



# BEAD SUBGRANTEE APPLICATION: PROJECT AREAS & SELECTION

SEPTEMBER 2024

# INTRODUCTION



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# AGENDA

1. Project area design
2. Benchmark pricing
3. Application prioritization (NTIA guidance)
4. Project selection



# PROJECT AREA DESIGN

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“WBO intends to provide flexibility to applicants to construct their own project areas using geographic units defined by WBO. WBO has chosen Census Block Groups (CBG) as its foundational geographic unit, while reserving the right to divide some of Wyoming’s more sizeable CBGs into smaller subsets in the interest of incentivizing inclusion of more rural unserved or underserved BSLs.”

“During the subgrantee application process, applicants will have the opportunity to construct project area(s) using CBGs or other geographic units defined by WBO (in the event WBO splits some of the larger CBGs).”

“A project area could be as small as a single CBG/geographic unit or include multiple CBGs/geographic units to take advantage of economies of scale. Applicants are encouraged to aggregate CBGs/geographic units into project areas that best reflect their most cost-effective business case.”



# **BENCHMARK PRICING**

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“Benchmarks will be calculated using data (e.g., estimated capital expenditure, estimated BEAD subsidy required for fiber or fixed wireless service) from CostQuest Associates (the vendor used by the FCC in their Broadband Funding Map) as a starting point; the NTIA has provided this data to states for BEAD planning purposes. WBO will calculate the benchmarks following the completion of the challenge process before launching the subgrantee application process.”

“WBO intends to set the total sum of the benchmarks for all CBGs in the State with un- or underserved locations equal to the total BEAD funding available, utilizing CostQuest Associates data to arrive at a benchmark commensurate with the State’s BEAD allocation.”

“WBO will set benchmarks by considering the CostQuest estimates for both capital expenditure and estimated BEAD subsidy required for greenfield and brownfield deployment of fiber and fixed wireless service. An optimization analysis will be conducted to identify which locations may require use of different technologies to help determine the appropriate estimate for each CBG.”



# BENCHMARK PRICING, CONT.



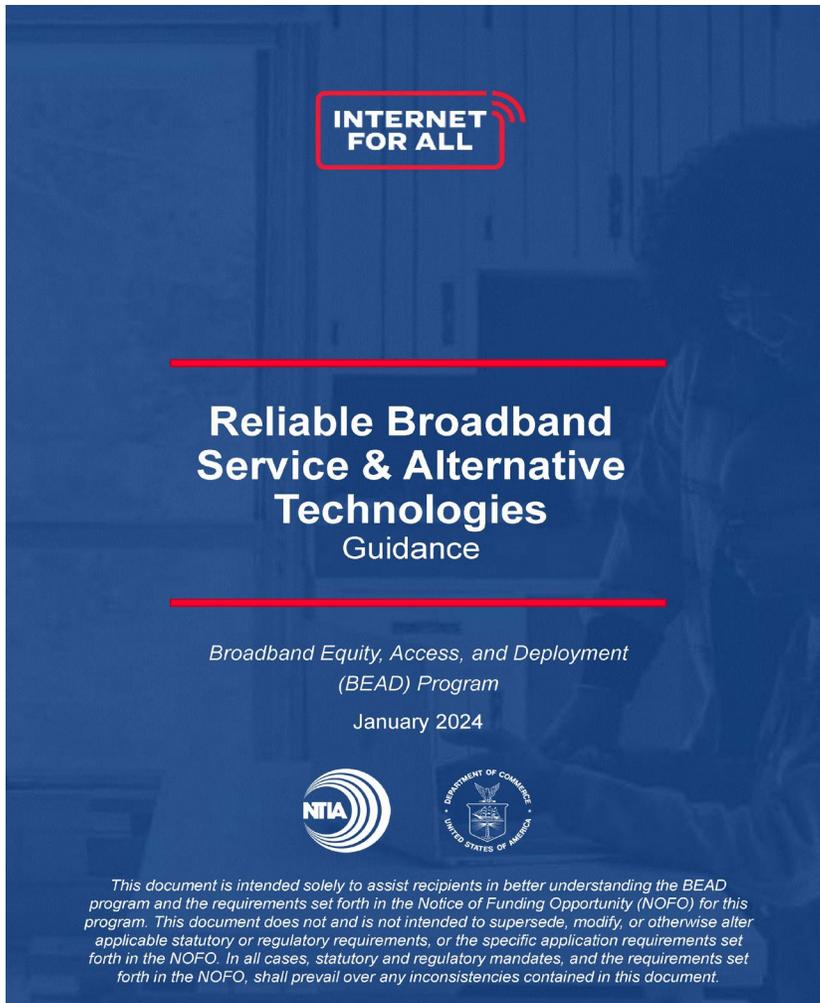
“WBO is facing a significant funding shortfall and does not anticipate being able to provide fiber service to every unserved and underserved BSL. In setting its benchmarks equal to the State’s BEAD allocation, WBO intends to provide subgrantee applicants a realistic perspective of what portion of the subsidy they could hope to receive from the State if awarded a BEAD grant.”

Once applications are received, “WBO will calculate a benchmark BEAD allocation for an applicant’s project area by summing the previously published benchmarks for each CBG included in an applicant’s proposed project area.”



# APPLICATION PRIORITIZATION

# NTIA GUIDANCE

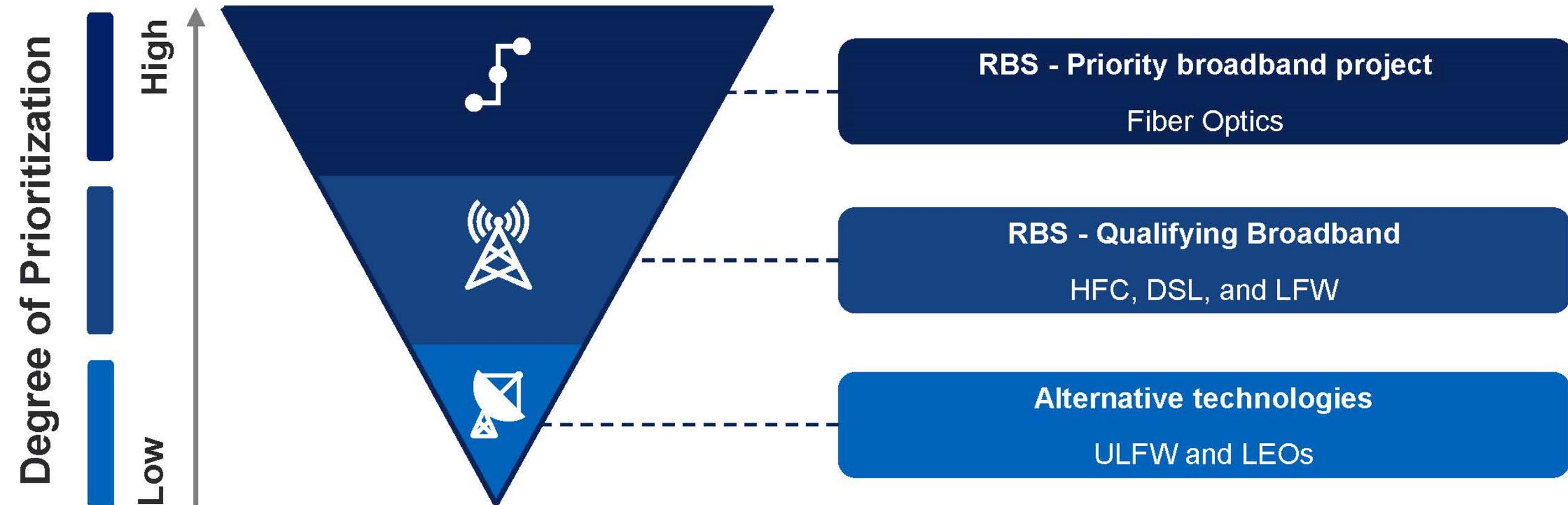


1. Key definitions
2. Broadband technology prioritization
3. When can alternative technologies be used?
4. Selection criteria

# KEY DEFINITIONS

- 1 Reliable broadband service (RBS):** The term “Reliable Broadband Service” means broadband service that is accessible to a location via:
  - fiber-optic technology (*BDC technology code 50*)
  - cable modem/hybrid fiber-coaxial (HFC) technology (*technology code 40*)
  - digital subscriber line (DSL) technology (*technology code 10*)
  - terrestrial fixed wireless technology utilizing entirely licensed spectrum (*includes spectrum licensed by rule*) or using a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum (*technology codes 71 and 72*).
- 2 Priority broadband project:** The term “Priority Broadband Project” means a project that will provision service via end-to-end fiber-optic facilities to each end-user premises.
- 3 Qualifying broadband:** To a location that is not a CAI, qualifying broadband is Reliable Broadband Service 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; “qualifying broadband” to a CAI is Reliable Broadband Service with a speed of not less than 1 Gbps for downloads and uploads alike and latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
- 4 Alternative technology:** Alternative technology is any technology that does not qualify as reliable broadband service; includes unlicensed fixed wireless (ULFW) and low-earth orbit satellites (LEOs). Alternative technologies must still meet the BEAD technical requirements.
- 5 BEAD technical requirements:** For the purposes of BEAD, speed must be not less than 100 Mbps for downloads and 20 Mbps for uploads. 95% of latency measurements during testing windows must fall at or below 100 milliseconds round-trip time.

# BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY PRIORITIZATION



# WHEN CAN ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGIES BE USED?



## Default Selection Process:

**Single Proposal:** If there is only one proposed Priority Broadband Project in a given location that is below the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT), it automatically becomes the default winner.

**Exception:** A different project may be chosen if the Eligible Entity requests, and the Assistant Secretary approves, a waiver for an alternative project.<sup>1</sup>



## Competitive Selection Process:

**Multiple Proposals:** In cases where multiple proposals exist and are deemed Priority Broadband Projects, and meet all other subgrantee qualifications (gating criteria), the Eligible Entity must use its approved competitive process to select the best project based on established selection criteria.



## High-Cost Fiber Proposals:

**Exceeding EHCPLT:** If all fiber project proposals in a project area exceed the cost threshold, the Eligible Entity has the discretion to consider other reliable broadband services or alternative technologies<sup>2</sup>.



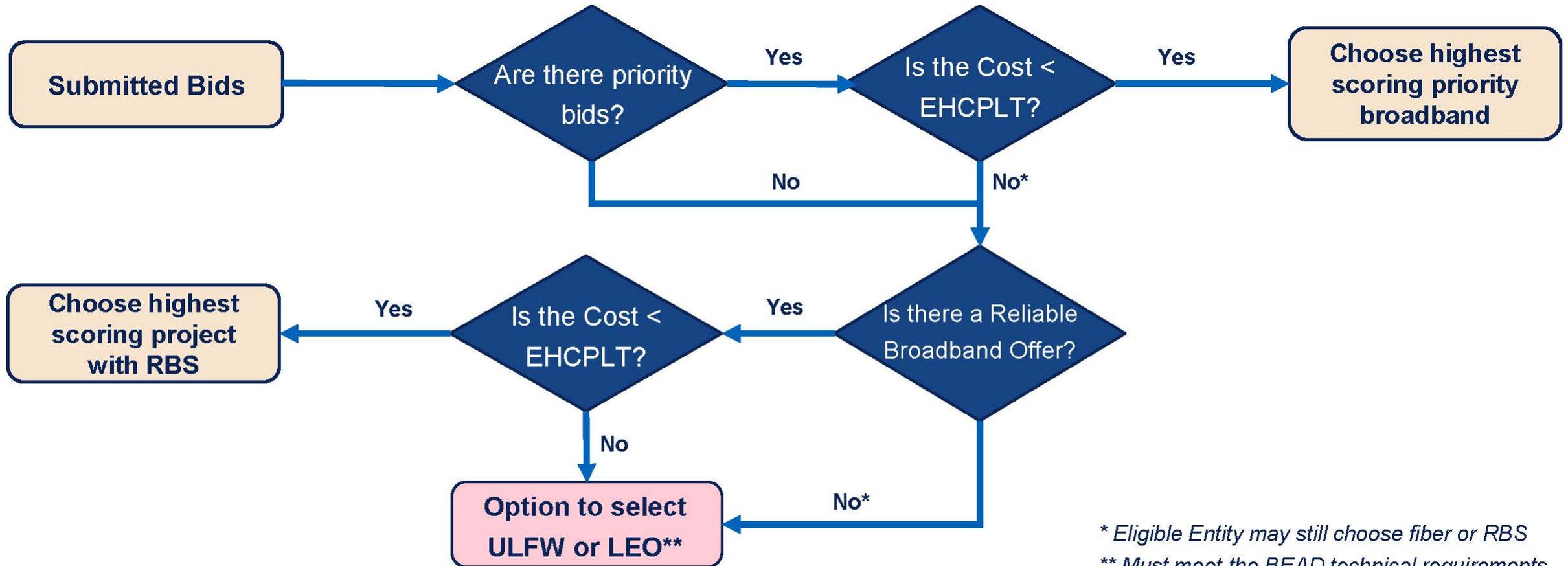
## Offer Solicitation and Scoring:

**Solicitation:** The Eligible Entity is permitted to request proposals for all technology types at once, including alternative technologies.

**Scoring Criteria:** Non-fiber (other last-mile broadband deployment projects) must have their own criteria, which can differ from the criteria for fiber projects (priority broadband projects). Examples: evaluation of long-term technical sustainability and the speed tiers for assessing affordability.

<sup>1</sup> See BEAD NOFO, Page 42- Footnote 63 - The Eligible Entity need not seek a waiver before rejecting a project whose costs, on average or for a given location, exceed the Eligible Entity's Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold.  
<sup>2</sup> Eligible options that comply with BEAD technical requirements including unlicensed fixed wireless and low-earth orbiting satellites.

# SELECTION CRITERIA

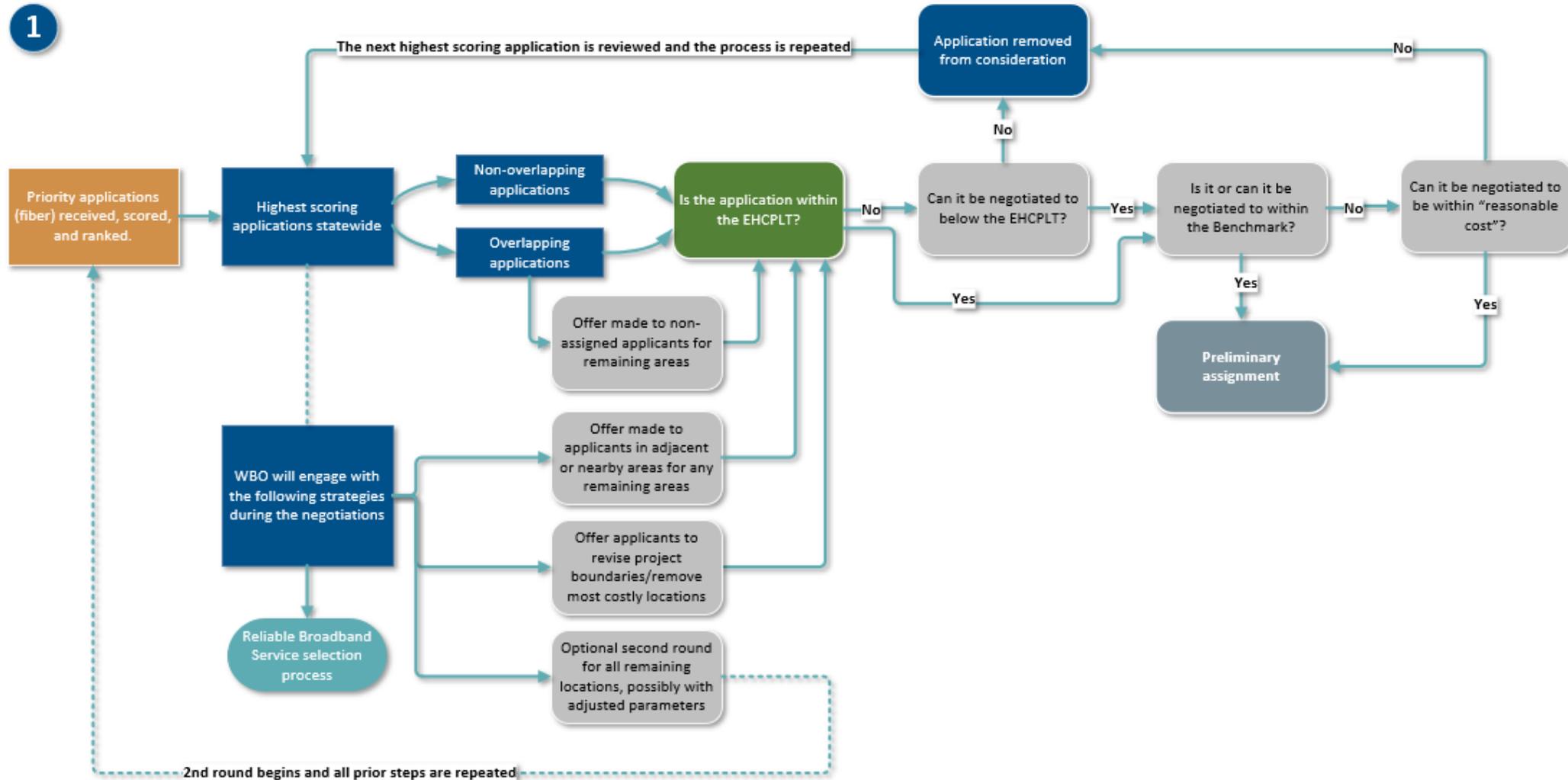


\* Eligible Entity may still choose fiber or RBS  
\*\* Must meet the BEAD technical requirements

# PROJECT SELECTION

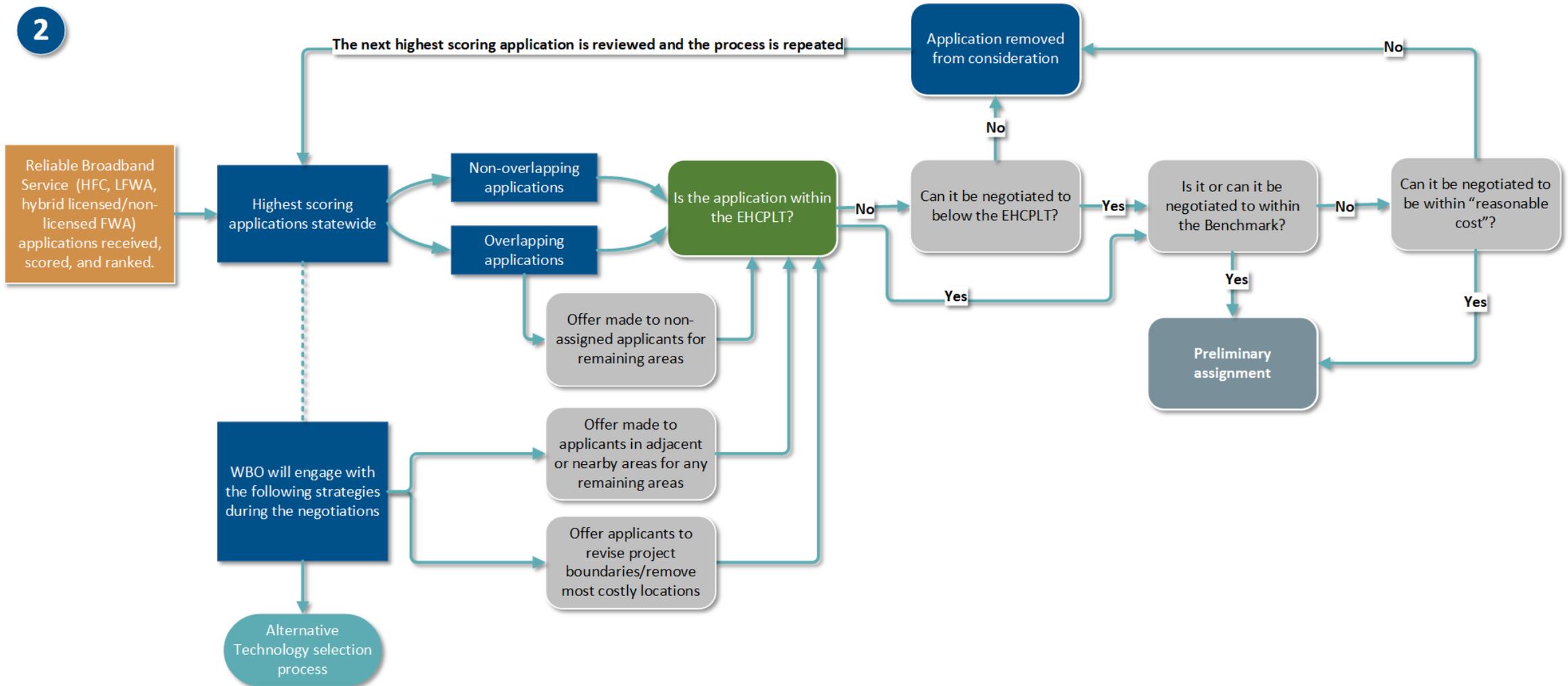
# SELECTION PROCESS - PRIORITY

1



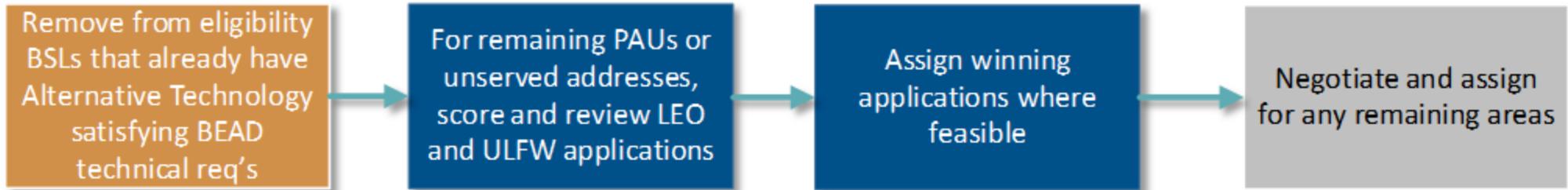
# SELECTION PROCESS – NON-PRIORITY

2



# ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY PROCESS

3



# QUESTIONS



<https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/>

[broadbandoffice@wyo.gov](mailto:broadbandoffice@wyo.gov)

# WEBINAR DATES



## **BEAD Grant Application Process**

September 13, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Grant Project Plan (Technical Requirements)**

September 19, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Grant Project Areas & Selection**

September 23, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Application Scoring Criteria**

September 30, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Application Financial Capability**

October 7, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Application Portal Deep Dive**

October 14, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT

## **BEAD Grant Application Q&A**

November 4, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM MT