

# Rural Broadband

## How do we get started?

### How do we find Local Match.....

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## Local Match for Broadband Grants

- ▶ Awarded 2 PSC Broadband Expansion grants (2018 and 2020)
- ▶ 2017 Broadband committee sent RFP to 3 providers, only 1 proposal received
- ▶ Provider needed county to gather 50% match funds for ROI to be attractive
- ▶ Original proposal for 5 towers scaled back to 3 towers based on match \$'s
- ▶ \$133,462 project for 3 towers set our goal for \$66,750 match funds to secure

Where/How did we find \$66,750 match  
in a rural county with only 4,423 residents?

## Where to Find Match Funds and Why

- ▶ Schools for online learning (K-12, technical colleges, colleges)
- ▶ Residents for work, play, telehealth (telecommuters, doctors, gamers)
- ▶ Seasonal Residents for security and staying longer via telecommuting
- ▶ Businesses/Chamber for online licensing, reporting, buying, selling
- ▶ County/Towns for EM, better quality of life to attract more residents
- ▶ Hospitals/Pharmacy for telehealth appointments, lab data, Rx orders
- ▶ Utility Companies for bill paying, account info & remote meter reads
- ▶ Clubs/Organizations for website work, member info and state contact
- ▶ In Kind Donations for clearing and excavation of tower sites
- ▶ Mini-Grants from foundations, hospitals, utility companies, LCC

## How to Find Match Funds

- ▶ Prepare 1-page project summary to show why needed and benefits to all
- ▶ Send donation ask letters to county, towns, schools, hospitals, utility companies, clubs, economic development entities, chambers
- ▶ Attend board meetings to explain project, show map and ask for match
- ▶ Use tax roll database to send out Broadband Survey to targeted resident and seasonal residents to collect access/cost/speed data for grant application and piggy back with ask for small donations ie \$20-\$100
- ▶ Use Facebook posts and Survey Monkey links online to get data and \$'s
- ▶ Mail donation ask letters to all small businesses within tower range
- ▶ Groups that didn't donate were asked for a letter of support

## Where Florence County Found \$66,750

<u>Sources of Revenue</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>In-Kind</u>
1. Florence County	\$25,000	
2. Florence County Forestry & Parks Long Lake Tower Site Prep		\$10,000
3. Northwoods Connect	\$5,000	\$5,000
4. Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	\$5,000	
5. Florence County School District	\$5,000	
6. Towns of Fence, Fern, Long Lake, Commonwealth and Florence	\$3,000	
7. Florence County Chamber of Commerce	\$500	
8. Florence Utilities (member of WPPI Energy)	\$500	
9. Marinette County+Marinette Cty Assoc. of Business & Industry	\$1,500	
10. Dr. Greene (Florence Area Medical Clinic)	\$500	
11. Dr. Peter Hamel from Fence	\$3,800	
12. Dickinson Area Community Foundation mini-grant	\$250	
13. Pine River Lumber Company	\$200	
14. Wild River Realty	\$200	
15. Florence Prescription Services	\$100	
16. Donations from small business owners	\$100	
17. Private citizen small donations	\$1,000	
18. Fence Sportsman's Club	\$100	

## What We Learned

- ▶ Need a team of people to split up the number of meetings to attend
- ▶ Attending meetings in person to make the ask was best!
- ▶ Highlight benefits to their organization + the community in general
- ▶ List who else you have received \$'s from and who else you are asking
- ▶ Ideally, find a provider who will cover the match (F.C. grant #2 ☺)  
(Provide letters of support and help write narrative to tell local story)

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