

Brightspeed Announces Initial Fiber Build Markets for Arkansas

Advanced Fiber Optics Network to Reach Over 40,000 Potential Customers in Arkansas by End of 2023

Charlotte, NC — August 10, 2022 — Brightspeed today outlined its planned fiber network build for the state of Arkansas. By the end of 2023, Brightspeed will complete the first phase of construction and deliver over 40,000 fiber passings across 10 counties in the state. In subsequent years of its network initiative, the company plans to add 60,000 fiber passings for a total of over 100,000 new fiber-enabled locations in its Arkansas footprint.

“We look forward to beginning our network deployment in Arkansas and participating in the state’s continued growth and development,” said Chris Creager, chief administration officer of Brightspeed. “Households and businesses, especially in our rural communities, need high-quality internet connectivity they can rely on, whether for working, learning, accessing healthcare, or growing their businesses. Customers will be delighted with our simple, intuitive user experience and state-of-the-art internet services achievable only through an all-fiber network.”

Brightspeed’s 2022-23 build plan for Arkansas will bring faster, more reliable internet and Wi-Fi solutions to over 40,000 residential and business locations in markets within Arkansas, Benton, Desha, Lonoke, Monroe, Poinsett, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, and Yell counties.

“In addition to our initial build scope, we are thrilled about the opportunity to work with stakeholders at state, county, and city levels to further expand fiber-based broadband availability through participation in the Arkansas Rural Connect program and other broadband infrastructure initiatives,” added Creager.

Arkansas State Representative Brian Evans said, “I certainly appreciate this initiative as we have worked tirelessly these last few years to increase broadband access—especially in those rural areas where it is needed the most. This will move Arkansas not only from a business perspective, but from an educational perspective as well. This will be especially important for our students whose education and curriculum require a great deal of computer work at home. I appreciate Brightspeed for their commitment to come into Arkansas and invest.”

The Arkansas fiber build is part of Brightspeed’s comprehensive plan to invest at least \$2 billion in its fiber optics transformation, which is expected to reach up to 3 million homes and businesses over the next five years, including in many locations where fiber and advanced technology have not historically been deployed.

Brightspeed is pioneering the latest technology innovations as part of its large-scale network deployment, including the implementation of XGS-PON, a next generation architecture capable of symmetrical internet speeds exceeding 1Gbps, and Wi-Fi 6, the latest wireless networking standard for superior reach and performance within today’s device-dense homes and offices.

Brightspeed will initially be comprised of incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) assets and associated operations of Lumen Technologies (NYSE: LUMN), which are the subject of a pending acquisition by Apollo-managed funds (NYSE: APO). The company has secured all necessary state-required regulatory approvals in the 20 states in its operating footprint. The parties expect to obtain final FCC approval in the third quarter, and to close the transaction early in the fourth quarter.

Brightspeed plans to announce additional state-specific network build plans over the next several weeks.

For more information about Brightspeed, visit the company's website, www.brightspeed.com.

About Brightspeed

Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. and expected to have assets and associated operations in 20 states, Brightspeed will provide broadband and telecommunications services through a network platform capable of serving more than 6 million homes and businesses. The company aims to bridge the digital divide by deploying a state-of-the-art fiber network and a customer experience that makes staying connected simple and seamless. For more information about Brightspeed, visit the company's website, www.brightspeed.com.

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