

CBAN YEAR IN REVIEW

Like most organizations, the Community Broadband Action Network (CBAN) was seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We entered 2020 with plans for our annual Broadband Summit and Fall Broadband Meeting, as well as additional networking events to bring members together to exchange ideas and visions for better broadband. Instead we were forced to adjust plans and curtail activities. The planned March 2020 Broadband Summit was poised to be our biggest and best yet until coronavirus precautions forced its cancellation. And as the nation struggled to bring the virus under control, the rest of our activities in 2020—and into 2021—were also forced to the sidelines. Instead, we turned our focus to virtual gatherings and growing the membership. We had some great Lunch and Learn webinars (see the list on the back) and welcomed new members from across the nation.

CBAN PUBLIC POLICY INITIATIVES



In May 2019, [Representative Cindy Axne](#) (IA 3rd District) was appointed to the US House of Representatives Rural Broadband Task Force. In October, Axne hosted two roundtables on rural broadband with FCC Commissioner Rosenworcel. At the suggestion of the [Institute for Local Self-Reliance](#) and CBAN Associate Member [The Bill Menner Group](#), CBAN was asked to participate and provide input on local broadband access and network development barriers. As a follow-up to the October roundtable, CBAN was included on a November call with Rep. Axne and her legislative staff managing rural broadband legislative proposals.

As the Task Force's recommendations were drafted in June of 2020, Rep. Axne's office asked CBAN to provide additional insights on HR 2, approved by the House in July. That broad infrastructure bill did not move forward in the legislative process, with broadband components being segregated into a separate bill, [HR 7302, The Accessible, Affordable, Broadband for All Act](#), now under consideration of a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee.

Policy components for which CBAN provided input include:

- The ability to prioritizing federal funding for transport and middle-mile fiber construction jointly built by multiple parties expanding retail access,
- Adding reliability and redundancy as components of being "served" under FCC definitions,
- Leveraging recent fiber-based investments as local match for network expansion funding, and
- Using federal funding as local credit enhancement in addition to direct federal appropriations.

Representative Axne joined CBAN for a [Lunch and Learn webinar](#)

[on December 2, 2020](#) and her office continues to engage as aspects of the bill progress through the legislative process.

Several components totaling \$7 billion, including retail rebates for retail service provided to lower-income households, are contained in the December 21, 2020 COVID Relief Bill passed by Congress and signed by President Trump on December 27, 2020.



CBAN IN IOWA

CBAN is represented on the Public Policy Committee of the [Technology Association of Iowa \(TAI\)](#). The committee is actively promoting broadband access funding and barrier removal in a carrier and technology-neutral manner. This includes support for the [Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program](#), applicable tax credits, and other state policies impacting new infrastructure investments.

TAI is also an Advocate Member of CBAN, and we look forward to continue working with the Association to promote broadband expansion in 2021.



2021 Schedule (to date)

Municipal Financing Update

January 13, 2021 @ Noon CST

[CLICK HERE](#) to register

Michael Maloney with CBAN Associate Member DA Davidson will discuss recent financing efforts for municipal broadband projects that he's been involved with.

Anti-Municipal Broadband Groups & Dark Money

February 10, 2021 @ Noon CST

[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

Guests Christopher Mitchell (Institute for Local Self-Reliance) and Doug Dawson (CCG Consulting) will join us for a discussion of the big (often dark) money behind efforts to block municipal broadband in America.

A New Approach to Feasibility

March 10, 2021 @ Noon CST

[CLICK HERE](#) to register

CBAN's Todd Kielkopf and Curtis Dean will join Ken Demlow of HR Green discuss how communities can approach feasibility studies to retain flexibility and control over the process.

In addition to these Lunch and Learn sessions, we're working on a full schedule of engaging topics for the coming year!

- Lessons Learned from the 2020 RDOF Auctions
- Telehealth
- And many more!

CBAN Lunch and Learn webinars are always free, so join us for any that interest you!

2020 Archive

CBAN held five Lunch and Learn webinars in 2020 on key broadband topics, with attendance of approximately 100 people. See all of CBAN's resource videos [on our website](#).

- Digital Inclusion Programs (5/6/2020)
- New Market Tax Credits for Broadband Projects (6/23/2020)
- Electric Cooperatives and Fiber (7/14/2020)
- Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act (12/2/2020)



CBAN SUPPORTS REGIONAL BROADBAND EFFORTS

One of CBAN's primary goals is to serve as an outlet for education and advocacy to communities or groups of communities hoping to improve their broadband access. During 2020, CBAN provided assistance for these regional efforts.

The [East Central Intergovernmental Association](#), which serves five counties in eastern Iowa, asked CBAN to help educate its member communities on the importance of broadband. CBAN hosted two webinars for the group in September 2020. One webinar focused on the importance of fiber optic infrastructure in today's world. The other webinar provided the communities with information and tools to help bring better broadband to their citizens.

The [Ringgold County Development Corporation](#) reached out to CBAN to assist with their efforts to improve broadband connectivity in this southwest Iowa county. CBAN participated in discussions with their broadband committee and offered assistance to a fixed wireless provider to implement its plan for better coverage.

2021 MEMBERSHIP

Effective in 2021, we've changed the name of our Vendor Membership to Associate Membership. We've also changed our Associate Member rate structure to make it easier than ever to join, while still providing CBAN with resources needed to keep the organization strong and growing!

2021 Associate Member Dues

- Single-person companies: \$240.00
- Companies with 2-10 employees: \$360.00
- Companies with 11+ employees: \$600.00

As always, participation in CBAN events is free to all members. And membership as a Community Member, Provider Member, or Advocate Member remain free in 2021.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our efforts to date. We look forward to making 2021 our best year yet!