CONNECTMAINE

September Meeting Agenda

29 September 2021

10:00 A.M.

Zoom Link: https://networkmaine.zoom.us/j/87234174040

Authority Members
Nick Battista, Chair
Jasmine Bishop
Fred Brittain
Susan Corbett
Heather Johnson
Jeff Letourneau
Liz Wyman

Introductions of Members and Staff

Meeting Kickoff

Notes of Last Meeting
Approval of the August minutes:

Review of Operations
Executive Director's Report—Peggy
- Community Broadband Planning Support Program
- Rulemaking continues with public hearing on 10.4

Registration required and the 10-day public comment period follows the hearing.
- ConnectMaine presentation at Maine Connectivity Authority September meeting

Review of Timelines—Stephenie
- Targeting February or March for awarding infrastructure grants

This requires opening the application window by/on November 24.
- Targeting February for triennial plan adoption

This means the draft plan must be publicly posted by/on November 25. Staff has been communicating with some authority members about reframing this plan in the context of the MCA and ConnectMaine relationship over the next three years.
- Targeting November for confirming un(der)served areas

This means our update of the Broadband Availability Map must be done by/on October 20 based on industry data and grant tracking reports that were submitted by last week.
- Targeting October for rule adoption

Later in the agenda, we'll discuss next steps that include getting state approval under the 30-day deadline, to affect those three other upcoming actions.

Review of Financials—Stephenie
- Update on audit

The audit is occurring the week of the 27th; so as required by 10.15, staff will submit draft financial statements, GAAP package and signed transmittal letter. Vote to approve the audit would then occur at the October meeting.
- Review monthly financial statements

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Decisions on Programs

NBRC Grant Workplan—Peggy

- Debrief progress on Broadband Intelligence Platform and Grants V&V process
- Decide on remaining portion relating to evaluation of business models

Community Broadband Planning—Stephenie

- Promote Startup Grants
- Open application window for Planning Grants

Performance Criteria—Grants Committee (Nick, Susan & Jeff)

- Discuss recommendations for performance criteria and infrastructure grants process
- Decide when and how to solicit stakeholder engagement prior to grants applications

Other Business

Public Comments

Approval of adjournment:

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August Meeting Minutes

1 September 2021

10:00 A.M.

Temporary Recording: https://networkmaine.zoom.us/rec/share/bO4DCRdZa_H7n8od5hzQ-rc-L6WK5GYt6ICzTHDNlWDAggUvH3SPjSc6qBl8n_4U.acGUL0qyMI_VAUAF

Authority Members
Nick Battista, Chair
Jasmine Bishop
Fred Brittain
Susan Corbett
Heather Johnson
Jeff Letourneau
Liz Wyman

Introductions of Members and Staff

Nick Battista, Jeff Letourneau, Susan Corbett, Liz Wyman, Fred Brittain, Peggy Schaffer, Stephenie MacLagan, Emily Atkins, Jasmine Bishop, Heather Johnson

Notes of Last Meeting

Approval of the July minutes: Fred motioned, Susan 2nd, 5:0

Review of Operations

Executive Director's Report—Peggy

- Required data filing and grant tracking reports due 9.21

Data filing occurs with Sewall Company, and any grant tracking reports are submitted to ConnectMaine.

- Other federal-level activities

Infrastructure bill contains about $65 billion for broadband, $14.8 for digital inclusion and 42 million for infrastructure. House votes around 9.27, but intended to be grants to the state. Each state should be getting a minimum of $100 million plus more based on new FCC maps, so Maine might be getting $2-300 million in 1.5 years or so. The American Rescue Plan funds through the Treasury for Capital Projects will likely be about $129 million, and additional guidance should be forthcoming in October.

- NTIA Grant application submitted

ConnectMaine submitted an application for almost $28 million to serve almost 15,000 potential subscriber locations in seven different areas of the state. A total of $2.5 billion was requested of only $288 million available, so this will be very competitive but we should hear something in November. ConnectMaine is also supporting an application to another NTIA grant program by the Passamaquoddy. If that is submitted, the field is less competitive, with more funds available in that program.

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Update on Maine Connectivity Authority—Heather & Nick
- Debrief first meeting

Board was seated and held first meeting. For next meeting, the board is seeking an update from ConnectMaine on its activities.

- Search for President

Committee is doing the interviews but the ultimate nomination made by the Governor to be confirmed by the legislature.

- Review timeline

The recording of the last meeting and information might be on the DECD website. No update on meeting frequency, but there will be public notice ahead of the next meeting. There are legislative requirements for ConnectMaine and MCA to work together on reporting recommendations for statutory changes in the next legislative session.

Review of Financials—Stephenie
- Update on audit

Field visit is scheduled for mid-September. If it isn't completed and ready for adoption at the September meeting, then we'll know to submit a waiver to vote on the audit at October or November meetings.

- Review monthly financial statements

Flow of funds is slower at the start of a fiscal year, so these show what was captured in July. The $2.5 million NBRC grant is almost fully obligated and funds are starting to flow. NECEC Broadband Fund collects interest. Bond funds are finally moving, and we'll be seeking a second quarter allotment to continue covering the expenses of the projects awarded infrastructure grants.

Decisions on Programs
Review NBRC Grant Workplan—Peggy
- Debrief progress on Broadband Intelligence Platform and Grants V&V process

As mentioned, these funds are flowing and work is well underway.

- Plan for remaining portion relating to evaluation of business models

There was a bit of the grant funds set aside for business models, strategies, for middle mile—information that would be helpful to ConnectMaine but especially for MCA, to estimate costs of projects and assess the possible returns. Waiting to get the cost proposal on additional data tools that will help identify and evaluate various infrastructure projects, including middle-mile, and evaluate the business models for those designs. These feed into the broadband intelligence platform, and ensuring the state's using one mapping platform.

Review Community Planning Support Program—Peggy

- Debrief development of program concept

This program is based on the lessons learned from partners in the private and nonprofit sectors that have provided planning support over the years. Taking upfront planning activities, like the precertification checklist, from the planning grants program—formally known as Phase I—and moving those activities into this planning support program. The Startup Grants will be a much simpler application process, which will roll out in the next week or so. Completion of these projects will result in precertification for Planning Grants.

- Decide on supporting the Connectivity Boosters

One of the lessons learned is watching how communities get started in broadband planning but then get stuck before implementation. A concept proposal was shared with the board, including 12-16 individuals to serve as connectivity boosters across the state. This will provide consistent planning support and training. The support will wrap around the existing community broadband planning and work that consultants are already doing in preparing plans. This additional support has been provided by various nonprofits across the state, and this proposal scales it statewide. ConnectMaine proposes to sole-source contract with the Maine Broadband Coalition to launch this planning support program, in order to ensure statewide consistent training and deployment. MBC can also attract private investment money; we've been having conversations with other partners in this work, e.g., Maine Community Foundation. ConnectMaine Policies & Procedures allows us to waive requirements to do a sole-source contract.

Board Discussion

- Jeff: We've talked about the need for this type of planning support, and structuring it a little bit better for accountability and constantly improving the program is good.

Fred: We need a creative solution for some time, and this is a great opportunity.

Peggy: We did learn a lot from the Maine West Bootcamp, seeing how Mia was able to help move those communities forward; we aimed to scale programs like that statewide.

- Susan: There'd be a connectivity booster in each county?

Peggy: That would be the goal, yes; these connectivity boosters would augment community broadband planning that's already occurring, e.g., Charlie in Western Maine, and wouldn't replace the work of community volunteers and their consultants. There's value in the connections with planning that is going on and the planning grants available.

Approval of ConnectMaine contracting with the Maine Broadband Coalition to support the Connectivity Boosters: Liz motioned, Jeff 2nd, 5:0, Nick abstained

Review Grants Awarded—Nick
- Debrief awards declined or left unaccepted

Status of projects shared in meeting binder. Further described in the Director's Report. Thanks to Melinda at Charter to work through ensuring those declined awards don't prevent the projects from being implemented.

- Discuss response letter on the grants verification & validation process

This new process generated concerns from some industry participations, which were shared in a letter to ConnectMaine. We wrote a response letter, and these conversations are still continuing.

Rulemaking and Grantmaking

Update on Rulemaking & Performance Criteria—Peggy & Nick
- Debrief drafted rule

Spurred by the legislation that expanded the $0.10 surcharge, rulemaking also aims to refine the grants programs, coming from all the stakeholder engagement since last fall. The way that underserved is designated is changing. Other housekeeping changes as well.

- Decision to post drafted rule to host public hearing in September

If we post the drafted rule this week, we can host a public hearing end of September.

- Discuss recommendations for performance criteria and infrastructure grants process

The rule and the grants program are connected, and the grants committee hasn't yet dived deeply into the rule, performance criteria and the Tilson recommendations shared last meeting. Really the other changes to the rule are straightforward or housekeeping; it's only the changes about grants that need to mesh with the application and review process.

Board Discussion

- Nick: Is additional conversation beneficial, about the technical details of the performance criteria affected by the rule; does the grants committee want to have this conversation this week?

Liz: Having more time to absorb all these changes would make me feel more comfortable.

Jeff: Agreed, I'd be more comfortable moving forward after a review is done.

Approval of the grants committee finalizing the draft rule to be posted for a public hearing in September: Jeff motioned, Susan 2nd, 6:0

Other Business

Maine Connectivity Authority presentation—Peggy & Nick
- Revisit our role in the state

To be proactive or ready for conversations with MCA about our respective statutes. Even though they aren't set up yet, our presentation could include how the two organizations could work together, giving them something to soundboard off of once established.

Action: Liz & Susan volunteered to form committee to work with Peggy on this.

Digital Inclusion—Susan
- The National Digital Equity Center received additional funds from DECD

These funds will purchase devices for low- to moderate-income individuals, for which there's an application process. NDEC is working directly with get IT. give IT. To learn more or access, visit: https://digitalequitycenter.org/request-device/

Next meeting—Stephenie & Nick
- Postpone a week to 9.29

With the extra week in September, this makes sense to do.

Public Comments
Startup Grants
- James Ritter, Denmark: How would the grants program work with multiple towns that could range from three to eight?

Peggy: I forgot to mention that while the Startup Grants are replacing Phase I, the Phase II activities would still occur with Planning Grants. The Denmark area is well beyond Startup activities. Community leaders can call staff to discuss their individual timelines.

Approval of adjournment: Susan motioned, Jeff 2nd, unopposed

ConnectMaine Authority Financials

Includes ConnectME Fund and State Account   FY22 Administrative Combined   ConnectME as of 07.31.21 and State as of 08.31.21

FINANCIALS	DETAIL	PROPOSED	OBLIGATED	ENCUMBERED	Q1	Q2	ACTUAL	REMAIN
REVENUE	Carryforward, includes Assessment Withdrawal	$886,455.65	$1,927,088.14	$1,927,088.14	$1,927,088.14	$0.00	$1,927,088.14	$783,222.92
Fund	Assessment Fees, etc.	$3,050,000.00	$1,250,000.00	$481,215.90	$879,098.85	$0.00	$879,098.85	$2,171,487.66
State	Refunds, excludes Assessment Withdrawal	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
SUBTOTAL		$3,936,455.65	$3,177,088.14	$2,408,304.04	$2,806,186.99	$0.00	$2,806,186.99	$2,954,710.58
EXPENSES								
Financial	DAFS, Solix, audit, bank charges	$81,600.00	$76,600.00	$12,900.00	$7,574.00	$0.00	$7,574.00	$69,026.00
Website	InforME, OIT & Sewall	$79,275.00	$79,275.00	$2,375.00	$356.52	$0.00	$356.52	$78,918.48
Administration	Salaries, etc.	$263,563.00	$263,563.00	$263,153.87	$20,280.59	$0.00	$20,280.59	$242,873.28
Cellphones		$1,080.00	$1,080.00	$90.00	$82.16	$0.00	$82.16	$997.84
Travel	Central Fleet, etc.	$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Operational Services	subscriptions, conferences	$21,300.00	$700.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$20,600.00
Support Services	excluding technical and intelligence	$376,500.00	$145,960.20	$50,718.95	$23,112.70	$0.00	$23,112.70	$276,887.30
Technical Services	grants verification & validation	$177,775.00	$146,318.75	$55,856.25	$21,218.75	$0.00	$21,218.75	$125,100.00
Broadband Intelligence	data collection, analysis & mapping	$900,000.00	$929,201.39	$529,294.19	$462,362.15	$0.00	$462,362.15	$466,839.24
Research Services	business models & ROI evaluations	$250,000.00	$140,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$250,000.00
Planning Grants		$246,125.00	$86,625.00	$30,250.00	$30,250.00	$0.00	$30,250.00	$213,375.00
Planning Services	including community mapping services	$200,000.00	$9,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$200,000.00
Digital Inclusion		$100,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Grant Matches		$750,000.00	$50,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure Fund	separate from restricted grants	$225,312.50	$75,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$225,312.50
Miscellaneous	covers likely deviations	$50,000.00	$42.00	$44.18	$44.18	$0.00	$44.18	$19,955.82
TOTAL		$3,725,530.50	$2,006,865.34	$944,682.44	$565,281.05	$0.00	$565,281.05	$2,189,885.46
BALANCE		$210,925.15			$2,240,905.94	$0.00	$2,240,905.94	$764,825.12

ConnectMaine Authority Financials
Coronavirus Relief Funds

FINANCIALS	DETAIL	FY20	FY21	PROPOSED	OBLIGATED	ENCUMBERED	Q1	Q2	ACTUAL	REMAIN
REVENUE	Carryforward			$289,708.39	$289,708.39		$289,708.39		$289,708.39	$0.00
Coronavirus Relief	CARES	$12,000,000.00	$6,201,842.08	$0.00	$0.00				$0.00	$0.00
SUBTOTAL		$12,000,000.00	$6,201,842.08	$289,708.39	$289,708.39	$0.00	$289,708.39		$289,708.39	$0.00
EXPENSES										
Financial	pro rata share of audit	$0.00	$0.00	$5,000.00	$5,000.00					$5,000.00
Digital Inclusion	affordability program	$2,000,000.00	$0.00	$0.00						$0.00
Infrastructure	Connect Kids Grants	$10,000,000.00	$6,201,842.08	$284,708.39	$284,708.39	$273,858.52				$284,708.39
TOTAL		$12,000,000.00	$6,201,842.08	$289,708.39	$289,708.39	$273,858.52	$0.00		$0.00	$289,708.39
BALANCE		$0.00	$0.00	$0.00			$289,708.39		$289,708.39	-$289,708.39

ConnectMaine Authority Financials
NECEC Broadband Fund

FINANCIALS	DETAIL	PROPOSED	OBLIGATED	ENCUMBERED	Q1	Q2	Q3	ACTUAL	REMAIN
REVENUE	Carryforward	$1,000,533.46			$1,000,533.46			$1,000,533.46	$1,000,533.46
NECEC		$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
Interest					$469.61			$469.61	
SUBTOTAL		$1,000,533.46	$0.00	$0.00	$1,001,003.07	$0.00	$0.00	$1,001,003.07	$1,000,533.46
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EXPENSES									
Withdrawals	Maine Connectivity Authority	$1,000,533.46	$1,000,533.46					$0.00	$1,000,533.46
Planning Assistance		$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
Digital Inclusion	affordability program	$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure Grants	matches or direct allocations	$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure Loans		$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
Miscellaneous	covers likely deviations	$0.00						$0.00	$0.00
TOTAL		$1,000,533.46	$1,000,533.46	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,000,533.46
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BALANCE		$0.00			$1,001,003.07	$0.00	$0.00	$1,001,003.07	$0.00

FINANCIALS	DETAIL	PROPOSED	OBLIGATED	ENCUMBERED	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	ACTUAL	REMAIN
REVENUE	Carryforward	$2,000,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$211,000.00	$211,000.00				$211,000.00	$1,789,000.00
Bonds	FY21	$13,000,000.00		$1,789,000.00	$1,653,134.71				$1,653,134.71	$11,346,865.29
SUBTOTAL		$15,000,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$1,864,134.71	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,864,134.71	$13,135,865.29
EXPENSES										
Bond Fees		$10,000.00							$0.00	$10,000.00
Infrastructure Bond		$14,990,000.00	$2,027,986.96	$2,027,986.96	$1,597,840.00				$1,597,840.00	$13,392,160.00
TOTAL		$15,000,000.00	$2,027,986.96	$2,027,986.96	$1,597,840.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,597,840.00	$13,402,160.00
BALANCE		$0.00			$266,294.71	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$266,294.71	-$266,294.71

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ConnectMaine Authority Members: Nick Battista, Jasmine Bishop, Fred Britain, Susan Corbett, Heather Johnson, Jeff Letourneau, Liz Wyman

1 October 2021

Press Release

BROADBAND GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT

The ConnectMaine Authority seeks applications to the Community Broadband Planning Grants Program from groups interested in expanding broadband service to their communities.

Broadband service enables civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning and access to essential services. These grants are funded through assessments or surcharges on certain communications, video and internet service bills. Along with other sources of funds, ConnectMaine anticipates awarding about $50,000 at this time.

Planning grants are awarded to develop plans for expanding the availability of broadband service, and to produce strategies for digital equity and inclusion. Municipalities, groups of municipalities, counties, or community organizations that provide local or regional economic development programs, are eligible to apply.

The planning grants program incentivizes collaboration among multiple communities, in part because the community planning process is a significant undertaking. Collaboration can bring additional resources, volunteers and community support to the planning effort, and it also improves the viability of eventual expansion of broadband networks in the area. Regional projects will be more competitive.

The ConnectMaine Community Broadband Planning Grants Program is designed to get communities ready to pursue future opportunities for broadband expansion, by committing to firm milestones to expand broadband in a way that reflects the community's vision and goals. Communities that go through a community-driven broadband planning process are situated well to apply for future infrastructure grants. Community-Driven Broadband Projects seek to widely expand infrastructure for equitable access to affordable and reliable internet service that meet the current and future broadband needs of Mainers.

More information and applications can be found on the ConnectMaine website: www.maine.gov\connectme. Please direct any questions to ConnectMaine staff. The mission of ConnectMaine is to facilitate the universal availability of broadband to all Maine households and businesses, and to promote the valuable role it can play in enriching their lives and helping their communities thrive.

CONNECTMAINE

Planning Grants Application

Authority Members
Nick Battista, Chair
Jasmine Bishop
Fred Brittain
Susan Corbett
Heather Johnson
Jeff Letourneau
Liz Wyman

Contact Staff
Connect.ME@maine.gov
207.624.9894

This application is for community broadband planning projects, which involve developing plans for expanding the availability of broadband service. Preference will be given to regional projects affecting multiple communities. Successful grant applications describe the project work that would likely lead to expanding the availability of broadband in unserved and underserved areas.[1]

This application window is October 1 through October 31. Please submit your application materials by emailing Connect.ME@maine.gov with the subject heading Grant Application.

Instructions

Please don't include addendums or references; please insert evidence in the order requested. Any information that may be deemed confidential must be submitted as separate files to remain confidential. Please note that applications submitted are made publicly available. Some details of projects funded with grants, including the extent of broadband service availability and any plans produced, are posted on the ConnectMaine website.

Precertification is an eligibility requirement that involves demonstrating an understanding of broadband service availability in the affected communities, that a committed broadband committee covering relevant backgrounds and essential roles has been established, and that other startup activities have been occurring. Proposing the use of funds and investigating regional collaborations are requirements of this application. The ConnectMaine Authority reserves the right to request additional information necessary to evaluate applications for planning grants.

Please contact ConnectMaine staff for any assistance. Please note that the score of an application is only one factor considered by ConnectMaine in awarding grants, among many other factors required or allowed to be reviewed in accordance with the statute and rule. Regional collaborations, proposing project areas that cover more than one municipality, are strongly encouraged.

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[1] Evaluation of applications is conducted in accordance with the ConnectMaine rule:
https://www.maine.gov/connectme/about/statutes-rulemaking

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I.   Applicant Information

Applicant Signature:

Date Submitted:

A. Fiscal Agent

Please also submit a W9 form with the application.

Entity Name:

B. Grant Requested

Amount:

C. Affected Communities

List a point of contact for each community involved in the proposed work.

Community	Name	Title or Role	Email or Phone

D. Applicant or Agent

Name:

Title or Role:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

E. Partner, if any, excluding any consultants hired

Company Name:

Point of Contact Name:

Title:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

F. Applicant Eligibility

The applicant may be any general-purpose local government, including a municipality or county; groups or regional partnership of general-purpose local governments, including multiple municipalities, local government authorities, counties, and joint or multi-county development authorities; any broadband utility district or corporation, wholly or partially owned by local government(s); or any nonprofit local or regional community organizations that are providing local or regional economic development programs.

Name and type of entity:

If any, list any planning grants awarded by ConnectMaine to any of the entities of this application.

Date of award	Entity receiving funds

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II. Executive Summary

Provide a five-sentence executive summary that identifies the applicant, the project area, the proposed work, how the proposed work will lead to expanding the availability of broadband service, and when completion is anticipated.

III. Precertification

To be eligible for planning grants, precertification must be completed and approved. Precertification is a process of engaging stakeholders and gathering information, and which encourages adoption of best practices for community broadband planning.

Briefly describe the regional collaborations or partnerships formed among communities, local or regional nonprofits providing economic development programs, or private-sector stakeholders. If none, then describe the investigation and efforts of undertaken to date.

A. Local Participation

Briefly describe how residents of each affected community are participating in broadband planning.

B. Broadband Committee

The community broadband committee must be committed for the duration of community broadband planning; committees that are committed into and through eventual expansion of broadband further ensure community vision and goals are met. List the community broadband committee members who contribute relevant backgrounds and roles.

Background	Name
an official representing the affected community, including a local elected official with political will to support broadband	
an educator who cares about educational opportunities around broadband	
someone in economic development, including a local business owner, including someone from an industry that's important to the affected community	
someone who depends on broadband, including a teleworker, including a student, including a healthcare provider	
a key individual to any such project, including someone who's integral to the fabric of the affected community	
a deep diver into broadband, including someone with information technology expertise, including someone with policy expertise	
a finance expert, including someone with banking expertise, including someone with public-private partnership experience	
a communicator, both within the committee and from the committee	
an energizer, who diversifies and brings together the group	
a visionary, who drives the process forward and keeps it upbeat	

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IV. Regional Preference

Preference will be given to regional projects involving multiple communities.

Describe the areas covered by the proposed project or included in the proposed activities, including the number of municipalities or local governments, and the number of economic development nonprofits, that are involved in this broadband planning.

V. Project Focus

The evaluation process involves first ranking applications by the likelihood of the proposed projects leading to the expansion of the availability of broadband service.

Describe the focus of the proposed project and how it is likely to lead expanding the availability of broadband service in unserved and underserved areas.

Grant recipients are required to submit the plan generated by the project or a report with sufficient detail to demonstrate that the project is leading to the expansion of the availability of broadband service in unserved and underserved areas. Funded activities should either build upon or result in the following:

- a description of local broadband needs and goals;
- an inventory of the existing infrastructure assets;
- a gap analysis defining the additional broadband infrastructure necessary to meet identified needs and goals;
- an assessment of relevant municipal procedures, policies, rules and ordinances that have the effect of delaying or increasing the cost of broadband infrastructure deployment;
- a strategy to promote digital inclusion that addresses affordable internet service and equipment, digital literacy and public computer access;
- one or more network designs and cost estimates based on input from broadband service providers;
- operating and business models based on input from broadband service providers; and
- information or network design solutions from any other parties submitted during planning.

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A. Project Area

Are the areas covered or included in the proposed project predominately unserved or underserved areas?[2] If not, briefly describe the unique benefit of expanding broadband service to the portion of the project area that is unserved or underserved.

Areas designated as unserved may be identified in any or all of the following sources:

- The ConnectMaine Broadband Availability Map:
  https://maps.sewall.com/connectme/public/
- Community Broadband Plans posted on the ConnectMaine website, if geographic areas are delineated based on a service level of at least 50/10mbps being unavailable:
  www.maine.gov/connectme/grants/planning-grants/awards
- The 2021 Reviewed Areas, if these weren't awarded infrastructure grants since:
  www.maine.gov/connectme/communities-resources/Broadbandmapping

B. Project Engagement

Describe how local leaders, residents and businesses of affected communities will be educated and engaged in the proposed project.

C. Timeline and Milestones

While planning is an on-going process, for these proposed planning activities, insert a timeline that lists the anticipated milestones and anticipated completion date.

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[2] At least annually, and subject to 30-day comment period, ConnectMaine designates geographic areas that are unserved. Currently areas are designated as unserved where internet service is less than 50mbps/10mbps, and areas are designated as underserved where less than 20% of the households have access to internet service of at least 50mbps/10mbps.

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VI.   Financial Commitment

The evaluation process involves dividing the grant amount requested by the number of communities involved in the proposed project, which is then multiplied by the initial ranking for a final ranking.

Briefly describe how any funds awarded would be essential for the proposed project work.

While many factors affect costs, ConnectMaine may use these guidelines and others to award the very limited grant funds available:

- Activities that the applicant, broadband committees or affected communities have the capability of conducting should be covered by in-kind contributions or committed dollars;
- Only activities that the applicant, broadband committees or affected communities aren't capable of conducting on their own should result in consultant expenses;
- Grant dollars should be reserved to cover expenses associated with other activities that aren't typical for the applicant, broadband committees or affected communities to conduct on their own, or that can't be covered by in-kind contributions or committed dollars;
- Consultant expenses are typical for generating the engineering designs and business modeling; however, grant dollars are unlikely to be awarded for fieldwork, mapping and conducting RFP processes where in-kind contributions should be explored.

A. Budget

List all costs of the proposed project and the secured, financial commitments from the applicant and other sources. Committed dollars cannot consist of in-kind contributions.

Anticipated Expenses	Total ($)	Committed ($)	Grant ($)
Totals			

If a community includes a financial commitment toward planning, those funds may not consist of in-kind contributions from the municipality or funds provided by a vendor or private business that proposes to build, operate or provide retail services using broadband infrastructure constructed pursuant to the planning grant. By signing and submitting this application, the applicant certifies the proposed project would be conducted and completed in accordance with the ConnectMaine rule.