



VISIONARY BROADBAND

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Visionary Broadband—a provider of high-speed internet service to communities in the rural West including Colorado, Wyoming and Montana—has been tentatively awarded two grants totaling \$9.1 million. The grants will allow Visionary to build out high-speed, internet service to nearly 2,400 users in Chaffee and Archuleta counties in Colorado.

Awards are from Colorado’s Advance Broadband Initiative via the Colorado Projects Fund Grant.

Visionary pinpointed 2,344 users in and around Pagosa Springs and Buena Vista that suffer from slow or no internet service at all, referred to as underserved and unserved. In Chaffee County, 1,310 homes and businesses in Buena Vista and Nathrop were identified as underserved and unserved. In Archuleta County, 1,034 users in Pagosa Springs were identified. The Colorado Projects Fund grant will give those users access to high-speed, reliable internet service.

To meet the new high-speed requirements of the federal government and Colorado Broadband Office, broadband constructed with the grant funds must provide download speeds of 100 megabits per second and upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps. The old requirements were 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up.

The funding will allow Visionary to provide the infrastructure for “Fiber to the Home” internet service, which is state of the art technology. “Visionary bid these projects knowing that the grant funds plus the required match would be enough to get the job done,” said Brian Shepherd, Visionary’s vice president for grant engagement. “We did not want to leave projects incomplete. We believe it’s important to fulfill our commitments to the communities we serve.”

Emily Lashbrooke, executive director for the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation, said the partnership with Visionary and subsequent award is vital to the economic well-being of the area. “Visionary continues to be a great partner for Archuleta County’s broadband development, as they have been for many years. This grant will address an area of great need in the Hatcher Reservoir and surrounding area, which has traditionally been an area



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that has been ‘hit-or-miss,’ at best.” She continued: “Universally available fiber internet for over 1,000 residents of this area, as well as the prospect of better cellular coverage the accompanying fiber infrastructure will bring, will be a true game-changer for this area. It will allow residents to fully participate in the modern economy, which will be fully scalable to whatever standard broadband capabilities become in the future.”

The projects must be completed by the end of 2026 in order to receive full funding. The Colorado Projects Fund grant application process was highly competitive. Thirteen projects were awarded \$113.5 million, out of 112 applicants seeking more than \$640 million.

“Awarding such a large number of grants in such a short time was not a simple lift. The Colorado Broadband Office did a phenomenal job ensuring that the areas of greatest need in rural Colorado were prioritized and we are excited to get to work to deliver an exceptional product to these areas,” said Brian Worthen, CEO for the rural broadband provider.

In Colorado, Visionary serves primarily mountain communities in western Colorado, areas where internet service has historically been difficult to provide due to the vast distances between users or the rugged, high-altitude topography of the Rocky Mountains.

About Visionary Broadband:

Visionary Broadband was founded in 1994 in a rural community in Wyoming. It is a homegrown company that has developed technical abilities with a focus on reliability. Today, the rural internet provider serves five states and has a proven track record of connecting the most rural communities, bringing a commitment of efficiency, reliability and affordability to its customers. To learn more visit, <https://www.vcn.com/>

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