



Press Release

Westmoreland County Releases Report to Support Broadband Infrastructure and Funding Initiatives

The Broadband Data Collection and Feasibility Study is a key step in bridging the digital divide

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Westmoreland County, Pa - The Westmoreland County Commissioners today released the Westmoreland Broadband Data Collection and Feasibility Study Final Report that identified more than 3,500 locations across the county as having little to no broadband connectivity.

Four Early Action projects were analyzed and recommended by the Taskforce and approved by the Board of Commissioners to begin this year in parts of Derry, Fairfield, and Ligonier Townships. These projects represent the areas of the County with the greatest need and were prioritized to bring much needed support to residents and businesses in these 400 locations.

“This is just the beginning of broadband expansion in the County,” said Sean Kertes, Chair, Westmoreland County Commissioners. “The report also lays out five goals that will guide our next steps in achieving digital equity, improving health and safety access, economic growth, workforce development, and providing support for our municipalities every step of the way.”

The Westmoreland Broadband Program is the culmination of extensive fieldwork, a public speed test survey, and stakeholder engagement, serving as a roadmap for making broadband available throughout the county. It captures the current state of broadband availability, improvement goals, and implementation steps.

“The Study was informed by more than 2,500 survey responses, speed verifications conducted at more than 3,700 locations, and interactive meetings and workshops with community stakeholders,” said Douglas Chew, Vice-Chair, Westmoreland County Commissioners. “We are appreciative of the Taskforce, residents, business owners, and community leaders who contributed to the Report and look forward to bringing new service to the County.”

Internet speed is measured in megabits per second (Mbps). The locations identified as unserved means they do not have access to Internet service with at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speed, the current FCC minimum definition of broadband. To find out if you’re located in a new service area, also known as a Connectivity Opportunity Area (COA), visit the program website and enter your address into the interactive map on the new service page.

“We are committed to making broadband available to unserved areas and improving access for critical daily needs like paying bills, telehealth appointments, shopping, job searches and applications, education and so much more,” said Gina Cerilli Thrasher, Secretary, Westmoreland County

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Commissioners. “Closing the digital gap is essential as Internet access is necessary to participate in today’s society, and these projects will strengthen the county’s economy and quality of life.”

Initial next steps include verifying the locations with service providers, issuing a Request for Proposals for the Early Action projects, evaluating the potential for a Broadband Utility Connection Fund, and developing a Digital Navigator Program to support digital literacy throughout the county. More details on the next steps may be found in the Final Report.

For access to video clips and photos of the live press event, visit this [link](#).

To learn more about the Broadband Data Collection and Feasibility Study findings, visit the broadband program website at westmorelandbroadband.org.

About the Westmoreland Broadband Program

Westmoreland County Planning and Development is taking steps to ensure that all residents and businesses in Westmoreland County can connect to high-speed and reliable broadband. Working together with countywide and regional agencies, Westmoreland County is seeking to bridge the gap areas within the county for future infrastructure expansion. This will result in resilient and competitive communities throughout Westmoreland County to ensure both urban and rural communities are properly connected.

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Board of Commissioners

Sean Kertes, Chairman
Douglas W. Chew, Vice-Chairman
Gina Cerilli Thrasher, Secretary

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