



Berrien County  
Broadband  
Internet Task Force

**TO:** Berrien County ARPA Applicants

**FROM:** Berrien County Broadband Internet Task Force (BCBIT)

**DATE:** February 10, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN) Applications – Local Match

We would like to provide an update to our December, 22, 2022, notification to all ARPA applicants that the County was “postponing any announcement of funding awards while it pursued opportunities to coordinate with ISPs on state/federal grants for broadband deployment”.

Recently, the Michigan State Office of High-Speed Internet (MIHI) has announced a broadband connectivity grant program, ROBIN, which will provide funding directly to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to expand broadband service into unserved and underserved areas. To date, 5 ISPs have expressed their interest in applying for these grants. Especially critical for your consideration is that grant applications are due on March 13, 2023 and require a minimum of 15% and ISP applicants believe a 50% match will be needed to be successful, which can be a combination of private and local public funds.

Previously, 19 communities submitted requests to Berrien County during the initial ARPA process for assistance in funding broadband projects. Nearly all of these communities pledged to provide local match funding to supplement County contributions (See attached Spreadsheet). Consistent with our December notification, the County deferred awarding previously committed APRA broadband dollars for direct grants to local communities and is instead leveraging these funds as matching assistance for ISP ROBIN applications. It’s our hope that the local communities will agree to do the same with their pledged matching funds.

To put some context to this, as you can see in the spreadsheet, the local units collectively pledged \$5M. The County has \$4.5M available. The ISPs are expected to ask for a one-to-one contribution from the Berrien County community as part of their ROBIN applications. ROBIN is expected to provide the remaining 50% of project costs. If the County and all local units would commit their total pledged allocations, the potential amount of development capital would be:

Local Match \$9.5M + ISP Match \$9.5M + ROBIN Grant \$19M = TOTAL \$38M

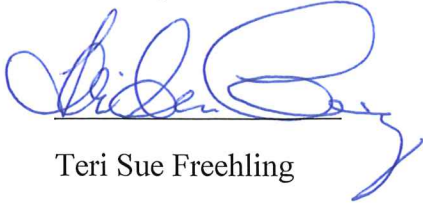
This would likely be sufficient to connect all currently unserved parcels in Berrien County (approximately 6,100 parcels) that aren’t part of the previously awarded RDOF funding.

The challenge is in obtaining your commitment in time to meet the grant deadline, understanding your meeting schedule and that we won’t know for a number of weeks which communities will fall into MEC’s application and which into Comcast’s. We need to be upfront about this. However, in order to take advantage of this funding opportunity we are compelled to ask that you commit your previously pledged matching funds to support the ISP ROBIN applications. We will only request a final commitment of your funds after the ISP’s have demonstrated that each community will receive deployment of broadband as anticipated in their applications to us.

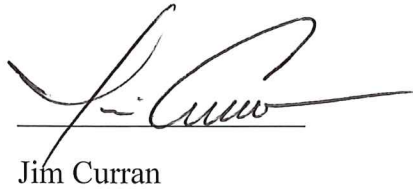
In conclusion, because of the short time-frame, we ask you for confirmation as soon as possible that you will maintain your commitment to provide local funds for matching requirements of the ISP ROBIN grant. Ideally, this would come in the form of a resolution or a signed statement on your official letterhead.

Thank you for your consideration of this message. We would be happy to answer any questions.

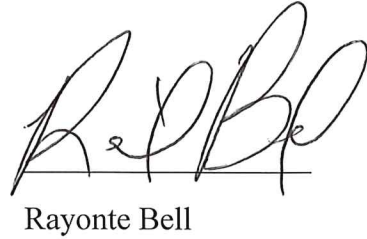
Sincerely,



Teri Sue Freehling



Jim Curran



Rayonte Bell

	MUNICIPALITY	BERRIEN COUNTY FUNDS REQUEST	LOCAL COMMITMENT	ISP REQUEST	Other LOCAL FUNDS	TOTAL COST	PARCELS	COST PER PARCEL
1	Galien Twp (+Village)	\$ 3,093,720	\$ 100,000	\$ 741,300	\$ -	\$ 3,963,020	479	
2	<i>Galien Village (W/Twp)</i>		\$ 28,000				320	\$ 4,959.97
3	Berrien Twp	\$ 1,575,000	\$ 1,575,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,150,000	630	\$ 5,000.00
4	Hagar Twp	\$ 975,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 358,930	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,958,930	553	\$ 3,542.37
5	Baroda Twp	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 197,944	\$ -	\$ 966,056	\$ 2,314,000	512	\$ 4,519.53
6	Buchanan Twp	\$ 5,500,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,800,000	503	\$ 11,530.82
7	Chikaming Twp	\$ 1,870,077	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,070,077	482	\$ 4,294.77
8	Weesaw Twp	\$ 2,002,429	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,012,429	401	\$ 5,018.53
9	New Buffalo Twp	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 212,000	\$ 170,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,982,000	331	\$ 5,987.92
10	Benton Twp	\$ 3,300,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,800,000	300	\$ 12,666.67
11	Pipestone Twp	\$ 2,392,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,592,000	288	\$ 9,000.00
12	Eau Claire Village	\$ 179,308	\$ 70,692	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000	221	\$ 1,131.22
13	Sodus Twp	\$ 1,989,995	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,994,995	272	\$ 7,334.54
14	Lincoln Charter Twp	\$ 800,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	204	\$ 4,901.96
15	Watervliet Charter Twp	\$ 892,574	\$ 323,426	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,216,000	142	\$ 8,563.38
16	Royalton Twp	\$ 883,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 40,000	\$ 948,000	79	\$ 12,000.00
17	Three Oaks Twp	\$ 4,510,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,510,000	451	\$ 10,000.00
18	Lake Charter Twp	\$ 5,945,500	\$ 162,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,108,000	509	\$ 12,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 38,558,603	\$ 4,434,562	\$ 1,270,230	\$ 1,406,056	\$ 45,669,451	6677	\$ 6,839.82