

CONTRACT ROUTING FORM

1. Complete the information below BEFORE printing and completing items 2 through 7. Items in red are required.

Department: County Manager's Office

Department contract file name (use effective date): NCDIT_Manager'sOffice_20240820

Project Code: Click here to enter text.

Contract type: Other

Contracted Services/Goods: Funding Commitment for Stopgap/CAB

Program

Contract Component: undefined

Change Order Number/Addendum Number: Click here to enter text.

Vendor Name: NCDIT – Stopgap Program

Effective Date: 08/20/2024

Approved by: Commissioners

Date approved by the BOC: 08/19/2024

Ending Date: Click here to enter a date.

Total Amount: Received direction by BOC to pursue this program up to \$500,000. Once project is awarded by NCDIT an MOU will go back to the BOC for approval.

Please Return Contract to:

Name: __Brenton Hart

Email: __brenton.hart@chathamcountync.gov

Special Instructions for Clerks

Office:

2. Department Head or his/her designee has read the contract in its entirety.

By: _____ (Department Head signature required)

3. County Attorney has reviewed and approved the contract

County Attorney has reviewed and rejects the contract Reason: _____

This is an automatic renewal and does not require approval from the County Attorney: Yes No



If this box is checked the County Attorney's Office has reviewed the contract but has not made needed changes to protect the County because the contract is a sole source contract and the services required by the County are not available from another vendor.

4. Technical/MIS Advisor has reviewed the contract if applicable. Yes No

5. Vendor has signed the contract. Yes No

6. A budget amendment is necessary before approval. Yes No

If budget amendment is necessary, please attach to this form.

7. Approval

Requires approval by the BOC - contracts over \$100,000.00. Follow Board submission guidelines.

Requires approval by the Manager – contracts \$100,000 or less.

8. Submit to Clerk.

Clerk's Office Only

Finance Officer has signed the contract

The Finance Officer is not required to sign the contract



NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

STOP-GAP SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

2024-2025 Notice of Funding Availability
and Program Guidance

Funded by the Federal American Rescue Plan Act

Published Aug. 12, 2024

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About the N.C. Department of Information Technology

The mission of the N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) is to promote a stronger North Carolina that connects customers, residents, business, education and government. NCDIT provides technology services to state agencies and is charged with closing the digital divide by expanding availability of broadband services and promoting the adoption of affordable, high-speed internet.

The NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity is responsible for expanding access to broadband infrastructure, supporting affordability, advancing digital literacy, and building digital equity in North Carolina. The division houses two offices, the Broadband Infrastructure Office and the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy, that help ensure every North Carolinian has access to an affordable, reliable high-speed internet connection. The goals of the division with its more than \$1 billion in American Rescue Plan Act funds are to ensure by 2025 that 98% of N.C. households have high-speed internet access, 80% of households subscribe to high-speed internet, and 100% of households with children subscribe to high-speed internet.

The Broadband Infrastructure Office (the office) serves as a statewide resource for broadband expansion and first-responder communications. The office works collaboratively with state, federal, local, private and nonprofit partners to draw attention to the digital divide in the state and work to close the gap by administering rural broadband grant programs, facilitating partnerships with broadband providers, gathering data to identify unserved areas, and providing policy and technical guidance to local and state leaders.

Disclaimer

The office reserves the right to amend this document pursuant to feedback from potential applicants and legislative changes amending the governing law. The information contained in this document is not legal or professional advice. While the office is available to answer questions and will attempt to help you resolve any concerns, we cannot provide legal advice to applicants, and you should consult with professional advisors concerning specific matters relevant to your application.

1. PROGRAM SUMMARY

NCDIT's Broadband Infrastructure Office (the office) issues this Notice of Funding Availability and program guidance for the Stop-Gap Solutions program established by Section 38.5 of [Session Law 2021-180](#), as amended by Section 10.1 of [Session Law 2021-189](#); Section 16.1 (b) of [Session Law 2022-6](#); and Section 38.8(a) of [Session Law 2023-134](#).

The authorizing session laws state:

The Department of Information Technology shall use the funds appropriated in this act for Stop-Gap Solutions—Federal Broadband Funds to provide grants to internet service providers, local government entities, and nonprofits for the provision and installation of infrastructure, as that term is defined in G.S. 143B-1373(a), that will expand the provision of broadband service to unserved and underserved households, businesses, state facilities, and community anchor institutions in this state. The department shall ensure that grant funds are awarded and utilized in compliance with applicable federal guidelines. No more than five percent (5%) of the funds described in this section may be granted for broadband projects located in any single county.

Within the office, this program is one of four broadband infrastructure programs utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to deploy last-mile broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved households and businesses within North Carolina. The programs include the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) grant program; the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program, the Broadband Pole Replacement program and the Stop-Gap Solutions program.

A. Funding Source and Availability

[Session Law 2021-180](#) appropriated \$86 million of ARPA funds for the Stop-Gap Solutions program. The office will administer these funds in accordance with the requirements of state law and the [U.S. SFRF Treasury Guidance](#), such as the [Final Rule](#), [the FAQs](#), and [the Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#), and will follow applicable compliance requirements of the [Uniform Guidance \(2 CFR 200\)](#).

B. Eligible Participants

The Stop-Gap Solutions program is open to applications for funding from county governments and internet service providers as defined in Section C below. Local governments and nonprofits also may participate by identifying unserved and underserved locations that may be addressed in funded projects.

C. Eligible Program Purposes

The Stop-Gap Solutions program funds may be used for the provision and installation of infrastructure that will expand broadband service to unserved and underserved households, businesses, state facilities, and community anchor institutions in North Carolina. To achieve this goal, Stop-Gap Solutions funding will be made available for:

- Grants to counties to use as matching funds for new CAB program projects; and
- Broadband line-extension projects by prequalified internet service providers.

If funding remains in the Stop-Gap Solutions program after exhaustion of these uses, the office may identify additional eligible uses of funding.

2. COUNTY MATCH FOR CAB PROJECTS

The Stop-Gap Solutions program authorizing session law requires the office to make grants to local government entities for the provision and installation of infrastructure that will expand the provision of broadband service to unserved and underserved locations. The CAB program is a competitive bidding program that provides an opportunity for individual North Carolina county governments to partner with NCDIT to fund broadband infrastructure projects in unserved and underserved areas of each county. Counties that participate in the CAB program must provide matching funds for the projects using ARPA funds or nonrestricted general funds as their source of matching funds. To ensure that the CAB funding can be utilized across the state, counties may apply to the Stop-Gap Solutions program to request funding assistance for meeting the county's CAB program match requirement.

Only counties eligible to participate in the CAB program may request funding for a county match for CAB program projects. A county that (i) is a development tier three area, as provided in the annual ranking performed by the Department of Commerce pursuant to G.S. 143B-437.08 for the 2023 calendar year and (ii) has utilized federal funding for broadband infrastructure projects on or after May 1, 2021 (with the exception of funds previously expended under the GREAT or CAB programs), is not eligible. N.C. Gen. Stat. 143B-1373.1(a)(3).

A. County Match Amounts for Each County

The *baseline* amount for each eligible county that requests county match for CAB program projects is \$500,000 per county. The baseline is calculated based on the goal of making matching funds available to all eligible counties. A county's amount may be adjusted up or down from this baseline based on overall demand for funding, and according to the following priorities, listed in order of importance:

- Counties receiving less than \$8 million in ARPA funding (in direct county allocation);
- Counties that participated in the CAB program in the state's fiscal year 2023-2024;
- Counties that provided matching funds for the GREAT grant program; and
- The number of unserved and underserved locations in the county.

The goal of the county match program is to award Stop-gap funds to all counties that wish to participate in an amount that will leverage and allow NCDIT to award remaining CAB program dollars. In the CAB program, the required percentage of matching funds from the county and the broadband provider are based on state law (G.S. 143b-1373.1). Specific requirements of the CAB program are outlined in the CAB Program Guidance at <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/CAB>.

Counties seeking Stop-Gap Solutions program funding as a match for CAB program projects may contribute additional matching funds directly from the county. The CAB statute requires county matching funds to be ARPA funds or nonrestricted general funds. However, the specific county match amount for a particular CAB program project award will not be known until the proposals are received from broadband providers and a project is selected. Because awards for CAB program projects may not be made until the end of 2024, a county may not have sufficient time to re-obligate county ARPA funds reserved for CAB program match but unutilized due to

actual project size and cost.

B. NCDIT/County Collaboration Process for CAB

Appendix A outlines the NCDIT/County Collaboration Process for counties that participate in the CAB program. This appendix outlines responsibilities of each participating county and includes a timeline of key dates as well as the required County Participation Form.

C. County Participation Form

Counties that wish to request participation in the county match from Stop-Gap Solutions program, and the CAB program, must complete and submit the County Participation Form included in Appendix A.

D. Award and Memorandum of Understanding

The final Stop-Gap Solutions program funding amount for a county's match will be defined upon the selection of a CAB program project in that county and will be based on the total project cost identified by the service provider in its proposal. The award of a CAB program project will result in a contract between NCDIT and the selected broadband provider. The contract will reflect the NCDIT portion, the county portion, and the broadband provider portion of the total project cost. The county and NCDIT will execute a separate Memorandum of Understanding to recognize the Stop-Gap Solutions program funding amount and any additional county contributions.

3. BROADBAND LINE-EXTENSION PROJECTS

As stated in session law, the Stop-Gap Solutions program provides funding for the provision and installation of infrastructure, as that term is defined in G.S. 143B-1373(a), that will expand the provision of broadband service to unserved and underserved households, businesses, community anchor institutions and state facilities in North Carolina. The GREAT grant and CAB programs fund larger projects to eligible locations across the state, with a focus on households and businesses. A portion of the Stop-Gap Solutions program funding will be for buildouts to specific targeted locations through a line-extension program. Line-extensions can be funded to reach individual or small pockets of households or businesses that have not been reached through the GREAT grant or CAB programs and where geography in relation to existing infrastructure made them harder to reach. The program relies on leveraging and extending the closest infrastructure possible to make service available.

The broadband line-extension projects allow NCDIT to provide funding for capital costs to incentivize broadband providers to build to individual or small pockets of households or businesses that are unserved or underserved with broadband, and to specific community anchor institutions or state facilities that are unserved or underserved with broadband. The program allows further development and coordination between the state, local governments, broadband providers, and residents to identify unserved and underserved locations for the broadband line-extension projects.

Definitions and Speed Requirements

Monies awarded from the Stop-Gap Solutions program must be used for infrastructure and infrastructure costs, as those terms are defined in G.S.143B-1373(a). In line with priorities under the federal funding rules, investments in fiber will receive priority for any broadband line-extension project.

All proposed broadband speeds must meet or exceed the federal guidelines for use of American Rescue Plan Act (P.L.117-2) funds. Eligible projects must be designed to, upon completion, reliably meet or exceed symmetrical 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload speeds.

Broadband line-extension projects must propose to deploy broadband infrastructure to unserved or underserved households and businesses at specific locations. Funding may also be used to build infrastructure to specific community anchor institutions or state facilities that are unserved or underserved with broadband.

The following definitions from the statutes and session laws authorizing the GREAT grant and CAB programs will be used for the Stop-Gap Solutions program and are relevant in determining project locations for broadband service.

- **Broadband Service:** For the purposes of the Stop-Gap Solutions program, terrestrially deployed internet access service with transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and at least 3 Mbps upload (25:3). Terrestrially deployed technologies are generally understood to include wired infrastructure (such as fiber, coax and copper) and fixed wireless. In assessing the delivery of transmission speeds for purposes of defining unserved areas, the federal concept of “reliably” within ARPA broadband funding, should also be considered. Areas where broadband transmission speeds are not delivered reliably may be considered unserved.
- **Unserved or Underserved:** A location within a county that has no deployment of broadband service or that has internet access service that does not meet the definition of broadband service. Areas where a private provider has been designated to receive funds through other state or federally funded programs designed specifically for broadband deployment shall be considered served if such funding is intended to result in construction of broadband in the area within 18 months or for the duration of the federal funding program for that area or if the funding recipient is otherwise in good standing with the funding agency’s regulations governing the funding program.

For the purposes of the Stop-Gap Solutions program and based on federal parameters under ARPA, the office is treating unserved broadband serviceable locations as those without availability of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload fixed internet service through qualifying fiber, cable, or qualifying licensed fixed wireless service; and underserved broadband serviceable locations as those with available service equal to or greater than 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload, but less than 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload through qualifying fiber, cable, or qualifying licensed fixed wireless service.

In identifying eligible locations, the following criteria must be considered:

- Projects *must* make service available to *unserved* locations (meaning locations unserved with terrestrial broadband of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload).

- Projects *may* make service available to areas *underserved* with broadband in certain cases.

Priority Locations

Broadband line-extension projects funded by the Stop-Gap Solutions program will be awarded to prequalified broadband providers as described below. Local governments and nonprofits may submit priority locations for consideration for the program. Individual locations should be submitted for consideration through the N.C. Broadband Survey at <https://go.ncsu.edu/StopGap>. The survey allows for identifying unserved and underserved households, businesses and community anchor institutions needing service. The office will consider all validated and eligible survey response locations as priority locations for the broadband line-extension projects. In addition, CAB program priority locations that did not receive CAB program funding may be considered as priority locations through broadband line-extension projects funded by the Stop-Gap Solutions program.

Prequalification of Broadband Providers

On June 21, 2023, NCDIT posted the Broadband Expansion and Access Request for Proposals (RFP) to prequalify internet service providers to participate in multiple broadband expansion programs, including the Stop-Gap Solutions program. Responses to this RFP were due to NCDIT on Aug. 14, 2023.

The outcome of this RFP was the creation of a convenience contract to identify broadband service providers that have the financial, operational, and technical capacity to deploy broadband infrastructure for the provision of high-speed internet service in unserved and underserved areas of the state. This RFP did not result in a direct project award but acts as a review of qualifications of broadband providers. Respondents were evaluated on a pass/fail basis to determine eligibility to participate in subsequent scopes of work for broadband deployment services needed by the state. Information collected in the RFP may also be used for risk assessment purposes.

The list of prequalified vendors is available at ncbroadband.gov/funding-programs/cab-program. Broadband providers successfully approved through this convenience contract are eligible to provide responses to the scope of work for the broadband line-extension projects funded by the Stop-Gap Solutions program. The scope of work for line-extension projects requires competition.

Procurement Process and Selection Criteria

NCDIT will prepare a scope of work document to solicit eligible broadband providers to submit responses for consideration for funding broadband line-extension projects. The office will also publish an online map of statewide locations that are unserved or underserved with qualifying high-speed internet service and are eligible for consideration in broadband line-extension projects. The online map will also reflect priority locations for funding.

The office will use a best value procurement process to evaluate the scope of work responses and select broadband providers that offer the best balance between price and performance, where quality is considered an integral performance factor. Award decisions will be based on multiple factors such as: past performance; the evaluated technical merit of the proposal; total

cost; and the evaluated probability of performing the requirements stated in the solicitation on time, with high quality, and in a manner that accomplishes the stated business objectives and maintains industry standards compliance. Geographic distribution of locations will also be considered, as well as proximity to existing infrastructure. In line with priorities under the federal funding rules, investments in fiber receive priority for any Stop-Gap Solutions program projects.

In addition, local governments may request prioritization of eligible locations or sites for broadband line-extension projects within their counties. Eligible locations proposed to be served through the CAB program but that do not receive funding may be considered for funding through the Stop-Gap Solutions program.

Specific prioritization and evaluation criteria will be outlined in the scope of work. Locations such as the following may receive prioritization in the published scope of work:

- Unserved locations (may receive priority over underserved locations)
- Locations received through the N.C. Broadband at go.ncsu.edu/StopGap
- Other eligible prioritized locations received from local governments and nonprofits through this program

Issuing Awards

A broadband line-extension project award will result in a contract between NCDIT and the selected broadband provider. The contract will consist of the scope of work, the scope of work response (the bid), the best and final offer, the Broadband Expansion and Access RFP, and the RFP response.

Timeline

The scope of work for Broadband Line Extension projects and the eligible locations map will be released in October 2024. The office is aiming to award Completing Access to Broadband scopes of work before the end of 2024. Broadband Line-Extension project locations will be awarded following the CAB project awards. Locations may only be funded one time and cannot be funded under both programs. Once a location is funded through the CAB program, it will be ineligible for funding under a Broadband Line Extension project. Specific dates for the Broadband Line Extension program and the scope of work details will be posted at ncbroadband.gov/stop-gap.

4. APPENDIX A

STOP-GAP SOLUTIONS: COUNTY MATCH FOR CAB PROJECTS NCDIT/COUNTY COLLABORATION PROCESS

PURPOSE

The N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) is seeking to collaborate with North Carolina counties to fund awards for last-mile broadband projects through the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program. The purpose of this document is to: (1) describe the process for this collaboration; (2) gather information from each county regarding its interest in receiving Stop-Gap Solutions program funding to use as its required match for the CAB program; and (3) gather information from each county regarding any additional financial commitment to the county's CAB program match. Additional details on the CAB program can be accessed in the CAB Program Guidance at ncbroadband.gov/CAB.

CAB PROGRAM BACKGROUND

North Carolina's plan to close the digital divide invests more than \$1 billion in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address infrastructure, access and digital literacy. N.C. Session Law 2021-180 provides \$400 million in ARPA funds to deploy crucial last-mile broadband infrastructure to serve remaining unserved and underserved areas in the state through the CAB program.

The CAB program is a competitive bidding program that provides an opportunity for individual North Carolina county governments to partner with NCDIT to fund broadband infrastructure projects in unserved and underserved areas of each county. The program is codified in N.C.G.S. § 143B-1373.1, established by S.L. 2021-180, and amended by S.L. 2022-6, S.L. 2022-74, and 2023-134. Counties that participate in the CAB program must provide matching funds for projects using ARPA funds or nonrestricted general funds as their source of matching funds as outlined in the CAB program statutes.

PROCESS FOR COUNTY CAB PROJECTS

1. Prequalification of Broadband Providers

On June 21, 2023, NCDIT posted the Broadband Expansion and Access Request for Proposals (RFP) to prequalify internet service providers to participate in multiple broadband expansion programs, including the CAB program. Responses to the RFP were due to NCDIT on Aug. 14, 2023.

The outcome of this RFP was the creation of a convenience contract to identify broadband service providers that have the financial, operational and technical capacity to deploy broadband infrastructure for the provision of internet service in unserved and underserved areas of the state. This RFP did not result in a direct project award but acts as a review of qualifications of broadband providers. Respondents were evaluated on a pass/fail basis to determine eligibility to participate in subsequent scopes of work for broadband deployment services needed by the state. Information collected through the RFP may also be used for risk assessment purposes.

The list of prequalified vendors is available at ncbroadband.gov/funding-programs/cab-program. Broadband providers successfully approved in this convenience contract are eligible to provide responses to county-level scopes of work for the CAB program. Scopes of work for individual CAB projects require competition.

2. County Participation

Counties that participate in the CAB program must provide matching funds for awarded projects using ARPA funds or nonrestricted general funds as prescribed in the CAB program statutes. In NCDIT's Stop-Gap Solutions program, counties can request funding to meet this match requirement. The county must complete the County Participation Form attached hereto to request participation in this program. The completed County Participation Form must be returned to NCDIT via email to CABprogram@nc.gov.

Per Section 38.7 of Session Law 2023-134, with the exception of funds expended under the CAB, GREAT grant, or Stop-Gap Solutions programs, a county that (i) is a development tier three area, as provided in the annual ranking performed by the N.C. Department of Commerce pursuant to G.S. 143B-437.08 for the 2023 calendar year and (ii) has utilized federal funding for broadband infrastructure projects on or after May 1, 2021, is not eligible for participation in the CAB program. Counties should confirm eligibility before submitting the County Participation Form.

3. Award of Stop-Gap Solutions Funds for County Match

The baseline amount for each eligible county that requests county match for CAB program projects is \$500,000 per county. The baseline is calculated based on the goal of making matching funds available to all eligible counties. A county's amount may be adjusted up or down from this baseline based on overall demand for funding, and according to the following priorities, listed in order of importance:

- Counties receiving less than \$8 million in ARPA funding (in direct county allocation);
- Counties that participated in the CAB program in the state's fiscal year 2023-2024;
- Counties that provided matching funds for the GREAT grant program; and
- The number of unserved and underserved locations in the county.

Counties seeking Stop-Gap funding as match for CAB program projects may contribute additional matching funds directly from the county. The CAB statute requires county matching funds to be ARPA funds or nonrestricted general funds. However, the specific required county match amount for a particular CAB program project award will not be known until the proposals are received from broadband providers and a project is selected. Because awards for CAB program projects may not be made until the end of 2024, a county may not have sufficient time to re-obligate county ARPA funds reserved for CAB program match but unutilized due to actual project size and cost.

4. Preparation for CAB Procurement Process

Scope of Work Document

NCDIT will prepare and publish a scope of work document to solicit eligible broadband providers

to submit responses for consideration for funding of CAB program projects within the geographic boundaries of the county. The CAB program project(s) will provide funding for internet service providers to build broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved locations within the county. The template scope of work for the CAB program is available at ncbroadband.gov/CAB. Counties should review the template scope of work before submitting the County Participation Form below.

Identification of Eligible Locations and Prioritization of Areas

NCDIT will prepare and publish an initial online map of locations statewide that are unserved or underserved with qualifying broadband service. NCDIT will then conduct a protest process where broadband providers may submit data to NCDIT if they claim to serve identified locations. NCDIT will adjudicate these protests and then publish a final map of eligible locations for review by each county.

While any eligible unserved and underserved households and businesses within a county may be included in a bid response, counties may identify locations that should receive prioritization.

Counties with a license to access the Federal Communication Commission's Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) data may submit CSV data files of the areas of prioritization using the NCDIT Broadband Data Exchange Web Application at assets.gis.nc.gov/apps/ncbio-data-exchange/index.html. Counties may request credentials for the NCDIT Broadband Data Exchange Web Application by sending an email to broadbandmapping@nc.gov. Counties without access to the BSL data may work with NCDIT to create data files or may include a narrative description of the areas of prioritization in such a way that NCDIT can communicate the prioritized locations in a file referencing polygons that summarize the BSLs they contain. Further details on submission of this information is included in the CAB Program Guidance at ncbroadband.gov/CAB-guidance in Section 6. F. CAB Project Areas, County Prioritization of Areas and Section 6. H. CAB Project Areas, Utilization of CAB Data Exchange. The template for submission of priority areas (CAB_CountyPriorityAreas_YYMMDD) is located at ncbroadband.gov/CAB.

Selection of Evaluation Team Members

Counties may identify up to two representatives to serve on the evaluation team to review the broadband providers' responses. County members of the evaluation team agree to commit the time needed to review responses in an efficient manner to move toward the award. The evaluation team members should have the authority from the county to participate in the selection of an award winner and should ensure they have no personal or professional conflicts of interest with respect to any prequalified providers. Evaluation team members will need to complete a Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure Agreement provided by NCDIT. The county should submit the names and contact information for the evaluation team members using the form below to CABprogram@nc.gov.

5. Review and Evaluation of Responses Received

NCDIT will publicly post the CAB program scope of work for each county and will lead the evaluation processes necessary to review and evaluate the responses received. The evaluation team will consist of the following members:

- NCDIT Broadband Infrastructure Office – minimum of two members

- The County – up to two members unless participation is waived by the county

In addition, a procurement specialist will assist with guiding team members through the evaluation process. Responses will be evaluated per the requirements listed within the CAB program statutes, the CAB Program Guidance, and the scope of work. The evaluation team will recommend awards to NCDIT.

The evaluation team will utilize a best value procurement process to evaluate the scope of work responses and select a broadband provider that offers the best balance between price and performance, where quality is considered an integral performance factor. Award decisions will be based on multiple factors such as: past performance; the evaluated technical merit of the proposal; total cost; and the evaluated probability of performing the requirements stated in the solicitation on time, with high quality, and in a manner that accomplishes the stated business objectives and maintains industry standards compliance.

The evaluation team may decline to recommend award of any projects if it determines that the bids received do not fulfill the county's needs.

6. Issuing Award(s)

An award through the CAB program will result in a contract between NCDIT and the selected broadband provider. Upon execution, a copy of the award document will be shared by NCDIT with the county and will reflect the amount of funding awarded, including the NCDIT portion, the county portion, and the broadband provider match calculated by the match requirements found in statute. County match obligations and final Stop-Gap Solutions program funding amounts for the county match are defined at that time. A Memorandum of Understanding between the county and NCDIT will then be executed to recognize the Stop-Gap Solutions program County Match for the CAB program project funding amount and any additional county contributions. Details for the transfer of any county funding to NCDIT will be provided to the county along with the award documentation.

7. Summary of County Responsibilities

In summary, the county will be responsible for the following steps as part of the CAB program:

- Reviewing the CAB program Scope of Work template
- Completing the CAB County Participation Form and returning the form to CABprogram@nc.gov by **Sept. 9**
- Selecting evaluation team members, completing and submitting the Evaluation Team Members Form to CABprogram@nc.gov by **Sept. 9** (Optional – county is not required to participate in the evaluation of scope of work responses.)
- Submitting any priority location data through the [NCBIO Data Exchange](#) by **Sept. 9** (Optional – county is not required to prioritize areas.)
- Participating in review of responses by members of the evaluation team (Optional)
- Upon issuance of a CAB award to a broadband provider by NCDIT, complete a Memorandum of Understanding with NCDIT related to funding.

8. Timeline

The goal of the office is to award additional county scopes of work for the Completing Access to Broadband program before the end of calendar year 2024. The American Rescue Plan Act requires its funding to be expended by Dec. 31, 2026. This window allows for only two years for construction of the projects and for submission and reimbursement of funding to the internet providers. Counties that wish to participate in the Stop-Gap Solutions program's County Match for CAB projects and the CAB program must submit the required documentation listed above by September 9, 2024. The CAB program scopes of work will be posted by Oct. 1, 2024, with responses due in early November. Evaluations will take place in November and December. The office will share additional details including updated timelines at ncbroadband.gov/CAB.

**STOP-GAP SOLUTIONS: COUNTY MATCH FOR CAB PROJECTS
COUNTY PARTICIPATION FORM**

Through submission of this form, Chatham County requests funding under the Stop-Gap Solutions program from the N.C. Department of Information Technology to assist in meeting the county match requirement for participation in the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program.

The county understands that:

- Funding amounts for the county match for CAB program projects will be made based on overall demand for funding as well as using the prioritization criteria outlined in the Stop-Gap Solutions Program Guidance;
- NCDIT will review this County Participation Form and determine an “up to” amount for the county match, which will determine the project size for the CAB program scope of work; and
- The specific county match amount will be finalized once the scope of work responses are received and the project(s) selected.

(Optional)

In addition to funding from NCDIT through the Stop-Gap Solutions program, the county intends to contribute up to \$ \$500,000 for the issuance of a CAB scope of work soliciting eligible broadband providers to build broadband infrastructure within the county. The county will use the funding source indicated below for this purpose (indicate one or multiple sources of funds below):

 American Rescue Plan Act Funds

 X Nonrestricted General Funds



Signature, Authorized Representative

Dan Lamontagne

Name

County Manager

Title

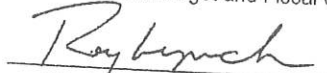
dan.lamontagne@chathamcountync.gov

Email Address

919-542-8200

Phone Number

This instrument has been pre-audited in the manner required by the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.



Roy Lynch, Finance Officer

This form should be completed and submitted to CABprogram@nc.gov by Sept. 9.

CAB Program: County Evaluation Team Members Form (Optional)

Through submission of this Evaluation Team Members Form, Chatham County requests to have the following individuals represent them in evaluation of the scope of work responses for the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program. (Counties may elect not to participate in the evaluation process and let NCDIT keep them informed regarding proposals received and selected project(s).)

Evaluation Team Member 1

Name: Brenton Hart

Title: Policy and Legislative Analyst

Phone: 919-545-8398

Email: brenton.hart@chathamcountync.gov

Evaluation Team Member 2

Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Evaluation Team Members Form Completed by:



Signature, Authorized Representative

Dan Lamontagne

Name

County Manager

Title

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Email Address

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Phone Number

This form should be completed and submitted to CABprogram@nc.gov by Sept. 9.