



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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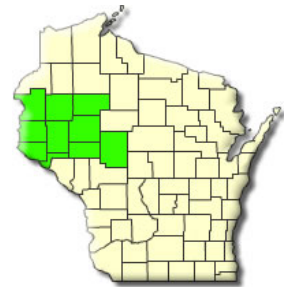
Broadband Plan for Western Wisconsin Launching October 12 *Participation by Residents and Leaders Requested*

Eau Claire - A team of Western Wisconsin community leaders asks for assistance from the public at an open house on Wednesday, October 12. The purpose of the open house is to launch initiatives to fill in gaps in broadband (high-speed Internet) availability and improve adoption of available broadband services. Information discussed at the open house will include findings on broadband needs, barriers to adoption and maps showing gaps in service. Those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to start advancing broadband projects.

The open house will be held from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. in the Business Education Center (Room 100A) of the Clairemont Campus of Chippewa Valley Technical College, 620 West Clairemont Avenue, in Eau Claire. There will be displays and staff available to answer questions throughout this time with a focused discussion from 5:00 – 6:00 pm. Light refreshments will be served.

The planning team included representatives from education, health care, business, libraries, regional planning and more. The team developed doable projects to elicit public and private investment of time and money for more broadband adoption and infrastructure to deploy broadband to more rural areas. The draft plan is designed to enhance the regional economic development and quality of life by initially focusing on ensuring adequate broadband connectivity for business and other anchor institutions throughout the ten-county area.

“Broadband is crucial to improving quality of life, delivering cost-effective services, and meeting our shared economic goals,” said Chris Straight, Senior Planner for the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and a member of the team. “Many of our region’s businesses, institutions, and households lack access to reliable Internet service at suitable speeds. To address such gaps, continued collaboration is needed and local communities require the tools to meet their goals.”



A regional leadership team consisting of representatives of internet providers, education, businesses, and government will be formed and meet later this fall to act on recommendations in the plan.

Presenters from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, LinkWISCONSIN and the Regional Planning Team will be available to talk with participants during the Oct. 12 open house. Maps of where broadband exists across the state are online at <http://wi.linkamericadata.org>. The Western Wisconsin regional plan is available online at www.link.wisconsin.gov or by contacting Chris Straight at 715-836-2918. Those without Internet access can view the maps and regional plan at a local library or other facility with public computers.

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