

BTX Fiber

NETWORK LOCATION

Brownsville, TX

SIZE (LAST MILE)

550 miles of fiber (planned)

BUDGETED COST

\$61mm (planned)

SCOPE

Broadband Feasibility & Digital Inclusion Plan and Planned FTTP Deployment in 2022

DATE

July 2020 – Present

ANTICIPATED COMPLETION

48 months

NETWORK TYPE

Aerial & Underground



Middle Mile Development

- According to the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), Brownsville, TX, has consistently ranked as one of the least connected cities in the United States, with 47.13% of households without broadband of any kind and 67% of households who do not have cable, DSL, or fiber broadband.
- Recognizing the severity of this problem, the City established a partnership with seven community anchor institutions to fund the Broadband Feasibility and Digital Inclusion Plan to study and address the lack of broadband in the community.
- In July 2020, Lit Communities began working with Brownsville on a City-wide broadband feasibility study and digital inclusion plan.
- The City's plan consisted of a comprehensive plan for a fiber-optic network owned by both the public and private partners, including last mile fiber to the premise.
- Currently, the City is embarking on a 24 month effort to develop its own 93-mile middle mile backbone network utilizing \$19.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding, allowing for further opportunities to work with private partners such as BTX Fiber to deploy last mile services in priority areas of the community.
- Additionally, the City's proposed network will connect 32 anchor institutions including city facilities, Police, Fire, EMS, and public parks.

Press

- ▶ **Brownsville approves \$19.5M for deployment of broadband installation**
- ▶ **Getting connected: City hires broadband consultant**
- ▶ **Expanding Broadband Access: City of Brownsville, Texas**

Current Status

- In July 2021, Lit Communities Broadband, Inc. created BTX Fiber, LLC for the sole purpose of serving Brownsville's residents and businesses and partnering with the City to provide a source of revenue generation.
- Understanding the importance of affordability, BTX Fiber planning to implement a 50 Mbps download / 50 Mbps upload service tier that is 100% subsidized through the FCC's Lifeline program.
- BTX Fiber will work with the local workforce and community college (Texas Southmost College) to meet both the skills and labor needs of the project.
- In August 2021, BTX Fiber partnered with the City and applied for \$15.2mm in NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program funding to deploy last mile infrastructure for 10,876 households in the twelve Census Tracts of which 6,054 are unserved.



Community Action Plan

Our work in Brownsville began with a community-wide survey. The results enabled local decision-makers to hear from residents and identify needs and priorities before moving forward.

The following statistics and quotes are from our survey results unless noted otherwise.

*From Table B28002 in the 2019 American Community Survey One-Year Estimates

1,594

Number of residents who took the survey



66.59%*

Brownsville households without cable, fiber optic, or DSL



23.08%

Brownsville households with no broadband of any type, including cellular data plans



32%

Speed tests that failed to pass the FCC's broadband definition speed of 25/3 Mbps



93%

Respondents who indicated a likelihood to sign up for enhanced broadband services if made available



38%

Respondents who indicated their options for internet were too slow, unreliable, too expensive, or not available



99.2%

Speed test results that fell below 1000 Mbps for download speed



65.5%

Speed test results that fell below 100 Mbps for download speed

"If speeds were faster and cheaper, everyone from Brownsville would sign up!"

"A faster speed and better connectivity would help us all. We are constantly being buffered and disconnected. [Current Provider] is worthless."

"The internet is not fast enough for online school work and is not reliable for multiple Zoom calls."

"My son was denied a job online because [our] internet [is] so slow."

"I have to rely on hotspots for internet access since broadband is not offered at my location at this time and sometimes it is not fast enough to support 3 children signed in to online classes."

"I am paying for significantly more speed than I am getting."

"Bringing another provider to end the monopoly in the valley or at least bring good fast reliable internet."

