

BEAD Challenge Portal Pre-Registration, Tier D/E CostQuest Licenses, and Portal Overview

Prepare for the Challenge Process

May 8, 2024



California Public
Utilities Commission

Welcome

Jonathan Lakritz

Program Manager

CPUC BEAD Branch

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. BEAD overview
3. BEAD Challenge Process overview
4. CostQuest licensing
5. Challenge Portal registration and overview
6. Next steps

Housekeeping

Tips for getting the most out of this webinar

Closed Captions: English closed captions are available. Select “Show captions” on your toolbar. (Click the small arrow on the ‘Show captions’ button for more settings or to see a full transcript)

Q&A: Please add your questions via the Q&A function and answers will be added to the FAQs on the BEAD Challenge Process webpage. We received many questions in the last webinar and are currently reviewing and drafting responses to be posted shortly.

Chat: Keep an eye on the chat because we will use it to send useful links to you.



Overview



What to expect today

- 🎯 What is the **NTIA BEAD Program**?
- 🎯 What is the **NTIA Model BEAD Challenge Process**?
- 🎯 What are the **licensing requirements** to participate?
- 🎯 How do I **preregister as a challenger**?
- 🎯 How does the **Challenge Portal** work?

Note: The **CPUC's Challenge Process** still requires approval from the Commission.

BEAD Overview

Aimee Meacham

Director of State Broadband Programs

CTC Technology and Energy

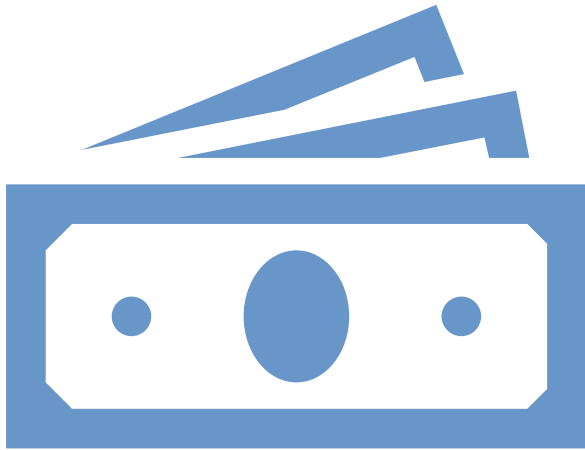
BEAD Overview



What is the BEAD Program?

- 🎯 The **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program** was created by the **bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)** in 2021
- 🎯 Allocates **\$42.45 billion of federal funding** to all 50 states, Washington D.C., and territories
- 🎯 Administered by the **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)**
- 🎯 Goal of **expanding high-speed internet access** through infrastructure deployment

Funding priority



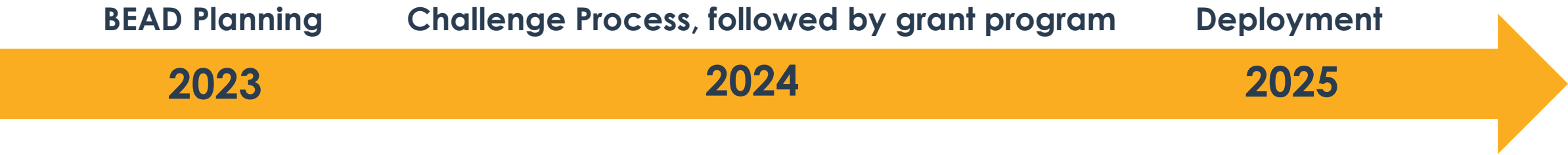
How will BEAD funding be prioritized?

- 🎯 **Unserved areas** that do not have access to internet service speeds $\geq 25/3$ Mbps are the **top priority for BEAD funding**
- 🎯 **Underserved areas** that have internet service between 25/3 Mbps and 100/20 Mbps will **receive funding after unserved areas are connected**
- 🎯 **Community anchor institutions** with internet service under 1 Gbps symmetrical will receive funding **only if all unserved and underserved locations are connected**

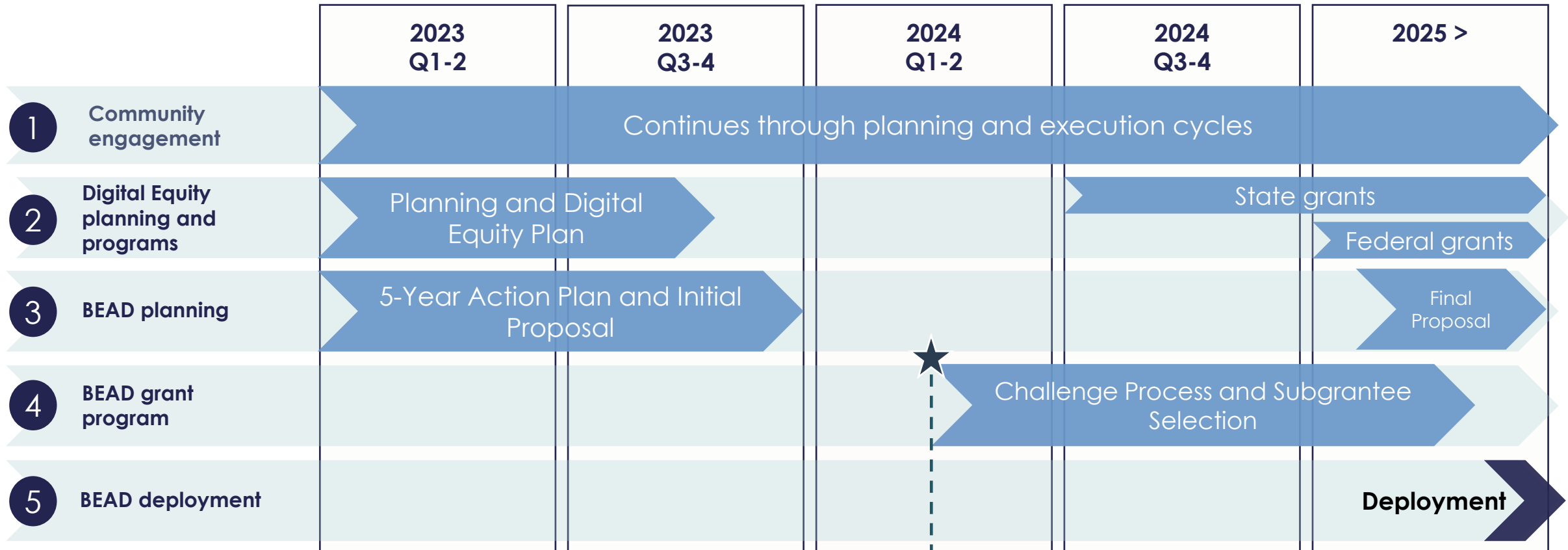
The BEAD Program in California

In June 2023, California was allocated \$1.86 billion in BEAD funds that will become available following completion of the federal planning and approval cycle.

The CPUC has submitted to the federal government the Five-Year Action Plan and Initial Proposal Volumes I & II.



Overall BEAD status and timeline



**We are here:
Challenge Process**

BEAD Challenge Process Overview

Aimee Meacham

Director of State Broadband Programs

CTC Technology and Energy

Purpose



What is the BEAD Challenge Process?

- 🎯 Will determine **locations** and **community anchor institutions** within the state that are **eligible for BEAD funding**
- 🎯 Allows entities the **opportunity to offer input on** whether **specific locations** are not accurately reported in the datasets and therefore **should be eligible for BEAD funding**

Relevance



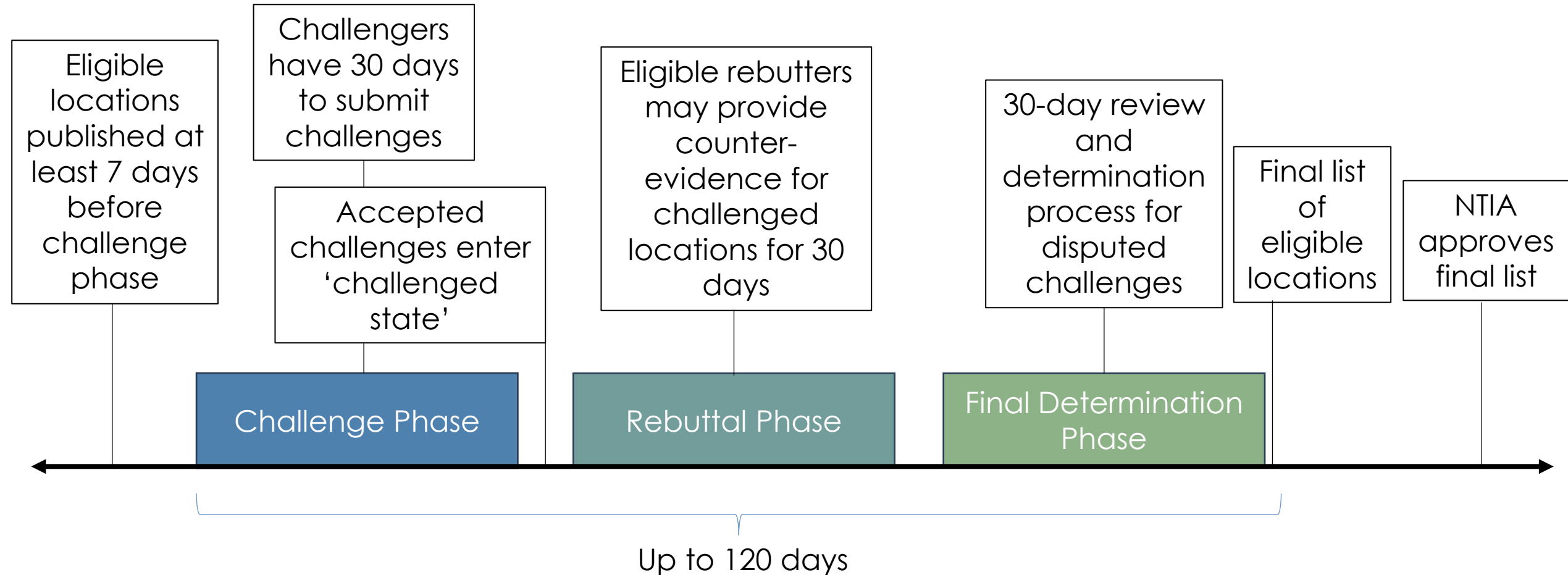
Why is the BEAD Challenge Process so important?

Allows stakeholders to challenge the existing broadband map and enables the state to submit the most **updated** and **accurate location data** for NTIA's approval.

- 🎯 Helps determine which locations are **eligible for BEAD funding**
- 🎯 Necessary to achieving **the goal of the BEAD program** (providing all Americans with reliable internet service)
- 🎯 **Prevents the misrepresentation of data** regarding locations that need funding for deployment

NTIA Model Challenge Process

Sequence of events



Who can submit a challenge?

Local governments



Nonprofit organizations



Tribal governments



Broadband service providers

Can individuals participate?



- 🎯 While NTIA requirements don't allow individuals to submit challenges directly, **California residents will play an important role in the challenge process** by identifying inaccuracies and working with eligible participating local governments, Tribal governments, or nonprofits to challenge the maps.

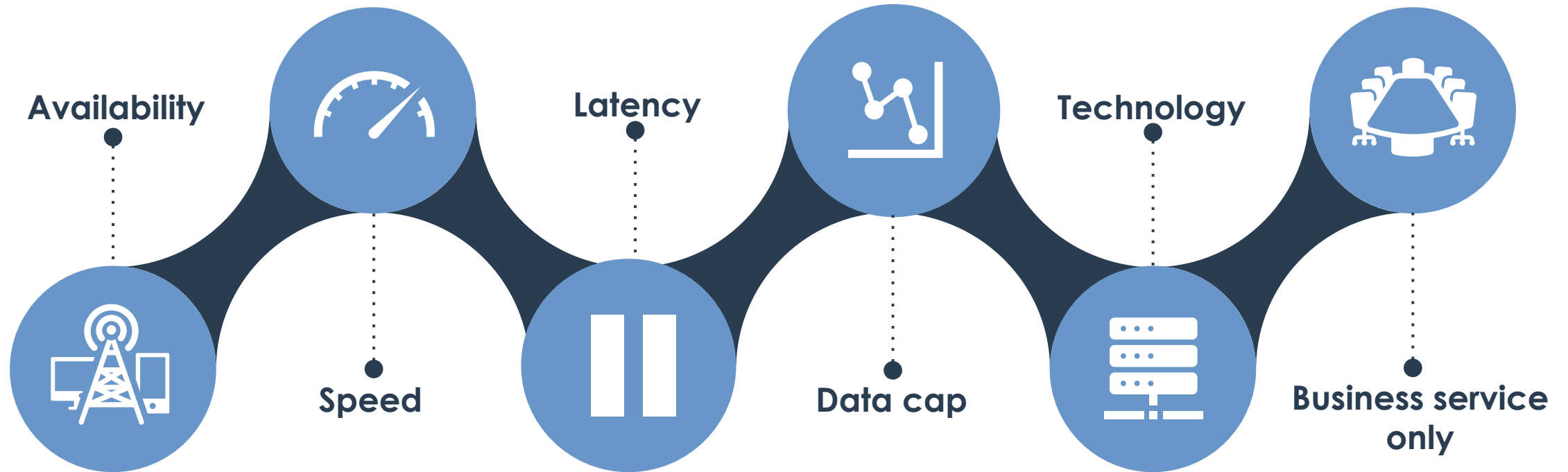
More information to come

Permissible challenges

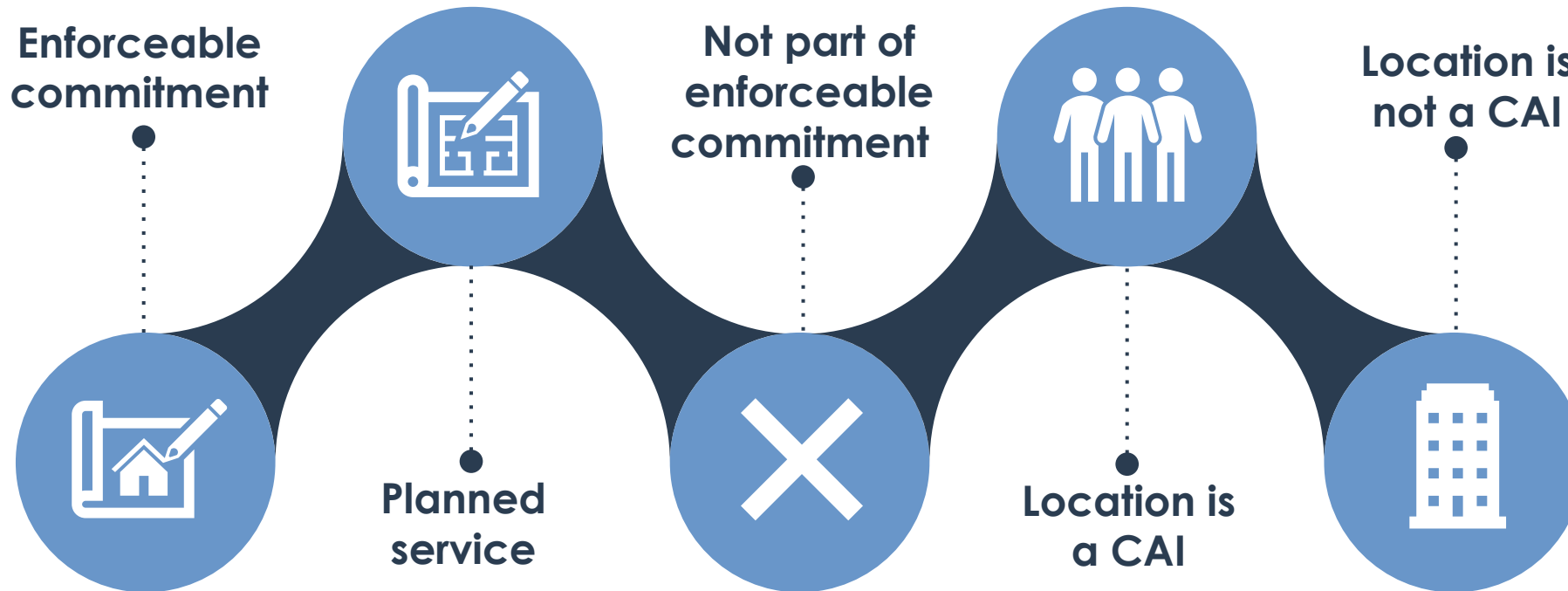


- 🎯 **Internet speeds and other specifications** for Broadband Serviceable Locations included in the FCC's National Broadband Map (to determine BEAD eligibility for those locations)
- 🎯 **Community anchor institution eligibility and identification**
- 🎯 **Enforceable commitments**
- 🎯 **Planned service**

Challenge types



Challenge types continued



Area and MDU challenges

Area and MDU challenges can apply for the following challenge types:

-  Availability
-  Speed
-  Latency
-  Data cap
-  Technology

Area and Multiple Dwelling Unit (MDU) challenges **reverse the burden of proof to the ISP** if a certain number of challenges have been submitted for an ISP serving an area or MDU.

- **Area challenges** are triggered if **six or more** broadband serviceable locations using a specific technology and reportedly served by a single ISP within a census block group are challenged.
- **MDU challenges** are triggered if challenges are submitted for one unit for MDUs with less than 15 units, two units for MDUs of between 16 and 24 units, and at least three units for larger MDUs.

CostQuest licensing for the Challenge Process

Aimee Meacham

Director of State Broadband Programs

CTC Technology and Energy

Challenge Process datasets

- **FCC Fabric** (Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric) is a **dataset of all locations** where fixed broadband is or could be deployed
 - Developed by the FCC in coordination with CostQuest
 - Updated twice per year
 - Contains Location IDs that are attached to addresses and coordinates
 - The Challenge Process uses the location data but cannot change it
 - Requires a free license to access Fabric dataset directly
 - **Broadband Data Collection** records **broadband availability and service** data at each location
 - Developed by the FCC
 - Locations are tagged by Location ID only, not by addresses or coordinates
 - Results of the Challenge Process can change the status from served to unserved or underserved
- Note: The Challenge Process cannot add or remove Broadband Serviceable Locations**

Licenses for FCC Fabric

- A license is necessary to access the complete FCC Fabric (dataset of all locations)
- It is **free** to obtain a license
- These licenses are offered through NTIA's partnership with CostQuest and come in various tiers, each designated for a different set of eligible licensees
- Tier D and Tier E are the relevant licenses for the Challenge Process:
 - **Tier D** is for **broadband service providers** (recipients or prospective recipients of Federal Broadband Program funding)
 - **Tier E** is for **local governments, Tribal governments, and nonprofits**

What can I do without a Fabric license and with one?

Without a license

- Submit a challenge
- Rebut a challenge
- Access Fabric data through the portal map, where you can see location dots and service status but cannot see the address or download the dataset

With a license

- Match location IDs to addresses to research and prepare a challenge
- Download full dataset to incorporate into your own GIS visualizations to analyze potential challenges
- Prepare bulk challenges using downloaded data (for the challenge types that accept bulk challenges)

How to get a CostQuest Fabric license

1. Ensure you have an **FCC Registration Number** (FRN) and contact details for who will administer the account
2. Go to **NTIA's CostQuest License Request site** (specific to your Tier)
 - a. Tier D (for ISPs): [NTIA Tier D License Request](#)
 - b. Tier E (for local governments, Tribal governments, nonprofits): [NTIA Tier E License Request](#)
3. Enter **basic information** about your organization (including FRN) and validate the email address
4. Follow the emailed link to the next step and **insert detailed organization information**
5. Input information about the **federal programs and geographical areas** of challenges you plan on submitting
6. **Select 'submit'** and **complete account creation process** and license information form sent via email from support system

Submitting challenges on behalf of residents

- **Residents** will be able to **submit evidence** for challenges
- In pre-registration, you will be asked if you would like to **submit challenges on behalf of residents**
- The CPUC recommends you **select ‘Yes’** and choose to **enable challenge submissions on behalf of residents**
- This will increase the **amount of evidence** you can draw upon to submit challenges
- The CPUC will provide **additional resources** and materials for entities submitting on behalf of residents

Notes on the Portal

- Register for only **one account per entity** and designate **one user as primary contact**. You will be able to add other users to your account.
- There will be a link to a **speed test module to run** and submit speed tests through the Portal
 - You can also use and submit [NTIA-approved speed test](#) platforms (Ookla, M-Lab, Cloudflare, Netflix)

Challenge Portal Demonstration

Clayton Wooley

Director of Technical Strategy

Ready.net

Account registration

Eligible challengers must register for an account in the Challenge Portal

- Visit the [registration page](#) for a brief overview of the Challenge Process and links.
- Select the “Register” button which will open a form for you to fill out.
- Complete the intake form that will verify that you are an eligible challenger.

Register For The BEAD Challenge Process ×

SECTION 1 OF 2

About You

* Entity Name

* Entity Website

* Primary Contact Name

* Primary Contact Email

Primary Contact Number

* Type of Organization

Next

Account registration continued

Intake form requirements

- **General information:** name; website; primary contact name, email and phone number; category of entity (dropdown)
- **Unit of local government information:** physical address, documentation to verify identity
- **Unit of Tribal Government information:** UEI Number assigned by Sam.gov, Tribe's name as listed by BIA, physical address, additional documentation to verify identity
- **Nonprofit Organization Information:** EIN, 501 (c)3, physical address, additional documentation to verify identity
- **Broadband provider information:** provider name (dropdown), FRN, physical address, documentation to verify identity

Account registration continued

Form submission

- **Select “Finish” to submit the intake form.** You will receive an email confirmation.
- **Account approval:** Each registration will be manually reviewed by the CPUC before you can set up your account. If your registration lacks details, you will be prompted via email to update your account request.
- **Account set-up:** Upon approval of your intake form, you will receive an email with a link to set up your account and create a password.

Live demonstration of registration and Challenge Portal

Next Steps

Laura Sasaki

Program and Project Supervisor

CPUC BEAD Branch

Next Steps



Ways to Prepare to Participate in the Challenge Process

- Attend a webinar
- [Register for office hours](#)
- [Pre-register to submit a challenge](#)
- Request for a CostQuest License
 - [Tier D](#)
 - [Tier E](#)
- Sign up for email updates and news

Upcoming webinars

Webinars are open to all who wish to attend, and registration links will be posted on the [BEAD Events](#) page.

DATE/TIME	TOPIC
Tuesday, May 14 10:00 -11:00 am	Key Differences between the BEAD Model Challenge Process and the CPUC's approved Initial Proposal Volume I Challenge Process
Thursday, May 16 10:00 -11:00 am	Challenge Process for Broadband Service Providers
Tuesday, May 21 10:00 -11:30 am	Overview of the toolkit for local governments, Tribal governments, and nonprofits
Week of May 20 Week of May 27 Week of June 3	Office Hours

Questions?

If you have questions about the Challenge Portal or need technical assistance, please email cahelpdesk@ready.net.

For general questions about the BEAD Program in California, please email the CPUC BEAD team at BEAD@cpuc.ca.gov.



For more information visit:

[The CPUC's BEAD Page](#) – general program information

[CPUC BEAD Challenge Process](#) – Challenge Process information

[BEAD Frequently Asked Questions](#) – answers to your BEAD questions



Thank you!

We appreciate your questions and your attendance.
We hope to see you at the next webinar!



California Public Utilities Commission