

Appendix A

County and City of Pittsburgh **PROFILES**

The profiles contained herein represent feedback and data gathered in fall 2021 to inform the development of the SWPA Connectivity Roadmap.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY & CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Population
1,211,358

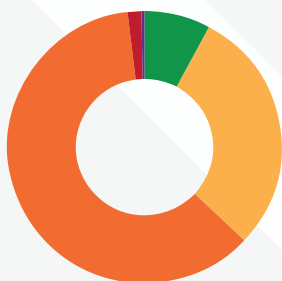
Broadband Issues

An interview with Allegheny County
Economic Development – Fall 2021

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	7.77%
3 Providers	29.29%
2 Providers	60.98%
Only 1 Provider	1.62%
No Providers	0.35%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$687,250

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

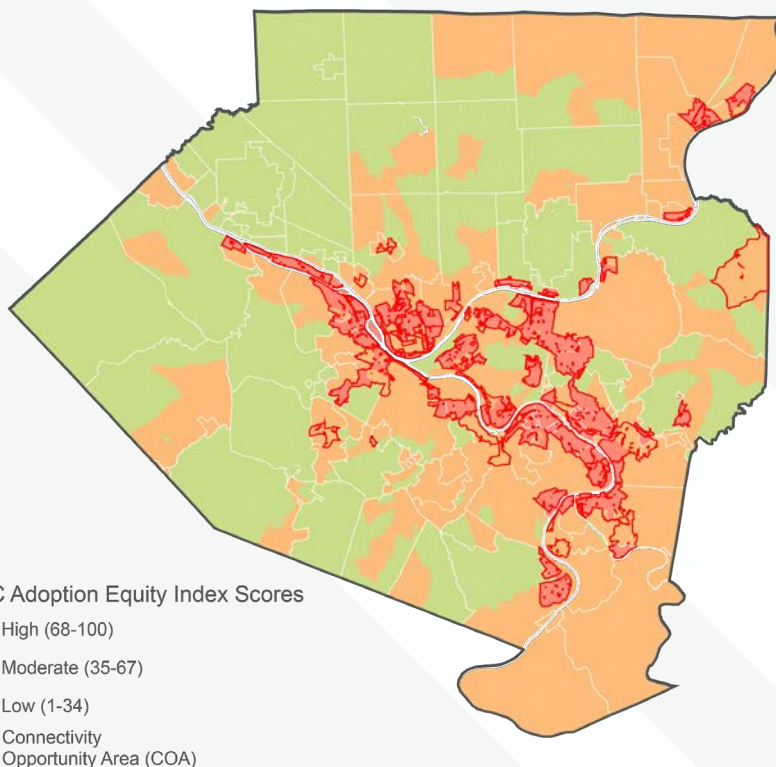
Allegheny County is interested in affordability in the region and county specifically. The county plans to consult the SPC Connectivity Roadmap in deciding what broadband projects to pursue and in the identification of grants or funding for those projects. Allegheny County recommends striking a balance between supporting the affordability needs of urban areas and the connectivity/infrastructure needs of rural areas in the region.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Broadband should be treated like a core utility, for example with cost handled like heating bills and subsidized for low-income areas.
- Cornell School District (including Coraopolis and Neville Island) is a partner in the Every1online program which offers wireless internet service provider (WISP) infrastructure for households in need of internet connectivity in the district.
- Several Allegheny County departments would be heavily involved in any future broadband projects (i.e., Department of Human Services, Health Department, and the Housing Authority).

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



WHAT WE HEARD IN ALLEGHENY

Public Feedback – Fall 2021

1,156

Residents took the survey

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Service



Contract

Fiber Optic is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (45%)

40% of respondents **SELECTED CABLE** as a connection type for their household

36% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



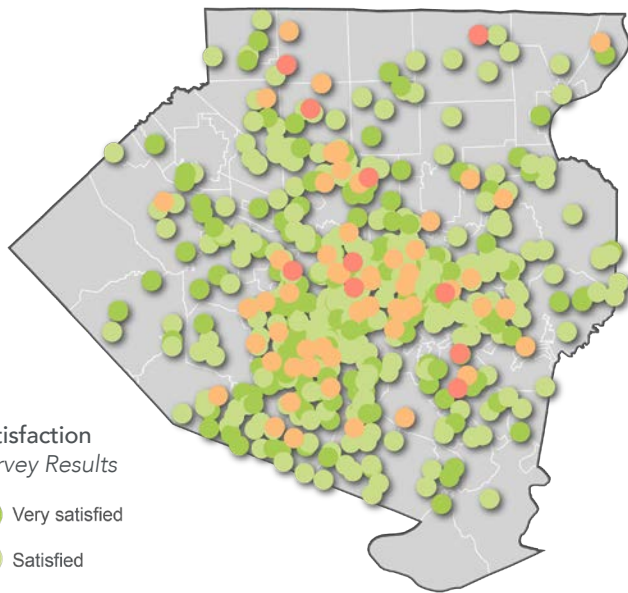
55% say their current service fits their needs.



38% cannot afford to pay more.

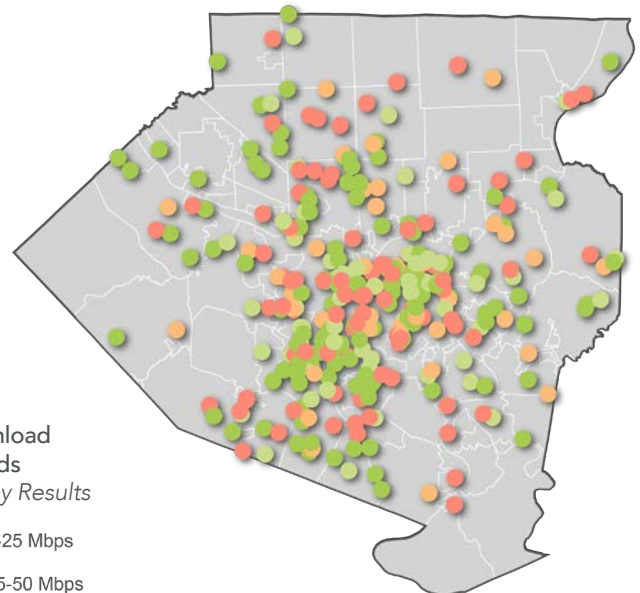


29% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps

In conversation at the Latino Community Center

SYLVIA'S STORY:

Sylvia uses the internet at work every day, and during the COVID pandemic she used her internet at home for work. Her internet is slow, and it normally does not work in certain parts of her house. Both her son and she use it for classes and work, which slows it down even more. She lives in North Versailles and works in the McKeesport School District.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Affordability
- Staying Connected
- Inequity for Children
- Remote Work & Job Search
- Social Media and Gaming

CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Broadband Issues

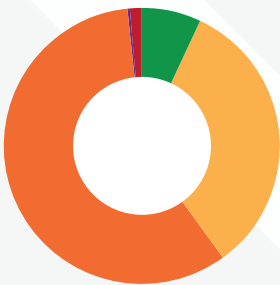
An interview with the City of Pittsburgh Department of Innovation & Performance – Winter 2022

One of the Mayor's goals is to close the digital divide within the City of Pittsburgh. The city has begun the necessary steps to close the digital divide with a comprehensive plan that includes support for residents to navigate options for affordable or free broadband services, expanded digital literacy training, and broader access to internet-enabled devices. In 2019, a feasibility study was done through the city's Department of Innovation and Performance to review the city's fiber network across all city-owned facilities with the possibility of expanding services to other governmental and nonprofit organizations in the future. The feasibility study led to an agreement with Crown Castle to provide a new unified fiber connectivity network connecting 130 facilities within the City of Pittsburgh. The new network, called NetPGH, will provide upgrades to service, improvement to hardware, and will meet the city's strict cybersecurity standards. The work on NetPGH will begin in April 2022 and take approximately two years to complete.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers by Population*

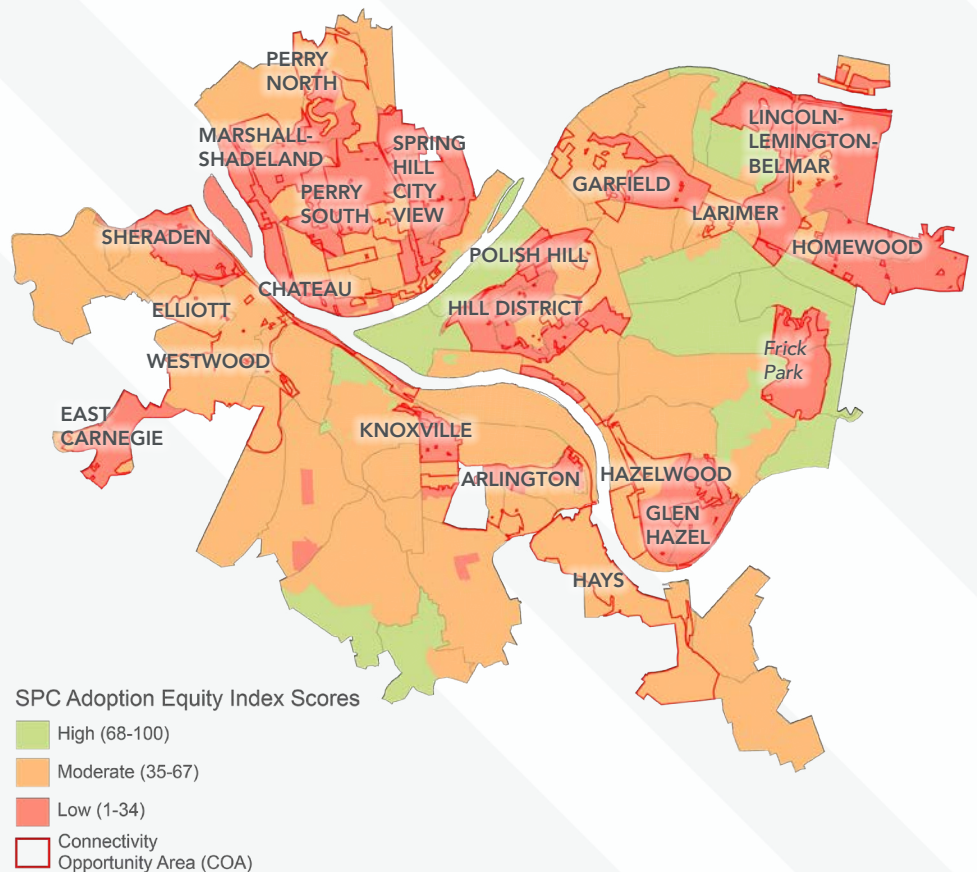


4 or More Providers	7.16%
3 Providers	33.37%
2 Providers	58.07%
Only 1 Provider	1.28%
No Providers	0.12%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



WHAT WE HEARD IN THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Public Feedback – Fall 2021



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Department of Innovation and Performance is reaching out to important community organizations such as the United Way, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the Pittsburgh Digital Inclusion Coalition and others to learn more about Pittsburgh residents' digital inclusion needs and to establish a coordinated, multi-year plan to address them through anticipated funding opportunities. With this coalition, the Department of Innovation and Performance will be applying for Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment (BEAD) program funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- Funding received through these efforts should expand on the foundational work of NetPGH by underwriting expenses to provide free Wi-Fi in the areas near city recreation and senior centers, working with the Housing Authority to provide broadband to their residents, and partnering with established digital literacy and device providers to dramatically expand and extend their programs. The goal is to improve digital literacy and provide high-quality internet connectivity by enhancing free public Wi-Fi to those communities who would benefit the most.

In conversation at Homewood Children's Village

JEROME'S STORY:

Jerome is currently looking for a new job; he is into non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and blockchain technology. He feels the internet is necessary. He is a musician and uses the internet to stream and upload music. He has Cricket as his mobile provider and feels that his phone bill is really affordable. Cricket doesn't have great phone service. He feels that he has pretty good service for the internet in his home, unlike his brother, who lives less than a mile away in Wilkinsburg and has trouble accessing his internet.

KEY THEMES

Inequity for Children
Remote Work & Job Search
Affordability
Community Service

In conversation at the Latino Community Center

KATHARINE'S STORY:

Katharine uses the internet to help her with her baby and to learn different parenting tips. Her English classes are online, and she needs the internet to go to class. She doesn't have internet in her house, so she is borrowing it through La Lineria de Pittsburgh, which she received through her English classes.

KEY THEMES

Connecting Abroad
Remote Learning
Remote Work

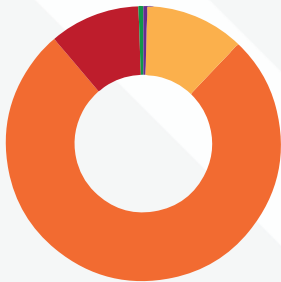
ARMSTRONG COUNTY

Population
64,162

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

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Fixed Broadband Providers by Population*



4 or More Providers	0.45%
3 Providers	11.66%
2 Providers	76.66%
Only 1 Provider	10.67%
No Providers	0.56%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$4,863,512

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

Broadband Issues

An interview with Armstrong County
Planning & Development – Fall 2021

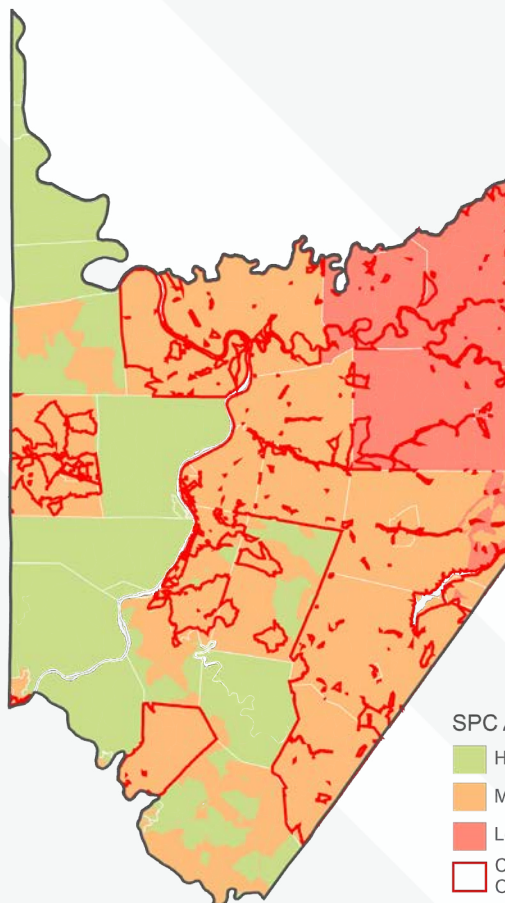
Armstrong County has discussed potential projects with several internet service providers (ISPs) contingent upon funding availability. There is a possibility that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will be allocated. The county has not applied for broadband grants or funding as of yet. Armstrong County may reconsider seeking broadband funding based on the data and approaches outlined in the SPC Connectivity Roadmap.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- It is important to get input and involvement from the school districts since they know the students and families who are struggling with broadband connectivity.
- Communication and transparency are key to having a successful Connectivity Roadmap.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



SPC Adoption Equity Index Scores

- High (68-100)
- Moderate (35-67)
- Low (1-34)
- Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Speed



Service

DSL is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (44%)

ONLY 36% of respondents **SELECTED CABLE** and **only 3%** selected **fiber optic** as a connection type for their household

37% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



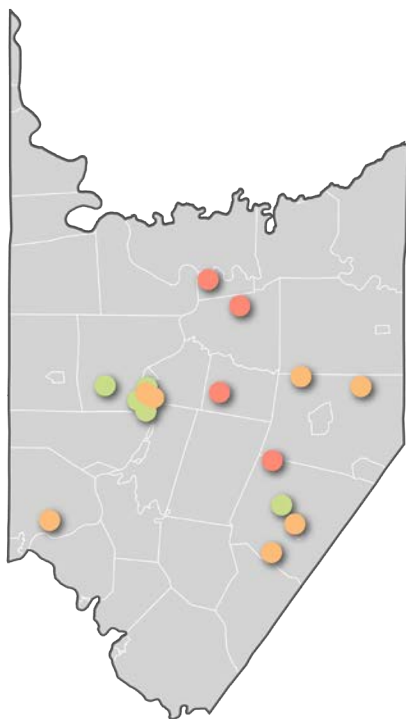
58% cannot afford to pay more.



43% say their current service fits their needs.

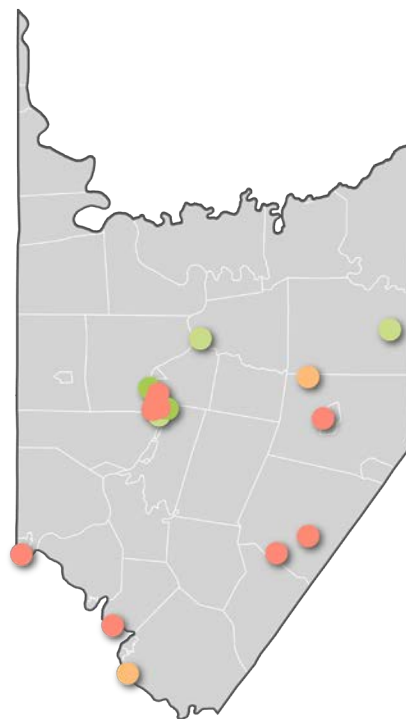


39% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps

In conversation at Redbank Valley Library

BRENDA'S STORY:

Brenda is located in an area that has limited fiber connections, but those connections only reach key institutions. She is left with the often-unreliable service that is supplied by the ISP, which is not sufficient. Being on the "end of the line," Brenda must rely heavily on expensive mobile data plans to compensate for the lack of coverage.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Poor & Unreliable Service
- Affordability
- Availability/Choice of Provider

BEAVER COUNTY

Population
162,575

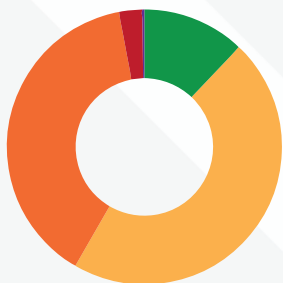
Broadband Issues

An interview with the Office
of Planning & Redevelopment – Fall 2021

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

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Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	12.06%
3 Providers	46.34%
2 Providers	38.64%
Only 1 Provider	2.71%
No Providers	0.26%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$1,309,579

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904



Equitable Broadband Access

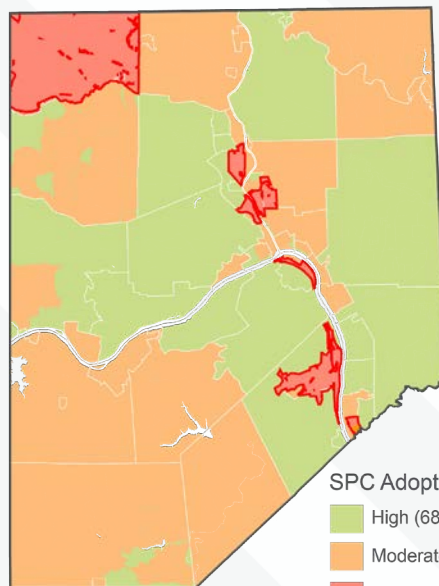
Beaver County has been at the forefront of identifying broadband availability with their Infrastructure Connectivity Study in 2019. Since then, Beaver County has devoted their time and energy to bridging the digital divide, making the county one of the first broadband champions in the Commonwealth. Starting in the spring 2021, Beaver County conducted a Broadband Data Collection & Feasibility Study where the county conducted field verification, broadband surveys, and speed tests for both fixed and mobile, to determine the true picture of the broadband landscape in Beaver County. Over 2,100 potential locations were field verified, along with more than 500 broadband surveys and speed tests collected. The study was completed in October 2021, with final data findings and recommendations.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Beaver County has earmarked nearly \$20 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for broadband improvements.
- The county is currently developing two pilot areas in rural areas with the intent of awarding them to internet service providers (ISPs) in Spring of 2022.
- The county will soon be issuing requests for bids to ISPs with the intent of providing service to the unserved areas of the county.
- Communication and transparency are key to having a successful Connectivity Roadmap.
- The latest updates are available at connectbeavercounty.com

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



SPC Adoption Equity Index Scores

- High (68-100)
- Moderate (35-67)
- Low (1-34)
- Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Speed



Reliability

Cable is the **MOST COMMON** internet connection (47%)

ONLY 21% of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

45% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



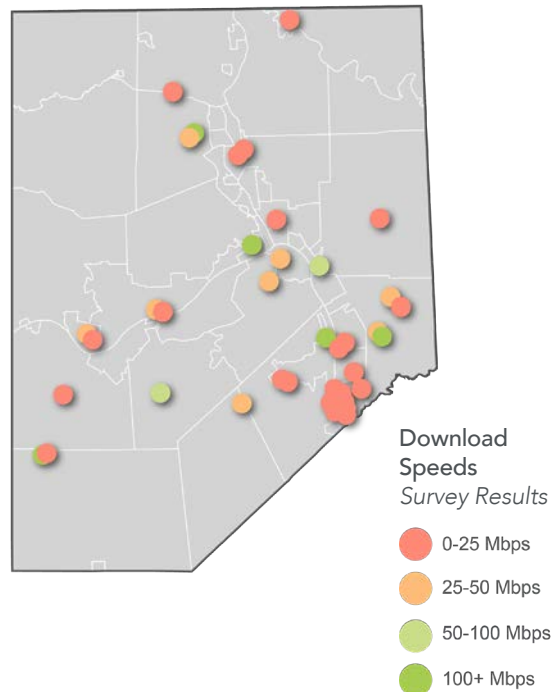
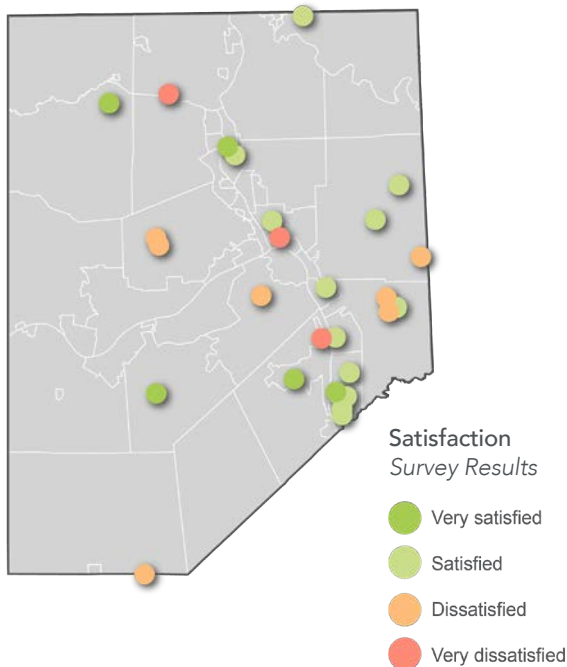
46% cannot afford to pay more.



46% say their current service fits their needs.



24% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



In conversation at Darlington Township Building

KRISTIN'S STORY:

Kristin often works from home but finds that unreliable internet reduces her productivity. She sometimes takes her phone and/or computer to an open farm field and sits there to take calls or do work because the flat open area is the only place where she can get a reliable signal. Kristin needs Wi-Fi to be able to work. Her coworkers in Ohio have much better service than she does, despite living in similar geographic areas. Kristin noted how astonishing it is that local high-speed internet is so far behind compared to our neighboring state.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Remote Work & Learning
- Gaming
- Poor & Unreliable Service
- Affordability

BUTLER COUNTY

Population
189,135

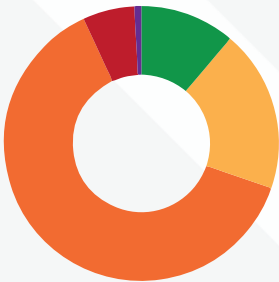
Broadband Issues

An interview with the Office
of Economic Development & Planning – Fall 2021

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

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Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	11.17%
3 Providers	19.10%
2 Providers	62.83%
Only 1 Provider	6.08%
No Providers	0.82%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$3,025,174

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904



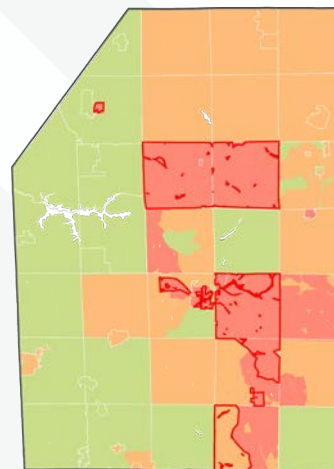
Butler County is the only county in the state with an Infrastructure Bank Program. It started three years ago as a fund for municipalities to access loans at a very low interest rate of 1.5% for 10 years. Municipalities can use the funds for their own projects. The program uses Act 13 Marcellus Shale funds for construction, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, and repairs for roadway, bridges, transportation, water, wastewater, stormwater, emergency preparedness, and public safety. The fund currently has \$40 million. The county started this program as a new strategy to get funding, instead of asking the state for funds. Butler County aims to share their experience and approach with other counties and is considering a similar strategy to fund broadband projects. Butler County is an active partner in the SPC Connectivity Roadmap and plans to consult the plan in future broadband project decisions and funding opportunities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Butler County is considering pilot broadband projects that add hotspots/Wi-Fi connectivity at each municipal park for general use.
- The northern municipalities such as Slippery Rock, Parker, Allegheny, and Cherry Townships (south of Interstate 80) are the areas with greatest broadband need.
- School districts such as Karns City, Moniteau, and Slippery Rock had to set up hotspots during COVID-19 at local libraries for students to connect. The libraries were closed during this time, so students had to complete their assignments in the parking lots.
- Each municipality faces their own unique challenges such as terrain and demographics, and will need a compliment of solutions for each county and community.
- Communication and transparency are key to having a successful Connectivity Roadmap.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



SPC Adoption Equity
Index Scores

- High (68-100)
- Moderate (35-67)
- Low (1-34)
- Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Speed



Service

Cable is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (43%)

ONLY 18%

of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

39% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



53% cannot afford to pay more.



39% say their current service fits their needs.

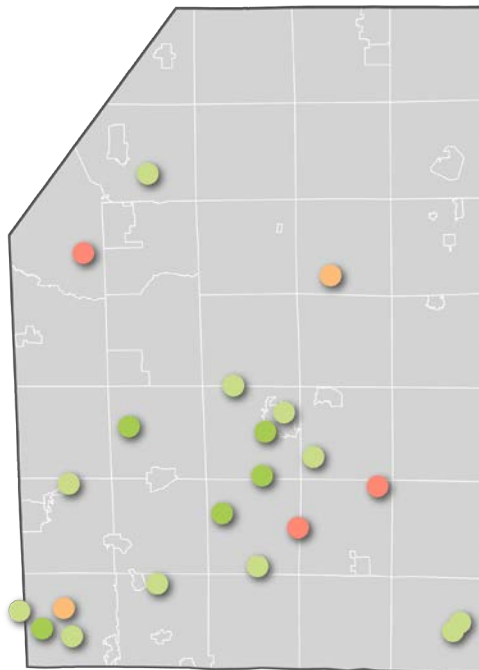


25% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



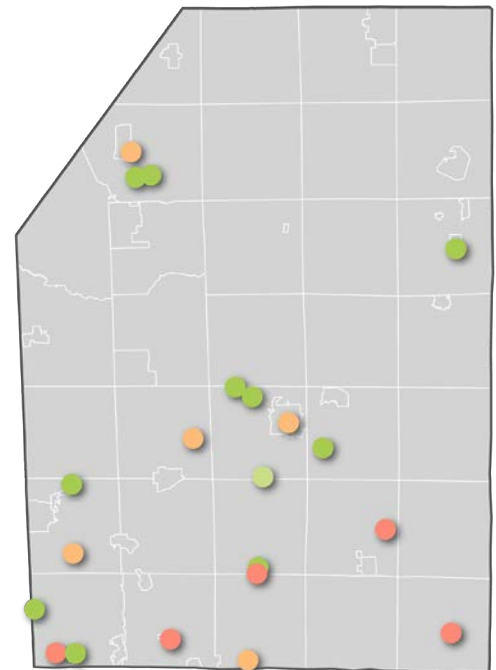
Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps



In conversation at Butler Public Library

CHARLIE'S STORY:

Charlie has internet at home but likes to go to the local library to stream because it works better than his home service. He uses the internet for entertainment and movies and to create content for YouTube. He previously used the internet for telehealth visits. Storms can easily knock his service out due to above ground utilities.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

Safety
Remote Learning:
Wider Access
Poor Service

FAYETTE COUNTY

Population
128,126

Broadband Issues

An interview with the Office of Planning,
Zoning & Community Development – Fall 2021

Fayette County participated in a joint broadband study with Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission that was completed in the summer of 2020. The study included meetings with stakeholders, interviews and meetings with businesses, county officials, and residents to determine unserved and underserved areas of the county. Fayette County looks forward to the upcoming SPC Connectivity Roadmap and is very interested in the results.

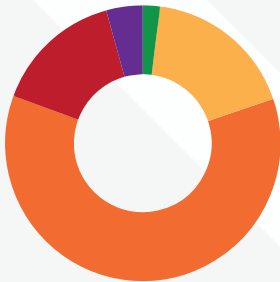
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Fayette County completed and published a Broadband Study and Recommendations Report in the summer of 2020 focusing on wireless internet service providers (WISP) deployment.
- Fayette County completed a fiber project in December 2020 using CARES Act funding. The \$5.3 million project laid fiber in Wharton and Henry Clay Townships and Markleysburg Borough. QCOL is the internet service provider (ISP) who installed the fiber.
- Due to COVID-19, the county's involvement and participation was limited during the Southern Alleghenies broadband study. The county is now planning to launch their own feasibility study in coordination with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).
- The county wants cell towers in proper locations to provide additional potential for fixed wireless to be installed.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

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Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	2.02%
3 Providers	17.75%
2 Providers	60.80%
Only 1 Provider	15.15%
No Providers	4.28%

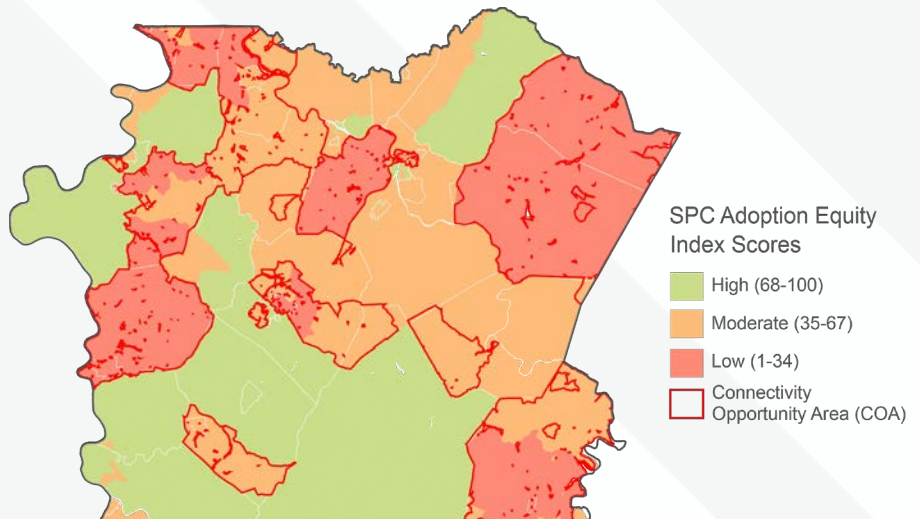
*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$3,793,599

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Reliability



Service

Cable is the **MOST COMMON** internet connection (54%)

ONLY 10% of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

38% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



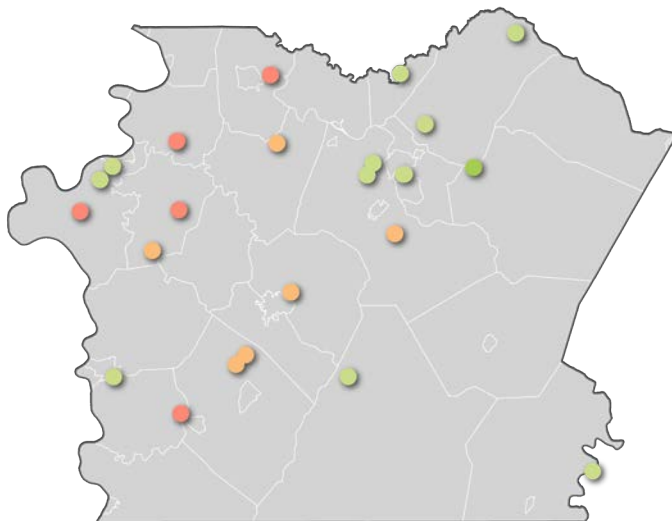
78% cannot afford to pay more.



31% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.

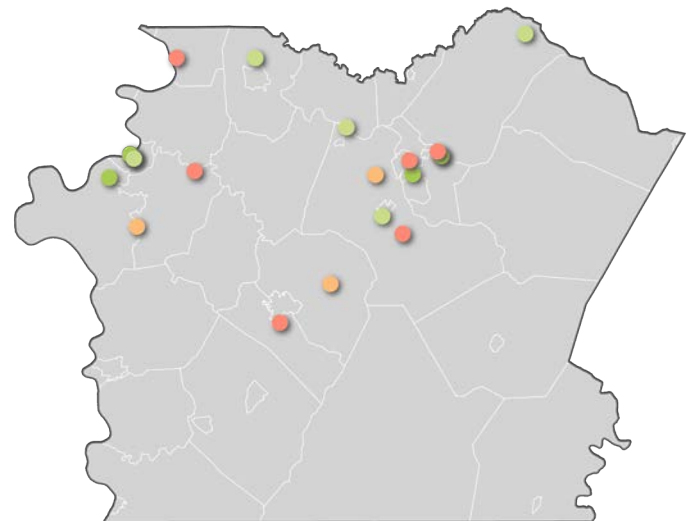


22% say their current service fits their needs.



Satisfaction
Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download
Speeds
Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps

In conversation at German-Masontown Public Library

THOMAS' STORY:

Thomas is a dairy farmer. Internet terminated at the end of his road until this year when it finally came to Thomas' house. It was very slow and unreliable, if it rained, it went out. He uses the internet to work from home, and his daughter uses it for schoolwork and to search for recipes online.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Remote Work
- Affordability & Inequity
- Remote Learning:
- Wider Access
- Poor Service

GREENE COUNTY

Population
35,621

Broadband Issues

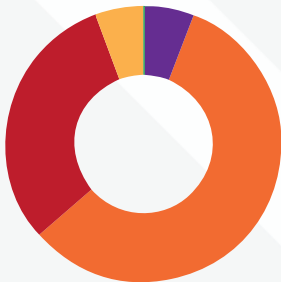
An interview with the Office of Chief Clerk – Fall 2021

Greene County is one of the leaders in Pennsylvania in the deployment of broadband to rural areas. They completed a broadband feasibility study in Spring 2020. Greene County is set to invest more than \$34 million in broadband deployment throughout the county. Greene County deployed more than 220 miles of fiber using CARES Act funding. The fiber runs through the backbone of the county through Center, Franklin, Gray, Morris, and Richhill Townships. The project was completed in December 2020 and provided 8,300 homes and businesses with gigabit capability.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

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Fixed Broadband Providers by Population*



4 or More Providers	0.32%
3 Providers	5.60%
2 Providers	57.65%
Only 1 Provider	30.77%
No Providers	5.66%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$13,931,004

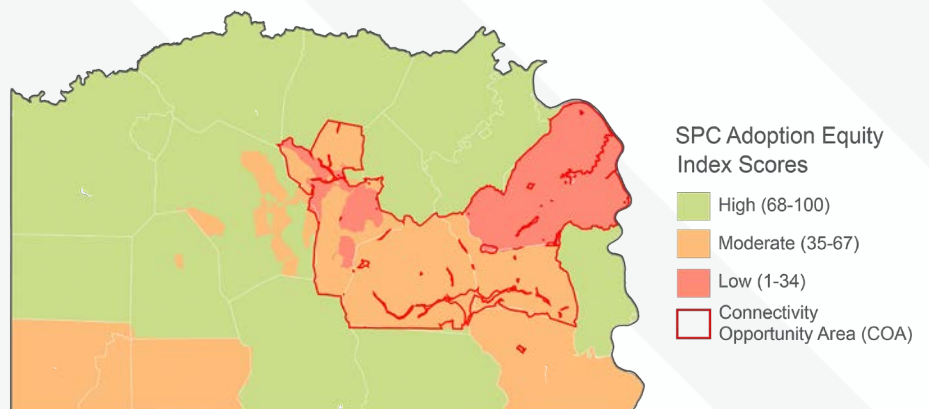
awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Greene County was awarded \$2.5 million in Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant funding in September 2021. The funds are being used to run fiber in the southwestern portion of the county, which includes Aleppo, Freeport, Gilmore, Perry, Springhill and Wayne Townships. Approximately 105 miles of fiber will be installed reaching nearly 1,000 underserved and unserved residents.
- Windstream won a \$14 million bid in Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) funding, for locations located throughout the county.
- A National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) grant proposal was submitted by Greene County for \$8 million. If awarded, the county will use the money to bring gigabit service to an additional 2,000 residents.
- CNX Resources Corporation has recently donated \$1 million for continued investments for broadband access in rural parts of Greene County.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Speed



Reliability

DSL is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (39%)

ONLY 20% of respondents **SELECTED CABLE** and **only 17%** selected **fiber optic** as a connection type for their household

55% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



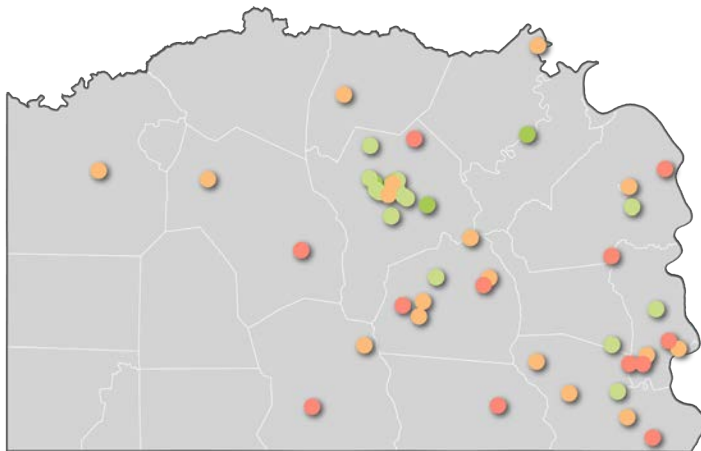
35% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



34% cannot afford to pay more.

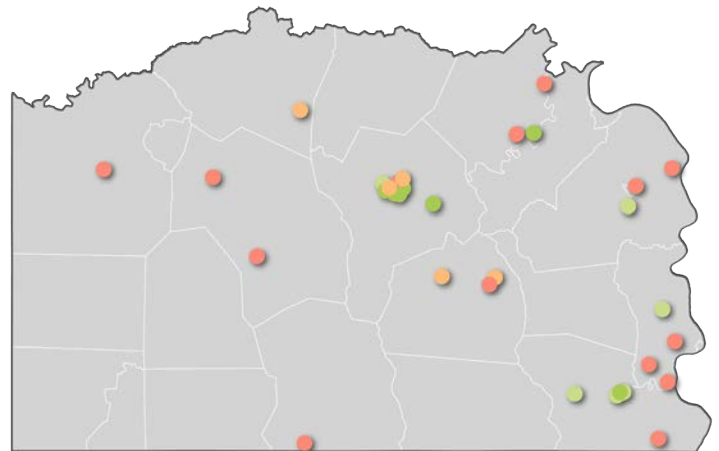


32% say their current service fits their needs.



Satisfaction
Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download
Speeds
Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps

In conversation at the 4-H Building in Waynesburg

ANDY'S STORY:

Andy is a mechanic who works on race cars. His shop does not have a good internet connection so he needs to take engines home to run computer diagnostics and download data before he can proceed with repairs. This creates undue time, effort, and impacts to home life.

KEY THEMES

- Remote Learning
- No Service Providers
- Poor & Unreliable Service
- Affordability

INDIANA COUNTY

Population
83,664

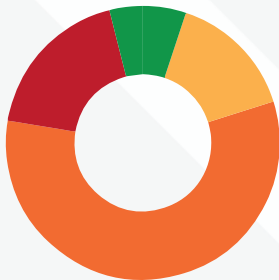
Broadband Issues

An interview with the Office
of Planning & Development – Fall 2021

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	5.08%
3 Providers	15.04%
2 Providers	57.48%
Only 1 Provider	18.48%
No Providers	3.92%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$14,153,233

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

Southwestern Pennsylvania
Connected

Equitable Broadband Access

Indiana County is ready to begin launching its next wave of broadband services to help those who lack high-speed broadband in rural areas. The county completed a vertical asset study in 2020, and has \$4.5 million ready to deploy on imminent RFPs and another \$10 million in submitted grants. The county just recently received \$2 million in Community Development Block Grant CARES funding for broadband services and will target the northwest portion of the county, which includes Plumville and Smicksburg Boroughs, and West and South Mahoning Townships. In the spring of 2021, Indiana was awarded \$1.5 million in Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant funds to deploy more than 100 miles of fiber and to establish eight wireless telecom sites.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

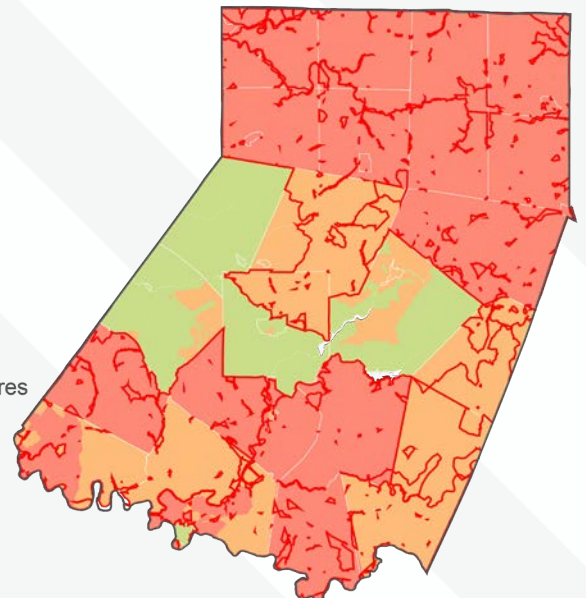
- In 2020, the county used \$2 million in CARES Act funding to extend 85 miles of fiber and installed 10 major wireless hotspots to reach more rural areas on an already-built fiber and tower emergency 911 communication system.
- In 2021, the county completed a cellular repeater project for their county parks. This provided data and phone signals to parks that do not provide service. The county partnered with Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) on an \$8.562 million National Telecomm & Information Administration (NTIA) grant, and is currently waiting on the grant status.
- Indiana County has received \$16 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and anticipates using \$3 million toward broadband projects.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.

SPC Adoption Equity Index Scores

- High (68-100)
- Moderate (35-67)
- Low (1-34)
- Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)



Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Speed



Reliability

Cell Phone is the **MOST COMMON** internet connection (35%)

ONLY 28% of respondents **SELECTED CABLE** and **only 2%** selected fiber optic as a connection type for their household

52% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



54% cannot afford to pay more.



38% say their current service fits their needs.



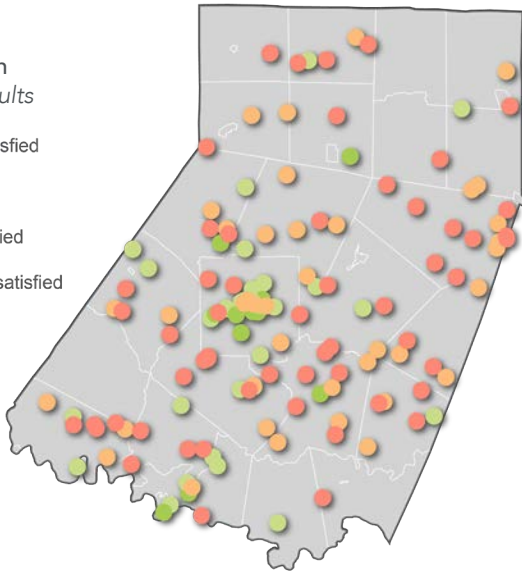
35% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



23%  of respondents have a household income **\$25,000-\$49,999**.

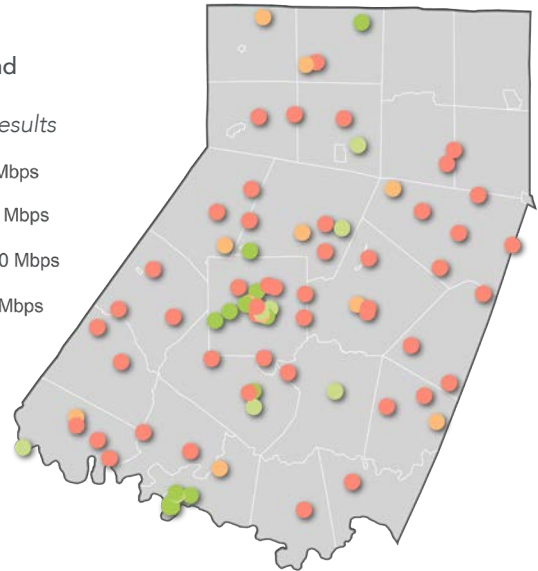
Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps



In conversation at Purchase Line High School

RACHEL'S STORY:

Rachel, a preschool teacher, said that in order to provide her students with virtual learning, she had to record several videos each week. She then had to travel to the school parking lot to upload her videos for the children to view.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Remote Learning
- Lack of Providers
- Poor & Unreliable Service

LAWRENCE COUNTY

Population
85,083

Broadband Issues

An interview with the Office
of Planning & Community Development – Fall 2021

Lawrence County participated in a Community Technology Action Plan study with the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission. The county is also a member and active partner in the Local Development District. Lawrence County has not allocated any American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for broadband work as they are looking to align projects with the final ARPA ruling and guidance.

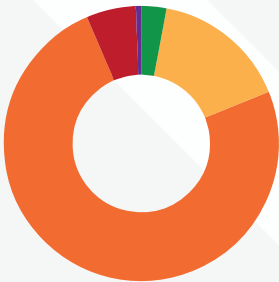
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Lawrence County is in the preliminary stage of creating a GIS tool to support the identification of existing infrastructure utility assets. The purpose is to develop a complete picture of all utility datasets to view and track in one centralized location hub with broadband infrastructure as a key asset to assess. The tool will provide essential information to make future informed business decisions.
- The results of the Community Technology Action Plan, which was funded through an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant and completed in 2019, showed Lawrence County as having the widest broadband coverage compared to the other participating counties. Lawrence County currently is not planning any feasibility studies or broadband projects before the results of the SPC Connectivity Roadmap are released.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	2.96%
3 Providers	15.90%
2 Providers	74.69%
Only 1 Provider	5.82%
No Providers	0.63%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$1,755,979

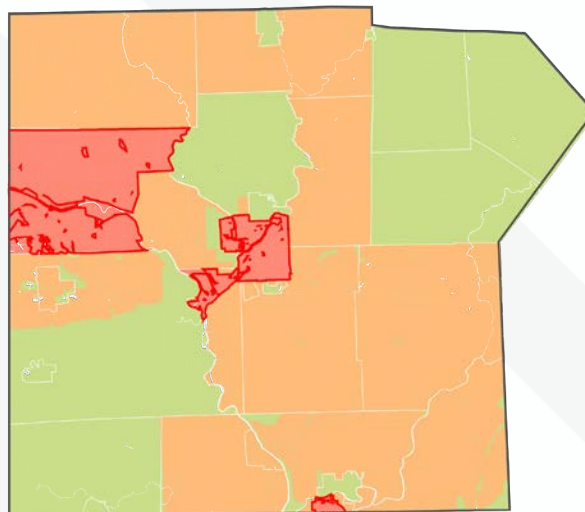
awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

Southwestern Pennsylvania
Connected

Equitable Broadband Access

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



SPC Adoption Equity
Index Scores

- High (68-100)
- Moderate (35-67)
- Low (1-34)
- Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Contract



Speed

Cable is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (51%)

ONLY 3% of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

25% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



75% cannot afford to pay more.



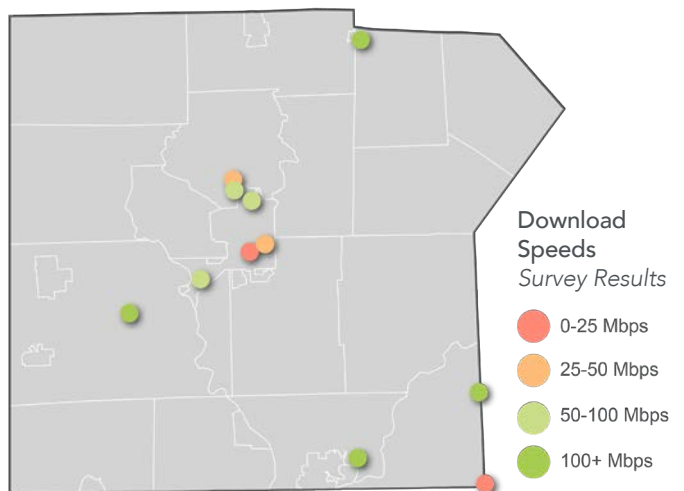
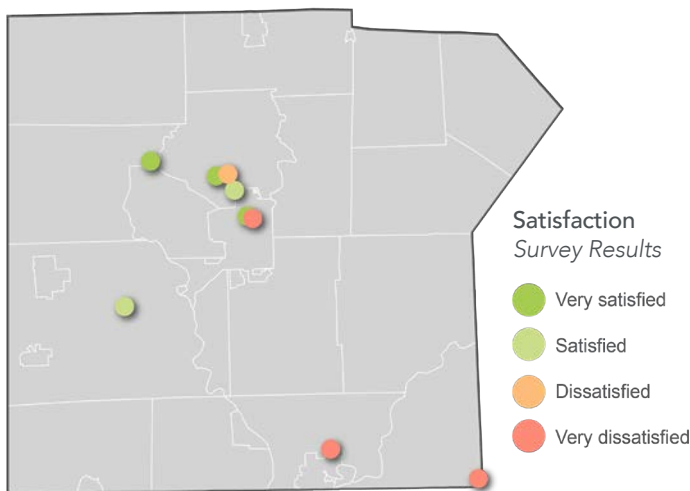
49% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



27% say their current service fits their needs.



36%  of respondents have a household income **BELOW \$25,000.**



In conversation at New Castle Public Library

GRACE'S STORY:

Grace uses her brother's Wi-Fi to connect to the internet to look for work because she cannot afford access or a hotspot. She must go to the library to submit job applications and upload required documents. She is concerned about the privacy of her personal information, but she has no choice and must take the risk.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

Poor & Unreliable Service
Affordability
Inequity

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Population
206,803

Broadband Issues

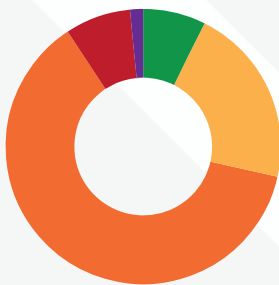
An interview with the Washington County Authority and the Planning Commission – Fall 2021

Washington County is highly motivated to provide broadband to the underserved and unserved areas of the county and has been in contact and coordinating with other counties in the region. The county created the Rural Broadband Program to begin to address the need for reliable broadband connectivity throughout the county. Its county commissioners are 100% committed to furthering broadband initiatives. The county plans to use the SPC Connectivity Roadmap recommendations to help fund future projects.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers by Population*



4 or More Providers	7.34%
3 Providers	21.18%
2 Providers	62.24%
Only 1 Provider	7.72%
No Providers	1.52%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$6,542,573

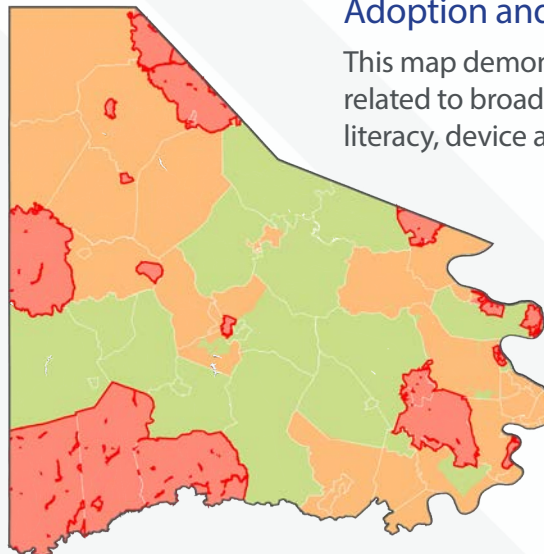
awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Washington County issued an RFP in the fall 2021, seeking a consultant to perform a feasibility study and provide overall assistance with their newly formed Rural Broadband Program. The feasibility study will provide the county with maps of broadband gap areas, financial and capital budget data, and outreach efforts.
- The Hickory Telephone Company received \$495,750 in CARES Act funds to connect six unserved communities in 2021.
- The county is seeking some quick wins with pilot projects. In early 2022, the county let potential internet service provider (ISP) bidders know that it is ready to award and begin construction projects to install fiber to the homes of unserved and underserved areas in 2022.
- The county released an RFP in January 2022 for a small pilot project in Avella with an aggressive construction schedule to provide fiber to homes with 100 Mbps symmetrical speeds.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.



SPC Adoption Equity Index Scores

High (68-100)
Moderate (35-67)
Low (1-34)
Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA)

Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Reliability



Contract

Cable is the **MOST COMMON** internet connection (47%)

ONLY 17% of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

36% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



52% cannot afford to pay more.



37% say their current service fits their needs.

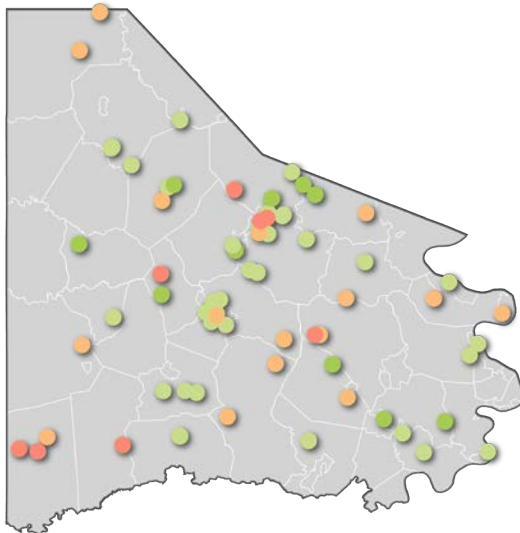


23% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



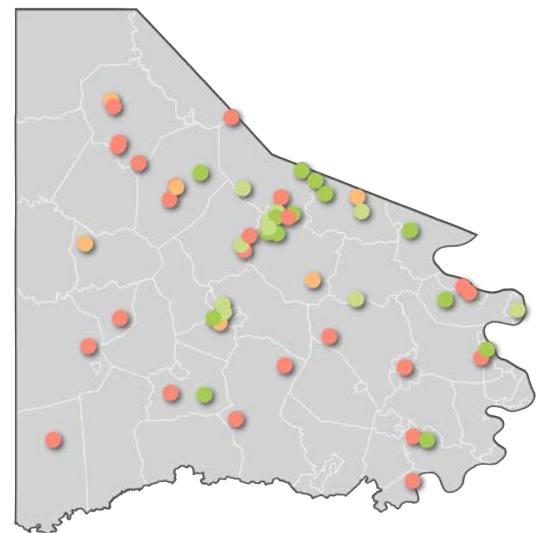
Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps



In conversation at Blueprints in Washington

TREVOR'S STORY:

Trevor lives in Mariana, which is a very rural area. The service at his home is fine, but there is no cell service on 90% of the roads in his area. It is impossible to make calls or get online if he is out of the house. It is a concern when there is an emergency, especially when there was a road closure due to an overturned truck and he could not communicate with anyone. There are many low-income people in his community who cannot afford bundles that can cost \$300 or more, and he worries for the children of those families that are missing out on education due to their inability to connect to the internet. Many people in his area are forced to pay for landline and cell service, because they do not get cell service at their home.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

- Remote Learning
- Lack of Service Providers
- Poor & Unreliable Service
- Affordability
- Inequity

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Population
347,087

Broadband Issues

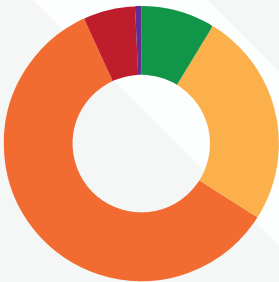
An interview with the Office
of Planning & Development – Fall 2021

Westmoreland County participated in a joint broadband study with Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission that was completed in the summer 2020. The study included meetings with stakeholders and interviews and meetings with businesses, county officials, and residents to determine unserved and underserved areas of the county. The report was based upon the FCC defined broadband speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload; however, the county is planning for and seeking faster broadband speeds. Westmoreland County plans to incorporate the SPC Connectivity Roadmap findings in future feasibility studies and broadband projects.

Overstated FCC Data Creates Challenges

Broadband coverage data included in this profile is based on available FCC Form 477 data which is overstated and in need of verification for each county, which is a key recommendation in the Connectivity Roadmap final report.

Fixed Broadband Providers
by Population*



4 or More Providers	8.68%
3 Providers	25.31%
2 Providers	59.19%
Only 1 Provider	6.10%
No Providers	0.72%

*Based on available FCC Form 477 data

\$2,032,536

awarded in
FCC Rural Digital
Opportunity Fund:
Auction 904

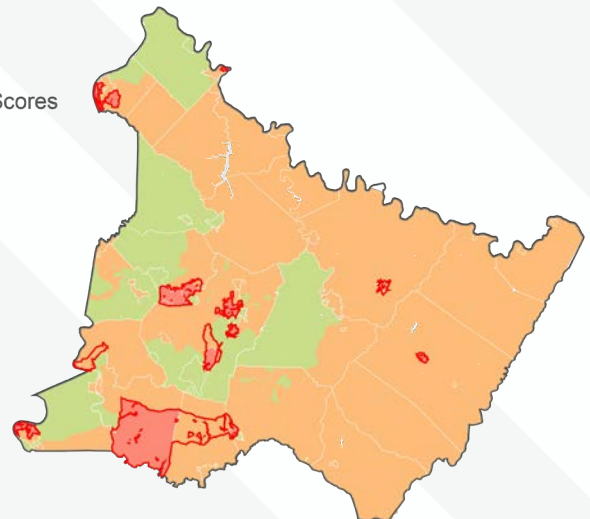
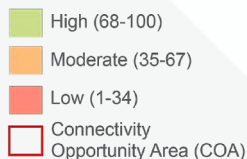
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Westmoreland County used \$150,000 in CARES Act funding for a project installing hotspots at 22 of the county's 26 libraries.
- There are two projects in the preliminary stages of planning. The Municipality of Murrysville is partnering with Westmoreland County to provide gigabit broadband service to every household. The county is also partnering with Fairfield Township and Ligonier and New Florence Boroughs to expand broadband into rural areas.
- Westmoreland County is looking to establish a task force from various disciplines (nonprofit, education, healthcare) to gather their valuable input and feedback to assist in decision making.

Adoption and Equity Index and COAs

This map demonstrates the social needs related to broadband such as adoption, digital literacy, device access, and affordability.

SPC Adoption Equity Index Scores



Internet users are most UNHAPPY with:



Cost



Contract



Bundled Service

Cable is the **MOST COMMON**

internet connection (61%)

ONLY 7% of respondents **SELECTED FIBER OPTIC** as a connection type for their household

30% of respondents are willing to pay more for faster, more reliable home internet service.



52% cannot afford to pay more.



39% say their current service fits their needs.

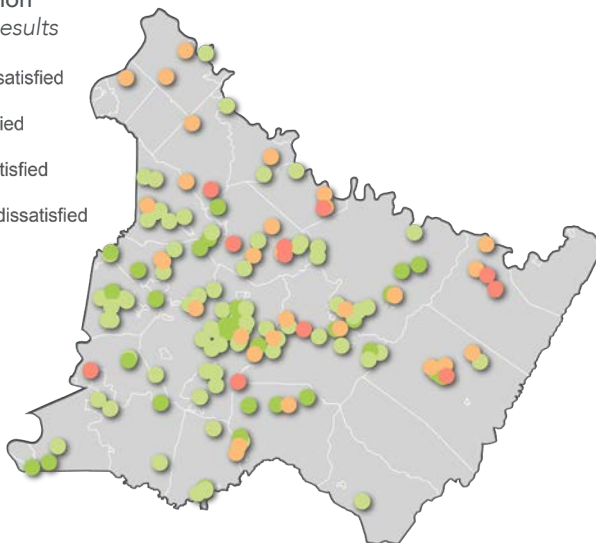


28% think faster internet is not worth paying more for.



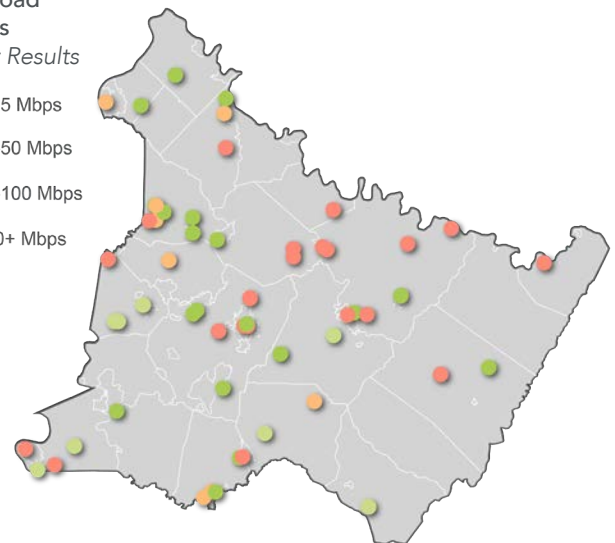
Satisfaction Survey Results

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied



Download Speeds Survey Results

- 0-25 Mbps
- 25-50 Mbps
- 50-100 Mbps
- 100+ Mbps



In conversation at Jeannette Public Library

AVA'S STORY:

Ava, a senior citizen, does not know much about the internet, but is trying to learn. For her, the internet became essential for everyday life during the start of the pandemic to access information, order groceries, and attend telehealth appointments. She has many friends who rely on the internet to order groceries because they are unable to leave their homes. She expressed frustration that there were not many classes or ways for senior citizens to learn about the internet. The classes that are available (or used to be, pre-pandemic) were expensive and usually at night when she didn't like to drive. She has tried to use the public transportation system to get to classes, but the bus schedule does not coincide with the class schedule.

OVERALL KEY THEMES

Learning Curve for Seniors
Inequity
Remote Work & Job Search
Lack of Service Providers
Remote Education