



American Rescue Plan Act Update

June 28, 2021



American Rescue Plan

The American Rescue Plan will deliver \$350 billion for state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 emergency and bring back jobs.

**Durham County
Allocation:
\$62,445,275**

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRP-Quick-Reference-Guide-FINAL-508a.pdf>

Key Dates – Recap

NOW: [Treasury portal](#) is now open for counties to register and request Recovery Funds

JULY 9, 2021: Deadline to submit comments on U.S. Treasury's [Interim Final Rule](#)

AUGUST 31, 2021: Deadline for counties to submit first Interim Report to U.S. Treasury

OCTOBER 31, 2021: Deadline for counties to submit first *Quarterly Project and Expenditure Report*

DECEMBER 31, 2024: Funds must be *incurred* and obligated

DECEMBER 31, 2026: Funds must be *expended* to cover obligations and all work must be completed

[Overview for America's Counties: U.S. Treasury Interim Final Rule & Guidance For State And Local Fiscal Recovery Funds \(naco.org\)](#)

There are five primary ways – outside of the “lost revenue allowance” – that counties may invest ARPA Funds:

Support public health response: COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral health care and certain county public health, public safety, human services and other related staff

Address negative economic impacts: Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, impacted industries and rehiring of public sector workers (including county staff)

Replace public sector revenue loss: Use funds to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced during the pandemic – ***this provision allows a much broader use of Funds***

Premium pay for essential workers: Offer additional compensation, up to \$13 per hour in additional wages, to those – both county employees and other workers in the community – who have faced and continue to face the greatest health risks due to their service. Counties should prioritize low- and moderate-income persons, with additional written justification needed for workers above 150 percent of the residing state’s average annual wage for all occupations or their residing county’s average annual wage, whichever is higher. ***Funds can be used retroactively back to January 27, 2020***

Water, sewer and broadband infrastructure: Make necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure and provide unserved or underserved locations with new or expanded broadband access

[Overview for America’s Counties: U.S. Treasury Interim Final Rule & Guidance For State And Local Fiscal Recovery Funds \(naco.org\)](https://www.naco.org/2021/04/overview-for-americas-counties-u-s-treasury-interim-final-rule-guidance-for-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds/)

GFOA American Rescue Plan Act Guiding Principles

Take Time and Careful Consideration. ARPA funds will be issued in two tranches to local governments. Throughout the years of outlays, and until the end of calendar year 2024, consider how the funds may be used to address rescue efforts and lead to recovery.

Use other dedicated grants and programs first whenever possible and save ARPA funds for priorities not eligible for other federal and state assistance programs.

Whenever possible, expenditures related to the ARPA funding should be spread over the qualifying period (through December 31, 2024) to enhance budgetary and financial stability.

Adequate time should be taken to carefully consider all alternatives for the prudent use of ARPA funding prior to committing the resources to ensure the best use of the temporary funding.

[American Rescue Plan Spending: Recommended Guiding Principles \(gfoa.org\)](https://www.gfoa.org/american-rescue-plan-spending-recommended-guiding-principles)

Grant Compliance

- Compliance has to remain in the forefront of project development to ensure procurement and contractual obligations align with Uniform Grant Guidelines.
- Keep good records for Compliance Reporting.
- ARPA funds will be reported on the Single-Audit annually.



Draft Guiding Principles ARPA Fund Usage

- Prioritization given to funding priorities that support the Board's strategic and capital plans and other assessments endorsed by the BOCC.
- Leverage ARPA funds from federal, state and local community to optimize overall allocation.
- Prioritization given to funding that addresses equity including health disparities, closing the achievement gap, infrastructure support to unincorporated areas and funding to support minority-owned businesses.
- Evaluate infrastructure needed to address compliance increased workloads resultant from COVID-19 in the human services, public safety and administrative operations.
- Establish framework for community discussions and input. Coordinate discussions with community partners when possible. Communications should include accommodation for non-English speaking and hard of hearing residents if needed to the extent possible in these sessions.

City of Durham and Durham County staff will collaborate on engagement infrastructure.



Draft Guiding Principles ARPA Fund Usage

- County expenses that can be reimbursed through FEMA should be limited on ARPA dollars.
- Identify strategic one-time projects and/or a sustainability strategy for initiatives that require funding beyond one year.

For an example incremental increase in local funding to offset ARPA funds in years two and three.

- Establish rubric to evaluate and rank projects to ensure optimal and highest use of funds are achieved

ARPA Allocations to Date

Total Earmarked to Date: \$5.1 million

- Janitorial contracts for COVID-19 County building cleaning standards: **\$1.2 million***
- Increased security services due to COVID-19: **\$530,000***
- COVID Screening in high traffic areas to include HHS, Courthouse and Libraries: **\$515,000***
- Support for ongoing non-congregate housing needs: **\$936,000***
- Indirect revenue loss / increased expenses for Durham Convention Center: **\$408,000**
- Court Facility fees revenue loss from COVID-19: **\$260,000**
- Vaccine Equity – Community Health Workers: **\$650,000**
- School Health Nurses partial offset: **\$550,000**
- Minority Business Community Infrastructure Support: **\$50,000**

*** Previously funded with CARES dollars**

Example ARPA Fund Use Categories Based on Budget Discussions and/or Funding Gaps Related to COVID-19*

- Funds to support DSS grant relief for long-term homeowners at or below 30% AMI
- Behavioral Health Infrastructure
- Workforce development
- Business Community Support
- Food Insecurity
- Housing Insecurity
- Pre-K and K-12 initiatives
- Broadband Support
- Infrastructure support for Public Safety, Human Service and Administrative operations due to increased level of service to residents.
- One-time bonus for Public Safety, Human Services staff.

** Example for illustrative purposes*

Engagement Approaches

- ❑ Integrate web-based and face-to-face engagement activities
- ❑ Optimize feedback loops within existing infrastructures
- ❑ Use surveys, social media and traditional mailings to promote engagement and solicit feedback

ARPA Community Engagement

- *First Joint City-County Engagement – June 8, 2021*

Budget Healing Initial City-County Engagement occurred June 8, 2021

Areas of Focus: Health, Housing, Education, Employment/Entrepreneurship

- *What are the unmet needs in your neighborhood or community?*
- *What ideas do you have for how Durham should invest these federal funds?*

- Future City-County Community Engagement in Planning Phase

- County only events will also occur for unincorporated areas

- Additional updates will occur in August

REMINDERS AND NEXT STEPS

- Federal and State guidance on ARPA allocations will continue for months to come.
- Additional time sensitive projects that require summer funding will be presented during one of the July and August BOCC meetings
- Formal update on ARPA funding will occur at an August BOCC meeting.
- Staff will present a draft rubric for Board discussion to evaluate projects and rank projects at the August 8th meeting.



Broadband Internet Access Update

Closing the Digital Divide



Crossing the digital divide



Broadband: The Digital Divide

The digital divide is the gap between those who have access to technology, the internet and digital literacy training and those who do not. It affects all generations – both rural and urban communities – and a wide variety of industries and sectors.

Aspects of the Digital Divide



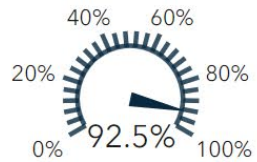
- Affordability
- Availability *
- Devices *
- Digital Literacy *
- Homework Gap
- Public Libraries *
- Telehealth*

Broadband Availability: North Carolina

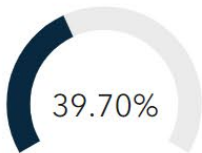
Available 25/3 Service



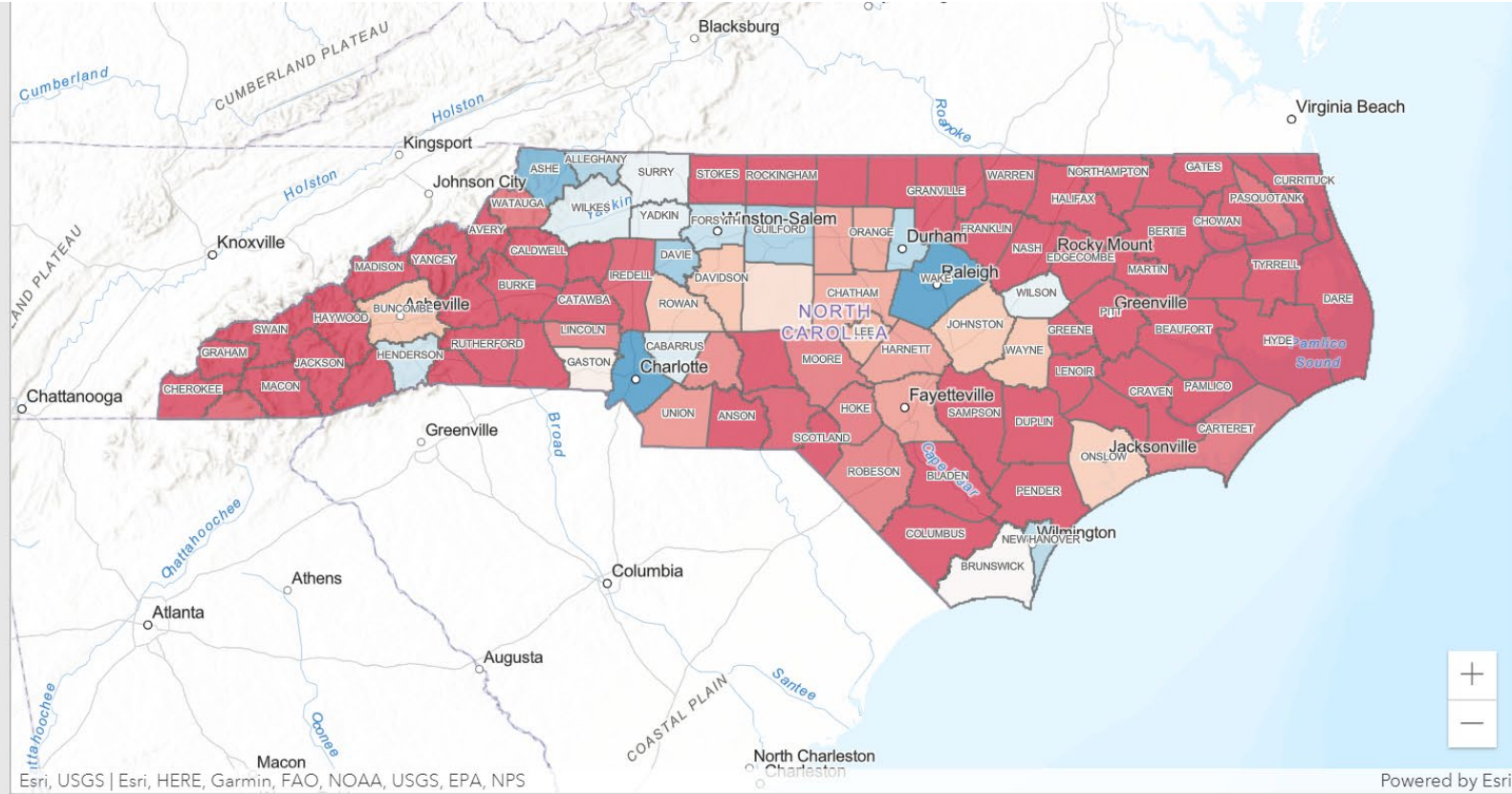
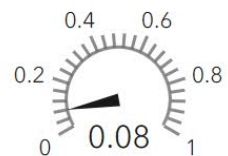
Percent Pop. with Access to 100 Download and 20 Upload



Percent Population with Available Fiber Technology



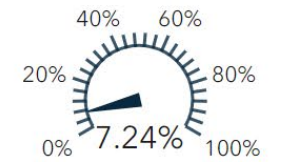
Ratio of upload to download median advertised speeds



Mile)



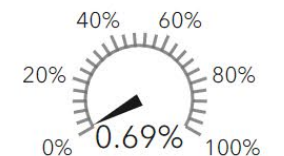
Percent housing units built in 2010 or later



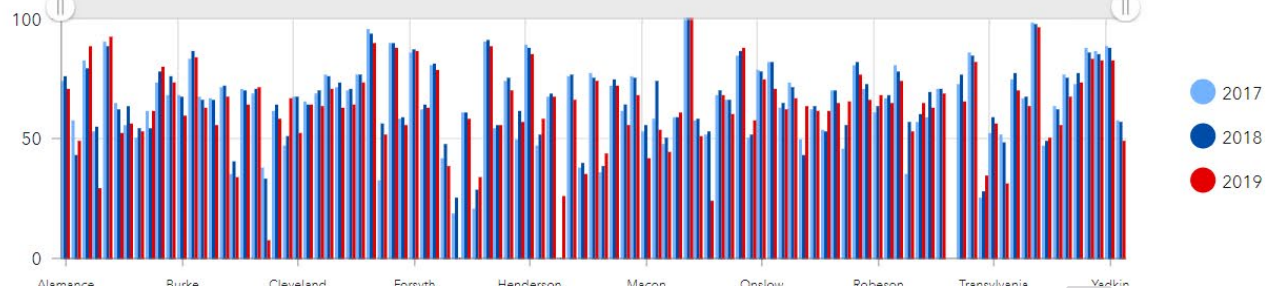
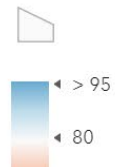
Percent Population with Access to No Providers



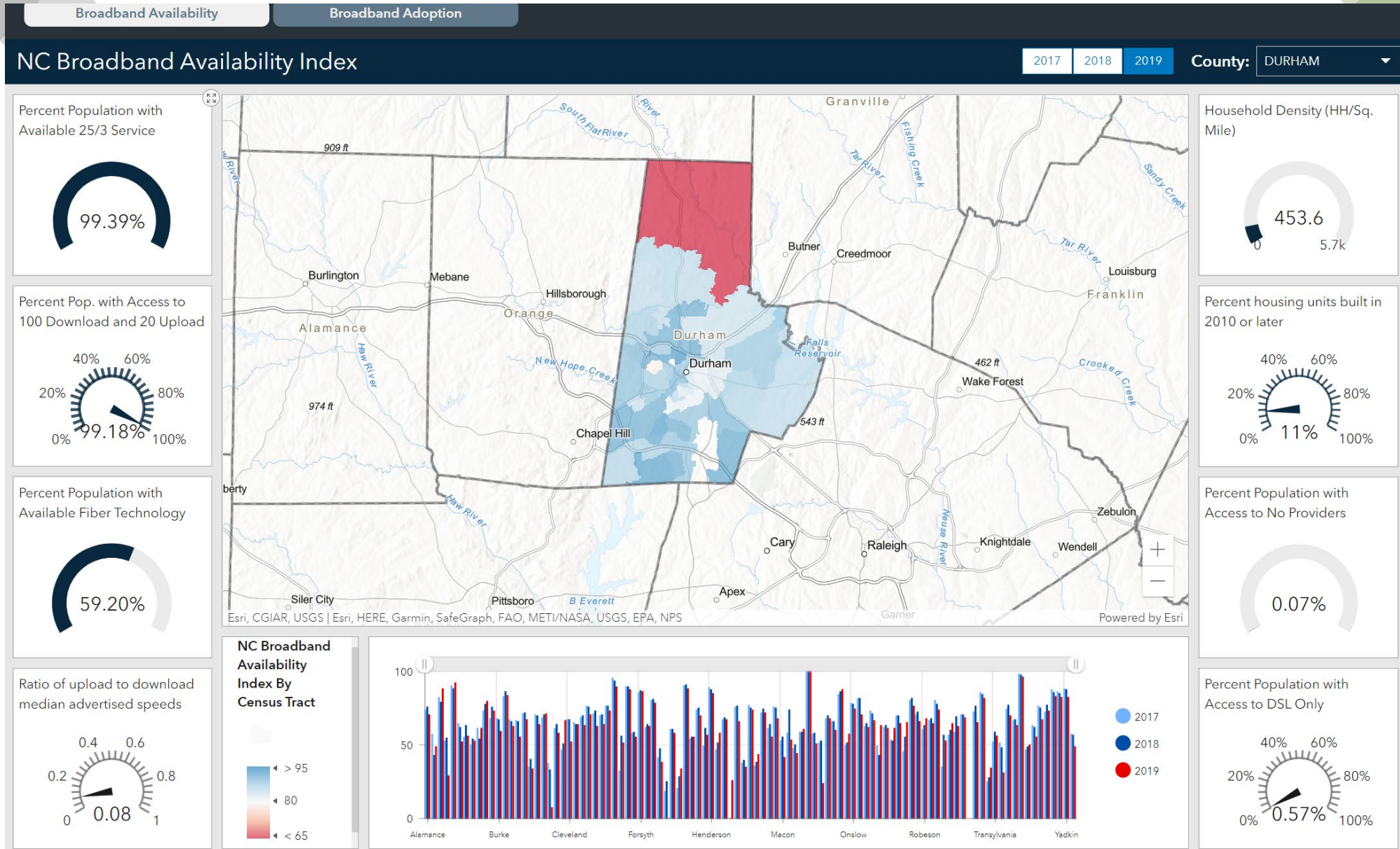
Percent Population with Access to DSL Only



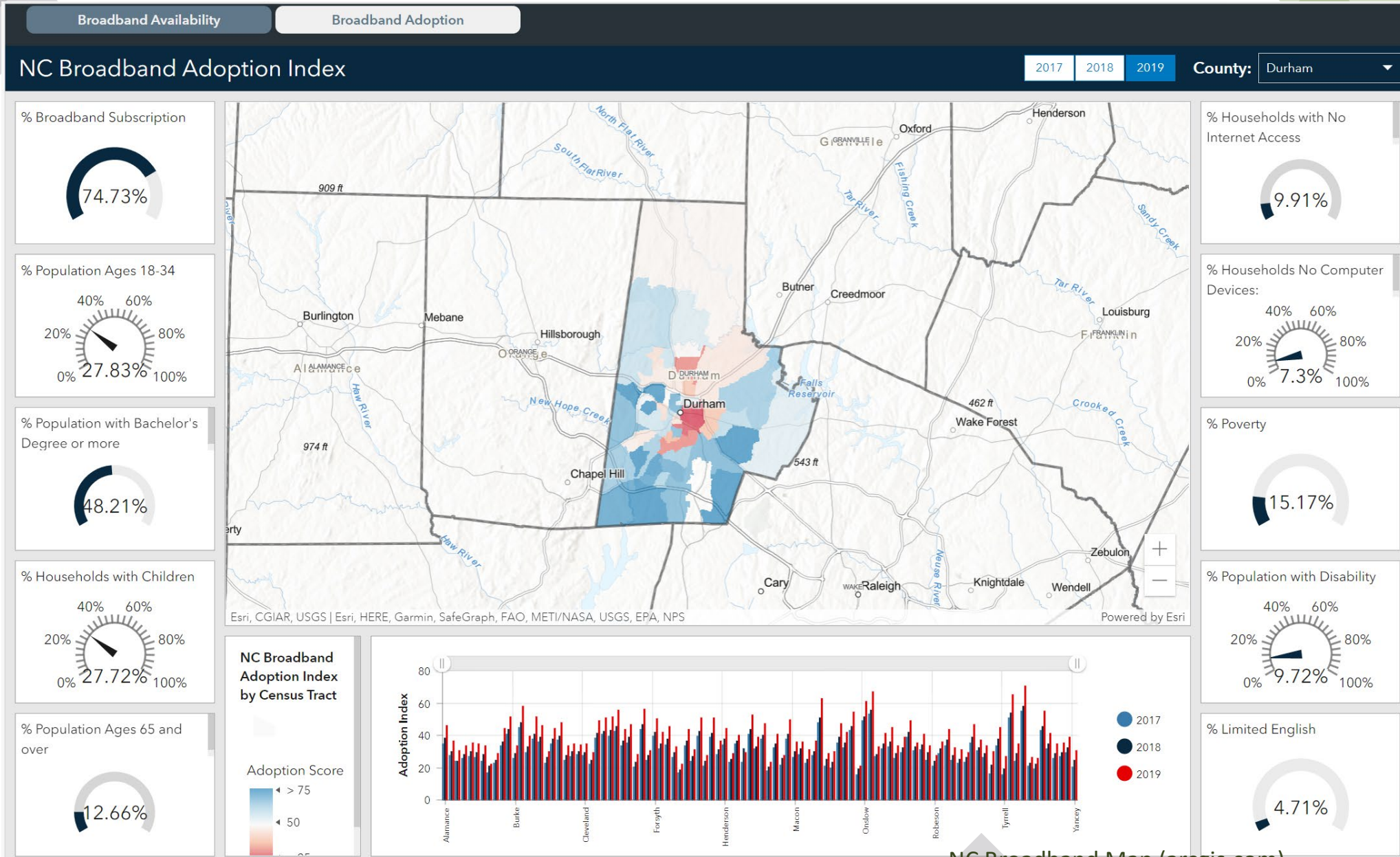
NC Broadband Availability Index - By County



Broadband Availability: Durham County

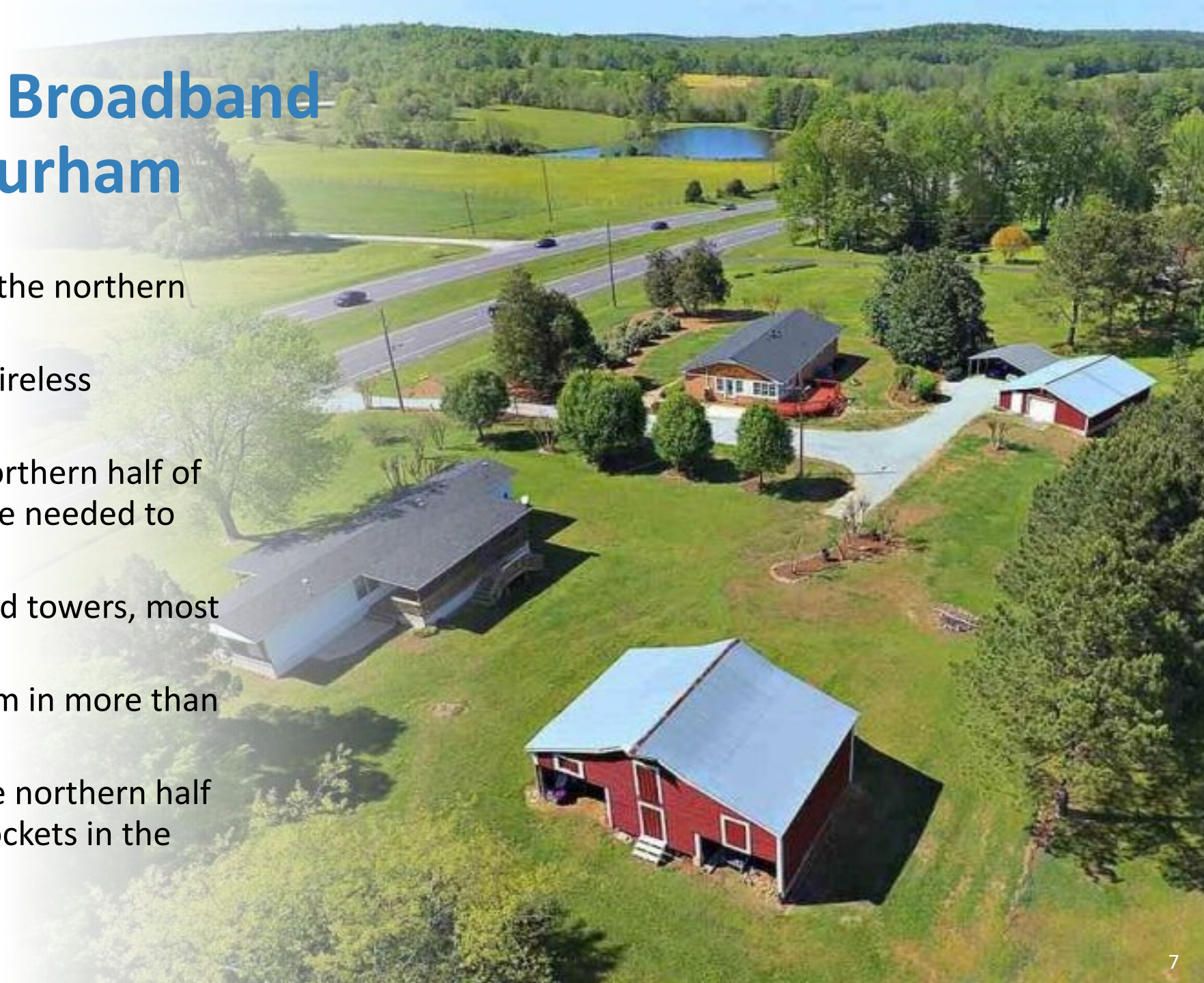


Broadband Adoption: Durham County



2019 Preliminary Broadband Study – N. Durham

- Broadband is very limited in the northern part of the county.
- There are no present fixed wireless companies offering service.
- Fiber is very limited in the northern half of the county. Microwave will be needed to distribute broadband.
- There are strategically located towers, most commercial, in the county.
- Spectrum offers cable modem in more than half of the county.
- Cell coverage is limited in the northern half of the county. Some small pockets in the south as well.



Starlink Internet Service

Starlink is catered toward those who live in remote or rural communities with limited access to internet service providers

- Program is early – limited availability in the Durham region (60 customers max in 2021)
- Consistent internet connectivity is a challenge right now
- Does not work well with trees around

Technology is promising but limited right now...

Order Starlink

200 E Main St, Durham, NC 27701, USA

Starlink is targeting coverage in your area in mid to late 2021. You will receive a notification once your Starlink is ready to ship.

Hardware	\$499.00
Service	\$99.00 /mo
Shipping & Handling	\$50.00
Est. Tax	\$41.18
Due Today	\$99.00

Service Information



An aerial photograph of a rural farmstead. In the foreground, there is a large red barn with a blue metal roof. To the left of the barn is a long, low-profile house with a dark roof. In the middle ground, there is a two-story house with a dark roof and a red porch. A paved road with a few cars is visible in the background, leading to a pond surrounded by green fields and trees. The overall scene is a typical rural landscape.

Federal and State Funding

Emergency Broadband Benefit: Addressing Affordability



What Is the Benefit?



The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. Eligible households can receive:

- Up to \$50/month discount for broadband service and associated equipment rentals;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on Tribal lands, and;
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

Closing NC Digital Divide

Gov. Cooper's Plan

Gov. Roy Cooper proposes investing **\$1.2 billion in federal American Rescue Plan funds** in three key pillars necessary to close the gap:

- Infrastructure and access
- Affordability
- Digital literacy

Funds would be allocated over 4-years:

Amount	Purpose
\$600 million	To rapidly build crucial infrastructure in unserved areas to give internet speeds of 100/20 Mbps to 98% of households and 50/10 Mbps to 100% of households (with the ability to handle future speeds of 100/100 Mbps).
\$420 million	To promote federal programs for affordable internet and continue subscription support once federal funding ends.
\$165 million	To give 365,000 households the devices, repair support and digital literacy and skills training to participate in the digital economy.

An additional \$15 million would cover administrative and operational costs to supplement existing state administrative capacity to support high-speed internet efforts. The plan also will require significant private investment.



DCo Digital Durham

- **Availability (Public Libraries)**
 - Durham County Library offers computers with internet access and free public Wi-Fi for public use in all locations
- **Devices (Public Libraries)**
 - Wifi checkout program through DCo Public Libraries
 - Computer donations to Kramden Institute & Triangle E-Cycling
- **Digital Literacy**
 - Digital literacy programs offered through DCo Public Libraries through partnerships with Digital Durham
- **Telehealth**
 - DSS & Public Health (virtual video visits)





Broadband Next Steps Framework

-
- Continue monitoring of Gov. Cooper's Plan for funding to expand broadband infrastructure (including federal dollars)
 - Leverage partnerships with City, County and Durham Public Schools
 - Identify potential pilot projects to test expansion including addressing affordability issues through grants and/or other approaches
 - Community Engagement (in-Person and web-based)
 - Complete Engineering Study (dependent on State approach)

closing
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