

# BROADBAND PROJECT UPDATES

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Through a substantial partnership with internet service provider 123NET, the County is working to ensure all residents and businesses have access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet.

The County strategically leveraged Board Initiative Funds in two phases to maximize grant opportunities from the state – **Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure Network (ROBIN)** and **Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)**. Here's a closer look at each investment:

## Current Project: Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure (ROBIN) Grant

The County strategically leveraged **\$4 million in Board Initiative funds** alongside **\$1.9 million from preferred fiber internet service provider 123NET** to apply for the Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure Network (ROBIN) grant.

In early 2024, Ottawa County was awarded approximately **\$9 million** in state ROBIN grant funding. All together, this approximately **\$15 million** total investment is being deployed to develop **325 miles\* of fiber** and potential to connect up to **6,000 addresses**.

Over the past year, 123NET and the County have worked closely developing the high-level and detailed-level designs required to convert the application to real-world, actionable plans.

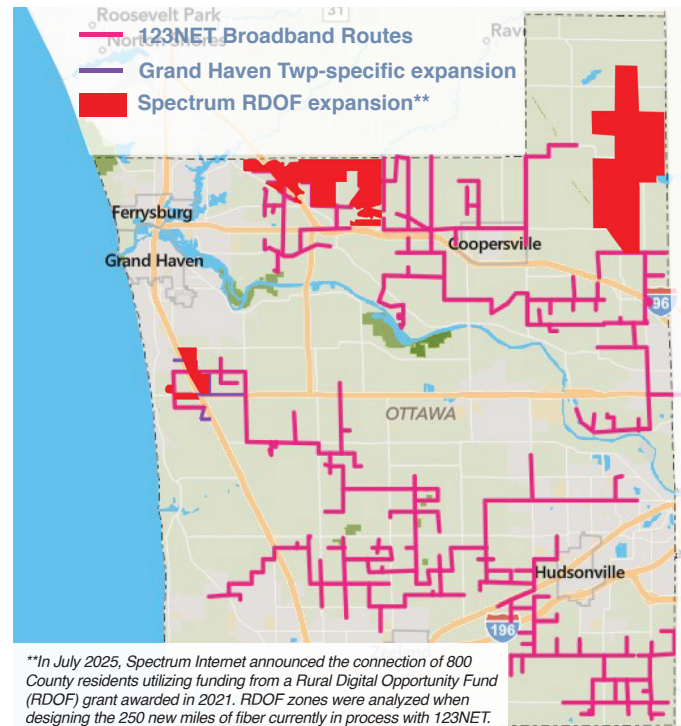
Currently, 123NET is working with the Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC) to permit what might be the largest infrastructure project the County and OCRC have taken on at once. As of Aug. 22, the OCRC and the County Water Resources office were reviewing plans for Batch 1 of 17 'batches' (**geographic regions** – see **Table 1**). Batches

**TABLE 1: BATCHES**

**# Approximate Municipality**

1	Jamestown Twp.
2	Jamestown Twp./Zeeland Twp.
3	Georgetown Twp.
4	Blendon Twp.
5	Holland Twp.
6	Olive Twp.
7	Park Twp.
8	Robinson Twp.
9	Grand Haven Twp.
10	Tallmadge Twp.
11	Allendale Twp.
12	Wright Twp.
13	Conklin (Chester Twp.)
14	City of Coopersville
15	Polkton Twp.
16	Polkton Twp.
17	Nunica (Crockery Twp.)

## Planned ROBIN Routes



2-17 are begin refined by 123NET's design team, and will be submitted for review as they are completed.

Ahead of the broader batch permitting process, 123NET announced connecting its first Ottawa County customer – Ronda Fisher of Hudsonville – on Aug. 20. This connection was part of a limited test area ahead of the full launch.

## Next Up: Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

In April 2025 **Ottawa County** formally supported a joint application with **123NET** for the **Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program**. By pairing **\$3.5 million in Board Initiative Funds** previously earmarked for broadband with a **\$3.5 million match from 123NET**, the County had the potential to leverage as much as **\$16 million** in grant funds. This **\$23 million** total investment has the potential to connect an additional **5,400 addresses** not covered by the ROBIN expansion.

However, on June 6, 2025, the National

Telecommunications and Information Administration released a BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice which prompted significant changes to funding requirements. The Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) quickly reopened the application process under the new criteria. 123NET successfully resubmitted applications before MIHI's new Aug. 4, 2025 deadline.

BEAD awards are expected to be announced by late September. County staff stand ready to support 123NET in this powerful opportunity to improve broadband service.

\* Preliminary estimates were reported as 250 miles of fiber. According to 123NET, to ensure network integrity and coverage, total mileage was expanded to 325.