



**TEXAS BROADBAND  
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**

# Texas Broadband

## Performance Report

July 2024

Capital Projects Fund



Texas Comptroller  
of Public Accounts

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# 1 Executive Summary

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The Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO), an office within the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, is the gubernatorially appointed recipient of and administering agent for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF), and it has been allocated \$500,475,163 to support the state of Texas' mission of expanding access to reliable, affordable and high-speed broadband service to all Texans. In September 2022, the BDO submitted a grant plan seeking \$363,807,243 in project costs to support the Bringing Online Opportunities to Texas (BOOT) Program, a competitive grant program to address broadband infrastructure projects across the state. The COVID-19 public health emergency showed that access to high-quality internet is a critical need. The BOOT Program is intended to respond to this critical need by connecting end-users in need with reliable internet by delivering at least 100/100 Mbps coverage (or 100/20 Mbps scalable to 100/100 Mbps where higher speed is currently impracticable) to unserved and underserved locations across Texas. The BDO has budgeted to use \$22,412,581 for administrative costs for the BOOT Program and other initiatives related to last-mile connectivity in the state, which includes providing technical assistance to potential sub-recipients; distributing funds; monitoring progress and compliance of funded projects; complying with grant administration and audit requirements; encouraging community engagement; developing Texas location data address fabric maps for public information; and addressing challenges and other uses related to the costs of administering the CPF grant funding. In January 2023, the U.S. Treasury approved the BDO's program plan to support the BOOT Program.

As part of its original CPF Grant Plan, the BDO submitted a program plan requesting \$75 million to support the Texas Broadband Pole Replacement Program created by the passage of House Bill (HB) 1505 in 2021. In 2023, the Texas Legislature passed HB 9, creating the Broadband Infrastructure Fund, and dedicated \$1.5 billion in general revenue to the fund. Managed by the Texas Comptroller's office, the fund's limited uses include funding the Pole Replacement Fund. In response, the BDO withdrew its \$75 million program plan for the Pole Replacement Program from its CPF Grant Plan in early 2024 and

transferred the entire balance to further support the BOOT Program, bringing the total amount of funding for BOOT to \$438.8 million.

To further serve community needs for accessing high-quality internet, the BDO has partnered with three state agencies to expand broadband access across the state. Through June 30, 2024, the BDO has expended \$36,644,162 in total project costs to fund broadband expansion through the following state agency-driven broadband project proposals, with another \$2,611,177 in administrative costs to support the execution of these projects.

- The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's (TSLAC) Infrastructure and Facility Access Improvement Grant Program (IFAIG). In June 2023, the U.S. Treasury approved the BDO's program plan for \$7.8 million in project costs to support this program, which will expand broadband access to libraries throughout the state.
- The Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Texas Rural Hospital Broadband Program. In September 2023, the U.S. Treasury approved the BDO's program plan for \$22.9 million in project costs to support this program, which will build the digital capacity of rural hospitals in Texas.
- The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) El Paso District Safety Rest Area (SRA) Broadband Infrastructure Project. In January 2024, The U.S. Treasury approved the BDO's program plan for \$6 million in project costs to support this project. The purpose is to add broadband infrastructure to six safety rest areas located in Van Horn, Fabens and Fort Hancock.

The state agency proposals build on years of experience working directly within these communities to support Texans.

**1.1 BDO Grant Plan Summary**

Program Component	Description	Allocation Request			Decision
		Project Costs	Administrative Costs	Total Costs	
1a: Broadband Infrastructure Projects	BDO – BOOT Program	\$438,807,243	\$22,412,581	\$461,219,824	Approved
1c: Multi-Purpose Community Facility Project	Texas State Library and Archives Commission – Infrastructure and Facility Access Improvement Grant Program	\$7,799,162	\$1,611,177	\$9,410,339	Approved
1a: Broadband Infrastructure Projects	Texas Department of Agriculture – Texas Rural Hospital Broadband Program	\$22,845,000	\$1,000,000	\$23,845,000	Approved
1b: Digital Connectivity Technology Project	Texas Department of Transportation – El Paso District Safety Rest Area Broadband Infrastructure Project	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$6,000,000	Approved
<b>TOTAL:</b>		\$475,451,405	\$25,023,758	\$500,475,163	

## 2 Use of Funds

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As of June 30, 2024, the BDO has obligated \$11.9 million in project costs related to its first round of the BOOT Program. However, the office has expended administrative funds to support upcoming activities intended to fulfill the program plans' necessary components and ensure the CPF Program's tenets are being met. The program administrative expenses for the reporting period totaled \$6,420,080.53 in cumulative obligation and \$3,152,925.07 in cumulative expenditure.

During this reporting period (July 2023 – June 2024), the BDO completed the following activities through the state's CPF allocation:

- Initiated the BOOT Program, the state's first last-mile competitive grant program.
  - Supported by CPF funding approved through the BDO's BOOT Program plan.
  - Awarded \$11.9 million to fund 20 projects.
  - Will connect 1,729 locations across 22 Texas counties.
- Established a grant program through TSLAC that provides resources for selected state libraries to connect to reliable internet.
  - Expended \$32,116.69 for project cost reimbursements.
- Developed a grant program through the TDA to help rural hospitals improve their broadband infrastructure, provide education and technical assistance, and identify additional resources that address broadband connectivity, reliability and adoption.
  - Expended \$284,904.56 for project cost reimbursements.
- Supported TxDOT's program, adding last-mile broadband infrastructure into state-owned assets to allow at-need communities to access fast, reliable internet along the state highway system.
- Developed a technical assistance program that supports broadband planning in communities with limited resources.
- Increased office staff capacity to meet the goal of ensuring Texas is the most-connected state in the nation.
- Leveraged federal availability data to create and update the BDO's state-mandated broadband map.

During the next reporting period, the BDO plans to implement the following activities through the state's CPF allocation:

- Establish a second round of its last-mile competitive grant program (BOOT II) to obligate the state's remaining CPF balance associated with that program plan.
- Update the Broadband Development Map to inform the BDO and its stakeholders on regions of the state that need the greatest support.
- Administer a technical assistance program supporting broadband planning in communities with limited resources.
- Engage with community members and stakeholders to build relationships and better understand local needs for further broadband access.
- Continue to build office capacity to ensure Texas is the most-connected state in the nation.
- Oversee and verify awardees' compliance with the guidelines of various funding opportunities.

- Develop a grant program for six El Paso District Safety Rest Areas, adding broadband infrastructure to these locations.

### 3 Promoting Fair Outcomes

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The BDO is dedicated to fostering fair outcomes across the state. Our commitment extends to inclusive outreach efforts, ensuring accessibility to all communities.

During community engagements, particularly with organizations representing underrepresented groups, the office actively encourages the dissemination of information related to broadband expansion opportunities. The office prioritizes serving unserved and underserved communities through initiatives like the BOOT Program, TSLAC's IFAIG, TDA's Texas Rural Hospital Broadband Program and TxDOT's El Paso District SRA Broadband Infrastructure Project. Through CPF funded programs, Texas aims to ensure fair and open broadband access for all citizens. The office's efforts align with the U.S. Treasury's guidance and Executive Order 13985, emphasizing fairness for all Texans and support for underserved communities.

**Objectives:** The BDO programs are designed to provide high-speed, reliable and affordable broadband access to every Texan and connect historically neglected communities with the proper infrastructure.

**Awareness:** Texas promotes program availability through news releases via monthly newsletters, stakeholder meetings, semi-annual board meetings and updates on the office's website. The BDO collaborates closely with internet service providers (ISPs) to advertise opportunities, including multilingual notices and support for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

**Outcomes:** The BDO remains steadfast in making affordable, high-speed broadband accessible to every Texan. To ensure the success of connecting every Texan to reliable, affordable internet, the office relies on continuous communication, which guides the BDO's efforts to expand broadband coverage into unserved and underserved areas.



## 4 Labor

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Upon expending project funds, the BDO will ensure funded projects and their awardees use lawful labor standards to promote effective and efficient delivery of high-quality projects while supporting economic recovery through employment opportunities.

In addition to Federal Fair Labor Standard Act rules, such as overtime and minimum wages, all CPF-funded subrecipients must comply with state labor practice standards. Texas state employment, wage and hour laws help protect employees from discrimination or unlawful treatment.

The BDO encourages subgrantees to use effective labor standards to promote the efficient delivery of high-quality infrastructure while supporting economic recovery through employment opportunities. Grant agreements, which establish the terms and conditions of employment for the project's duration, are encouraged to promote harmonious labor relations and enhance productivity. Community benefits agreements are also being utilized to ensure local communities directly benefit from the projects through various provisions. Additionally, a focus on local hiring is being emphasized to provide job opportunities to individuals residing in the project areas, thereby stimulating the local economy and fostering community development.

## 5 Community Engagement

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Since its establishment in 2021, the BDO has maintained a robust and comprehensive public engagement campaign. The office has grown its network of stakeholders and leverages those connections to reach communities most impacted by the digital divide.

Community engagement efforts include:

- Since May 2022, the BDO has hosted monthly roundtable discussions to help ISPs and other industry stakeholders understand federal funding requirements, facilitate mapping data requests, expand community involvement, provide updates on the ACP and provide a platform for industry to report areas of concern to the BDO.
- Since May 2022, the BDO has hosted 10 meetings with its Board of Advisors. These meetings are open to the public and available virtually and in-person.
- Since October 2022, the BDO has hosted monthly roundtable discussions to help local governments understand federal funding requirements, facilitate the map challenge process, expand community involvement, provide ACP updates and provide a platform for community leaders to report areas of concern. Attendees include representatives from area councils of government, universities, nonprofit organizations and elected officials. Attendees included representatives from the Texas Municipal League, Texas Rural Funders, Texas Department of Transportation, Dallas College and the South Dallas Employment Project.
- Since January 2022, the BDO has published a monthly newsletter to push direct updates and other news to stakeholders, promote transparency and generate awareness of the BDO's mission to close the digital divide. As of June 30, 2024, the newsletter serves more than 15,772 subscribers.
- The BDO has two dedicated outreach coordinators who work with stakeholders and local communities on engagement and educating the public.
- Establishing weekly coordination meetings with federal agencies allows the BDO to better understand complex federal requirements for programs under CPF and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Participating in a national network of state broadband offices allows the BDO to learn from and coordinate with other state offices on program development and implementation.
- In April 2023, the BDO established a statewide working group that includes representation from tribal governments and relevant state agencies and provided advisory support in the drafting of the Texas Digital Opportunity Plan (TDOP).
- The BDO established six task forces organized around key broadband outcome areas: health care, education, economic development, essential services, civic and industry. These task forces help identify barriers to broadband access, affordability and adoption and leverage their partner channels to connect additional stakeholders with the BDO. See Appendix for task force membership.
- The BDO also organized 12 regional working groups to ensure communities across the state have a direct line of communication with the office. These regional working groups helped promote public surveys and facilitated in-person public meetings hosted by the BDO. See Appendix for regional working group membership.
- In July and August 2023, the BDO hosted 24 public meetings, with two events in every region of the state. These events were structured to allow residents, local governments, ISPs and other stakeholders to communicate barriers to the BDO directly. All meeting materials were available

in both English and Spanish. Meeting registrants could indicate the need for language/ASL interpretation. The BDO hosted two virtual, statewide public meetings to maximize participation.

- In May 2023, the BDO published three surveys to gather stakeholder feedback. An ISP survey was created to help the BDO understand the unique perspective of industry stakeholders. This survey received 79 responses. The BDO also created a digital resources mapping tool survey to better understand the resources already available in the state and identify where gaps exist. The BDO received 352 valid responses to this survey. Lastly, the BDO published a public survey to elicit feedback from Texas residents. The survey was available online in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Mandarin. Audio files were also attached to the online surveys to assist those who struggle with reading print. The public survey was also available in printed form in English, Spanish and large print. The BDO received 9,440 online responses and 1,400 paper responses.
- The data gathered from the public meeting tour and surveys were used to create the [Digital Opportunity Hub](#), including an interactive TDOP version.
- To expand transparency and encourage further engagement, the BDO has published and continues to maintain an [outreach website](#), which displays opportunities to interact with the office and provides information on working groups. Interested parties can also find meeting links, sign up for newsletters and access email contact information at this location.

The BDO is committed to engaging with broadband stakeholders across the state and maintains constant communication among advisory bodies, industry representatives, local governments and residents.

Feedback from the BDO's various public engagement efforts is used to make programmatic decisions to address the diverse needs of all Texans.

## 6 Appendix

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Task Force Membership:

### **Business and Telecom Task Force**

- Texas Telephone Association
- Texas Statewide Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
- Texas Cable Association
- Wireless Internet Service Providers Association – Texas
- Texas Electric Cooperative Association
- Texas Association of Manufacturers
- Texas Department of Transportation
- AT&T
- Internet2 Technology Evaluation Center (Texas A&M)
- Nextlink Internet
- Victoria Electric Cooperative/Infinium Broadband
- HC Wireless, LLC
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- Texas Area Telecom
- Crown Castle
- Mears Broadband
- TekWav
- AW Broadband
- Nexstream
- Rock Solid Internet, a Vtx1 Company
- Bluebonnet Fiber
- Lit Communities
- MSEC Communications, LLC
- Electronic Corporate Pages, Inc (Western Broadband)
- Cobb Fendley
- AMA TechTel
- Signalnet Broadband, Inc
- Net Ops Communications, LLC
- AMA Communications
- Graybar
- Fiberlight
- Congruex
- Highline
- Space Exploration Technologies
- Comcast

### **Civic and Social Task Force**

- Abilene Library Consortium
- Community Tech Network
- Dallas Innovation Alliance
- Senior Access (Capital Region)
- OneStar Foundation
- Texas AARP

- Texas Network of Youth Services
- Texas Demographic Center
- Texas Department of Information Resources
- Texas State Library and Archives Commission
- Texas Association of Counties (Chair)
- Texas Association of Regional Councils (Secondary chair)
- Texas Library Association
- Texas Rural Funders
- United Way Denton County
- Harris County Public Library
- Texas Municipal League
- TLL Temple Foundation

### **Economy and Workforce Task Force**

- Texas Workforce Commission
- The High Ground of Texas
- Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
- Austin Urban Technology Movement
- Goodwill Industries
- Technology and Policy Information Institute
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas Farm Bureau
- Texas Midwest Community Network
- Greater Houston Partnership
- TechNet

### **Education Task Force**

- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Texas State Technical College
- Windham School District
- Texas Association of School Administrators
- Texas Association of Community Schools
- Dallas Foundation
- Raise Your Hand Texas
- Texas School Alliance
- Tyler Independent School District (ISD)
- Distance Education Professional Development Center (at Texas A&M)
- Paul Quinn College
- Education Service Center (ESC) – Region 1
- Changing Expectations
- Operation Connectivity
- Texas Public Charter Schools Association

### **Essential Services Task Force**

- Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Texans Veterans Commission

- Texas Division of Emergency Management
- Feeding Texas
- Texas Technology Access Program (at UT)
- United Ways of Texas
- Combined Arms
- Commission on State Emergency Communications
- Texas ABLE

**Health Task Force**

- Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Texas
- Texas e-Health Alliance
- Texas Association of Community Health Centers
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- Texas Association of Rural Health Clinics
- Texas Association of Community Clinics
- Texas Medical Association
- Texas Rural Health Association
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas Health and Human Services (Chair)
- Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals
- Texas Veterans Commission
- University of Texas – Medical Branch
- Texas Academy of Family Physicians
- Baylor College of Medicine

Organizations represented in the 12 regional working groups:

**Alamo Area Regional Working Group**

- Cuero Chamber of Commerce
- United Way of the Crossroads
- Karnes County
- Hill Country Telephone Cooperative
- San Antonio Food Bank
- Meals on Wheels Victoria
- City of Edna
- Golden Crescent Area Agency on Aging
- Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission
- City of Saint Hedwig
- Community Action Committee of Victoria
- Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent
- ESC Region 20
- City of San Antonio
- Victoria County
- FiberLight
- Texas General Land Office
- City of Gonzales
- Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation President
- Jackson Electric Cooperative
- Goliad County Rural Transit
- Hallettsville Economic Development Corporation (EDC)
- City of Victoria
- University of Houston – Victoria
- City of Fredericksburg
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- San Antonio Housing Authority
- ESC Region 3
- SA Digital Connects
- The Arc of San Antonio
- Wilson County Public Libraries
- Infinium Broadband
- La Ward Telephone Exchange
- City of Gonzales
- Sparklight

**Capital Area Regional Working Group**

- Goodwill Central Texas
- Texans for the Arts
- Bastrop County Cares
- Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative
- Lead for America – American Connection Corps
- Texas Computer Education Association
- Communications Workers of America
- Changing Expectations
- Colorado Valley Communications

- Lit Communities Broadband, Inc.
- City of Austin
- Nexstream
- Heritage Broadband
- Brightspeed
- Travis County Broadband and Digital Equity Office
- Hays County
- City of Bastrop
- Housing Authority of the City of Austin
- City of Creedmoor
- Lampasas EDC
- City of Taylor
- Llano County

#### **Central Texas Regional Working Group**

- United Way of Brazos Valley
- Central Texas Council of Governments
- Brazos WiFi
- Nortex Communications
- Brightspeed
- Brazos County
- Leon County
- City of Gatesville

#### **Gulf Coast Regional Working Group**

- Greater Houston Partnership
- Comcast
- Vaquero River Estates
- Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Fort Bend County
- Prairie View A&M University
- Harris County Broadband Office
- Fort Bend County
- Waller County

#### **High Plains Regional Working Group**

- Lubbock Chamber of Commerce
- Amarillo Area Foundation
- ESC Region 16
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative
- West Texas Rural Telephone Cooperative
- South Plains Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
- Plains Internet, LLC
- Poka Lambro Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
- Five Area Telephone Cooperative
- Cap Rock Telephone Cooperative
- FiberLight



- Lubbock Public Library
- City of Amarillo

#### **Metroplex Regional Working Group**

- United Way Metro Dallas
- Quinlan EDC
- United Way Grayson County
- United Way Metro Dallas
- Oso Electric
- Family Literacy Coalition
- City of Dallas
- Communications Workers of America
- CARDBoard Project
- Revitalize South Dallas Coalition
- South Dallas Employment Project
- United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- North Central Texas Council of Governments
- Family Literacy Coalition
- Dallas College
- Brightspeed
- Pottsboro Area Public Library
- Ellis County
- City of Waxahachie
- City of Terrell
- City of Fort Worth, Economic Development Department
- City of McKinney

#### **Northwest Regional Working Group**

- City of Coleman EDC
- Wichita Falls Chamber
- NORTEX Regional Planning Commission
- State Representative Stan Lambert's Office
- Cable One
- Taylor Telephone Cooperative, Inc
- Clay County Judge
- Scurry County
- Jones County Judge
- Mayor of Throckmorton

#### **South Texas Regional Working Group**

- City of Pharr, Director of External Relations
- SmartCom
- DHR Health
- Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation
- Bluebonnet Fiber
- Gigabit Fiber
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
- RGV 911

- Valley Telephone Cooperative
- Connect Humanity
- City of Edinburg
- Cameron County
- City of Brownsville

#### **Upper East Regional Working Group**

- TexAmericas Center
- State Bank of DeKalb
- GrantWorks
- East Texas Council of Governments
- Greater Longview United Way
- Bullard ISD
- Atlanta ISD
- ESC Region 7
- Congressman Nathaniel Moran's Office
- Eastex Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
- Conterra Networks
- ETEX Fiber
- BrightspeedLamar County
- Cass County
- Bowie County
- Delta County
- Bowie County

#### **Southeast Regional Working Group**

- Jasper EDC
- Texas Forest Country Partnership
- TLL Temple Foundation
- Deep East Texas Council of Governments
- Judy B. McDonald Public Library
- Nacogdoches ISD
- City of Onalaska Public Library
- Hardin County
- City of Port Arthur

#### **Upper Rio Grande Regional Working Group**

- Sacred Heart
- El Paso Chamber President
- Borderplex Connect
- Borderplex Jobs
- Big Bend Regional Hospital District
- West Texas Food Bank
- El Paso Community Action Program Project BRAVO
- Project Vida
- Hudspeth Community Resource Coordination Group (Region 10)
- El Paso Community Foundation
- Dallas Reserve Bank of Dallas

- San Elizario ISD
- University of Texas at El Paso
- Van Horn Education Foundation
- ESC Region 19
- El Paso Community College
- Big Bend Telecom
- Dell Telephone Cooperative
- Alpine Public Library
- Jeff Davis County and Rio Grande Council of Governments
- Hudspeth County
- El Paso County
- Workforce Solutions Borderplex

**West Texas Regional Working Group**

- Monahans Chamber of Commerce
- Richard C. Abalos Law Office
- GrantWorks
- Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- PMD RE Consulting Services, LLC
- Angelo State University
- Greenwood ISD
- ESC Region 15
- ESC Region 18
- Concho Valley Electric Cooperative
- Poka Lambro Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
- Menard County
- Ector County ISD
- Big Bend Telephone Company
- Net Ops Comms
- Conterra