



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Lt. Gov. Crouch, Indiana Broadband Office designate Howard County as a Broadband Ready Community**

**INDIANAPOLIS** (Sept. 8, 2021) – Today, Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch and the Indiana Broadband Office announced that Howard County is now designated as an official Broadband Ready Community. The Broadband Ready Communities Program was created as a tool to encourage broadband development throughout Indiana.

The Broadband Ready Community certification sends a signal to the telecommunication industry that a community has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment. Howard County is the 52nd community to achieve this designation.

“Our administration remains focused on getting high-speed, reliable internet service to unserved and underserved Hoosiers,” Crouch said. “Congratulations to Howard County as it joins the more than 50 other Indiana communities that are now broadband ready and looking to attract this critical investment. Howard County’s designation comes at a great time as Indiana further invests in expanding broadband infrastructure with \$270 million available in funding through our Next Level Connections Broadband grant program”.

The certification was approved by the Indiana Broadband Office following the Howard County Commissioners adoption of a Broadband Ready Community ordinance.

“Howard County Government is always looking for ways to provide quality services to our residents and at the same time looking forward and anticipating future needs,” said Howard County Commissioner Paul Wyman. “We believe the designation of being a Broadband Ready Community meets both goals. The importance of broadband throughout Howard County has risen to the top of the infrastructure needs locally considering COVID-19 as well as the future delivery of information and education. We are excited about the opportunity to bring widespread broadband coverage to all Howard County residents.”

According to Scott Rudd, Director of the Indiana Broadband Office, over the last 6 months, there has been a major uptick in communities seeking the Broadband Ready designation.

“Today is a day for celebration in Howard County. When local leadership understands the importance of affordable and reliable broadband access to all residents the county can do so much. We are so pleased that the county has taken this step to success,” said Rudd.

Via 2020 legislation, the Broadband Ready Community Program was transitioned from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation ([IEDC](#)) to the Office of Community and Rural Affairs ([OCRA](#)). [IBO](#) began the day-to-day management of the Broadband Ready Community Program on July 1, 2020. For more information, visit [in.gov/indianabroadband](#).

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*Under the leadership of [Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch](#), who also serves as the Secretary of Rural Development, the Indiana Broadband Office (IBO) mission is to assist residents in need of affordable and reliable broadband connectivity. This mission of reaching Hoosiers where they live, work and play is accomplished by communicating with stakeholders, providing resources to a diverse audience, and leveraging established relationships with elected officials, associations, and providers. For more information, visit [in.gov/broadband](#).*