

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

Governor Scott announces \$9.9 million in grants to accelerate broadband buildout in four Vermont Communications Union Districts

Montpelier, Vermont – The Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB), along with the Governor, Congressman Welch and other state and federal officials and representatives of many of the state’s Communications Union Districts, celebrated the awarding of \$9.9 Million in [Preconstruction Grants](#) to four [Communication Union Districts \(CUDs\)](#) in an event in Montpelier Monday. The Districts represent 64 Vermont towns and villages.

Governor Scott celebrated the investment, “We all know how important broadband is to Vermonters and our economy. Connectivity is essential to our everyday lives, the way we do business, and how we stay connected with family and friends. Making investments in this critical infrastructure will allow us to grow in all 14 counties and help us retain and attract more workers, and I’m excited this work is moving forward.”

The Broadband Preconstruction Grant Program provides grants to Communications Union District (CUDs) for preconstruction costs related to broadband projects that are a part of a universal service plan. Eligible costs include expenses for feasibility studies, business planning, pole data surveys, engineering and design, and make-ready work associated with the construction of broadband networks, including consultant, legal, and administrative expenses. The [Vermont Community Broadband Board](#) will issue grants for construction costs (materials, equipment, labor) early next year. Three of the four groups awarded in this first round of grants expect to begin construction in the spring of 2022.

“This grant is the single largest grant ever for CVFiber, and it clears the way to begin construction of the 1,200 mile, \$50 million CVFiber Community Network in 2022,” said Jeremy Hansen, founder and chair of CVFiber.

In a statement Senator Leahy (D-Vt.) also praised the efforts: “It is encouraging to see Vermont make early and quick use of the federal funds we secured in Congress for deploying community based broadband. The pandemic has accelerated the shift toward online work and online education, making it more crucial than ever that Vermonters and Vermont communities have reliable, high-speed internet access. One of my top priorities in negotiating the American Rescue Plan was ensuring our state received an equitable share of the funding so that we could leverage this moment to finally help deliver broadband to every Vermonter.”

According to Christine Hallquist, Director of the Vermont Community Broadband Board, the grants issued are a testament to Vermont volunteer spirit and willingness to work together to solve pressing problems: “Vermonters have been working decades to get broadband to every address in Vermont. It is exciting to see that goal within reach. I am so grateful to the hundreds of volunteers, the legislature, the Administration and the many branches of state government that are working together to make this happen.”

For more information about the awards issued, please see the Department’s [Act 71 Preconstruction Grant Awards webpage](#).

Press Release: <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/press-release/governor-scott-announces-99-million-grants-accelerate-broadband-buildout-four-vermont>

[Slides from the Press Conference](#) are available on YouTube.

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