

# WHATCOM COUNTY BROADBAND PRESENTATION

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Manager





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# MISSION

TO PROVIDE OPEN ACCESS BROADBAND NETWORK  
IN ORDER TO SERVE COMMUNITIES IN OUR RURAL  
AREAS WHO ARE CURRENTLY UNSERVED AND  
UNDERSERVED.

# Goals

Build

Build fiber routes in the highest need areas

- Bridge the digital inequities

Provide

Provide opportunities for competition where none currently exists

Responsible

Be fiscally responsible with public funding

Collaborate

Collaborate with all our partners and stakeholders

Support

Support our local business and develop an economy for new businesses



# BROADBAND TEAM

Partnership between the  
Port of Bellingham and  
Whatcom County PUD

Mutually agreed upon  
roles

- Port is the lead agent
- PUD supports all efforts

Team meets weekly to  
collaborate and work on  
projects

Each agency has  
identified a representative  
from each of their  
commissions

Collaborates on:

Policy

Grant opportunities

Stakeholders Engagement

Community Engagement

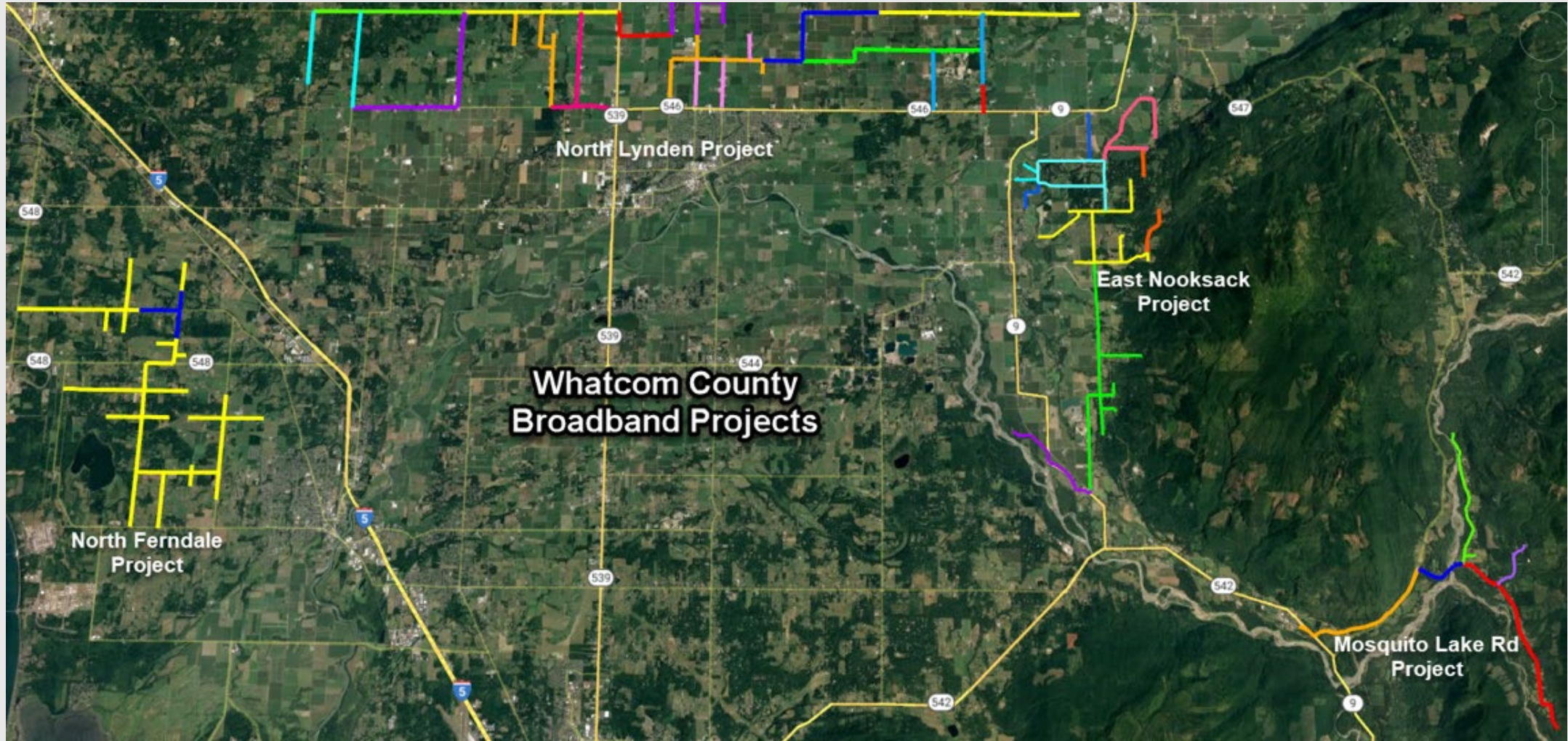
Reports to our leadership

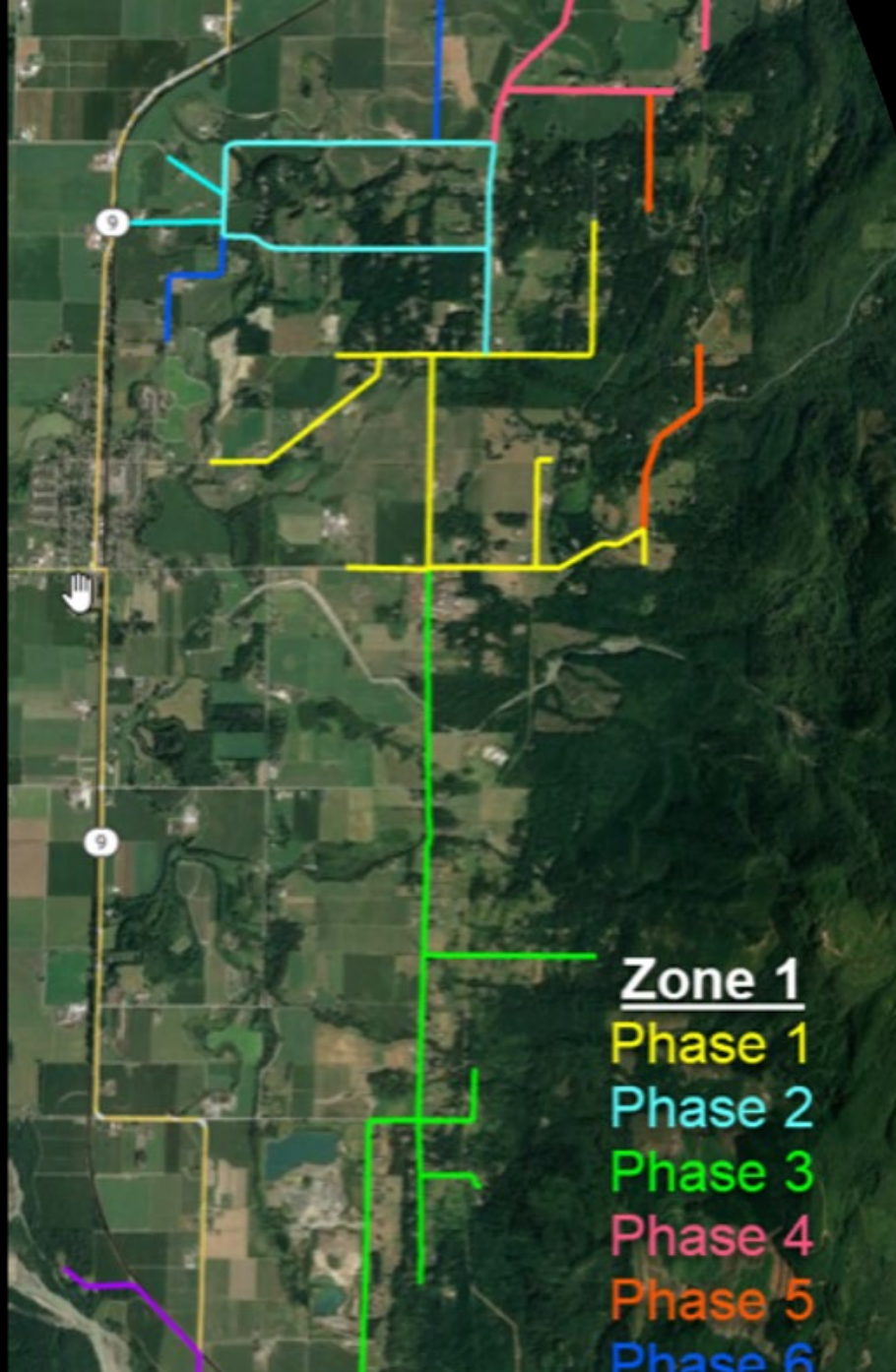
# Community and Stakeholder Collaboration



- Work with stakeholder on broadband efforts and policies
  - Lummi Nation
  - Nooksack Tribe
  - ISPs
  - Non-Profits
  - Seven Cities
  - Libraries
    - County
    - City of Bellingham
  - WSU Extension
  - WPPA

# Whatcom County Funded Fiber Projects





# EAST NOOKSACK PROJECT

## Open Access Fiber Project

- 464 homes pass
- 47 miles of fiber
- Fiber to the premise project

## Under Construction

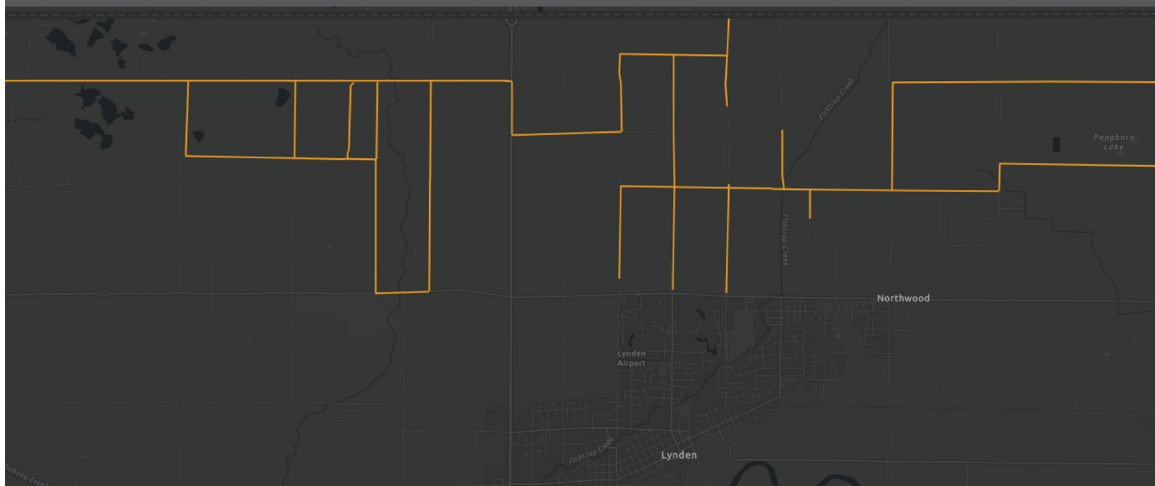
- Hanging Fiber on Phase 1 and 4
- Estimate connecting Community members later this year

## Funding Sources

- \$1168,782 Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB)
- \$750,000 EDI
- \$114,000 Port of Bellingham
- \$2,032,782 total

# North Lynden Project Area

Funded Project Area  
± 450 Address Points



Source: Port of Bellingham

# North Lynden Project

Located North of Lynden along the Canadian Boarder

Open access Network

- Last Mile Project:
- 450 home and businesses passed
- 47 Miles

Secured Funding:

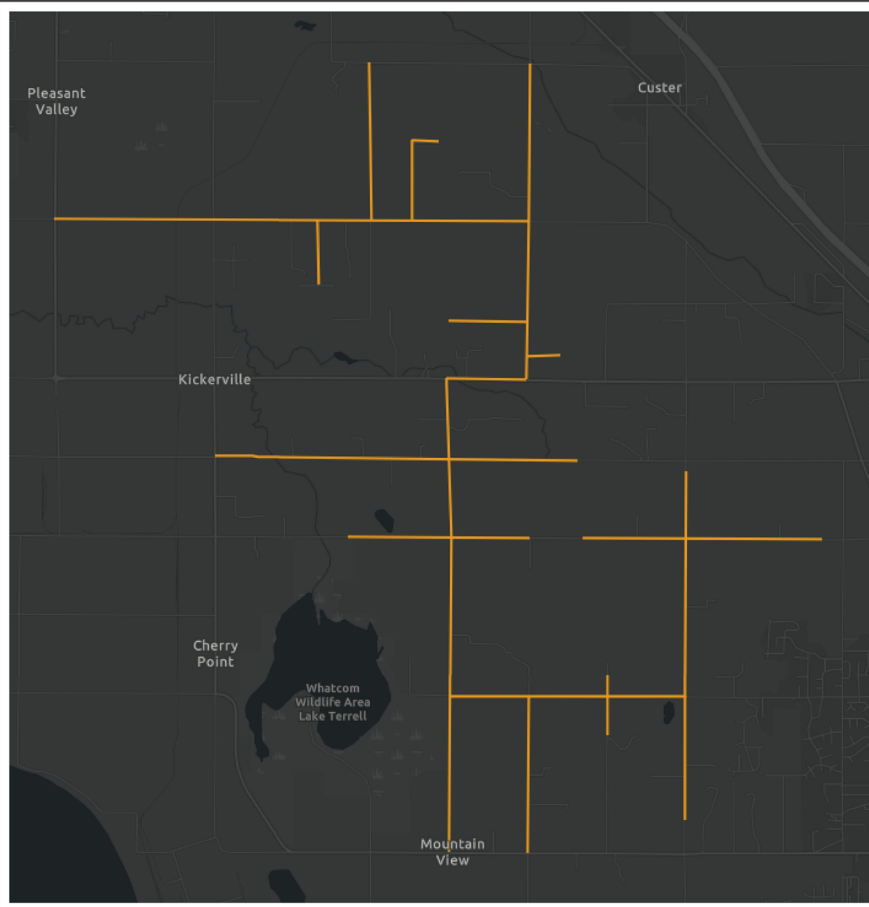
- CERB-\$2 Million
- EDI-\$1 Million

Entering contract with CERB this Fall Construction begins in 2023



# Ferndale Project Area

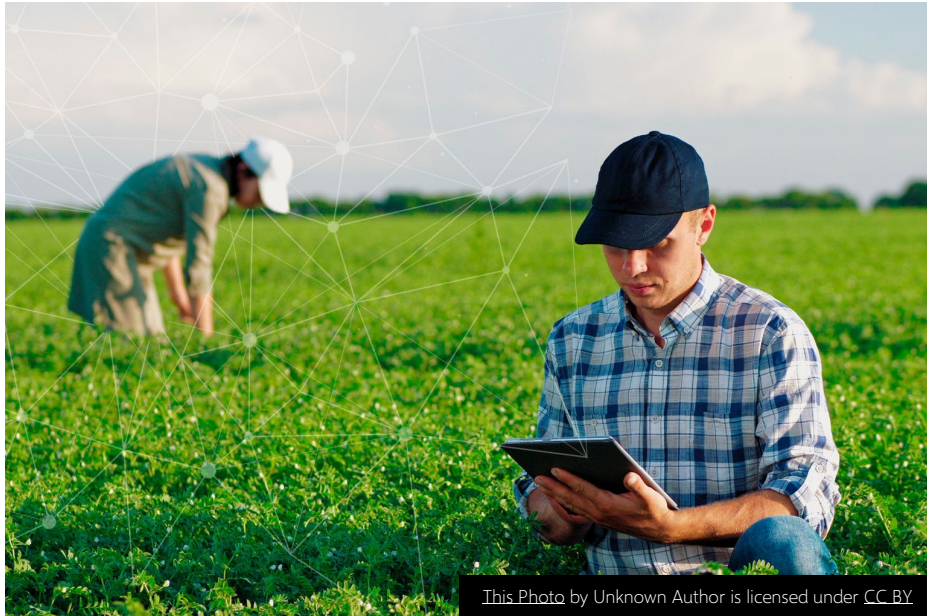
Funded Project Area  
± 1,110 Address Points



## North Ferndale Project

- Located West of Lake Terrell and East of Ferndale
- Last Mile Fiber to the Premise Project
  - 30 Miles
  - Passes 1,100 homes/business
- Funding Sources
  - \$1million EDI
  - \$4million WSBO
- Construction Status
  - Compete contract with County
  - Will complete contract with WSBO before end of year
  - Anticipate design before end of year

# Feasibility Study



- CERB Planning feasibility grant
- Identify remaining unserved and underseved areas in Whatcom County
- Identify potential future service areas
- Identify financial cost
- Identify management models
- Currently in preliminary draft stage
- Completed end of year

# Community Engagement

- Surveys
  - Mailed and On-line
  - Over 500 results
  - Highest needs areas where Deming and Custer
  - Those who had internet said it was slow and did not meet their needs
  - Many expressed safety concerns
- Community Meeting
  - June 14<sup>th</sup> Ferndale Chamber
  - Engage community members and stakeholder on current and future broadband needs



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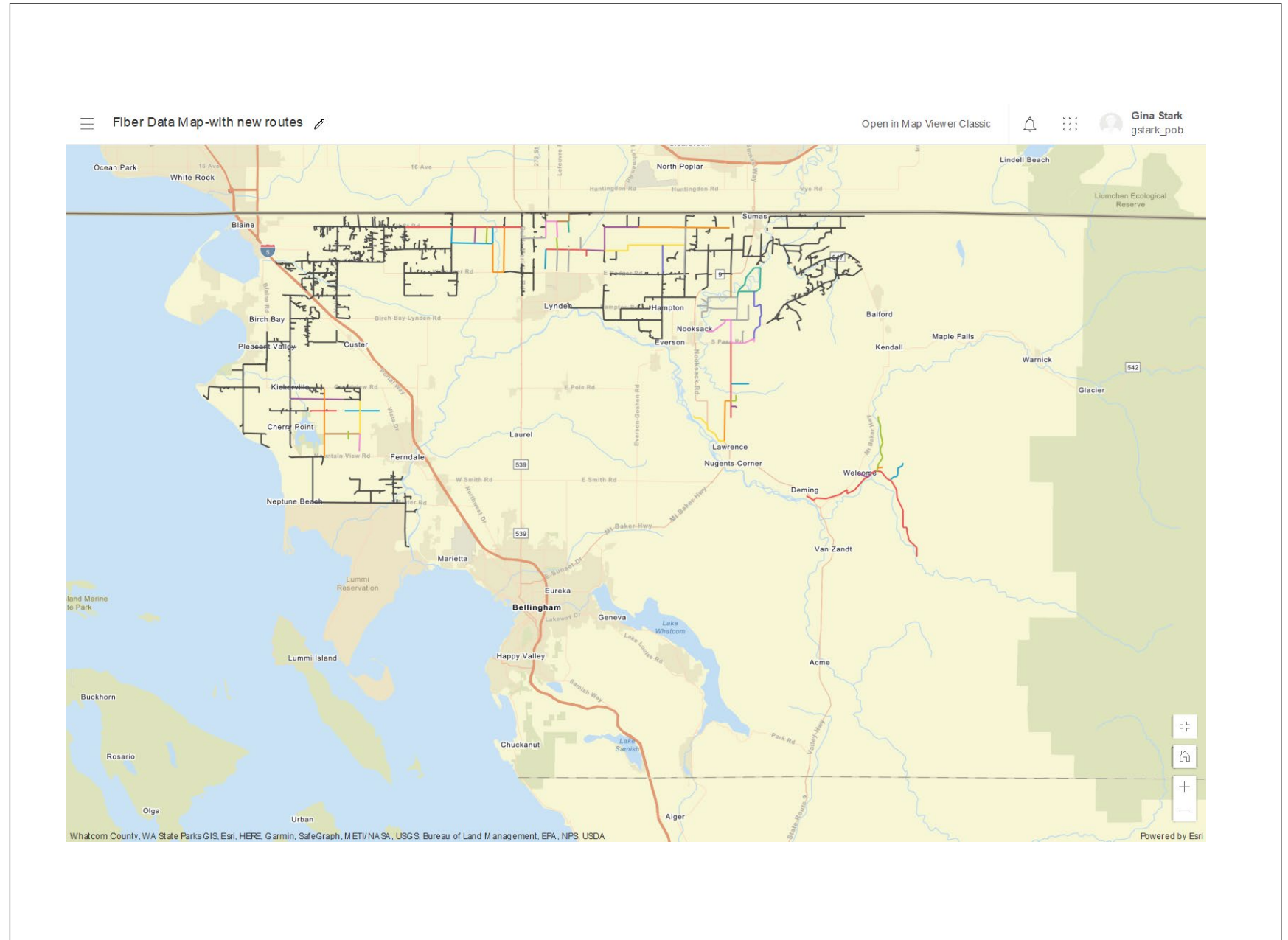


# Other Work Plans

- Policy Work
  - WSBO Call for comments
    - Open access
    - Matching funding
    - Challenge process
  - Legislative Broadband Policies
  - Work with County Council on Policy
  - Work w/ WPPA and WPUA
- Digital Equity and Access

# New Proposed Projects Area

- Identified areas that were at 23/3 Mbps
- Areas that were not currently served by the three area under construction
- Used Ookla and FCC Census data sets
- Estimated cost for FTTP infrastructure project is \$15-\$17 million



# Funding Request



\$4 million ARPA Broadband Funding or a portion



Leverage as matching funding for State Broadband Accelerated Grants



Used for design and construction of open access infrastructure build

~2000 homes passed  
~150 miles fiber



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QUESTIONS???