

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

~ Harry S. Truman



**- OUR NETWORK IS THE DIRECT RESULT OF OUR PARTNERS' HARD WORK AND COMMITMENT! -**

- Nearly 10,000 miles of fiber optic cabling deployed
- Scalable up to 100 Gbps
- Strategic partnership serves 28 counties
- DDos Mitigation
- Custom fiber builds to your business locations
- Optical Wave Services

**[WWW.PENTELEDATA.NET](http://WWW.PENTELEDATA.NET)**  
**800.281.3564**

 **PenTeleData.**  
fiber networks



January 18, 2021

**Cogeco news release**

Pennsylvania will see a coordinated statewide effort to expand high-speed internet access with a \$600,000 grant made possible by legislative support in

[Cogeco Communications, parent company of Atlantic Broadband, Reports Strong Performance for the First Quarter of Fiscal 2021](#)

[Washington Post Internet regulation takes on greater urgency as pandemic highlights digital divide](#)

[Next TV FCC Approves Frontier Restructuring](#)

[Politico How Trump's fights with tech transformed Republicans' beliefs on free speech](#)

[Pennlive 'Pennsylvania is a better place because of him': Colleagues react to Sen. Dave Arnold's passing](#)

[Pittsburgh Tribune-Review County leaders in Pa. call for mail-in ballot reform](#)

[Pennlive After quiet Sunday at Pa. Capitol, police will maintain presence through this week](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer Op-ed: Gov. Wolf's heartbreaking closure of Pa. Capitol underscores the incivility of these times](#)

the Pennsylvania state House and Senate. This grant bolsters SEDA Council of Governments' (SEDA-COG) broadband expansion project in the Snow Shoe Township area of Centre County.

Mike Fisher, SEDA-COG assistant executive director, thanked state Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman (R-34), state House Majority Leader Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre/Mifflin), state Sen. Cris Dush (R-25), and state Rep. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Centre/Clinton) for their support in securing the grant. "We are grateful to our legislators who recognize the crucial importance of expanding high-speed internet service to our communities and businesses, especially in these difficult times," Fisher said. "Their efforts to secure this grant underscore a steadfast commitment to ensure that our region has access to essential broadband and technology resources now, not years from now – we couldn't do our work without their support."

The Keystone Communities grant was awarded to the seven Local Development Districts (LDDs) that serve 52 Pennsylvania counties. The grant complements a previous \$600,000 Appalachian Regional Commission POWER broadband grant supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) awarded to the LDDs to undertake broadband expansion throughout the state. "We truly appreciate the partnership we have with our legislative champions and the team at DCED," Fisher said.

The LDDs are multi-county organizations providing services such as community and economic development, transportation, international trade, strategic planning, and much more. Counties share information through their LDD, respond to common concerns, and develop solutions to today's critical issues. For over 40 years, Pennsylvania's LDDs have taken the lead in community and business initiatives, coordinating and delivering services on behalf of their member counties as well as the Commonwealth.

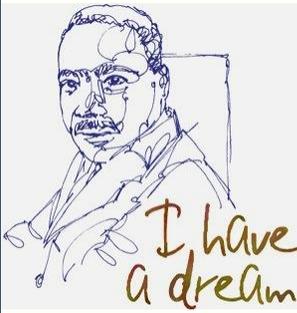
SEDA-COG is one of the seven LDDs and serves 11 central Pennsylvania counties. The LDDs will coordinate to identify areas of Pennsylvania that need broadband and then expand coverage by either providing it or incentivizing internet service providers to expand service. As a result, broadband will be expanded to a total of 410 businesses, 860 homes, and 13 communities throughout the LDDs' statewide regions. The LDDs that will identify areas that need broadband are Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance, Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

The following LDDs have identified underserved areas and will expand broadband service: North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG), and Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission. All projects are anticipated to be completed over the next 12 to 18 months.

Using \$105,000 from the Keystone Communities grant and \$105,000 from ARC POWER funds, SEDA-COG will establish a \$210,000 grant program to incentivize internet service providers to provide broadband in the Snow Shoe area. The project will provide 100/100 (download/upload) megabits per second internet speeds for at least five to 10 businesses and 50/10 megabits per second speeds for 50 to 100 households. The infrastructure will be owned and operated by the internet service provider who is awarded the project through a competitive request-for-proposals process. Officials at SEDA-COG said they will release the proposals over the next several weeks. – *Sunbury Daily Item*

---

Bidders spent a record \$80.9 billion in a U.S. government airwaves-license sale, capping a frenzied auction that will demand a commensurate wave of borrowing in an already-indebted telecom sector.



AT&T Inc., Verizon Communications Inc. and others competed in the Federal Communications Commission's [sale of C-band spectrum rights](#)—a hot commodity for cellphone carriers seeking more frequencies for 5G services. The sale ended Friday ahead of a second phase that determines the specific frequencies each company will receive. The public won't likely learn the names of the auction's winners for several weeks, but Wall Street is already taking cues from traditional network operators [seeking loans or issuing bonds](#) that could be used to foot the bill.

AT&T is in talks with banks about a possible one-year loan of around \$14 billion and recently borrowed about \$3.5 billion in the short-term commercial-paper market, according to people familiar with the matter. T-Mobile US Inc. raised \$3 billion through a high-yield bond sale earlier this month. Verizon is widely expected to issue bonds in the coming weeks, analysts said. The new debt this year adds to several billion dollars in bonds that carriers issued in 2020 before the auction started. AT&T's discussion with banks was earlier reported by Bloomberg News.

All told, the C-band auction will cost the winning bidders as much as \$96 billion after they cover obligatory payments to satellite companies that are shifting their operations to make room for cellphone service. That financial burden is more than double the [price of the previous FCC auction record](#), a \$44.9 billion contest that ended in 2015.

Some of the licenses in the latest auction could end up in the hands of financial firms; cable-TV operators such as Comcast Corp. and Charter Communications Inc.; and cellular-industry newcomer Dish Network Corp. Representatives for AT&T, Verizon and other registered bidders declined to comment on the auction. FCC rules bar companies that participate in the auction from discussing the process.

Telecom analysts expect the wireless industry's traditional leaders to walk away with most of the licenses. "AT&T and Verizon need to catch up," said Allyn Arden, a debt analyst for S&P Global Ratings. T-Mobile's purchase of Sprint Corp. last year gave it a cache of midrange frequencies that can support the huge volumes of data expected to cross fifth-generation, or 5G, networks. The latest federal auction gives T-Mobile's rivals a chance to even the score.

Verizon, [which sold \\$49 billion of bonds in 2013](#) to acquire full control of its wireless business, is expected to spend the most cash on the latest auction to snap up a valuable resource. But S&P and other ratings services are giving the company more leeway to spend without threatening its investment-grade rating, which already enjoys a positive outlook that could lead to an eventual upgrade. AT&T could spend less than Verizon and still face trouble convincing credit raters that its debt should maintain its current ratings. S&P and Moody's Investors Service both rate AT&T's bonds two levels above speculative grade.

The company, which borrowed \$40 billion in 2016 before it acquired media giant Time Warner, last reported net debt of about \$149 billion, a figure that will most likely climb if executives spend billions more on spectrum. AT&T has been [exploring a potential sale](#) of its DirecTV satellite business, among other divestitures, The Wall Street Journal has reported. S&P, in a recent report, said AT&T's debt-to-earnings ratio could exceed its "downgrade threshold" if it bought \$20 billion of spectrum. But forgoing a resource that wireless companies use to keep their customers happy could prove more costly.

AT&T finance chief John Stephens told a virtual Citigroup investor conference earlier this month that executives were confident after making "really significant progress in managing the balance sheet, giving us a lot of runway to continue to invest, to continue to pay a dividend, and to continue to pay down debt."

Ultralow interest rates could be driving bids higher than most observers expected when the process kicked off in December. The average yield on U.S. investment-grade corporate bonds was 1.85% on Friday, according to Bloomberg Barclays data, just above its all-time low of 1.74% set at the end of

last year. The average yield was around 2.9% at the time of the FCC spectrum auction in 2015. "That gave telecom companies some confidence to be aggressive," said Davis Hebert, a senior analyst at debt-research firm CreditSights. "If they got stuck with a larger bill than anticipated, the debt market would still be relatively favorable."

The extra yield, or spread, that investors demand to hold telecom bonds over U.S. Treasuries has ticked up as they anticipate additional borrowing to fund the auction purchases. Verizon's 2.875% notes due in 2050 traded last week with a 1.17 percentage point spread, up from 1.03 percentage points in early December, according to MarketAxess. The spread on AT&T bonds due in 2053 has climbed to 1.87 percentage points from 1.67 percentage points during that span. – **Wall Street Journal**

---

The Judge hearing the Department of Justice's challenge to California's net neutrality law has rescheduled a Jan. 26 hearing, citing the caseload of the court and the complexity of the issue. The new date is Feb. 23, which will give the new Biden Justice Department, which takes over after the Jan. 20 inauguration, a chance to decide whether it wants to continue the challenge.

The court made it clear it wanted an answer to that pressing question. "The Court orders the parties to meet and confer (after January 20, 2021) and to file a status conference statement by February 9, 2021, informing the Court whether the United States of America intends to pursue this case further, or whether, upon review by the Biden Administration, it will file a stipulation or motion to dismiss this lawsuit.

The law was passed after the FCC's Restoring Internet Freedom (RIF) order scrapped its net neutrality rules banning blocking, throttling and paid prioritization. The FCC's RIF deregulation of internet access included a preemption of state regs that conflicted with that decision. But in 2018, California passed its own tough net neutrality rules anyway to fill what it saw as a regulatory void. The FCC, backed by Justice, filed suit, as did ISPs. The law's implementation was stayed pending resolution of those legal challenges.  
– **Next TV**

