

The Library Role Connecting Texans to the Internet

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Report from the Governor's Broadband Development Council

In the 2020 report, the Council recommended the Texas Legislature take the following action:

1. Create a state broadband plan; and
2. Establish a state broadband office.

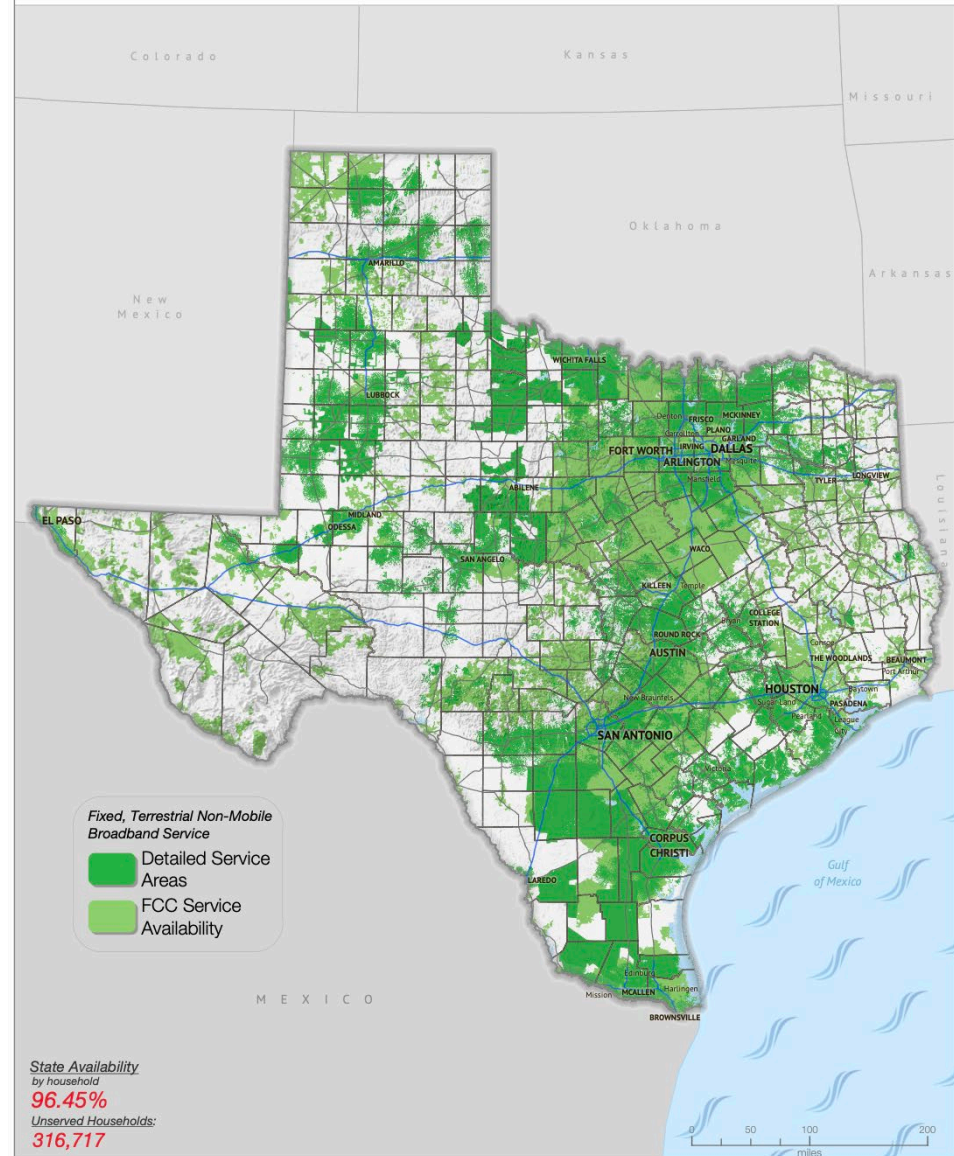
The Council also believed that the following action could benefit the broadband landscape in Texas and therefore recommends its continued study:

- Develop a state broadband funding program to incentivize deployment in unserved areas.

Full report is available here:

[https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/2020 Texas Report - Governors Broadband Development Council.pdf](https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/2020_Texas_Report_-_Governors_Broadband_Development_Council.pdf)

Overall State of Broadband in Texas



Barriers to universal broadband

- Regulatory, economic, market, and technical factors
- Lack of collaboration/transparency
- Insufficient statewide cooperation
- Low adoption rates



How Libraries Can Help Bring Broadband to Our Communities

TSLAC Broadband Efforts

- Digital inclusion as a priority – History of providing content
 - Stated strategic priority of the Commission
 - TexShare back to 1997
 - E-Read Texas e-book project – partnership with Amigos
- Digital inclusion – Recent emphasis on connectivity
 - Broadband projects – partnerships with [LEARN, ESC, E-Rate Central](#)
 - Digital inclusion policy – Governor’s Broadband Council
 - E-Rate participation
 - New technologies

Looking to the Future: Questions to consider

What will it take to deploy universal broadband?

What are the opportunities and obstacles to broadband access in Texas going forward?

What Libraries Workers Can Do

- Know your community.
 - Use TSLAC's [Digital Equity worksheet](#) (WordDoc) to map your digital inclusion landscape
- Know your library's technology needs
 - Use the [Internet2 Broadband Toolkit](#) (WordDoc) to assess your library's technology needs
- Stay abreast of funding (next slide)

What Funding Exists

Federal funding: American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA)

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 includes \$200 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), providing emergency funding for budgetary expenses brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic and includes billions of dollars in academic, public and school library-eligible programs, including the Emergency Education Connectivity Fund (ECF) through the federal E-rate program. Read the details in [ALA's ECF Factsheet \(PDF\)](#) and stay up to date using [ALA's ARPA site](#).

Federal Funding: Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB)

The Federal Communications Commission has launched a temporary program to help families and households struggling to afford Internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Find a list of [participating Internet Service Providers](#) in your area. Find more information at the [Universal Service Administration Co's EBB site](#).

State Funding: E-rate

TSLAC's E-rate consultant can assist you with filing for Internet discount. Find more information on our [E-rate page](#).

Digital Equity Innovations

- TSLAC CARES Act [Grant Recipients](#)
- Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS): Harris County Public Libraries
- [Telehealth](#): Pottsboro Public Library + University of North Texas
- [Digital Navigators](#): Salt Lake City Public Library

Review recorded webinars from [GigLibraries pandemic response](#) to see other examples.

Additional Resources

ConnectedTexas – Maps

- Review the [state of broadband access in Texas](#) with updated maps from ConnectedTexas.

National Digital Equity Organizations:

- [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](#) (NDIA)
- [Schools, Healthcare, Libraries Broadband Coalition](#) (SHLB)
- [Benton Foundation](#)

Questions

Thank you!

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