

Gordon County Comprehensive Plan Update Broadband Ready Element Amendment 2021

(To be added to the full text of the comprehensive plan)

Broadband Goal

Broadband service speeds will meet the needs of residents, business and industry, and the public sector, throughout Gordon County.

Element Narrative:

Broadband and related telecommunications are vital services to residents, students, employers, and the workforce of Gordon County. In 2015, the Federal Communications Commission defined High-Speed Internet as 25 megabits per second (MBPS) download speed and 3 MBPS upload speed via fixed, terrestrial broadband. Georgia's 2018 Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) act for promotion and deployment of broadband service codified the statewide effort to bring this standard of internet availability to its residents. As part of these efforts, the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, a five-agency collaborative team, developed the Broadband Ready Community program in which communities making a commitment to improve broadband deployment would adopt the state's model broadband ordinance and formalize this commitment in their comprehensive plan. The Broadband Deployment Initiative also worked with providers to map unserved areas that do not receive broadband at these speeds.

Accordingly, Gordon County has assessed the broadband needs and identified the following action steps to address the identified unserved areas:

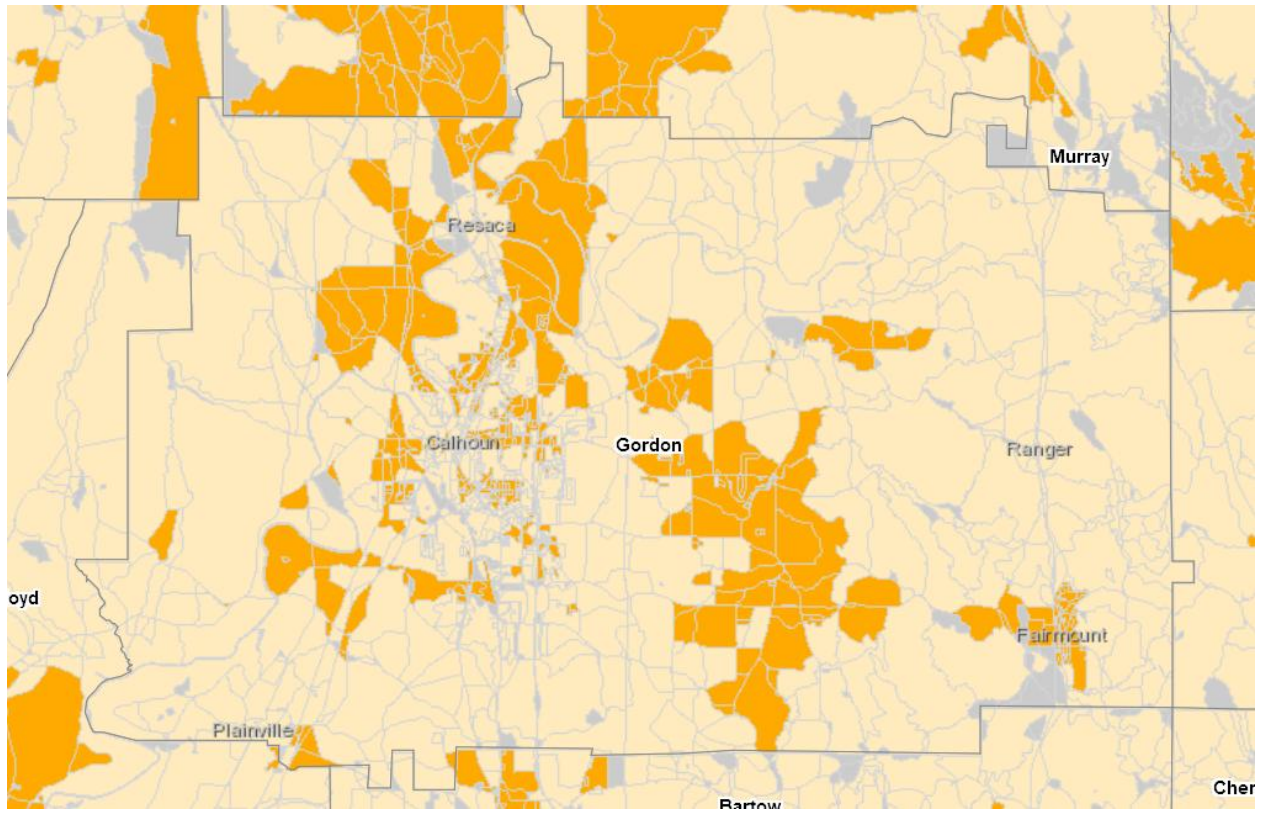
One. Adopt the Broadband Model Ordinance to allow timely and uniform permitting processes so that providers can more easily deploy broadband across jurisdictional lines to address unserved areas. **Gordon County and the municipalities of Fairmount, Plainville, and Resaca have adopted the Broadband Deployment Ordinance.**

Two. Become designated as Broadband Ready, and participate in the Georgia Broadband Ready program. This includes adoption of the Model Broadband Ordinance, and application to the State of Georgia to be designated a Broadband Ready Community and to maintain Broadband Ready status.

Three. Working with the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative and providers, identify unserved areas and apply for funding to serve those areas. **Gordon County is currently developing an RFP process to identify providers to implement the needed improvements to broadband facilities.**

According to the current data from the Georgia Broadband Initiative, 16% of Gordon County residential and business locations, or 4,506 locations, are unserved. County statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, and where the broadband service is available to more than 80% of locations in a Census block. Census blocks not meeting this definition, in which this speed is not available to 20% or more of the locations, are shown as **Unserved (green)**. The areas in **beige are unpopulated**. The map depicts access to broadband, not subscription to broadband. Broadband data is provided by the various Internet Service Providers of Georgia. Location data are from commercially available sources.

UPDATE MAP



Source: Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative. From <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/unserved-georgia-county>

Needs and Opportunities

Broadband	
B1	Extend broadband service to unserved areas of Gordon County

Community Work Program Items

Broadband, Gordon County									
Need/ Opportunity Code	Activity	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
B1	Adopt the model Broadband Ordinance			X	X		\$1,000/ Staff time	General Fund	Gordon County
B1	Issue RFQ to identify providers to work with Gordon County to provide service to unserved areas				X		\$1,000/ Staff time	General Fund	Gordon County
B1	Become designated as Broadband Ready Community; reapply to keep designation current				X		\$1,000/ Staff time	General Fund	Gordon County
B1	Apply for funding under the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative and other funding sources to provide broadband service of at least 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up in unserved areas				X		\$5,000/ Staff time	Local, SPLOST, state and federal grants, loans	Gordon County, providers