

Broadband Gap and Feasibility Analysis – FAQ's

Q. What is a Broadband Gap Analysis?

A. A Broadband Gap Analysis is a comprehensive feasibility study that identifies areas within the County that lack adequate broadband internet access. It assesses the current state of broadband infrastructure, service availability, and usage patterns to pinpoint where the greatest need is and therefore, define all the places that still have slow or no broadband.

Q. Why is a Broadband Gap Analysis being planned?

A. There are areas within the County today where residents, farms, and businesses can buy good broadband speeds; however, there are also areas within the County where the internet options are limited, and the broadband speeds are slow or non-existent. The analysis is being planned to understand the current state of broadband access in the County, ensuring that all residents, farms, and businesses have equitable access to high-speed internet, which is essential for today's digital economy.

Q. Who is going to pay to get faster broadband?

A. The County is not considering becoming an internet service provider and no tax revenues will be used to get faster broadband. The State of Missouri has received over \$1.7 billion in money that can be used to provide broadband grants to improve internet service. The County will be working with the existing internet service providers to seek grant funding and to build faster broadband networks.

Q. Why is faster broadband needed?

A. The residents and businesses in the areas without good broadband are disadvantaged. Students struggle with doing homework at home. Residents do not have the same options for working from home as everybody else. Residents have a hard time participating in telemedicine and other essential services. Businesses and farms struggle to use online software tools that their competitors are using.

Q. Who will conduct the Broadband Gap Analysis?

A. Finley Engineering and CCG Consulting, in collaboration with local stakeholders, will conduct the analysis.

Q. How will the data for the Broadband Gap Analysis be collected?

A. Data will be collected through a combination of surveys, interviews, publicly available datasets, speed tests, field reviews, and collaboration with local internet service providers to complete a full assessment.

Q. What are the potential benefits of conducting a Broadband Gap Analysis?

A. The analysis will provide insights into areas that need improved broadband infrastructure, help in securing grant funding for such projects, and ensure that all residents, farms, and businesses can access high-speed internet for a wide variety of uses including education, work, and other essential activities.

Q. How can residents participate in the Broadband Gap Analysis?

A. Residents can participate by filling out surveys and providing feedback on their personal broadband experiences.

Q. How will the results of the Broadband Gap Analysis be used to improve broadband access?

A. The results will guide infrastructure development plans, policy recommendations, and guide local leaders on future support for grant funding requests to the State of Missouri.

Q. What is the timeline for the Broadband Gap Analysis?

A. The analysis is currently underway and will conclude by December, 2023.

Q. How does improved broadband access benefit communities?

A. Improved broadband access promotes education, enables remote work, fosters economic growth, and ensures residents and businesses can access essential online services and information.

Q. How does improved broadband access support economic development?

A. It attracts and retains businesses, supports local entrepreneurs, and ensures a skilled workforce by providing access to online training and resources.

Q. How does improved broadband access enable remote work and education?

A. With high-speed internet, residents can participate in online classes, access educational resources, and work from home efficiently.

Q. How does improved broadband access improve healthcare delivery?

A. It enables telemedicine, online consultations, and access to medical resources and information, ensuring timely and efficient healthcare.

Q. How does improved broadband access enhance public safety?

A. It supports emergency response systems, allows for real-time communication during crises, and provides residents with timely updates and information.