



Expanding Broadband Access in Green County

Situation

Green County faces significant challenges in expanding affordable broadband access. With many locations unserved or underserved, the county needed to identify areas lacking adequate service and develop strategies to address these gaps. The Broadband Coordinator led these efforts, focusing on community outreach and public engagement, and partnering with ISPs to create strong public-private partnerships.

Response

To tackle the issue, Green County implemented several key actions:

- **Strategic Planning:** The county formed an IT committee in 2022, which developed the Strategic Broadband Plan and a guidance policy to compare project proposals using a scoring matrix.
- **Creation of the Broadband Coordinator Position:** Recognizing the need for dedicated leadership, the county created a Broadband Coordinator position to focus on broadband initiatives.
- **Community Outreach and Public Engagement:** The Coordinator educated the public on the need for broadband and collaborated with local leaders, including the county board and townships, to garner support.
- **Partnerships with ISPs:** The Coordinator worked on building strong relationships with ISPs to facilitate broadband expansion.

Outcomes

The efforts led to several positive outcomes:

- **Formation of Committees:** The ad hoc broadband committee formed in 2017 and the IT committee in 2022 provided structured approaches to addressing broadband issues.
- **Strategic Broadband Plan:** The IT committee developed a comprehensive plan and guidance policy, enabling effective comparison and selection of project proposals.
- **Increased Public Awareness:** Outreach efforts educated the community on the importance of broadband, leading to greater public support.
- **Identification of Unserved Areas:** 1,569 unserved and underserved locations in three pockets of the county were identified that needed focus.

Lessons Learned

Several key lessons emerged from this initiative:

- **Importance of Dedicated Leadership:** Having a dedicated broadband coordinator was crucial for focusing efforts and building strong relationships with ISPs and local leaders.
- **Community Engagement:** Educating the public and local leaders about the need for broadband and the role of government funding was essential for gaining support.

- **Strategic Planning:** Developing a strategic plan and guidance policy helped streamline the process of selecting and implementing broadband projects.
- **Role of Broadband Champions:** Identifying broadband champions, whether in official or unofficial capacities, was important for advocating and driving broadband expansion efforts.

This case study highlights the importance of dedicated leadership, community engagement, strategic planning, and the role of broadband champions in successfully expanding broadband access in Green County.

Learn More

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