

Commonwealth of Massachusetts **Performance Report**

Capital Projects Fund 2026 Report

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

2026 Performance Report

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Executive Summary

Launched in August of 2023, MBI has completed all rounds for the Gap Networks Program; awards totaling \$45.3 million. MBI completed two data reconciliation processes with all Round 1 and Round 2 awardees that resulted in the contract amendments with each of the four awardees.

The Residential Retrofit Program launched in May 2024 and has closed five funding rounds, totaling awards of \$74,285,967.32 that will provide improved broadband services to approximately 33,000 affordable and public housing units. The ancillary grant Retrofit Ancillary Grantee Program (RANGE) launched in April 2025, with \$ 7,323,875.61 awarded in its first three cycles to 35 applicants. Additional funds were awarded though a fourth cycle, though not all cycle 4 contracts were executed by 6/30/26. The table below includes four of the ten applicants awarded under cycle 4, for an additional \$203,302.68.

The Connected & Online Program launched in October 2025 and has completed two award rounds providing fleets of internet-connected devices and supporting ancillary and peripheral equipment to expand education, workforce development, and healthcare access. Supported by a \$31.6 million budget, the to date has awarded approximately 31,426 core devices and 19,369 pieces of peripheral and ancillary equipment to 255 unique organizations across 103 municipalities and 13 counties throughout Massachusetts.

Uses of Funds

MBI developed the grant solicitation and the online application portal for the Gap Networks Grant Program during Q3 and Q4 of 2023. Round 1 awards were made during Q1 and Q2 of 2024 and Round 2 awards were made in Q4 of 2024. MBI releases funds to awardees upon the completion of project milestones. Projects awarded under Round 1 and Round 2 are contract and projects are underway. Gap Networks Program funds are designed to support the Commonwealth's goal to make affordable, high-speed internet available to homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices, and other public places across the Commonwealth to support towns and cities with critical needs, particularly those communities that have substantial low-income households and other disadvantaged populations. The Gap Networks Program funds will address gaps in broadband infrastructure where reliable broadband service is unavailable by expanding access and connectivity in unserved and underserved locations across the Commonwealth. Networks funded through this Program will be capable of offering broadband service that meets or exceed 100 Mbps download speeds and 100 Mbps upload speeds.

Funds under the Residential Retrofit Program have been used to construct state-of-the-art fiber or CAT6 to the unit networks, along with associated equipment, to ensure that residents of public and affordable housing have access to reliable high-speed internet.

Funds under the Connected & Online Program have been used to procure and distribute internet-enabled devices, assistive technology, and peripheral equipment directly to awarded organizations across Massachusetts, at no cost to recipients. Rather than awarding funds directly to organizations, MBI has contracted with Dell Marketing LP and HUB Technical Services to purchase and deliver equipment on their behalf, ensuring program dollars are converted directly into deployed technology.

Activities implemented Over the Reporting Period

Gap Networks

MBI launched the Round 1 solicitation on October 25, 2023 and subsequently issued two amendments to the solicitation. Six applicants submitted grant applications under Round 1 of the Gap Networks Program, including their firm qualifications, approach, number and location of broadband serviceable locations (“BSLs”) to be served, technological approach and proposed schedule and budget for every proposed Project Service Area (“PSA”) they wished to have considered. The Round 1 grant applications totaled \$76.2 million in requested grant funds to extend coverage in 189 towns and cities. The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MBI’s parent agency) approved \$45.4 million in grant awards to four grantees to expand broadband availability in 41 towns and cities. After two reconciliation processes were completed the total grant award amount was adjusted to \$32,233,067.41 and the number of towns and cities was adjusted to 38.

Round 2 solicitation launched on May 23, 2024. Four applicants submitted grant applications under Round 2 of the Gap Networks Program, including their firm qualifications, approach, number and location of broadband serviceable locations (“BSLs”) to be served, technological approach and proposed schedule and budget for every proposed Project Service Area (“PSA”) they wished to have considered. The Round 2 grant applications totaled \$26.2 million in requested grant funds to extend coverage in 121 towns and cities. The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MBI’s parent agency) approved grant awards to two grantees to expand broadband availability in 97 towns and cities. Networks funded through this Program will be capable of offering broadband service that meets or exceed 100 Mbps download speeds and 100 Mbps upload speeds.

After two reconciliation processes related to Round 2 were completed, the total grant award amount was adjusted to \$13,072,243.76 and the number of towns and cities was adjusted to 90. The reconciliation processes were undertaken to ensure that CPF awards are only expended to funded locations that (1) are actual serviceable locations; and (2) do not have access to qualifying broadband service.

[https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/Presentation - Gap Networks Grant Program Webinar %2811-17-23%29.pdf](https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/Presentation%20-%20Gap%20Networks%20Grant%20Program%20Webinar%2011-17-23%29.pdf)[https://broadband.masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation 2024-MBI-01 Gap Networks Grant Program Questions and Answers Batch%231.pdf](https://broadband.masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation%202024-MBI-01%20Gap%20Networks%20Grant%20Program%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20Batch%231.pdf)[https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation 2024-MBI-01 Gap Networks Grant Program - Questions and Answers Batch %232.pdf](https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation%202024-MBI-01%20Gap%20Networks%20Grant%20Program%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20Batch%232.pdf)[https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation 2024-MBI-01 Gap Networks Program - Questions and Answers Batch %233.pdf](https://masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Solicitation%202024-MBI-01%20Gap%20Networks%20Grant%20Program%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20Batch%233.pdf)

Additional funding was awarded to Gap Networks awardees through a reconciliation process that analyzed BSLs identified as underserved during the BEAD Challenge Process. Underserved BSLs that were within existing Gap Networks awarded PSAs were added into the awardees’ scopes.

Awardees began submitting make ready pole applications in December of 2024. In collaboration with the Executive Office of Economic Development, MBI established a Make Ready Working Group involving utility pole owners, awardees, and Commonwealth telecommunications and utility regulation authorities to facilitate an efficient and effective make ready process. EOED and MBI began convening

monthly Make Ready Working Group meetings in May 2025. By the summer of 2025 it became apparent that there were huge delays in the processing of make ready applications on behalf of the utilities.

The two initial payment milestones are tied to the make ready process, so make ready delays caused residual delays in awardee project milestone completion. Nonetheless, progress was made by awardees within all awarded PSAs and some make ready licenses were received by the end of 2025.

Residential Retrofit

During the period covered, MBI continued to make progress on key program milestones including the successful completion of the fifth and final grant round that committed \$15,936,884 in funds to service an additional 4,698 housing units. The last funding round brings the total housing coverage across the Commonwealth to approximately 33,000 units. Below is a summary of the grant round executed during this funding period.

Table 1

Grant Round	RFP Open	RFP Closed	Units	Awarded
Round V	September 9, 2025	October 7, 2025	4,698	\$15,936,884

Additionally, this period saw the successful completion of construction for several Residential Retrofit properties across Massachusetts. MBI celebrated construction completion and service provision with public “Go Live” events in partnership with the housing operators and internet service providers. In November 2025 MBI joined Aervivo and the Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) to mark the completion of Gardner Terrace at 46 Pine St in Attleboro serving seniors in 92 units. Just A Start joined Comcast and MBI to celebrate service to 274 units at Rindge Tower Apartments in Cambridge in January 2026. In March 2026 MBI joined the AccessPlus/RingSquared team and the Pittsfield Housing Authority to launch service to 91 units at the Columbia Arms on 65 Columbus Ave in Pittsfield. Lastly this month on June 16th MBI joined Community Broadband Networks (CBN) and the Southbridge Housing Authority to celebrate project completion at 60 Charlton Street and 150 Main Street for a total of 152 units.

During this period, in anticipation of a high volume of Residential Retrofit construction progress and completion, MBI launched a Mini-Bid solicitation for Field Inspection Services. Two responses were received on April 2, 2026 and a contract was executed with LiRo Engineers, Inc. on June 2, 2026. MBI expects many additional projects to come online during the 1st quarter of FY27, with providers reaching key milestones toward project completion, as outlined in quarterly CPF reports.

Additionally, during this period MBI made several new awards under the Retrofit Ancillary Grantee (RANGE) Program, designed to support the maximum use and adoption of broadband infrastructure being installed under the Retrofit program. Through an open application process grants will be made available directly to housing operators participating in the Retrofit Program. RANGE grants are structured to support housing operators with investments in four areas: digital navigators or tenant coordinators, digital literacy courses, public space improvements, and device distribution.

Housing operators may apply for RANGE awards for any development receiving Retrofit Program infrastructure investments. Below is a summary of all fully executed RANGE grant awards.

Housing Organization	Total Units	Number of Buildings	Award Amount
Boston Housing Authority	906	20	\$1,504,659.24
Preservation of Affordable Housing	839	5	\$353,663.63
Home City Development Inc.	261	10	\$130,448.20
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corp.	129	52	\$67,759.50
Worcester Housing Authority	592	90	\$188,681.03
Action Inc.	37	8	\$21,275.00
Acton Housing Authority	47	3	\$24,129.00
Amesbury Housing Authority	262	36	\$179,600.00
Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribal Housing Authority	32	32	\$156,652.80
Arlington Housing Authority	694	59	\$366,576.00
Carr Properties	743	24	\$272,869.23
Chelsea Housing Authority	566	10	\$302,624.50
Dudley Housing Authority	80	20	\$37,206.00
Gloucester Housing Authority	582	105	\$96,635.80
Granite Place Associates/Marina Bay Management	350	2	\$139,223.00
Great Barrington Housing Authority	111	22	\$29,198.61
Hearthway Inc.	654	29	\$284,481.39
Holyoke Housing Authority	415	59	\$196,363.75
Just A Start	273	1	\$118,617.60
Leicester Housing Authority	44	1	\$68,862.00
Melrose Housing Authority	305	2	\$217,317.50
Merrimac Housing Authority	52	9	\$37,439.30
Neighborworks Housing Solutions	309	38	\$195,099.49
New England Center and Home for Veterans	121	1	\$181,705.58
North Shore CDC	15	1	\$30,500.35
Norton Housing Authority	10	13	\$65,000.00
Pine Street Inn, Inc.	256	30	\$48,085.00
Pittsfield Housing Authority	655	59	\$402,750.26
Planning Office for Urban Affairs	249	23	\$115,820.00
Quincy Housing Authority	1,394	199	\$589,204.74
Revere Housing Authority	372	86	\$90,862.70
Scituate Housing Authority	209	19	\$104,164.40
Somerville Housing Authority	784	20	\$227,353.48
The Neighborhood Developers	769	61	\$432,225.03
Worcester Common Ground	75	2	\$46,821.50
Stockbridge Housing Authority	51	7	\$51,875.00

Williamstown Housing Authority	30	2	\$29,485.18
Youghal LLC	51	12	\$54,607.50
Concord Housing Authority	68	16	\$67,335.00
Total Award			\$7,527,178.29

Infrastructure Dashboard – Gap Networks and Residential Retrofit

During the reporting period MBI launched a new online dashboard and map to track program progress and activities. Through monthly updates submitted by awardees, MBI staff monitor performance, identify delays or challenges early, and make data-driven decisions to keep projects on track. The infrastructure dashboard data is also accessible externally to stakeholders, including housing operators, residents, and public agencies, through MBI’s website. The public facing dashboard offers transparent access to information, fostering accountability and trust. Additionally, the centralized dashboard stimulates constructive conversations, reduces administrative burdens, and enables comparison across projects and providers to effectively support the evaluation of the overall program impact while informing future funding priorities.

Connected & Online Program

MBI launched the Round 1 solicitation on October 6, 2025, and subsequently hosted a Technical Assistance Session on October 15, 2025 to support interested applicants. MBI also conducted a Q&A period, publishing responses to applicant questions on October 22, 2025. The application period formally closed on November 7, 2025, with award notifications issued in late November and early December 2025.

MBI received 233 applications under Round 1 and awarded 217 organizations, distributing 26,378 core devices, 6,513 add-on software packages, and 9,540 pieces of ancillary equipment. Applications were evaluated across five scored categories — project impact, feasibility and readiness, community engagement and public accessibility, equipment effectiveness and program alignment, and monitoring and evaluation — with bonus points available for organizations serving Gateway Cities, rural communities, or populations at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Following award notifications, MBI worked to execute contracts with Round 1 grantees in January 2026 and equipment procurement and distribution began in February 2026. Due to weather events and geopolitical factors impacting global supply chains, some organizations experienced delays in receiving their equipment. All core Dell devices were delivered by April 2026; however, peripheral and ancillary equipment for many organizations did not arrive until June 2026, causing some grantees to experience delays in deploying devices to their communities. Despite these challenges, all Round 1 awardees are expected to have devices fully deployed by the end of June 2026.

Even in this early stage of deployment, grantees have begun documenting meaningful community impact across education, workforce development, and healthcare, with devices made publicly accessible through on-site computer stations and free lending programs across the Commonwealth. The Worcester Public Library established one of the program’s most visible public access points, hosting a device launch event in partnership with the City of Worcester and eight additional Connected & Online grantees in April 2026, celebrating over 1,000 devices reaching approximately 2,000 community members. At the

Milton Public Library, Chromebooks available for free checkout to library cardholders have been used by community members of all ages for job searches, résumé development, school assignments, and virtual appointments, with patrons regularly attending tech help sessions offered by library staff. At the Osterville Village Library on Cape Cod, 14 publicly accessible desktop computers have been utilized by an estimated 212 unique individuals since deployment, including year-round residents, seasonal visitors, and remote workers — with patrons using the devices for internet access, research, communication, and job-related needs across all seven days the library is open each week.

In community-based settings, publicly accessible devices are reaching residents facing significant barriers to technology access. At Brazilian-American Center BRACE, devices available for public on-site use have supported beginner computer classes and individualized assistance for community members including older adults and immigrants, with one participant experiencing homelessness attending every class session without missing a single week. At the Immigrant Learning Center, 84 of 140 Chromebooks have been loaned through a free public lending program to adult English language learners, with devices enabling students to access online educational platforms, complete workforce preparation activities, and engage in English instruction from home. MassHire Holyoke made devices publicly available at a walk-in career center and employer recruitment event with Baystate Health, enabling approximately 40 job seekers to complete online applications and submit resumes on-site with staff assistance — directly addressing the challenge that residents often intend to apply for jobs but cannot follow through without immediate access to technology.

Healthcare-focused grantees have similarly prioritized public access to devices for patients and community members at no cost. DotHouse Health deployed tablets in its Community Resource and Wellness Center for open public use, enabling community members to access resources related to food, housing, immigration support, financial assistance, and healthcare navigation, with staff available to assist individuals in real time. At Greater Roslindale Medical and Dental Center, patients receiving loaner laptops through a free public lending program are connected to resources covering SNAP and WIC benefits, remote blood pressure monitoring, colorectal cancer screening, and MyChart patient portal navigation, pairing publicly accessible device lending with wraparound health support.

MBI launched the Round 2 solicitation on March 9, 2026 and closed the application period on April 5, 2026, with award notifications and contracts issued in May 2026. MBI received 68 applications and awarded 45 organizations under Round 2, totaling 5,063 devices, 1,261 add-on software packages, and 3,758 pieces of ancillary equipment. Round 2 grantees are expected to receive all equipment by September 1, 2026.

Activities Planned for the Next Reporting Period

Gap Networks

In the next reporting period, MBI will continue to hold monthly project status meetings with all awardees, which will include: U.S. Treasury Quarterly Project and Expenditure Reporting, project status reporting and schedule review, milestone reimbursement invoicing discussions, make ready status review, identification of outstanding issues and project risk assessment.

In collaboration with the Executive Office of Economic Development, MBI will continue to support a Make Ready Working Group until all make ready licenses have been issued.

Milestone #2 requires that awardees make all make ready estimates payments. When the awardees have satisfied this requirement they are able to request reimbursement for all pre-construction costs incurred. MBI will continue to work closely with the awardees to ensure that they complete Milestone #3 - 50% construction completion and Milestone #4 – 100% construction completion.

Residential Retrofit Program

As mentioned under *Activities Implemented Over the Reporting Period*, MBI has contracted with LiRo Engineers, Inc. to provide Field Inspection Services. On behalf of MBI, LiRo will conduct thorough inspections of representative Retrofit projects including level of completion, quality assurance, and adherence to all technical and contractual requirements. Inspections will include all Internet Service Providers and a variety of housing typologies to determine if specific providers, operators, or building types warrant further review to ensure successful program outcomes and anticipated benefits. The scope of work comprises an evaluation and documentation of installed infrastructure across the full network path from building entry point to residential unit including outside plant / entry infrastructure, distribution infrastructure, in-building cabling, and unit-level infrastructure using recognized telecommunications and electrical standards.

During the next period, MBI will actively support and monitor both grant recipients and housing operator partners to ensure that funded projects are meeting schedule milestones toward completion including construction, service provision, deliverables, and invoicing. As needed MBI will also work with state and municipal officials to clarify program objectives and time sensitivities to mitigate any delays in permitting or right of way access that could threaten project completion.

MBI will also be deploying a survey through its housing partners to residents of retrofitted buildings to document information regarding how individuals and households are benefitting from CPF funds. MBI will be hosting ongoing “Go Live” events for the Retrofit program as projects are completed. MBI will continue to monitor all sub-recipients and contractors under the program and complete Treasury reporting requirements.

Under the RANGE program, MBI anticipates executing 6 more contracts for an additional \$1,289,268.25. MBI also anticipates increasing existing awards upon request for up to an additional \$265,494.24.

Connected & Online Program

In the next reporting period, MBI will continue to monitor Round 1 grantees to ensure all organizations have fully deployed devices to their communities and are meeting program compliance requirements, including public accessibility commitments through December 31, 2026. MBI will follow up with any organizations that experienced supply chain-related delays to confirm deployment completion and collect activation forms certifying receipt of all serial-numbered devices.

MBI will continue to work closely with Dell Marketing LP and HUB Technical Services to support Round 2 device procurement and delivery, with a target of all equipment reaching grantees by September 1, 2026. In response to lessons learned during Round 1, MBI and its vendors will provide enhanced on-site

deployment support to Round 2 grantees to ensure devices are quickly distributed and made accessible to community members upon arrival.

As Round 1 grantees move into full operation, the next reporting period is expected to see a significant expansion of publicly accessible programming across the Commonwealth. Grantees have planned a wide range of activities that reflect the program's three required focus areas of education, workforce development, and healthcare. Libraries across Massachusetts are planning free public technology help sessions, one-on-one digital literacy appointments, and device lending programs. The Milton Public Library has scheduled weekly drop-in Tech Help sessions open to all community members through the summer, while the Bellingham Public Library is launching "Tech Tuesdays" for individuals with limited technology experience, with outreach coordinated through the local senior center. The Dennis Library System is planning a "MyChart" instruction workshop in partnership with the Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod to help community members navigate the Cape Cod Healthcare patient portal, and has begun outreach to Sight Loss Services, Inc. to promote devices loaded with JAWS assistive technology software for individuals with vision impairments.

Workforce-focused organizations are preparing to significantly expand public access to job search and career development services. MassHire Holyoke plans to host two to three employer recruitment events per month where Chromebooks will be publicly available for job seekers to complete online applications in real time, while also launching a Department of Transitional Assistance Job Readiness Program and monthly Financial Literacy workshops utilizing grant-funded devices. Make It Haverhill is planning to open public computer access stations with walk-in internet access and one-on-one Digital Navigator support, and will launch digital literacy classes in both English and Spanish at beginner and intermediate levels. La Colaborativa is preparing to launch a free community lending program for 30 laptops alongside Digital Navigator Office Hours providing open access for community members to receive assistance with employment applications, benefits access, and healthcare navigation.

Healthcare-focused grantees are also planning expanded public access to devices and health services. Lynn Community Health Center will begin distributing remote blood pressure monitoring devices and computers to eligible patients through care team referrals. Whittier Street Health Center will begin computers, blood pressure RPM kits and glucose monitors received in June, training staff and patients on remote monitoring workflows and MyChart activation. Greater Roslindale Medical and Dental Center will continue promoting its free public laptop lending program through wellness fairs, community events, and local farmers markets, pairing device access with wraparound health navigation support.

Several grantees are also planning innovative public programming that reflects emerging community needs. The Osterville Village Library is launching a dedicated AI Learning Studio featuring four publicly accessible workstations connecting Cape Cod residents to the Massachusetts AI Hub, Google AI Professional Certificate program, and other free AI tools — positioning the library as a regional hub for emerging technology literacy. Arlington Housing Authority and Melrose Housing Authority are both preparing to launch resident-facing digital literacy training and lending programs in their community rooms in the coming quarter, providing elderly and low-income residents with supported access to technology for the first time.

MBI will continue to conduct U.S. Treasury Quarterly Project and Expenditure Reporting and maintain ongoing compliance oversight across both rounds of the program, working with awarded organizations

to ensure adherence to all federal compliance requirements under the Treasury Capital Projects Fund guidance.

MBI will also continue to attend community events and conduct site visits with grantees throughout the next reporting period to observe equipment in use, celebrate program milestones, and document community impact firsthand. As Round 2 deployment progresses, MBI will begin collecting outcome data from grantees to document the impact of the Connected & Online Program on device access, digital inclusion, and community benefit across Massachusetts.

Narratives About Individuals/Households Benefiting From CPF Funds, Including Information About Measures Used For Collecting and Measuring Success

Gap Networks

Each grant agreement includes a schedule for each PSA that includes timeframes for achieving the following milestones:

- Site surveys, field work and completion of preliminary design and engineering
- Negotiation and execution of cable television license agreement (if applicable)
- Filing make ready applications with utilities for pole and conduit licenses and payment of associated fees
- Payment of make ready estimates to utilities
- Receipt of all make ready licenses needed to complete the project
- Completion of 50% of the construction buildout (measured by premises passed)
- Final completion – 100% of premises passed and completion of initial customer installations

MBI requires that each grantee achieve final completion within 12 months of receipt of all make ready licenses subject to excusable delay justifications for force majeure events; provided that all projects must achieve substantial completion prior to December 31, 2026. For PSAs that were affected by make ready application processing delays, caused by the utilities, an extension to June 30, 2027 will be requested from the US Treasury.

Awardees are required to attend monthly project status meeting where they update a project schedule matrix that tracks the estimated and actual start and completion dates for the project milestones. The awardees are also able make MBI aware of any factors or challenges impacting the progress of project(s).

Broadband internet is a tool for progress, empowering individuals and driving collective success. The infrastructure built during this Program will improve each community's quality of life by enabling residents to access online education, expand their career pathways, work remotely, access and engage in telehealth opportunities, access government services, and stay connected to friends and family.

Residential Retrofit

During the reporting period MBI has been in close contact with Housing Operators and Internet Service Providers to seek feedback and ensure construction coordination and resident engagement activities are

successful during implementation through to completion and transition to operation. Resident inputs through Housing Operators have helped Internet Service Providers to refine communication and onsite activities leading up to service availability. Go-Live events have provided an opportunity to interact directly with residents benefitting from the program and often have included resident speakers explaining how the new services will impact their lives. Residents have cited affordable plans as a significant benefit to fixed income constraints and how essential reliable fast internet service is for telehealth, shopping, news, civic engagement, and maintain family and social ties. To complement these anecdotal user stories, MBI is deploying a survey to residents of retrofitted buildings 3 months following project completion to capture more comprehensive qualitative information.

Payments upon completion of Milestones

A structured reimbursement system has been implemented, aligning payments with predefined grantee milestones. This ensures financial support is provided in tandem with project progress. Each grant payment request will include a) detailed documentation of project expenses reported using the same line items as in the approved budget and b) reports on project progress, risks, expenditures, and impact and will be reviewed by MBI's Financial and Grants Analytical staff

Payments to grantees in all RFP rounds will be reimbursed based on the following milestones to ensure satisfactory progression.

Milestone 1: Submission of detailed construction plans and network designs

Milestone 2: Receipt of approvals for permitting, licensing, and access

Milestone 3: Completion of fiber to the building construction and installation

Milestone 4: Final project completion

Connected & Online Program

The Connected & Online Program is designed to expand access to education, workforce development, and healthcare for Massachusetts residents who lack reliable access to internet-enabled devices. All awarded organizations are required to make devices available to the general public either through on-site computer stations in publicly accessible locations or through free-to-borrow lending programs, ensuring that CPF-funded equipment directly reaches individuals and households in need.

To measure program impact, MBI established a mandatory reporting framework for all Round 1 grantees, with quarterly reports due June 22, 2026, September 21, 2026, and a final report due January 25, 2027. Through an Airtable-based reporting form, grantees are required to report on community activities, risks and challenges, and the total number of unique individuals who used devices each quarter. Grantees are also asked to provide program narratives including types of digital literacy trainings offered, attendance figures, and success stories documenting how device access has improved the lives of community members. MBI also collects optional impact data on the number of individuals reporting increased ability to use technology for education, healthcare, employment, civic engagement, and accessing public services and benefits.

Even at this early stage, grantees have documented meaningful community impact across all three focus areas. In education and digital literacy, organizations have reported serving ESOL students, older adults, and individuals who lacked any device access at home — with several grantees noting that free public lending programs have reached community members who could not have otherwise afforded a device. In workforce development, devices deployed at career centers, job fairs, and community organizations have supported résumé development, online job applications, and certification programs, with several grantees reporting direct employment outcomes tied to device access. In healthcare, organizations have used devices to connect patients and community members to telehealth services, remote patient monitoring programs, MyChart enrollment, and health navigation resources at no cost to recipients.

As many Round 1 grantee programs are just now coming fully online following the completion of device deployment in June 2026, individual impact data and community narratives are still in the early stages of collection. Grantees submitted their first required quarterly reports on June 22, 2026, marking the program's initial formal data collection milestone. These reports represent the first opportunity for organizations to document device usage, community activities, and early outcomes, and MBI is currently in the process of reviewing submissions. As programs move into full operation and community members begin regularly accessing devices, MBI anticipates that the subsequent two reporting periods will yield significantly more robust impact stories, device utilization metrics, and individual outcome data. MBI will continue to actively support grantees in their reporting efforts and work to capture the full breadth of the program's impact on residents across Massachusetts.

Notable Challenges and the Status of Each Challenge

Gap Networks

A major challenge under the Gap Networks program was the process of reconciling broadband serviceable locations. Upon completion of this initial reconciliation process grant agreements needed to be amended following analysis conducted by both MBI and the awardees and negotiations between MBI and the awardees.

The second reconciliation process was also a major challenge as it involved the reconciliation of broadband serviceable locations that were changed from ineligible for funding to eligible for funding as the result of the BEAD Challenge Process.

Both of these reconciliation processes have now completed and contract amendments have now been fully executed.

Another major challenge faced by the Gap Networks Program is the make ready application processing delays caused by the utilities. For example, applications submitted in December of 2024 were not yet licensed by the end of 2025. Make Ready Working Group (MRWG) meetings have been helpful in identifying the factors behind the delays and overcoming obstacles.

Overcoming make ready delays is an ongoing difficulty for most of the Gap Networks awardees. MRWG meetings are biweekly, and progress is beginning to accelerate. Extensions will be requested for PSAs have been most affected by make ready delays.

Residential Retrofit

MBI is tracking challenges across three major categories for the Retrofit program, working with Internet Service Providers, working with housing operators, and tackling unanticipated construction complications. Below is an overview of these challenges and status / resolutions MBI is pursuing.

Challenges of Working with ISPs:

- Capacity of smaller ISPs to sufficiently scale up within timeframe: Smaller ISPs with a substantial volume of projects and locations may need to scale up to have sufficient capacity to ensure projects are completed within the tight timelines of the program. MBI is working closely with providers to understand and monitor their hiring and resourcing processes as well as their overall program delivery methodologies to mitigate these risks.
- Agility of larger ISPs to respond and change course as needed within timeframe: Larger ISPs can have significant administrative overhead and internal processes that impede or delay progress on program milestones and deliverables. MBI is working with providers to identify any program dependencies and obstacles to timely delivery to support modest and practical changes to streamline and speed up processes through close coordination and collaboration.
- ISPs ability and motivation to engage with housing operators varies drastically between organizations: Given the mix of public, nonprofit, and private housing owners and operators with varied roles and responsibilities, ISPs can find it challenging to rely on any single approach or methodology to manage and coordinate construction activities. MBI is working closely with ISPs and Housing Operators to ensure each site is benefitting from clear and continuous communication through channels best suited for individual projects and their success.
- ISPs ability to navigate unforeseen construction issues such as presence of asbestos and required remediation.

Challenges / Risks of Working with Housing Operators:

- Lagging Property Access Agreements: Frequently caused by delays internal to housing organizations or outside legal counsel. MBI has dedicated resourcing of 1 FTE to housing operator coordination and increased administrative support to mitigate and minimize delays when possible.
- Property Access for Installation and Surveying: Housing Owners may not be coordinating as closely with property management teams, causing misalignment and delays. Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities may impede progress. MBI is closely coordinating with Housing Operators to maintain presence in program and improve coordination with ISPs.
- Tenant Communication for In Unit Installation: A major challenge has been communicating project activities, timelines, and requirements to tenants. MBI is working with Housing Operators and ISPs to communicate program goals and benefits early through multiple channels and improve coordination with tenants prior to and during construction. MBI has also partnered

with a community outreach firm to develop a Retrofit Housing Operator marketing toolkit that can be tailored to fit local requirements.

Challenges of unanticipated construction complications

- Presence or suspected presence of asbestos: Housing Operators were asked to identify properties with asbestos as program participants, and these were flagged in advance for Internet Service Providers to incorporate remediation in their construction planning. However, during program implementation many additional properties have surfaced as potentially having asbestos in areas impacting network cabling and infrastructure installation. In many cases Housing Operators have little knowledge of exactly where asbestos might be present including in the walls, ceilings, and floors of common areas, utility spaces, and resident units. Asbestos resolution often necessitates independent testing and remediation by certified subcontractors and procurement processes that pose significant project delays. MBI is working with Housing Operators and Internet Service Providers to support appropriate testing, abatement, network design modifications, and budget adjustments while ensuring network construction and service provision can be successfully completed within funding timelines.
- Inadequate electrical infrastructure: During construction planning Internet Service Providers have found that some buildings lack the necessary electrical capacity, circuits, or outlets to power network equipment in MDFs or IDF rooms or the CPEs in residential units. As Housing Operators sometimes lack the resources or expertise to evaluate and communicate such deficiencies in advance of construction planning, the assessment of work needed, and procurement of electrical subcontractors risks significant project delays. MBI is working with Housing Operators and Internet Service Providers to support appropriate electrical upgrades and budget adjustments while ensuring network construction and service provision can be successfully completed within funding timelines.
- Unwieldy municipal permitting: While Retrofit Internet Service Providers have anticipated and incorporated municipal permitting processes into their Retrofit project planning, many have encountered substantial delays. Obstacles have included ambiguous business processes, lengthy turnaround times, and unresponsive officials following the submission of permitting applications. MBI has implemented an escalation process to support Internet Service Providers when municipal permitting delays threaten to substantially delay project completion. This process has proven successful and includes direct outreach by MBI staff and senior state agency executives to municipal and regional planning contacts to convey the urgency of Retrofit construction completion adhering to program funding deadlines.

Connected & Online Program

MBI has catalogued challenges reported by Round 1 grantees in several major categories. Below is an overview of these challenges and the status and resolutions MBI is pursuing.

Device Delivery and Ancillary Equipment Delays

The most common challenge across grantees was the timing of device delivery relative to their program calendars and organizational capacity. Many organizations received core Dell devices in April 2026, leaving limited time within the first reporting period to complete setup and begin serving community members. Ancillary and peripheral equipment, including charging carts, projectors, smart boards, and

remote patient monitoring kits, were delayed due to supply chain issues and arrived weeks after core devices, preventing organizations from launching programs at full capacity until June 2026.

Software Licensing and Device Configuration

A significant number of grantees experienced delays due to software licensing. Several grantees noted that the configuration process was more technically complex than anticipated, particularly for small nonprofits, libraries, and housing authorities without dedicated IT staff. Some organizations encountered compatibility issues between vendors' configuration requirements and their existing IT infrastructure, including challenges related to .gov domain restrictions, existing Microsoft tenants, and network security requirements. MBI and HUB Technical Services are working to improve technical support responsiveness and provide clearer guidance to grantees navigating these challenges.

Organizational Capacity and Staffing

Many grantees, particularly small nonprofits, rural libraries, and housing authorities, reported that device setup and program implementation placed significant demands on already limited staff capacity. Staffing transitions, medical leaves, and budget-driven reductions compounded these challenges for some organizations. The labor-intensive nature of inventorying, configuring, and tracking hundreds of devices was frequently underestimated, and many organizations lacked dedicated IT support. MBI acknowledges these capacity constraints and has been actively working with grantees and other community partners to support grantees in deploying their devices.

Overview and Outcomes of Ancillary Costs Incurred to Support Bringing the Capital Asset(s) into Full Use

Gap Networks

Not Applicable – Gap Networks has not incurred any ancillary costs to date.

Retrofit

During this period of performance, \$875,703.24 was incurred for ancillary services. Funds were used to support computer purchases, upgraded spaces for digital literacy education and on-site computer labs, digital skills classes, and digital navigation services. At Leicester Housing Authority, 24 residents completed a Digital Readiness course, which provides foundational computer, internet, email, and online safety skills. Upon completion, participants received a refurbished laptop and access to resources for continued learning. At Melrose Housing Authority, a 68-year-old resident worked with a digital navigator to improve healthcare access. With digital navigator support, he created an email account, learned how to use his healthcare portal, and successfully completed his first telehealth appointment independently. As a result, he regained access to healthcare services and developed skills that will help him manage appointments and medical information on his own.

Connected & Online Program

During this reporting period, \$1,489,452.32 was incurred for ancillary hardware costs to support bringing devices into full community use. In Q1, \$221,780.52 was spent on Newline Interactive Panels distributed to organizations across the Commonwealth to support public programming, digital literacy instruction, and community presentations. In Q2, an additional \$1,267,671.80 was expended on a

range of ancillary equipment including blood pressure remote patient monitoring kits, glucose monitors, assistive technology devices, printers, projector and whiteboard sets, and network infrastructure.

Ancillary equipment has played a critical role in expanding the reach and impact of the program across a range of settings. At healthcare organizations such as DotHouse Health and Whittier Street Health Center, blood pressure RPM kits and glucose monitors are being deployed to support chronic disease management and telehealth access for patients with limited access to in-person care. At the Boys & Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster, Newline Interactive Panels are being integrated into technology programming, including coding, game design, and digital literacy instruction for youth and their families. At the Nahant Public Library, JAWS assistive technology software paired with accessible hardware has expanded technology access for patrons with visual impairments, with library staff noting strong and unexpected demand for these accessibility tools. Organizations including Cape Cod Community College and Community Action Inc. deployed printers and projector and whiteboard sets to support adult education classrooms, ESOL instruction, and workforce training programs.

As grantee programs move into full operation in the coming quarters, MBI anticipates that utilization of ancillary equipment will increase and that additional outcome data will be available to document the full impact of these investments on residents across Massachusetts.

Addressing Critical Needs

Objectives

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is currently administering 3 programs under the Capital Projects Fund: the Gap Networks Program, the Residential Retrofit Program, and the Connected & Online Program. The \$45 million Gap Networks Grant Program is funding the deployment of broadband infrastructure in areas that currently lack broadband service. The Program aims to expand access and connectivity in unserved and underserved locations throughout the Commonwealth to bridge the digital divide. Specifically, the Program is funding the deployment of broadband infrastructure in those areas that currently lack access to sufficient broadband internet service, defined as service offering download speeds of at least 100 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps.

While prior investment of public funds have substantially reduced the number of unserved and underserved locations remaining in the state, there are still pockets of locations throughout the state that lack access to reliable and affordable broadband service. The Gap Networks Program addresses those remaining gaps in broadband availability.

Projects funded through the Gap Networks Program must be designed to deliver broadband service that meets or exceeds 100 Mbps symmetrical speeds. Locations that will be covered through a binding funding commitment from other federal or state funding sources are not eligible for funding under this Program. Grant applicants are required to provide a minimum matching contribution of at least 20%, subject to limited waivers for certain municipally owned broadband infrastructure projects. Awardees of the Gap Networks Program were scored more favorably if they submitted proposed projects in economically challenged areas, specifically Gateway Municipalities and those areas identified by HUD's Qualified Census Tract program.

The Residential Retrofit Program is making investments to deploy state-of-the-art broadband infrastructure at approximately 33,000 Public and Affordable Housing properties across Massachusetts. MBI intends to increase low-income residents' opportunity to access high-quality, reliable, and affordable broadband service in their homes by addressing deficient wiring and infrastructure through grants for the deployment of fiber optic cabling to the unit to qualified Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who will install, own, and maintain equipment. Improved infrastructure and enhanced connectivity will enable residents of Public and Affordable Housing to engage in essential daily activities such as working remotely, pursuing educational opportunities, and accessing healthcare from home.

The Connected & Online program addresses the lack of access to internet-enabled devices where broadband infrastructure exists, and where many Massachusetts residents lack access to the devices needed to connect to essential services and opportunities online. The \$31.6 million Connected & Online Program addresses this gap by distributing laptops, tablets, desktops, and supporting ancillary and assistive technology equipment to 255 eligible organizations across 103 municipalities and 13 counties throughout the Commonwealth. Funded organizations make devices publicly available through on-site computer stations and free-to-borrow lending programs, expanding access to education, workforce development, and healthcare services for residents who would otherwise be unable to participate fully in an increasingly digital world. Together, the Gap Networks Program, the Residential Retrofit Program, and the Connected & Online Program represent MBI's comprehensive strategy to address broadband access, infrastructure, and device equity across Massachusetts.

Awareness

Gap Networks:

MBI required a letter of support from an appropriate municipal official for each community that applicants proposed to serve through this program. These community letters of support ensured both awareness and acceptance from each community being applied for. Each applicant had to reach out to the officials within the communities and convince them to create a letter of support for the projects that they were proposing to build. The letters were submitted to MBI as part of the application packages and served to affirm that the communities were aware of each proposed project within their communities.

Residential Retrofit Program

MBI engaged with MORE consultants to develop marketing and communication materials to help housing operators clearly and effectively communicate upcoming construction activities and subsequent service offerings to residents. MBI has promoted and distributed these materials to both housing operators and internet service providers, resulting in a high level of interest and usage. The materials prioritize accessibility and clarity by using highly visual, graphic-based designs and short videos to explain timelines, impacts, and benefits of the work. Positive feedback to date suggests that the materials are helping to ensure that residents, regardless of language or literacy level, are better informed and engaged throughout the construction process. Materials are available in various languages, and the templates allow for customizability across internet service providers.

MBI believes it was convenient for members of these communities to be aware of the services funded by CPF. MBI has engaged more than 100 unique housing operators serving over 33,000 units of housing in every county of the state in the Retrofit program.

Connected & Online Program

MBI took several steps to ensure broad awareness of the Connected & Online Program among eligible organizations and the communities they serve. Prior to launching the Round 1 solicitation, MBI conducted outreach to a wide range of entities across Massachusetts, including libraries, nonprofits, healthcare providers, career centers, housing authorities, educational institutions, and community-based organizations. MBI hosted a Technical Assistance Session in October 2025 and conducted a public Q&A period to ensure interested organizations had access to the information needed to apply.

MBI issued a formal press release in April 2026 announcing the distribution of nearly 27,000 internet-enabled devices through the program and a full list of awarded organizations. The announcement was made in partnership with the Healey-Driscoll Administration and received statewide media attention, raising public awareness of device availability across the Commonwealth.

At the grantee level, community engagement and public accessibility was a core component of the application and evaluation process. Applicants were required to describe in their applications how they would market the program to individuals without device access, identify the specific populations they intended to serve, and outline their plan for ensuring devices would be publicly available and accessible to community members. Community engagement and public accessibility was one of five scored evaluation categories, meaning applicants were directly assessed on the strength and specificity of their outreach plans and their ability to reach intended populations. Grantees have promoted program availability through newsletters, social media, press releases, community events, flyers in multiple languages, and partnerships with local organizations — ensuring that residents across 103 municipalities and 13 counties are aware of publicly accessible devices in their communities.

Outcomes

Gap Networks:

The final result of the Gap Networks Program are that awards were made to four (4) applicants. The grant and matching funding amounts along with the names of the affected municipalities are listed below.

Grant Recipient	Communities Covered	Grant Amount	Match Amount	Match %
Comcast	Abington, Andover, Ashby, Aquinnah, Ayer, Barnstable, Bedford, Bellingham, Billerica, Blackstone, Bolton, Bourne, Bridgewater, Brockton, Buckland, Carlisle, Carver,	\$15,851,276.29	\$4,326,575.36	21%

	Chelmsford, Chilmark, Conway, Danvers, Dracut, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Edgartown, Essex, Franklin, Gardner, Georgetown, Gill, Granby, Groveland, Hatfield, Haverhill, Holliston, Hopedale, Huntington, Ipswich, Kingston, Lancaster, Lowell, Lynnfield, Manchester, Marblehead, Marlborough, Marshfield, Medway, Merrimac, Methuen, Middlefield, Millis, Monson, Montague, Montgomery, Nantucket, Needham, Newbury, Newburyport, Northampton, Northfield, Norton, Norwell, Oak Bluffs, Orleans, Palmer, Pembroke, Phillipston, Plainville, Plymouth, Plympton, Rehoboth, Rockport, Russell, Salem, Sharon, Shelburne, Shirley, Sudbury, Sunderland, Swansea, Tewksbury, Tisbury, Topsfield, Truro, Walpole, Ware, Watertown, Westford, Westhampton, Westminster, Weston, West Tisbury, Weymouth, Whately, Williamsburg, Winchendon, Woburn			
Greenfield Community Energy and Technology	Greenfield	\$769,271.91	\$0.00	0%
Spectrum Northeast LLC	Florida, Savoy, Hawley, Monroe	\$5,752,846.96	\$1,438,211.82	20%
Verizon New England Inc.	Agawam, Amesbury, Amherst, Ashburnham, Attleboro, Barre, Bernardston, Brewster, Dartmouth, Deerfield, Eastham, Fall River, Falmouth, Gloucester, Harwich, Holyoke, Lunenburg, Millville, Sandwich, Springfield, Templeton, Townsend, North Brookfield, Sheffield, Warren, Wellfleet	\$22,931,916.02	\$16,150,902.67	41%

Residential Retrofit Program

The Residential Retrofit Program deploys state-of-the-art broadband infrastructure to public and affordable housing properties across Massachusetts. MBI intends to increase low-income residents'

opportunities to access high-quality, reliable and affordable broadband service in their homes by addressing deficient wiring and infrastructure through grants for the deployment of fiberoptic cabling to the unit to qualified Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who will install, own and maintain equipment.

Improved infrastructure and enhanced connectivity will enable residents of public and affordable housing to engage in essential daily activities such as working remotely, pursuing educational opportunities and accessing telehealth.

Connected & Online Program

Under Round 1, MBI awarded 217 organizations across 103 municipalities and 13 counties, distributing 26,353 core devices, 6,471 add-on software packages, and 15,638 pieces of ancillary and peripheral equipment. Under Round 2, MBI awarded 45 organizations, distributing an additional 5,0673 core devices, 1,261 add-on software packages, and 3,731 pieces of ancillary and peripheral equipment. Across both rounds, the program has reached 255 organizations statewide, distributing approximately 31,426 core devices and 19,369pieces of supporting equipment at no cost to recipients.

Labor

Gap Networks:

This program supports labor and workforce standards throughout the construction period and beyond by ensuring that all awardees' workforces meet high safety and training standards, including professional certification, licensure and/or robust in-house training, and that all awardees prioritize the hiring of local workers and/or workers from historically disadvantaged communities. All applicants of this program were required to submit narratives detailing their labor and workforce training standards and MBI reviewed these narratives as part of the application review process.

MBI has engrained labor and workforce standards into the Gap Networks Program. Applicants were incentivized to meet high safety and training standards through the programs scoring matrix that awarded points based on the demonstrated quality of labor and workforce standards.

Residential Retrofit Program:

Under the Residential Retrofit Program MBI requires applicants to provide a discussion of which of the following practices are being utilized: project labor agreements, community benefits agreements, prevailing wage requirements, and local hiring are used in their practices. In this section, MBI has included a narrative description by the awarded provider. This information was provided in the applications from award recipients.

Aervivo

Aervivo works with property owners to build local installation teams by engaging qualified residents, staff, or preferred contractors. This approach maximizes local employment while leveraging community knowledge that supports retrofit success. Project design, safety standards, and regulations define job roles. Candidates are vetted against these requirements, with a focus on relevant experience, safety, and licensing where needed. All team members complete a one-week training program covering low-voltage installation, OSHA compliance, and hands-on practice, followed by supervised fieldwork. Aervivo's national engineering team provides on-site support during startup, remote guidance throughout, and final Quality Assurance before project completion. In FY 2025 Aervivo committed to

hiring 20 new project managers to support their expanding operations, in response to Residential Retrofit awards.

CBN America

CBN America is committed to building a skilled, safety-first workforce by requiring rigorous training, certifications, and licensure for all employees, contractors, and subcontractors in the Residential Retrofit Program. CBN Broadband technicians, network engineers, project managers, and construction crews meet industry-recognized standards such as FOA Fiber Optic, CCNA, PMP, NEC compliance, and OSHA safety training, with continuing education and recertification supported by CBN's tracking systems. Workplace safety is reinforced through PPE requirements, hazard assessments, incident reporting, audits, and emergency preparedness. These measures ensure compliance with state and federal regulations while fostering a sustainable, high-quality work environment and delivering reliable broadband infrastructure. CBN funds continuing education, tracks credential compliance, and ensures timely recertification. By prioritizing workforce development and safety excellence, CBN delivers reliable broadband infrastructure while fostering a sustainable, supportive work environment.

Comcast Cable Communication

Comcast will manage and operate the proposed network with its internal workforce and vetted third-party construction partners. All contractors are required to meet strict standards for training, certification, safety, and compliance with labor laws and industry regulations. Comcast requires vendors to train workers in accordance with its installation, quality, and safety standards, and all personnel must be certified for the contracted work. For example, power supply construction requires certification under the SCTE 205 2014 standard, and vendors must comply with any additional skillset certification programs Comcast establishes.

Subcontractor personnel are certified for their roles, each subcontractor designates a certified safety representative, and all workers complete OSHA or equivalent safety training. Comcast enforces background checks, credential verification, and ongoing compliance audits for employees and contractors, ensuring only appropriately skilled and credentialed personnel perform work. Training is delivered through classroom education, on-the-job mentoring, certification assistance, and internal programs covering fiber optics, cybersecurity, and telecommunications skills. Comcast's vendor network spans 143 construction partners nationwide, all contractually obligated to meet certification, safety, and performance standards.

For this project, Comcast anticipates roles such as fiber splicers, linemen, ground hands, foremen, and machine operators, with OSHA compliance as a baseline and additional requirements applied where project-specific. This comprehensive approach ensures a safe, skilled, and fully compliant workforce capable of delivering reliable broadband infrastructure.

Greenfield Community Energy & Technology

GCET has a qualified internal team to manage and execute all project activities, supported by strict safety and compliance standards. The General Manager, with leadership experience since 2018 and a background in municipal economic development, oversees operations, finances, compliance, and strategic goals. The Operations Manager, in telecommunications since 2005, manages procurement, customer service, outside plant operations, and network build-outs, with multiple industry certifications.

The Senior Fiber Optic Technician, with over 10 years' experience, leads fiber installation, splicing, diagnostics, and maintenance, holding OSHA and Bucket Truck certifications. The Chief Technology Officer directs network engineering, design, deployment, and monitoring, supporting outside plant operations and maintaining partnerships with hardware/software vendors. All GCET field staff meet OSHA, confined space, and equipment operation safety requirements, and the company enforces rigorous workplace safety practices. GCET will perform all project work in full compliance with state and federal regulations, while monitoring subcontractors to ensure adherence to the same standards.

Ring Squared/ DBA Access Plus

Ring Squared/ AccessPlus is committed to workforce excellence through robust training, certification, and strict safety protocols for all employees, contractors, and subcontractors. Field technicians complete OSHA, defensive driving, confined space, ladder, and boom truck training, along with an 8-week onboarding program. Their network engineers hold relevant degrees and participate in ongoing vendor-led and internal training on emerging technologies, while customer support teams receive customer service and crisis communication training. All certifications are tracked, regularly audited, and reinforced with continuous education and industry seminars. Safety is central to Ring Squared/ AccessPlus culture, with mandatory OSHA training, PPE requirements, annual safety reviews, and real-time incident reporting. For Retrofit Program projects, Ring Squared/Access Plus enhances standards with retrofit-specific training, a dedicated Project Safety Manager, frequent audits, and a "Safety First" culture that prioritizes worker well-being and operational excellence.

Hawk Networks

Hawk Networks is advancing a long-term workforce development strategy that goes beyond compliance to build sustainable, high-quality jobs and training pathways in broadband and digital infrastructure. Our goal is to ensure that Retrofit-funded projects not only connect residents but also create meaningful, lasting opportunities for local workers and small businesses. We are actively developing expanded workforce supports and services to remove barriers to participation in broadband-related employment. This includes providing travel stipends and fuel reimbursements for field technicians traveling between dispersed project sites, offering per diem allowances for training days or off-site certifications, and coordinating flexible scheduling for employees and subcontractors who are also caregivers. We are developing partnerships with regional workforce boards and training institutions to establish a pipeline for certified low-voltage technicians, fiber splicers, and wireless installers. Our training model emphasizes "earn-and-learn" opportunities—allowing trainees to participate in supervised, paid field work while completing coursework. Hawk Networks maintains a Massachusetts-first hiring policy for Retrofit projects, focusing on candidates who live within the regions served.

Connected & Online Program

As the Connected & Online program is a 1B program, this does not apply to the program.

Community Engagement

Gap Networks Program

This program supports community empowerment across the construction period and beyond through the sustainment and creation of local jobs and purchasing of supplies from local vendors. Access to reliable broadband service will help each municipality build a stronger community by unlocking new learning opportunities, allowing healthcare providers to reach unserved populations through telemedicine and small businesses to access broader markets.

MBI has engrained community engagement into the Gap Networks Program. Applicants were incentivized to conduct robust local engagement through the scoring matrix that awarded points based on the demonstrated level of community engagement and support. Further, MBI required a letter of support from an appropriate municipal official for each community that the applicant proposed to serve through this program.

Residential Retrofit Program

Go Live Events

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute celebrated the delivery of high-speed internet with public “Go Live” events in partnership with housing operators and internet service providers. In November 2025 MBI joined Aervivo and the Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) to mark the completion of Gardner Terrace at 46 Pine St in Attleboro serving 92 units. Just A Start joined Comcast and MBI to celebrate service to 274 units at Rindge Tower Apartments in Cambridge in January 2026. In March 2026 MBI joined the AccessPlus/RingSquared team and the Pittsfield Housing Authority to launch service to 91 units at the Columbia Arms on 65 Columbus Ave in Pittsfield. Lastly this past month on June 16th MBI joined Community Broadband Networks (CBN) and the Southbridge Housing Authority to celebrate project completion at 60 Charlton Street and 150 Main Street for a total of 152 units.

MBI is planning to host similar events at sites across Massachusetts throughout 2026. MBI is working with internet service providers and housing operators to ensure that a variety of “Go Live” events represent different regional areas, include rural, urban, and suburban communities, and highlight the wide variety of housing solutions and building types.

MORE Consulting

MBI engaged with MORE consultants to develop marketing and communication materials to help housing operators clearly and effectively communicate upcoming construction activities to residents. MBI has promoted and distributed these materials to both housing operators and internet service providers, resulting in a high level of interest and usage. The materials prioritize accessibility and clarity by using highly visual, graphic-based designs and short videos to explain timelines, impacts, and benefits of the work. Positive feedback to date suggests that the materials are helping to ensure that residents, regardless of language or literacy level, are better informed and engaged throughout the construction process. Materials are available in various languages, and the templates allow for customizability across internet service providers. This project was developed in response to the ISPs' and housing operators' desire for increased capacity and tools to support infrastructure installation at their sites.

Connected & Online Program

Device Launch Events and Site Visits

MBI has celebrated the distribution of devices and the launch of public technology access programs through community events and site visits with grantees across Massachusetts. In April 2026, MBI partnered with the City of Worcester and eight additional Connected & Online grantees to host a device launch event at the Worcester Public Library, celebrating the distribution of over 1,000 devices benefitting approximately 2,000 individuals and highlighting the program's impact in closing the digital divide for Worcester residents. In June 2026, MBI attended the Dennis Center for Active Living's Open House event celebrating the launch of their newly established community computer lab — a resource the organization had been working to fund for four years prior to receiving their Connected & Online award. MBI will continue to attend community launch events and conduct site visits with grantees throughout the remainder of the program period to observe devices in use, celebrate program milestones, and gather firsthand accounts of program impact.

Grantees have planned a robust slate of public-facing community events and program launches for next period that MBI intends to participate in and monitor. The Salem and Marblehead Housing Authorities are planning a Laptop Lending Library Kick-Off Celebration in July, with robocalls to eligible residents and computer classes scheduled through the summer. North Shore Community Development is planning community center ribbon cutting ceremonies at two sites where device access and computer usage are central features of the new community spaces. The Osterville Village Library is planning a series of fall AI literacy workshops and technology education programs open to the public, including introductory artificial intelligence sessions, digital literacy training, and demonstrations of AI tools for older adults, job seekers, and small business owners. The City of Beverly is planning a full Connected & Online program launch in July with multilingual outreach and the deployment of devices to community partners including Montserrat College of Art, Beverly Community Media, and the Beverly Council on Aging. JA Career Launch is planning continued career readiness programming for Boston-area high school students through the fall. MassHire Holyoke is planning two to three public employer recruitment events per month through the fall where devices will be publicly available for job seekers, alongside the launch of a Department of Transitional Assistance Job Readiness Program and monthly Financial Literacy workshops. The Greenfield Housing Authority is planning to continue its monthly digital literacy workshops open to all residents across multiple housing properties, with at-home support available for elderly and disabled residents who are unable to travel to community spaces.