



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Broadband Policy & Development (BPD) Office

2026 Citizen-Centric Report | Reporting Period: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026

BPD | CNMI OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BRAND ADBAND
POLICY & DEVELOPMENT

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Governor David M. Apatang with BPD



Governor David M. Apatang with BPD

ABOUT THE BPD OFFICE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE 2023-003

Established within the Office of the Governor by Executive Directive 2023-003 on April 24, 2023, the CNMI Broadband Policy and Development (BPD) Office serves as the designated lead agency for telecommunications infrastructure expansion, regulatory policy, and federal broadband grant coordination. Originally established through the foresight of the late Governor Arnold I. Palacios, BPD continues its vital mandate under Governor David M. Apatang: building a modern, storm-hardened digital foundation that connects all villages and powers sustainable economic diversification across Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Vision Statement

To empower all CNMI residents across every island with equitable access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet—catalyzing economic diversification, expanding digital education and telehealth, and raising the overall quality of life.

Mission Statement

To direct and administer federal broadband funding—most notably the BEAD Program and CPF—while partnering with local and federal stakeholders, public agencies, and the private sector to deploy resilient physical infrastructure and close the digital divide.

CORE STRATEGIC GOALS

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

Universal 100% Last-Mile FTTH Deployment

Deploy an underground, carrier-grade optical network directly connecting every unserved and underserved location across Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, delivering symmetrical gigabit connectivity.

Trans-Pacific Subsea Redundancy & Sovereignty

Secure direct landings for next-generation international subsea fiber cables (Proa and TPU), breaking single-point vulnerability, reducing latency, and drastically lowering wholesale bandwidth tariffs.

Storm-Hardened Civil Infrastructure & Survivability

Enforce 100% underground conduit placement for all federally funded routes, eliminating vulnerable poles and neutralizing threats from Super Typhoons, high winds, and salt-air corrosion.

Targeted Digital Inclusion & Community Empowerment

Execute targeted device distributions (Operation Governor's Digital Connect), fabricate 10 soundproof SafeSpace privacy pods for telehealth, and embed localized digital navigation support.

9 FTES

CORE STAFF (LED BY GLEN HUNTER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT/DIRECTOR)

66.7% / 33.3%

DEMOGRAPHICS: 6 FEMALE / 3 MALE PERSONNEL

47,329

CNMI RESIDENTS ACROSS ALL INHABITED ISLANDS

PERFORMANCE REPORT & KEY STRATEGIC DELIVERABLES

P.L. 20-83 COMPLIANT

Fiscal Year 2026 Operational Milestones and Quantitative Outcomes

Strategic Objective	FY 2025 Baseline	FY 2026 Accomplishment	Impact & Outcome Measure
BEAD Final Proposal	Submitted to NTIA (Aug 2025); pending evaluation	Formal Approval Granted (Nov 26, 2025)	Formally unlocked CNMI's \$81.3M capital allocation for territory-wide high-speed deployment.
BEAD Subgrant Execution	Provisional subgrantee selection completed	Executed Subgrant with IT&E (May 13, 2026)	CNMI became the 2nd U.S. territory to sign its BEAD agreement; \$31.3M build for ~11,000 locations.
Multi-Agency Permitting	\$500K USDA grant secured; RFP drafted	Environmental Firm Retained & Active	Actively navigating NEPA, NHPA Section 106, CRM, and DPL rights-of-way for shovel-ready routes.
Governor's Digital Connect	MOUs formed with Aging & Veterans Affairs	Laptop Procurement Contract Secured	Procurement finalized; connected laptop deliveries scheduled for distribution before year-end.
SafeSpace Privacy Pods	Architectural specifications drafted	Fabrication Contract Executed	Commenced manufacturing and site preparation for 10 soundproof telehealth/telework booths.
Cost-Efficiency (Bargain)	Initial market projections exceeded \$80M	Provisional Award Closed at \$31.3M	Negotiated ~\$50M in public cost savings while securing a 100% underground fiber architecture.
Workforce Capacity	269 fiber-certified GBBC graduates	Civil Construction Technical Pool	Trained local technicians prepared for civil conduit placement, cable jetting, and fusion splicing.
Trans-Pacific Resiliency	MOU executed with Google (Jan 2025)	Terrestrial Landing Studies Ongoing	Collaborating on engineering alignments for the Proa, TPU, and Taiwan-USA trans-Pacific routes.

100% Underground Fiber Mandate

A cornerstone policy established by BPD is the legal mandate that all BEAD-funded last-mile fiber architecture deployed by subgrantee IT&E be installed entirely underground. Eliminating reliance on aerial utility poles shields infrastructure from extreme typhoons, vehicle collisions, and coastal corrosion, guaranteeing multi-decadal structural survivability and uninterrupted emergency communications across our island communities.

Permitting & Environmental Compliance

Prior to physical trenching, BPD and IT&E coordinate multi-agency federal and local clearances. Rigorous reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) are executed in close partnership with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO), Coastal Resources Management (DCRM), Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Department of Public Lands

WHAT ARE THE REVENUES & EXPENSES?

Financial Snapshot, Multi-Year Grant Allocations, and Audit Governance

100% FEDERALLY FUNDED

100% Grant-Funded Operational Model: The BPD Office receives zero local tax appropriations from the CNMI General Fund. All personnel salaries, administrative operations, technical consulting, and capital infrastructure investments are sustained entirely through competitive and formula federal grant programs administered under strict federal milestone guidelines.

FEDERAL GRANT PORTFOLIO (REVENUE SOURCES)

ACTIVE MULTI-YEAR CAPITAL

Federal Granting Agency & Program	Total Grant Award	Status
NTIA: Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)	\$81,300,000	Approved / Permitting
U.S. Department of the Treasury: Capital Projects Fund (CPF)	\$14,000,000	Active / Committed
USDA: Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA)	\$500,000	Active / Clearances
Total Active Multi-Year Federal Capital	\$95,800,000	Fully Dedicated

**Note: Initial formula allocations for Digital Equity Capacity (\$2.1M) and Competitive (\$2.5M) were discontinued nationwide by the federal government and rescinded.*

COSTS FOR SERVICES & FUND ALLOCATION BREAKDOWN

FUNCTIONAL OUTLAYS

1. Physical FTTH Deployments (\$31.3M Contracted) Underground mainline trenching, conduit placement, fiber blowing, and customer premises equipment across 21 Project Areas. Zero funds drawn to date pending permits.	2. Environmental Reviews & Permitting Retaining specialized environmental engineering firms under the \$500K USDA grant to execute archaeological, cultural, NEPA, and coastal baseline studies.
3. Digital Devices & Public Pod Infrastructure Capital outlays procuring connected laptops for vulnerable seniors and veterans and fabricating 10 soundproof SafeSpace privacy pods for telehealth and remote work.	4. GIS Spatial Mapping, Compliance & 9 FTEs Territory-wide address verification, Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) audits, federal reporting, legal compliance, and operational staff management.

SINGLE AUDIT & FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

INTERNAL CONTROLS

Verified Reimbursement Protocols & Clean Audit Finding: Capital disbursements to subgrantees are executed strictly on a verified reimbursement basis following independent third-party physical inspections certifying that conduit depth, fiber jetting, and terminal specs meet rigid federal standards. BPD transactions are audited under the Commonwealth Government Single Audit (2 CFR 200 Subpart F). In FY 2026, the BPD Office recorded **zero federal questioned costs, zero audit disallowances, and zero administrative sanctions.**

WHAT'S NEXT? FUTURE OUTLOOK & CITIZEN FEEDBACK

Anticipated Challenges, Economic Dividends, and FY 2027 Strategic Priorities

HORIZON 2027

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES & RISK MITIGATION

RISK MANAGEMENT

Intensive Permitting Bottlenecks

Navigating concurrent NEPA, Section 106, CRM, and DPL clearances across Saipan, Tinian, and Rota requires proactive agency liaison to avert civil ground-breaking delays.

Limestone & Volcanic Subsurface Trenching

Undergrounding conduit through dense coralline limestone and rock requires specialized horizontal directional drilling machinery, rock saws, and strict erosion controls.

Inter-Island Logistics & Shipping

Coordinating oceanic freight for heavy machinery, conduit reels, and specialized technicians across three distinct island municipalities requires proactive inventorying.

Subgrantee Compliance Oversight

Maintaining continuous inspection of contractor build milestones, performance bonding, prevailing wage compliance, and long-term low-cost consumer price covenants.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK & THE DIGITAL DIVIDEND

MACRO IMPACT

Economic Diversification & Remote Work

Gigabit low-latency connectivity removes geographic barriers, empowering local entrepreneurs and youth to access high-paying remote global careers without leaving the islands.

Healthcare Equity & Telehealth Savings

SafeSpace pods and high-speed fiber connections enable specialized remote medical consultations, slashing expensive off-island medical referral costs for residents.

Skilled Technical Workforce

Fiber bootcamp graduates establish a certified local technical labor pool, retaining capital within the Commonwealth and supporting long-term utility maintenance.

Multi-Decadal Disaster Resilience

Underground fiber eliminates multi-million-dollar post-storm telecommunications repair cycles, ensuring business and government continuity during severe typhoons.

FY 2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ACTION PLAN

- **Permit Clearances & Groundbreaking:** Clear final rights-of-way to launch physical trenching in prioritized unserved zones.
- **SafeSpace Pod Deployment:** Complete installation of all 10 privacy booths in designated Community Anchor Institutions.

- **Device Distribution:** Deliver connected laptops to eligible seniors and veterans in coordination with Aging and Veterans Affairs.
- **Subsea Cable Landings:** Finalize terrestrial landing conduit alignments and beach manhole agreements for trans-Pacific arrivals.

CITIZEN FEEDBACK & CONTACT DIRECTORY

TRANSPARENCY

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Social Media & Community Channels:

Facebook: [CNMI Broadband Policy & Development](#) | Instagram: [@cnmi_bpd](#)

Statutory Compliance Notice: Pursuant to CNMI Public Law 20-83 (codified at 1 CMC § 2311), this Citizen-Centric Report was submitted electronically to the Office of the Public Auditor and the Presiding Officers of the CNMI Legislature, and published on the official web portals of the BPD Office, the Office of the Governor, the CNMI Legislature, and the Office of the Public Auditor.