

Advance Colorado Broadband Grant Program Guidelines

State & Local Dollars

Dec. 30, 2024





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1 Overview

The Advance Colorado Broadband State & Local Dollars grant program (Advance-Local) is authorized by [HB24-1336](#) (the Act). The Advance-Local program builds upon the prior High-Cost Support Mechanism (HCSM) grant program, and consolidates the grantmaking process under the Colorado Broadband Office (CBO). Furthermore, it expands the eligible grant categories Applicants can apply for, including Last-Mile infrastructure Projects. Significantly, Advance-Local allows for middle-mile Projects and Short-Term Construction (e.g., make-ready) Projects, such as pole audits and pole replacement.

Advance-Local is funded annually in varying amounts based on contributions to the Universal Service Fund (USF) through the HCSM paid by landline carriers on a per-line basis. Currently, the program is expected to be funded at an annual estimated amount of \$14M on average. However, this amount could decline as the number of land-line subscribers declines. Longer term, and working with the State legislature, the CBO may explore other options for funding the Advance-Local program. Advance-Local is a cost reimbursement-based-on-performance program that will fund two different tiers of Projects:

- Tier I: Middle Mile (up to 60% of funds)
- Tier II: Other (up to 40% of funds)
 - (a) Last Mile
 - (b) Short-Term Construction
 - (c) Non-deployment (e.g., Digital Equity, workforce development, digital ambassadors, etc.).

Projects may vary in size, length, subject matter (Middle Mile, Last Mile, digital equity, make-ready, workforce, other) and complexity. Third party expertise may be employed by the CBO for input and evaluation of applications depending on the subject matter of the application cohort. Eligible Applicants will include ISPs, nonprofits, cooperatives, electric companies, municipalities, ISP partnerships, and city-owned ISPs. The CBO plans to run one grant cycle annually in order to promote



efficiency, and diversity of Project sizes and types, while also making monitoring and compliance more manageable.

Each Project will be scored based on the minimum requirements criteria and award criteria described in this Guidelines document; see Exhibits A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4. It is the CBO's intention to build a sustainable program that emphasizes funding well prepared Projects of a high standard. These Projects will construct or support high-speed Broadband internet to a number of locations, specifically those that are strategically important to Underserved and Unserved areas of the state.

In sum, the CBO will use Advance-Local funding to make a historic investment in the state's Broadband infrastructure and programs. Advance-Local contributes to Governor Polis' goal to connect 99% of Colorado households and fund programs that address the state's digital divide.

1.1 Advance-Local Program Timeline

Under the enabling statute, the CBO shall establish the Advance-Local Grant Guidelines, including criteria for awarding grants, by Dec 31, 2024. As middle-mile Projects may tend to be larger, and taking into consideration the Colorado Broadband build cycle, the CBO plans to conduct one grant cycle annually, with awards being made in the winter in time for spring/summer/fall build season. In order to amass a meaningful amount of grant funds, the CBO plans to launch the first grant cycle in the latter part of 2025.

1.2 Important Links and Information

- [Colorado Advance-Local website](#)
- [HB24-1336 Statutory Authorization Bill](#)
- [Colorado Broadband Office Mapping Hub](#)
- [Local Five-Year Action Plan FINAL 8.14.23.pdf](#)
- [Colorado Broadband Roadmap](#)



- [Colorado State Demography Office Home Page](#)
- [Colorado Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing](#)
- [Colorado Broadband Office Speed Test Certification Guidance](#)
- [Broadband Community Readiness Certification](#)
- [State of Colorado Vendor Self Service](#)
- [List of Stakeholders by Planning & Management Regions](#)
- [Colorado Broadband Data Collection Program](#)
- [Colorado Department of Transportation - Fiber Leases & Right of Way Use](#)
- [Colorado Public Utilities Commission](#)

1.3 Definitions

- (a) **“Applicant”** means an entity that applies for grant funds from the CBO to carry out eligible activities under the Advance-Local program.
- (b) **“Awardee”** means an entity that the CBO intends to award grant funds to carry out eligible activities, but the award is not finalized in a grant agreement.
- (c) **“Broadband”** has the meaning set forth in C.R.S. Section 40-15-102.
- (d) **“Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL)”** or “location” is a business or residential location in the United States at which mass-market fixed Broadband internet access service is, or can be, installed.
- (e) **“Community Anchor Institution (CAI)”** – is an entity such as a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of Broadband



service by vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, and aged individuals.

- (f) **“Coalitions”** are a collaborative network of organizations and public and private sector partners that come together to coordinate and execute Projects. This includes planning, organizing, equipping, training, exercises and evaluation.
- (g) **“Critically Unserved”** means “Unserved” locations.
- (h) **“Digital Equity”** or **“DE”** means the condition in which individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.
- (i) **“Grantees”** means an entity that has received grant funds from CBO to carry out eligible activities and is in possession of a signed grant agreement with the State of Colorado to carry out their Project.
- (j) **“Last Mile”** or **“LM”** means the provision of Reliable Broadband Service to a location or BSL, and may include incidental Middle Mile or backhaul or bandwidth capacity (e.g., LEO) required for the provision of such Reliable Broadband Service to the BSL.
- (k) **“Low-Cost Broadband Service Plan”** has the meaning as set forth in section 6.10.
- (l) **“Middle-Mile Infrastructure”** or **“MM”** has the meaning set forth in 47 U.S.C.A. Section 1741(a)(9), as amended.
- (m) **“Non-deployment Projects”** may include Digital Equity initiatives to help close the digital divide, initiatives for basic internet access, computer and device distribution, digital literacy training, and Broadband workforce development training.



- (n) **“Open Access”** refers to an arrangement in which the Grantee offers nondiscriminatory access to and use of its network on a wholesale basis to other providers seeking to provide Broadband service to end-user locations or provide interconnection to other service providers, at just and reasonable wholesale rates for the useful life of the subsidized network assets. For this purpose, “just and reasonable wholesale rates” means rates that include a discount from the provider’s retail rates reflecting the costs that the Grantee avoids by virtue of not providing retail service to the end user location (including, for example, marketing, billing, and collection-related costs) or costs the grantee avoids by not needing to recoup the full cost of an unsubsidized build with each IRU contract it signs. The cost should reflect the opportunity cost of taking those fibers offline for other uses, but not burden with the full cost of the network build.
- (o) **“Project”** means an undertaking by an entity to construct and deploy infrastructure for the provision of Broadband service, or carry out non-deployment activities to promote Broadband access or adoption.
- (p) **“Reliable Broadband Service”** means Broadband service that the Broadband DATA Maps show is accessible to a location with at least 100 Mbps symmetrical consistent speeds, with latency equal to or less than one hundred (100) milliseconds, and low downtime.
- (q) **“Short-Term Construction”** refers to activities described in HB24-1336, which initiated this new program. Funds under this subtier may be used for pole replacements and attachments, line extensions, long drops, network upgrades that strengthen cybersecurity, and network infrastructure, including wireline and wireless facilities such as towers and satellite infrastructure.
- (r) **“Tribal Lands”** means, for the purpose of this Colorado-based grant program, the two federally recognized Tribes in Colorado, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (UMUT) and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT).



- (s) **“Tribal Government”** means the governing body of the two federally recognized Tribes in Colorado, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (UMUT) or the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT).
- (t) **“Underrepresented Communities”** refers to groups that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, including: low-income households, aging individuals, incarcerated individuals, veterans, persons of color, Indigenous and Native American persons, members of ethnic and religious minorities, women, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, persons who live in rural areas, and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.
- (u) **“Underserved”** means a location that the CBO Broadband Map shows is accessible to terrestrial Broadband at speeds less than 100/20 Mbps.
- (v) **“Unserved”** means a location that the CBO Broadband Map shows has no access to terrestrial Broadband, or access to terrestrial Broadband at speeds less than 25/3 Mbps.

2 Program Information

Advance-Local allows for significantly more diverse Project types than the previous HCSM grant program. The authorizing legislation breaks out funding into two streams of funding: Tier I - Middle Mile (60%) and Tier II - Other (40%). The CBO further defines allowable Projects as noted below. The Advance-Local program will be administered on a cost-reimbursement basis.

2.1 Types of Allowable Projects

Under the Act, up to sixty percent (60%) of available grant money must be used to finance Tier I Projects for Middle-Mile Infrastructure; and up to forty percent (40%) of available grant money must be used to finance Tier II Projects and otherwise underfunded Broadband needs. The CBO breaks these two tiers down as follows:



- **Tier I: Middle Mile (60% of funds)**
 - (a) **Middle-Mile Projects:** Middle-Mile Infrastructure is any Broadband infrastructure that does not connect directly to an end-user location or BSL (but may connect to a CAI). This funding is to expand and strengthen high-speed networks across the state by reducing the cost of connecting areas that are Unserved or Underserved to the internet backbone.
- **Tier II: Other (40% of funds)**
 - (a) **Last Mile or LM Projects:** Last-Mile deployment capital costs, including network infrastructure consisting of wireline and wireless facilities such as towers and satellite infrastructure, to bring Reliable Broadband Services to BSLs. LM Projects may include incidental Middle Mile or backhaul required for the provision of such Reliable Broadband Service to the BSL. Examples of eligible Last-Mile Project expenses can be found in the [Advance-BEAD program](#), which is a Last-Mile grant program.
 - (b) **Short-Term Construction Projects**, including: pole replacements, pole attachments, other make-ready costs, line extensions, long drops, network upgrades that strengthen cybersecurity.
 - (c) **Non-deployment Projects**, including: Digital Equity initiatives to help close the digital divide, including initiatives for basic internet access, computer and device distribution, digital literacy training, and Broadband workforce development training.

Applicants who have questions about whether their Project qualifies for funding, and under what Tier, should contact the CBO. The CBO is open to the proposal of creative or unique Projects. In general, grant applications should be for a single allowable Project type. The CBO reserves the right to categorize, or recategorize, applications in its sole discretion.

The CBO will annually conduct a low-level audit to determine the impact of the program and the current grantmaking structure.



3 Application Process

3.1 Application Information

It is the Applicants' burden to ensure their application materials include sufficient information (i.e., proof) demonstrating that an award meets all applicable minimum requirements. Applicants who provide too little information risk having the determination that not all requirements are met or that other Projects better fulfill grant program criteria and will be awarded.

3.2 Application Portal

The application portal will be available on the Advance-Local website. Applicants will be notified of the portal and instructions via the listserv, social media and the CBO website. Ongoing communication regarding updates on the application process and portal will be made via the listserv, social media and website.

3.3 “How to Apply” Webinars

The CBO will host two (2) live webinars. These webinars will introduce the portal, review the Advance-Local Program Guidelines, and answer any questions prior to the application window opening. One of the two webinars will be recorded and posted to the Advance-Local website.

3.4 Application Window and Deadline

The application for the Advance-Local program will officially open the day after the webinars are completed. The application window will be open for sixty (60) calendar days. Applicants will be able to access the portal through a link that will be made available on the Advance-Local website. Only one (1) grant cycle will be held each year. Applicants will be asked to fill out organizational level information before filling in their Project applications. Project-level information will need to be filled out for each Project. Applicants may submit more than one application. Project information may vary based on the Project tier/type. See below section 6, “Project Information” for more details on what information is needed for each Project.



3.5 Application Support

Throughout the application window, the CBO will provide guidance, schedule office hours, publish an FAQ for public review based on questions asked, and offer technical assistance. Applicants to the Advance-Local program will have the opportunity to ask questions, attend webinars and office hours, and review all documentation related to the program.

- Communication channel: Ongoing communication regarding updates on the application process and portal will be made via the listserv, social media and website. An FAQ of all posed questions will be updated weekly.
- Office hours: CBO personnel will host office hours sessions once a week, each lasting one hour, throughout the application period. Applicants are invited to attend without prior registration and may join or leave at any point during the sessions. Specific timings and access information will be made available on the CBO website.
- Support request: Applicants can request support and/or pose their questions via Advance_CBO@state.co.us, which will be continuously monitored by the CBO team.
- Meetings upon request: Applicants can request meetings and additional technical assistance via Advance_CBO@state.co.us.

3.5.1 Assistance from CBO

Applicants are encouraged to communicate with staff regarding any questions or uncertainties surrounding the Advance-Local grant program. However, in order to avoid favoritism, CBO may be limited in the support provided to individual Applicants. Applicants are solely responsible for their grant application.

3.6 Published Application Summary

Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the application window closing, the CBO will publish a summary of the applications received. Only summary information will be



posted publicly: Applicant, type of Project, Project area, locations served, grant amount requested, match, etc. Portions of the application that qualify for exemption under Colorado Open Records Act (“CORA”), C.R.S. Section 24-72-204(3)(a)(IV) may be marked as confidential or proprietary. Only those portions of the application that qualify for the exemption should be marked as confidential or proprietary. Other CORA exemptions, such as advisory or deliberative materials for an elected official (e.g., the Governor) may also apply.

3.7 Application Review Process

The CBO will assess applications against the minimum requirements and the award criteria for each type of Advance-Local Project. See Exhibits A-1 to A-4. Applications that do not meet the minimum requirements may be rejected. At the sole discretion of the CBO, the CBO may seek clarification or remediation of such rejected applications. Applications that meet the minimum requirements will then be scored against the award criteria. The CBO will ensure that proposals are consistent with state and federal regulations. The review process will assess the merit of each application and its alignment with program goals and objectives.

After the review process, the CBO will make a recommendation to the Advance-Local Work Group (see section 11 below). Once the Work Group and the CBO have reviewed the recommendation, the intent-to-award list will be published on the Advance-Local website, and other communication and media platforms. Upon publication of the intent-to-award list, the fourteen (14) calendar day challenge process will open for all Last-mile deployment Projects. See section 8 for further information on the challenge process. At the same time, the CBO will notify Applicants not selected via email and the grant portal. Applicants denied a grant may appeal the decision within the fourteen (14) calendar day appeal period. See the [Appeals Policy](#) on the Advance-Local website.



4 Scoring and Evaluation

CBO has developed scoring and evaluation criteria for each major type of Advance-Local Project. In general, all applications will be required to meet a set of minimum requirements, as applicable, as set forth in the authorizing bill. Then, each Project type will also be evaluated against award criteria that are specific to the Project type.

The point values, descriptions, and the scoring values can be found in the exhibits. Applicants should carefully review the requirements for the Project type they are applying to. Some requirements have higher point allowances than others. If an Applicant is applying to more than one type of Project, they should create a separate application for each Project.

In reviewing applications, CBO will draw upon its own knowledge, expertise, and facts, and may also draw upon the knowledge and expertise of the Work Group.

4.1 Minimum Requirements

Under the authorizing statute, Projects must meet the following minimum requirements, as applicable:

- (a) Support for Broadband deployment in Unserved or Underserved areas;
- (b) Speed requirements (Middle Mile, Last Mile only);
- (c) Matching funding requirements (25% minimum);
- (d) Applicant eligibility requirements;
- (e) Generally accepted industry reliability and performance standards (Middle Mile, Last Mile only);
- (f) Timelines for completion of a Project;
- (g) Reasonable cost requirements for a Project;



- (h) Compliance standards (as applicable); and
- (i) Reporting and accountability requirements.

Some criteria may, or may not, be applicable depending on the Project type.

4.2 Award Criteria

Under the authorizing statute, Advance-Local applications are evaluated under the following award criteria, as applicable.

- (a) The purpose and Project impacts;
- (b) The geographic distribution of Broadband deployment;
- (c) Broadband network redundancy, diversity, and latency;
- (d) Broadband network speeds (Middle Mile, Last Mile only);
- (e) The amount of matching money from Applicant;
- (f) The cost-effectiveness of the Project;
- (g) The amount of support the Project would provide for low-income households;
and
- (h) The extent to which the Project would support Critically Unserved areas.

Some criteria may, or may not, be applicable depending on the Project type. Some Minimum Requirements are also scored in the Award Criteria phase (e.g., match percentage).

4.3 Scoring Matrix

The CBO has developed a scoring matrix for all of the Advance-Local Project types. See Exhibit A-1 Middle Mile Scoring Matrix, A-2 Last Mile Scoring Matrix, A-3 Short-term Construction Scoring Matrix, and A-4 Non-deployment Scoring Matrix.



1. **Middle-Mile** grants are somewhat familiar, as Middle-Mile Infrastructure was allowed in Last-Mile grant programs where it was incidental to the delivery of Last-Mile services. Some additional scoring criteria is borrowed from the NTIA's Middle Mile grant program and the Department of Local Affairs Broadband Program, and unique criteria, such as evaluation of Open Access availability.
2. **Last-Mile** grants (e.g., "Last Mile" Projects) are quite similar to existing state and federal grant programs (e.g., HCSM, CPF, BEAD). As such, similar scoring and evaluation criteria from prior Last-Mile grant programs will be used, where applicable.
3. **Short-Term Construction** Projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
4. **Non-deployment** grants will be the newest, and most diverse, set of grants allowed under this grant program. As such, evaluation criteria will be more open-ended, and less detailed or specific. Criteria from the Office of the Future Work, the [Digital Access Plan](#), and other Digital Equity, workforce development programs and CBO's [Broadband Workforce Development Plan](#) were used to develop evaluation criteria of these grant applications. Further communication and dialogue between the Applicant and the CBO may be required as this program develops.

5 Applicant Information

Section 6 below requires information about each Project. Applicants may apply for multiple Projects.

5.1 Applicant Background

Applicants must provide a summary of their history, detailing the organization's year of establishment, its experience in the telecommunications sector, and its track record in deploying and/or operating networks comparable in scale to what is proposed for funding under the Advance-Local program. If an Applicant is new to the telecommunications field or lacks extensive experience (minimum of 2 years), the



Applicant is required to describe how the Applicant plans to manage or collaborate with other entities to manage the proposed Broadband Projects and provide narratives from contractors, subcontractors or other partners with relevant operational experience or other comparable evidence. A newly formed special purpose vehicle established by a consortium of entities may point to the capabilities and experience of those entities in support of its application.

5.2 Organization Summary and Identifiers

To successfully complete the registration, Applicants are required to provide comprehensive details about their organization, including the contact information for a designated primary contact person. This individual should have thorough knowledge of the proposed Projects and be able to answer any questions regarding the Applicant and their applications. In addition, Applicants will need to provide organizational identifiers such as:

- Federal Employer Identification Number.
- Colorado Vendor Self Service Number (VSS). colorado.gov/vss.

5.3 Applicant Ownership Information, Organization & Key Partnerships

Applicants must provide ownership information including the full disclosure of direct and indirect ownership interests with a 10% or more stake, the nature of the interest, and the inter-relationships. Applicants must provide a detailed organizational chart, including corporate relationships with parents, subsidiaries, affiliates and partners.

5.4 Business & Organizational Structure

Applicants must indicate their business structure from the following:

- Limited Partnership: Applicants must list the name, address and citizenship of each limited partner whose interest in the Applicant is 10% or greater (as calculated according to the percentage of equity paid in or the percentage of distribution of profits and losses).



- General Partnership: Applicants must list the name, address and citizenship of each partner, and the share or interest participation in the partnership.
- Limited Liability Company: Applicants must list the name, address, and citizenship of each of its members whose interest in the Applicant is 10% or greater.
- Corporation: Applicants must provide the name, address, and citizenship of any party holding 10% or more of stock in the Applicant, whether voting or non-voting, common, or preferred, including the specific amount of the interest or percentage held.
- FCC-Regulated: Applicants must list any FCC-regulated entity that owns or is an Applicant for an FCC license, in which the Applicant or any of the parties above, owns 10% or more of stock, whether voting or nonvoting, common, or preferred.
- Nonprofit: Please provide the type of nonprofit.
- Local Government or Municipality.
- Tribal Entity.
- Other: Please provide details in the narrative.

5.5 Applicant Signature Authority

Applicants must identify a signature authority and provide the relevant contact details. A signature authority is the individual authorized to obligate and enter into contracts for the Applicant agency, is knowledgeable about the proposed Projects and can answer questions related to both Applicant and applications. Please note that the Applicants will have an opportunity to provide an additional signature authority (if needed) for Project level certifications.



5.6 Applicant Entity Type

Applicants must confirm what type of entity they are. Allowable entity types are: ISPs, partnerships between ISPs, local community internet service providers, nonprofits, cooperatives, electric companies, units of local governments, municipalities with partnerships, Tribes and city-owned ISPs.

5.7 Financial Capability

5.7.1 Audited Financial Statements

Applicants must submit audited financial statements for the last two (2) fiscal years. If audited statements are not available, unaudited financial statements for the same period may be provided. CBO will require Grantees with unaudited financial statements to provide audited financial statements within thirty (30) calendar days of execution of the grant agreement. If an Applicant does not have audited financials, or cannot obtain them, an explanation of the circumstances may be provided.

5.7.2 Certificate of Good Standing

Applicants must upload a Certificate of Fact on Good Standing from the Colorado Secretary of State. CBO will independently verify the Applicant organization's standing in the State as part of the review process. This involves checking the Certificate of Good Standing with the Colorado Secretary of State for most organizations. For local governments and other eligible governmental entities not typically covered by such certificates, this requirement is not applicable.

5.8 Compliance and Program Requirements

5.8.1 Previous Violations, Litigation, or Lawsuits

Applicants must confirm whether, within the preceding three (3) years, they have been involved in any additional violations, litigation, or lawsuits related to applicable laws, or are there any pending violations or lawsuits related to applicable laws against the organization within or outside the State of Colorado.



If the Applicant has been involved in any additional violations, litigation, or lawsuits within the preceding three years, the Applicant will be prompted to provide the relevant context for all of the referenced violation(s), lawsuit(s), or litigation and demonstrate how the Applicant adopted procedures to prevent future violations and/or past record of compliance or successful resolution of violations with applicable laws (excluding the federal labor and employment law referenced in Fair Labor Practices Section).

5.8.2 Prior Suspension or Debarment

The CBO will conduct an independent verification to ensure that the Applicant has not been subject to suspension or debarment as a vendor by the State of Colorado or any federal agency in the three years prior to the application filing. To confirm the Applicant's status the CBO will leverage the State's [Business Database Search](#) and [Sam.gov](#).

5.8.3 Broadband Project Violations

As applicable, Applicants must detail any other violations related to Broadband deployment Projects. Examples of violations include, contract breaches, default on Broadband grants, financial mismanagement, non-payment of subcontractors or vendors, and environmental damages.

Applicants will need to confirm and describe if they have had any prior financial defaults, funding claw-back, and/or negative audit findings with respect to use of federal or state grant funding. Descriptions must include the date and circumstances, and demonstrate how the Applicant adopted procedures to prevent future similar issues and/or past record of compliance or successful resolution of the issues.

If the Applicant has been involved in any other violations related to Broadband deployment Projects, the Applicant will be prompted to provide the relevant context for all of the referenced violation(s) and demonstrate how the Applicant adopted procedures to prevent future violations and/or past record of compliance or successful resolution of violations.



5.8.4 Submission of Broadband Mapping Data

If applicable, Applicants must certify that their organization has complied with all prerequisites and regulations put forth by the FCC including timely filing under the Broadband DATA Act. Such Broadband DATA Act data must also be submitted to the Colorado Broadband Office annual data collection.

5.8.5 Prohibition on Certain Telecommunications Equipment (Middle Mile & Last Mile Only)

Applicants must confirm compliance with requirements detailed in [2 C.F.R. Section 200.216](#) (The prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment). This regulation prohibits federal funds from being used to purchase or install telecommunications and video surveillance equipment, services or systems produced from prohibited companies and/or their subsidiaries. In addition, for public safety installations, there is an extended list of vendors and requirements listed in the National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 115-232, Section 889), which is the source legislation for this condition.

5.9 Cybersecurity Risk Management (Middle Mile and Last Mile only)

Applicants must certify the below information about their cybersecurity risk management plan (the Plan) that adheres to the following criteria:

- The Applicant's cybersecurity risk management plan is already operational or that it will be ready to be operationalized upon providing service.
- The Applicant's cybersecurity risk management plan aligns with or will align with the latest version of the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity ([Current Version](#)) and the standards and controls set forth in [Executive Order 14028](#).
- The Applicant's cybersecurity risk management plan specifies or will specify the security and privacy controls that will be put in place to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data and that it details the specific safeguards,



technologies, and policies that will be employed to address potential cybersecurity risks and threats.

- The Applicant has established or plans to establish a procedure for the periodic evaluation and reassessment of the cybersecurity risk management plan. This process includes or will include defining precise intervals for plan evaluation, clarifying the criteria to prompt updates or adjustments, and guarantees regular review and updating of the plan to tackle emerging cybersecurity risks and challenges.
- The Applicant's organization will commit to updating their Plan at least once a year. In the event of any significant changes to the Plan, the Applicant will provide the updated version to the CBO within thirty (30) calendar days of implementing those changes.
- Applicants will submit the Plan to the CBO before execution of the Advance-Local grant agreement.

A Grantee of the Advance-Local grant will be held fully responsible for the cybersecurity of the Advance-Local funded network. However, to the extent an Advance-Local Grantee relies in whole or in part on the network facilities owned or operated by a third party (e.g., purchases wholesale carriage on such facilities), that network provider must also comply with the above requirements. Applicants' cybersecurity plan should include relevant suppliers, subcontractors and network operators. At a minimum, Grantees must require the attestations from third party network facility owners or operators for certifying the above listed requirements.

5.10 Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) (Middle Mile and Last Mile Only)

The Applicant must confirm they have a Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) plan that safeguards the integrity of the Applicant's supply chain and to confirm:



- The Applicant's SCRM plan is already operational or that it will be ready to be operationalized upon providing service.
- The Applicant's SCRM plan clearly designates the implemented supply chain risk management controls and adheres to key practices stated in NISTIR 8276, "Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry" and incorporates relevant guidance from [NIST 800-161](#). The plan must clearly designate the supply chain risk management controls to be employed.
- The Applicant has established or plans to establish a procedure for the periodic evaluation and reassessment of the SCRM plan. This process includes or will include regular review and updating of the plan as events warrant to address evolving supply chain risks and challenges.
- The Applicant's organization will commit to updating our plan at least once a year. In the event of any significant changes to the plan, the Applicant will provide the updated version to the CBO within thirty (30) calendar days of implementing those changes.
- Applicants will submit the plan to the CBO before execution of the Advance-Local grant agreement

A Grantee of the Advance-Local grant will be held fully responsible for the SCRM requirements of the Advance-Local funded network. However, to the extent an Advance-Local Grantee relies in whole or in part on the network facilities owned or operated by a third party (e.g., purchases wholesale carriage on such facilities), that network provider must also comply with the above requirements. Applicants' SCRM plan should include relevant suppliers, subcontractors and network operators. At a minimum, Grantees must require the attestations from third party network facility owners or operators for certifying the above listed requirements.



6 Project Information

6.1 Project Application Contacts

Applicants must provide key application contact information (name, email, and telephone numbers) of the following individuals per Project application:

- **Additional Signature Authority:** The person authorized to obligate and enter into contracts for the Applicant agency. Applicants can identify an additional Signature Authority for Project level information if required.
- **Project Director:** The person within the Applicant organization who has direct day-to-day responsibility for implementing the Project. This person should possess knowledge and experience in the Project area and the ability to administer the Project and supervise personnel. This person shares responsibility with the Financial Officer for seeing that all expenditures are allowable and within the Approved Budget. The Project Director must be an employee within the Applicant agency.
- **Financial Officer:** The person within the Applicant agency responsible for all financial matters relating to the Project and for the accounting, management of funds, verification of expenditures, audit information, and financial grant reports.

6.2 Executive Summary

Applicants are encouraged to submit their best and final proposals for deployment and non-deployment applications to the CBO which should include, but is not limited to, number of Unserved/Underserved, locations served, affordability, financial sustainability, cost estimates, network designs, diagrams, build-out timelines, local coordination efforts, climate resilience, performance data, technology, and compliance with all regulations, etc.

6.3 Project Narrative

Applicants must provide a detailed narrative about the Project outlining:



- Project Type (Middle Mile, Last Mile, Short-Term Construction, non-deployment).
- Selected technology and performance (Middle Mile, Last Mile).
- Project timeline.
- Summary of Project financials (including total Project budget, match funds, surety approach).
- Project workforce details.
- Local and Tribal coordination plans.
- Community impact information.
- Any additional details or information the Applicant deems relevant to the Project.

6.4 Project Data (Middle Mile and Last Mile)

Applicants must provide the key Project data for each application in the below table:

Table 1: Key Project Data

Project Data Fields	Application Entry
Locations Served	
Total number of BSLs	
Total number of Unserved locations served	
Total number of Underserved locations served	
Total number of residential/households served	



Total number of businesses served	
Infrastructure	
Does the Project include MDU WIFI?	
Does the Project include Middle-Mile Infrastructure?	
Total mileage of buried fiber (if fiber proposed)	
Total mileage of aerial fiber (if fiber proposed)	
Number of towers (if wireless proposed)	
Technology	
Split ratio	
Technology mix (% of fiber and % of alternative technology)	
Speed of network proposed (up/down)	

6.5 Fiber-Optic Cables or Conduit Route (Middle Mile and Last Mile)

Applicants will be asked if their Project involves laying fiber-optic cables or conduit underground or along a roadway. Please note that if so, Applicant's network design must show the inclusion of preliminary interspersed conduit access points at regular and short intervals for interconnection by unaffiliated entities. Fiber-optic cables or



conduit routes can be finalized if a grant is executed. Similarly, if the Applicant proposes to lay conduit, the network design must show the amount of excess conduit capacity and conduit access point intervals. Conduit access points and interconnections can be finalized if a grant is executed. As part of the network design, Applicants must provide the total mileage of fiber proposed, including separate totals for both buried and aerial fiber.

6.6 High Level Network Design (Middle Mile and Last Mile)

Provide a high level network design, showing a proposed network that will deliver Broadband service that meets or exceeds the performance requirements to all locations served by the Project.

High-level network designs must include:

- Eligible locations to be served by the proposed Project.
- Polygons of the proposed funded service areas.
 - The required polygons should fully encompass all eligible locations the Applicant is seeking funding for.
- The proposed fiber or cable path to reach all proposed eligible locations. Applicants must submit a “path layer” in GIS format. The path layer should distinguish between aerial and underground to the extent Applicants are able.
- Proposed routes submitted (path) must include all new routes and proposed backhaul routes.
- If applicable, Applicants must show their existing fiber or cable network routes within the municipalities, Tribal and/or the unincorporated areas in or from which the Applicant is proposing to extend its network. Include any applicable information of these existing assets such as cable density, available capacity, year of deployment.



- Existing routes may be the actual cable or fiber line routes, the roads and/or poles along which the Applicant has the existing network(s).
- Any additional served addresses expected to be passed to reach eligible locations.
- The locations of key networking equipment such as OLTs and splitters, and interconnection points with backhaul networks.
- Depict backhaul infrastructure that will be utilized in this Project and points of interconnection with Advance-Local proposed funded infrastructure. Depict point(s) of internet connectivity.
- Redundancy/resiliency engineering:
 - Any fiber or equipment redundancy provided.
 - Any power backup capability provided (include capacity in hours).
 - Alternative routes provided in case of failure.
- For fixed wireless networks: Location and dimension of towers, number of sectors and coverage area of each sector.
- Middle Mile extension:
 - Aerial vs. underground.
 - Splice locations deployed.
 - Additional conduit.

6.6.1 Required Files/Format

Maps and design information must be provided in electronic format. Locations may be submitted as either an ESRI shapefile or CSV file and must include the latitude and longitude coordinates and street address information for each location. Proposed and



existing fiber or cable routes may be submitted as either ESRI shapefiles, geodatabase or KMZ/KML files. Proposed and existing routes must be submitted as separate files.

6.7 Qualifications/Skills (if Required)

Applicants should provide narrative on the required technical qualifications to successfully complete and operate the grant Project. This includes ensuring all Advance-Local-funded activities are carried out competently, leveraging a skilled and credentialed workforce, whether in-house, contracted, or subcontracted. Note, Grantees will be required to submit final detailed network designs after award, but prior to CBO approval to proceed to construction. For the purposes of construction, the final detailed network designs must be certified by a Professional Engineer. The Professional Engineer can be registered as an in-state, out-of-state or in-house engineer. Please note that when required by state or local regulation, Colorado-certified engineers must be used for construction of the network.

6.8 Construction Plan & Timeline (as Applicable)

6.8.1 Identification of Permitting and Critical Crossing Requirements

The application process requires Applicants to identify all required permits and critical crossings in their application. Permits may be submitted after execution of the grant agreement. This includes all necessary federal, state, and local permits.. A list of critical crossings may include the following non exhaustive list below:

- Bridge Crossings - CDOT Owned.
- Bridge Crossings - County Owned.
- Bureau of Land Management.
- CDOT Right of Way (ROW) (longitudinal, buried fiber infrastructure).
- Department of the Interior.
- Ditch Crossings.



- National Parks.
- Railroad Crossings.
- State Parks and State Lands.
- US Army Corps of Engineers.
- US Forest Service.
- Water Crossings.
- Wetland Crossings.
- Other Crossings/Permitting.

For each identified permit and/or critical crossing, Applicants will be asked to describe:

- Permitting entity.
- Estimated Time frame for submission of the permit(s).
- Projected cost for obtaining permit(s).
- Estimated Length of time until permits are approved.
- Any barriers to obtaining permits and their impact on the Project.
- What stage the Applicant is in obtaining required approvals or agreements.

For the CDOT ROW, if applicable, Applicants must describe:

- Permitting entity.
- Estimated Time frame for submission of the permit(s).
- Projected cost for obtaining permit(s).
- Estimated Length of time until permits are approved.



- Any barriers to obtaining permits and their impact on the Project.
- What stage the Applicant is in obtaining required approvals or agreements.

Applicants must identify the plan to compensate CDOT for use of the CDOT ROW.

- Applicants will pay the annual ROW fees as part of the standard permitting process.
- Applicant has submitted an in-kind unsolicited proposal to CDOT.

If the latter is selected, the unsolicited Proposal that was submitted to CDOT must be uploaded as part of the application. Confirmation of CDOT approval of the unsolicited proposal will need to be submitted prior to grant agreement. Please visit the [CDOT website](#) on this topic for more details.

6.8.2 Make-Ready and Short-Term Projects

If the Applicant has any make-ready requirements associated with its Project(s), they must describe how they have assessed these requirements (e.g., surveyed site, signed agreements, obtained necessary costs, prepared engineering designs, access to right of way, unsolicited proposals to CDOT, etc.). Applicants must include all prior activities, a complete description of make-ready next-steps, and how costs were estimated. Note, if awarded a grant, make-ready costs and preliminary analysis are eligible grant reimbursement expenses, subject to staff approval.

6.8.3 Speed to Deployment

Applicants must specify the number of months needed between grant agreement signature and provision of services.

6.8.4 Implementation Plan/Timeline and Key Milestones

Applicants must provide a detailed Project timeline with key implementation phases, milestones (e.g., contracting, engineering, pole licensing, make-ready, permitting, construction, connections, etc.) and responsible parties. Refer to Table 2 below for



typical Middle Mile and Last Mile Projects. Applicants can work with their grant manager to develop appropriate timelines and key milestones for their Project(s).

Table 2: Timeline and Key Milestones (Middle Mile and Last Mile, as applicable)

Phases/Milestones	Expected Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Responsible Party
Phase 1 - Planning			
Needs assessment			
Feasibility study			
Approved Project			
Funding secured			
Bidding/contracting (including w/ professional services)			
Preliminary design			
Phase 2 - Design			
Regulatory approvals, i.e., ROW, permits/leases			
Cable plant			
Structures and hardware			
Components			
Documentation			
Phase 3 - Installation			
Procurement			



Construction			
Cable installation			
Splicing			
Testing			
Documentation/as built			
Phase 4 - Acceptance			
Handoff to operations			
Project closeout			

Applicants must provide a narrative of any supply chain issues and a plan to overcome them, work that can be done during inclement weather, and anything else that may impact the timeline of this Project.

6.9 Open Access Network (Middle Mile and Last Mile)

Middle-Mile networks (including the Middle Mile necessary to implement Last-Mile Projects) must be offered to third parties on an Open Access basis. Applicants must confirm if they will provide an Open Access network for the entire useful life of the network asset (20 years). Applicant must provide the following supporting narratives:

- Details regarding Open Access policy including the process for allowing access with fair, equal, and neutral terms to all potential retail providers.
- Description of wholesale services and rates.
- Outline any retail ISP partners and status of contract negotiations (e.g., MOU, signed commitment, etc.).

This information serves as an additional indicator of the Applicant's dedication to the proposed Project and their ability to navigate the complexities of establishing



partnerships within the retail ISP industry. Demonstrating that the Applicant has taken preliminary steps in initiating discussions or establishing commitments with potential ISP partners can help highlight the Applicant's seriousness and preparedness to undertake the proposed Project.

6.10 Low-Cost Broadband Service Option (Last Mile)

All Last-Mile Projects will require a Low-Cost Broadband Service Option for low-income subscribers. This requirement will be substantially the same as the BEAD requirement: a \$50 Low-Cost Broadband Service Option, subject to a waiver request not to exceed \$75, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges. ISPs may define and administer their own Low-Cost Broadband Service Options, but the requirements should be substantially similar to that of the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) (ACP) (now expired), including the basic service characteristics. The CBO reserves the right to review such Low-Cost Broadband Service Options in the application process.

In the event there are any applicable subsidies for subscribers, Grantees are required to accept them. ISPs who participate in the [Lifeline Program](#) may also use the Lifeline program to qualify subscribers, and provide the Lifeline subsidy to subscribers. Applicants are not required to be Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs).

Low-Cost Broadband Service Option needs to meet the following parameters:

- The proposed Low-Cost Broadband Service Option should describe subscriber eligibility.
- The Low-Cost Broadband Service Option rate must not exceed \$50 per month, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges. If the CBO grants a waiver, the service rate must not surpass \$75 per month, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges.
- Grantees who offer subscribers an existing monthly plan for less than \$50 per month must offer the existing lower cost plan.
- Provides speeds of at least 100 Mbps symmetrical.
- Provides typical latency measurements of no more than 100 milliseconds.



- Is not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling, and is subject only to the same acceptable use policies to which subscribers to all other Broadband internet access service plans offered to home subscribers by the participating Grantees must adhere.
- Permits eligible subscribers that are subscribed to a Low-Cost Broadband Service Option to upgrade to the new low-cost offering at no cost, in the event the Grantee later offers a low-cost plan with higher speeds download and/or upload.
- In the event that there are any applicable subsidies, Grantees are required to accept them.
- Grantees must assist subscribers to transition to a more affordable plan offered by the same provider without incurring extra fees.

Grantees are required to ensure that customers are well-informed about the Low-Cost Broadband Service Option and face no excessive difficulties in accessing it. If Grantees self verify subscribers' low-cost eligibility, it is the Grantees' responsibility to verify subscriber eligibility while safeguarding all personal documentation provided by the subscriber as proof of eligibility. The criteria and verification mechanism of subscribers' eligibility for the Low-Cost Broadband Service Option may be further defined post-award, but the Low-Cost Broadband Service Option qualifications for subscribers should be substantially similar to the ACP qualifications that were allowed under ACP.

The Low-Cost Service Option rate will be evaluated and adjusted annually based on the percent the FCC Urban Rate Survey (URS)¹ (for broadband plans of 100 download 20 upload speeds) increases or decreases. Annual adjustments, up or down, will be publicly announced by the CBO.

¹[2025 Urban Rate Survey](#) (announced December 13, 2025). The 100/20 plan for 2025 is listed at \$85.85.



6.11 Community Engagement

6.11.1 Local Government and Tribal Letters of Support

Applicants must engage in consultations with local governments and Tribal authorities regarding their qualifications and plans within the Advance-Local program. As such, the Applicants will be asked if they met with local and/or Tribal Governments, for the Project area(s) they have selected, to discuss qualifications and plans within the Advance-Local program and whether they received a letter(s) of support/endorsement from all local and Tribal Governments they met with.

- If an Applicant has met with local and/or Tribal Governments and received a letter(s) of support/endorsement, the Applicant will be prompted to provide the proof of meeting(s) held with local governments and Tribal authorities and letter(s) of support/endorsement from all local and Tribal Governments.
- If an Applicant has met with local and/or Tribal Governments, but has not received a letter(s) of support/endorsement, the Applicant must provide the proof of meeting(s) held with local governments.
- If an Applicant has not met with local and/or Tribal Governments after making at least three attempts to contact local and/or Tribal Governments, the Applicant will be prompted to provide the relevant email or written communications that proves that at least three attempts were made to contact local and/or Tribal Governments.

Applicants who do not obtain such support letters will not receive any points, but they are still eligible to submit proposals within the local government or Tribal jurisdiction.

6.11.2 Tribal Governments' Consent

Applicants intending to construct on Tribal Lands and territories will be required to:



- Provide, at the time a grant application is submitted, evidence that Applicant has made contact with the Tribal Government whose Tribal Lands are impacted by the Project.
- Provide, at the time a grant is awarded, a Resolution of Consent or Reciprocity, or an equivalent formal demonstration of consent from the Tribal Government whose Tribal Lands are impacted by the Project.

Please note that by providing either a Resolution of Consent or Reciprocity, the Applicant will be certifying that they have communicated with and received consent from the Tribal Governments in which their proposed Project area impacts. In addition, Applicants should be aware that the grant agreement process will require Applicants to submit written documents proving consent to deploy infrastructure on Tribal Lands.

6.12 Community Impact

Applicants must provide the narratives outlined below.

Increase Broadband Adoption and Digital Literacy

- Demonstrate how Project(s) would support Broadband adoption and improve digital literacy in communities, especially among populations that have experienced inequities in access to work, education, and health care or health information.

Major Economic Development

- Demonstrate how Project(s) would provide services that support at least one major economic development initiative as identified by a regional planning or development council or economic development authority.

Broadband Planning Initiative

- Demonstrate how Project(s) would support recent Broadband planning initiatives within the proposed area. See, for example, [Colorado Broadband](#)



[Roadmap](#), [5-Year Action Plan](#), [Digital Equity Plan](#), [Broadband Workforce Plan](#), or other local community Broadband plan initiatives.

Strategic Partnerships

- Demonstrate if Project(s) has strategic partnerships involved in the proposed Project, for example, electric utilities, universities, and federal, state, or local agencies. If there are no strategic partnerships involved with the Project, explain why and how the organization plans to build those relationships for this Project.

6.13 Project Budget and Financials

Applicants must provide Project financial information. This will be a combination of direct input to the portal and through an excel template linked in the portal. Missing information from the Project budget and financials may jeopardize the completeness and review of the application.

6.13.1 Financial Surety

Certain large dollar Middle Mile and Last Mile deployment projects may require financial sureties such as a Performance Bond and a Labor and Material Payment Bond, or a Letter of Credit. Details on the financial surety requirements may vary depending on the Project type, Project size, etc., and will be negotiated and documented in the Grant Agreement if required.

6.13.2 Project Match

In general, Applicants must commit a cash match of at least 25% of the total cost for each application, unless a waiver is granted by the CBO. Match expenses are subject to the same eligibility rules and requirements as eligible grant expenses. Grantees must maintain financial records that clearly show the source, the amount, and the date of receipt and expenditure of all matching funds contributions during the grant award period. In the event inventory is used as match, documentation of the GAAP inventory costing method used will be required. In-kind matches are not allowable under the Advance-Local program without the prior approval of the CBO staff.



Applicants are required to populate the Table 4 below with the following:

- The total match amount per application.
- All match sources. Please note that if Applicants plan to leverage federal match sources they are required to provide the name of the federal funding source.

In addition, Applicants will be requested to upload proof of the total committed match per application to the application portal (e.g., letter from bank stating the loan amount). CBO will regard all cash, loans, federal grants, and state grants as cash matches.

Table 4: Total Committed Match Source Details

Match Sources	Amount	Type	Secured (Yes /No)
Source 1	- \$	Cash	
Source 2	- \$	Loan	
Source 3	- \$	Federal Grant	
Source 4	- \$	State Grant	
Total Match Amount (sum of above)	- \$		
Total Requested Local Fund	- \$		
Match Percentage	%		

Each Application's total proposed match amount will be compared to the total Project cost. The ratio of the total proposed match to the total Project cost will be used to allocate scores to applications. As the specified ratio increases, Applicants will receive a higher score, as indicated in the sliding scale in the table below.

Total Match vs Total Project Cost	15 Max Points
--	----------------------



<i>(Match Ratio = Total Match / Total Project Cost)</i>	
55% > Match Ratio =< 65%	15
45% > Match Ratio =< 55%	10
35% > Match Ratio =< 45%	7
>=25% Match Ratio =< 35%	5

Match Waiver Request

If an Applicant is requesting a waiver for 25% match requirement (per Application), the Applicant is required to provide the description of the special circumstances underlying the reason it is infeasible for the Applicant to provide the match in full or in part, documenting any efforts made to obtain matching fund commitments for the Project from capital funding sources and explaining how a waiver would serve the public interest and advance the goals of the Advance-Local Program.

The CBO will consider factors that may make certain areas more difficult or costly to serve, such as low density, extensive make-ready costs, topography, geography, or unavoidable underground construction.

Waivers may be granted upon a determination that to do so is in the best interest of the State and furthers the program goal of expanding broadband service in Colorado, and that the proposed Project would not be feasible or advisable without the requested waiver.

6.13.3 Project Financials Workbook (Middle Mile and Last Mile Only)

Applicants will be required to populate and upload the provided Project Financials Workbook, which will include detailed information covering:

- Capital Costs.
- Operating Costs.



- Details on Funding Sources and Matching.
- Capital Investment Schedule:
 - Demonstrates that the Applicant will achieve complete build-out and service initiation within four years of grant receipt.
- Project Pro Forma Financials & Cashflow:
 - Should be for not less than a 10-year period, or the length of any expected debt or capital leases, whichever is longer.
 - Identify any periods during which the Project is expected to have a net operating revenue loss and identify the expected source of funds to cover those losses.
 - Demonstrate the availability of funds to cover all Project costs exceeding the grant amount, along with the ongoing financial capacity to meet eligible Project expenses.
 - Include the following:
 - Revenue and operating expenses.
 - Net operating revenue.
 - Net income.
 - Unlevered and levered free cash flows.
 - Other capital sources.
 - Net cash.

6.13.4 Project Budget (Middle Mile and Last Mile Only)

Applicants must summarize and populate the Project budget information below that they have included in the Project Financials Workbook (Capital Cost Summary Tab) by phase. The Project Financials Workbook's Capital Cost Summary Tab will summarize



expenses by category and Applicants should use that summary to allocate costs across phases in the portal budget table.

Table 5: Budget Table

Cost Category	Phase 1 Planning	Phase 2 Design	Phase 3 Installation	Phase 4 Acceptance
Administrative and legal expenses				
Administrative and legal expenses				
Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc.				
ROW fees				
Land/structure purchases				
Relocation expenses and payments				
Relocation expenses and payments				
Architectural and engineering fees				
Engineering				
Other architectural and engineering fees				
Other eligible Architectural/engineering fees				
Project inspection fees				
Project inspection fees				
Site work				
Site preparation, and site restoration costs				
Demolition and removal				
Demolition and removal				



Cost Category	Phase 1 Planning	Phase 2 Design	Phase 3 Installation	Phase 4 Acceptance
Administrative and legal expenses				
Construction				
Equipment shelter/land rental				
Project and construction management				
Pole placement and pole make-ready				
Middle/Last Mile construction material				
Middle/Last Mile construction labor				
Customer premise labor				
Customer premise installation				
Towers construction and tower improvement/Installation costs				
Construction labor travel expenses				
Equipment (per item cost over \$5,000)				
Middle/Last Mile construction Equipment				
Customer premise equipment				
Towers and tower improvement				
Miscellaneous				
Other eligible costs (including long term leases)				
Subtotal				



Cost Category	Phase 1 Planning	Phase 2 Design	Phase 3 Installation	Phase 4 Acceptance
Administrative and legal expenses				
<i>Contingency as a %</i>				
Total				

Projects that are not Middle Mile and Last Mile should work with their grant manager to develop a financial workbook and budget appropriate for their Project(s).

6.14 Certification

By signing the Application, Applicant certifies to the best of their knowledge and belief that the application is true, complete, and accurate, and the designs, costs and Project plans are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the Advance-Local Grant Guidelines. The Applicant is also confirming that they are aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject them to criminal, civil or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims or otherwise and the [Colorado False Claims Act](#).

7 Notice of Decision

7.1 Conditional Award

After concluding the application review process, and crafting a list of "conditional" awards, the CBO will recommend the funding list to the Work Group. After review by the Work Group , CBO will post the intent-to-award list to the CBO website. The challenge process and appeal process will then run concurrently for fourteen (14) calendar days. Please note that any official award is dependent on the conclusion of the challenge and appeals process. Unless authorized in writing by the CBO, Applicants must wait for execution of the Advance-Local Grant Agreement before proceeding with any work. Any work performed prior to the execution of a Grant Agreement cannot be reimbursed.



7.2 Official Award

Upon completion and resolution of the challenge and appeal processes, the CBO will announce the selected Applicants (Awardees) on the Advance-Local website and through other communication and media platforms and proceed with executing the grant agreements. Additionally, upon request by an Applicant that did not have their Project selected for funding, the CBO will offer feedback, providing insights on why an application was not awarded.

7.3 Grant Agreement Execution

Grants are not final until a Grant Agreement is executed with the State of Colorado. Awardees are expected to work with CBO staff in creating and finalizing the Grant Agreement, such as adding the specific Project details from the application to the Grant Agreement. Awardees must review and understand the Grant Agreement prior to execution. Grant agreements must be finalized and executed by all parties within sixty (60) calendar days of CBO providing a draft contract to the Awardees. In the event an Awardees and the State are unable to come to terms within sixty (60) calendar days, staff will assess whether the delay is caused by staff and/or the State. If the CBO believes the delay was not caused by staff and/or the State, the CBO, in its sole discretion, may choose to rescind the award and reallocate the funding under this Advance-Local grant process, or hold the grant funds for subsequent grant cycles. If CBO staff and counsel, or any other State personnel preparing or negotiating the Grant Agreement determine additional information from Awardee is reasonable or necessary, they are authorized to require that Awardees provide such information. CBO relies upon staff, counsel, and other State personnel involved in contract preparation and negotiation to implement contract terms and oversight practices that will protect the State, monitor Project progress, and, generally, promote the timely completion of awarded Projects.

7.4 Notice to Proceed

After a grant agreement is fully executed, Notices to Proceed will be issued per phase (if applicable) in consultation with the assigned CBO grant manager.



8 Challenge Process (Last Mile only)

All Last Mile Projects will be subject to a challenge process prior to finalizing any grant award. ISPs who participate in the Advance-Local grant program must report all served Broadband locations to the FCC Broadband Map and the CBO Broadband Map. The FCC Broadband Map, as supplemented by the CBO Broadband Map, is the primary source for determining eligible Unserved and Underserved locations for Last Mile Projects.

Per the statute, the CBO will include a formal process wherein “eligible Applicants, and incumbent providers may challenge or appeal an Applicant’s data included in the application to prevent the financing of Projects that would cause overbuild or duplication of federal or other state funding.” The process will generally have the following characteristics:

- A fourteen (14) calendar day challenge process will commence after the intent-to-award list is posted. All challenges must be filed by 11:59 p.m. MT on the due date posted by the CBO.
- A challenger must be an Applicant to the Advance-Local grant program in the current cycle, or an eligible entity of the Advance-Local Grant program.
- Challenges are limited to challenging individual locations (BSLs) in the grant award as:
 - “Served” (“S”) with terrestrial Reliable Broadband Service,
 - Subject to an enforceable commitment (“E”) to provide terrestrial Reliable Broadband Service, or
 - An ISP has ongoing construction to complete build out the location(s) within six (6) months of the date of the award (“P”). Challengers must provide evidence supporting this claim such as existing agreements to construct infrastructure that would provide terrestrial Reliable Broadband Service, or evidence that construction has started. Claims of



plans to deploy Broadband infrastructure must clearly and conclusively prove the claimed deployment plans, and these challenges must include a written commitment on company letterhead, signed by a person with the authority to legally bind the challenger to provide terrestrial Reliable Broadband Service to the locations in question. Demonstration that such areas will be built out will cause affected locations to be reclassified as served. Failure to build out the challenged area within the six (6) month period may result in the challenger being barred from future State grant programs.

- Challenges must be submitted to the CBO in substantially the same format as Broadband Availability challenges submitted into the FCC's BDC challenge portal: they must be challenges to individual locations within the published polygons.
 - For challenges to be successful, challengers must demonstrate that challenged locations have terrestrial Reliable Broadband Service.

Instructions for submitting challenges will be provided at the launch of the Challenge Process.

9 Appeals Process

A fourteen (14) calendar day appeals process will commence after the intent-to-award list is posted. All appeals must be filed by 11:59 p.m. MT on the due date posted by the CBO. Only the grant Applicant whose grant application was denied or underfunded may appeal the grant award decision. The sole remedy for an Applicant that prevails on appeal is the financing of the Applicant's proposed Project in the current or next fiscal year, subject to the availability of funds in the Advance-Local grant fund. See the [Appeals Policy](#), including Appeal Form, for further information, and public comments.



10 Reporting and Monitoring Requirements

10.1 Reporting

Per statute, all Advance-Local Grantees must be in compliance with all state and federal obligations. Grantees must adhere to strict reporting requirements. CBO will require all Grantees to provide Progress & Programmatic Reporting and Financial Reporting.

Progress & Programmatic Reporting

- Progress reports must track Project milestones, challenges and objectives.
- Document work completed on the Project, any challenges encountered, and track their program metrics based on the approved Project plan and milestones.
- Compares actual grant activities to estimated Project plan timeline at least on a quarterly basis.

Financial Reporting

- Quarterly financial reports should detail Project finances, including transactions and budget status, ensuring financial transparency and compliance.
- Documents the big picture of how funding is being spent.
- Compares actual costs against originally-budgeted costs for the Project.

CBO grant agreements contain quarterly financial and progress reporting requirements. Adhering to quarterly financial and progress reporting is essential. Grantees must submit these reports regularly, following the CBO's schedule, with noncompliance impacting requests processing and approval. Integrating these requirements into the grant agreement enforces diligence in reporting, fostering transparency and accountability for successful Project outcomes.



10.2 Monitoring

Grantee monitoring is a critical aspect of the agreement, permitting the CBO to assess Project progress, compliance with regulatory standards, and the appropriate utilization of grant funds. To ensure effective oversight and Project execution, the CBO's grant agreement incorporates robust provisions for Grantee monitoring, which encompasses the possibility of on-site visits. CBO may also contract with a third-party contractor to ensure monitoring is conducted to high standards, and will communicate clearly with all Grantees about expectations regarding any upcoming visits.

Grantees should be prepared to facilitate these visits, as they are essential to maintaining program integrity and ensuring the successful implementation of their Projects. The CBO will conduct the following compliance activities:

- **Regular reporting:** The CBO will request quarterly documentation related to the Project and expects documentation to clearly align with reimbursements and Project progress.
- **On-site inspections:** To validate and document Project advancement, the CBO will perform regular on-site inspections on a quarterly basis.
- **Remote assessments:** The CBO will undertake remote evaluations of the Project during the alternating quarters.
- **Concluding financial review:** After the Project's conclusion, the CBO will execute a final financial review to ensure that the Project's finances are in order.

The CBO has a few tips to follow based on previous experience:

- **Communicate:** Clearly communicate **as soon as you are aware** of any barriers or changes to the timeline, Project or organizational structure before reporting requirements are due. This helps CBO to help determine a solution with Grantees.



- Collaboration: CBO grant managers are here to help you document and complete the Project on-time and within the agreement and program guidelines.
- Collaborate: Delays and barriers are **not** automatically a concern, however withholding information from CBO is always a concern.
- Proactive: Be prepared to show Project and financial progress at any time.
- Solution driven: Resolve any corrections from monitoring as quickly as possible and send documentation of corrections to the grant monitor promptly.

It is expected that Applicants and Grantees review the Advance-Local Grant Agreement that will be posted to the Advance-Local website to understand the requirements. Reach out to the CBO with any questions prior to the execution date of the grant agreement.

11 Advance-Local Work Group

The CBO will establish the Advance-Local Work Group drawn from external stakeholders, including, industry associations, local governments, Tribal Governments, other state agencies, federal agencies, Broadband consumers, and other key stakeholders that the CBO identifies.

The Work Group may vary in size and background depending on the cohort of grant applications before the CBO in a given grant cycle. The Work Group will be composed of up to seven (7) individuals with expertise in Middle Mile, Last Mile and digital inclusion workforce in addition to experience with state and local governance affairs (SLGA). Members of the Work Group must have knowledge of basic Broadband infrastructure standards or telecommunication, digital equity, and workforce.

Prior to the first grant cycle, potential Work Group candidates will be invited to submit an application to the CBO. Candidates will be scored based on their expertise in areas noted above. CBO will solicit applications every two (2) years, and will replace members of the Work Group with eligible candidates on a rolling basis.



Members will have staggered terms that will last 2 years and can serve up to 3 consecutive terms. Work Group members will be evaluated each term based on attendance, engagement, and contributions to the overall program prior to being renewed.

CBO staff, including consultants, will generally perform the initial evaluation, scoring, and award recommendations. If needed, the CBO may also draw upon the expertise and input of the Work Group. Work Group will be given an opportunity to review the cohort of recommended grant awards prior to publication. The Work Group may also make recommendations as to how the grant application, scoring process, and other processes could be improved to better represent the purpose of this program. The Work Group may be tasked with the following responsibilities:

1. Request and review application summaries from CBO staff.
2. Provide recommendations to Advance-Local staff regarding the process for application scoring and content.
3. Request reporting and monitoring updates from Advance-Local staff.
4. Review and provide recommendations for any annual reports to the Joint Budget Committee and the Joint Technology Committee, or their successor committees.

The Work Group will meet quarterly. The Work Group or the CBO may also request additional meetings, as necessary.

There is no voting authority to approve or deny specific grant applications, as such, members of the Work Group may be Advance-Local grant program Applicants. Members must agree to a conflict of interest policy, and should disclose any direct or indirect conflicts of interest during Advance-Local Work Group discussions.

All meetings will be subject to the CORA, C.R.S. Section 24-72-2014, and Colorado Open Meetings Law (“COML”), C.R.S. Section 24-6-401 and 402, unless exemptions apply.



More information will be forthcoming on the Work Group, including the call for candidates, participation, operating procedures and policies, etc.

12 Other Matters

12.1 Reservation of Rights

The CBO has the right to amend the Advance-Local Program Guidelines and supporting application materials, policies and processes, in whole or in part, by written addendum (including redline and issuance of updated documents), at any time. The CBO is responsible only for that which is expressly stated in the Guidelines, the Advance-Local Grant Agreement, and supporting application portal materials and any authorized written policies, processes, or addenda. Such addendum shall be made available on the Advance-Local website. Should such addendum require additional information not previously requested, failure to address the requirements of such addendum may result in the application being found non-responsive and not being considered, as determined in the sole discretion of the CBO. The CBO is not responsible for and shall not be bound by any representations otherwise made by any individual acting or purporting to act on its behalf. The CBO has the right to reissue the Advance-Local Program Guidelines at a future date. It is anticipated that these Guidelines will be updated and posted prior to each grant cycle.

12.2 Order of Precedence

These Guidelines are designed to be consistent with, and promote the purposes of, applicable law and regulation. To the extent these Guidelines conflict with any applicable law, regulation, or rule, including, by way of example and not limitation, any provisions of [HB 2024-1336](#), or any provision of the Colorado Procurement Code, Colorado Procurement Rules, or Colorado Fiscal Rules, the applicable law, regulation or rule shall control.

12.3 Scoring Matrices

[Exhibit A-1: Middle Mile Projects Scoring Matrix](#)



[Exhibit A-2: Last Mile Projects Scoring Matrix](#)

[Exhibit A-3: Short-Term Construction Projects Scoring Matrix](#)

[Exhibit A-4: Non-deployment Projects Scoring Matrix](#)



Exhibit A-1: Middle Mile Scoring Matrix

Minimum Requirements

Advance-Local focuses on the Middle Mile Projects, and is designed to support the construction, improvement, or acquisition of Middle-Mile Infrastructure for a wide range of eligible entities, including municipalities, with the stated purposes of encouraging the expansion of these networks to reduce the cost of reaching Unserved and Underserved areas and increasing overall connection resiliency with multiple redundancies to prevent a single point of failure in a network.

ISPs that participate or intend to participate in any State of Colorado administered Broadband grants program, hereby grants license to the CBO to publish location information, routes, connection points, access terms, ownership, and other information requested by the CBO about Middle-Mile Infrastructure contained in ISP's grant applications. Such information will form part of a publicly available state-wide Middle-Mile Infrastructure mapping hub on the CBO website. To be considered for Middle Mile grant, Applicants bear the burden of proving that each of the following minimum requirements are met:

- 1. Regional Broadband Plan and Need.** The Project is clearly a priority for the region. For example, the Project is identified in a state, local or regional Broadband plan, and addresses an identified community need or problem; the Project is specified in documents such as a capital improvement plan, community master plan, engineering report, annual budget; and/or other related planning and development resource publications adopted or otherwise approved by the local governing body. Applicants may also provide letters of support from local and regional governmental bodies. The opportunity or challenge is clearly identified with a quantifiable financial need that is well documented, with expected outcomes and impact identified.
- 2. Eligible Applicants.** Eligible Applicants include ISPs, local community internet service providers, nonprofits, Tribes, cooperatives, electric companies,



municipalities with partnerships, city-owned ISPs, or partnerships between such entities.

3. **Middle Mile Project** . The funds shall not be used for Last-Mile deployments, which will be considered any infrastructure that terminates at a residential, business or other non-governmental address (“fiber to the curb”). Connections to Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) may be included. Applicants should demonstrate marketplace needs from Last Mile providers for the Middle Mile network. Projects submitted for funding must demonstrate plans for eventual use of the system, including plans for maintenance and system upgrades. Public/private partnerships to provide service are highly encouraged.
4. **Project Readiness**. The Project can be implemented in a reasonable period, i.e., within 12 months following grant award. Funding sources are pledged and ready for expenditure. Preliminary engineering has been completed and plans and permits (as applicable) are approved or scheduled to be, and the Project is ready for bid. In the case of design/build Projects, a contractor has been selected by the Applicant. Note, if awarded, preliminary engineering, plans, permits, etc. may be reimbursable as allowed expenses, subject to staff approval.
5. **Resilience**. The Project provides solutions that address problems across multiple sectors to create maximum benefit. The Project looks to the future and creates long-term gains for the community. The Project incorporates State of Colorado goals in planning, development and implementation of the Project. The community has included long-term resilience and sustainability measures.
6. **Open Access**. Any infrastructure built with program funds must be provided on an Open Access basis. Access and rates must be provided on a competitively neutral basis for all providers regardless of technology.
7. **Complete Application**. The Applicant has applied using the most recent application form and answered all questions and provided all attachments.



Specifically, a map of the Project area, a list of potential geographic areas impacted by this Project demonstrating the insufficient availability of Broadband service in the area, and demonstrating marketplace need from Last Mile providers for the Middle Mile network.

8. **Reasonable Cost.** Applicants should describe how the Project will improve access to Broadband service, or how this Project will improve upon the existing infrastructure. Please describe the following in this section: Project cost effectiveness, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category. Scored under Award Criteria.
9. **Broadband Network Speeds.** The planned downstream and upstream service speeds provide sufficient bandwidth to accommodate multiple Last Mile Projects and/or Middle Mile or wholesale leases in accordance with current industry best practices. Higher speeds, capacity, and fiber counts will be scored higher in award criteria.
10. **Performance standards.** Please describe the sustainability of the proposed network and operations. This should include equipment replacement, infrastructure replacement schedule, and additional public funding will be required to operate, maintain, update, build, and/or replace the proposed build. Applicants should discuss Project technology and reliability standards. Applicants should respond with equipment and material lists, and each Project should be detailed in their analysis of this equipment.
11. **Matching Funds.** Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a match waiver request form with justification. Under award criteria, points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.



Award Criteria (85 Points)

All applications that meet the minimum requirements are reviewed for funding using the following award criteria. Application funding will be prioritized based on a review of the following criteria and the availability of funds.

In addition to all other requirements and assessments, the CBO may consider but is not limited to considering, the extent to which the Applicant has demonstrated that:

- 1. Purpose and Project Impacts (10 Points).** The Project proposal should clearly state the purpose, objectives, scope, sponsorship, funding and mission behind the Project, and must point out clear impact, including proposed service speeds or access points for any entity in the Project area. Applicants should demonstrate marketplace needs from Last Mile providers for the Middle Mile network.
- 2. Low-Income households and CAIs (10 Points).** The amount of support the Project would provide for low-income households by potentially serving such households via a Last Mile; and the extent to which the Project would support Critically Unserved areas and CAIs.
- 3. Project Plan and the Timeline (10 Points).** A completed Project plan which references timelines with a narrative of performance goals. Applicants should prepare a clear assessment of the Project with quantified outcomes, and demonstrate their ability to pivot with the Project if challenges arise. Project Readiness as defined above in Minimum Requirements will also be considered.
- 4. Geographic Distribution of Broadband Deployment (10 Points).** Geographic distribution of grant awards with additional consideration to Projects in areas that have not received an award from any State of Colorado grant program.
- 5. Broadband network redundancy, diversity, and latency (10 Points).** Whether the Project plans indicate the Project will have sufficient network redundancy and physical diversity, and latency to reliably serve the Project area. For redundancy, we will consider physical (fiber) redundancy, equipment



redundancy, power redundancy, as well as diversity. Physical redundancy is from the first distribution (collector) location before the customer premise to the backhaul/backbone.

- 6. Matching Funds (15 Points).** Must have matching funds of at least 25% (Minimum Requirements), or a match waiver request form with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.
- 7. Broadband Network Speeds (10 Points).** The planned downstream and upstream service speeds (and fiber counts) provide sufficient bandwidth to accommodate multiple Last Mile Projects and/or Middle Mile or wholesale leases in accordance with current industry best practices. Higher speeds, capacity, and fiber counts will be scored higher.
- 8. Reasonable Cost (10 Points).** Project cost effectiveness, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects, cost per mile of fiber.



Exhibit A-2: Last Mile Scoring Matrix

Minimum Requirements

Similar to prior grant programs, Last-Mile deployment Projects are eligible. Last Mile Projects are designed to support the construction of Last-Mile infrastructure for a wide range of eligible entities, including local municipalities, with the stated purposes of encouraging the expansion of networks to increase the amount of locations across Colorado gaining access to high-speed Broadband internet service.

Applicants that participate or intend to participate in any State of Colorado administered Broadband grants program, must provide timely Broadband filings under the Broadband DATA Act. Such Broadband DATA Act data must also be submitted to the Colorado Broadband Office.

To be considered for a Last Mile Project, Applicants bear the burden of proving that each of the following requirements are met:

- 1. Broadband Need in Unserved or Underserved Areas.** The Applicant has demonstrated that the Project area is Unserved and Underserved, and has the full support of local communities and the municipality. Applicants should consider the following points as evidence: at least 80% of all of the locations in the proposed Project area, or at least 50 subscribers, whichever is greater demonstrating a lack of service in the Project area. Screenshots of coverage map data showing service availability, which include narratives detailing the current needs of the community, and impact of this Project. Project areas may be defined by Applicants; i.e., unlike the BEAD grant program, there are no CBO pre-defined project areas wherein Applicants must serve all eligible locations.
- 2. Eligible Applicants.** ISPs, local community internet service providers, nonprofits, Tribes, cooperatives, electric companies, municipalities with partnerships, city-owned ISPs. If a partnership is in place, a description must include proof of partnership and status.



3. **New Last Mile Project.** Grant funds will only be used for new infrastructure deployment Projects and not for on-going operating costs. Funds will be used to provide Last Mile service, which is defined as the portion of Broadband service that delivers an internet connection to an end user. Proposed Projects may include necessary Middle Mile or other infrastructure necessary to provide Last Mile connections to a Broadband network. Public/private partnerships to provide service are highly encouraged.
4. **Speed.** Upon completion, the Project will: (1) reliably meet or exceed the definition of Reliable Broadband Service (symmetrical 100 Mbps download and upload speeds with less than 100 ms latency). Applicants should provide the following when responding to the section, including service tiers, installation fees, monthly costs, equipment rentals, low-income tier being offered, and scalability of services. Higher speeds (e.g., 1G) will be scored higher in the Award Criteria.
5. **Project Plan and Timeline.** A completed Project plan which references timelines with a narrative of performance goals. Applicants should prepare a clear assessment of the Project with quantified outcomes, and demonstrate their ability to pivot with the Project if challenges arise.
6. **Overbuild.** The Project does not seek to provide Broadband to locations which: (1) have access to a reliable Broadband service network, or (2) have received an enforceable funding commitment from state or federal sources for construction of a Broadband network. Applicants should consider the following suggestions for a successful response: using screenshot of map showing coverage levels, (must include all state and federal program build-outs), screenshots from other ISPs indicating they do not serve the area, provide speed tests for at least 50 subscribers, or 10% of the locations in the proposed Project area, whichever is greater and demonstrates actual service in the Project area.



7. **Generally Accepted Industry Reliability and Performance Standards.** Please describe the sustainability of the proposed network and operations. This should include equipment replacement, infrastructure replacement schedule, and additional public funding will be required to operate, maintain, update, build, and/or replace the proposed build. Applicants should discuss Project technology and reliability standards. Applicants should respond with equipment and material lists, and each Project should be detailed in their analysis of this equipment.
8. **Access and Reasonable Cost.** Applicants should describe how the Project will improve access to Broadband service for the proposed Project area. Please describe the following in this section: Project cost, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category.
9. **Complete Application.** The Applicant has applied using the most recent application form and answered all questions to the satisfaction of the CBO. In addition, the Applicant has provided all attachments to the satisfaction of the CBO including, specifically, a map of the Project area, a list of potential addresses impacted by this Project demonstrating the insufficient availability of Broadband service in the area, and identification of all incumbent providers or incumbent Broadband providers that provide Broadband internet service or Broadband service in the Project area.
10. **Matching Funds.** Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a request for match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.

Award Criteria (90 Points)

All applications that meet the minimum requirements are reviewed for funding using the following award criteria. Application funding will be prioritized based on a review of the following criteria and availability of funds.



In addition to all other requirements and assessments, the CBO may consider but is not limited to considering, the extent to which the Applicant has demonstrated that:

- 1. Purpose and Project Impact (10 Points).** The Project proposal should clearly state the purpose, objectives, scope, sponsorship, funding and impact behind the Project.
- 2. Geographic Distribution (10 Points).** Geographic distribution of grant awards with additional consideration to Projects in areas that have not received an award from any Federal or State grant program.
- 3. Broadband Network Redundancy, Diversity, and Latency (10 Points).** Whether the Project plans indicate the Project will have sufficient network redundancy and physical diversity, and latency to reliably serve the Project area.
- 4. Broadband Network Speeds (10 Points).** The planned downstream and upstream service speeds exceed the minimum speeds, such as through the Applicant's submission of a detailed, tiered service chart, including service speeds, monthly and one-off user fees, installation fees, and contract duration. Higher minimum speeds will be scored higher.
- 5. Low-Income Households (10 Points).** The Applicant has submitted a Broadband service plan that provides discounts for low-income households. Examples of a household meeting the low-income threshold include but are not limited to being eligible for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and meeting the definition of low-income found in C.R.S. § 39- 3112(1)(b.3). Lower cost low-income plans will be scored higher.
- 6. Critically Unserved Areas (5 Points).** Whether the Project will provide service to households that are located in an area determined to be Critically Unserved.



7. **Matching Funds (15 Points).** Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.
8. **Reasonable Cost (10 Points).** Please describe the following in this section: Project cost, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects, cost per location. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category.
9. **Speed to Deployment (10 Points).** Estimated time to deployment of services to subscribers. Faster deployment will receive higher scores.



Exhibit A-3: Short-Term Construction Scoring Matrix

Minimum Requirements

Specialized Short-Term Construction Projects are eligible under the Advance-Local grant program. Short Term construction Projects are designed to support the construction, improvement, or acquisition of differing components of Last-Mile infrastructure for a wide range of eligible entities, including local municipalities, with the stated purposes of encouraging the expansion of these networks to increase the amount of locations across Colorado gaining access to high-speed Broadband internet service. To be considered for Short-Term Construction Project, Applicants bear the burden of proving that each of the following requirements are met:

- 1. Regional Broadband Plan and Need.** The Project is clearly a priority for the region. For example, the Project is identified in a state, local or regional Broadband plan, and addresses an identified community need or problem; the Project is specified in documents such as a capital improvement plan, community master plan, engineering report, annual budget; and/or other related planning and development resource publications adopted or otherwise approved by the local governing body. Applicants may also provide letters of support from local and regional governmental bodies. The opportunity or challenge is clearly identified with a quantifiable financial need that is well documented, with expected outcomes and impact identified.
- 2. Eligible Applicants.** Eligible Applicants include ISPs, local community internet service providers, Tribes, nonprofits, cooperatives, electric companies, municipalities with partnerships, city-owned ISPs, and partnerships of such entities. Description must include proof of partnership and status.
- 3. Overbuild.** If applicable, the Project does not seek to provide Broadband to households which: (1) have access to a reliable Broadband service network, and (2) have received an enforceable funding commitment from state or federal sources for construction of a Broadband network. Applicants should consider the following suggestions for a successful response: using screenshot of map



showing coverage levels, (must include all state and federal program build-outs), screenshots from other ISPs indicating they do not serve the area, provide speed tests for at least 50 subscribers, or 10% of the locations in the proposed Project area, whichever is greater and demonstrates actual service in the Project area.

4. **Generally Accepted Industry Reliability and Performance Standards.** Please describe how this Project will follow industry standards and best practices. This should include equipment replacement, infrastructure replacement schedule, type of equipment and estimated outcome. Applicants should discuss Project technology and reliability standards. Applicants should respond with equipment and material lists, and each Project should be detailed in their analysis of this equipment.
5. **Access and Reasonable Cost.** Applicants should describe how the Project will improve access to reliable Broadband service, and how this Project will improve upon the existing infrastructure. Please describe the following in this section: reasonableness of Project cost, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category.
6. **Budget.** The budget and budget narrative are detailed and cover all realistic costs associated with the Project. Applicants must demonstrate how the budget was built for each line of the Project costs. Each budget line-item justification should be included. The narrative should provide a clear justification of the costs and how it was calculated.
7. **Complete Application.** The Applicant has applied using the most recent application form and answered all questions to the satisfaction of the CBO. In addition, the Applicant has provided all attachments to the satisfaction of the CBO including, specifically, a map of the Project area, a list of potential addresses impacted by this Project demonstrating the insufficient availability of Broadband service in the area, and all incumbent providers or incumbent



Broadband providers that provide Broadband internet service or Broadband service in the Project area.

8. **Matching Funds** . Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a request for match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.

Award Criteria (70 Points)

All applications that meet the minimum requirements are reviewed for funding using the following award criteria. Application funding will be prioritized based on a review of the following criteria, the availability of funds, and any other information the CBO deems pertinent to the funding decision. In addition to all other requirements and assessments, the CBO may consider but is not limited to considering, the extent to which the Applicant has demonstrated that:

1. **Purpose and Project Impacts (10 Points)**. The Project proposal should clearly state the purpose, objectives, scope, sponsorship, funding and impact of the Project.
2. **Project Plan and Timeline (10 points)**. A completed Project plan which references milestones within a timeline, with a narrative of performance goals should be attached. Applicants should prepare a clear assessment of the Project with quantified outcomes, and demonstrate their ability to pivot with the Project if challenges arise. Timelines must demonstrate clear milestones to be achieved over the life of the Project, and must be tied to deliverables in the milestones. Faster deployment will receive higher scores.
3. **Geographic Distribution of Broadband Deployment (10 Points)**. Geographic distribution of grant awards with additional consideration to Projects in areas that have not received an award from any Colorado State grant program.
4. **Low-Income Households (10 Points)**. The Applicant has demonstrated how this Project will benefit low-income households in the proposed Project area.



5. **Critically Unserved Areas (5 Points).** Whether the Project will provide service to households that are located in an area determined to be Critically Unserved.
6. **Matching Funds (15 Points).** Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a request for match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.
7. **Reasonable Cost (10 Points).** Please describe the following in this section: reasonableness of Project cost, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category.



Exhibit A-4: Non-deployment Scoring Matrix

Minimum Requirements

The Advance-Local grant program also supports Non-deployment Projects.

Non-deployment Projects are designed to support the improvement, or acquisition operations or programs for a wide range of eligible entities, including local municipalities, nonprofits, Tribes with the stated purposes of working to ensure all Coloradans have the digital skills, devices, and affordable access to the internet needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Projects can include programs that support workforce development. Applicants are prohibited from using grant money to subsidize expenses associated with telecommunications operational expenses, with the exception of one-time technology upgrades that improve cybers security and innovation expenses and regulatory compliance. Applicants will be reviewed based on the factors below, with special consideration made through the award criteria. To be considered for an award, Applicants bear the burden of proving that each of the following requirements are met:

- 1. Coalition.** Eligible entities must maintain an active partnership or Coalition during the life of the Project, with evidence of an agreement between the entities, or a legally binding document detailing the partnership. Coalition members must show evidence of what they will each accomplish in the Project, and how they are able to define the Project impact between the two or more entities involved.
- 2. Eligible Applicants.** Eligible Applicants include ISPs, Tribes, local community internet service providers, nonprofits, cooperatives, electric companies, municipalities with partnerships, city-owned ISPs, and partnerships of such entities. Description must include proof of partnership and status.
- 3. Statement of Need.** Applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the Project area's Digital Equity and access gaps, including workforce development, and the specific barriers of prioritized audience(s). Uses data to establish a



clear community need for a Project and focuses on the need for this specific Project, rather than a general need.

4. **Population Served.** The Applicant clearly defines the demographic impacted by the Project, the number of the population who will benefit from this Project, any specific language groups that will be served, and offers a justification for why this demographic is the focus of this Project. The Applicant understands and can explain what specialized services are needed to address the barriers that these populations face, and has a long-term strategy for addressing these barriers. The Applicant should also demonstrate how this demographic will stand to benefit from this Project, and if they are clearly identified in the Colorado Digital Access Plan.
5. **Project Plan and Timeline.** A completed Project plan which references milestones within a timeline, with a narrative of performance goals should be attached. Applicants should prepare a clear assessment of the Project with quantified outcomes, and demonstrate their ability to pivot with the Project if challenges arise. Timelines must demonstrate clear milestones to be achieved over the life of the Project, and must be tied to deliverables in the milestones.
6. **Community Impact.** Community support is also an essential component of this Project and Applicants must demonstrate how the community is supportive of this Project, and what role they will play in its successful implementation.
7. **Roles and Responsibilities.** The Applicant clearly outlines roles and responsibilities to support all aspects of Project planning, implementation, outreach, and reporting, and should list team members working on the Project and each member's title, role and responsibilities. This should include expected managers, coordinators, staff, volunteers, and consultants funded by both the community match and grant funds.
8. **Complete Application.** The Applicant has applied using the most recent application form and answered all questions to the satisfaction of the CBO.



9. **Matching Funds.** Applicants must provide evidence of a 25% match, or a request for match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.

Award Criteria (90 Points)

All applications that meet the minimum requirements are then reviewed using the following award criteria. Funding will be prioritized based on the impact, fund availability, and any other information the CBO deems pertinent to the decision.

1. **Budget (10 points).** The budget and budget narrative are detailed and cover all realistic costs associated with the Project. Applicants must demonstrate how the budget was built for each line of the Project costs. The narrative should provide a clear justification of the costs and how it was calculated.
2. **Low-Income Households (5 Points).** The Applicant has submitted an estimated number of how this Project will benefit low-income households, and how it will determine which households are considered low-income.
3. **Project Implementation (10 Points).** The Applicant uses evidence to show how previous Projects have been successful, and if applicable, how the organization will build on previous successes and how funding will increase organizational capacity to deliver programs and services. Submissions must include a timeline of successfully executed Projects, including deliverables and wider impact. Applicants with no prior experience should consider partnering with more experienced entities.
4. **Geographic Distribution (10 Points).** Geographic distribution of grant awards with additional consideration to Projects in areas that have not received an award from any State of Colorado grant program.
5. **Project Evaluation (10 Points).** Demonstrates a well-defined evaluation plan with administrative procedures to track outcomes. Applicants must explain how outcomes must be both quantitative and qualitative benefits for the intended population. Outcomes are realistic, actionable, equitable and have the



resources needed to collect and keep track of the data. Also demonstrates how the data help the organization make decisions in the future. How will the Project data help the organization determine if they are reaching their target population(s)?

6. **Matching Funds (15 Points).** Must have matching funds of at least 25%, or a request for match waiver with justification. Points are allocated on a sliding scale as shown in 6.13.2.
7. **Reasonable Cost (10 Points).** Please describe the following in this section: reasonableness of Project cost, grant cost for the entire Project, cost comparison versus other similar Projects. Staff will assess and score narrative responses under this category.
8. **Purpose and Project Impacts (10 Points).** The Project proposal should clearly state the purpose, objectives, scope, sponsorship, funding and impact of the Project.
9. **Project Plan and Timeline (10 points).** A completed Project plan which references milestones within a timeline, with a narrative of performance goals should be attached. Applicants should prepare a clear assessment of the Project with quantified outcomes, and demonstrate their ability to pivot with the Project if challenges arise. Timelines must demonstrate clear milestones to be achieved over the life of the Project, and must be tied to deliverables in the milestones. Faster project goal achievement will receive higher scores.