

Brightspeed Announces Initial Fiber Build Markets for Illinois and Michigan

State-of-the-Art Fiber Network to Reach up to 24,000 Potential Customers by End of 2023

Charlotte, NC — August 25, 2022 —Brightspeed today announced that it will build portions of its planned fiber optics network in Illinois and Michigan, bringing faster, more reliable internet and Wi-Fi to residential and business locations across its operating territory in each state.

In Illinois, Brightspeed will deliver, by end of 2023, up to 14,000 new fiber passings in Knox County during the first phase of network construction. The company plans to add 31,000 fiber passings in the state in subsequent years of the build, for a total of up to 45,000 fiber-enabled locations.

In Michigan, Brightspeed will achieve, by end of 2023, over 10,000 new fiber passings in markets within Chippewa, Monroe, Saginaw, Sanilac, Schoolcraft, and Tuscola counties. The company plans to add 14,000 passings in future years of the build, for a total of over 24,000 fiber-enabled locations.

“As our economy, education systems, healthcare platforms, and entertainment options increasingly move online, there is greater urgency for the broadband infrastructure to keep pace, especially in rural and suburban communities,” said Sherry Hessenthaler, operations strategy lead for Brightspeed. “We are eager to begin our ambitious fiber deployment in Illinois and Michigan. We believe customers will welcome a new competitive choice for internet and Wi-Fi. We can’t wait to introduce our high-quality products and customer experience to the cities, towns, and neighborhoods we are privileged to serve.”

Brightspeed has outlined many of its state-specific build plans over the last several months and is well underway with network design and construction groundwork across its multistate territory as it continues preparations for day one operations. In total, Brightspeed intends 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.

The company 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 FCC approval and all necessary regulatory approvals in the 20 states in its operating footprint, and plans to close the transaction early in the fourth quarter.

Brightspeed will leverage technology innovations and a unique distributed FTTP architecture designed for faster implementation and market availability of XGSPON-based internet services with symmetrical speeds that exceed 1Gbps.

“Beyond our investment in Illinois and Michigan, we will evaluate areas for consideration for state and federal broadband grant programs as they arise,” added Hessenthaler. “We are excited for the potential to expand fiber-based internet to even more communities in our serving area and look forward to working with key policymakers and stakeholders including the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office.”

Brightspeed plans to announce further state-specific fiber build plans in the coming 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.

Media

Erik Carlson
Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher
(212) 355-4449
pr@brightspeed.com