



BROADBAND PROJECT KICK-OFF MEETING

**SOUTH EAST TEXAS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
AND
SOUTH EAST TEXAS
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MCM Elegante Hotel
FOUNTAINVIEW ROOM
2355 IH-10
Beaumont, Texas 77705**



**Wednesday, February 2, 2022
10:00 a.m.**

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Hardin County Judge, Wayne McDaniel, Chairman, Broadband Advisory Committee

2. **DISCUSSION OF SETEDD'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATION (EDA) CARES ACT GRANT BROADBAND INITIATIVE**

Shanna Burke, Executive Director, SETRPC

3. **CONNECTED NATION ENGAGEMENT – SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGION**

Pam Waggoner, Broadband Solutions Manager, Connected Nation Texas

4. **REPORT ON CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS (SPECTRUM) EFFORTS TO
EXPAND BROADBAND COVERAGE IN OUR SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGION**

Ed Serna, Charter Communications (Spectrum)

5. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

SOUTH EAST TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Broadband Advisory Committee Mission Statement

The South East Texas Economic Development District Broadband Advisory Committee's vision is to increase access, availability, speed, reliability, consistency and affordability of broadband services to large and small businesses, local governments, schools, institutions of higher learning, medical facilities, non-profit organizations and the general public in our four county South East Texas Region.

SOUTH EAST TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Broadband Advisory Committee

Mission Statement

1. Facilitate and accelerate improvements by identifying and pursuing public and private funding opportunities to improve infrastructure through partnerships with private broadband providers through the most efficient process possible;
2. Identify, promote, facilitate and accelerate improvements to Broadband infrastructure in South East Texas Regional Planning Commission Region;
3. Provide advice in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, bylaws, reports and actions plan to enhance Broadband connectivity;
4. Provide advice on a systematic and coordinated approach to bring internet connectivity to all locations within the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission Region;
5. Identify specific projects to enhance Broadband connectivity within South East Texas;
6. Recommend to the Committee informal or formal partnerships that would enhance the success of connectivity related projects;
7. Review grant applications for Broadband projects for the Committee's approval and submission;
8. Complete community consultation on the development and implementation of broadband connectivity plans and projects.
9. Collect and maintain comprehensive information on the state of broadband in households, businesses, schools and public gathering areas in South East Texas;
10. Analyze internal data to identify areas negatively impacted by lack of availability and quality of broadband services in South East Texas to identify areas for improvement;
11. Develop a South East Texas Broadband Strategic Plan; and
12. Report to stakeholders on the current status and improvements to broadband services in South East Texas.



Contact: Jessica Denson, Director, Communications
Email: jdenson@connectednation.org
Phone: 502-341-2024
Website: connectednation.org/Texas

For Immediate Release
January 4, 2022

South East Texas Economic Development District, South East Texas Regional Planning Commission and Connected Nation Texas plan next steps for broadband connectivity in three counties

Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties, Texas (January 4, 2022) – The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) invites local stakeholders, community residents, and media to attend a special kickoff event on Wednesday, February 2nd at 10:00 am to discuss expanding and improving broadband access, adoption, and use throughout the three counties. Attendees will learn more about broadband access in Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange counties, as well as the Connected Program at Connected Nation Texas (CN Texas), in addition to the project timeline. The meeting will conclude with a Q/A session.

The SETRPC is hosting a community kick-off event on **Wednesday, February 2, at 10:00 am**, at the following location:

MCM Elegante Hotel
Fountain Room
2355 1-10, Beaumont, Texas 77705

If you cannot attend the kickoff meeting, the SETRPC is asking residents and organizations to take 10 minutes to fill out a short survey. Simply choose your county and select the survey category or categories that represent you or your organization.

<https://myconnectedcommunity.org/hardin-county/>
<https://myconnectedcommunity.org/jefferson-county/>
<https://myconnectedcommunity.org/orange-county/>

Current maps provided by the FCC regarding the number of residents and businesses that have adequate broadband service, are majorly overestimated. The goal of the survey is to clearly identify unique challenges and opportunities for expanding high-speed internet in Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange counties, so that every family, business, and community organization can access the critical resources needed to be connected. SETRPC will work with CN Texas to help close the Digital Divide within the community.

The project is funded by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

A Technology Action Plan will be developed for the county by leveraging Connected Nation's [Connected Community Engagement Program](#) and will be shaped by the information provided by local stakeholders. For that reason, it's important to include as much information as possible so that no area is left out of this plan.

The Connected Program has been used in nearly 650 communities across the country to develop county or regional Technology Action Plans that have both short term and long-term broadband solutions.

For more information or if you have questions, email info@connectednation.org or head to connectednation.org/texas.

###

About Connected Nation Texas: CN Texas is the statewide subsidiary of the national nonprofit Connected Nation. Our mission is to improve lives by providing innovative solutions that expand access to and increase the adoption and use of broadband (high-speed internet) and its related technologies for all people. Everyone belongs in a Connected Nation.

Connected Nation works with consumers, local community leaders, states, technology providers, and foundations to develop and implement technology expansion programs with core competencies centered on a mission to improve digital inclusion for people and places previously underserved or overlooked. For more information, please visit: connectednation.org and follow Connected Nation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



connectedSM
A CONNECTED NATION Initiative

JEFFERSON, HARDIN AND ORANGE COUNTIES, YOU ARE INVITED!



WEDNESDAY, FEB 2 AT 10:00AM

Join the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission and Connected Nation Texas as we discuss next steps for broadband connectivity.

What we need from you! Attend this kickoff meeting to identify community champions and make this broadband Connected Engagement a success. We need elected officials and community volunteers with a passion to serve as well as members from the business, agriculture, medical, non-profit, K-12, higher education, and library sectors to come ready to serve.

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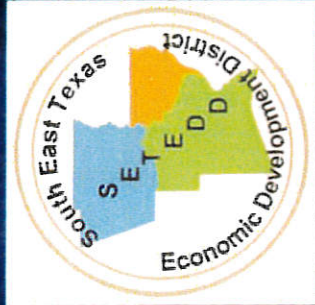
SETRPC
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

This project is funded by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Connected Nation Texas Connected Broadband Engagement

Funded by:

South East Texas Economic Development District
and the
Economic Development Administration
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security
(CARES) Act February 2, 2022



Pam Waggoner

Broadband Solutions Manager, Connected Nation Texas



AGENDA



Opening

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Funding and Governor Abbott's statement on broadband
- Connected Nation's mission statement

Presentation

- What is Broadband?
- RDOF and quick facts about access and adoption in the counties
- Launching survey to produce a community action plan
- Timeline
- Local Service Providers

Closing

- Issues, concerns
- Feedback
- Adjourn

Economic Development Administration (CARES) Act Allotment



The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides the Economic Development Administration (EDA) with \$1.5 billion for economic development assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance, which is being administered under the authority of the bureau's flexible **Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA)** (PDF) program, provides a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

EDA's CARES Act Recovery Assistance funding is made available with the announcement that EDA had published an Addendum to its FY 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity. EDA intends to deploy its CARES Act funding as quickly, effectively, and efficiently as possible, and in a manner that meets communities needs.

<https://eda.gov/cares/>

Governor Abbott's Statement on Broadband



#SOTS2021

“**Broadband access** is an essential tool that must be available to all Texans.”

— Governor Greg Abbott



Mission Statement:

“Our mission is to improve lives by providing innovative solutions that expand the access, adoption, and use of high-speed internet and its related technologies to all people. Everyone belongs in a **Connected Nation.**”

Core Competencies include:

- Network mapping, validation, and analysis
- Residential and business technology research
- Local state, and national policy analysis
- Community technology planning



What is Broadband?

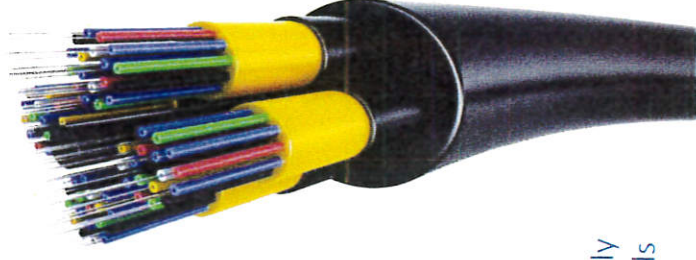


Broadband Defined

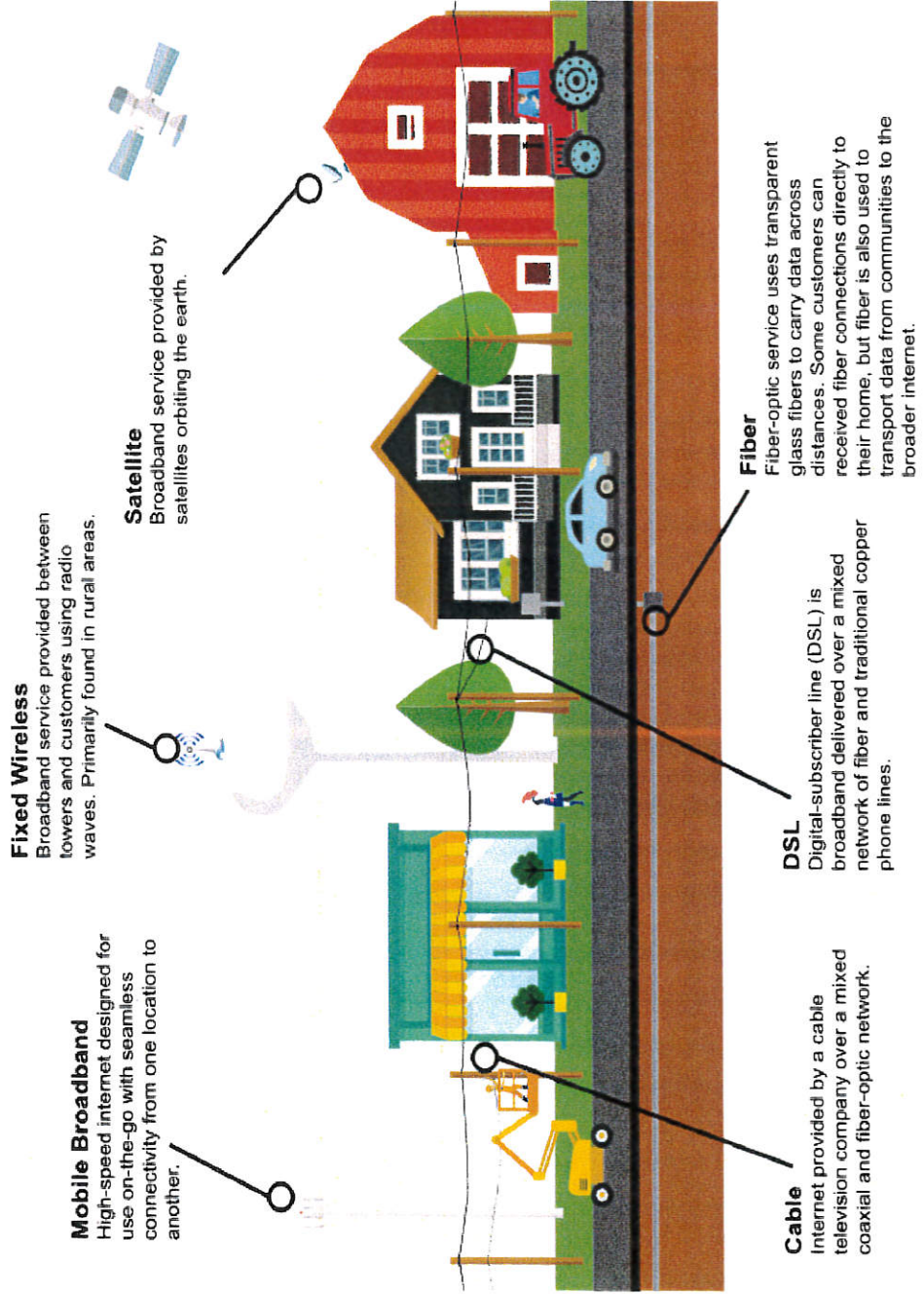


Broadband:

- **Broadband:** high-speed internet access that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access.
- **Two Types of Service:**
 - **Fixed, terrestrial broadband;**
 - Service designed for permanent, stationary use at a home, business, or institution
 - Includes cable, fiber, fixed wireless, T1, and DSL.
 - Excludes mobile broadband and non-terrestrial services (satellite)
 - **Mobile broadband;**
 - Wireless internet service designed for continuous use on a portable device with seamless connectivity from one geographic location to the next.
- Fixed and mobile services are treated as equally important but have different frameworks, funding, business models, capabilities, etc.
- With the introduction of new Low Earth Orbit technologies, satellite is becoming a viable broadband solution particularly for areas where there is no other service or in truly rural locations. Newer technologies overcome many of the shortfalls of previous satellite broadband technologies and provide comparable speeds and latency to other networks.



Broadband Technology



Core Components of Connectivity



Access

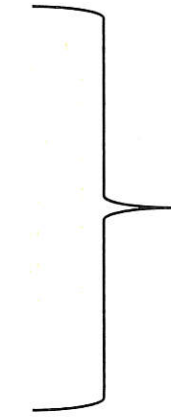
The physical connection to high-speed infrastructure

Adoption

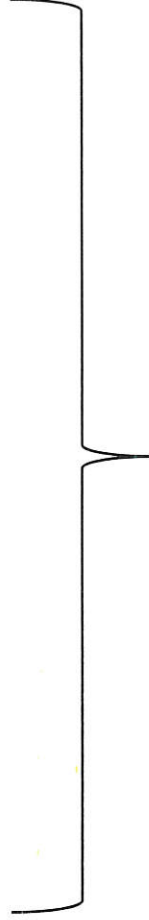
Recognizing the value of broadband and subscribing either at home, work, or via public institutions

Use

Skills and applications to leverage technology to improve quality of life and community/economic development



Supply









Demand

Broadband Defined



The FCC defines broadband as 25/3 Mbps connection

Estimated time to download 2 GB file:	Devices Supported:	Activities Supported:	Primarily used by:
10 Mbps  29 minutes	 1 or 2	Web surfing, e-mail, & moderate HD streaming	Homes & Some Businesses
25 Mbps  11 minutes	 3 to 5	Heavy HD streaming, video conferencing, large file transfer	Homes & Businesses
1 Gbps  17 seconds	 10+	Extreme HD, real-time streaming, frequent & huge file transfers	Businesses & Some Homes

RDOF: Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties



RDOF (Rural Digital Opportunity Fund) Award: The FCC allocated \$9.2 billion of its Rural Digital Opportunity Fund through a “reverse auction” system, in which companies apply for money by making the case that they can deliver the best service to an area at the lowest price. Locations included areas without internet of at least 25/3 Mbps.

- **Hardin County:** CCO Holdings, LLC (Charter Communications) - 4,457 new locations and \$7,499,250 new money: LTD Broadband LLC- 104 new locations and \$306,700 new money
Hardin County, TX Total 4,561 new locations and \$7,805,950 total new money

- **Jefferson County:** CCO Holdings, LLC (Charter Communications)- 2,807 new locations and \$449,236 new money: LTD Broadband LLC- 6 new locations and \$30,448 new money: Resound Networks, LLC- 136 new locations and \$426,555 new money
Jefferson, TX Total 2,949 new locations and \$906,239 new money

- **Orange County:** CCO Holdings, LLC (Charter Communications)- 1,302 new locations and \$1,156,683 new money: LTD Broadband LLC- 132 new locations and \$347,574 new money: Windstream Services LLC, Debtor-In Possession – 30 new locations and \$32,238 new money
Orange, TX Total 1,464 new locations and \$1,536,495 new money



Quick facts: Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties



Quick facts from the American Community Survey administered by the US Census

- **Hardin** - **90.6%** have a computer
- **Orange** - **88.6%** have a computer
- **Jefferson** - **85.3%** have a computer

- **Hardin** - Census shows **81.3%** of households subscribe to Broadband
- **Orange** - Census shows **80.7%** of households subscribe to Broadband
- **Jefferson** - Census shows **72.8%** of households subscribe to Broadband

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/hardincountytexas,orangecountytexas,jeffersoncountytexas,US/PST045221>



Connected Engagement

Connected Teams



What does a Community Technology Team look like?

A local team/task force should include members from the follow sectors:

- government
- education – K-12 and higher ed
- chambers, libraries and community organizations
- businesses
- agriculture
- health Care
- excited residents wanting to be involved.

2. Leaders must share the survey and information with the community. The more surveys taken, the better the information Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties will have to develop the right plan.

3. Talk about the survey, the need for faster broadband, at any community gather you attend. Share the excitement.

The CONNECTED Community Broadband Team

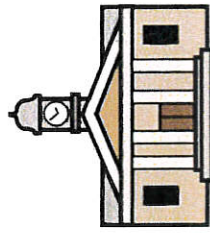


Connected Nation TX CTA

Local Broadband Champion/s

Sector POCs/ Reps

Broadband Providers / ISPs



Local
Government



Education



Agriculture



Economic
Development



Broadband
Providers



Libraries



Public Safety



Healthcare

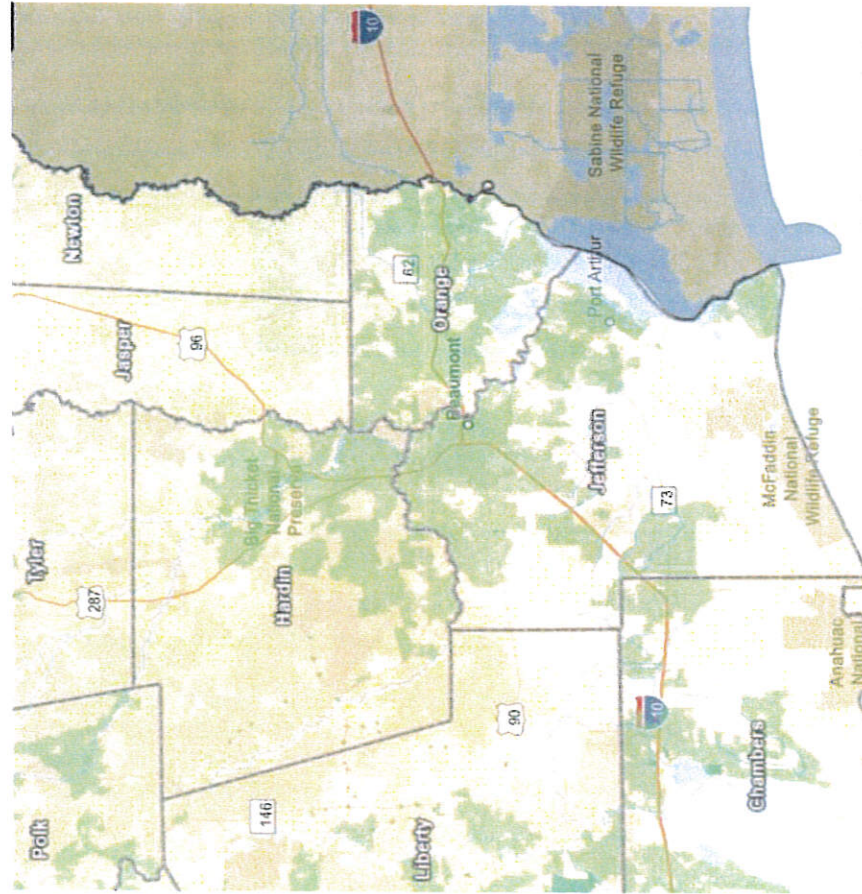


Tourism



Business

Connected Engagement Launch



- Press releases
- Local press/media
- Blog posts / news articles
- Email distribution lists
- Social media
- Meetings / Zoom calls
- Mailings
- Signage (Libraries / Schools / Local Govt offices / etc.)
 - Fact Sheet
 - Reminder cards

The “CONNECTED” Community Broadband Assessment

All surveys are available online via Connected Nation’s “My Connected Community” portal and in hardcopy form



- Residential Technology Survey
- Libraries & Community Organizations Survey
- Business Technology Survey
- Agriculture Technology Survey
- Government Technology Survey
- Healthcare Technology Survey
- Higher Education Technology Survey
- K-12 a Survey
- Public Safety Technology Survey

Survey portal is live now:

- <https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/hardin-county/>
- <https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/jefferson-county/>
- <https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/orange-county/>




Survey Home Page



Hardin County

Data gathering is the first step for improving your internet connection.

Choose a survey below that best represents your role in your community. You may take more than one survey if you have more than one role in the community, (you own a home in the community and own a small business, or you own a home in the community and work at the library, etc.).

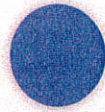
 Household	 Business	 Agriculture
 Health	 Higher Education	 K-12
 Libraries & Organizations	 Public Safety	 Government

Timeline



**February 2-April
6, 2022**

**Survey & Data
Collection**

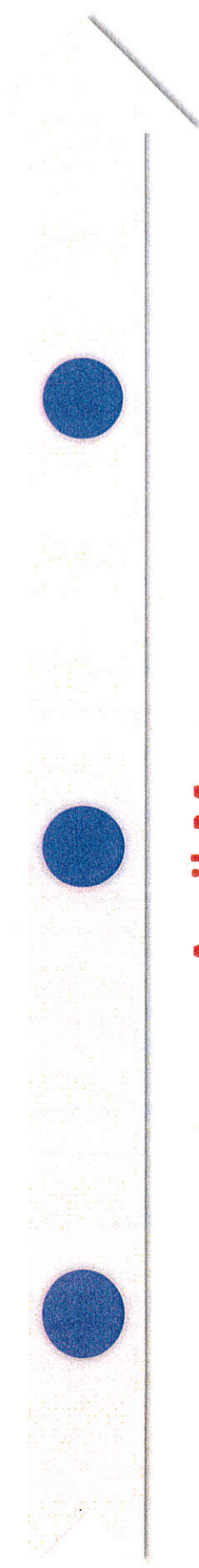


**End of May
2022**

**Action Plan
Development and
Presentation**

**April-May
2022**

**Data Analysis &
Assessment**



Broadband Providers in Jefferson County



Internet Service Provider Technology Max. Speed

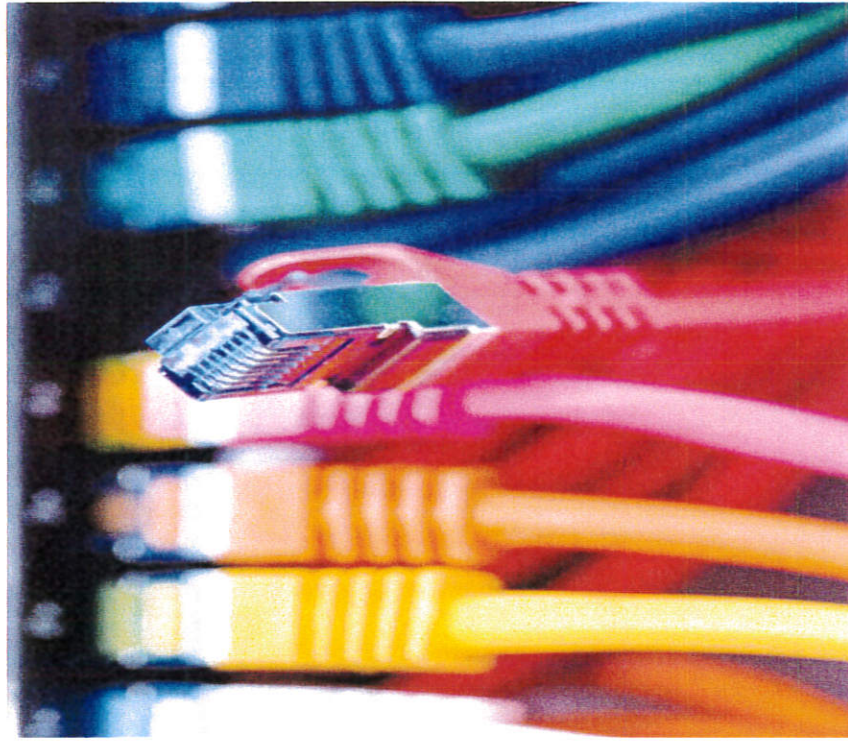
Internet Service Provider	Technology	Max. Speed
AT&T Southwest	Fiber	1000/1000
AT&T Southwest	DSL	18/1
AT&T Southwest	Fixed Wireless	10/1
Cameron Telephone Company	DSL	25/3
Charter Communications	Cable	940/35
Comcast	Cable	987/35
En-Touch Systems, Inc	Fiber	1000/1000
EN-Touch Systems, Inc	Cable	115/20
Internet Management Services	Fiber	1000/1000
NewWave	Cable	300/10
Ndemand	Wireless	10/3
Skybeam, LLC Rise Broadband	Wireless	15/3
Southern Broadband	Fiber	1000/1000
Southern Broadband	Fixed Wireless	100/12
Texas Windstream Inc	Fiber	1000/1000
Texas Windstream Inc.	DSL	200/200



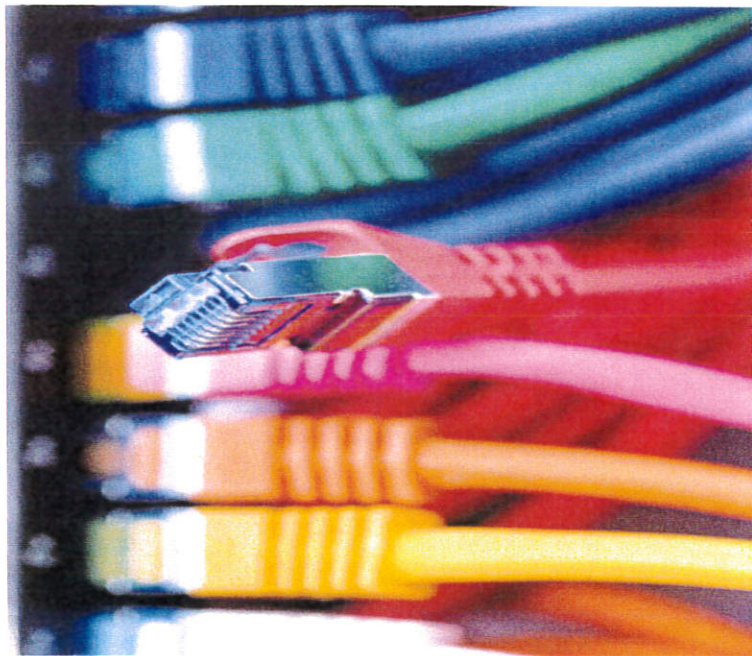
Broadband Providers in Hardin County



Internet Service Provider	Technology	Max. Speed
AT&T Southwest	Fixed	10/1
AT&T Southwest	DSL	25/2
Charter Communications, Inc	Cable	940/35
Comcast Cable	Cable	987/35
Eastex Telephone Coop, Inc	DSL	10/1
Frontier Communications	DSL	100/10
Telecommunications –New Wave	Cable	300/10
Skybeam, LLC	Fixed	25/5

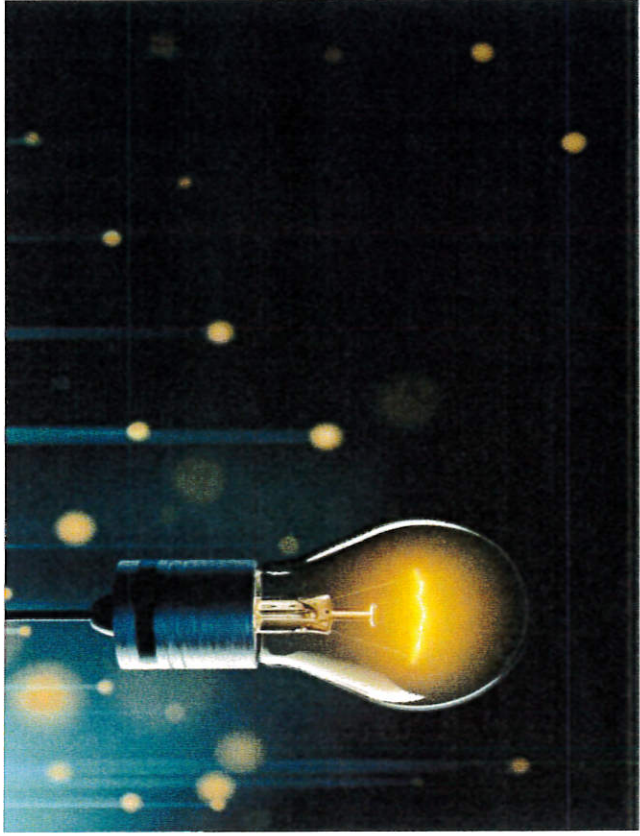


Broadband Provides in Orange County



Internet Service Provider	Technology	Max. Speed
AT&T Southwest	Fiber	1000/1000
AT&T Southwest	DSL	25/2
AT&T Southwest	Fixed Wireless	10/1
Comcast Cable	Cable	987/35
Charter Communications	Cable	940/35
En-Touch Systems, Inc	Fiber	1000/1000
En-Touch Systems, Inc	Cable	115/20

Next Steps



1. Distribute survey link across the entire community
2. Contact institutions directly to complete the survey (e.g. schools, healthcare, political subdivisions, public safety, etc.)
3. I will monitor survey results coming back and give you weekly updates

<https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/hardin-county/>
<https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/jefferson-county/>
<https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/orange-county/>

Questions?

Concerns?

Comments?

Pam Waggoner
Community Technology Advisor
Broadband Solutions Manager
pwaggoner@connectednation.org
936-276-0007



**CONNECTED
NATION™**
Texas

Jefferson County Survey



Please help us as we pursue better broadband service for residents and businesses by taking our survey at: myconnectedcommunity.org/jefferson-county



Or scan this code with your phone camera. Thank you!



Jefferson County Survey



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