

# BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT SUBJECT BRIEF

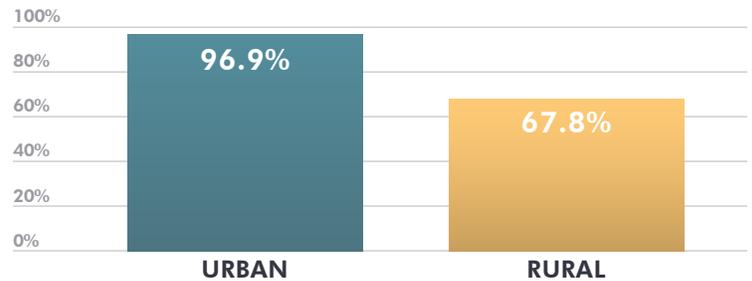


FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## What is Broadband?

Broadband is a high-speed data transmission via technologies such as cable, fiber, wireless radio-based, or satellite-based networks to allow access to the Internet. It refers to any **high-speed Internet access that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access**. While broadband is widely available throughout Florida, a **“digital divide” in broadband access between urban and rural areas persists.**<sup>1</sup>

PERCENT OF RESIDENTS WITH BROADBAND ACCESS IN FLORIDA COUNTIES (FEBRUARY 2021)



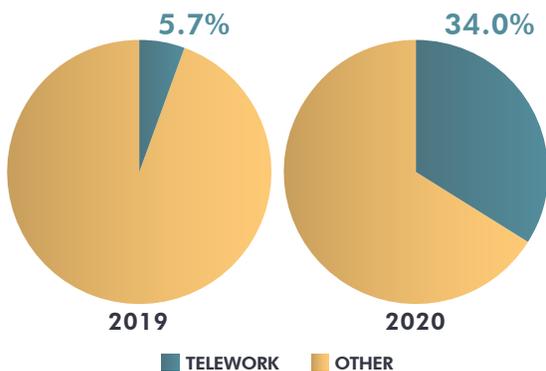
Source: Broadband Now.

## Why Is Planning for Broadband Important?

Broadband service is necessary for conducting a growing number of jobs and accessing a growing range of services and goods. The pace of broadband adoption accelerated dramatically in 2020. The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how critical broadband is for ensuring access to jobs, education, health care, and other essential goods and services.

### TELEWORK

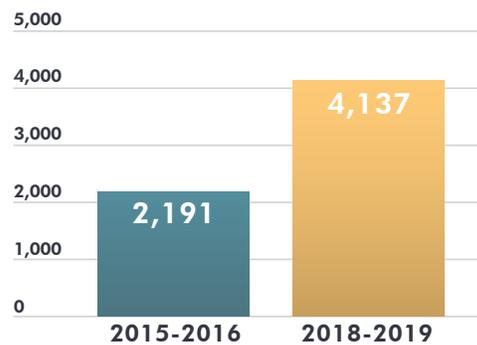
U.S. TELEWORKING SHARE



Source: U.S. Census, Household Pulse Survey.

### EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAM HEADCOUNT



Source: University of Florida.

### HEALTHCARE

IN 2018,  
**59.1%**  
OF FLORIDA HOSPITALS  
OFFERED TELEHEALTH SERVICES,  
UP FROM 45% IN 2016.

Globally, there were  
**20X MORE**  
**TELEHEALTH**  
**PATIENTS**  
IN 2019 THAN IN 2014.

Sources: JMIR Public Health & Surveillance; Statista.

**The expansion of broadband has implications both for how people will travel in the future and which transportation services will be available.** Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O), and automated and connected vehicles rely on **broadband service in roads, traffic signals, transit vehicles, and other systems** to access data on roadway conditions, traffic volumes, and other critical factors that influence how they operate. All of these emerging technologies can improve the safety and efficiency of Florida’s transportation systems.

<sup>1</sup> Broadband access is a measurement of the percentage of residents who live in an area that receives broadband service, defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as high-speed internet with 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) download, and 3 Mbps upload speeds. It is not a measurement of the percentage of people who actually have or use broadband service.

## What Is FDOT's Role in Broadband Deployment?

Since state-owned transportation corridors connect population centers, installing broadband in the right of way often allows **broadband service to "follow the road"** to the people or businesses that lack access. These may include:

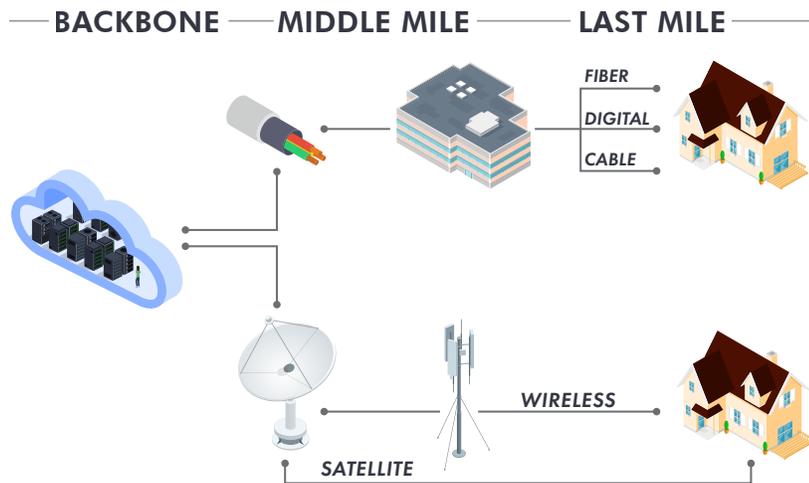
- Major trunkline or backbone connections between regions;
- Middle mile connections from the trunkline to key population or economic activity centers; or
- Last mile connections to local homes and businesses.

Coordination between FDOT and broadband providers can significantly reduce infrastructure costs using a **"dig-once" approach**: at the time of construction or major maintenance projects, conduits for broadband cables can be installed in the highway right of way, either underground or on utility transmission lines. This may include empty conduit or "dark fiber" reserved for future use.

**Coordinating broadband deployment with roadway construction can reduce installation costs by up to 75%**

Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office.

FDOT's long-range transportation planning process also provides opportunity for partners – from schools and libraries to private businesses – to collaborate on where infrastructure should go to maximize its benefits. These partners can support the installation effort to build the connections they need for remote learning, online commerce platforms, or other broadband-enabled activities.

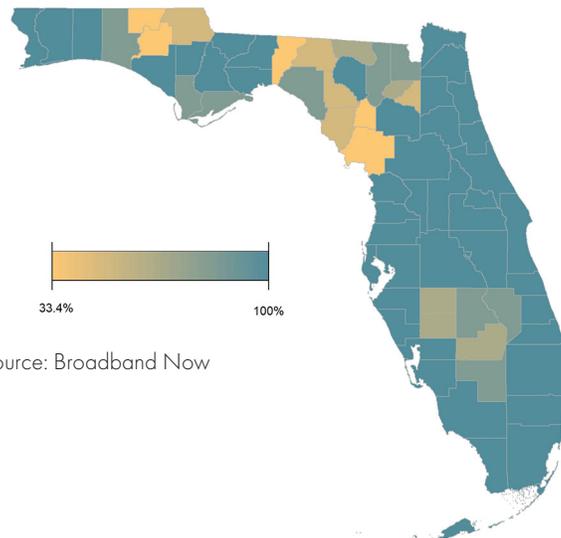


## What Is FDOT Doing to Advance Broadband Deployment?

FDOT is coordinating its investments in state highway right of way with public and private sector partners with a vision of deploying multiple types of infrastructure to meet multiple uses.

In 2020, §. 364.0135, F.S., designated the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) as the lead agency to facilitate broadband expansion and to create **the Florida Office of Broadband** within DEO. DEO is required to create a strategic plan for increasing broadband access and use throughout Florida.<sup>2</sup> To support this effort, FDOT is developing a competitive grant program for communities to assist with broadband deployment within or adjacent to a multi-use corridor.

### FLORIDA BROADBAND COVERAGE BY COUNTY (FEBRUARY 2021)



Source: Broadband Now

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2020/364.0135>

### Where Can I Learn More?

[Broadband Service in Florida](#)

[Florida DEO Office of Broadband](#)

[Federal Highway Administration – Dig Once Policy Brief](#)



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