



Audit of NTIA's Review of the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program's Planning Phase Requirements

Audit Report OIG-26-018-A

April 30, 2026

➤ **What We Audited** | Our objective was to determine whether the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has an adequate review process to ensure that states' and territories' plans meet the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program's planning phase requirements.

➤ **Why This Matters** | One of NTIA's missions is to build a better-connected nation by ensuring affordable, reliable high-speed internet access for all Americans, which is essential for maintaining America's competitiveness in the 21st-century global economy and for addressing key national needs. To accomplish this, NTIA's Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth oversees the implementation of six broadband grant programs. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, passed in November 2021, allocated \$42.45 billion in new federal funding to NTIA for the creation of the BEAD program, the largest of the six broadband grant programs, which NTIA announced is intended to ensure that every American is connected to high-speed internet.

NTIA is charged with administering the BEAD program and will allocate BEAD program funding to U.S. states and territories for projects that will close the digital access gap for unserved and underserved locations and community anchor institutions, such as schools, libraries, and hospitals.

➤ **What We Found** | NTIA did not have an adequate review process to ensure that states' and territories' plans met the BEAD program's planning phase requirements. Specifically, we found that NTIA did not have complete and accurate documentation to support its decisions for the BEAD program planning phase deliverables and experienced delays during its review of the required planning phase deliverables for the BEAD program grant awards.

➤ **What We Recommend** | We made five recommendations to NTIA to provide adequate oversight of its review of the deliverables and establish milestones or performance metrics for completing its reviews of planning phase deliverables. NTIA concurred with our recommendations and is working to implement them.