



Seminole County Board of County Of Commissioners Broadband Update

March 28, 2023



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 12/21/2021 - BCC approved the contract award to Magellan Advisors to conduct a Broadband Assessment for Seminole County.
- 3/28/2022 - Magellan Advisors facilitated the first of numerous engagement discussions with the community, local government, education, and business leaders regarding broadband accessibility. This group of leaders also comprised the FDEO Local Technology Planning Team.



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 6/21/2022 Magellan Advisors provided their first deliverable.
 - Key findings in the over 1700 resident surveys included speed testing results and the following:
 - Spectrum is the primary provider in the county, which is a wired line (cable).
 - Many respondents considered services available unreliable or not cost-effective



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 6/21/2022 (Continued)
 - Key findings (Continued)
 - Primary uses for internet are personal research, telehealth, school, and telecommuting activities
 - Internet providers' price offerings are the greatest source of dissatisfaction among residents and business respondents



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 8/23/2022 Magellan Advisors completed their second deliverable and provided an update to the BCC
 - Deliverable #2 provided the following:
 - Identified the five project areas within Seminole County that were shown to be unserved. These included Geneva North/South, Casselberry Winter Springs, East Sanford/Midway, West Sandford
 - Provided potential solutions to these unserved areas (either wired or wireless).
 - Provided cost estimates and suggested priority of project area's based on total linear footage to connect, price, and the number of residents covered.



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 8/23/2022 (continued)
 - Recommended moving forward with distributing ARPA funding to providers that could deploy broadband infrastructure to the project areas.
 - Also suggested either developing a grant program or releasing a competitive bid for this purpose.
- The BCC requested the staff and Magellan Advisors to follow up and receive feedback from the LTPT on the assessment findings and to allow the public also to provide input into the proposed project areas.



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 10/25/2022 Magellan Advisors presented the final update on the Broadband Assessment to the BCC.
 - Magellan's update included:
 - Confirmed the LTPT was supportive of the assessment recommendations.
 - Confirmed that 118 homes were added to the proposed project areas in the South Geneva and Chuluota areas following public feedback.
 - Staff requested direction on how to proceed with the assessment findings.
 - The BCC voted to support moving forward with the Grant Application process.



Broadband Update:

Background:

- 10/25/2022 (continued)
 - The BCC also supported moving forward using ARPA funds for the wireless solution option to address the largest concentration of residents in the Geneva North/South areas.
 - Directed staff to work with providers to address the small pockets of unserved residences in the West Sanford, East Sanford/Midway, and Casselberry Winter Springs areas.



Broadband Update:

Current Status:

- Since then, staff have been working with Magellan Advisors as they develop a proposal that addresses the defined scope within an acceptable budget.
 - Scope includes:
 - Developing a grant application program to expand high-speed broadband in already targeted project areas in North/South Geneva and Chuluota
 - Working with providers to address pocket areas of the county (West Sanford, Casselberry/Winter Springs, and East Sanford /Midway).
 - Assist with providing applicant screening and recommendations to county staff.
 - Provide guidance on Fiscal Recovery Funds compliance and financial reporting requirements.
 - Provide construction inspection and construction oversight.



Broadband Update:

Current Status:

- Staff is also working with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) as it facilitates increasing broadband availability and effectiveness. FDEO also encourages investment in grant funding opportunities.
 - On 2/2/2023, Charter Communications (Spectrum) was notified of their successful Broadband Opportunity Program grant request
 - Award: \$367,000 for 51.7 miles of new fiber-optic cable for 734 unserved locations in the Geneva and Black Hammock area.
 - Majority of the identified in the original Magellan Broadband Assessment are included. The balance is being reviewed for addition to the scope.
 - This award effectively eliminates the need for the grant program directed by the BCC.



Broadband Update:

Current Status:

- The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD),
 - Provides \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed Internet access for all 50 states will be available later this year.
- Both funding programs seek wired line solutions that inherently build in futureproofing over the wireless solution being proposed by the current grant application program efforts.



Broadband Update:

Current Status:

- FDEO has recommended that counties continue engaging with the LTPT and continue updating GIS broadband coverage mapping to include any new development that occurs within the county.
- Additionally, the county should actively promote the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program, which provides a \$30 for residents that qualify and, in some cases, will cover the entire cost of some providers' plans.



Board Direction Requested

- Staff is seeking Board direction regarding the necessity to engage Magellan Advisors for a grant program for a wireless solution for the Geneva/Black Hammock area.
- Additionally, the wired grant solution that Charter is receiving from the Broadband Opportunity Grant may not capture all the unserved residents in Seminole County and ARPA funds may be required to ensure full coverage.



Questions?