

Marketing Communications Plan



| Indiana Rollout 2022



Purpose

Comprehensive planning is needed to ensure low-income residents in Bloomington, Columbus, Martinsville, Shelbyville, and Bartholomew County are well informed of the opportunity to access affordable and high-quality fiber internet. Many communities, face significant broadband access challenges which were further exacerbated by the global pandemic. A comprehensive fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) is vital as connectivity has the potential to serve as a great equalizer for communities that have traditionally lacked information and tools that support sustainable progress. This includes access to online education and schooling, workforce development and training, telehealth, etc. This document provides a strategic approach to outreach, communications, resourcing, and marketing to effectively reach low-income and hard-to-reach communities throughout Indiana.

Objectives

1. Define eligibility
2. Outline best practices for community engagement and outreach
3. Leverage key stakeholders, community-based organizations, and local events and engagements to reach low-income communities.
4. Define key marketing and communication tactics
5. Engage with as many low-income households as possible through effective and ongoing outreach



Eligibility

Eligibility requirements for subsidized high speed internet subscriptions will be closely aligned with the [Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#). Given that many programs share similar thresholds for income eligibility that subsequently tie back to income levels, our approach will be to target communities where individuals and households are eligible for programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Indiana Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Indiana Department of Education's free and reduced-price meals eligibility criteria, and Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) recipients of Social Security Income (SSI). In doing so, this leverages existing criteria, thereby lessening the burden and barrier to access a reduced-price program.

In comparison to other internet service providers (ISP) that serve Hoosier Network (HN) markets, HN will provide truly symmetrical highspeed packages to the low-income communities. This provides households with reliable high-speed services that will unlock opportunities for work, education, information access, and entertainment.





Competitive Advantage

	Cost (before ACP)	GBN ¹	Xfinity from Comcast	AT&T
Speeds				
3mbps/1mbps	\$5			X
10mbps/10mbps	\$10			X
50mbps/10mbps	\$9.95		X	
75mbps/10mbps	\$30			X
100mbps/10mbps	\$29.95		X	
100mbps/20mbps	\$30			X
250mbps/250mbps	\$30	X		
500mbps/500mbps	\$45	X		
1gb/1gb	\$50	X		
Qualifications				
Reduced Price Program		X	X	X
National School Lunch		X	X	X
SSI ²		X	X	
SNAP		X	X	X
TANF		X		
Other		X	X	

¹ GBN, also referred to as GigabitNow

² Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (what we commonly think of as "Social Security") recipients, or formally known as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), is a federal program funded through general tax revenues (not the Social Security tax) that provides cash to help individuals meet the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. For a full description of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) eligibility criteria, please see: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-eligibility-ussi.htm>



Planned Cost Contributions

Item	Description	Owner	Contributor
Customer Service	<p>The ISP is responsible for managing the customer relationship and will therefore operate a 24/7 customer support center. This center will manage the following: scheduling, installation, training, product development, service performance, etc.</p> <p>HN will operate a 24/7 Tier 2 and Tier 3 technical support center that will provide network support.</p>	ISP	HN
Drops	<p>HN will construct a fiber connection from the Right of Way (ROW) to the inside of the Unit ("Drop"). The Drop installation includes the installation of the ONT equipment (HN provided) within the Unit.</p> <p>HN will work with the Municipality to develop a drop subsidy program.</p>	HN	Municipality
Network Equipment and Gateways	The ISP will provide the gateway device (router, security, Wi-Fi, etc.). The gateway device is placed in the Unit and is connected to the ONT.	ISP	None
Program Education & Product Training	<p>The ISP, in partnership with the municipality will develop Program Education and an end-user training program which will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility • Sign-up • Product usage • Other 	ISP	Municipality
Digital Equity Fund	<p>The City of Bloomington will contribute \$1M to a Digital Equity Fund program in support of bridging the digital divide in low-income communities across Bloomington. Monies from the Digital Equity Fund will go towards device purchases and repairs as well as up to \$350 per low income drop. This would be a five-year program capped at a \$1M contribution from the City of Bloomington.</p> <p>HN will contribute \$85K to the Digital Equity Fund, per year for the term of the agreement.</p>	Municipality	HN
Marketing	<p>ISP will support various Sponsorships/Events, Door to door, IU student/faculty team, Online & social media, MDU specials, Mailers, Door hangers, City governments partnerships, Area school and educational opportunities, Local associations and business. HN will support the ISP with many of these initiatives.</p> <p>The ISP and HN will engage with the Municipality to support these activities particularly where any government partnerships are involved.</p>	ISP	HN
Fiber backbone	HN will construct a fiber network that passes the greater of 85% of low-income units or a percentage that is greater than HN's fiber market coverage ratio.	HN	None
Low-Income Program, Community Outreach Specialist	HN will hire a Community Outreach Specialist to support and drive the execution of the low-income outreach, marketing, and communications strategy	HN	Municipality



Stakeholders and Audiences

STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders shall represent groups, collectives, agencies, or organizations that have a high-level of influence and will serve as accountable partners during the rollout and ongoing engagement of low-income communities.

- Indiana School Corporation
- Government Officials and Offices
 - Community & Family Resources Department, City of Bloomington
 - Housing & Neighborhood Development Department, City of Bloomington
 - Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Faith Based Organizations
- Community-based organizations

AUDIENCES

Audiences shall represent individuals, groups, collectives, agencies, or organizations who will serve as the target audience for marketing, outreach, and communications.

- Human Resource Administrations
- Housing Authorities
- School District Authorities (serving low-income communities)
- SNAP Program Offices
- American Job Centers
- WorkOne
- United Way
- YMCA
- Community Centers

The Community Outreach Specialist (COS) will be accountable for the planning and implementation of outreach strategies. They are responsible for connecting people in the broader community by creating sponsorship agreements and cultivating relationships with businesses, individuals, and other relevant organizations. The COS will also serve as point for coordinating and liaising with the municipality on outreach and marketing efforts.³

³ A sample job description is provided in Appendix A.



Marketing Approach

1. Low Cost – Effective Strategy

Approach	Tactic	Implementation Leads
<p>Social Media Campaign – The development of a social media toolkit with predefined messaging to push out informative content, updates, and general information on a regular basis through various communication channels.</p>	<p>Facebook Instagram Media Outlets TikTok Twitter Webpage (Government and ISP) Etc.</p>	<p>Municipality: Municipality to run parallel campaigns further amplifying the message. (e.g., for example, https://bloomington.in.gov/contact/social-media)</p> <p>Internet Service Provider: GigabitNow to push messaging on its socials and to promote ACP benefits.</p> <p>Media Outlets: Engaging local media outlets (prior and during HN roll out) is the perfect way to generate “buzz” of the project. This should be in the form of press releases, joint interviews with city leaders, thought leadership on the importance of the initiative in the community, and concise instructions on “how to apply”.</p> <p>It is important to consider local radio for “public service” announcement opportunities. (These radio slots are usually free or at a discounted rate as the information benefits the community).</p>

HN marketing will focus on the value and speed of services and will leverage the concept of the fastest broadband available exclusively to the targeted audience. Themes will include “Gigabit Internet is coming,” and “True Fiber Internet is Here.”

2. Mid Cost - Effective Strategy

Approach	Tactic	Implementation Leads
<p>Meeting People Where They Are – The deployment of area and community events include farmers markets, traditional holiday events, county fairgrounds events, annual events, and festivals to increase presence and program recognition. This will ensure that we are meeting people where they are and to be considered part of the community.</p>	<p>Mobile Outreach Unit Tabling Local Events (e.g., festivals, farmers markets, schools, etc.) Sponsorship opportunities University peak period outreach (i.e., move-in periods, etc.)</p>	<p>Municipality: Provide staffing and outreach support leading up to events and during events.</p> <p>Internet Service Provider: GigabitNow to deploy mobile outreach units and event tents to raise awareness and assist people with sign-up and registration for ACP.</p> <p>Media Outlets: Generate buzz around events and make residents aware of opportunities to learn more about the reduced-price high-speed internet program.</p>



3. Mid Cost - Effective Strategy

Approach	Tactic	Implementation Leads
<p>Grassroots Outreach – Deploying staff on-the-ground as fiber is rolled out, allowing education and immediate reservation for fiber Internet.</p>	<p>Door hangers Door-to-door outreach Inserts in utility bills Local Council Meetings Mailers Pamphlets in City Welcome Packets Flyering</p>	<p>Municipality: The provision of a Community Outreach Coordinator to facilitate one-on-one engagements. [See Appendix A]</p> <p>Internet Service Provider: TBD</p>

4. High Cost - Effective Strategy

Approach	Tactic	Implementation Leads
<p>Traditional Marketing – This would entail all marketing that is not online. Creating tangible visibility and brand recognition throughout Indiana.</p>	<p>Large-scale print Direct mail Public transportation ads Targeted robo calls</p>	<p>Municipality: [TBD]</p> <p>Internet Service Provider: [TBD]</p> <p>Media Outlets: [TBD]</p>





Communications Approach

→ *Partner with organizations and local leaders who are already linked to the targeted population.*

1. There are many city run programs and nonprofit organizations (community partners) who have a rich history and demonstrated rapport with the targeted population. They will be key ambassadors and advocates as we strive to reach low-income residents.
2. These individuals will need to be equipped with marketing materials, social media toolkits, facts sheets, and valuable talking points to answer questions that will arise.
3. They should also know how to screen for eligibility and pipeline individuals to receive HN internet service when it rolls out.
4. Lastly, it will be critical for HN to get on the agenda of local council meetings to share how this service will benefit the community.

→ *Saturate local media outlets.*

1. Engaging local media outlets (prior and during HN roll out) is the perfect way to generate “buzz” of the project. This should be in the form of press releases, joint interviews with city leaders, thought leadership on the importance of the initiative in the community, and concise instructions on “how to apply”.
2. Local media will also be key in driving traffic to designated sites where residents can receive assistance in applying or determining eligibility.
3. It is important to consider local radio for “public service” announcement opportunities. (These radio slots are usually free or at a discounted rate as the information benefits the community).⁴

→ *Connect with local event coordinators and large retailers.*

1. Each city has local happenings that require sponsorship as well as high traffic retailers (Walmart, grocery stores, etc.) that would be ideal for info tables and on the ground brand ambassadors to engage the community.
2. This outreach method is a great way to “meet residents where they are.”

⁴ See attached appendix B for a list of local media contacts.



Key Messaging

[To be developed w/ other marketing materials]

- Why is this important? What positive difference will this project make in the community?
- Overall timeline of the project
- Eligibility
- How to apply
- Where to apply
- Where can residents receive assistance with applying
- Timeframe from application to approval or denial
- What happens after approval?
- All associated cost (installation, equipment, monthly fee, etc.)
- Advantages of HN compared to other local providers

Action Planning

Activity	Target Audience	Lead ⁵	Timing
Engage Community Partners	Stakeholders	TPMA	June - Dec 2022
Engage Sponsorship Opportunities/ Local Retailers	Stakeholders	TPMA	June - Dec 2022
Development of Key Messaging	Stakeholders	HN	May 2022
Development of Marketing Material (web and print)	Residents	ISP	May 2022
Development of Press Packet	Stakeholders	TPMA	June 2022
Engage Local Media for Coverage	Residents	TPMA	June - Dec 2022
Ad Placements	Residents	TPMA	June - Dec 2022
Ongoing Outreach and Communications	Residents and Stakeholders	HN	Dec 2022 - Dec 2023

⁵ Thomas P Miller Associates (TPMA) is an Indiana-based consulting firm with experience in economic and workforce development including recent projects focused on community engagement and broadband connectivity. TPMA has been hired by Meridiam to provide on-the-ground support for all outreach, marketing, and communication efforts.

Measurement of Success

Take Rates in the low-income communities should reflect HN's take rates in the non-low-income communities.





Appendix A

Community Outreach Specialist Job Description

We are searching for a talented and professional Community Outreach Specialist to maintain all community outreach activities. You will represent the company and work with the management team to develop and implement initiatives that increase company visibility within the surrounding community.

The ideal candidate will need to be self-motivated, enthusiastic, and community-driven to take on this exciting role. This position requires someone equipped with a positive attitude and readiness to be a team player.

Responsibilities:

- Maintain a calendar of outreach activities, including community events, workshops, appearances, and other communication opportunities.
- Prepare an annual budget for community outreach activities.
- Foster new relationships and nurture existing relationships with collaborative partners.
- Coordinate and liaise with municipalities and relevant point persons on outreach efforts
- Schedule regular outreach exhibitions in strategic locations throughout the community.
- Assist and support with the planning and execution of special events, including seeking out and organizing volunteers
- Develop and organize a volunteer base to support with on-the-ground outreach such as door-knocking, flyering, etc.

Preferred Skills:

- Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, business, or related fields.
- Preferred experience of 3-5 years within non-profit or community outreach and engagement activities.
- Bilingual preferred
- Outstanding written communication and presentation skills.
- Strong experience preparing reports.
- Friendly, enthusiastic, and positive attitude.
- Strong knowledge of social media and other basic marketing platforms.
- Detail-orientated with the ability to manage multiple projects at a time.

Requirements:

- Based in Central Indiana
- Is comfortable with tabling, door-knocking, and engaging with community members



Appendix B

Local Media Contacts

Publication	TV/Radio/Print	Contact - Position	Email	Phone Number
Bloomington				
The Herald Times	Print	Jill Bond - News Director	jbond@heraldt.com	812-336-4200
The Herald Times	Print	Janice Rickert - News Editor	jrickert@heraldt.com	812-336-4200
The Herald Times	Print	Rachel Smith - Reporter	rsmith@heraldt.com	812-336-4200
The Bloomingtonian	Print	Jeremy Hogan	jeremy@bloomingtonian.com	
CBS 4	TV	Contacts	news4@cbs4indy.com	317-632-5900
Fox 59	TV	Contacts	fox59news@fox59.com	317-632-5900
WGCL	Radio	Rob Humphry - Program Director	rob@wttsfm.com	812-332-3366
WFIU Public Radio (WFIU)	Radio	Staff Directory	See Contact	(812) 855-1357
WFIU Public TV (WTIU)	TV	Staff Directory	See Contact	(812) 855-5900
WFHB	Radio	Kada Young - News Director	news@wfhb.org	812-202-NEWS
Columbus				
The Columbus Dispatch	Print	Darrel Rowland - Senior Editor	drowland@dispatch.com	1-888-884-9026
The Columbus Dispatch	Print	Amelia Robinson - Opinion and Community Engagement Editor	ameliarobinson@dispatch.com	1-888-884-9026
The Columbus Dispatch	Print	Cole Behrens - Reporter	cbehrens@dispatch.com	1-888-884-9026
The Columbus Dispatch	Print	Taijuan Moorman	tmooman@dispatch.com	1-888-884-9026
The Columbus Dispatch	Print	Bethany Bruner	bbruner@dispatch.com	1-888-884-9026
The Republic	Print	Julie McClure - Editor	jmccclure@therepublic.com	812-372-7811 (main)
Columbus Alive	Print	Andy Downing - Editor	adowning@columbusalive.com	614-221-2449
Columbus Alive	Print	Joel Oliphint - Associate Editor	joliphint@columbusalive.com	614-221-2449
Korn Country & WJCP	Radio	Fritz Moser - Program Director	fmoser@korncountry.com	
QMIX 107.3	Radio	Brittany Gray - Opps Manager - Morning Host	bgray@qmix.com	



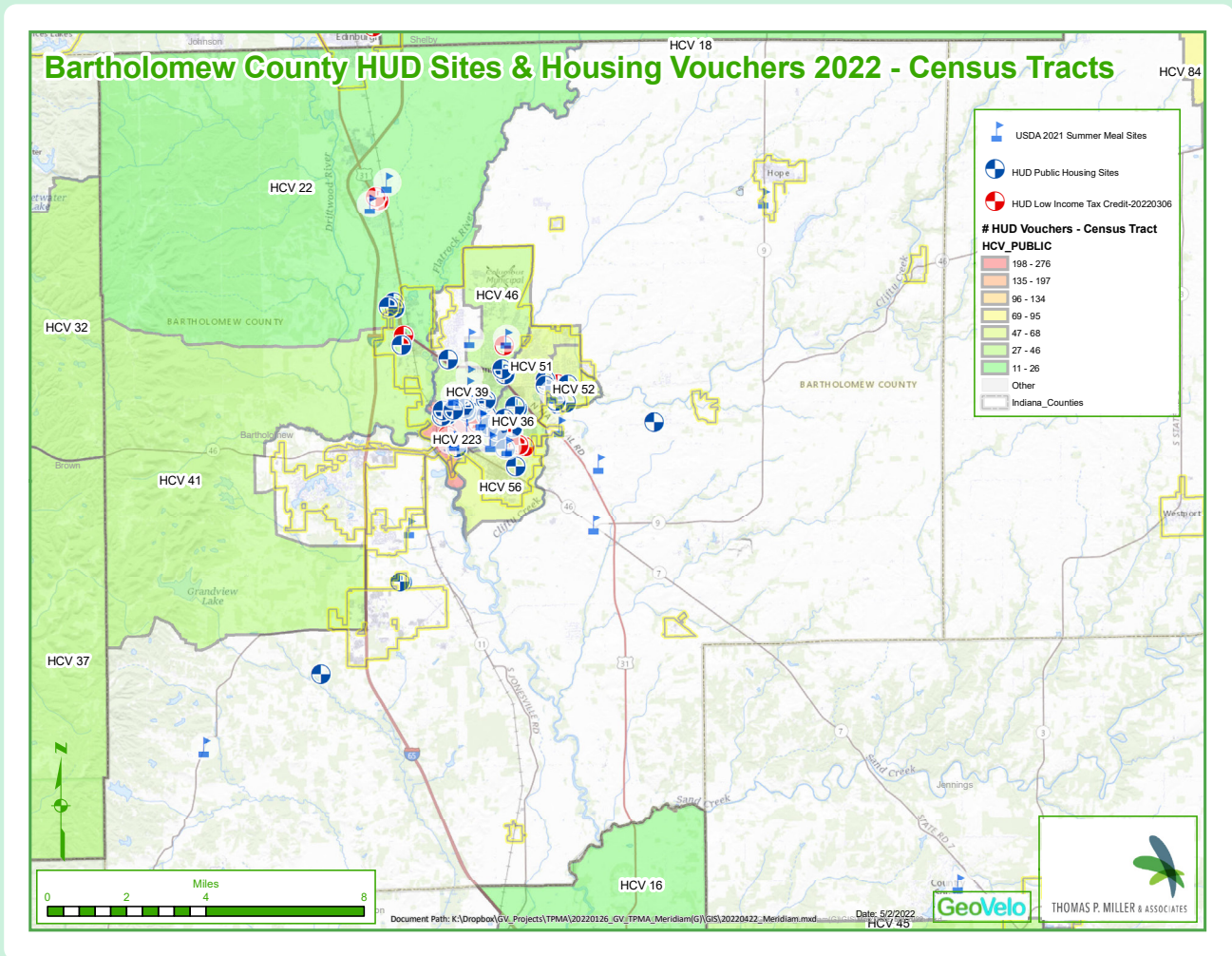
Publication	TV/Radio/Print	Contact - Position	Email	Phone Number
Martinsville				
Reporter-Times	Print	Lance Gideon -Editor	lgideon@reporter-times.com	1-888-561-5235
Reporter-Times	Print	Grace Phillips - News Reporter	GPhillips@Gannett.com	1-888-561-5235
Reporter-Times	Print	Peter Blanchard - General Assignment Reporter	pblanchard@reporter-times.com	1-888-561-5235
Shelbyville				
The Shelbyville News	Print	Travis Weik- Editor	tweik@shelbynews.com	317-395-7523
The Shelbyville News	Print	Ross Flint- Staff Writer	rflint@shelbynews.com	317-398-1279
The Shelbyville News	Print	Hannah Gunnell - Staff Writer	hgunnell@shelbynews.com	317-398-1284



Appendix C

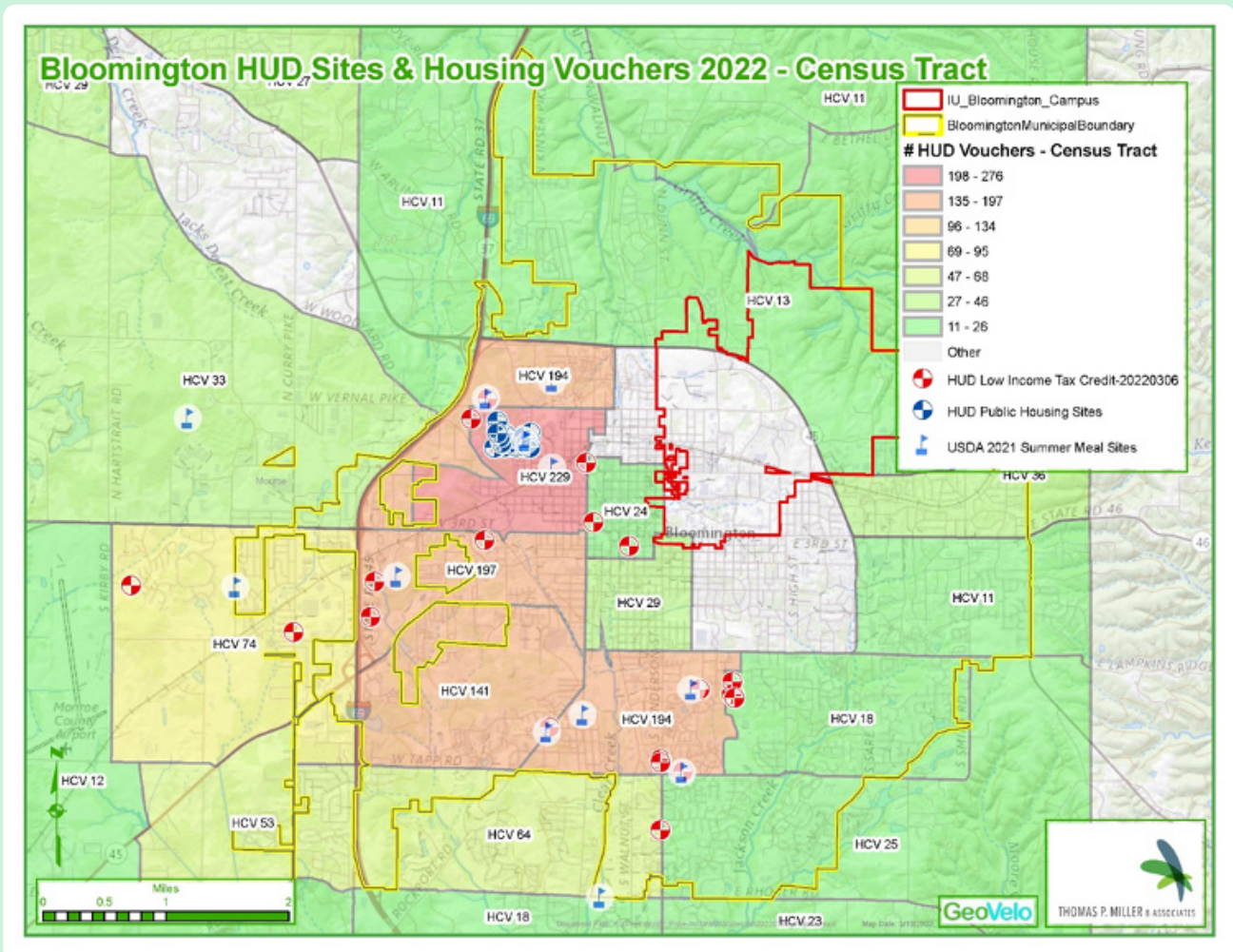
Target Outreach Sites

Bartholomew County



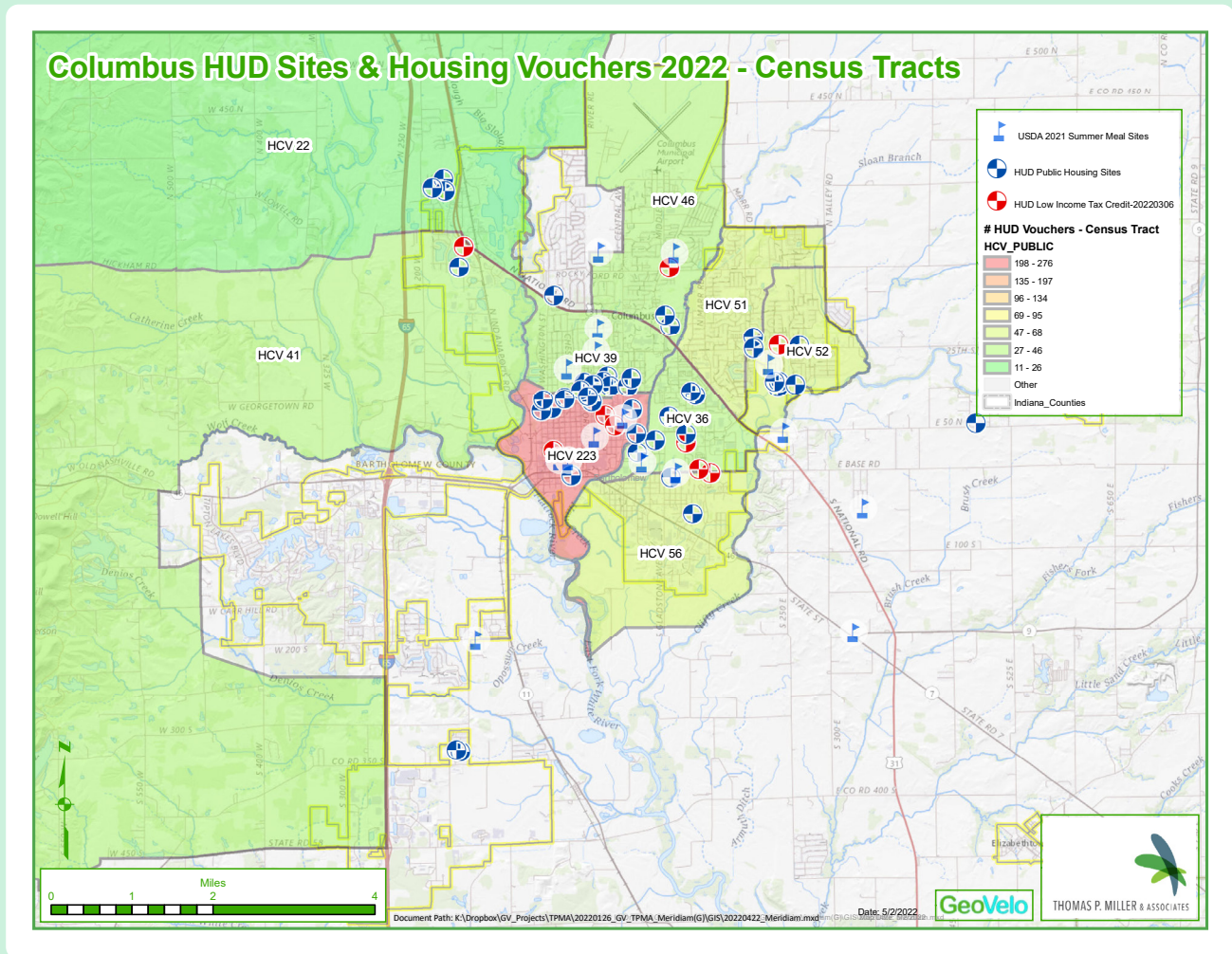


Bloomington



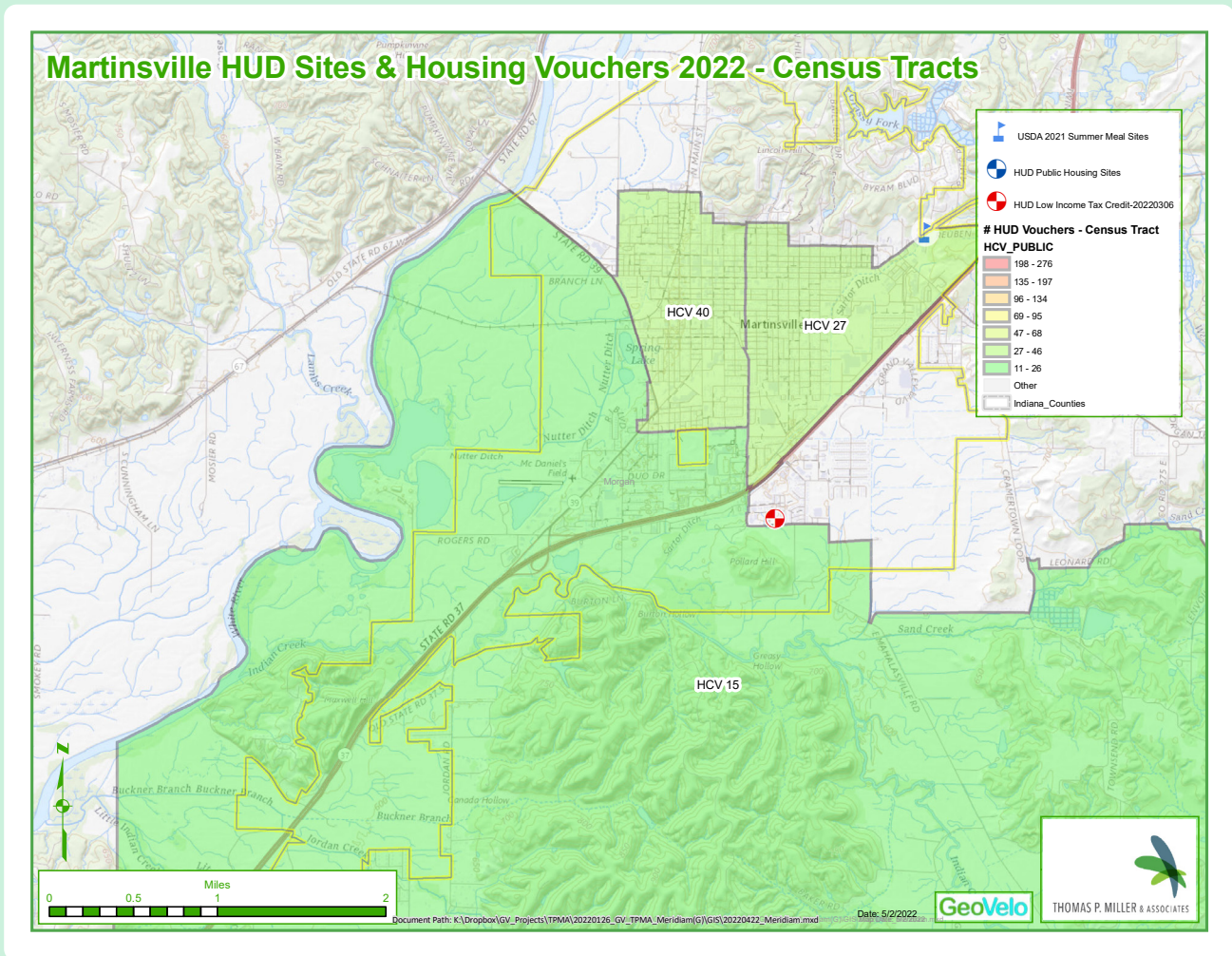


Columbus



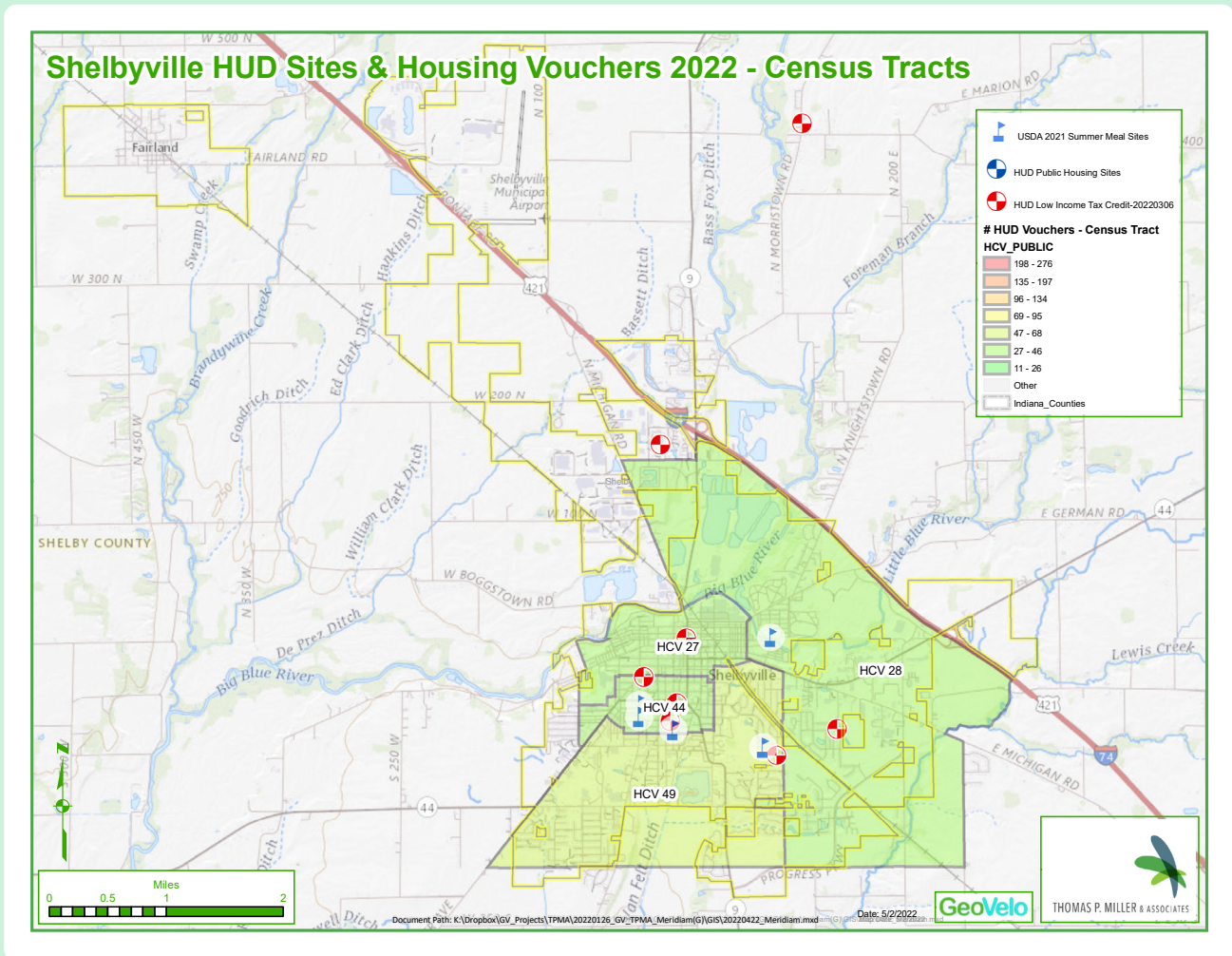


Martinsville





Shelbyville





Appendix D

Number of recipients in state (by eligibility category, age, and receipt of OASDI Benefits) and number of payments, by county, December 2020.⁶

County	ANSI Code	Total	Category		Age			SSI recipients also receiving OASDI	Amount of payments (thousands of dollars)
			Aged	Blind and disabled	Under 18	18-64	65 or older		
Bartholomew	18005	1,215	40	1,175	194	867	154	408	729
Franklin	18047	422	21	401	49	310	63	136	247
Monroe	18105	1,835	115	1,720	229	1,307	299	651	1,134
Morgan	18109	945	30	915	124	706	115	290	611
Shelby	18145	713	24	689	135	493	85	202	386
Totals			230	4,900	731	3,683	716	1,687	3,107

⁶ Data provided by the Social Security Administration, recipients as of December 2020. Available for download at: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/



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