

Broadband Strategic Plan



CITY OF SANTA FE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

July 2025

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1. Project Charters

I. Executive Summary

a. Introduction

Broadband access surpasses geographic limitations, linking communities irrespective of their location or differences. It facilitates efficient connectivity to education, healthcare, public safety, and government services for end users by:

- Providing the opportunity to participate in online learning and distance education.
- Giving entrepreneurs and small- and home-based business owners opportunities to compete with large corporations.
- Increasing the productivity and efficiency of businesses that use the internet for their operations.
- Connecting patients in remote areas to health care services.
- Making government services more readily available to residents.
- Saving companies and organizations money by letting employees work remotely.
- Allowing friends and families to stay entertained and in touch with one another.
- Enables environmental sustainability.
- Plays a significant role in revitalizing previously blighted urban communities.
- Assists the needs of people with disabilities.

Broadband is a fundamental necessity; however, its expansion faces challenges such as:

- Infrastructure Limitations: geographic and physical barriers hinder infrastructure development.
- Cost Barriers: high initial investment costs and long-term sustainability issues impact on consumers and limit providers from investing in infrastructure that may have a low return of investment.
- Digital Divide: disparities in access between different populations.

The City of Santa Fe recognizes the importance of broadband access and has established both a Broadband Strategic Plan (BSP) and a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) to address the digital divide within the community. The BSP frames the challenges of achieving universal connectivity, clearly stating the City's broadband goals and outlines the actions the City can take to meet these goals. The SAP outlines Projects intended to meet the City's goals.

b. Planning Process

In December 2024, the City of Santa Fe contracted with F5 Planning and Consulting, to develop the City's Broadband Strategic Plan. The BSP and SAP were developed utilizing the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) Broadband Strategic Planning guidelines for Phase 1, 2 and 3.



The purpose of utilizing the guidelines is intended to ensure that the City's plan meets OBAE and NTIA requirements for a comprehensive broadband plan and can serve as a reference when applying for broadband grant funding.

c. Vision and Broadband Principles

The City of Santa Fe envisions broadband availability for its residents and business, based upon the following five principles: access, equity, performance, affordability, and choice.

These principles will serve as measures for success and as design parameters for the City's approach to broadband infrastructure and service.



Access – There should be sufficient broadband infrastructure to provide safe, reliable, access to broadband service.



Equity - No one will face a barrier based on who they are or where they live.



Performance – Broadband should be fast and reliable, and the quality should improve over time as uses of the internet continue to evolve.



Affordability - Cost should not be a barrier for any resident or business who wants to connect to the internet.



Choice – Adequate provider competition and diverse technologies are needed to uphold the other principles.

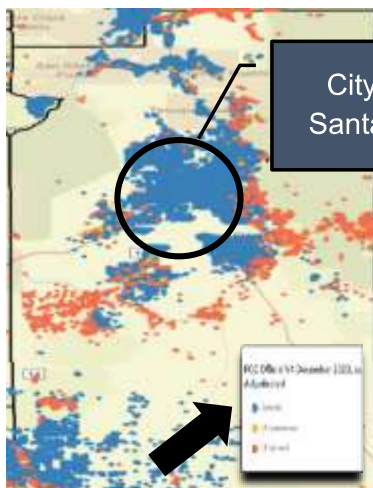
d. Goals and Objectives

Building on the City's Vision and Broadband Principles, the following are the recommended City of Santa Fe Broadband Goals and Objectives:

- **Increase Access to Broadband Service** (*Access, Affordability, Choice, Performance*)
 - Create access to secure, dependable, affordable, and sustainable forward-looking infrastructure that can meet future broadband needs, with a targeted focus on unserved, underserved, and vulnerable population areas.
- **Promote the Adoption and Use of Broadband and Improve Digital Literacy** (*Affordability, Choice, Equity*)
 - Improve the Adoption and Use and Digital Literacy skills for City residents, with a focus on unserved, underserved, and vulnerable population groups.
- **Promote Economic Development Opportunities through Broadband** (*Access, Affordability, Choice, Performance*)
 - Ensure that residents and the business community can take full advantage of the economic opportunities provided by broadband access.

e. The Challenge

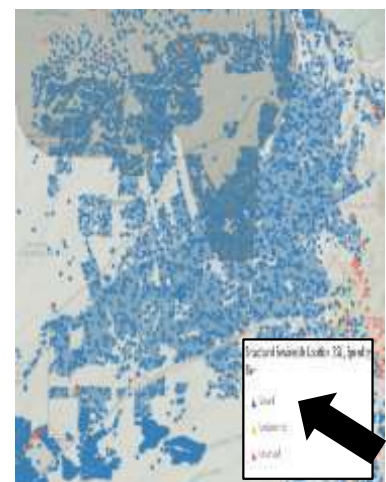
The NM Broadband Map (MAP) published by the State of New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) Broadband Map, and the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Project Area Unit Map, all indicate that the City of Santa Fe is considered **“served”** with broadband access. That is broadband access exists to a broadband service location (BSL) that meets the minimum 100/20 Mbps broadband service speed.



Map 1: NM Broadband Map



Map 2: FCC Broadband Map



Map 3: OBAE BEAD Project Area Unit Map

The maps, however, **do not indicate** whether a BSL is utilizing the broadband service that is reported to exist, or whether the broadband service is affordable. These factors pertain to a household or business' ability to subscribe to internet service and the ability to address the challenges involved in receiving broadband service including the cost of service, availability of a device capable of connecting to the internet, and level of digital literacy within the BSL.

In addition to the data sets, the BSP reviewed the Digital Divide (Divide) which is commonly referred to as the gap between those with internet access and those without. The Divide exacerbates disparities in education, health care, and economic development, as individuals/households struggle to access online resources essential for modern life.

The Divide must be assessed with factors such as access, affordability, and relevance.

- Access: Is there available access to the Internet in your area? Is there a nearby point of connection to the Internet?

To understand the broadband infrastructure landscape within the City, F5 reviewed the Federal, State, and REDINet broadband data sets identified above, consulted with internet service providers, fiber construction contractors, and local/state/federal partners.

Based upon a review of all data sets and in consultation with broadband experts, the City of Santa Fe has sufficient and varied access to broadband service.

- Affordability: If broadband service exists, is it affordable? How does the cost compare to other essential goods?

To assess this criteria, a review of the internet service providers identified in the FCC Broadband Map and their broadband service offerings and corresponding pricing options was conducted.

Xfinity (Comcast)	150 Mbps	Fiber	\$ 64.00	24 months	Modem is not included + \$15.00/month
	1200 Mbps		\$ 95.00	None	Modem is included
Verizon 5G Home Internet	10Gbps	Cellular & Fixed Wireless	\$ 35.00	24 months	after initial 24 months price increases to \$60.00 month
	10Gbps		\$ 45.00	36 months	after initial 36 months price increases to \$80.00 month
T Mobile Home Internet	10Gbps	Cellular & Fixed Wireless	\$ 50.00	24 months	Auto-pay Internet Unlimited
	10Gbps		\$ 70.00	24 months	Auto-pay Internet Plus
NM Surf	up to 100/25 Mbps	Fixed Wireless	\$ 59.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 200/50 Mbps		\$ 84.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 300/75 Mbps		\$ 94.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 400/100 Mbps		\$ 104.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
Century Link	100Mbps	Fiber	\$ 55.00	None	limited availability
	940Mbps		\$ 75.00	None	limited availability
Plateau Telecommunications	100Mbps	Fiber	\$ 60.00	None	None
	500Mbps		\$ 70.00	None	None
	1000Mbps		\$ 80.00	None	None
	10/1.3Mbps		\$ 40.00	None	DSL
	25/1.3Mbps		\$ 55.00	None	DSL
Ezee Fiber	1G symmetrical	Fiber	\$ 69.00	None	life-time pricing
	2G symmetrical		\$ 89.00	None	life-time pricing
	5G symmetrical		\$ 99.00	None	life-time pricing
	8G symmetrical		\$ 119.00	None	life-time pricing
Vexus Fiber	5G symmetrical	Fiber	\$ 99.00	None	
HughesNet	100Gbps/50Mbps	Satellite	\$ 49.99	None	Price Lock Guarantee
Starlink	45-140Mbps/10-20Mbps	Satellite	\$ 80.00	None	Residential Lite
ViaSat	56/5Mbps	Satellite	\$ 120.00	None	Residential
Resound Networks	unknown	Fiber	-	-	\$15.00 month equipment lease pricing or service data not available "coming soon"

Table 1: Price and Service Data taken from provider information and during interviews and consultations.

The price service data indicates that there are internet service providers within the City of Santa Fe that can provide both the minimum service speeds and meet the price points established by the BEAD program.

Although there are internet service providers that meet both the minimum broadband service speeds and broadband service price points required by the OBAE – BEAD program, considering the other factors listed above, it can be determined that a leading barrier to accessing broadband service in the City of Sante is affordability of broadband service.

- **Relevance:** Does the connected community have the necessary skills and technologies? Is there local interest and understanding of the relevance of Internet access? Is there content in the local language relevant to the people in the community?

General Digital Skills include:

- Using devices like a computer, tablet, or mobile phone for simple, personal, and work tasks.
- Finding and using information on the internet.
- Understanding how to be safe and responsible online.
- Communicating socially and professionally using email, messaging, and social media.

Although the City has had success with its TechConnect and Community Wi-Fi Accessibility programs, without a central point of outreach for the community, the level of skills and technology needs is unknown.

f. Alternatives to Building a Local / City of Santa Fe Broadband Network

As part of the planning process, the alternative of the City of Santa Fe building a local network was reviewed. A City owned broadband network could help fill gaps in the broadband market by providing affordable broadband service to low-income and vulnerable population groups.

Constructing a broadband network offers potential advantages such as cost savings, greater bandwidth, scalability, and enhanced security. However, deployment may involve significant expenses, ongoing management requirements, and vulnerability to physical damage.

In addition to the high costs required to develop, manage, and operate a broadband network, other reasons to consider include:

- **Technical Complexity:** Governments may not always have the necessary expertise to manage and maintain complex broadband networks.
- **Infrastructure Focus:** Governments typically manage infrastructure such as roads, water, and sewer systems, rather than operating broadband networks.
- **Market Efficiency:** Private broadband networks tend to be more efficient and responsive to market needs, resulting in higher service quality.
- **Resource Allocation:** Investing in broadband networks may limit funding for other key public services.

In lieu of developing a City of Santa Fe Broadband Network, it is recommended that the City undertake the following broadband alternatives:

- Expand the City's community-based Wi-Fi Accessibility Program.
- Establish a Broadband Utility Service development requirement for residential and commercial projects.
- Establish a City of Santa Fe Office of Broadband.

g. Implementation

As funding is available, the City can initiate the following projects which address the City's vision and broadband principles, alternatives and the goals and objectives:

- **Increase Access to Broadband Service**
 - Create access to secure, reliable, affordable, and sustainable forward-looking infrastructure that can meet future broadband needs.
 - **Project 1 - Expand the deployment of Wi-Fi accessible locations at City facilities, mobile home parks, low-income and vulnerable population areas/locations, including areas designated for development of the City's Pallet Villages.**
 - **Project 2 – Increase the number of mobile hotspots and laptop devices available for use by residents.**

The City has been providing Wi-Fi access via laptops and hotspots to community members through its **TechConnect Program** (Program) at no charge at its Libraries, and while the program has been successful, increasing the number of available Wi-Fi devices will provide a greater degree of Wi-Fi of affordable Wi-Fi accessibility.

- **Project 3 – Develop and deploy a Free Wi Fi Messaging/Communication Program.**

While the City has been successful with the initial deployment of Projects 1 and 2, to increase the knowledge of the locations and device availability, the City should develop a Messaging and Communication Program (Program) for City residents.

The Program should be implemented in accordance with the City's Communication Policy and Procedures. Programs outreach. It is also important that the Program be provided in both English and Spanish.

- **Project 4 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

- **Promote the Adoption and Use of Broadband and Improve Digital Literacy**

- Improve the Adoption and Use of Broadband service for City residents including unserved, underserved, and vulnerable populations groups.

- **Project 1 – Develop a Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Pilot Program.**

- **Project 2 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

- **Promote Economic Development Opportunities through Broadband**

- Ensure that residents and the business community can take full advantage of the economic opportunities presented by broadband access.

- **Project 1 – Deploy laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots at City Business Center locations.**

- **Project 2 – Deploy Wi-Fi boosters/extenders in commercial nodes.**

- Project 3 – **Develop and deploy a Messaging/Communication program.**
- Project 4 - **Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

h. The Impact

Expanded access to high-speed broadband is linked to shifts in property values, job and population growth, and unemployment rates. It also improves access to remote healthcare, social networks, and educational resources. Broadband access boosts economic growth, productivity, and job creation by providing more opportunities for development.

By achieving its Vision and Broadband Goals, the City can greatly impact daily life.

i. Review and Revision Frequency

- a. Quarterly Reviews: The City is encouraged to review their strategic plan at least quarterly. This allows for real-time evaluation of progress, learning, and necessary adjustments based on current conditions.
- b. Annual Revisions: It is common for organizations to revise their strategic plans annually. This ensures that the plan remains relevant and aligned with the organization's goals and the external environment.
- c. Comprehensive Updates: A more thorough revision of the strategic plan should occur every 3-5 years or when significant changes happen, such as shifts in market conditions, organizational restructuring, or changes in leadership.

II. Scope the Challenge (Phase 1)

a. Introduction

Broadband access is significant and necessary to daily life as it:

- Provides access to jobs, education, health care, entertainment, and civic engagement.
- Brings economic growth and improves essential services in communities.
- Facilitates job creation, reduces healthcare costs, decreases fossil fuel usage, expands consumer choice, and improves competition.

As technology and delivery methods have evolved, broadband has progressed from Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) to Satellite service. Today Internet Service Providers (ISPs) offer both wired, wireless, and satellite connections, which can impact the reliability, access, and affordability of broadband service.

- **DSL** – most common type of broadband internet, delivers service via the phone lines in a home or business.



- **Cable Modem** – broadband connection that uses the same cables as your cable TV service.



- **Fiber Optic** – cables that are made of glass or plastic that can transmit data at speeds up to 100 times faster than traditional broadband connections. *The best option for delivery, but least available.*



- **Wireless** – uses radio signals to transmit data and provides the convenience of a broadband connection without the need for wires and cables.



- **Satellite** – uses satellites to deliver broadband service and makes it readily available in rural areas



Although significant in daily life, the lack of broadband access, known as the **Digital Divide** (Divide), refers to the gap caused by unequal broadband access. Factors contributing to the Divide include income disparities, geographical differences, digital literacy gaps, racial divides, elderly divides, and ruralness of communities. The Divide is worsened by the issues of availability, reliability, and affordability of accessing and utilizing broadband.

To address the Divide as it relates to income disparities within the City, the City utilized American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to:

Build and manage public WiFi infrastructure in economically distressed, high-density southside and midtown communities who will need support to cross the digital divide. This project is a key element for bridging the digital divide for many students, adults and families who are still struggling through the ongoing negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

with the objectives of:

Installation and launch in eight, southside mobile home parks by end of year 2023. Installation and launch in three midtown high-density housing locations by end of year 2024

b. Connectivity Challenges

Despite its undeniable importance, several challenges impede the expansion, service, access, and connectivity of broadband. In general, these challenges include:

- Broadband Infrastructure – lack sufficient broadband infrastructure due to geographic region or physical barriers.
- Cost Barriers – high, initial cost investment that is required to develop infrastructure which are eventually passed on to the consumer/end use.
- Digital Divide - the gap between those with broadband access and those without it.
- Regulatory – the regulatory framework that may significantly influence broadband investment and competition in a community.

c. Understand the Broadband Infrastructure Landscape

i. Broadband Infrastructure

To assess the existing broadband infrastructure within the City, and to evaluate connectivity challenges, information contained in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) - National Broadband Map (MAP) and the state of New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) New Mexico Broadband Map (NM-MAP), the State of New Mexico BEAD Project Area Units Map, the City of Santa Fe - Santa Fe Public Schools Wi Fi Initiatives Map, the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey and the REDINet Network was reviewed.

To use the data effectively, we need to understand the broadband designations of "broadband service location," "reliable broadband service," "served," "underserved," and "unserved." These terms are crucial for identifying broadband service areas and planning future initiatives.

The National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) has provided, and OBAE has accepted, the following definitions:

- Broadband Service Location (BSL): Defined as a business or residential location at which mass-market fixed broadband Internet access service is or can be installed.
- Reliable Broadband Service: Defined as a BSL that has (a) fiber-optic technology; (b) Cable Modem/ Hybrid fiber-coaxial technology; (c) digital subscriber line (DSL) technology; or (d) terrestrial fixed wireless technology utilizing entirely licensed spectrum or using a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum that meets minimum broadband speeds.
- Served: Under the BEAD Program, any BSL that has access to broadband speeds of 100/20 and meets the definition of Reliable Broadband Service is considered served. For community anchor institutions (CAI), the minimum broadband service required to be served is 1GB symmetrical.
- Underserved: An underserved location is defined as a BSL that is (a) not an unserved location, and (b) that the Broadband DATA Maps show as lacking access to reliable broadband service offered with: (i) a speed of not less than 100 Mbps for downloads; and (ii) a speed of not less than 20 Mbps for uploads; and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
- Unserved: An unserved location is defined as a BSL that the Broadband DATA Maps show as (a) having no access to broadband service, or (b) lacking access to Reliable Broadband Service offered with: (i) a speed of not less than 25 Mbps for downloads; and (ii) a speed of not less than 3 Mbps for uploads; and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.

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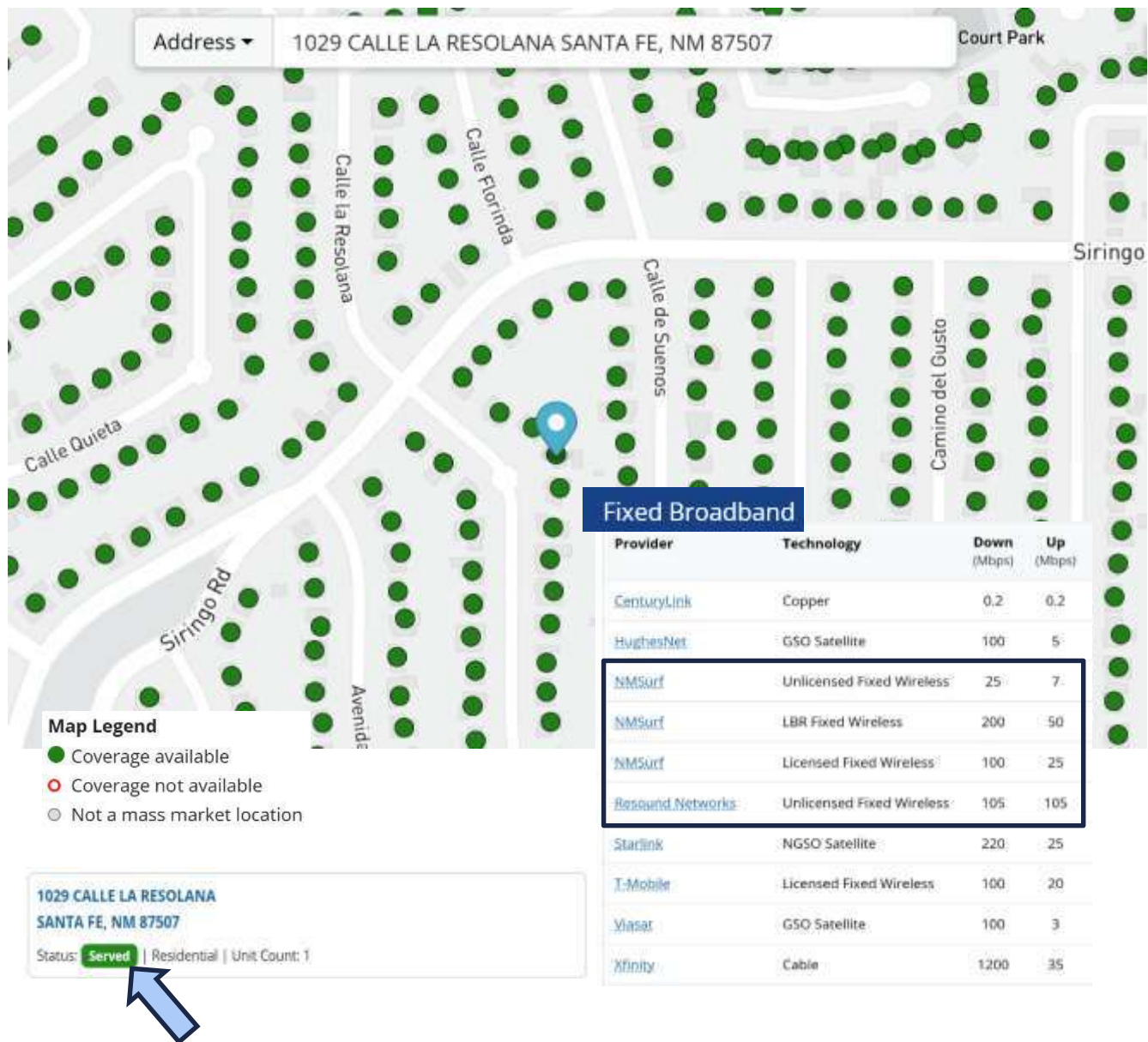
1. Federal Communication Commission Broadband Map

Developed as part of a combined effort of the FCC and NTIA, the City has between **80-100%** units ***served*** with either fixed, fixed wireless, or a combination of broadband service.



Courtesy of the Federal Communication Commission

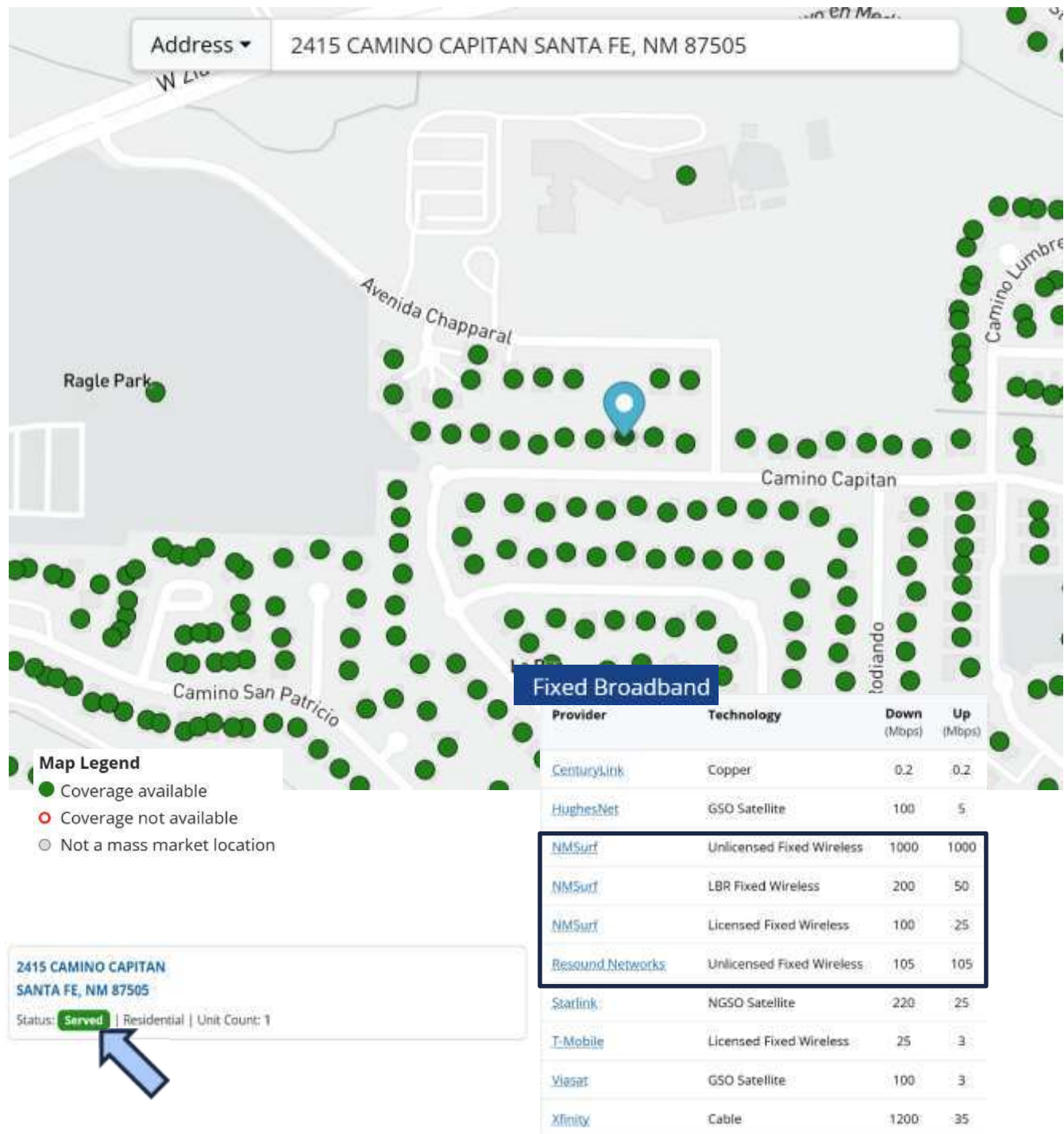
Drilling the data further, a sampling of the FCC Broadband Map in various areas within the City was conducted to determine what the broadband infrastructure landscape and related data sets indicate, and the following excerpts are provided:



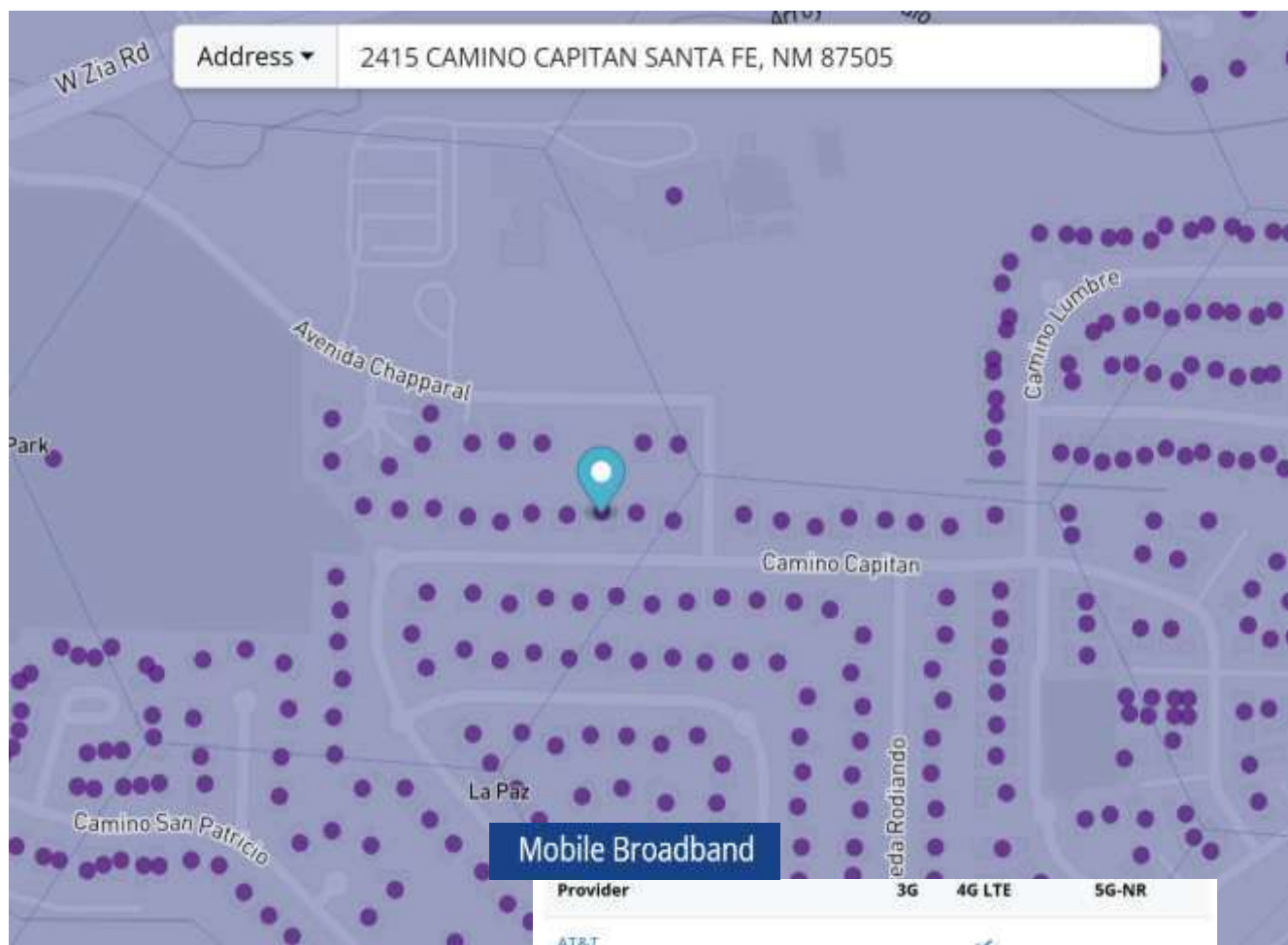
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 1029 Calle La Resolana and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered **served**.



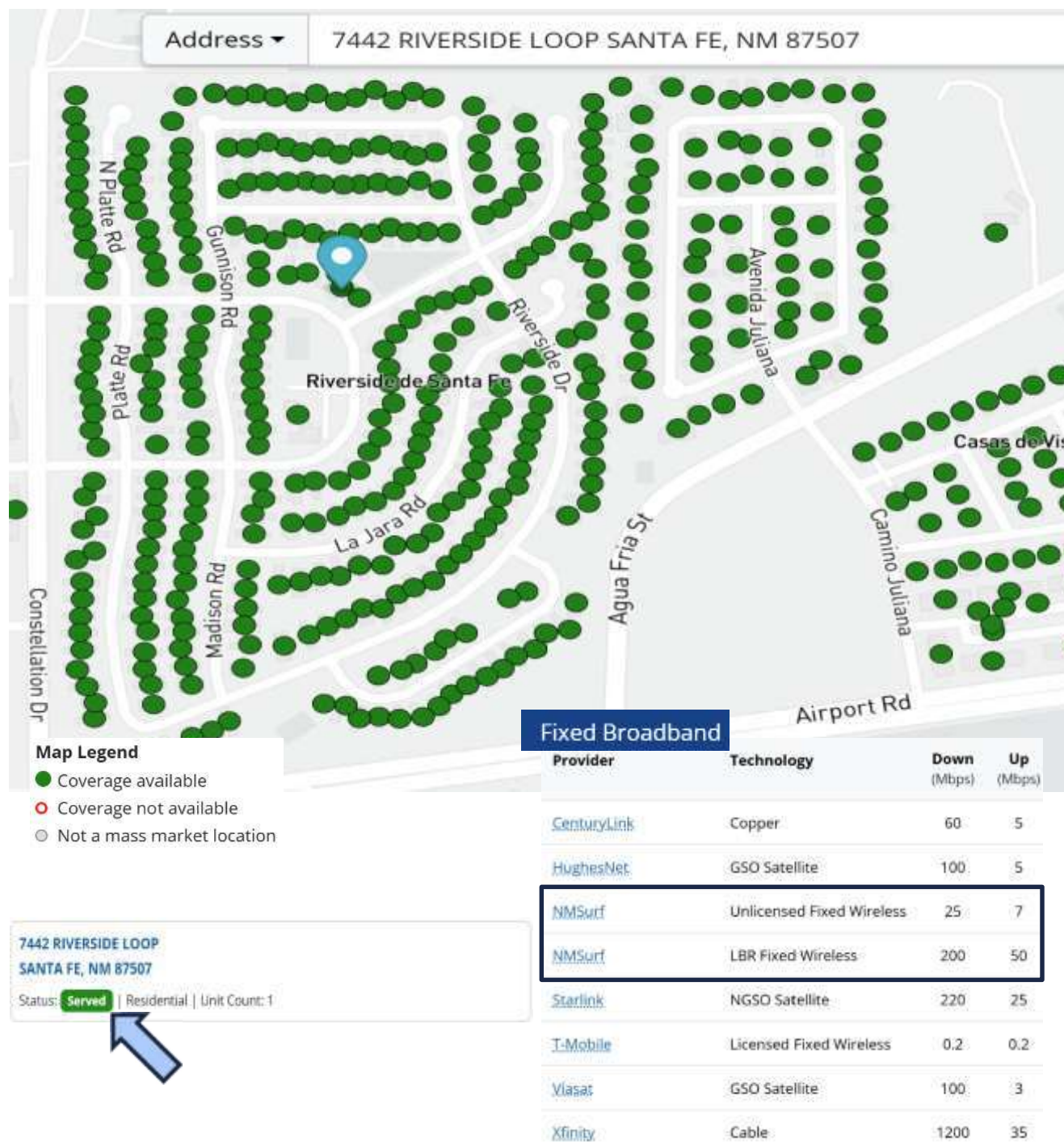
FCC National Broadband Map



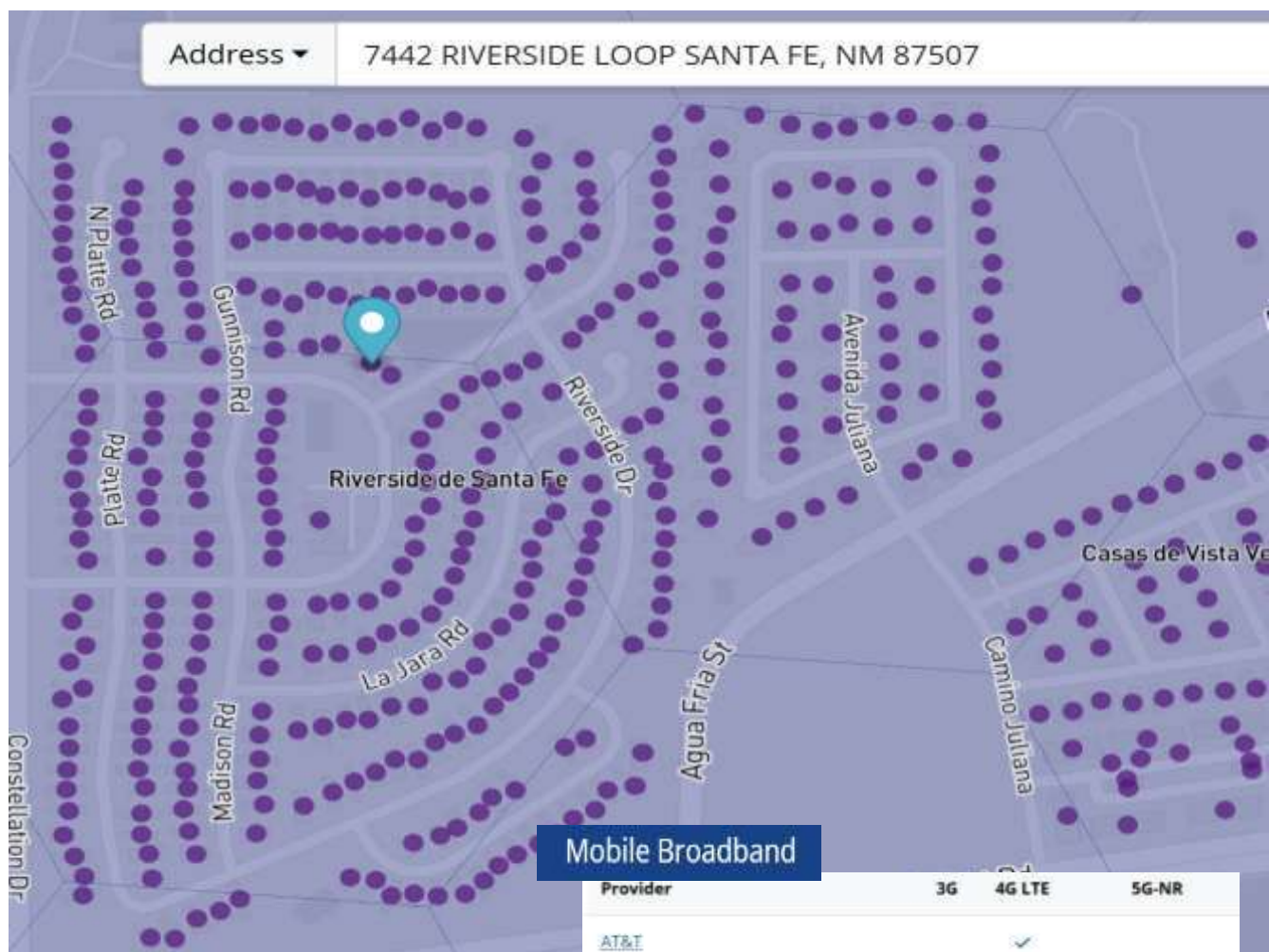
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 2415 Camino Capitan, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



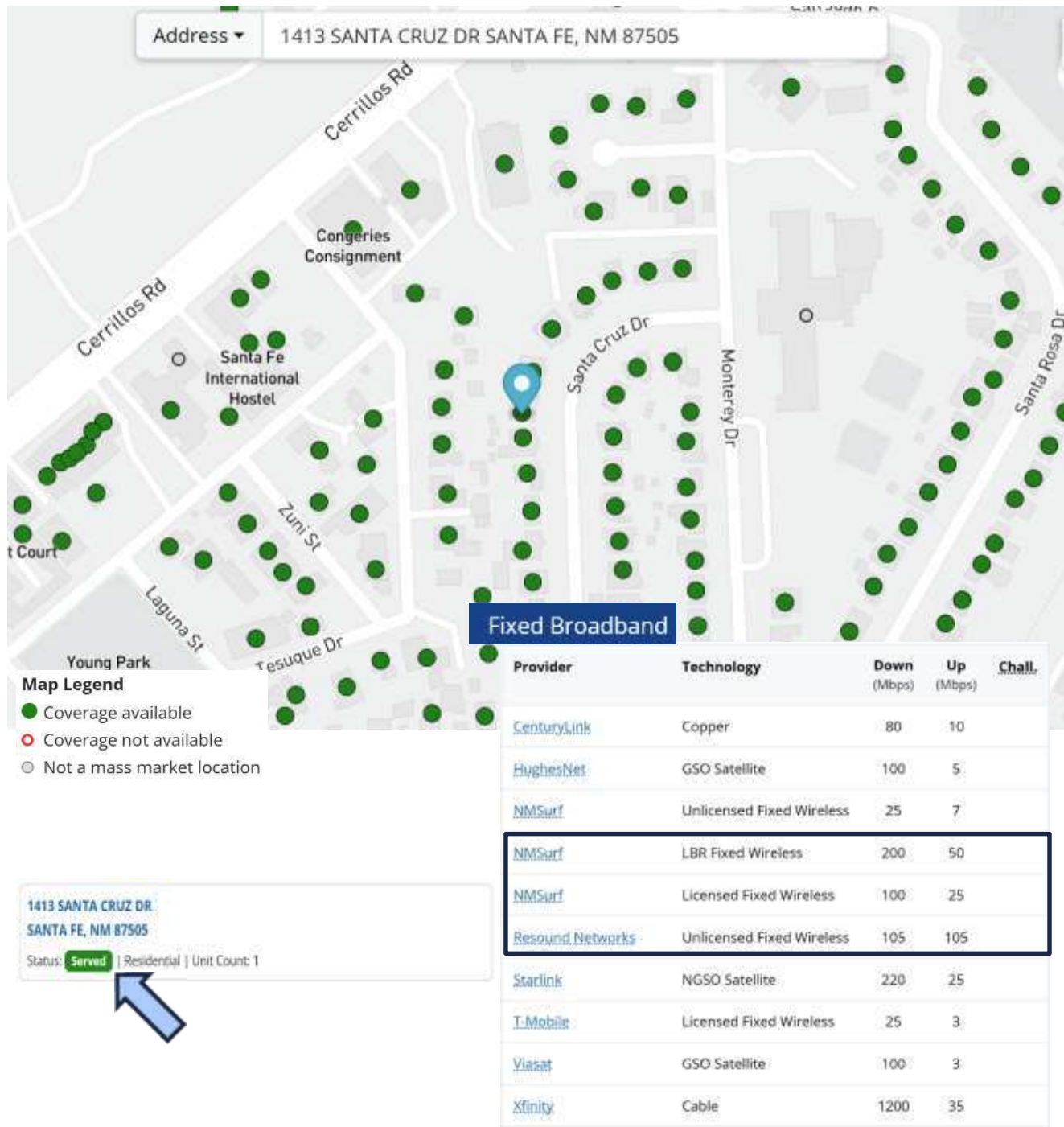
FCC National Broadband Map



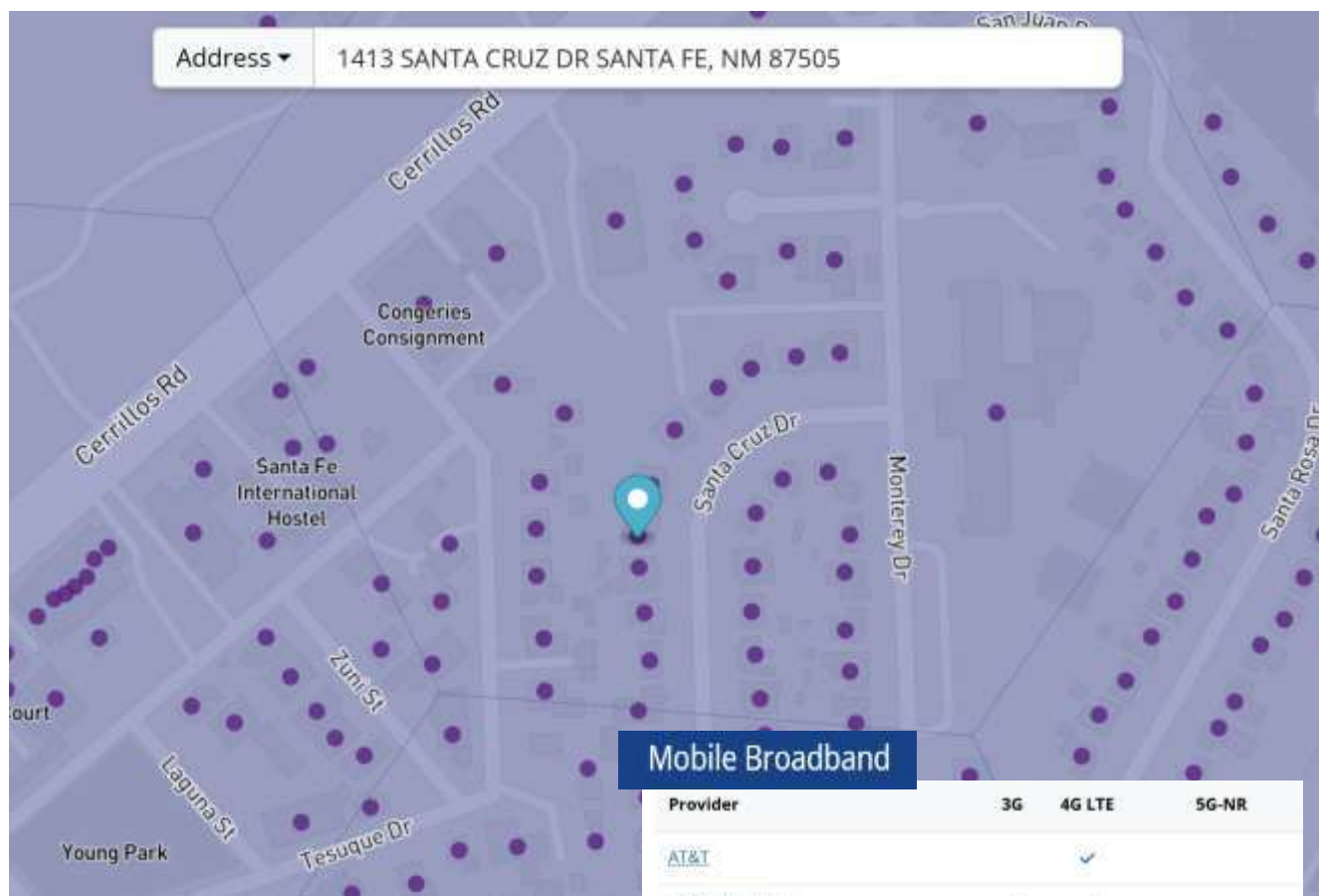
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 7442 Riverside Loop, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



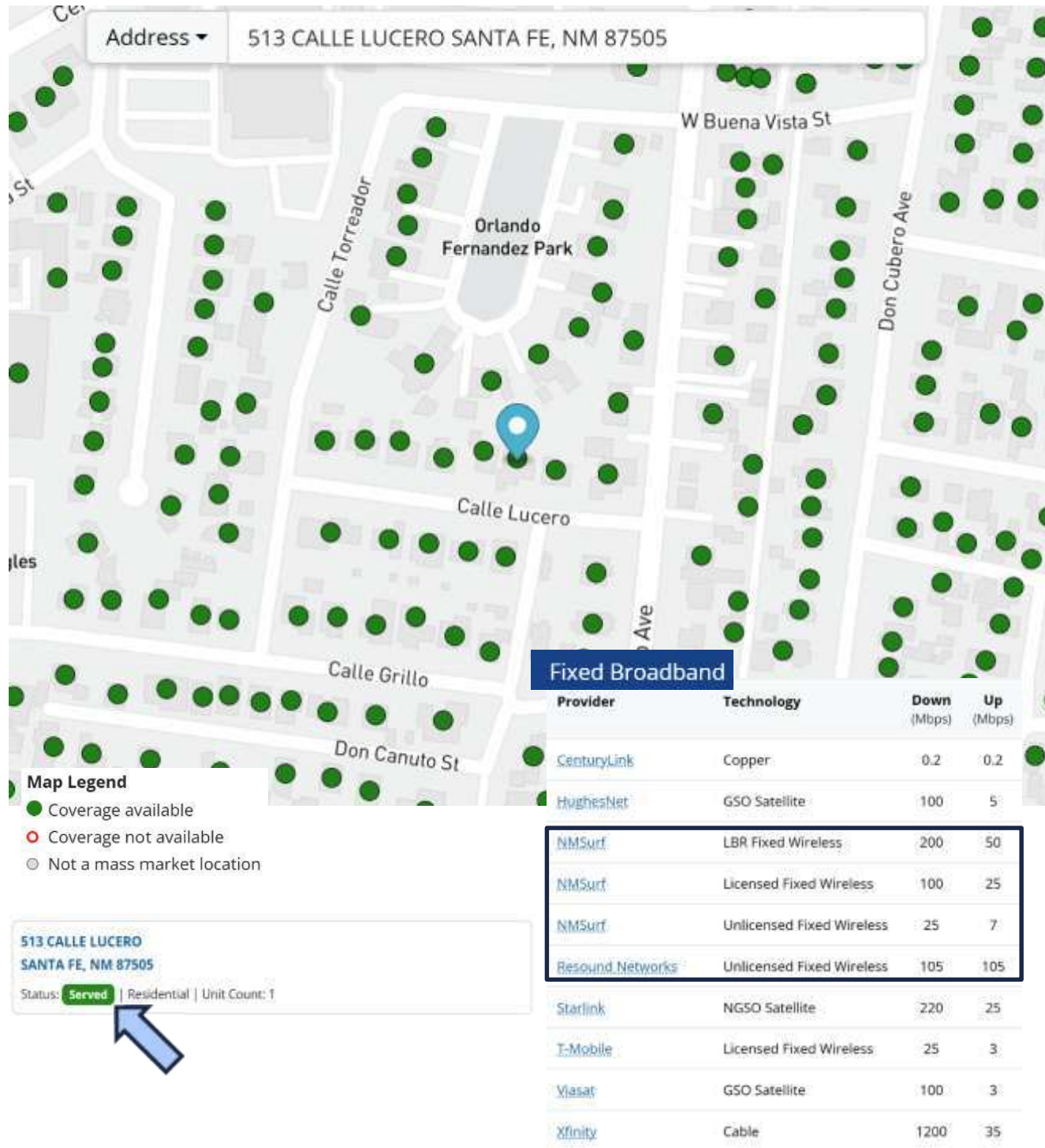
FCC National Broadband Map



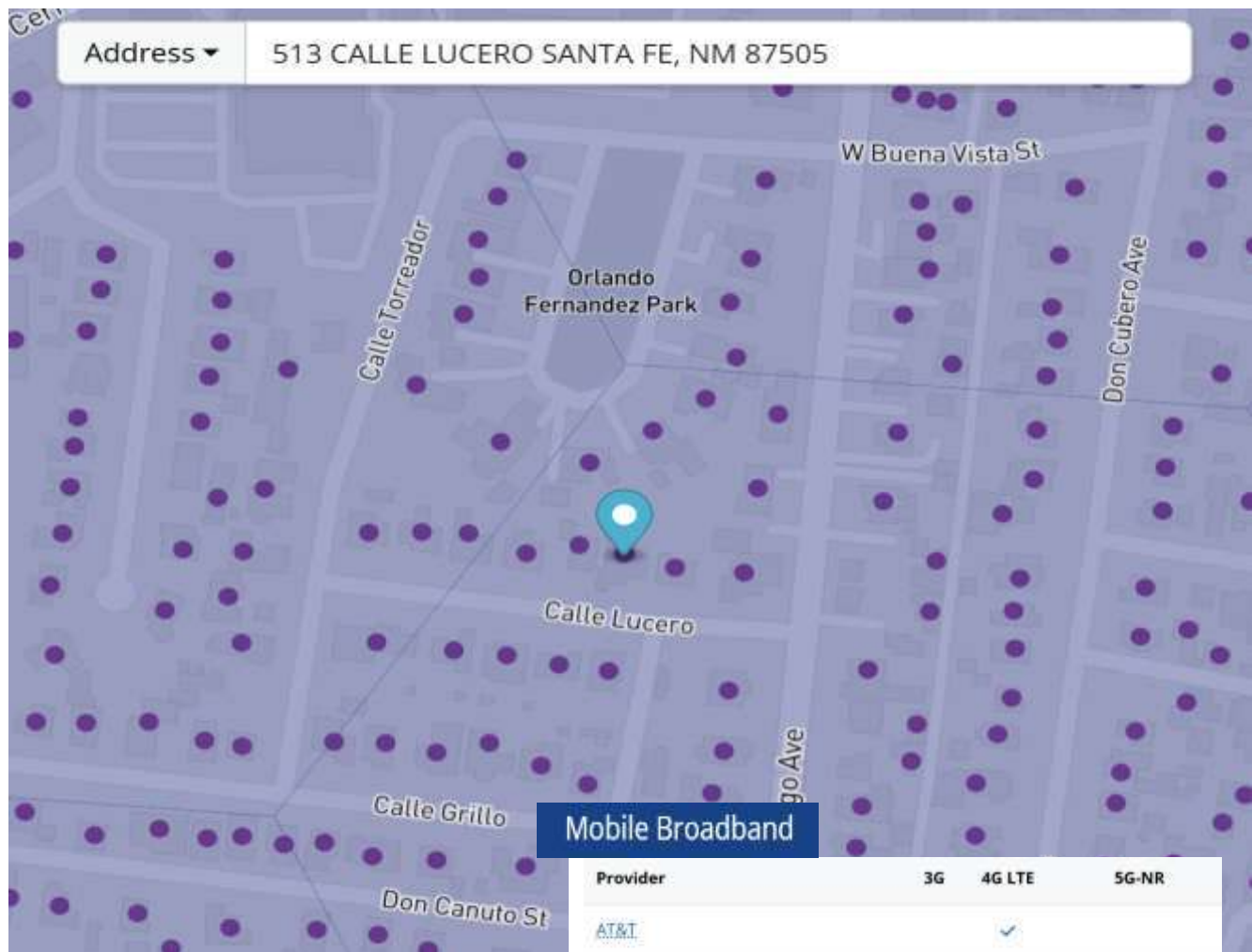
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 1413 Santa Cruz Drive, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



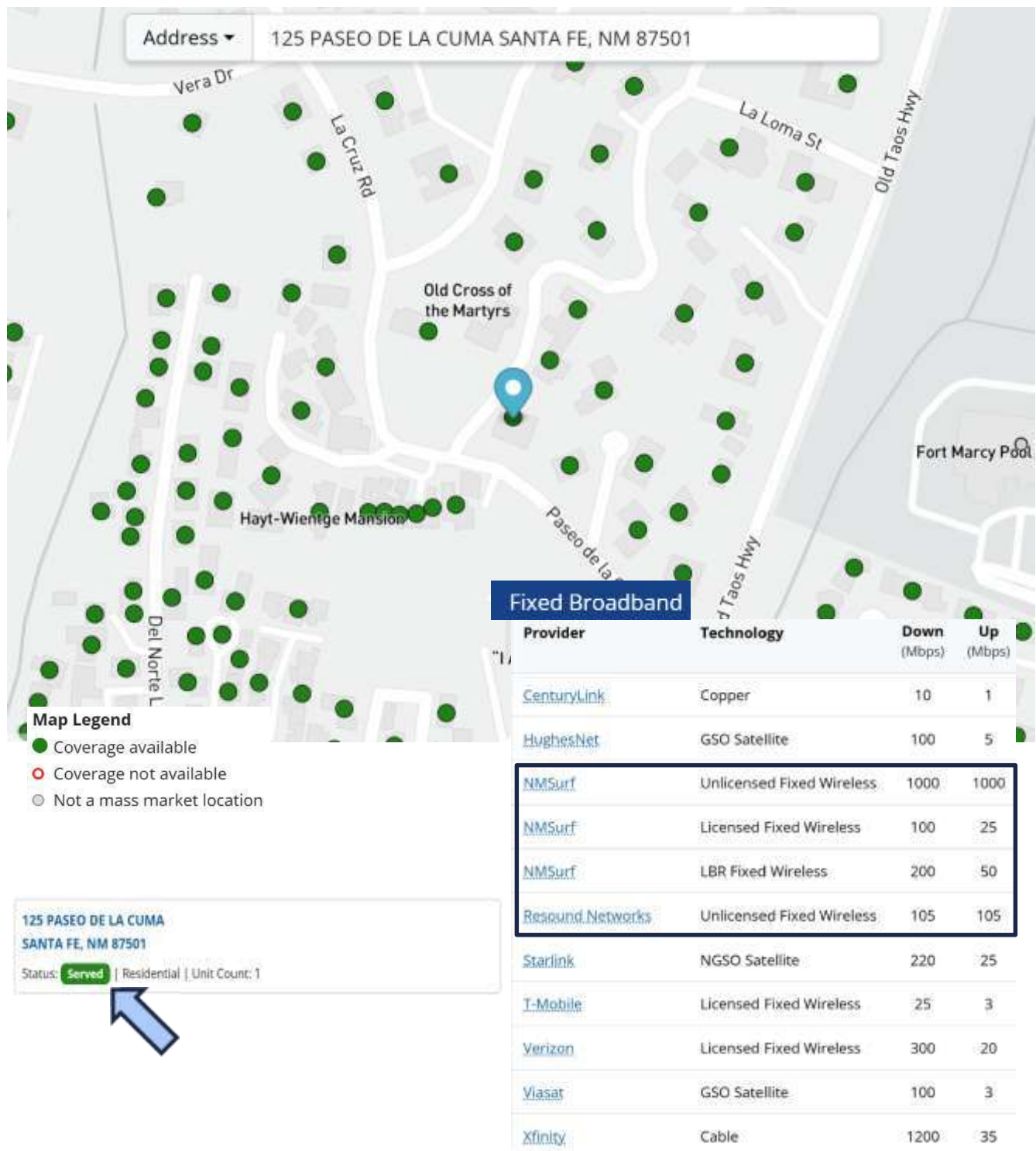
FCC National Broadband Map



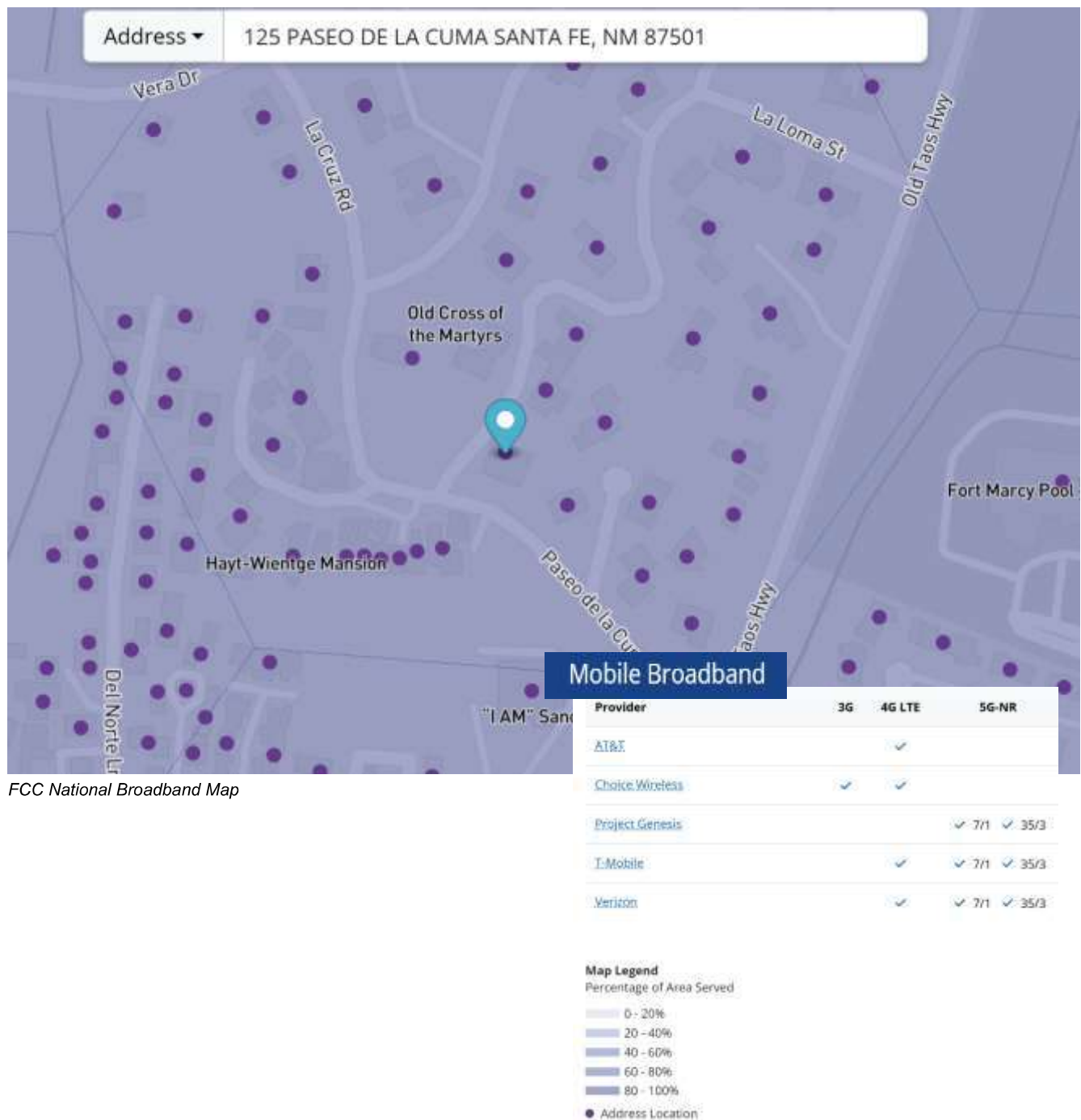
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 513 Calle Lucero, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



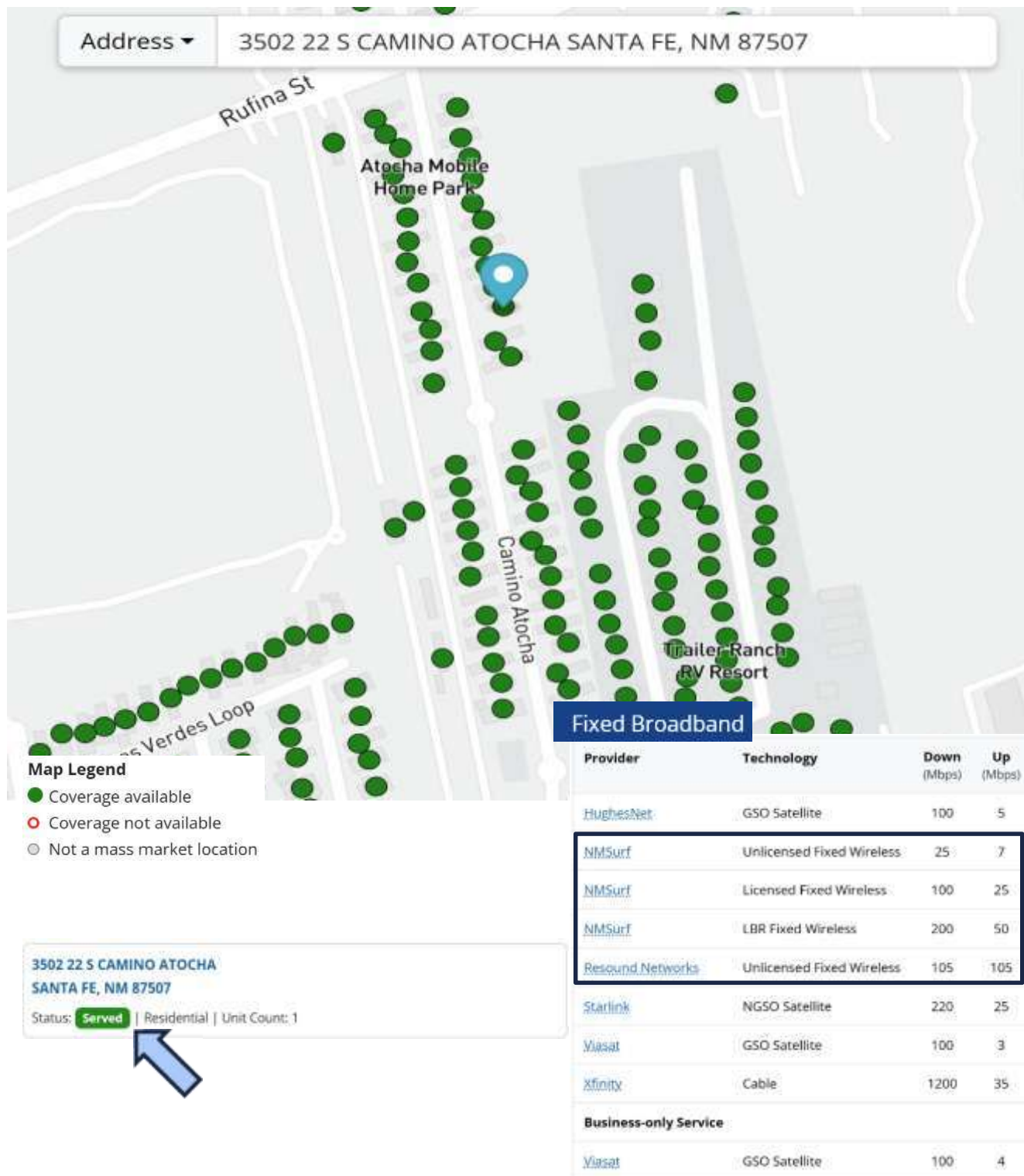
FCC National Broadband Map



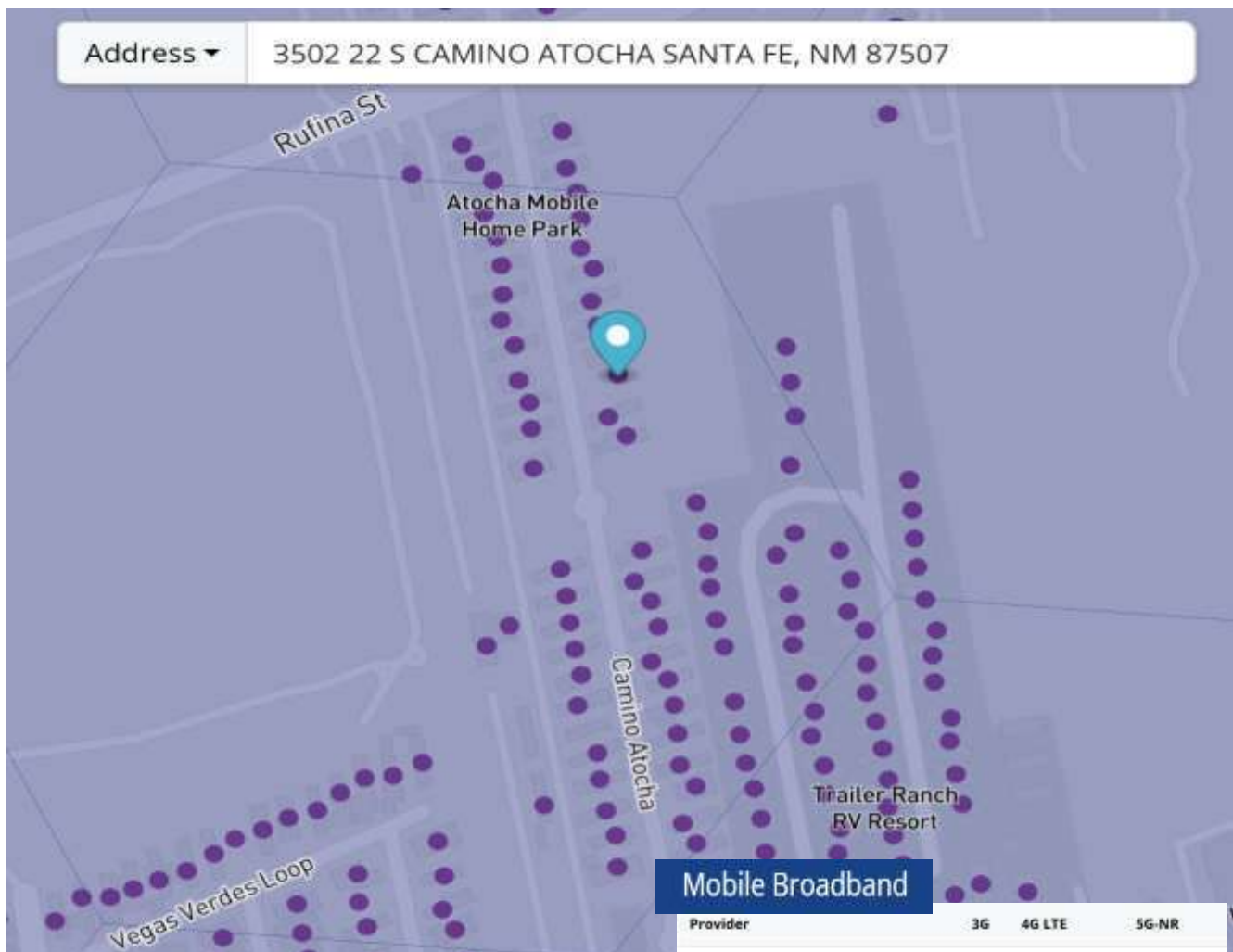
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 125 Paseo de la Cuma, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



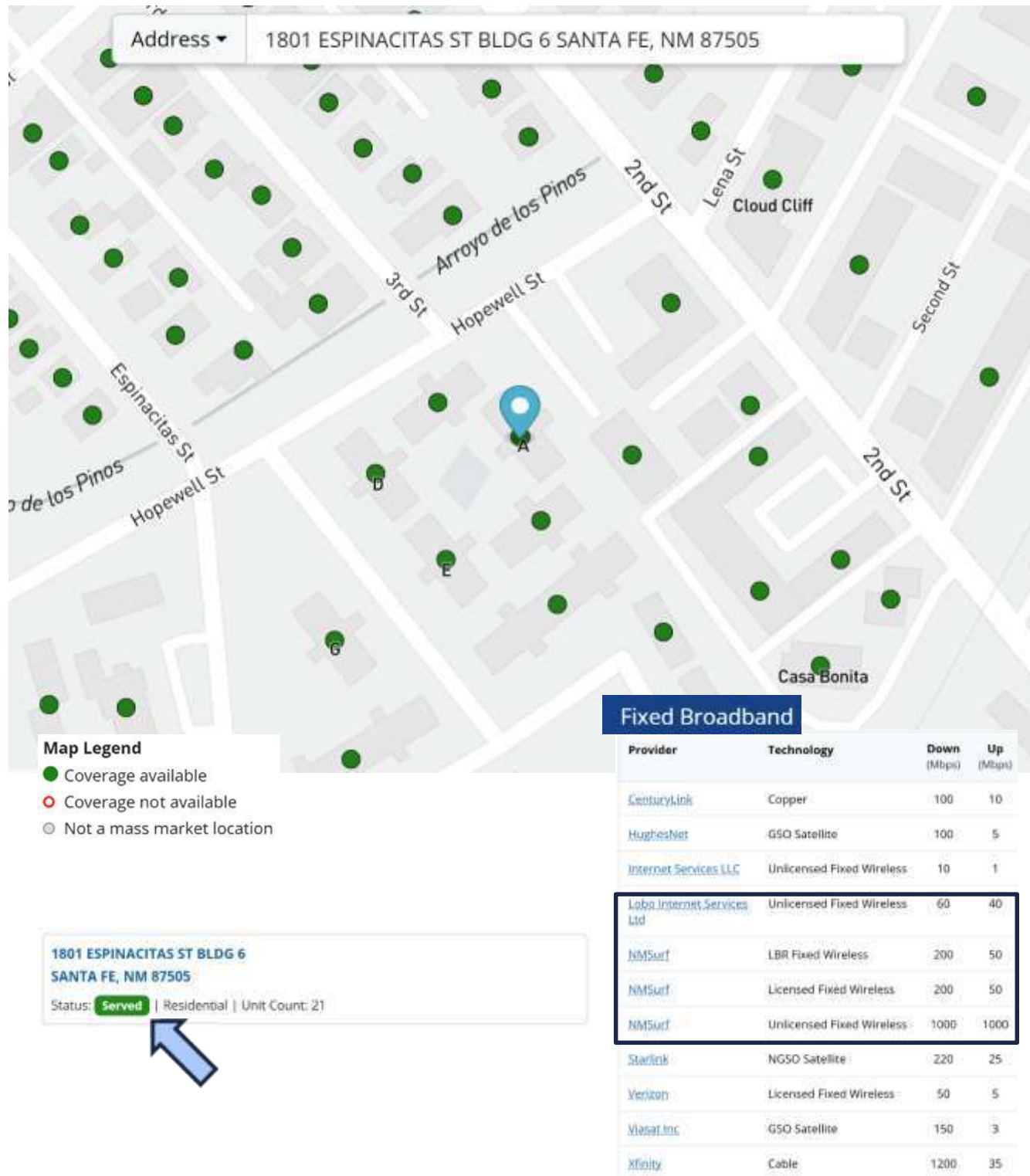
FCC National Broadband Map



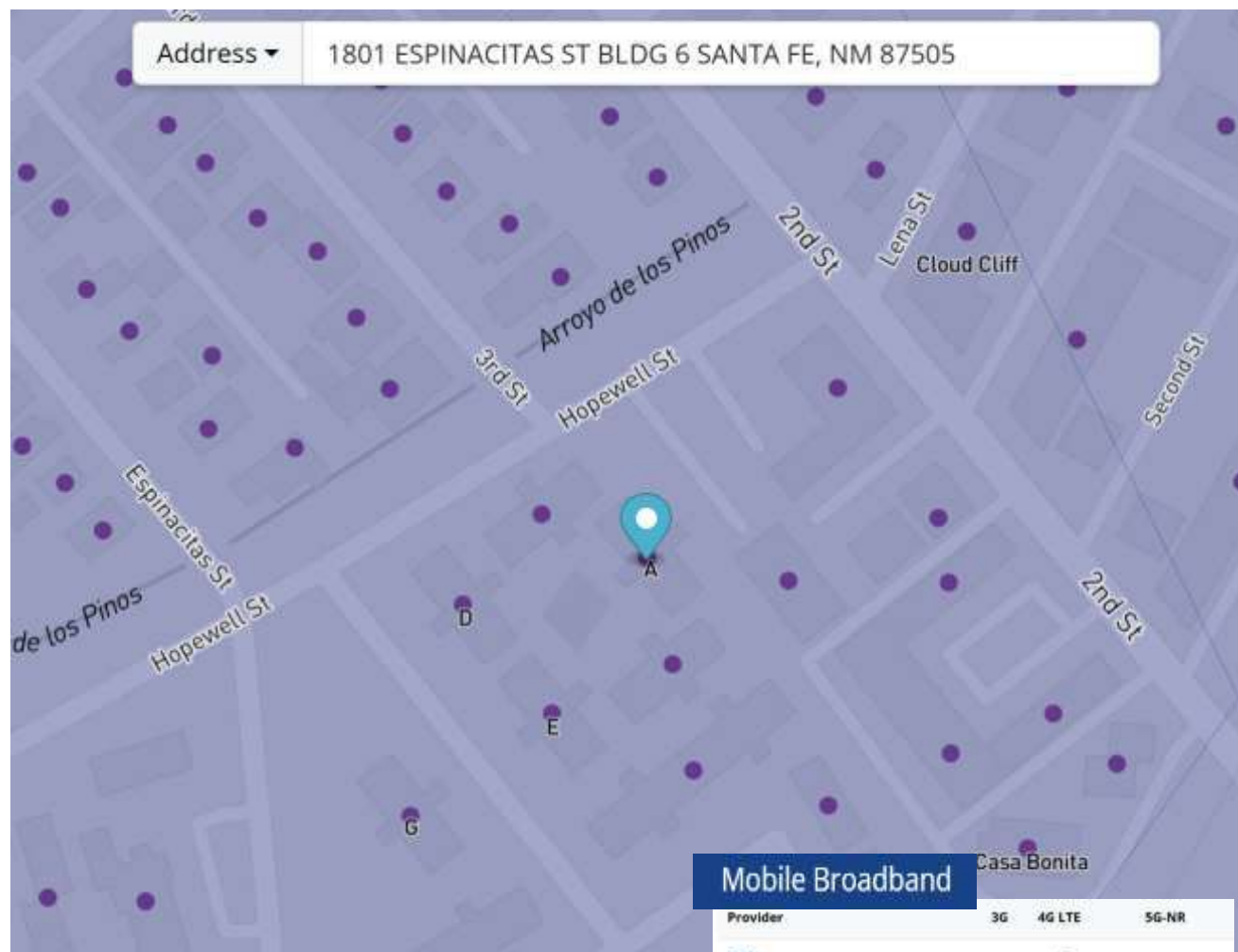
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 3502 – 22 South Camino Atocha, those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



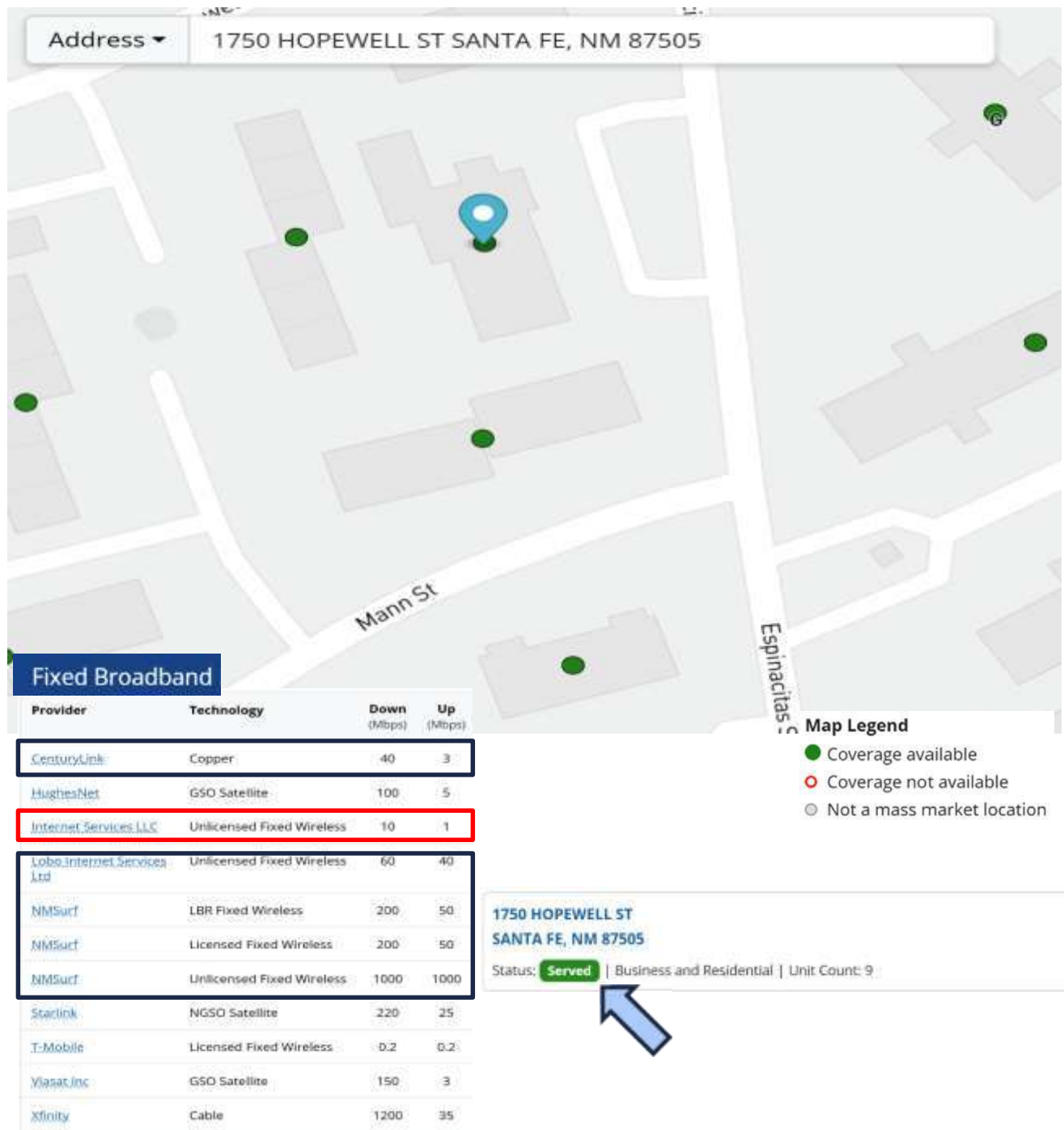
FCC National Broadband Map



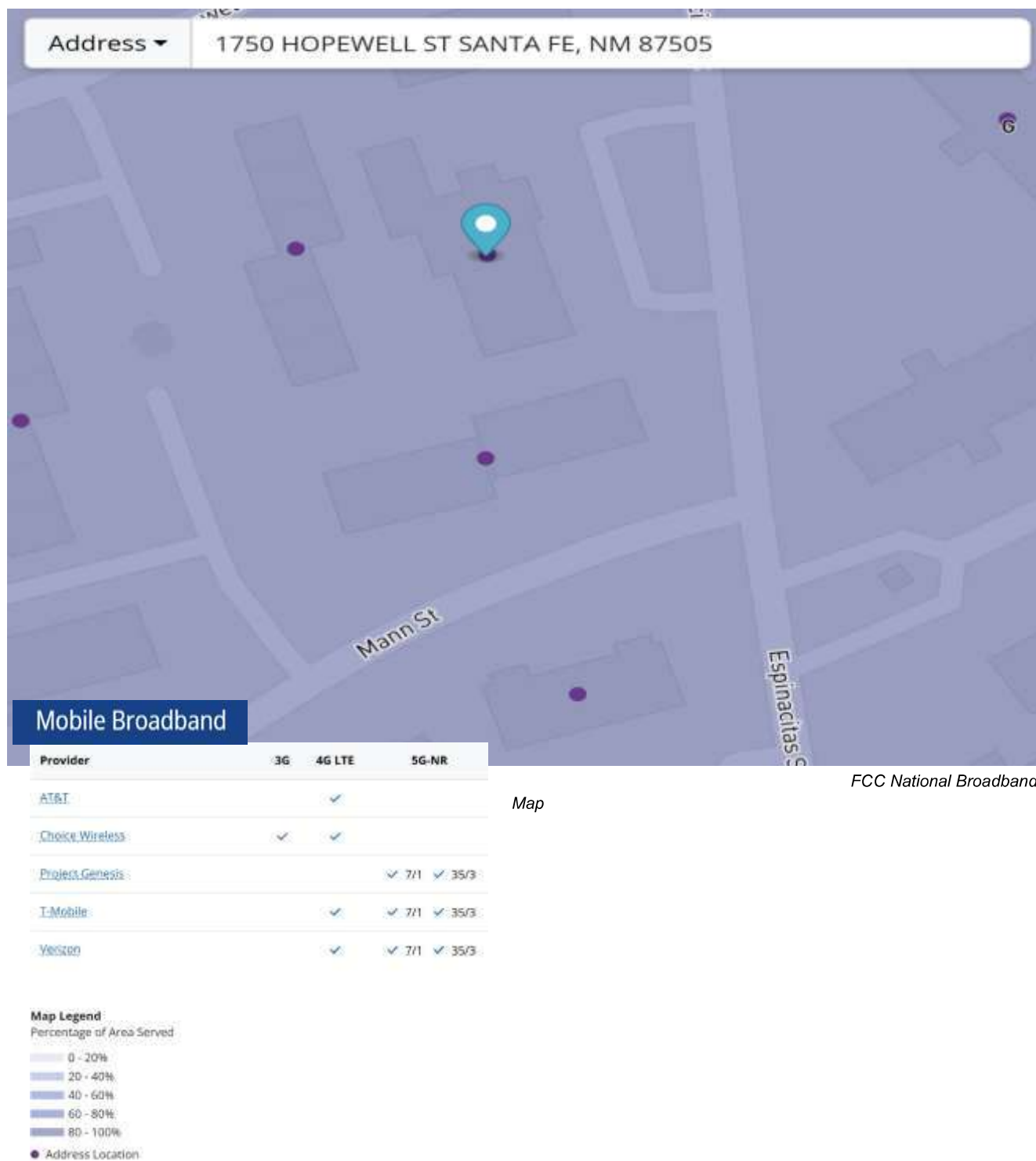
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 1801 Espinacitas St. Building 6 and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.

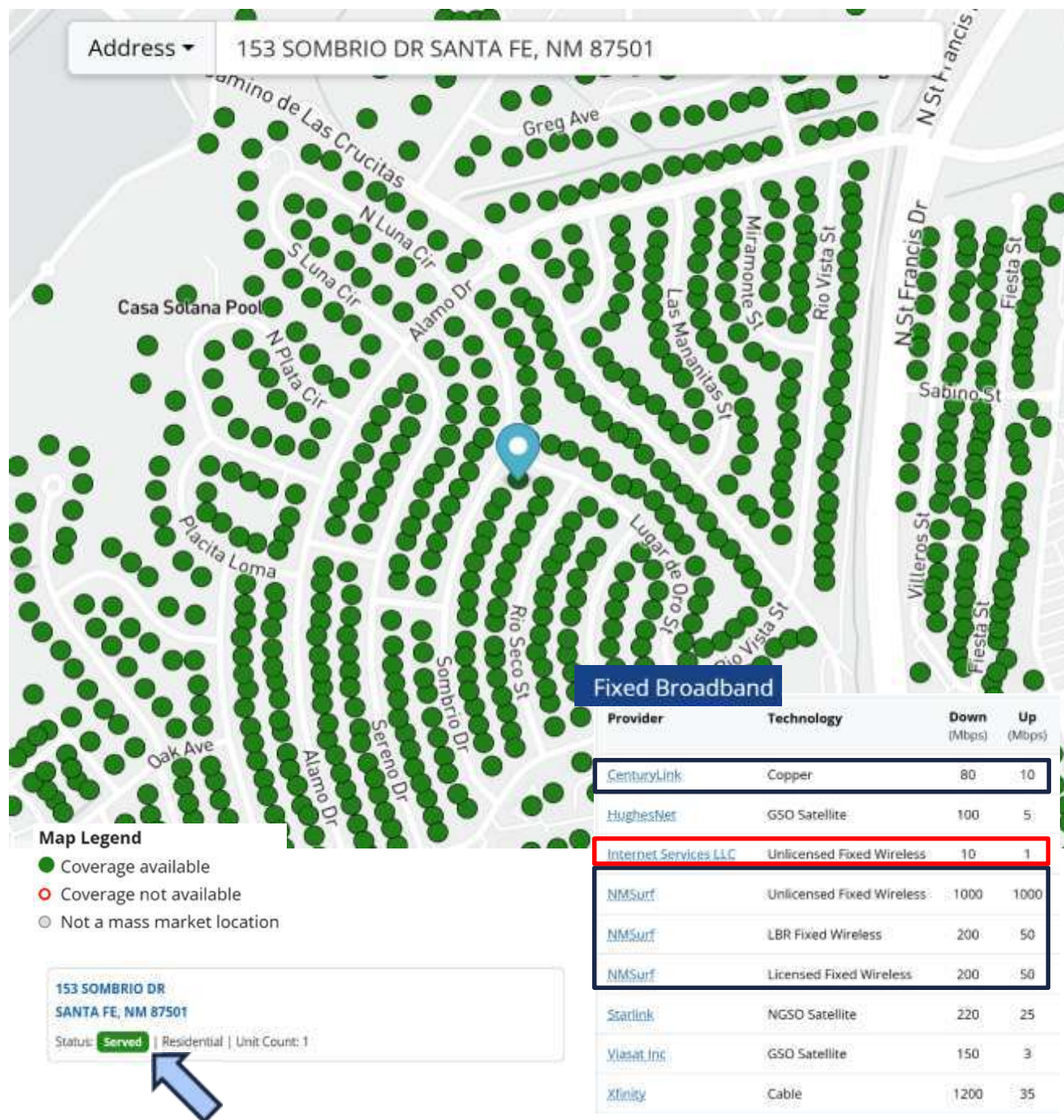


FCC National Broadband Map

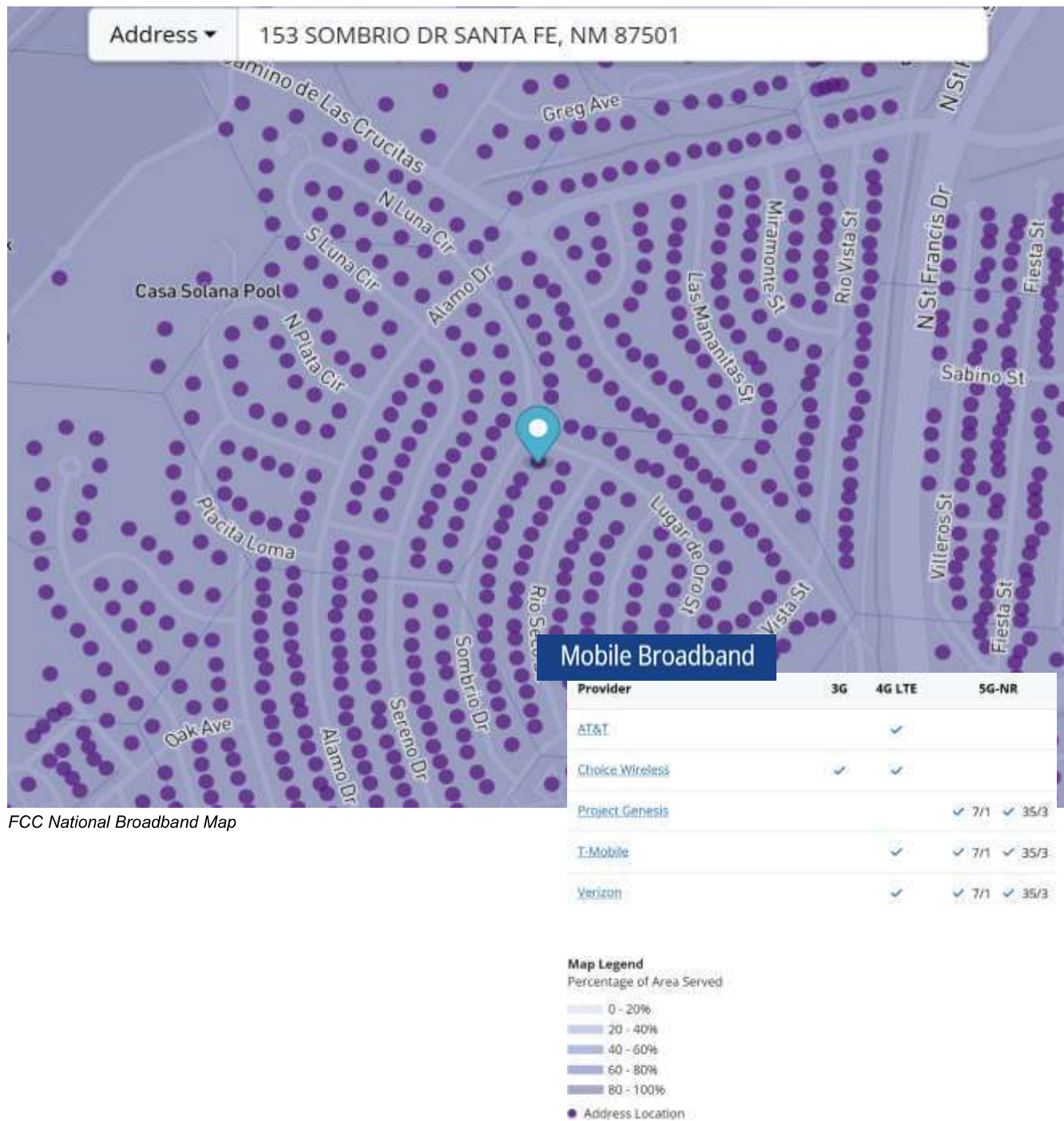


Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 1750 Hopewell Street, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.

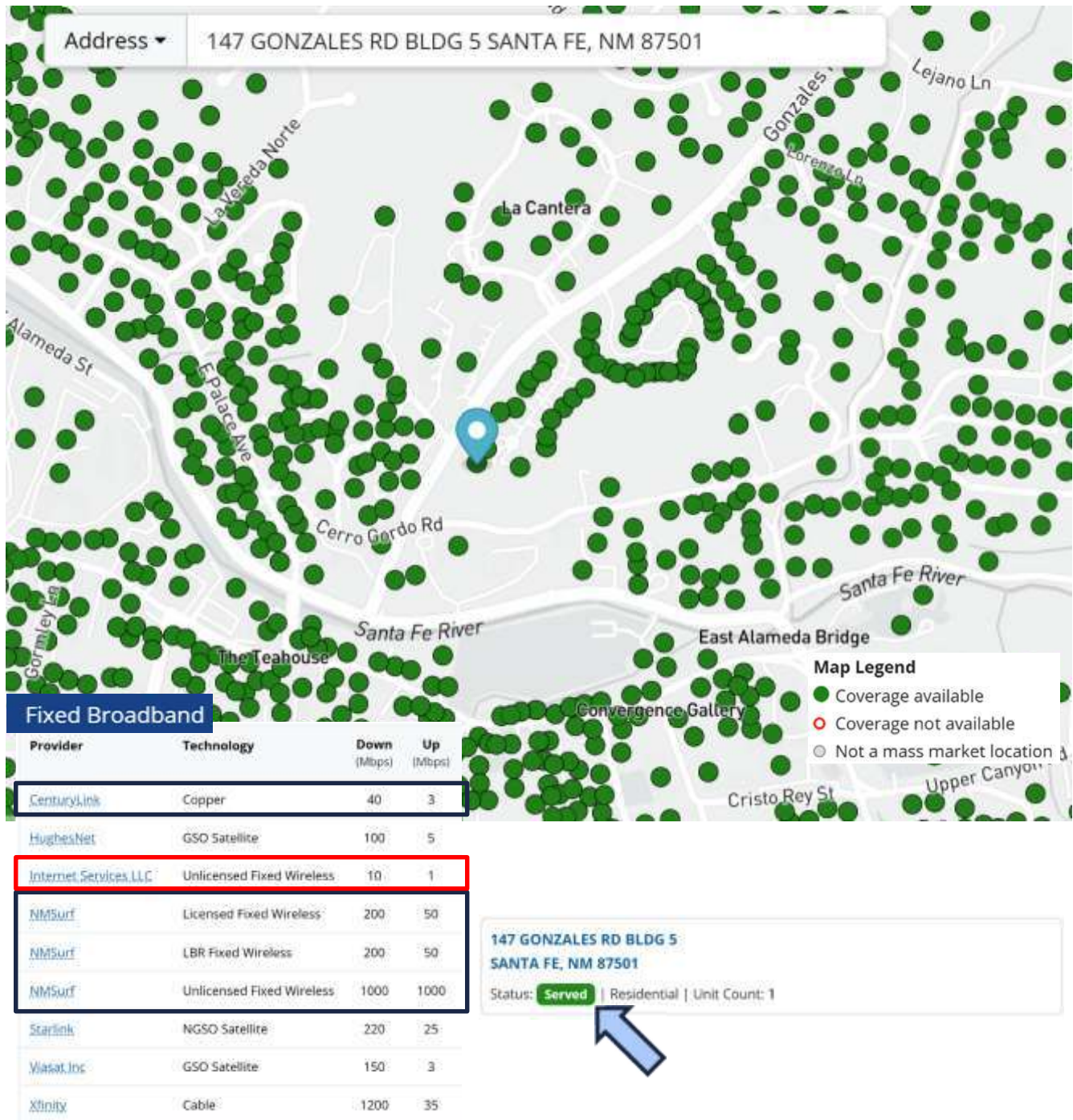




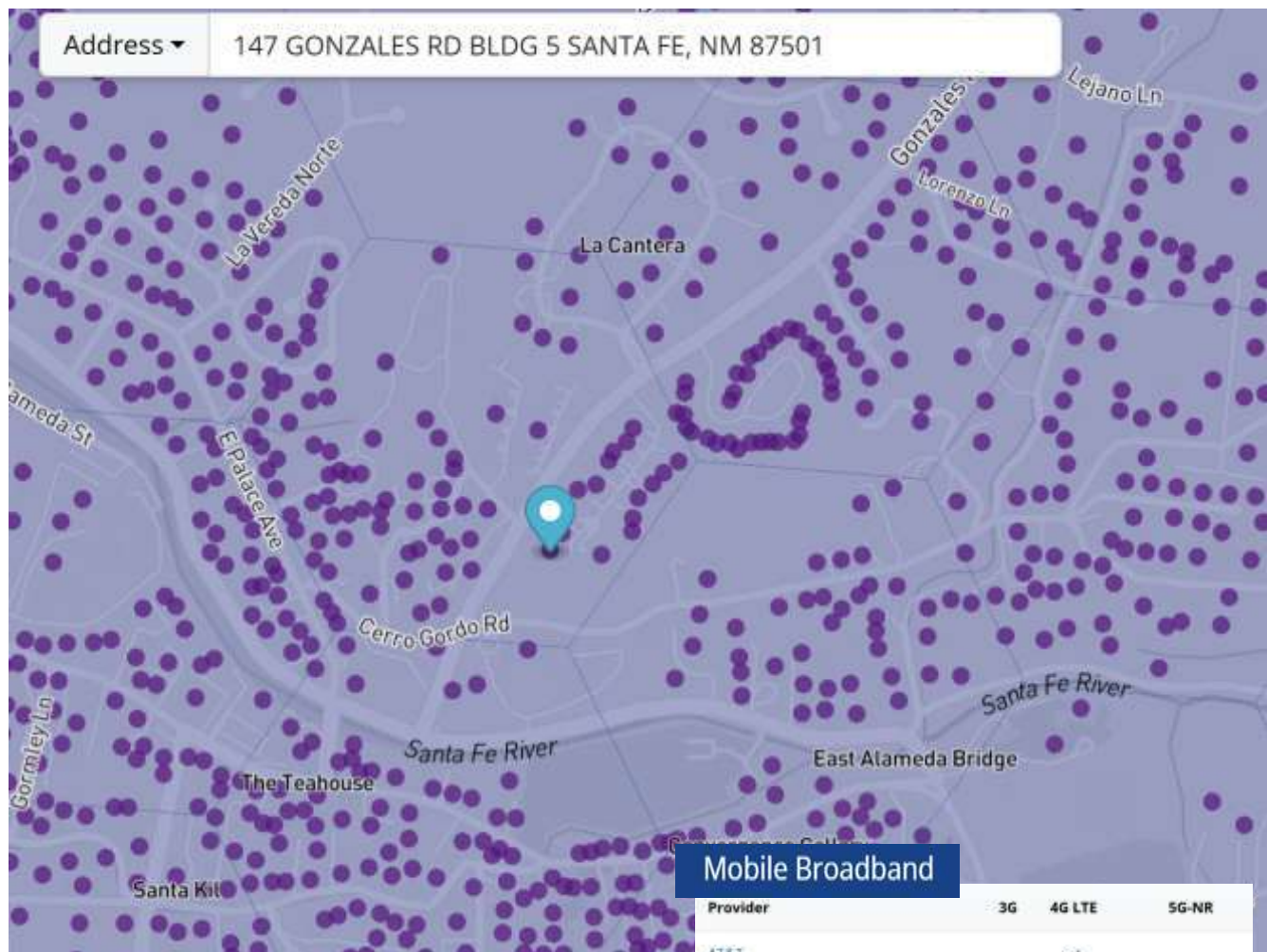
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 153 Sombrio Drive, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



FCC National Broadband Map



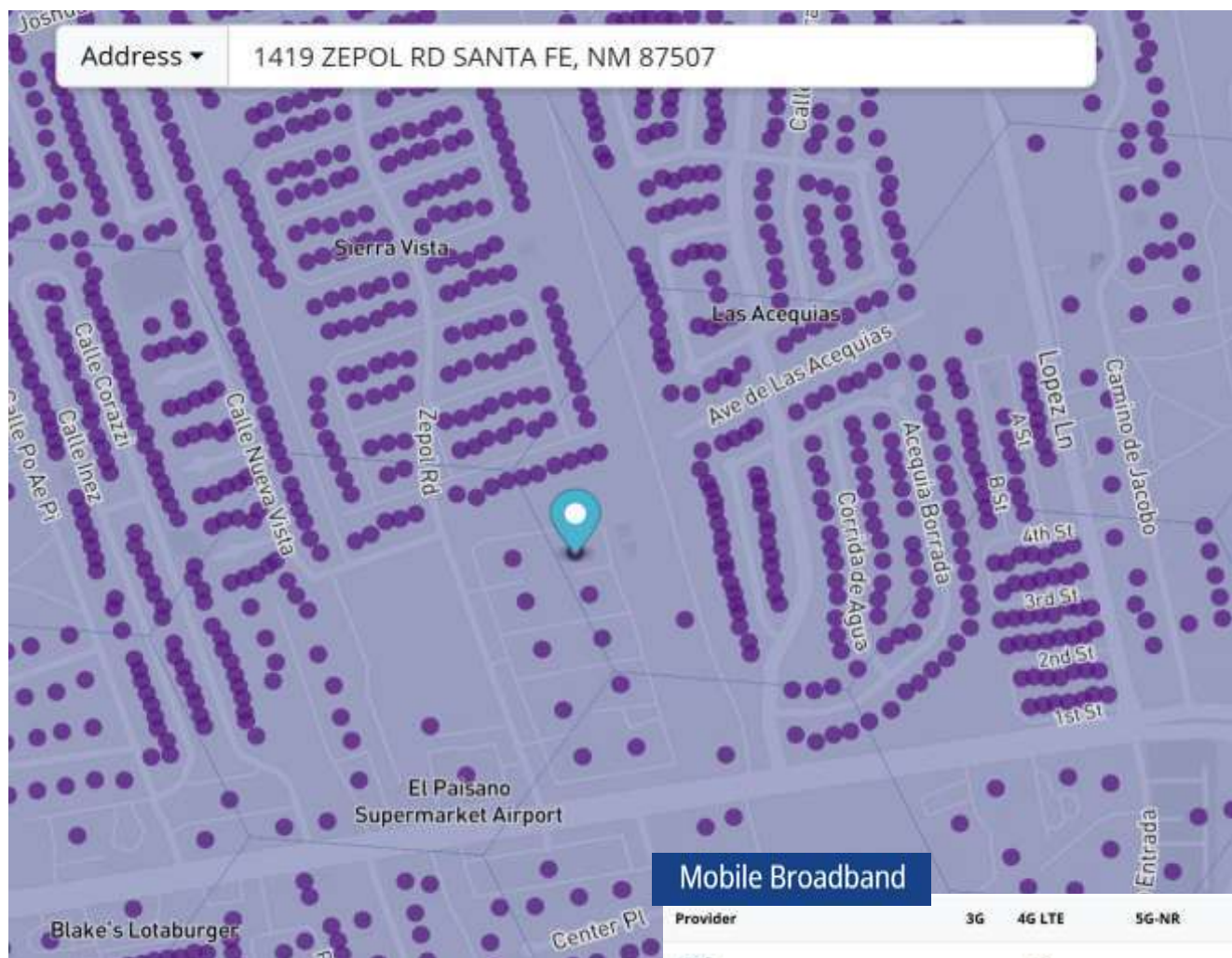
Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 147 Gonzales Road, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



FCC National Broadband Map

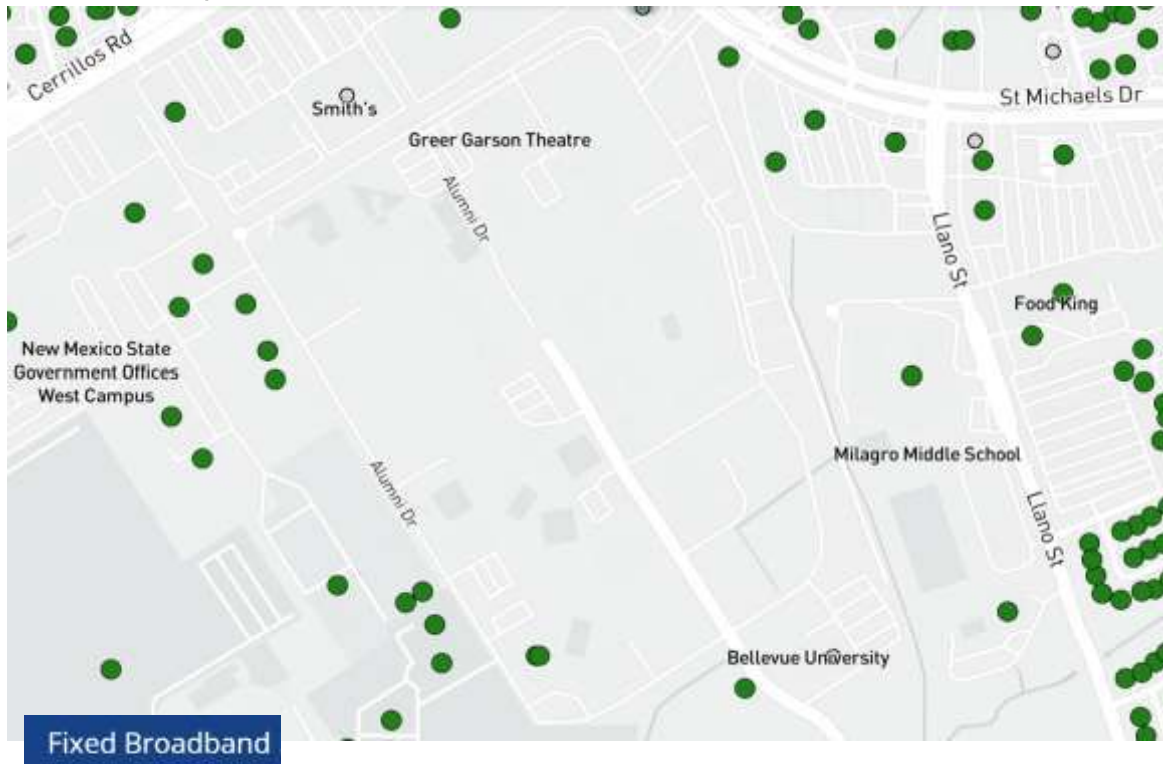


Based upon the information contained in the MAP, 1419 Zepol Road, and those BSLs in the immediate area are considered served.



FCC National Broadband Map

Midtown Campus

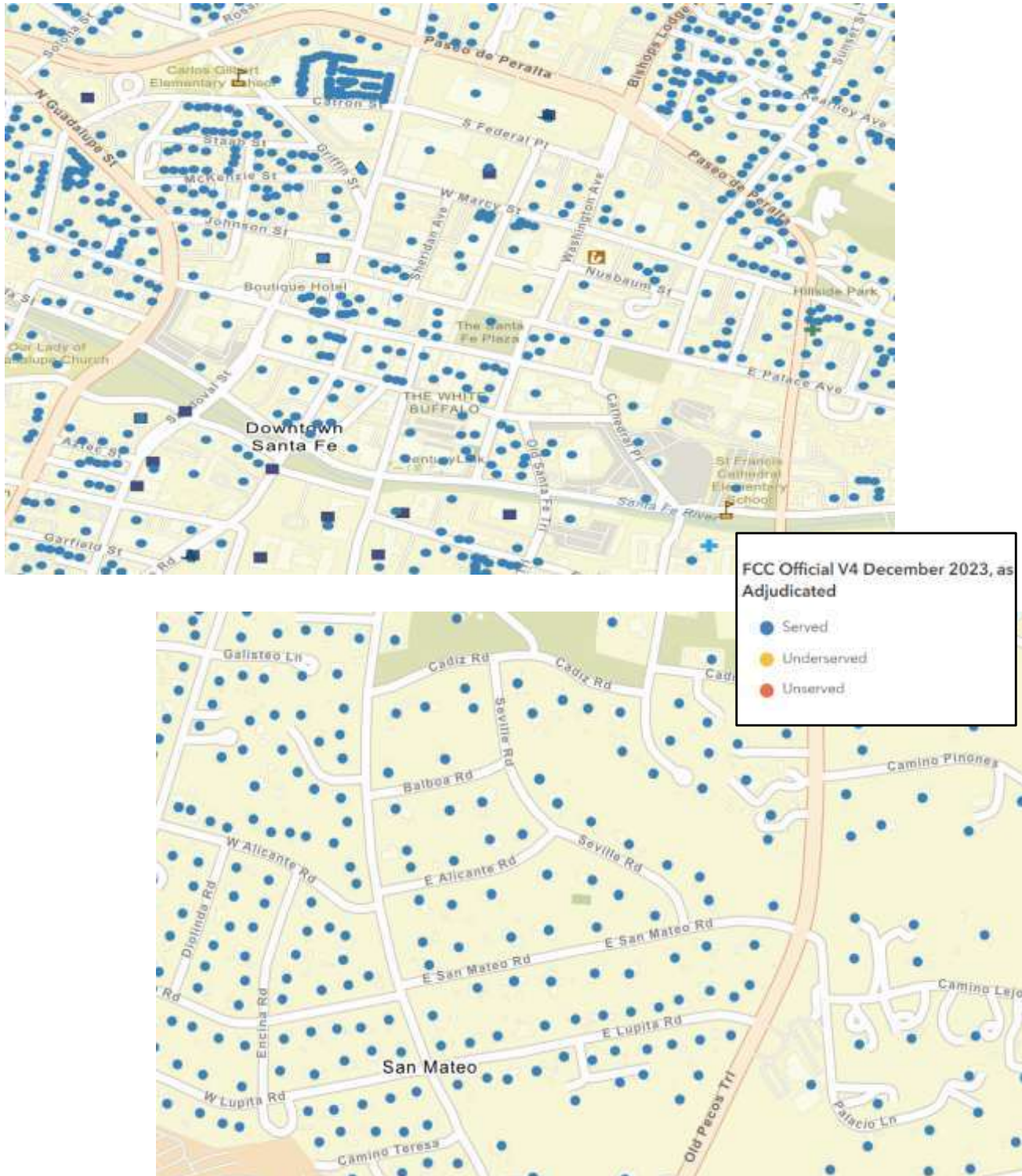


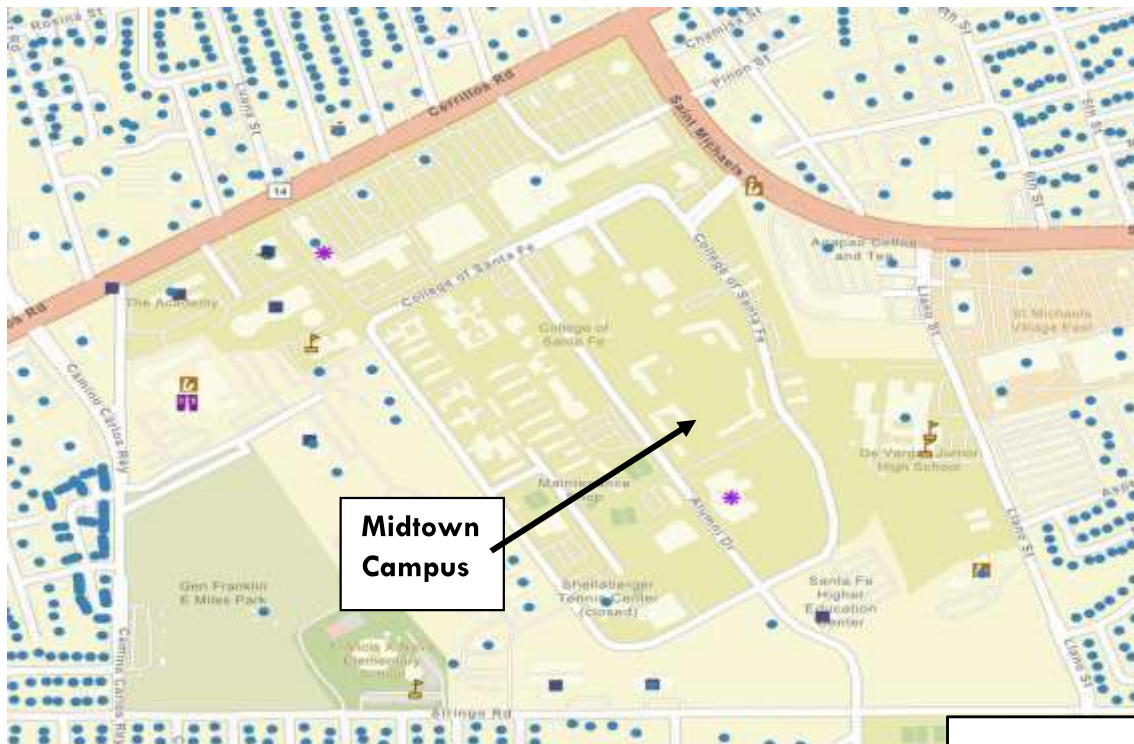
FCC National Broadband

Map

The MAP does not reflect information related to either fixed or mobile broadband service within the Midtown Campus.

A review of the NM - MAP information for various areas within the City, the following excerpts are provided:

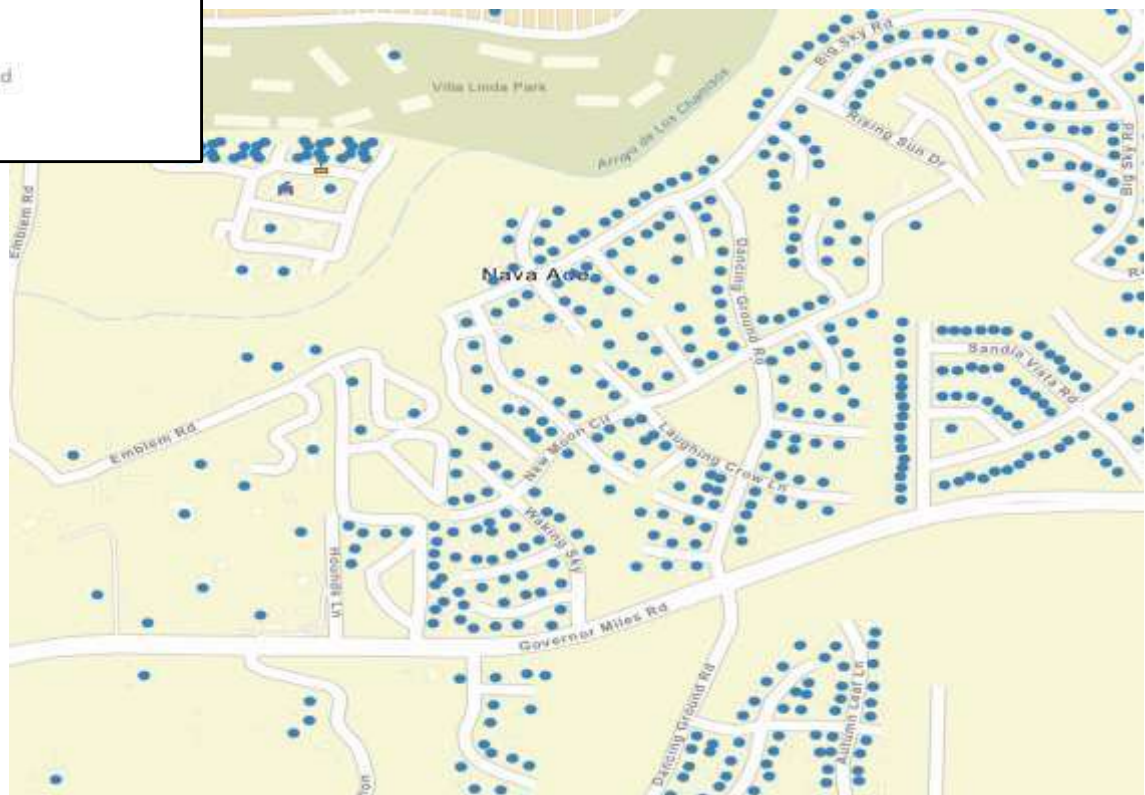




FCC Official V4 December 2023, as
Adjudicated

- Served
- Underserved
- Unserved







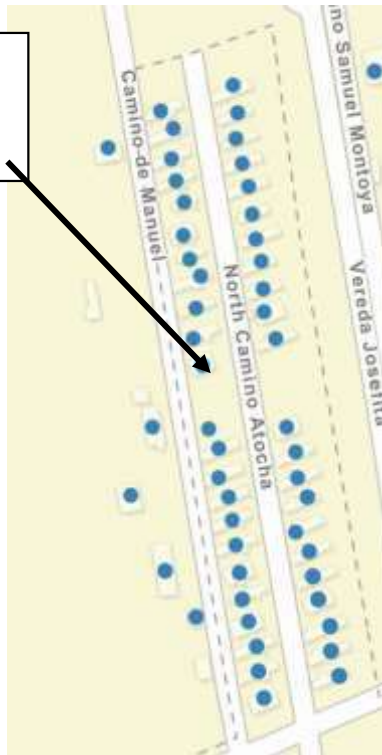


When reviewing the NM-MAP, the trailer parks that were included in the ARPA grant for Wi-Fi accessibility deployment indicate that they are **100% served** by broadband service.





**Atocha
Mobile Home
Park**



FCC Official V4 December 2023, as
Adjudicated

- Served
- Underserved
- Unserved

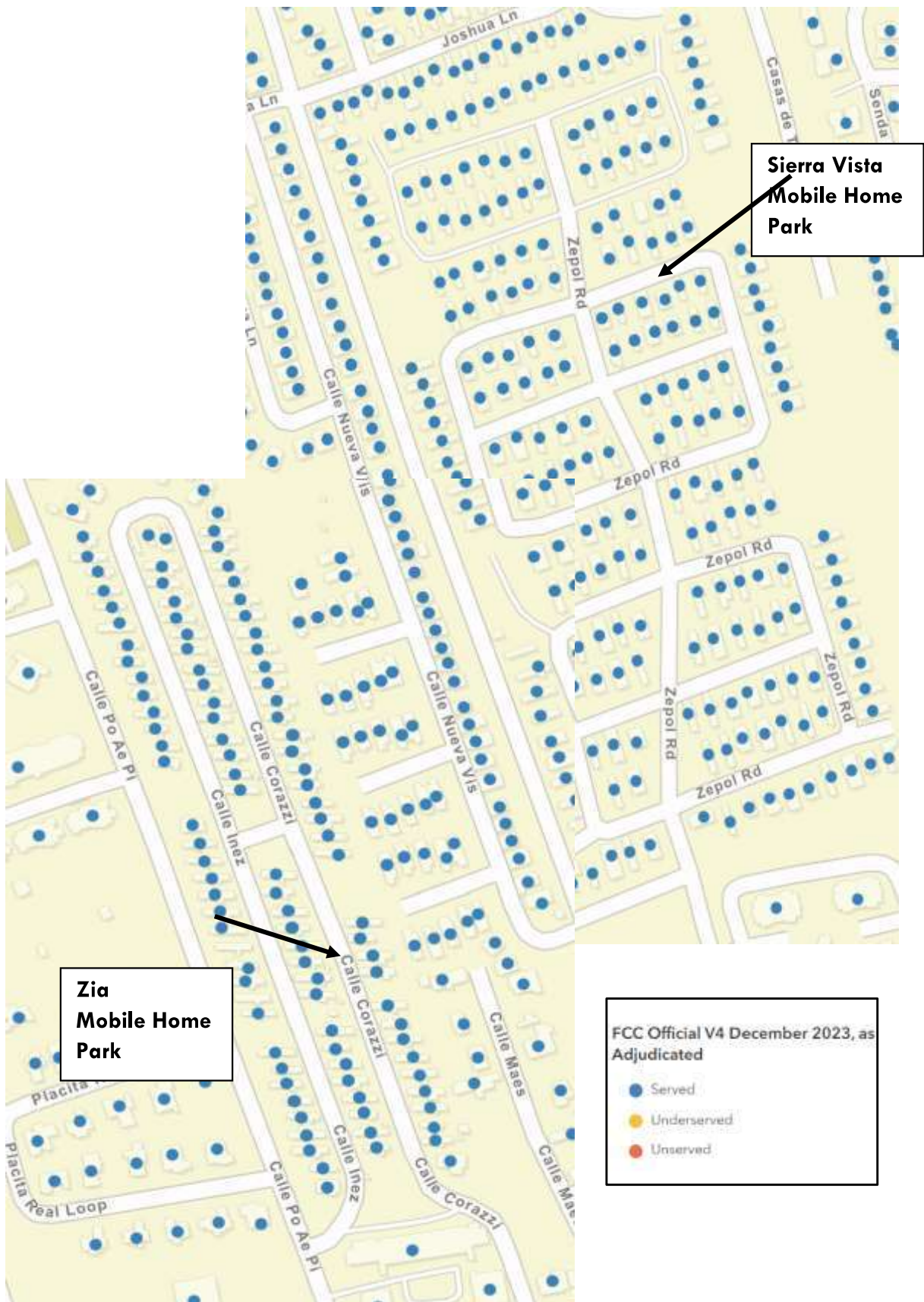
**Trailer
Ranch
Mobile
Home Park**





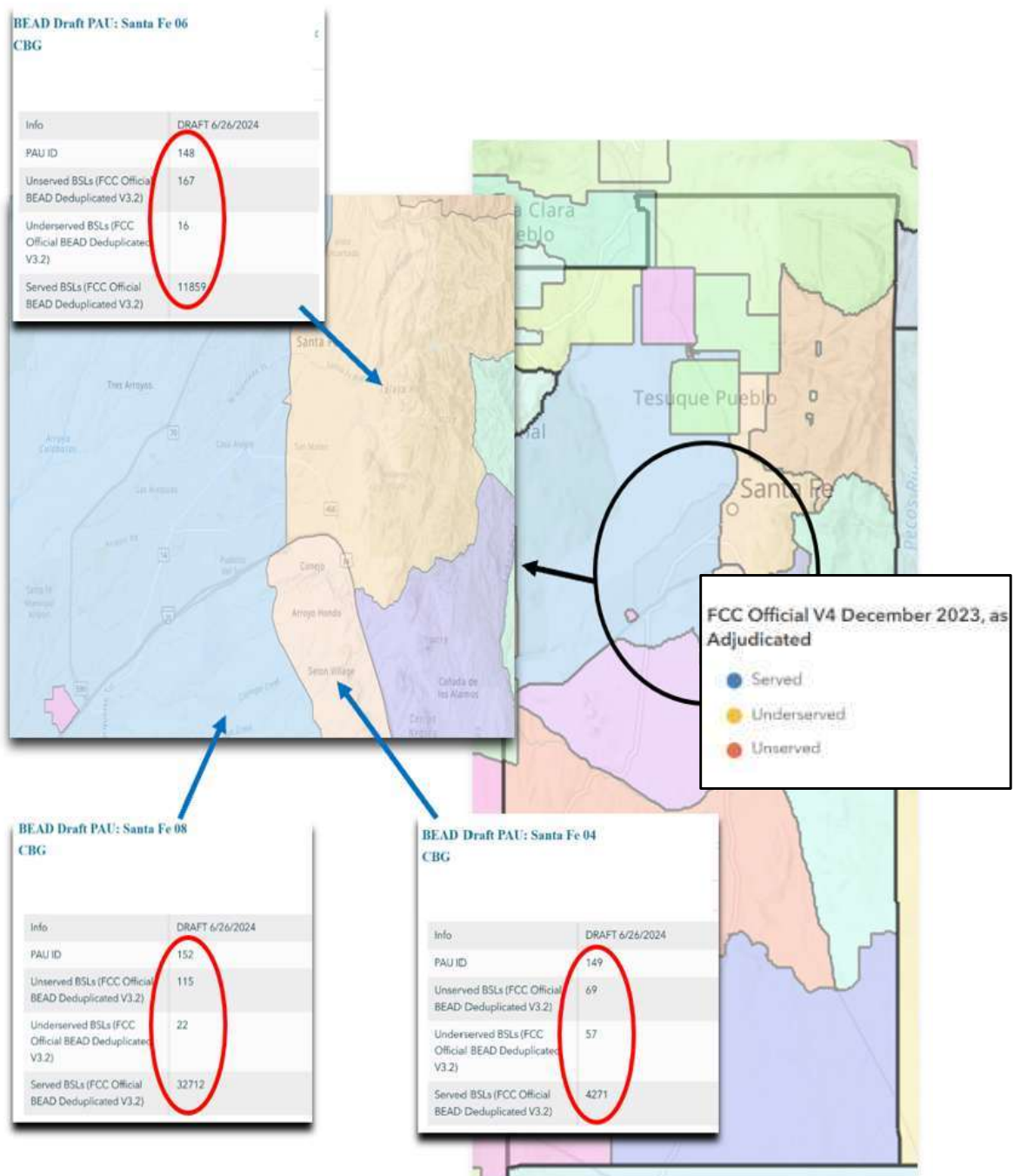
FCC Official V4 December 2023, as
Adjudicated

- Served
- Underserved
- Unserved



3. State of New Mexico BEAD Project Area Units

Published as part of the state of New Mexico's Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program (BEAD), the draft Project Area Units (PAU) were developed to identify areas where broadband deployment projects are eligible for funding based upon served, unserved and underserved locations.



4. City of Santa Fe – Broadband Initiatives
 - a. Franchise Agreements: The City continues to work on franchise agreements with potential new broadband service providers in the City. To this end, Vexus Fiber is developing a City-wide fiber network that will provide Fiber Optic Broadband services from 150Mb to 5 Gigabit symmetrical speeds to about 10,000 homes and businesses.



Initial planned PON Service Area comprises 2 of the 9 LCP Active areas for the City design.

At the time of this report, there has been no large scale network buildout.

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- b. Other Private Initiatives: Plateau Wireless received a Round 1 - NTIA grant to deploy “middle mile” broadband from the Santa Fe County Point of Presence located at the Santa Fe County Fair Grounds (adjacent to the Genoveva Chavez Community Center) to Tijeras, New Mexico, along NM Highway 14.

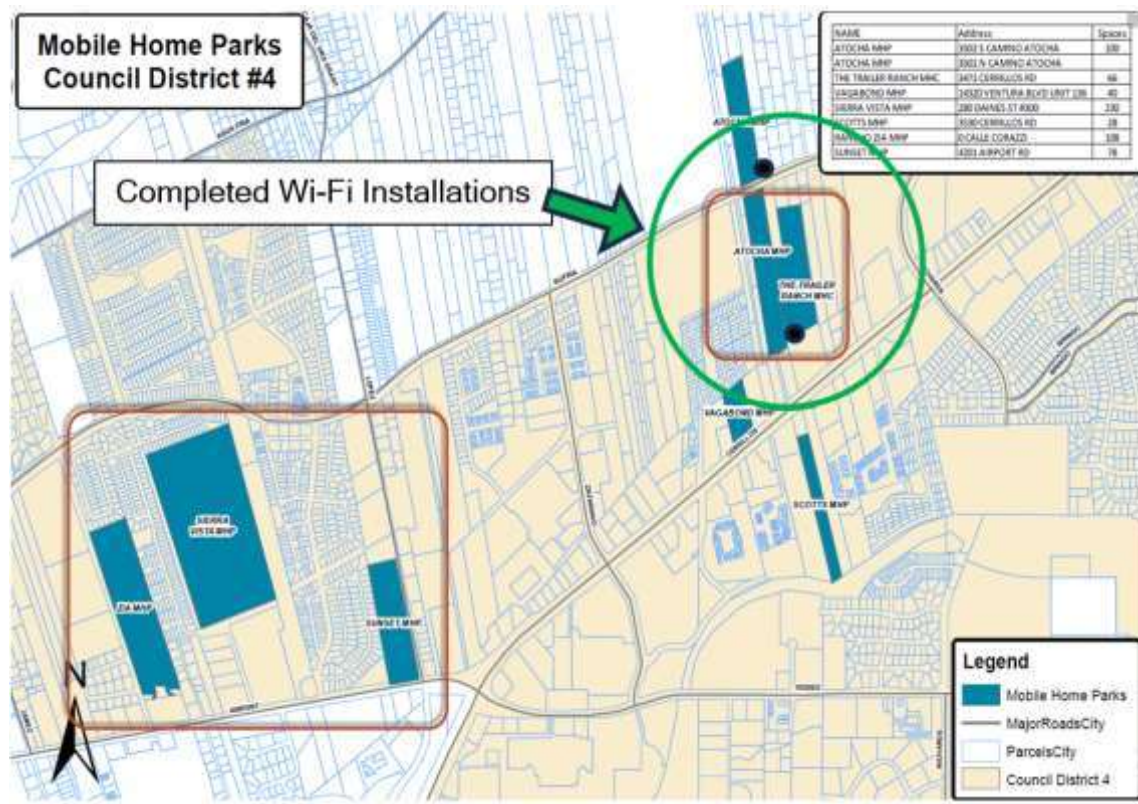


Although this Project does not impact efforts by the City, as a condition of the grant, Plateau is required to provide service to any Community Anchor Institution within 1000' of the centerline of the alignment, which would include City facilities along or within the alignment.

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- c. City Projects: As part of the City's ARPA funding, the City initiated its **Community Wi-Fi Accessibility Project** (Project), which is intended to provide no-cost Wi-Fi accessibility to City residents.

To date the Project has been completed in the Atocha and Trailer Ranch mobile home parks, with the deployment of three (3) WIFI poles that provide 25/3 broadband service to households, with the recurring costs borne by the City's ITT department.

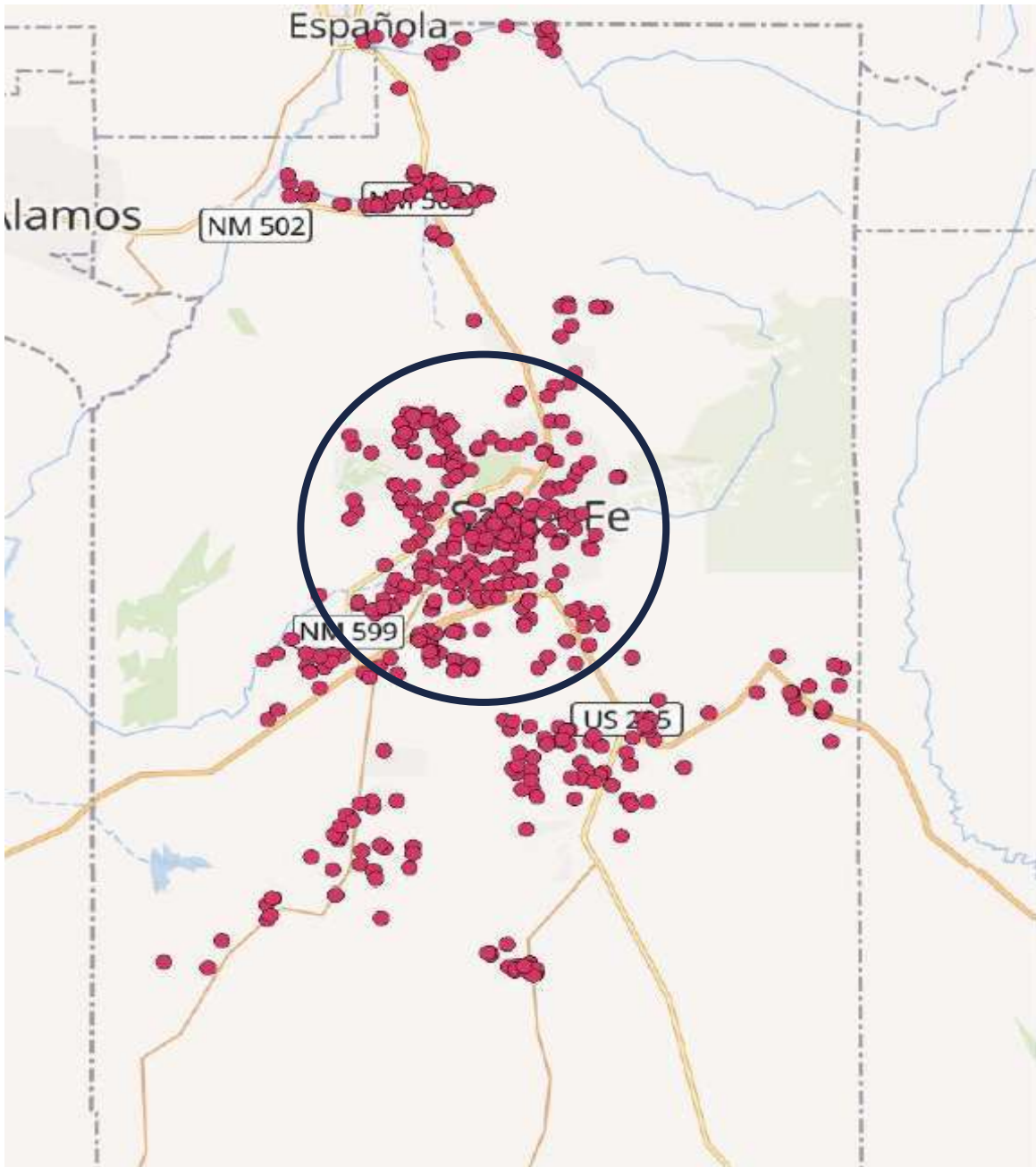


In addition to the Atocha Mobile Home Park location, the City provided additional Free Wi-Fi locations, and in partnership with the Santa Fe Public School District developed free Wi-Fi locations at school sites.

5. Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey

A review of the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results, prepared for the Santa Fe County Broadband Working Group under direction of the Economic Development Division was undertaken.

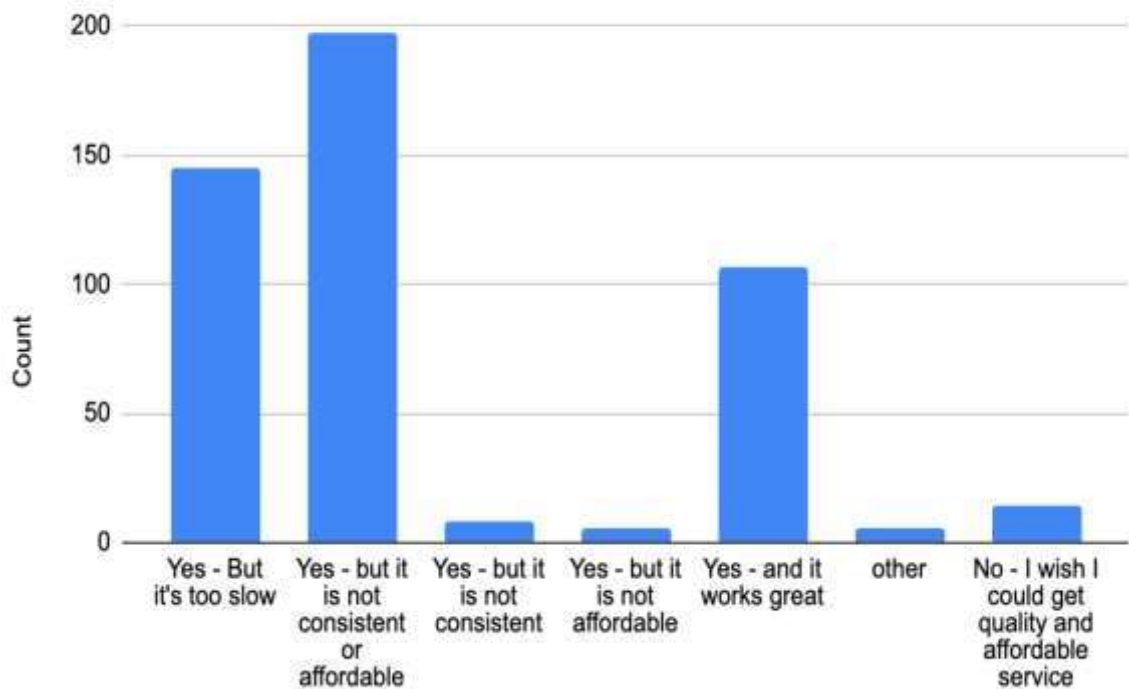
While the SURVEY was County wide, the responses included a substantial number from within the boundaries of the City.



Survey response locations provided in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

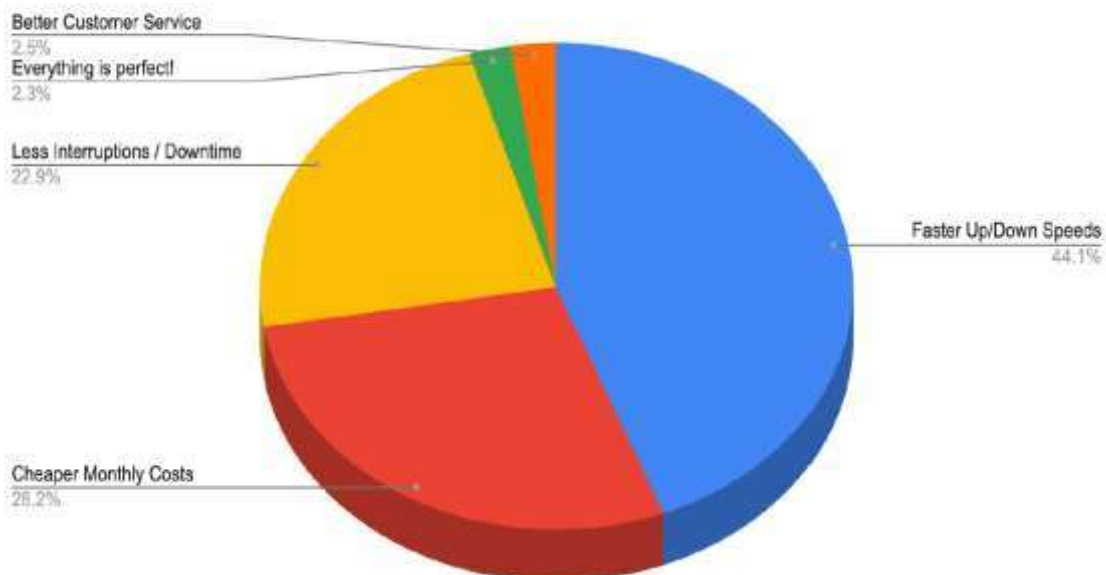
The SURVEY provided responses from 504 respondents to various questions including:

Do you have internet service at your home?



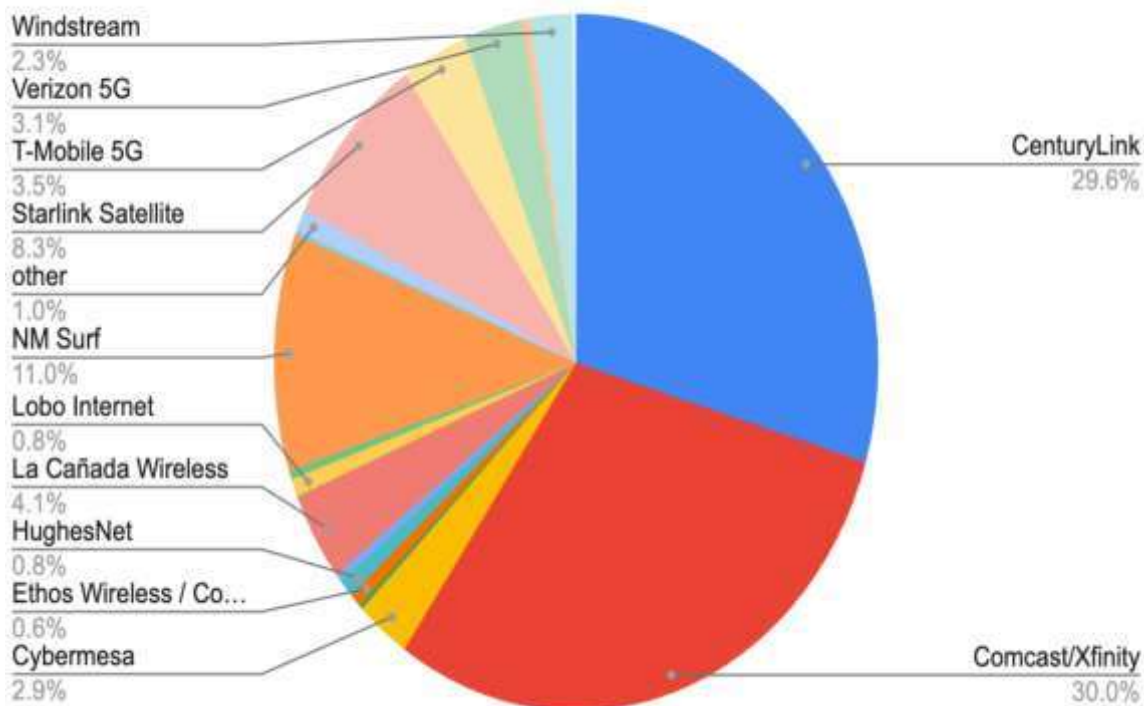
Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

What could make your internet service better? (Choose the most important one)



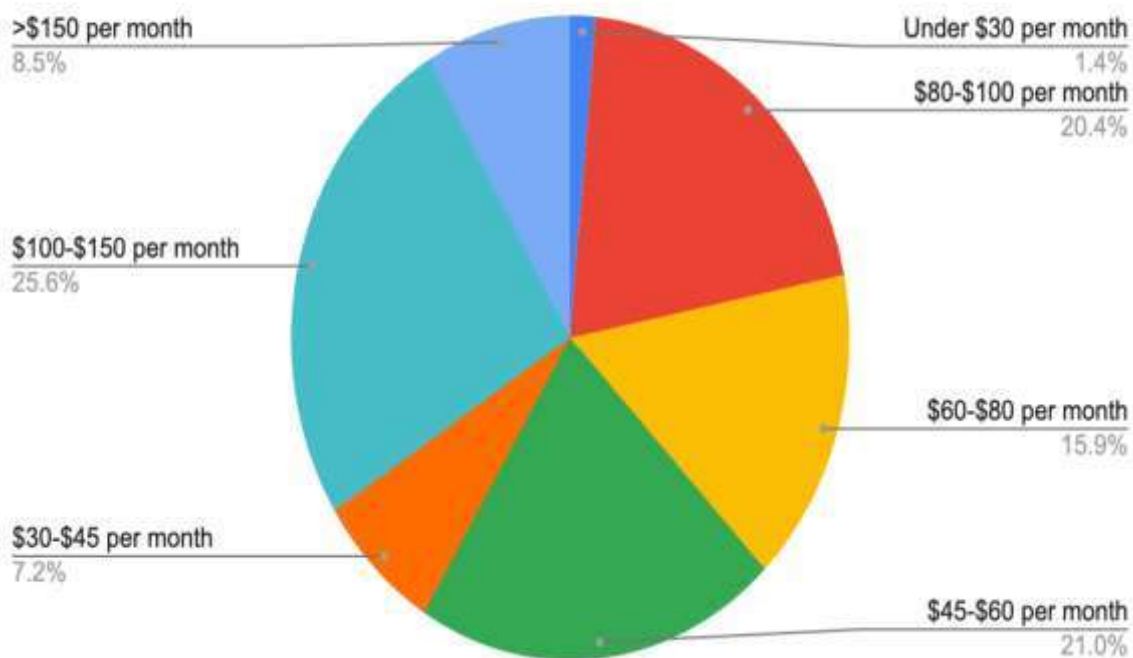
Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

Who is your internet service provider (ISP)?



Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

How much do you spend on your home internet service each month?



In addition, the Survey contained the following overall summaries of feedback:

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK THEMES

Reliability Issues:

- Many respondents reported frequent outages, slow speeds, and inconsistent service across various providers. CenturyLink, Comcast, and NM Surf were frequently mentioned in this context. Reliability is a major pain point, especially for those who work from home or rely on the internet for essential services.

Limited Options:

- Several respondents expressed frustration with the lack of alternative providers in their area, leaving them with no choice or only expensive alternatives. Limited options are perceived to have led to monopolies or near-monopolies, resulting in higher prices and lower quality of service.

Speed Concerns:

- Slow internet speeds were a common complaint, with many respondents dissatisfied with the download and upload speeds provided by their ISPs. Even when higher speeds were advertised, users often reported receiving much slower speeds in reality.

Cost and Affordability:

- Cost was another significant concern, with many respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the high prices they pay for subpar service. Some users mentioned that the cost of internet service is prohibitive, especially considering the quality of service they receive.

Customer Service Issues:

- Poor customer service experiences were prevalent, including difficulties in reaching support representatives, long wait times, and ineffective resolutions to problems. Lack of responsiveness and communication from ISPs exacerbated user frustrations.

Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK THEMES, CON'T.

Infrastructure Challenges:

- Some respondents mentioned infrastructure limitations, such as outdated cables or the absence of fiber optic networks, as reasons for their poor internet service. Geographical factors, like living in remote areas or valleys, were cited as barriers to improving internet connectivity.

Desire for Better Options:

- Overall, there is a strong desire for better internet options, including faster speeds, more reliable service, and competitive pricing. Users expressed a need for increased competition among ISPs to drive improvements in service quality and affordability.

Accessibility Concerns:

- Respondents highlighted the importance of equitable access to high-speed internet, especially for those in rural or underserved areas. The digital divide was mentioned, with calls for initiatives to bridge the gap and ensure that everyone has access to essential online services.

Alternative Solutions:

- Some mentioned having explored alternative solutions, such as satellite internet (e.g., Starlink), mobile hotspots, or community-owned networks, to address their internet connectivity issues. However, these alternatives were not always feasible or affordable.

Advocacy and Community Action:

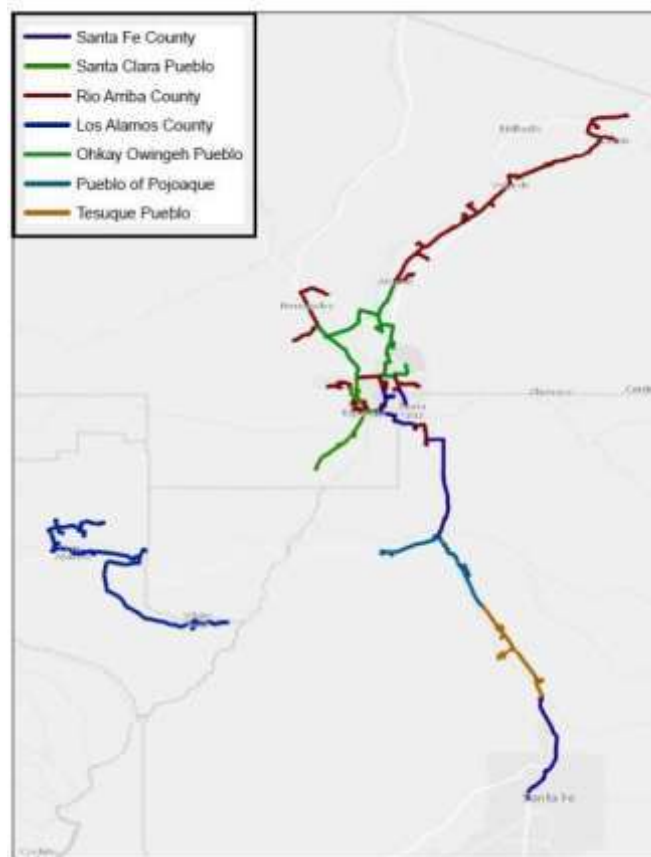
- There were calls for advocacy and community action to address internet infrastructure challenges, lobby for better service, and hold ISPs accountable for their performance. Collaborative efforts among residents, local governments, and organizations were seen as potential solutions to improving internet access and quality of service.

Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

6. REDINet

REDINet is a high-speed, open access, community broadband network located in Northern New Mexico. It is owned and operated by a consortium of local and tribal governments.

REDINet has its roots in the 2008 regional economic development effort called REDI, which stands for Northern New Mexico Regional Economic Development Initiative. REDI identified high-speed broadband as the region's number one infrastructure priority, resulting in an application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.



Courtesy of REDINet

With three (3) points of interconnection of middle mile fiber within the City, REDINet has the current capabilities of providing backhaul (middle mile fiber) to projects developed within the City.

Conclusion: Based upon the broadband infrastructure data, consultation with fiber contractors, internet service providers, and the fact the City continues to review and approve franchise agreement applications for broadband service providers, the City has sufficient and varied access to broadband service.

ii. Cost Barriers

With sufficient and varied broadband infrastructure within the City, instead of reviewing the costs necessary to develop/deploy new broadband infrastructure, a review of cost barriers from the perspective of the consumer/end-user was conducted.

The FCC Broadband Map provided a listing of ISPs and their respective broadband service speeds. When evaluating cost barriers, the broadband service price points established by OBAE - BEAD Urban Rates Survey was compared to offered ISP price points.

- The reference price point for 100/20 Mbps is \$70.65.
- The reference price point for symmetrical 1 Gbps is \$99.26.

Internet Service Provider	Service Speeds	Service Type	Monthly Cost	Price Guarantee/C ontract Term	Conditions to Price
Xfinity (Comcast)	150 Mbps	Fiber	\$ 64.00	24 months	Modem is not included + \$15.00/month
	1200 Mbps		\$ 95.00	None	Modem is included
Verizon 5G Home Internet	10Gbps	Cellular & Fixed Wireless	\$ 35.00	24 months	after initial 24 months price increases to \$60.00 month
	10Gbps		\$ 45.00	36 months	after initial 36 months price increases to \$80.00 month
T Mobile Home Internet	10Gbps	Cellular & Fixed Wireless	\$ 50.00	24 months	Auto-pay Internet Unlimited
	10Gbps		\$ 70.00		Auto-pay Internet Plue
NM Surf	up to 100/25 Mbps	Fixed Wireless	\$ 59.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 200/50 Mbps		\$ 84.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 300/75 Mbps		\$ 94.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
	up to 400/100 Mbps		\$ 104.99	24 months	includes antenna lease
Century Link	100Mbps	Fiber	\$ 55.00	None	limited availability
	940Mbps		\$ 75.00	None	limited availability
Plateau Telecommunications	100Mbps	Fiber	\$ 60.00	None	None
	500Mbps		\$ 70.00	None	None
	1000Mbps		\$ 80.00	None	None
	10/1.3Mbps		\$ 40.00	None	DSL
	25/1.3Mbps		\$ 55.00	None	DSL
Ezee Fiber	1G symmetrical	Fiber	\$ 69.00	None	life-time pricing
	2G symmetrical		\$ 89.00	None	life-time pricing
	5G symmetrical		\$ 99.00	None	life-time pricing
	8G symmetrical		\$ 119.00	None	life-time pricing
Vexus Fiber	5G symmetrical	Fiber	\$ 99.00	None	
HughesNet	100Gbps/50Mbps	Satellite	\$ 49.99	None	Price Lock Guarantee
Starlink	45-140Mbps/10-20Mbps	Satellite	\$ 80.00	None	Residential Lite
			\$ 120.00	None	Residential
ViaSat	56/5Mbps	Satellite	\$ 99.00	None	\$15.00 month equipment lease
Resound Networks	unknown	Fiber	-	-	pricing or service data not available "coming soon"

Conclusion: Based upon the pricing data and in consultation with Internet Service Providers, broadband service in the City generally meets the requirements for affordable broadband service.

iii. Digital Divide

Referred to as the gap between those with internet access and those without it, the Divide exacerbates disparities in education, health care, and economic development, as individuals/households struggle to access online resources essential for modern life.

The Divide must be assessed with factors such as access, quality/reliability, affordability, and relevance.

- Access: Is there available access to the Internet in your area? Is there a nearby point of connection to the Internet? If yes, this is just the first step to having Internet access.

There is a miss-conception that access to broadband is what is received on a cellular device and network. The true access to broadband is service to a location that is either fixed fiber (aerial or underground) or fixed wireless fiber to a BSL with equipment location upon and within the location. In addition, in June 2025, the FCC issued a policy memorandum to include satellite service as an allowable and acceptable form of broadband service.

To evaluate this factor, a sampling of the FCC National Broadband Map and the OBAE NM Broadband Map were reviewed. **Conclusion: The sampling reflects that the city of Santa Fe has sufficient and varied Access to both fixed and fixed wireless broadband service. In addition, with the development of the VEXUS, Plateau and Ezee Fiber projects, there will be a greater degree of available internet providers in the City, which will ultimately lead to competitive pricing for service options.**

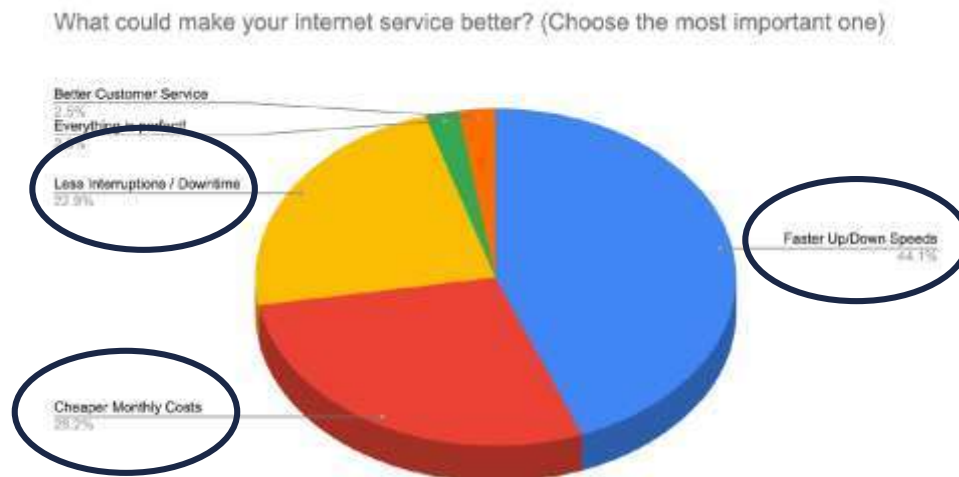
- Quality/Reliability: Are the upload and download speeds sufficient for the local needs of Internet users?

To assess this factor, a sampling of the FCC National Broadband Map, the OBAE NM Broadband Map , and results from Santa Fe County's Broadband Survey were reviewed.

Conclusion: Based upon the sampling of both Maps, the information reported and accepted by the FCC indicates that the city of Santa Fe BSLs have at least one type of fixed broadband service available that can provide sufficient upload and download speeds.

However, generally taking the information contained in the Santa Fe County Broadband Survey Results, most survey respondents indicated that the speeds, reliability, and monthly costs were not sufficient or consistent.

Additionally, “Many respondents reported frequent outages, slow speeds, and inconsistent service across various providers. CenturyLink, Comcast, and NM Surf were frequently mentioned in this context. Reliability is a major point, especially for those who work from home or rely on the internet for essential services.”



Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

- **Affordability:** Is the broadband access affordable? How does the cost compare to other essential goods? What percentage of your income do you need to pay for access?

To assess this section, a sampling (snapshot in time) review of the common provider listings contained in the FCC Broadband Map and their correlating pricing options was conducted. **Conclusion: Based upon the current pricing options/plans for Fixed and Fixed Wireless household broadband service in the City, the price for fixed broadband service ranges from \$50.00 month without discounts, equipment fees and taxes to \$95.00 month without discounts, equipment fees and taxes; and, for fixed wireless broadband service, the prices ranges from \$35.00 month with discounts, equipment fees and taxes to \$70.00 month without discounts, equipment fees, and taxes.**

When reviewing the accepted BEAD price points for households, there must be for a speed tier that is sufficient for a household with multiple users to simultaneously engage in telework and remote learning (e.g., 100/20 Mbps). This service option must meet, at a minimum, the following criteria:

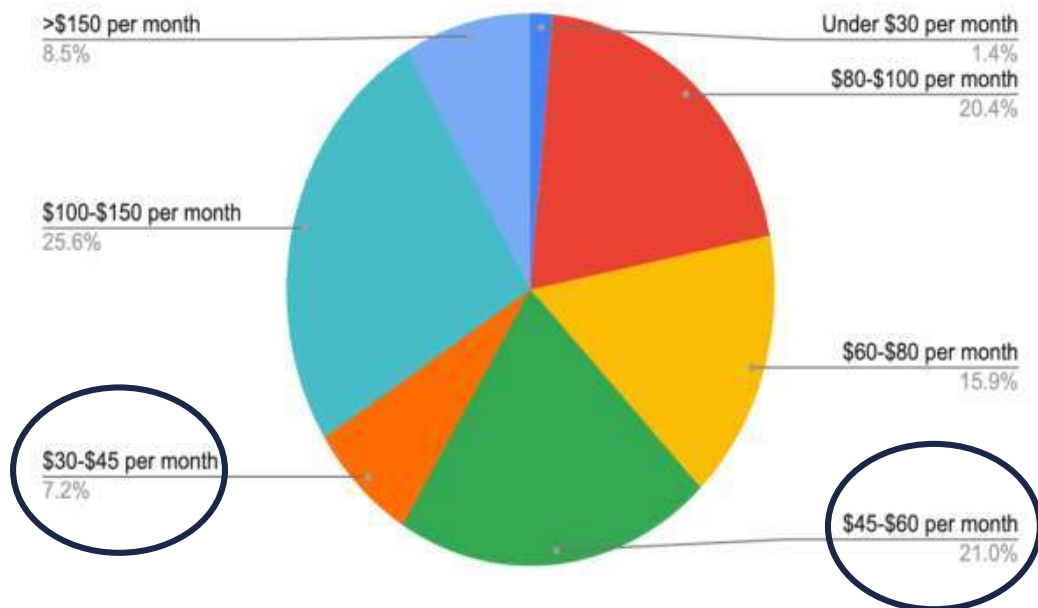
- Will be available to all households that meet the eligibility requirements of the ACP program
- Cost of \$50 per month or less (\$75 per month or less on Tribal lands), exclusive of all require federal, State, or county government taxes and fees, and inclusive of any optional, non-mandatory, and/or permissive fees
- Available to households with income equal to or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line
- Allows the end user to apply the ACP subsidy to the service price and encourages ISPs to ensure that prospective customers are aware of their participation in the ACP
- Meets performance requirements as established by the BEAD program, with download speeds of at least 100 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps
- Delivers typical latency of no more than 100 milliseconds
- It is not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling, and is subject only to the same acceptable use policies to which subscribers to all other broadband internet access service plans offered to home subscribers by the participating subgrantee must adhere
- Allows subscribers to upgrade at no cost in the event the provider later offers a low-cost plan with higher speeds (downstream or upstream)

OBAE-BEAD NOFO 1.15.25

Although the City's current served status, BEAD funding may not be available to ISPs operating within the City limits.

A review of the information contained in the Santa Fe County Broadband Survey Results, that less than 1.4% had broadband service under \$30.00 a month, with 7.2% paying between \$30-45 month and with 21.0% of the respondents paying \$45-\$60 month for service.

How much do you spend on your home internet service each month?

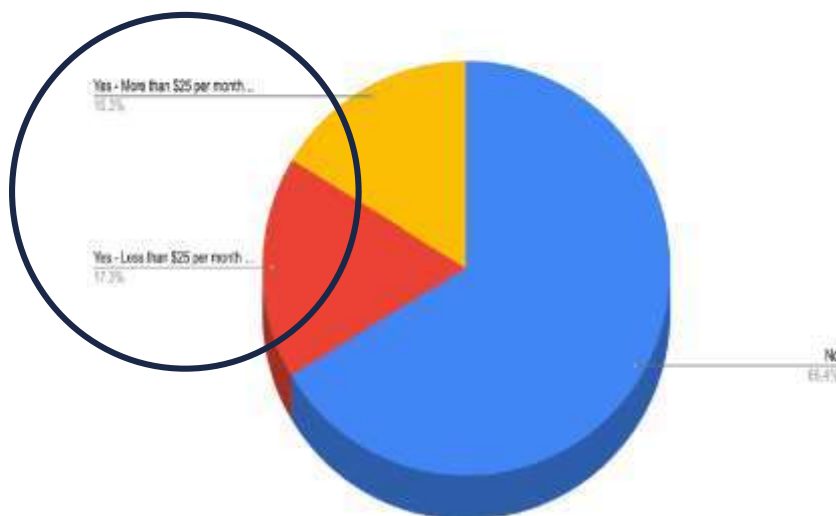


Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

Since none of the reviewed pricing options from ISPs indicated a pricing structure from <\$30 month to \$45 month, an assumption can be made that this is for cellular home service or for broadband service that is less than the OBAE – BEAD

In addition, 33.6% of survey respondents pay for the rental of equipment for their internet service.

Do you rent/lease router or WiFi equipment with your internet service subscription?



Information contained in the Santa Fe County Community Broadband Survey Results

To further assess the Affordability of broadband access, the cost of the access must be reviewed from the perspective of the “cost burden” for broadband service to households.

The PEW Research Center (PEW) found that the cost of broadband service to low-income households remains a barrier to broadband adoption and use and is contributing to the affordability challenge and that cost can be a barrier to adoption for low-income households.

Low-income households often find it difficult to cover the costs of broadband subscriptions, necessary equipment, and devices like computers or tablets. This economic constraint results in reduced access to online education, job opportunities, and essential government services, and deepening existing inequalities.

The Pew Research Center (PEW) found that although only 1% of adults with annual incomes over \$75,000 do not use the internet, 14% of those with annual incomes under \$30,000 are not online. And although only 8% of adults with annual household incomes of over \$75,000 do not have a home broadband subscription, and 43% of adults with annual household incomes under \$30,000 do not have one.

Those With Higher Household Income Are Most Likely to Have Broadband at Home

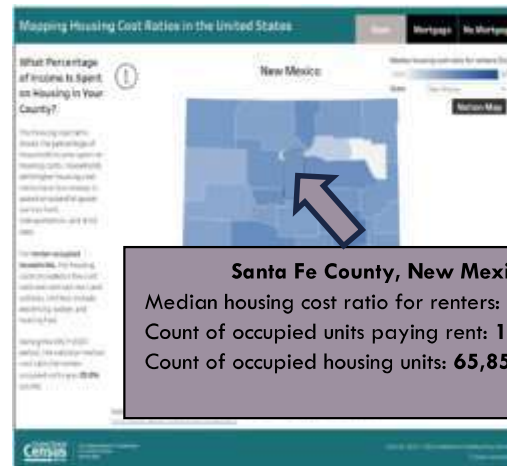
Internet adoption by income level

	Less than \$30,000	\$30,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$74,999	\$75,000+
% of U.S. adults who say they use the Internet	86%	91%	98%	99%
% of U.S. adults who say they have a broadband connection at home	57%	74%	87%	92%

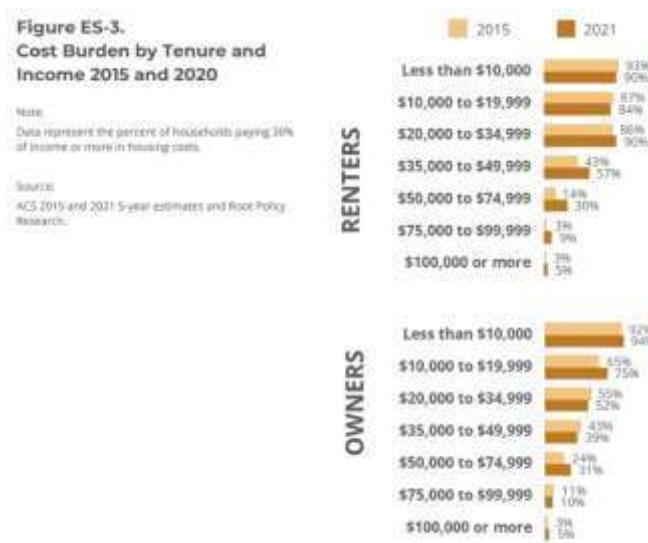
Source: The Pew Research Center, "Internet/Broadband Fact Sheet," April 7, 2021.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/internet-broadband>

According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households are considered cost-burdened when they spend more than 30% of their income on rent, mortgage payments, utilities and other fees, and households spending more than 50% of their income on those housing costs cited above are considered severely cost-burdened.

Data provided by the United States Census Bureau's 2017-2021 American Community Survey Data, 5-year estimates indicate that in Santa Fe County the housing cost for those renting has the highest ratio – 28.6% and those without a mortgage is the lowest with 10.0%.



Additionally, included in the City of Santa Fe 2023-2028 Consolidated Plan EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, the “cost burden (paying 30% or more in income in housing costs) is the most prevalent housing problem among city of Santa Fe residents.”



Courtesy of the City of Santa Fe 2023-2028 Consolidated Plan

While there are variations in broadband adoption based on gender, race, ethnicity, and community type (urban, suburban, and rural), the categories of **income and housing cost burdens** are the only areas where affordability concerns remain statistically consistent.

Impacting the affordability of broadband service for low-income or housing cost burdened households is the elimination of the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP helped ensure that households were able to afford the broadband they needed for work, school, healthcare and more. The ACP benefit provided a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households.

With this program elimination, few options remain for households. Programs like the FCC’s Lifeline program, which offers up to \$9.25 a month off phone, internet, or bundled phone and internet service is available or Verizon’s Forward, can provide discounts on broadband service.

However, both programs have rigid requirements and not all previous ACP recipients may qualify for Lifeline and not all ACP internet companies participate in the Lifeline program.

Although generally the price points for broadband service meet the OBAE – BEAD requirements, after review and consideration of other factors listed above, it can be determined that a leading barrier to accessing broadband service in the City of Santa Fe is the “Affordability” of broadband service.

- **Relevance:** Does the connected community have the necessary skills and technologies? Is there local interest and understanding of the relevance of Internet access? Is there content in the local language relevant to the people in the community?

General Digital Skills include:

- Using devices like a computer, tablet, or mobile phone for simple, personal, and work tasks.
- Finding and using information on the internet.
- Understanding how to be safe and responsible online.
- Communicating socially and professionally using email, messaging, and social media.

Without an outreach program for individuals in the community, the level of skills and technology needs is unknown. However, it can be determined that with the necessity of utilizing broadband during and after the Covid19 pandemic, there is an understanding of the importance and necessity of internet access.

Digital Equity: As provided in the state of New Mexico Office of Broadband and Access (OBAE) Digital Equity Plan, Digital Equity is the condition in which internet access, affordability, and the ability to use digital technologies to reach important goals is possible for everyone. *To put it plainly, this means everyone is equally able to benefit from the educational, economic, employment, and health opportunities that the internet provides.*

However, the inequality to have the opportunity to benefit from the opportunities that the internet provides is prevalent in the following areas:

- Income disparities: lower-income adults and vulnerable populations groups are less likely to own cellular devices/smartphones, have broadband service, or own a desktop/laptop computer.
- Geographical differences: unequal access to internet and internet speeds.
- Digital literacy gaps: differences in understanding digital topics.
- Racial divide: disparities in digital access.
- Elderly divide: challenges faced by older individuals.
- Rural communities: digital inequities and access in rural areas.

Considering the driving factor of broadband service within low-income, vulnerable population groups or high housing cost burdened households, it can be construed that not everyone is equally able to benefit from opportunities that the internet provides.

Digital Inclusion: Describes the effort to ensure that every individual and community has access to low-cost device and internet service plans as well as free and locally available training and IT support.

With the loss of the Affordable Connectivity Program, there are no true access points for accessing low-cost internet service plans. Other than individuals conducting their own outreach, there are no community wide efforts to provide education or training support.

Digital Skills: Include various abilities that relate to technology, including computer software and applications, digital devices, and other computer hardware. The lack of ***Digital Skills*** among low-income populations is exacerbated, as individuals may lack the skills needed to maximize the potential of available resources and/or protect their privacy and security online.

The City does not currently provide outreach related to building up the digital skills of any demographic group.

Sustainability: Is the ability to maintain and support a process over time.

The City does not intend to develop its own Internet Service Program or become an Internet Service Provider. However, if the City desires to develop outreach initiatives, the City will have to (i) identify long-term operational grant funding; or (ii) include funding within its general fund operating budget for these types of outreach initiatives.

III. Evaluate Solution Options (Phase 2)

a. Introduction

The data evaluated for Access reflects that the City has a diverse collection of internet/broadband service available, and the data evaluated from the FCC Map indicates that the City has internet service providers that can provide adequate (minimum) broadband service speeds. In addition, the data reflects that the Affordability for internet/broadband service is a driving issue with adoption and use.

The City could take an initiative approach in working with internet service providers in identifying potential cost-effective and affordable internet programs for City residents as existing franchise agreements are extended/amended and when new franchise agreements are negotiated to include but not be limited to established broadband service price points.

In addition, the City could initiate a developer program when new multi-family developments are proposed to include broadband service as part of their utility package, to include affordable broadband service price points.

Coupling this effort with the development of a City of Santa Fe Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Pilot Program, the City would be able to address the necessary skills and technologies required for City residents to address the Digital Divide with a focus on the low-income and vulnerable population groups.

This effort could be expanded utilizing a similar model to the Santa Fe Film Office, whereby the City and County could partner in developing a Broadband Office to address all factors of broadband.

b. Alternatives to building a local broadband network

Building a broadband network can provide cost savings, increased bandwidth, scalability, and improved security, however, they can be expensive to deploy, provide management of, and are susceptible to physical damage.

The sampling of both the National Broadband Map and the NM Broadband Map, reflects that the City of Santa Fe has sufficient and varied Access to both fixed and wireless broadband service. In addition, based upon the service provider information contained in the National Broadband Map for both Fixed and Fixed Wireless broadband service and the sampling of service and pricing, the city of Santa Fe has the necessary Quality/Reliability of broadband service, with sufficient Upload and Download Speeds for internet users.

It can be determined that a leading barrier to Access broadband service in the City of Santa Fe is the Affordability of broadband service especially in low-income and vulnerable population areas. Additionally, the City does not have a broadband outreach program for individuals in the community, the Relevancy of the level of skills and technology need is unknown.

Unless the City desires to build and deploy their own broadband infrastructure and establish the City as an Internet Service Provider, which is costly and time consuming, the City should develop alternatives necessary to meet its Broadband Goals and Objectives and implement those Projects outlined below.

c. Technical solutions to meet the needs of the City

Building on the goals and objectives outlined above, the following technical solutions (Projects) should be developed and/or expanded:

- **Increase Access to Broadband Service**
 - Project 1 – Expand the deployment of Wi-Fi accessible locations at City facilities, mobile home parks, low-income and vulnerable population areas/locations, including areas designated for development of the City's Pallet Villages.
 - Project 2 – Increase the number of mobile hotspots and laptop devices available for use by residents.
 - Project 3 – Develop and deploy a Messaging/Communication program.
 - Project 4 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.
- **Promote Digital Equity**
 - Project 1 – Develop a Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Pilot Program.
 - Project 2 – Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing joint broadband projects and initiatives.

- Promote Economic Development Opportunities through Broadband
 - Project 1 – Deploy laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots at City Business Center locations.
 - Project 2 – Deploy Wi-Fi boosters/extenders in commercial nodes.
 - Project 3 – Develop and deploy a Messaging/Communication program.
 - Project 4 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.

IV. Action Plan (Phase 3)

a. Community's Current Demand and Future Subscribers / Broadband Connectivity Challenges

In developing the City's Broadband Strategic Plan, four specific conditions were evaluated:

- Access - the sampling of both the National Broadband Map and the NM Broadband Map, reflects that the City of Santa Fe has **sufficient and varied access** to both fixed and wireless broadband service.
- Quality/Reliability - based upon the service provider information contained in the National Broadband Map for both Fixed and Fixed Wireless broadband service and the sampling of service and pricing, the city of Santa Fe has the **necessary quality/reliability of broadband service**, with sufficient upload and download speeds for internet users.
- Affordability - it can be demonstrated that a major issue **to accessing broadband service in the City is the affordability of broadband service**, especially in low-income population areas.
- Relevance - Additionally, the City does not have a broadband outreach program for individuals in the community, **the level of skills and technology need are unknown**.

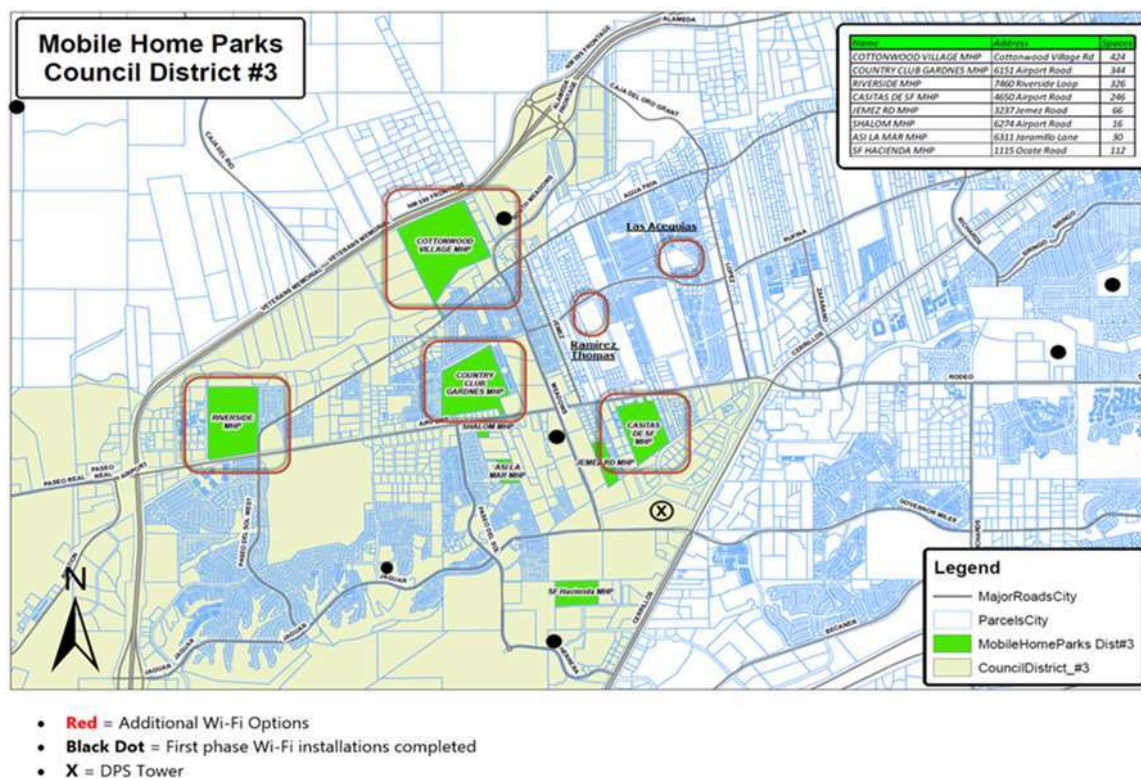
Although the price points and service requirements established by OBAE and NTIA can be met in the City by one or more ISPs, the main barrier to broadband connectivity challenges in the City is the cost for broadband service as it relates to the household burden costs. In addition, without a community outreach program, the level of skills and technology needs area unknow.

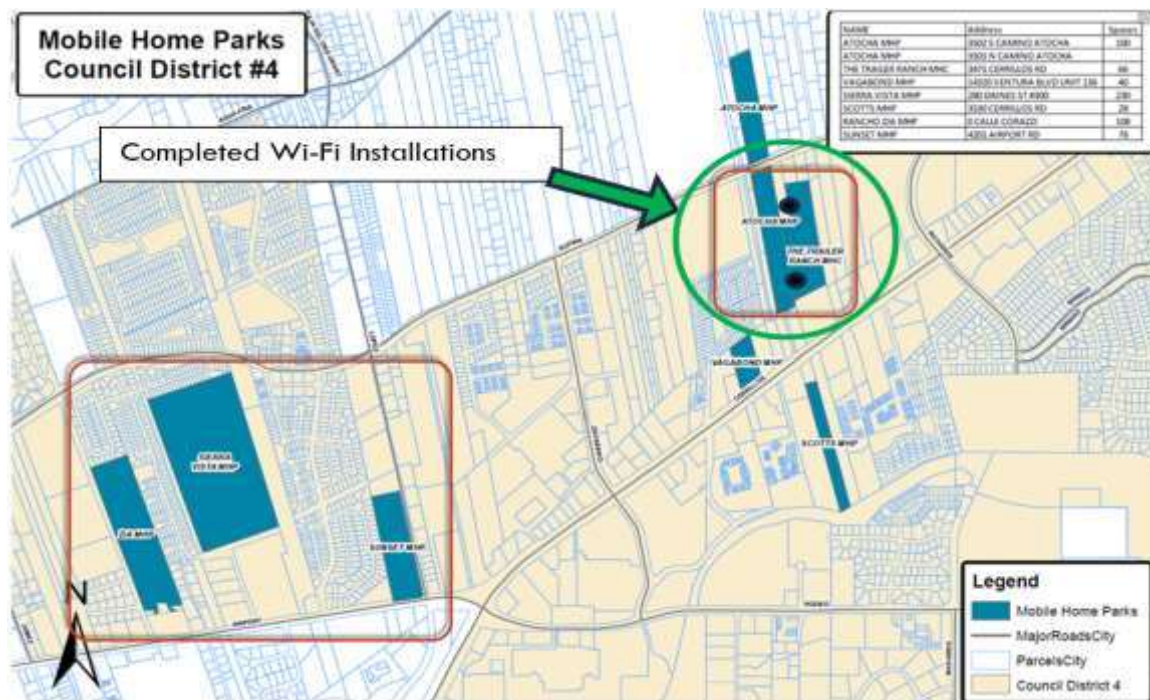
b. Network Strategy - Broadband Connectivity Solutions

In lieu of the City designing, constructing, and managing its own broadband network and building on the City's Broadband Goals and Objectives the following connectivity solutions (Projects) are recommended to be expanded and/or developed.

- **Increase Access to Broadband Service**
 - Create access to secure, reliable, affordable, and sustainable forward-looking infrastructure that can meet future broadband needs.
 - **Project 1 - Expand the deployment of Wi-Fi accessible locations at City facilities, mobile home parks, low-income and vulnerable population areas/locations, including areas designated for development of the City's Pallet Villages.**

While the initial project has proved successful with the deployment in two mobile home parks, the City has identified additional mobile home parks that would benefit from the expansion of the Project.





In addition, there are other locations/areas within the City such as the Hopewell Mann neighborhoods, areas along Airport Road, and the soon to be established Pallet Villages, which would benefit with expansion of the Project. Those areas are included in Attachment A.

The ITT Department will provide quarterly usage reports for each deployed site to evaluate whether the Project is reaching those who need broadband access.

- **Project 2 – Increase the number of mobile hotspots and laptop devices available for use by residents.**

The City has been providing Wi-Fi access via laptops and hotspots to community members through its **TechConnect Program** (Program) at no charge at its Libraries, and while the program has been successful, increasing the number of available Wi-Fi devices will provide a greater degree of Wi-Fi of affordable Wi-Fi accessibility.

To assess if the Program is being provided to those who need the broadband access, it is recommended that a mechanism be developed to track the number of users of each device to include demographics such as location, income and type of broadband service(s) being used/requested.

This tracking can be provided to the Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Program to ensure that support is provided to individuals and population sectors.

➤ **Project 3 – Develop and deploy a Free Wi Fi Messaging/Communication Program.**

While the City has been successful with the initial deployment of Projects 1 and 2, to increase the knowledge of the locations and device availability, the City should develop a Messaging and Communication Program (Program) for City residents.

The Program should be implemented in accordance with the City's Communication Policy and Procedures. It is also important that the Program be provided in both English and Spanish.

➤ **Project 4 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

Although the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County have different broadband challenges, they share the common goals of Increasing Access to Broadband Service, Promoting Digital Equity, and Promoting Economic Development through Broadband availability for residents and businesses.

The City and County have an opportunity, like the establishment of the Santa Fe Film Office, to create a joint effort to collaborate on addressing Broadband challenges. This collaboration can be accomplished through joint Broadband programs and initiatives.

After an analysis of the feasibility of establishing joint Broadband efforts and initiatives, the City and County could jointly develop an Office of Broadband.

- **Promote Digital Equity**

- Improve the Adoption and Use of Broadband service for City residents including unserved, underserved, and vulnerable populations.

➤ **Project 1 – Develop a Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Pilot Program to include communication and messaging.**

The City should consider developing a Broadband Digital Equity and Community Outreach Program (Program) which provides the community, especially those that are unserved, underserved and in vulnerable population groups, with relevant broadband adoption and use techniques/opportunities, educational opportunities, training, and technical support. The Program should be located within libraries and community/senior/teen centers (as space permits) across the City with a specific focus on low-income and vulnerable population areas.

The Program should be developed with Digital Navigators who are trained and dedicated to helping individuals secure affordable, high quality internet access, Wi Fi devices and providing digital skills training, and all marketing and outreach material shall be developed in English and Spanish.

- **Project 2 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

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- **Promote Economic Development Opportunities through Broadband**
 - Ensure that residents and the business community can take full advantage of the economic opportunities presented by broadband access.
 - **Project 1 – Deploy laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots at City Business Center locations.**
 - **Project 2 – Deploy Wi-Fi boosters/extenders in commercial nodes.**
 - **Project 3 – Develop and deploy a Messaging/Communication program.**

➤ **Project 4 - Collaborate with Santa Fe County on their Broadband Programs and determine feasibility of establishing a joint broadband office.**

Although the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County have different broadband challenges, they share the common goals of Increasing Access to Broadband Service, Promoting Digital Equity, and Promoting Economic Development through Broadband availability for residents and businesses.

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c. Identify and Apply for Relevant Federal Funding

The broadband funding landscape continues to evolve as emphasis at the Federal level is being placed on reducing and/or rewriting the broadband regulations administered by NITA.

Additionally, funding across the nation is being clawed-back for infrastructure projects awarded and/or underway.

A review of funding opportunities finds the following programs listed; however, there are no Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) currently published:

- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / Connected Care Pilot Program
- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / Emergency Connectivity Fund
- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / E-Rate Program
- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / High Cost Program (including Connect America Fund, Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, Enhanced Alternative Connect America Cost Model, and 5G Fund)
- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / Lifeline
- Federal Communications Commission / Wireline Competition Bureau / Rural Health Care Program
- Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service / Re-Connect Program
- Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service / Community Connect Grant Program
- Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service / Broadband Technical Assistance Program

- Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service / Telecommunications Infrastructure Program (Infrastructure Program)
- Department of Commerce National / Telecommunication Information Administration / Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

At the state level, OBAE is soliciting for:

- Round 2 BEAD pre-qualification applications
- Grant, Writing, and Engineering and Planning (GWEP) grants

It is too early to tell if the changes at the Federal level will affect how OBAE develops their Round 2 BEAD program guidelines and in the development of any new broadband funding opportunities.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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