



For more information:

Carole Yeend, Co-chair
(317) 407-3221

broadbandconnect@rushcounty.in.gov

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Rush County Wants to Partner with Internet Providers for Improved Service

Recognizing the acute need for accessible, reliable and affordable internet service for all of Rush County, the Board of Commissioners issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) at their meeting today. Monies are being earmarked to assist internet providers who will partner with the County. Due October 22, 2021, the RFP was prepared by the Rush County Connect Broadband Task Force. Details of the requirements and submittal procedures can be found at <https://rushcounty.in.gov/broadband/> or <https://rushcountybroadband.com/> or by an email request to broadbandconnect@rushcounty.in.gov.

Rush County is a ready partner, having spent the past two years working with Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) laying solid groundwork for improvement. Rush was the first county in Indiana with a fully-imagined Five-Year Digital Inclusion plan. The plan was developed by a 19-member taskforce and considers factors of accessibility and the “digital divide,” in addition to necessary infrastructure improvements to bring broadband access affordably to all residents. According to Roberto Gallardo, PhD, director of PCRD, “Increasing access to affordable broadband and fostering digital skills is expected to be economically transformative for rural communities like Rush County. “

Rush County has been designated as a Broadband Ready Community by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). This means that Rush County has taken steps to facilitate broadband infrastructure improvements by removing barriers to permits and development.

Recent surveys conducted with GEO Partners LLC collected data from Rush County residents about their broadband speeds. Maps displayed in GIS layers have been created and record real-time internet speed data accurately pinpointing areas in the most need and those who are not served at the level promised. Broadband task force co-chair, Mark McCorkle says, “This data has been particularly important to document unserved/underserved areas, highlighting the gaps in broadband service. Rush County must have better connectivity to sustain and thrive.”

About Rush County Connect Broadband Task Force

Rush County Connect Broadband Task Force is an all-volunteer group working with providers, community leaders, organizations, businesses, local government, and residents to improve internet access and digital literacy throughout Rush County. Our vision is for every home and business in Rush County to have accessible, reliable, and affordable internet access and be able to fully participate in a digital economy and society.

Contact Rush County Connect Broadband Task Force

For more information about Rush County Connect Broadband Task Force, visit us on Facebook or contact Carole Yeend, co-chair, at (317) 407-3221 or broadbandconnect@rushcounty.in.gov