

# Closing the Digital Divide in IL

Metropolitan Mayors Council DEI Task Force

March 28, 2023



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
OFFICE OF BROADBAND  
JB Pritzker, Governor



**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM**

## Agenda & Executive summary

1



### Overview of federal programs

The **Illinois Broadband Lab (IBL)** is preparing for the arrival of federal from the **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program**, the **Digital Equity (DE) program**, and the **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)**

2



### Local coordination efforts

IBL has launched a local coordination effort to engage a wide range of community organizations, local governments, and broadband stakeholders and **gather critical input for BEAD and DE**

3



### Preliminary insights & how to get involved

As IBL continues to develop the fact base for the Northeast Region, your support is needed to **better disseminate information on BEAD & DE** and **support outreach efforts** for the upcoming local engagement events

# THE ILLINOIS BROADBAND LAB AND BROADBAND READY TEAM ARE LEADING THE CHARGE



Illinois has a broad ecosystem of partners and programs is driving broadband access, adoption, and affordability statewide



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## ILLINOIS BROADBAND LAB (IBL)

The Illinois Broadband Lab is a **collaborative effort among the Illinois Office of Broadband, the University of Illinois, the Illinois Innovation Network, and the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society**, to advance shared interests in broadband data and research, explore various aspects of the digital divide, and provide thoughtful analysis of the Connect Illinois capital investment and related programming.

**The Lab measures, monitors, and tells the story of broadband investments**—combining the country’s largest state-driven broadband matching grant program with value-adding capacity focused on best practices, investment impact, and innovative cross-sector collaboration will ensure sustained success of the Connect Illinois program.



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## Illinois has a historic opportunity to close the digital divide with funding from **three** federal programs

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law could allocate hundreds of millions in federal funding to expand broadband access and digital equity in communities across Illinois



**The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)** allocates \$42.45B focused on **broadband infrastructure deployment** to all states

**The Digital Equity Programs** provides \$2B to states for **digital inclusion programs**



**The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** Fund distributes \$14.2B in funding to **subsidize broadband services** and for **connected devices** for low-income households across the country

# Upcoming Milestones

**2023**

Completion of **BEAD and State DE plans**, incorporating stakeholder input

**2024**

State expects to **receive funds** from Federal government, and executes a competitive grant program

**2025**

Federal funding **expected to be released** / implementation begins

**2028**

BEAD implementation expected to be complete; Digital Equity implementation ongoing



# Illinois plans to engage a broad list of diverse stakeholders through its local coordination efforts



**Government entities**



**Service providers**



**Other private companies**



**Non-profits and community organizations**



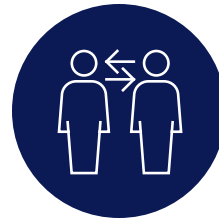
**Residents and organizations that serve them**

Underrepresented communities have historically faced barriers in participating in federal programs and therefore Eligible Entities **must identify these communities and determine specific outreach and engagement strategies tailored to their needs**, including providing outreach in the languages used in the communities these eligible activities serve

## Key objectives of Illinois' local coordination efforts



**Understanding the experiences and perspectives** of impact groups to inform strategic BEAD and DE plans



**Communicating the fact base** on the opportunity ahead (in BEAD & DEA) and the work already done by IBL to progress toward the goals, and the work ahead



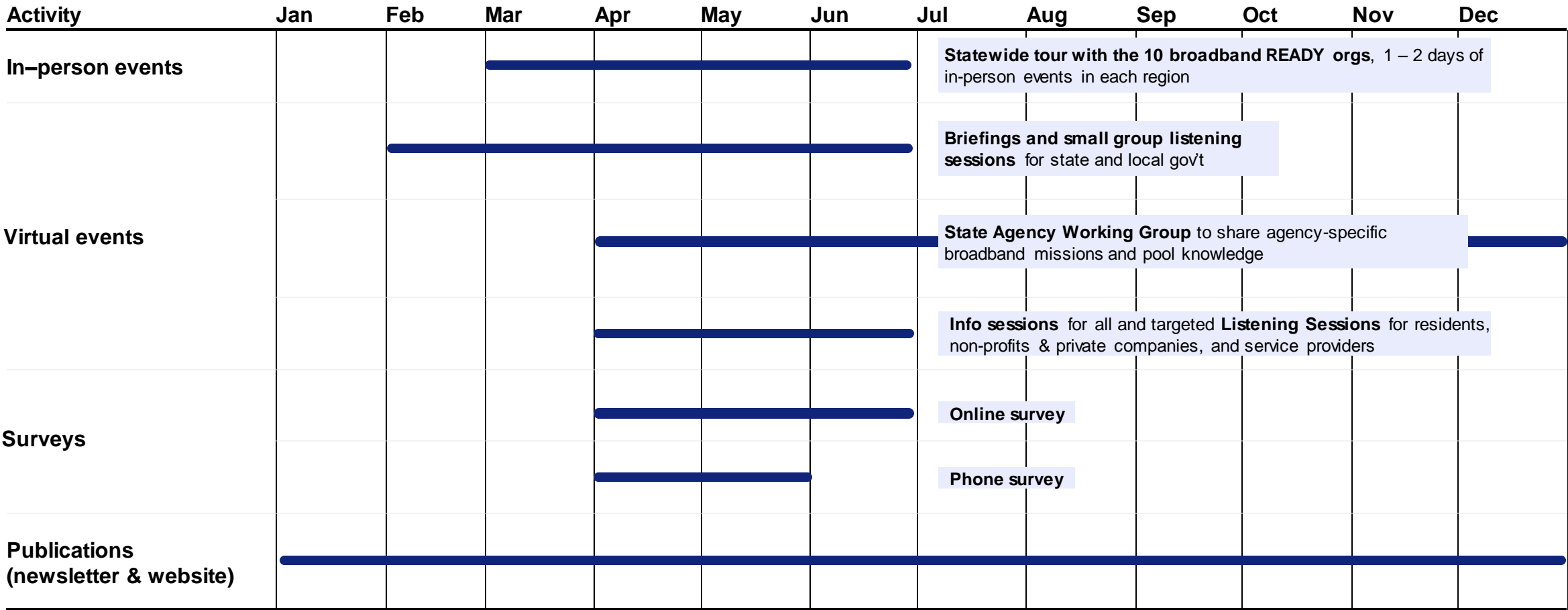
**Enabling existing partners, and growing new partnerships** with key stakeholders who are committed to the mission



**Building long-term capacity for all impacted communities and key stakeholders**— support, transparency, and feedback

# IBL plans to reach Illinoisians through a variety of channels, with a concentration of activities over the next 3 months

PRELIMINARY



Note: current plan as of 03/27/23. Timeline and plan are subject to change.



# Northeast Region: Service Availability & Broadband Adoption

## 2.3M

Total BSLs in NE Region



A business or residential location where fixed broadband Internet access service is, or can be, installed.

## Service Availability<sup>1</sup>



Served<sup>1</sup>

# 70%

vs 68% Illinois Avg.

Locations with broadband service of at least 100/20 Mbps



Unserved<sup>1</sup>

# 1%

vs 5% Illinois Avg.

Locations without broadband service of at least 25/3 Mbps



Underserved<sup>1</sup>

# 29%

vs 28% Illinois Avg.

Locations with broadband service higher than 25/3 Mbps but less than 100/20 Mbps

## Broadband Adoption<sup>2</sup>

# 76%

vs 72% Illinois Avg.

BSLs that have adopted broadband. Broadband adoption is defined as having an internet subscription to perform daily internet tasks.

## ACP<sup>3</sup>

# 24%

vs 24% Illinois Avg.





Eligible households that are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), an FCC benefit program to ensure households can afford broadband for work, school, & healthcare.

1. FCC Data maps, released Nov 18, 2022

2. US Census 2021 ACS 5-Year Dec, 2021

3. USAC ACP Enrollment and Claims Tracker, Dec 2022

# Digital Equity Programs in Action: Northeast Region

Name	Description	Counties
 <b>Broadband READY<sup>1</sup></b>	Illinois Office of Broadband and the Illinois Innovation Network provide grants to advance broadband access, adoption, and utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• DeKalb</li> <li>• DuPage</li> <li>• Grundy</li> <li>• Kane</li> <li>• Kankakee</li> <li>• Kendall</li> <li>• Lake</li> <li>• McHenry</li> <li>• Will</li> </ul>
 <b>Connect Illinois<sup>2</sup></b>	Connect Illinois is a state broadband matching grant program needed for state-driven broadband ubiquity – and lasting broadband equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• Lake</li> </ul>
 <b>Illinois Connected Communities<sup>3</sup></b>	Program designed to engage a first-year cohort of communities through best practice curriculum, expert consultation, and a state grant of up to \$15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• Lake</li> <li>• McHenry</li> </ul>
 <b>Accelerate Illinois<sup>4</sup></b>	A planning and capacity-building program to help Illinois communities leverage broadband infrastructure funding for community-driven broadband expansion and public-private partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• DuPage</li> </ul>






1. [Broadband Ready](#)

2. [Connect Illinois Round 1 Summaries](#); [Connect Round 2 Summaries](#)

3. [ICC First Cohort](#); [ICC Second Cohort](#)

4. [Accelerate Illinois: Fast Tracking Broadband Infrastructure in Six Communities](#); [Accelerate Illinois Brakes...for Now](#)

# Ways you can stay involved

- **1 Sign up for the Newsletter**  
Published bi-weekly to share progress and celebrate success
- **2 Take part in the Survey**  
Available on our website to share more about your broadband needs and barriers
- **3 Attend a Webinar**  
Virtual sessions to keep you updated on future progress
- **4 Visit our Website**  
Visit [broadband.illinois.edu](https://broadband.illinois.edu) to sign up for the Newsletter, take the Survey, and register for a Webinar
- **5 Send us an email**  
Email us at [illinoisbroadbandlab@ullinois.edu](mailto:illinoisbroadbandlab@ullinois.edu) with questions and comments



Scan the QR  
code to visit our  
website





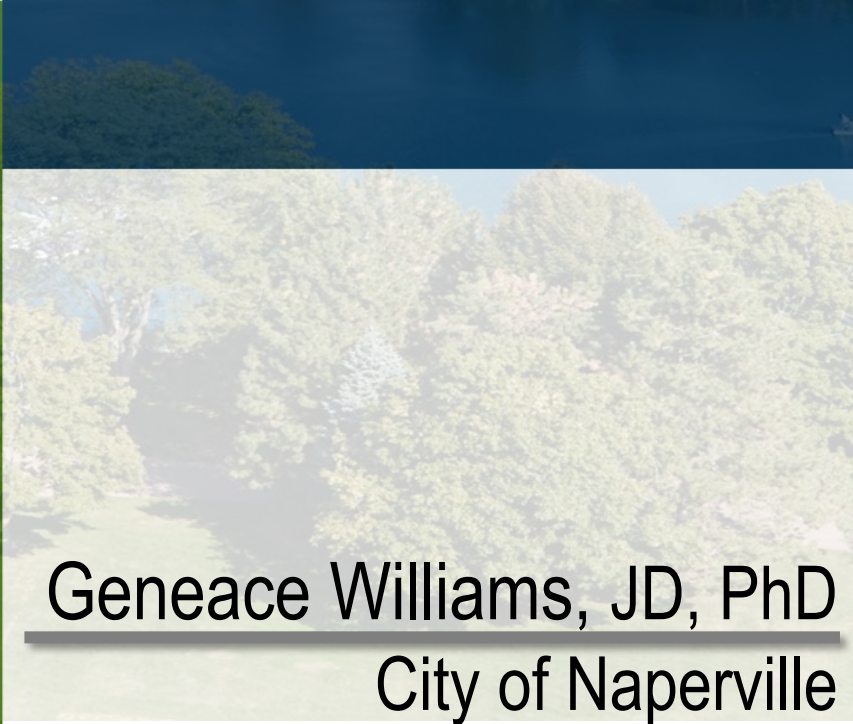

# IT Retention Project

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# Diversity Equity and Inclusion

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Geneace Williams, JD, PhD  
City of Naperville



# Organization Wide Goals Clearly Defined

- Better understand retention challenges
- Foster an inclusive workplace
- Improve staff retention
- Use retention as a recruitment tool
- Build a staff that more reflects the diversity of our resident population

# IT Retention Project

## Why IT?

- Department is “right” size
- Diverse personnel
- Great employee survey response rate, and
- Has experienced personnel fluctuation over the years.



## Specific Goals

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- Identify factors that positively and negatively impact retention in IT
- Formulate a plan based upon these findings to improve retention
- Apply applicable “lessons learned” to other departments in the City of Naperville





# **Our Process...**

- **Met with Key Leader Stakeholders**
- **Developed Project Action Plan**
- **Charted Our DARCI**



# What's Next?

## IT Retention Project – The HOW!

1

**Interview IT employees to gain feedback and input on what makes them feel valued, undervalued, motivated, & barriers, etc.**

2

**Gather and understand baseline data in IT and across the organization. Why people left?**

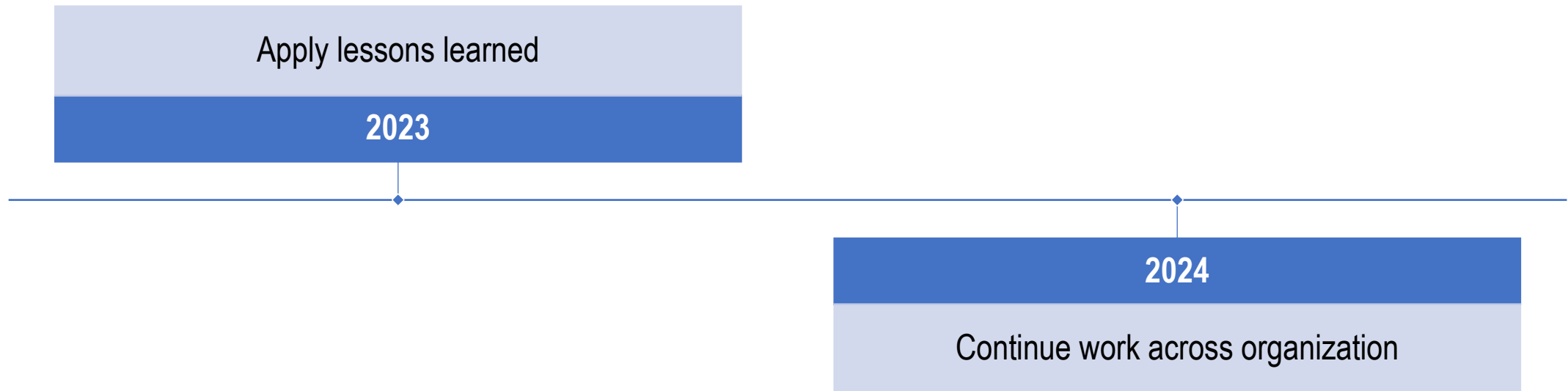
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**Share key findings from steps one and two, identify particulars to test in pilots**

4

**Address communication barriers and improve processes between IT and departments to improve work and work flow**

# Internal actions – based upon outcomes!





Thank You!

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