

Presentation to the October 2025 Meeting of the

Science Technology and Telecommunications Committee

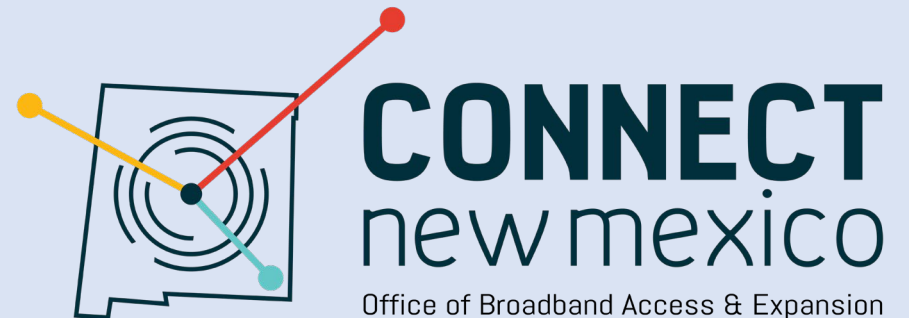
Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

Jeff Lopez, Director

(505) 618-0340

Jeff.Lopez@connect.nm.gov

October 24, 2025

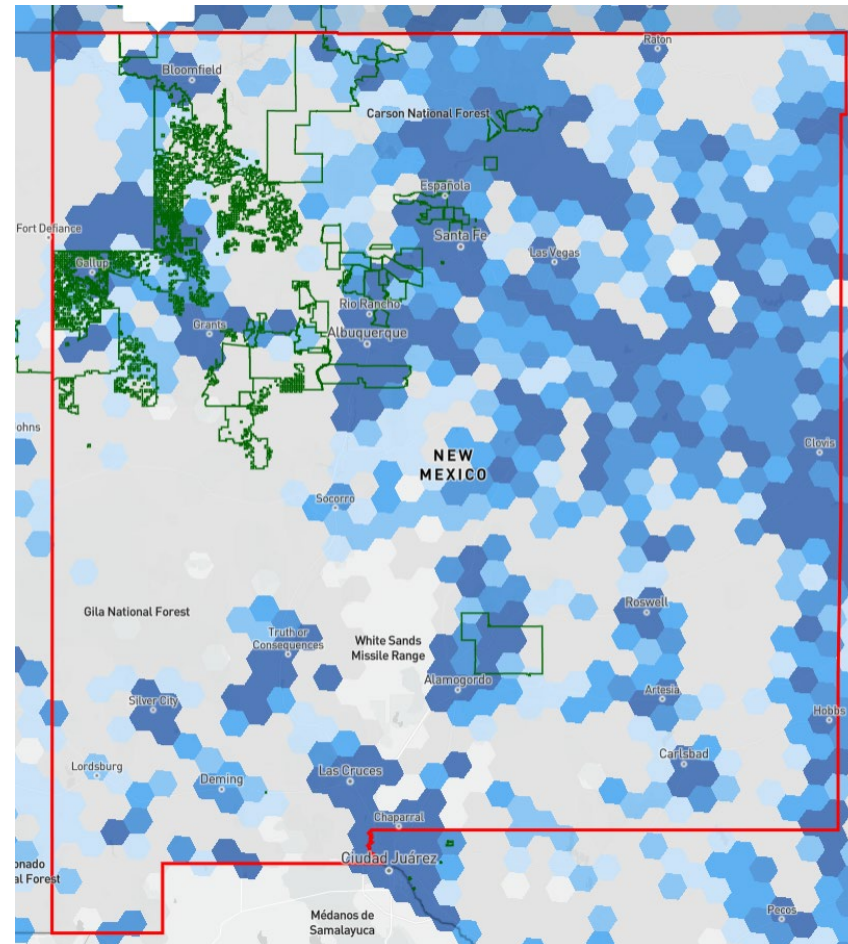
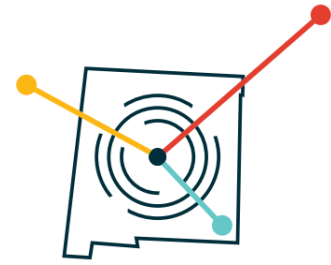


Content

- **Broadband Access in New Mexico**
- **Broadband and Rural Development**
- **OBAE Projects**
- **Authorizing Legislation**
- **Broadband Programs**
- **BEAD Update**
- **Permitting and Rights of Way**
- **Mapping, Data, and Policy**
- **Statewide Education Network**



Broadband Access in New Mexico



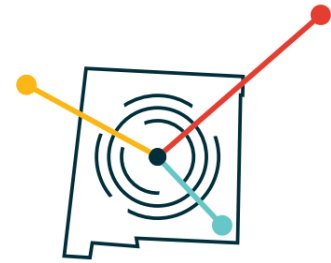
Map Legend

Served Units Percentage

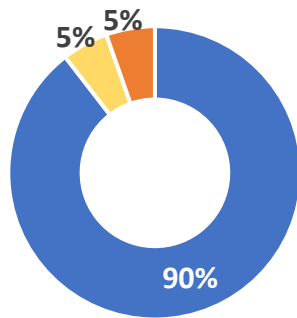
- 0%
- 0 - 20%
- 20 - 40%
- 40 - 60%
- 60 - 80%
- 80 - 100%
- Tribal Area

source: FCC National Broadband Map; data as of December 31, 2024

Broadband Access in New Mexico

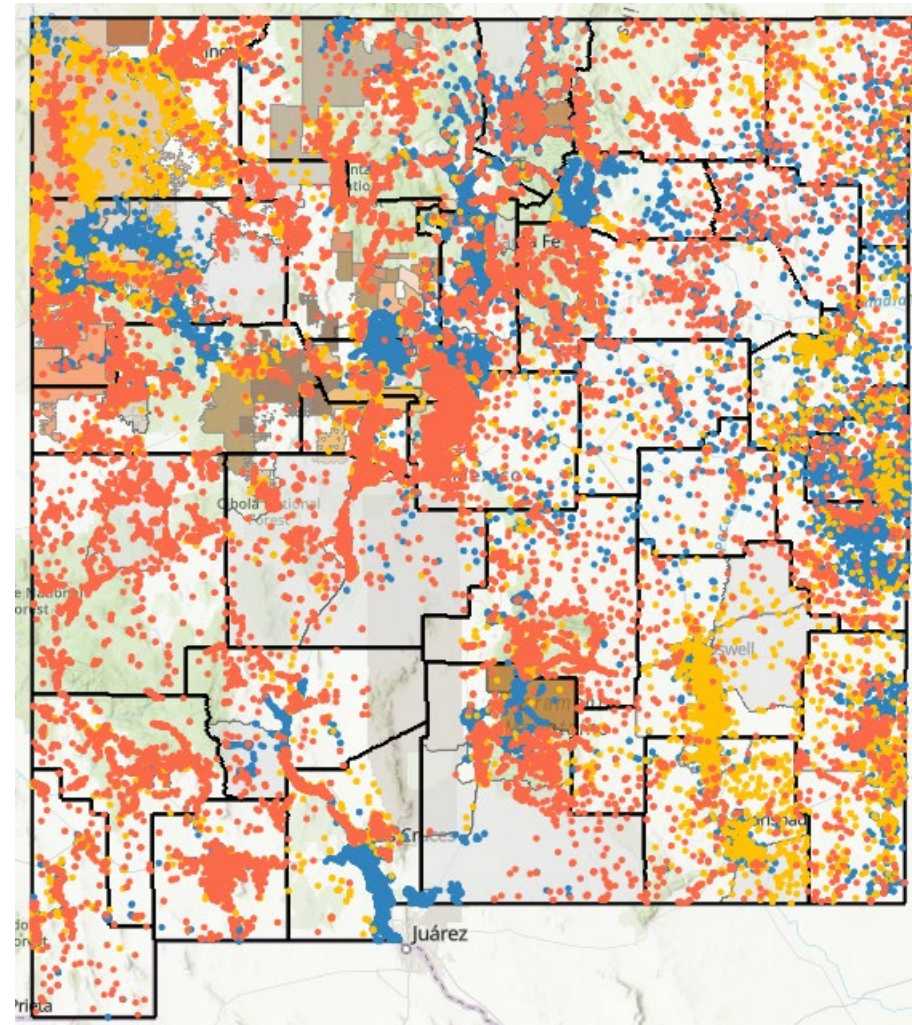


Current Served



■ Served ■ Underserved ■ Unserved

	Current
Served	765,402
Underserved	43,612
Unserved	46,008

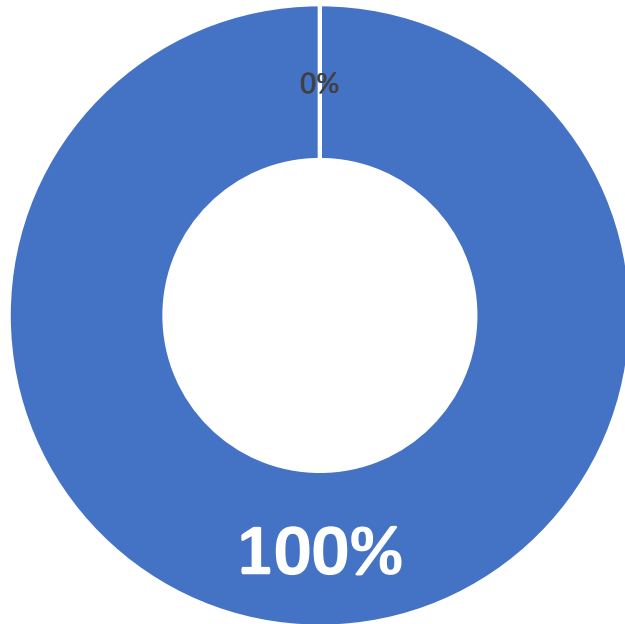


Source: FCC National Broadband Map, data as of December 31, 2024

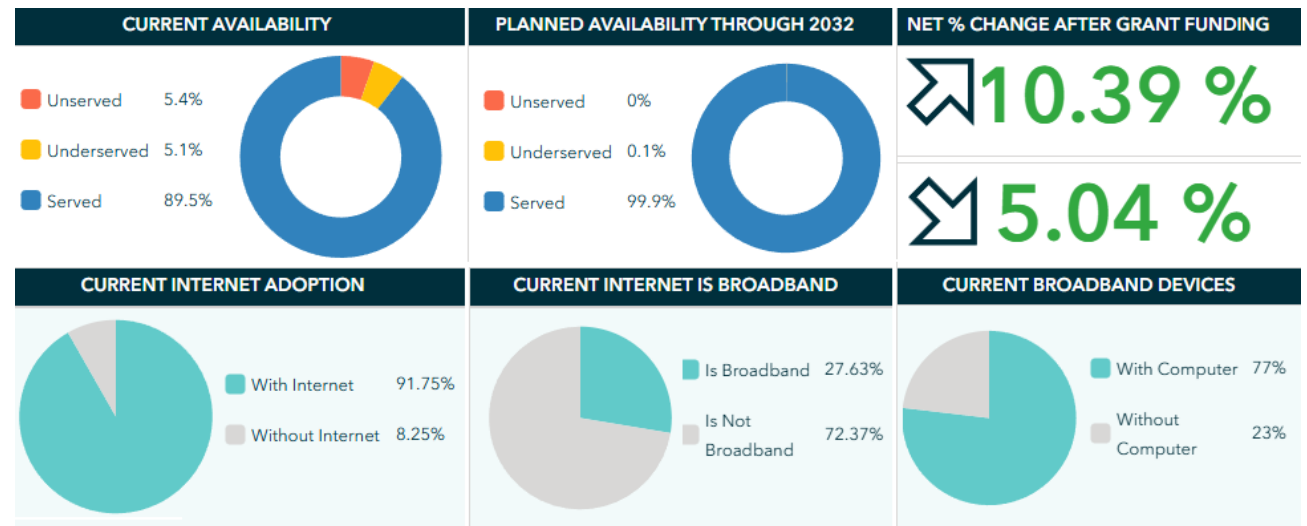
Broadband Access Goal by Dec. 2026



Will be Funded Upon NTIA Approval of New Mexico's Final Proposal for BEAD

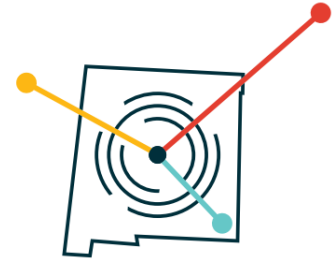


■ Served (Enforceable Commitments) ■ Underserved ■ Unavailable



Source: OBAE 2025 Data Collection Annual Report

Broadband Access and Rural Development



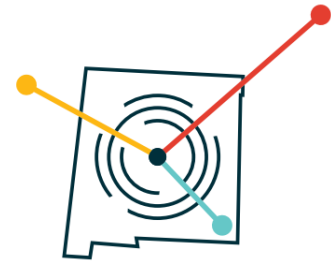
Compared to otherwise similar counties, rural counties with high broadband utilization have

- Business growth** rates that are 213% higher
- Self-employment** (opportunity entrepreneur) growth rates that are 10% higher
- Per capita **income growth** rates that are 18% higher
- GDP growth** rates that are 44% higher



** Source: Center on Rural Innovation (CRI) “Beyond Connectivity: Broadband in Rural Economic Growth and Resilience”; September 2024.*

Broadband Project #1: Typical Fiber to the Home (Oso Internet)



**Burying the
Fiber**



**Handhole
Connection**



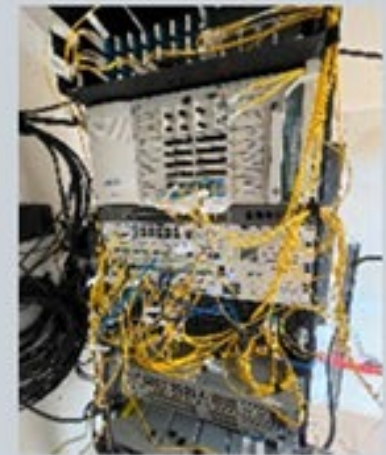
**NID on the
House**



**Inside
Connection**



**Network
Operations**





Broadband Project #2 – Plow and Laying Fiber
(OSO Internet - Ramah Navajo Chapter Project)



Broadband Project #3 – Trenching (Penasco Valley Telecom – Artesia Project)



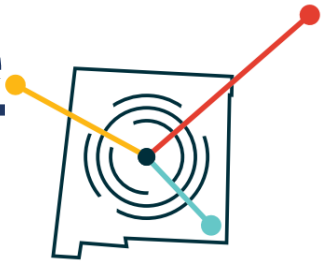
Broadband Project #4 - Trenching
(Tularosa Communications – Lincoln/Otero County Project)



Broadband Project #5 – Licensed Fixed Wireless Tower
(Oso Internet – Ramah Project)



NM Broadband Legislation and Timeline



Source: Mark Montoya, Legislative Education Study Committee, November 2024

- **Senate Bill 159:** Created the Broadband Development and Connectivity Program and allowed expenditure of \$10 million in funding from 2014-2019 for schools to upgrade broadband infrastructure.

- **House Bill 10:** Established the Connect New Mexico Council to coordinate state agency broadband programs.
- **Senate Bill 93:** Established the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE).

- **House Bill 160:** Allowed the State Transp. Commission to waive Right of Way fees for broadband in underserved areas, aiding smaller internet service providers (ISPs).
- **House Bill 232:** Ensured confidentiality for certain grant materials to help OBAE during the grant process.

- **Senate Bill 401:** Transferred administration of the Statewide Education Network (SEN) from PSFA to OBAE.
- **Senate Bill 126:** Increased the PRC's Rural Universal Service Fund to \$40 million after 2026.



2014

2017

2021

2022

2023

2025

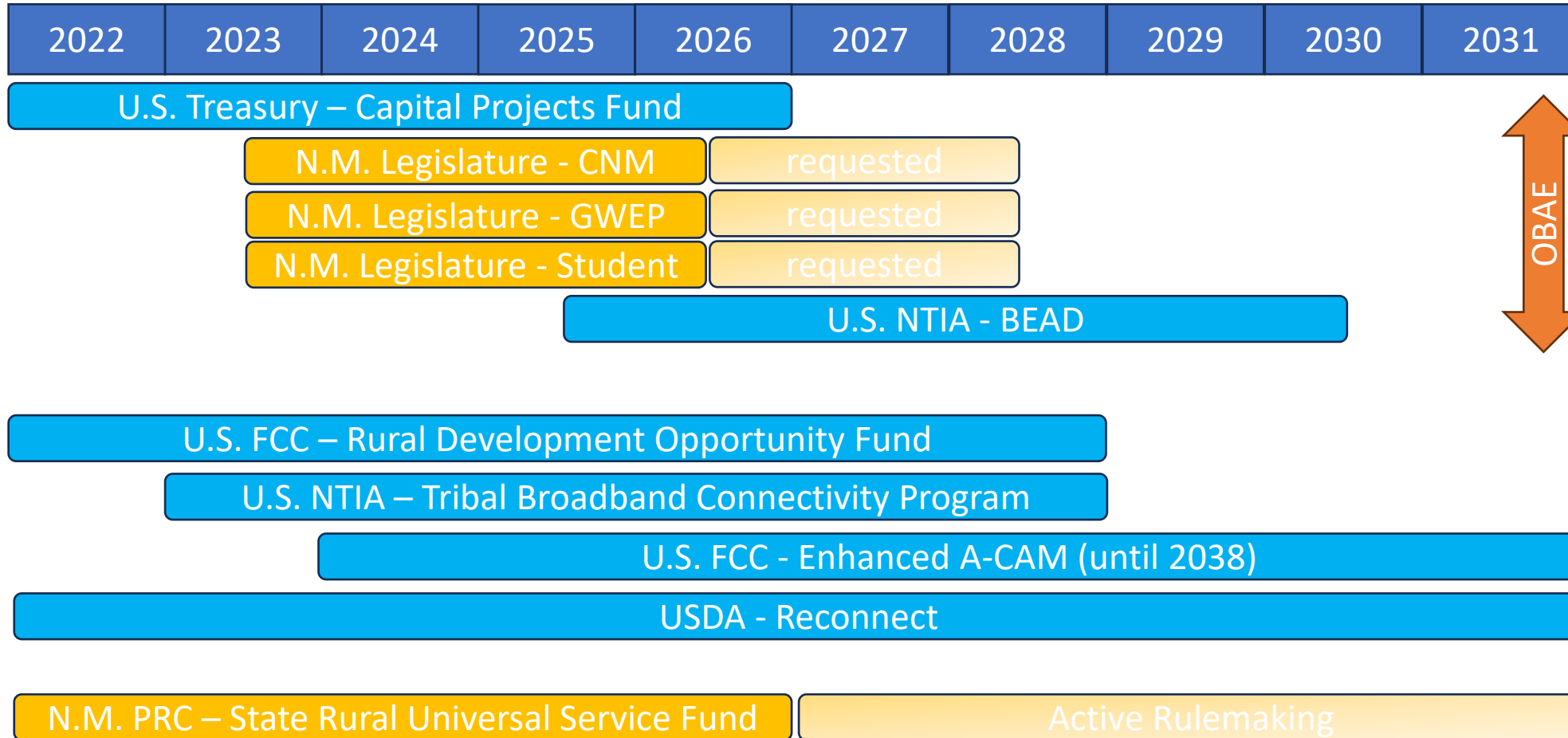
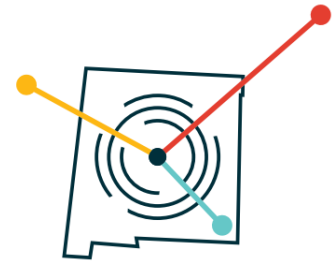
- **Senate Bill 64:** Removed the sunset period from SB159 (2014-2019), enabling continuous investment and support for broadband and technology upgrades.

- **Senate Bill 144:** Mandated Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) develop guidelines for a statewide infrastructure network, which became the SEN.
- **Senate Bill 377:** Allocated over \$105 million for broadband initiatives.

- **House Joint Resolution 1:** Constitutional Amendment, adopted by voters, adding a new anti-donation clause exception for essential household services, which include internet, energy, and wastewater, after implementing language from legislature

- **House Bill 262:** Enabled OBAE to use the Connect New Mexico Fund.
- **Senate Bill 155:** Increased the Rural Universal Service Fund to \$30 million in 2026.
- **Senate Bill 452:** Authorized OBAE to use established rates for broadband in underserved areas and requires semi-annual reporting with confidentiality.

Broadband Programs in NM



Key:

- State Funds
- Federal Funds

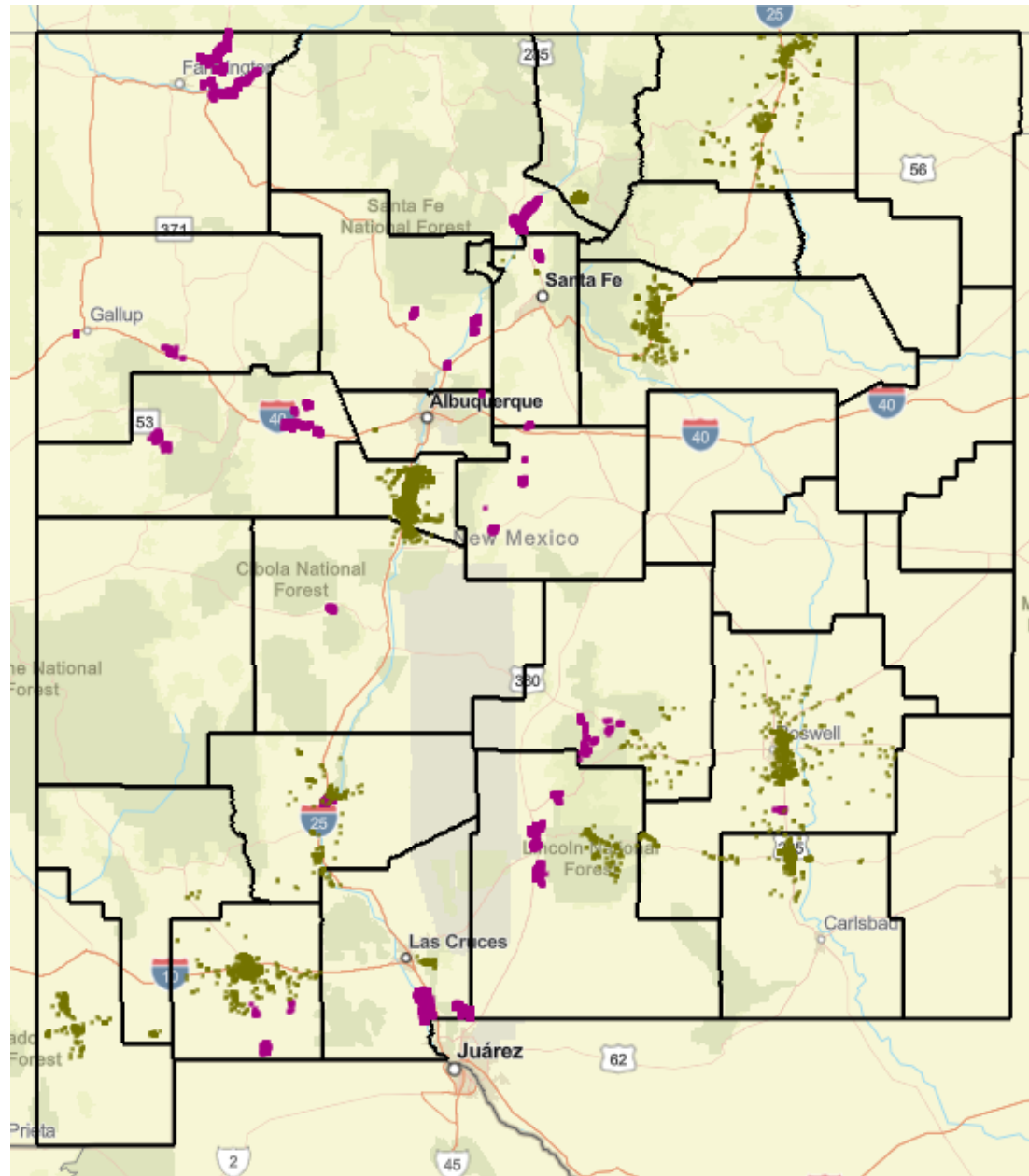
Nations, Pueblos, Tribes (NPTs)	Broadband Awards (state & federal)
Pueblo of Acoma	NTIA TBCP, USDA Reconnect, GWEP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Cochiti	GWEP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Isleta	Connect NM, GWEP, NTIA TBCP
Pueblo of Jemez	ARPA, GWEP, NTIA TBCP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Laguna	ARPA, Connect NM, GWEP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Nambe	ARPA, NTIA TBCP
Okay Owingeh	NTIA TBCP, Student Connect
Pueblo of Picuris	Connect NM, GWEP, NTIA TBCP
Pueblo of Pojoaque	NTIA TBCP, GWEP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of San Felipe	GWEP, NTIA TBCP
Pueblo of San Ildefonso	Connect NM, GWEP, NTIA TBCP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Santa Ana	ARPA
Pueblo of Santa Clara	NTIA TBCP

Nations, Pueblos, Tribes (NPTs)	Broadband Awards (state & federal)
Pueblo of Santo Domingo	ARPA, NTIA TBCP
Pueblo of Taos	NTIA TBCP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Pueblo of Tesuque	Connect NM, GWEP, NTIA TBCP
Pueblo of Zia	NTIA TBCP
Jicarilla Apache Nation	NTIA TBCP
Mescalero Apache Tribe	NTIA TBCP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD
Navajo Nation, Chapters & Affiliates	ARPA, GWEP, NTIA TBCP, <u>Prequalified</u> for BEAD

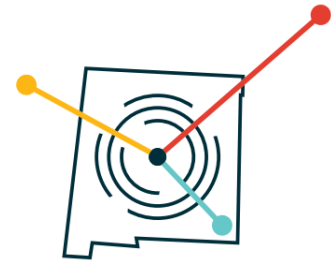
*Pueblos of Sandia and Zuni do not have broadband awards listed, nor does Fort Sill Apache.

Funded/Completed OBAE Projects

- Connect New Mexico Fund (State)
- ARPA Capital Projects Fund (Federal)



Digital Equity Act

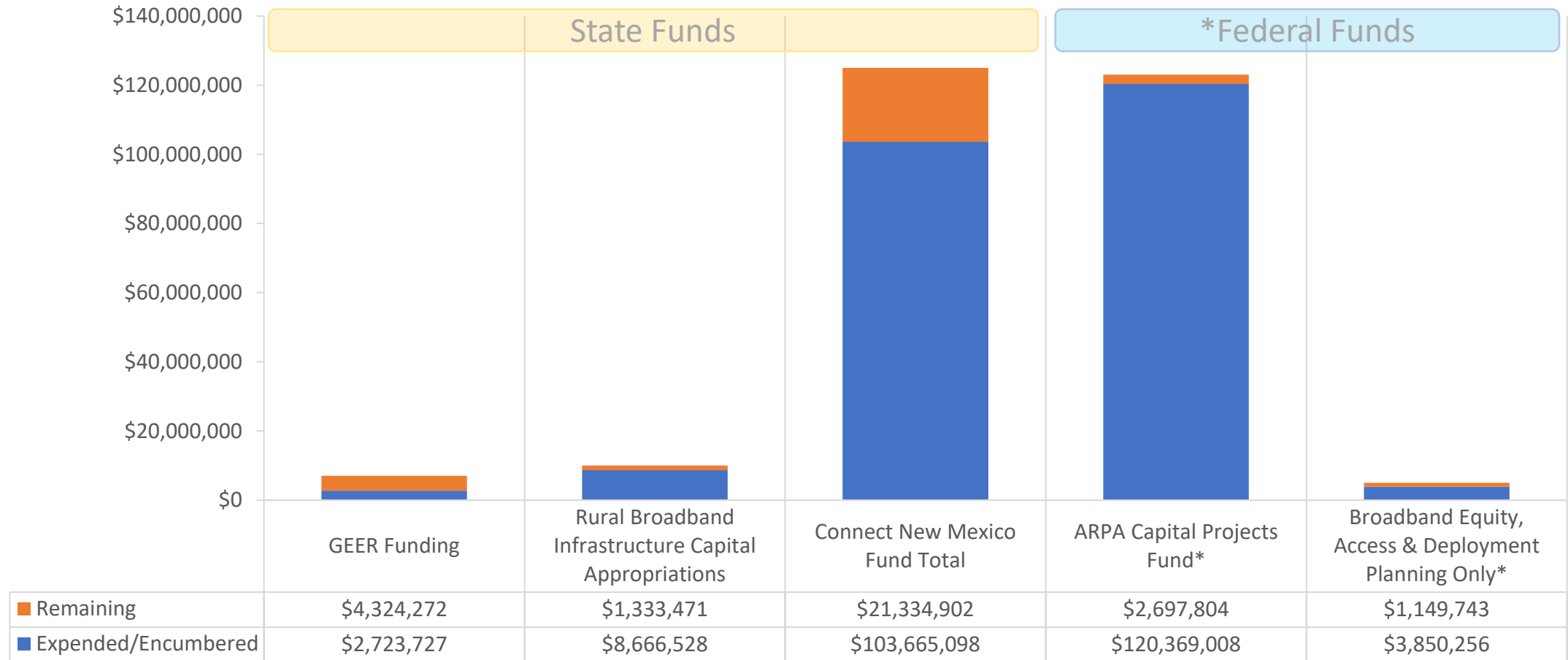
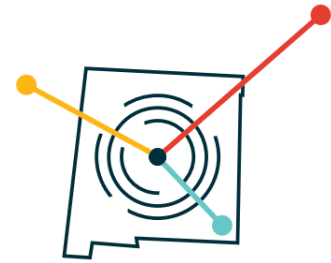


- In May 2025, US Dept. of Commerce **terminated** OBAE's legal grant agreement for \$8.7M

~~\$8.7 million 39 applications~~

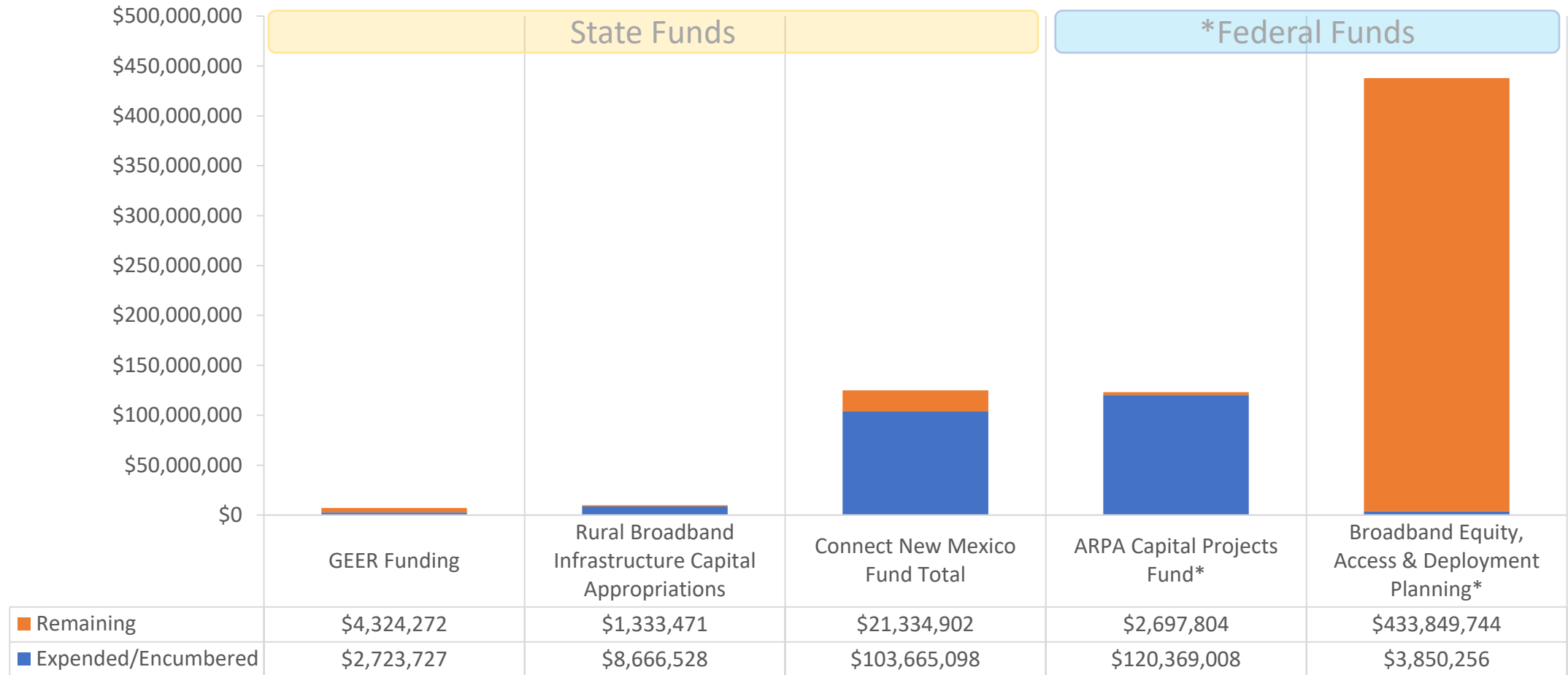
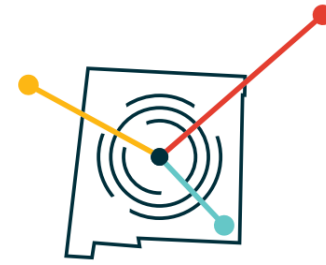
- Prior to federal termination of the funds, OBAE received 39 applications for over \$14M to support digital literacy, digital opportunity, and devices
- These projects were legally required to support **aging individuals, veterans, individuals with disabilities, low literacy populations, and rural families**

OBAE Administered Grants

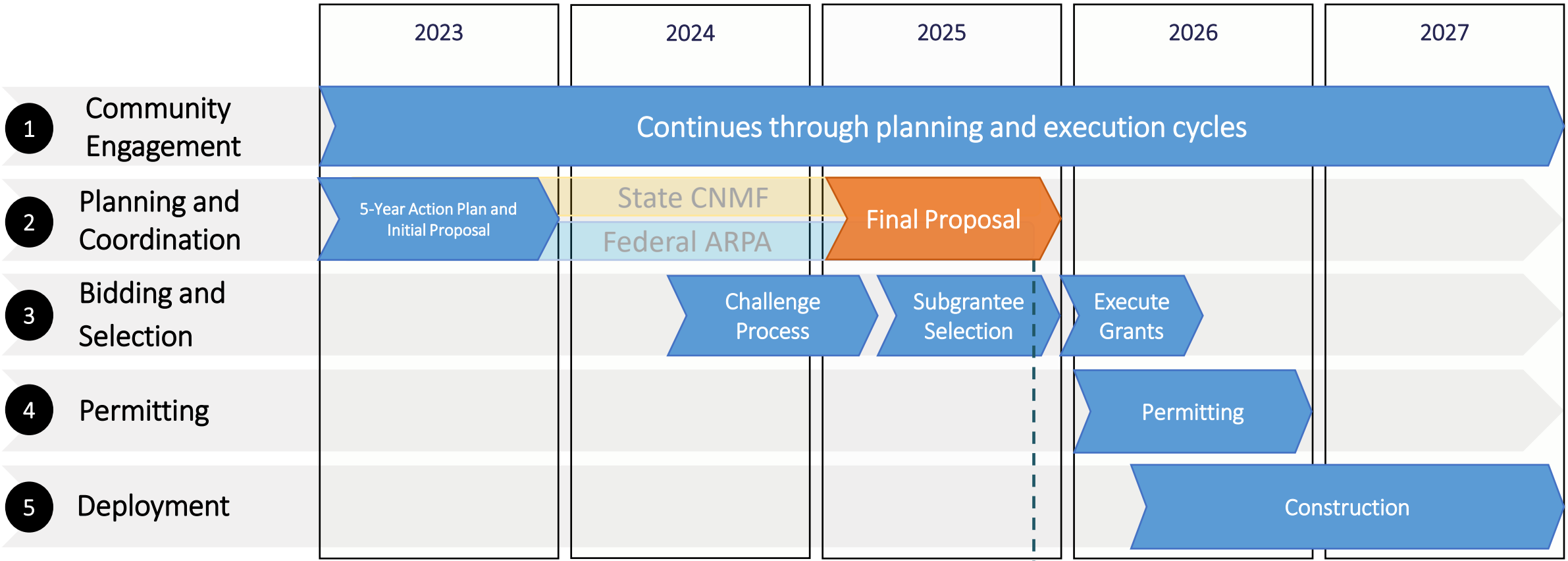
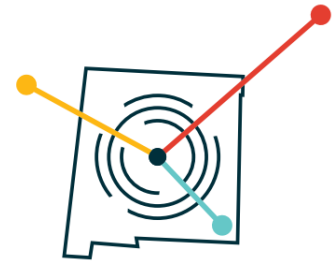


*denotes federal funding

OBAE Administered Grants upon BEAD Approval

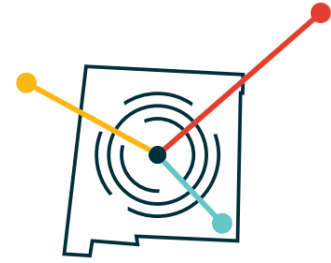


BEAD Updates



We Are Here

BEAD Updates

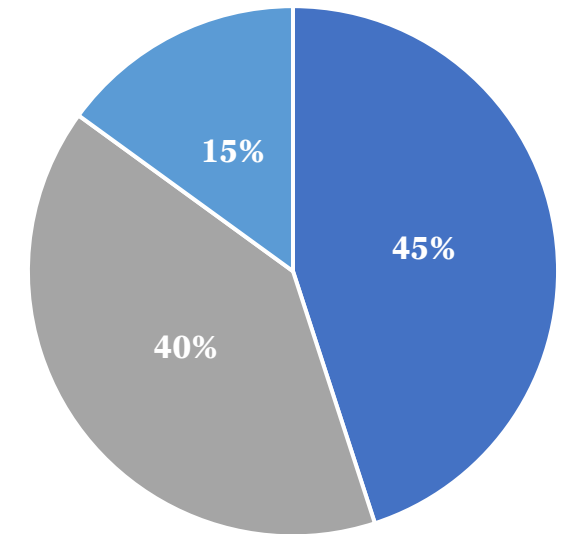


OBAE completed the Subgrantee Selection Process and submitted the Final Proposal to NTIA on September 4, 2025.

- **32 Provisional Awards** made to **17 entities**:
 - 9 internet service providers
 - 5 rural electric or telephone cooperatives
 - 3 Tribal entities (Navajo Nation, Pueblo of Acoma, and Pueblo of Jemez)

\$432.7 million

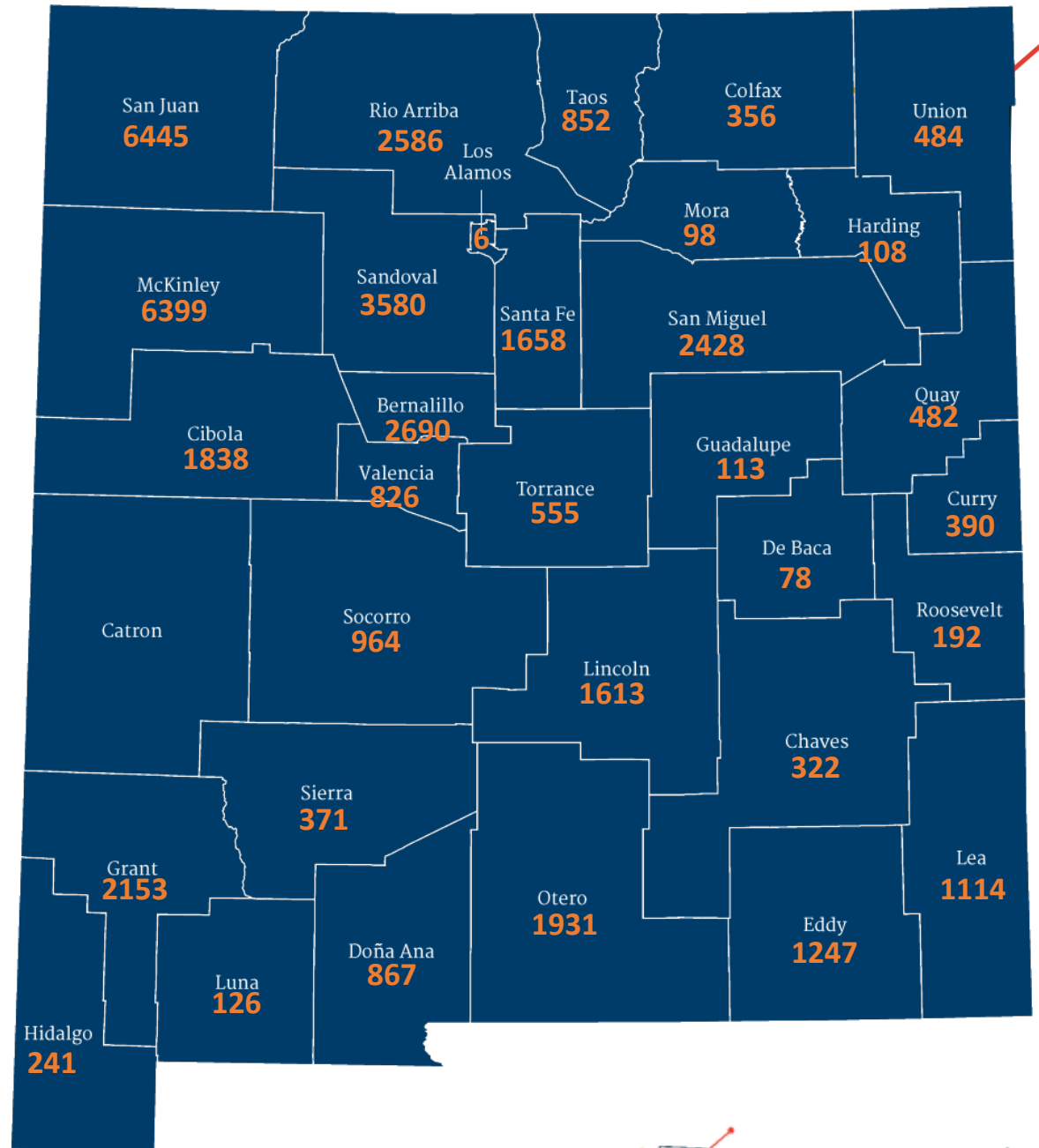
42,851 locations



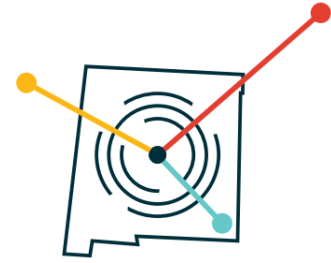
■ fiber ■ fixed wireless ■ satellite

BEAD Preliminary Award Locations

TOTAL:
42,851 locations



BEAD Updates



- June 6 BEAD Restructuring Notice
 - Extended timeline by 6 months
 - Decreased support for fiber
 - Increased support for satellite and wireless
 - Effectively capped per-location amount
- Remaining Funding: **\$242.6 million**
 - NTIA has paused "non-deployment" uses of BEAD funding.
- More information at: connect.nm.gov/bead

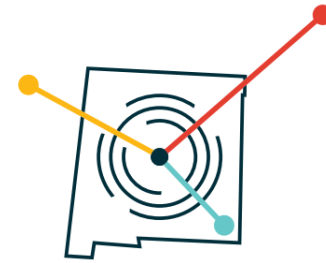
CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE USES OF

NON-DEPLOYMENT FUNDS

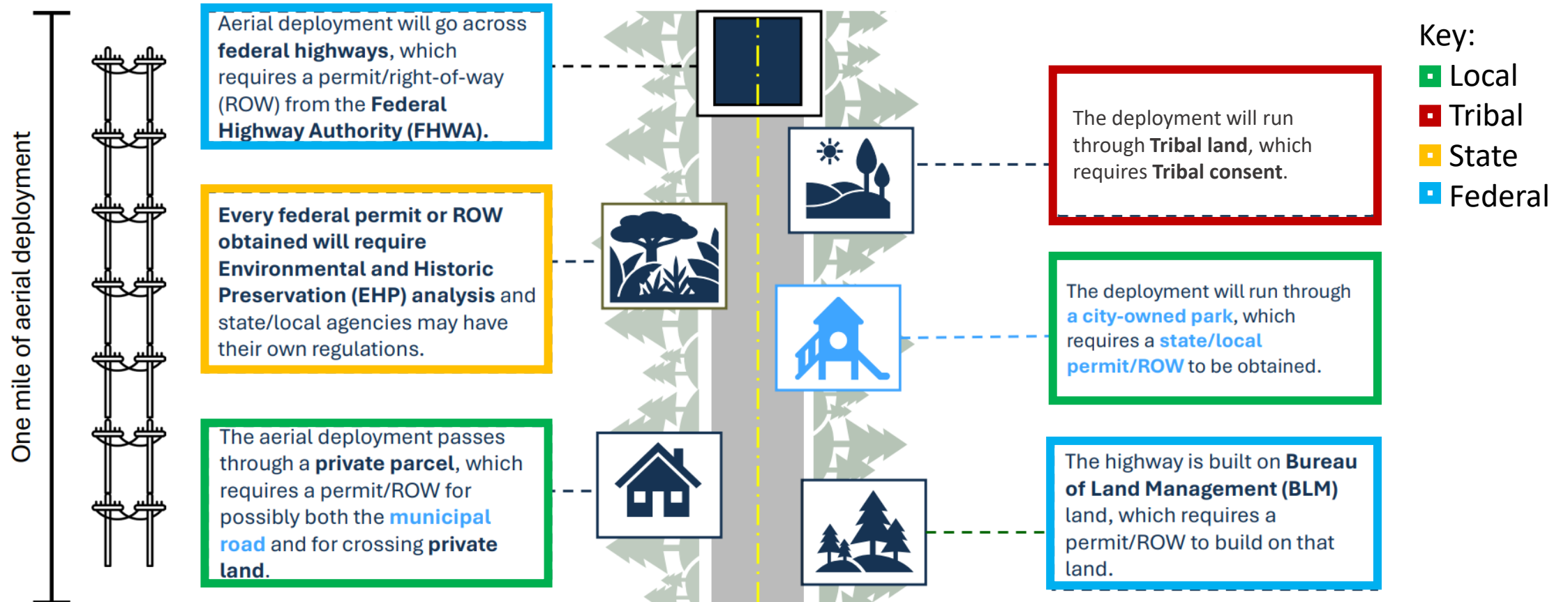
- community institutions (CAI)
- apartment buildings (MDU)
- digital opportunity
- workforce training
- fiber infrastructure to support deployment

\$242.6 million

Permitting and Rights of Way



Construction of a simple one-mile broadband deployment can require various local, Tribal, state, and/or federal permits. Deployment that runs through local land will require coordination with state/local governments to obtain permits.

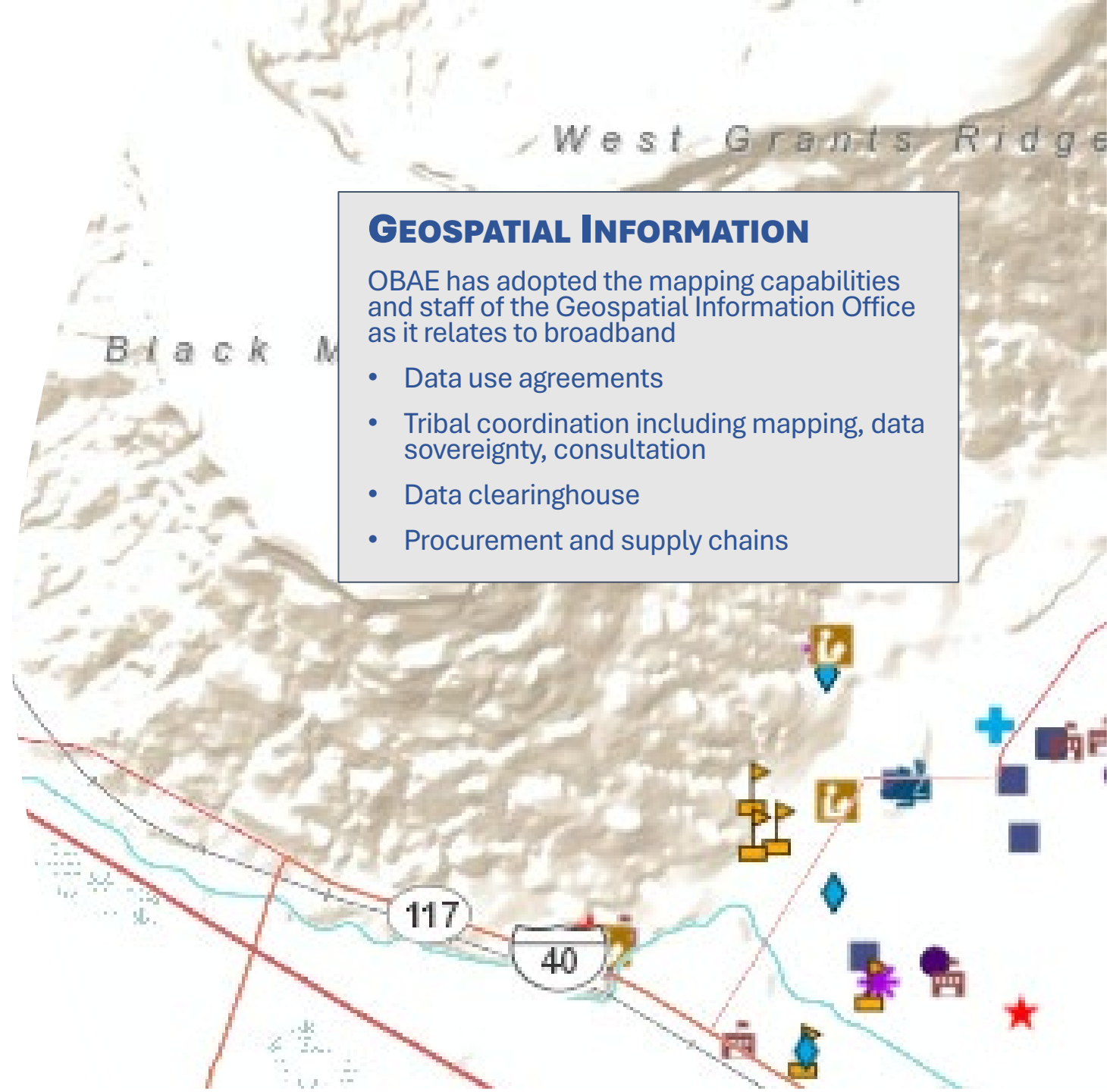


Source: NTIA, Local Permitting Importance, Challenges, and Strategies; August 2024

Mapping, Data, and Policy

1. Households and Small Businesses:

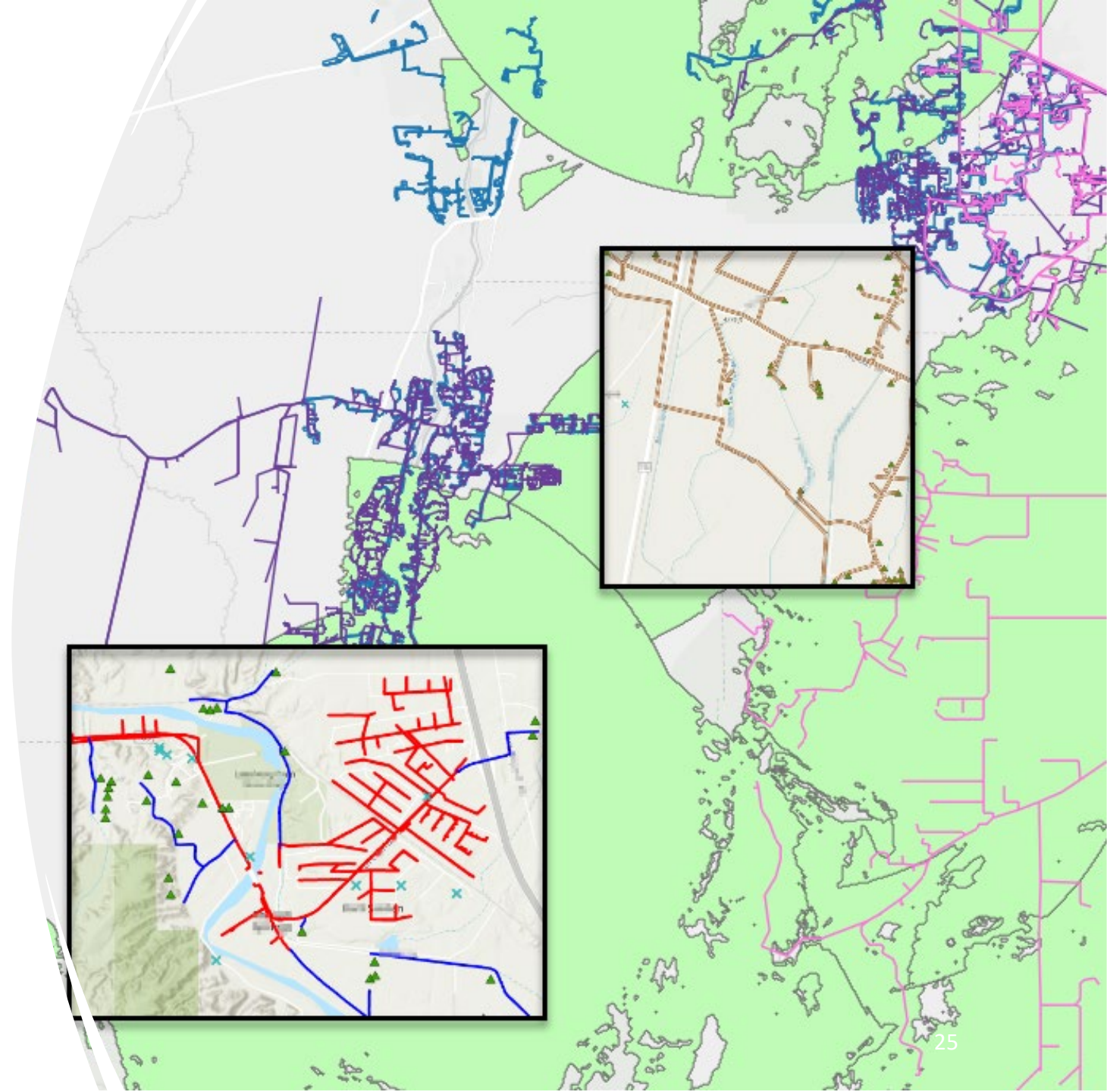
- broadband locations, availability, adoption focused on access to critical services in health, education, and workforce development



Mapping, Data, and Policy

2. Resiliency and Strategic Infrastructure:

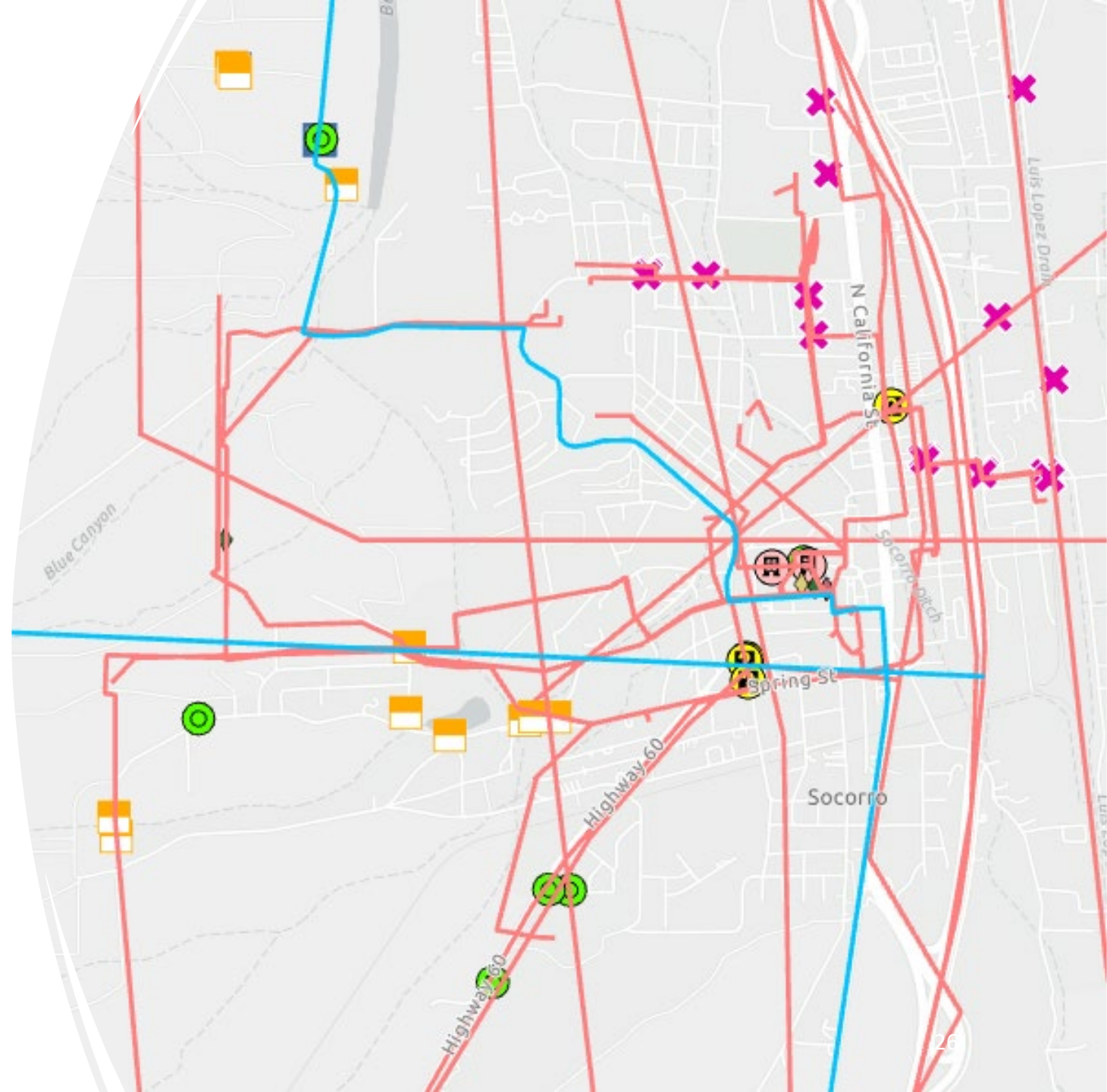
- community institutions, asset mapping, field photo inventory, gap analyses



Mapping, Data, and Policy

3. Permitting

- feasibility, conditions, dig once, data interoperability

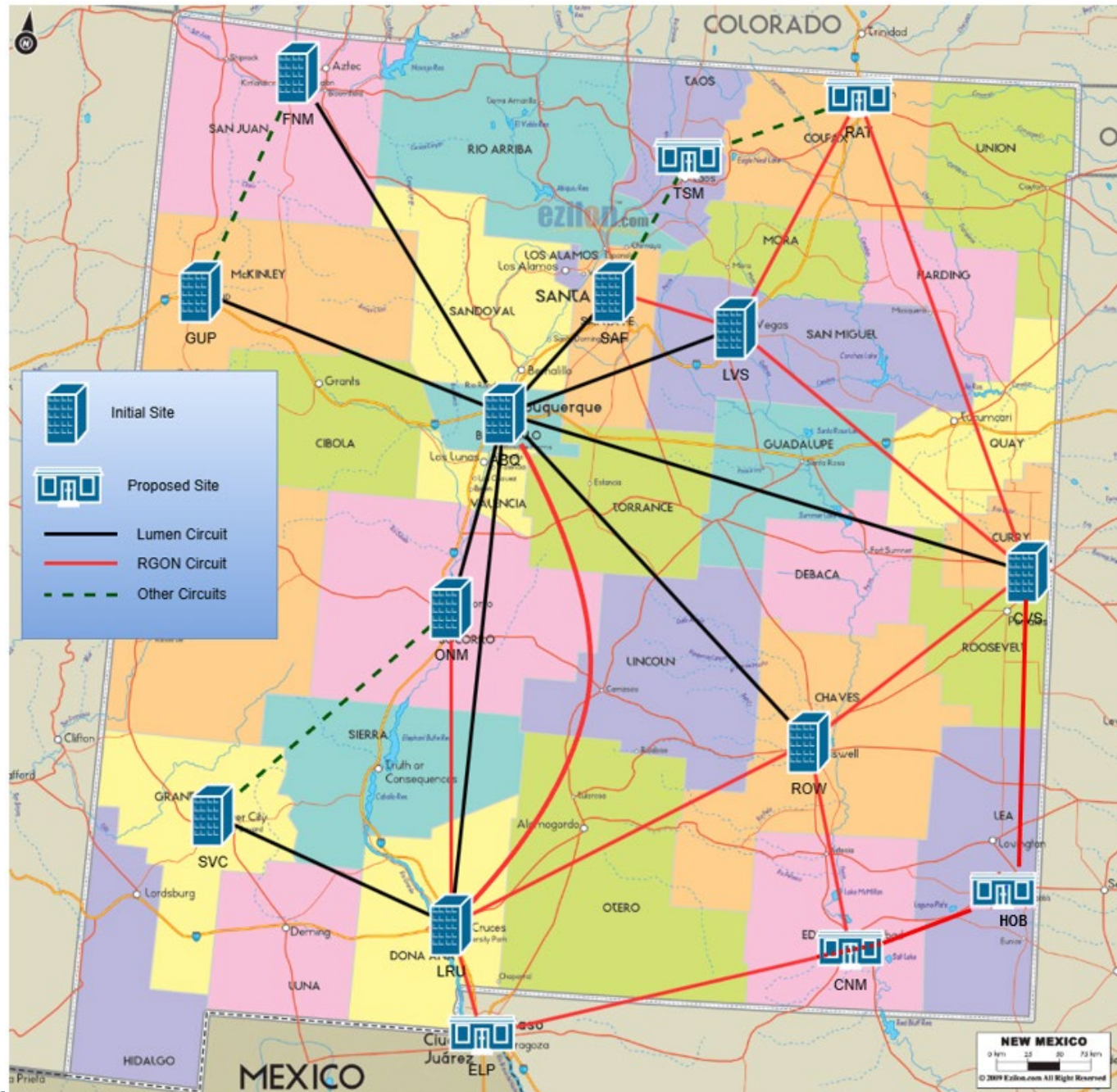


Statewide Education Network (SEN)

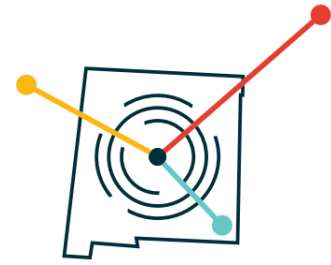
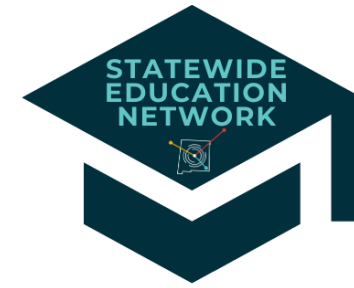


223 schools and 96,000 students connected

- **Cybersecurity:** Risk reduction.
- **Educational:** Supports EdTech to allow sharing of instructional and professional resources between all the participants.
- **Administrative:** Reduce burden of planning, procurement, contracting, E-rate paperwork, billing.
- **Cost reduction:** Reduction or elimination of schools' share (after E-rate). Economies of scale and scope.
- **Technical support:** Provide specialized resources to small districts.



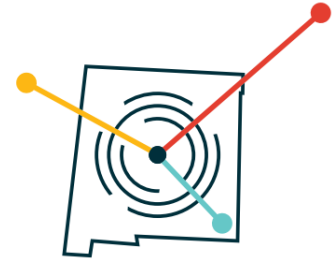
Completing the New Mexico Broadband Highway



Statewide Education Network (SEN) integrates regional hubs and supports the installation and maintenance of critical education technology infrastructure.

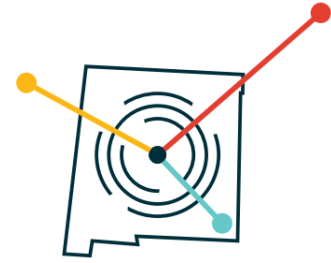
The SEN went live in July 2024.

Challenges



- Declining federal support for digital equity, digital literacy, and workforce training
- Sustainable programs for broadband affordability
- Procurement, rights of way, and project management

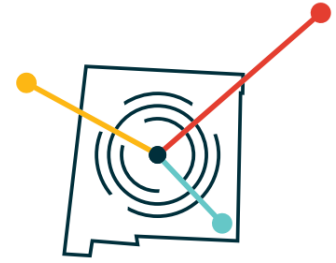
Questions?



Jeffrey Lopez is Director of the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion. He brings over 12 years of federal experience in support of New Mexicans. Prior to this appointment, Lopez served as senior policy advisor and state staff to U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján. Lopez managed the Senator's role as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Communications, Media, and Broadband and worked directly on legislation that created the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program, through which New Mexico is receiving \$675 million to connect unserved and underserved households across the state.



Additional Resources



OBAE Homepage

<https://connect.nm.gov/>

Mapping

<https://maps.connect.nm.gov/>

Broadband Project Video

https://youtu.be/Altg8BOP-Ww?si=v5v_nMbZDfGwAJwm

