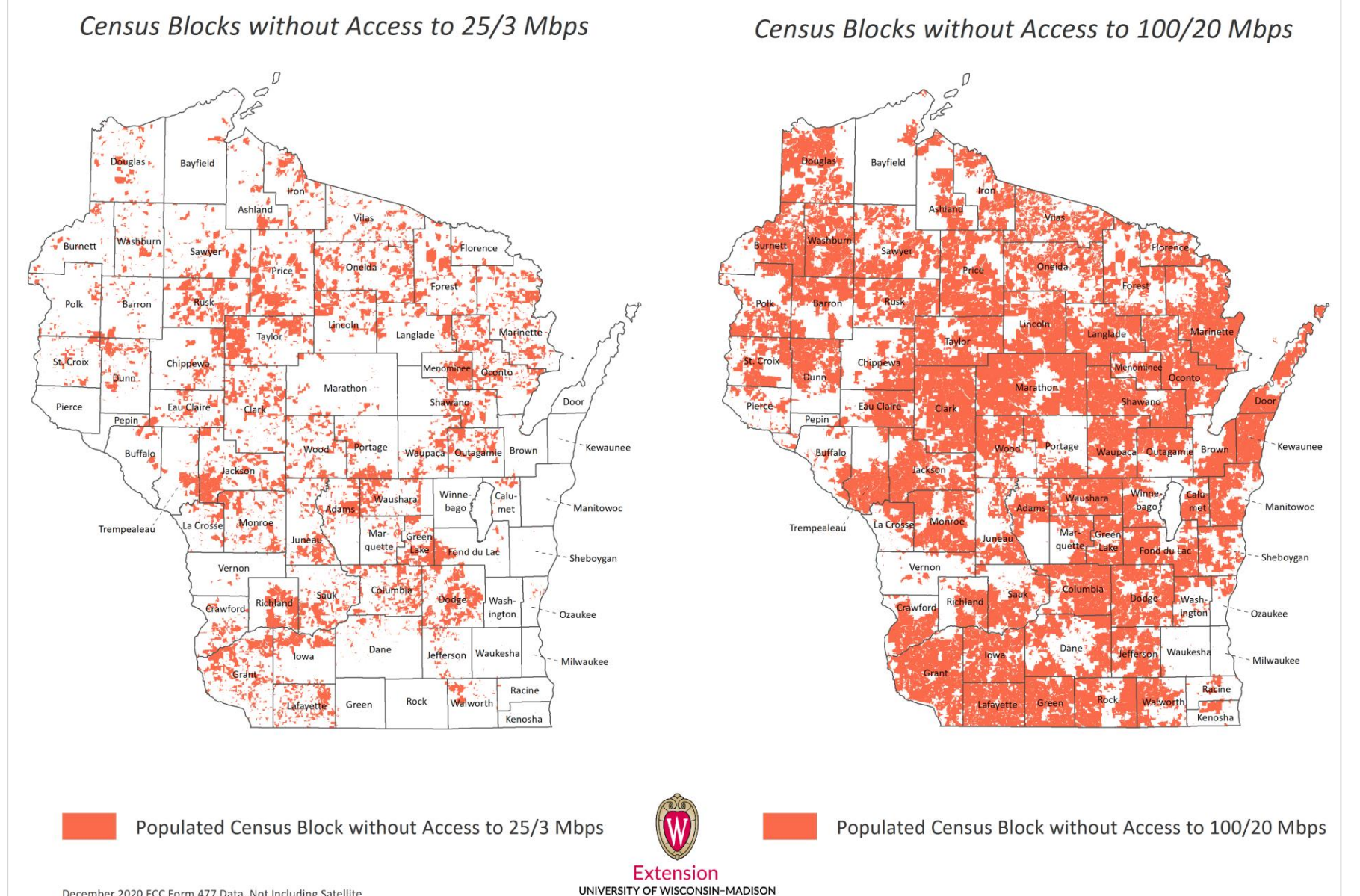
Planning - Activities

- Information on the broadband deployment process
- Examples of partners to engage in regional planning – e.g., engage broadband providers very early in the planning stage – whether housing, roads, business parks, or broadband expansion – the earlier the better
- Provide examples of how to align broadband with major economic development activities/plans that will engage providers, for example
 - Workforce attraction activities = growth in customer base
 - Business attraction activities = anchor institutions to build broadband from
 - Maximizing dig once policies
 - How to leverage Broadband Forward/Telecommuter Forward certifications

Planning - Data

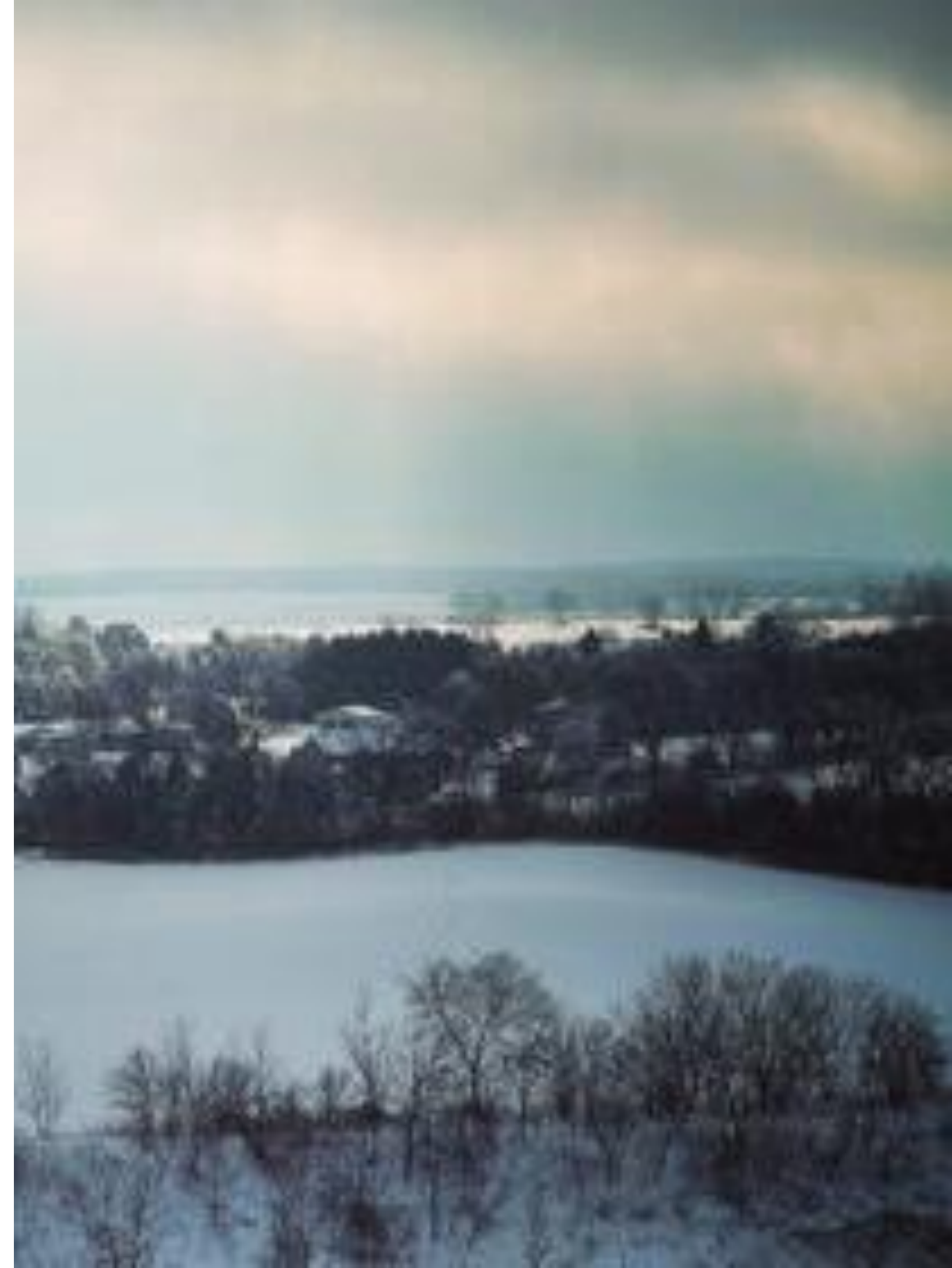
- How to leverage resources jointly to create a bigger pool or customer base to create the ROI for providers – examples of what has worked
- How to gather (and pay for) data
 - Unserved areas – where are they
 - Is speed adequate for needs
 - Is service affordable – are there areas where affordability is problematic
 - Are unserved or underserved areas adjacent to other communities, counties, regions
- Sharing knowledge of the types of service, e.g., Satellite vs. Starlink
- Share information on who the providers are across county lines and across regions, who are the incumbents
- Provide information on the state statutes

Map 1 - Census Blocks without Access to Broadband at 25/3 Versus 100/20 Benchmarks (Populated Blocks Only)



Planning - Financing

- **Information on available funding and financing options** – what funds are available for communities, novel innovative ideas from other states
- **Case studies, best practices** – what have other communities and states done
- **Assistance and information on sustainability plans** when planning and grant funding are done – e.g., funding for continued mapping
- **Recommendations on how to leverage partnerships** to increase funding / ROI



Planning - Broadband

- Recommendations on talking points for stakeholders
- Recommendations on how to approach providers to get the best responses
- Ideas for non-linear solutions – e.g., service here for increased take rates there



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