

Broadband Expansion

Timeline

1. August 8, 2008: Governor Patrick signs “An Act Establishing and Funding the Massachusetts Broadband Institute,” legislation that leverages resources to make high-speed Internet available in the Commonwealth’s 32 communities that currently lack access to broadband (A-5, B-10)
2. July 16, 2009: Governor Patrick signs “An Act Providing for Economic Recovery through Broadband Initiatives” to help leverage federal economic recovery funds to boost broadband services throughout Massachusetts (B-15).¹
3. March 12, 2010: Governor Patrick celebrates a \$32 million federal award received by the regional non-profit OpenCape Corporation through the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) (A-17).
4. July 2, 2010: Governor Patrick announces Massachusetts will be awarded \$45.4 million in federal stimulus funding to expand broadband access in Western and North-Central Massachusetts (A-23).
5. October 1, 2010: Massachusetts receives \$4.1 million in federal stimulus funding that will provide broadband assistance for veterans and small businesses, and also enhance mapping efforts to expand broadband infrastructure (A-26).
6. July 26, 2011: Governor Patrick kicks-off construction of the MassBroadband 123 fiber-optic network project to expand broadband access to more than 120 communities in western and north central Massachusetts (A-31).
7. April 4, 2013: Governor Patrick lights the first section of the 1,200-mile MassBroadband 123 fiber-optic network that will bring high-speed Internet access to underserved areas of western and central Massachusetts (A-38).

Results

*An Act Establishing and Funding the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (2008, B-10)*²

- Creates the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) under the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. The MBI will be in charge of overseeing the \$40 million new Broadband Incentive Fund to construct fiber, wireless towers and other critical and long-lived broadband infrastructure.
 - The Institute will also be responsible for assessing exiting service conditions across Massachusetts and developing a comprehensive plan to address deficiencies in towns currently lacking, or with only partial access to, broadband service.

¹ <http://broadband.masstech.org/history/broadband-bill>.

² Governor Deval Patrick Signs Broadband Access Law (A-5).

*An Act Providing for Economic Recovery through Broadband Initiatives (2009, B-16)*³

- Authorizes the Massachusetts Broadband Institute to use funding to acquire indefeasible rights of use and federal-government (FCC) spectrum.
- Clarifies that petitions relative to the zoning of a communications or cable facility will be reviewed by the Department of Telecommunications and Cable and petitions relative to all other types of public service facilities will be reviewed by the Department of Public Utilities.
- Clarifies that the MBI may be exempt from local zoning by-laws or ordinances so long as the MBI is acting within the confines of its essential government function for the public good.
- Authorizes MassHighway to enter into long-term leases with the MBI so that fiber and conduit can be deployed along certain existing right-of-ways in parallel with certain MassHighway construction projects.

*MassBroadband 123*⁴

- As of March 31, 2013:
 - 31,603 Verizon pole licenses received (96% complete).
 - 29,428 electric utility pole licenses received (97% complete).
 - 895 miles of fully licensed fiber miles released to construction for aerial installation (96% complete).
 - 775 miles of messenger strand and 676 miles of aerial fiber optic cable installed (83% and 72% complete, respectively).
 - 582 Community Anchor Institution site installations and 17 Point of Interconnection and collocation site equipment installations complete (72% and 63% complete, respectively).

³ Governor Patrick Files Broadband Legislation to Prepare the Commonwealth for Access to Federal Stimulus Funds (A-9). (Note: these provisions reflect the originally filed bill and not necessarily the bill at final passage).

⁴ Quarterly Performance Progress Report for Broadband Infrastructure Projects—Q1 2013 (B-3).