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FCC publishes broadband plan framework

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The FCC has published a framework that outlines the final development phase of a National Broadband Plan, which the commission must present to Congress in February.

The framework outlines options for a host of possibilities, ranging from universal service to launching broadband service across tribal lands. Blair Levin, the man in charge of this effort, told journalists via a conference call that despite having to present a broadband plan to Congress in about two months, not every question needs to be answered beforehand.

Levin said that a bill currently being considered in the House (H.R. 3125) authorizing a spectrum inventory would be good to have but not necessary. "Obviously, we agree with the concept, but I don't think we need a bill... it's not a necessity," Levin said.

Levin was vague about any timeline for spectrum availability but underscored the importance of moving the process along. The FCC has sent out a notice seeking official public comment on how TV broadcasters use their current spectrum holdings, and whether they should give up some spectrum for wireless broadband use. "If we don't get more spectrum to wireless carriers, the level at which they will be able to compete with wireline broadband are diminished. It's just that simple."

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