

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

A BROADBAND & DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

THE PATH TO A
FUTURE  **READY**
MIAMI-DADE



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY



LETTER FROM

OUR MAYOR

Since taking office as Mayor of Miami-Dade County, my administration has been focused on building a more inclusive, thriving economy by harnessing our County's resources, innovative spirit, and talent. Our economy – ranked the fastest-recovered in the nation – continues to grow with inbound investments, business relocations, and workers in search of new job opportunities.

With our Miami-Dade **FUTURE**  **READY** economic development strategy, we are capitalizing on this forward momentum to usher in a new era for the County – one in which our government, community, and the private sector build a collaborative ecosystem for economic growth that is innovative, inclusive, and sustainable.



Broadband connectivity has never been more critical. To achieve this, fast access must be available to all just like water and electricity. In our community, only 36% of households have access to top-quality, fiber-based broadband, and more than 455,000 households do not have access to competitive pricing and internet service providers. Closing the digital divide will catalyze the local momentum of innovation to fuel our inclusive economy.

Together, we can expand access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet service Countywide to ensure prosperity for all.

This plan was informed by conversations with Miami-Dade residents, key partners from all corners of the community, national experts and detailed data analysis. It represents a path forward for our community made possible by meaningful collaboration that ensures we make Miami-Dade County more connected, more inclusive, and creates opportunities for all residents. It positions the County to benefit from a historic level of Federal investment in broadband infrastructure with a collaborative strategy to make best use of these funds.

The County has a history of creating successful public-private partnerships to make a collective impact. Together, we share a clear desire from stakeholders for a bold, cohesive strategy.

My administration is committed to making sure that opportunity reaches every neighborhood and every resident of this great community. This plan ensures ubiquitous access to meet this challenge head on.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniella Levine Cava".

Mayor Daniella Levine Cava

A BROADBAND & DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

What is Broadband? Broadband is a term that refers to high-speed Internet access.

Broadband allows communities to thrive. Increased access and adoption in urban and rural areas is linked to increased job and population growth, higher rates of new business formation and home values, and lower unemployment rates. It enables talent attraction, innovation, skills upgrading, and access to a global economy.

OUR VISION

To enable access to high-speed internet for all Miami-Dade County residents.

WHY WE NEED A PLAN

Broadband access has never been more critical to bridging the digital divide. It should be as commonplace as water and electricity. Today, internet access remains a barrier for residents of low-income communities to access job opportunities, educational tools, training resources, services, and more.

One-third of Miami-Dade County households live without high-speed connectivity.

Miami-Dade has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to connect all residents and businesses to higher quality internet services. With the volume of Federal and State funding that is anticipated, this plan will ensure coordinated efforts across the community to increase regional viability for funding.

A PATH TO DIGITAL EQUITY

This plan outlines bold goals and actions that will drive a collective mission to connect communities to:

- Reverse historic inequity through the creation of a cohesive public-private strategy.
- Drive innovation and inclusive economic development.
- Position Miami-Dade County to benefit from historic levels of incoming Federal investment.

Through 2022, Miami Connected digital inclusion programs supported over 75,000 families in getting connected with new or improved broadband service drawing down \$39.7 million via the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Our path through 2026 is to double down and ensure that every resident has access to opportunity in our community.

By 2026, we will:



Identify opportunities, support partners, and **apply for Federal and State funding to invest in broadband infrastructure** that connects Miami-Dade's unserved and underserved communities.



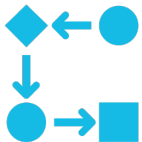
Support increased competition and promote low-cost access to expand the number of residents who subscribe to broadband internet.



Partner with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and community organizations to **remove roadblocks, leverage the County's data, and create public private partnerships** aimed at closing the digital divide.



Engage with local ISP providers to ensure we build a marketplace that supports the communities most in need.



Reduce red tape and streamline processes to fast-track infrastructure improvements.



Tap into Miami-Dade's local workforce to build out new Broadband infrastructure **keeping job growth and opportunity local.**

How will we accomplish this?

- Bring together ISPs, governments, and community partners to track progress.
- Support ISPs to apply for and receive Federal funding.
- Leverage Miami Connected and community partners to help scale solutions that reach those most in need.
- Work internally and across municipal governments to streamline processes and fast-track broadband infrastructure improvement projects.
- Create a detailed Broadband & Digital Equity strategy with the community that outlines clear goals and actions to:
 - Maximize Coordination & Funding,
 - Facilitate a more Competitive Marketplace, and
 - Increase Inclusive Access & Opportunities.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY IS SAYING...



"I am no longer concerned that we will have to give up our internet service due to its high cost. I have been able to apply for jobs and other opportunities as well as use the internet with my kids for their schoolwork and projects. I'm just happy to be a part of this program."

- Kingshinika, Miami Connected participant



"Thanks to having internet service again, I have been able to re-enroll in online classes as well as start an online business that I can run from home. These opportunities for additional income go a long way for a single parent like myself."

- Makeida, Miami Connected participant

BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY FACTS

- According to the Thrive305 survey, 83% of individuals without broadband don't have it because they feel it was too expensive.
- 89% of families that have accessed new or enhanced internet service through Miami Connected since 2021 report accessing increased educational and economic opportunities because of it.
- Households with broadband have a median household income nearly 3X that of households without broadband.

Median Household Income by Broadband Adoption



\$57,000

Households with Broadband



\$20,000

Households without Broadband

BROADBAND & DIGITAL EQUITY STRATEGY

GOAL 1: MAXIMIZE AVAILABLE FUNDING

Position Miami-Dade County to receive and maximize use of Federal and State broadband funding by aligning with other organizations receiving broadband funds.

ACTION 1: Form community and industry partnerships to strengthen funding proposals and promote the County's shared goals.

High Level Outcomes

- Collaborate on and/or submit more than five (5) grant applications for Federal and State funding by 2024.
- Secure at least \$50 million in Federal funding for broadband infrastructure and adoption work in the region by 2026.

ACTION 2: Lead coordination of broadband investments from the County and industry.

High Level Outcomes

- Track broadband investments and activities within the County.
- Lead an engaged broadband stakeholder group that will coordinate activities beyond the time frame and focus of the activities required for Federal funding.

ACTION 3: Ensure that Federal funds target high-priority underserved areas of the County.

High Level Outcomes

- Foster stronger relationships with State officials to move Miami-Dade priorities forward.
- Establish metrics and track funding allocation to target underserved communities.

GOAL 2: FACILITATE A MORE COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE

Foster an environment that promotes an open, competitive ISP marketplace that enables new affordable, high-quality internet service options for underserved communities Countywide.

ACTION 4: Establish principles and connectivity standards to ensure a baseline level of service for ISPs.

High Level Outcomes

- Convene with ISPs and Local Technology Planning Team (LTPT) to review agreed upon principles and standards.
- Engage at least 5 ISPs to establish long-term relationships and expand service offerings.

ACTION 5: Facilitate leveraging of County property, assets and permits for innovative broadband infrastructure expansion.

High Level Outcomes

- Create a digital online presence that will facilitate broadband capabilities in the areas with most need.
- Launch three innovative broadband deployments leveraging County assets via streamlined process and platform.

ACTION 6: Launch a Broadband Innovation Open Challenge to solicit solutions that will demonstrate innovative broadband solutions and partnerships.

High Level Outcomes

- Launch Broadband Innovation Open Challenge with a \$250,000 County funding commitment and matching funds from community partners.
- Connect 5,000 Miami-Dade households with new or enhanced broadband service by the end of 2024.

GOAL 3: INCREASE INCLUSIVE ACCESS & OPPORTUNITIES

Increase broadband adoption and maximize resident reach through close coordination with digital inclusion, workforce, and economic development organizations in the County.

ACTION 7: Expand connectivity options in underserved neighborhoods, including public and subsidized housing through public-private partnerships with ISPs.

High Level Outcomes

- Increase availability of affordably priced broadband options for an additional 2,000 households in target areas, including affordable and public housing, by the end of 2024.
- Create and implement connectivity standards and solutions for all new affordable and public housing projects.

ACTION 8: Ensure any new and existing internet service options are accompanied by adoption support and digital inclusion resources for residents.

High Level Outcomes

- Implement a coordinated strategy targeting the areas of lowest adoption with community-based organizations.
- Achieve a 20% rate of adoption within one year of new affordable internet service deployments.

ACTION 9: Ensure that residents benefit from the jobs created resulting from the unprecedented levels of private and public investments in broadband infrastructure.

High Level Outcomes

- Coordinate strategy to train and place residents into broadband related jobs based on County workforce initiatives with private and public partners.
- Collaborate with partners to create pathways for Miami-Dade residents to tap into workforce opportunities stemming from broadband expansion and investment.

THE PATH TO A **FUTURE** **READY** MIAMI-DADE

Miami-Dade County is poised to maximize on this unprecedented opportunity to expand access to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet service for all Miami-Dade residents at this pivotal moment. Broadband access has never been more critical to bridging the digital divide and connecting residents to the the limitless opportunities internet connectivity provides. It should be as commonplace as water and electricity.

The County is committed to executing this Broadband & Digital Equity Action Plan to reverse historic inequities and drive greater innovation and inclusive economic development throughout the County. Our goals of high-level coordination, attracting Federal and State funding, cultivating partnerships, creating a robust and competitive ISP marketplace, and ensuring equitable access for residents will serve as guideposts to achieving ubiquitous internet access in Miami-Dade.

Tracking and sharing progress towards these goals is key to success and the County has developed this www.miamidade.gov/broadband to keep all stakeholders and residents informed. Together we will improve quality of life, fuel small businesses, and connect our workforce to opportunities across the world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Miami-Dade County would like to acknowledge the contributions of all partners that made the development of this plan possible, including Miami Connected's financial support and leadership, stakeholders' input from across the community, and HR&A's analysis and thought leadership.



For more information visit,
www.miamidade.gov/broadband



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