

# Purpose of the State Broadband Plan

The State Broadband Plan highlights the objectives and activities of the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative. The purpose of the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative is to coordinate efforts to deploy high-speed broadband connectivity so that all Georgians have access to healthcare, education, economic growth and expansion, and other quality of life essentials.

An estimated 1.6 million Georgians lack access to high-speed internet service, which is widely acknowledged to be a significant barrier to economic growth. To address this issue, legislation was passed in 2018 to promote broadband deployment in areas not currently served at a minimum broadband speed of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload (25/3). The Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (GBDI) was launched as a result of this legislation, and efforts to date have primarily focused on developing the framework outlined in the following pages.

Under the leadership of an Executive Director, GBDI is coordinating activities among 5 state agencies (Department of Community Affairs, Department of Transportation, Department of Economic Development, Georgia Technology Authority, and State Properties Commission). Additionally, a Stakeholder Advisory Council consisting of representation from private telecom and cable providers, local government, and electricity cooperatives are actively engaged to ensure proposed solutions are useful and practical.

This Broadband Plan explains the detailed framework development efforts underway, including enhanced mapping of unserved areas, local broadband planning, and development of a grant program framework. This plan also supports broadband providers who are actively pursuing grant and loan funding through the US Department of Agriculture's ReConnect Program.