



BROADBAND CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM FAQ

This document is a compilation of frequently asked questions the Vermont Community Broadband Board has received about the Broadband Construction funding opportunity. This document will be updated regularly. Please be sure to read the full [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for the full details of this funding opportunity.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Where can I find homes passed data?

A: The RFP contains links to two spreadsheets. The first spreadsheet details the road miles and the second the homes passed. We expect applicants to have the GIS capability to determine the associated addresses.

Q: Is there a map of addresses considering unserved or underserved that corresponds to the spreadsheet?

A: A map is being developed by the VCBB and will soon be published.

Q: How are RDOF obligations accounted for?

A: Applicants must include all sources of income for the proposed Universal Service Plan. If the applicant is also an RDOF winner, that income should be included. If those addresses are to be served by a different company that was awarded RDOF funding, that should be explained in the universal service plan. The applicant requesting funding to serve the remaining addresses is encouraged to submit a letter from the winning RDOF bidder as part of their Universal Service Plan.

Q: How do the Universal Service Plan obligations address the customer buried service issues?

A: A Universal Service Plan must explain how service will be provided to every on the grid E911 address that does not currently have access to wireline service of at least 25/3. The VCBB will consider creating a high-cost program to address situations in which an underground drop is required, and the resident is low-income. Applicants should explain in their application challenges associated with underground drops. Applicants are also encouraged to reach out towns to address issues related to conduit and drops.

Q: Why doesn't the VCBB just create the Universal Service Plan?

A: Communications Union Districts and other eligible providers are in a much better position to understand the layout of their service area. Most Eligible Providers have also engaged in planning and preconstruction work. While such an approach was considered in Act 71, the VCBB determined that such an approach would be duplicative of previous efforts which would not be a responsible use of taxpayer funding and would likely result in the loss of the 2022 construction season.

Q: Traditional service areas rarely follow town lines. How does the USP allow flexibility for Vermont's geography?

A: The VCBB is governed by Act 71. Act 71 clearly defined a Universal Service Plan as a plan for providing access to broadband in a municipality or a Communications Union District. *See* 30 V.S.A. § 8082(12). If an Applicant does not serve the entire municipality in which it proposes to expand service, the Applicant should explain the situation, including the number of addresses impacted. Applicants should also seek letters of commitment from the neighboring small communications carrier that would traditionally serve the remaining addresses outside the wire-center boundaries, the RDOF winner, or the Communications Union District committing to serve those addresses within a set period of time. If the other provider refuses, that refusal should be included in the application to the Board.

Q: Will the Line Extension Customer Assistance Program (LECAP) program continue?

A: The Line Extension Program was created by the Public Service Department. The Public Service Department did not request funding to continue the program.