



# Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition | Fact Sheet 2018

**Goal:** The Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition and its supporters request the 2018 Legislature to fund the Border- to-Border Broadband Development Grant program with \$51.48 million in 2018 to achieve the state’s 2026 broadband speed goal of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 20 Mbps upload. Consistent and stable funding of the grant program is important to allow economic development agencies, local governments and others to be creative and collaborative in their approach to providing broadband services to these areas.

**Background:** The Legislature has traditionally provided funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Program on an annual basis, rather than over the biennium. Last session, the Legislature included \$20 million for the program. The Office of Broadband Development received 70 applications in the 2017 grant cycle totaling over \$50 million in requests for broadband infrastructure projects throughout the state.

The Governor’s Task Force on Broadband Report recommends \$71.48 million per biennium in on-going funding over the next four years. This will provide broadband internet speeds of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps to the 252,000 households that currently lack such service—and will help Minnesota achieve its statutory broadband speed goal of connecting all Minnesotans with broadband internet speeds of 100 Mbps/20 Mbps by 2026.

Broadband and internet speeds are improving across Minnesota. What we’ve achieved is a patchwork of highly successful areas, leaving behind many rural areas that are underserved and will have difficult time reaching the goal without state assistance grants.

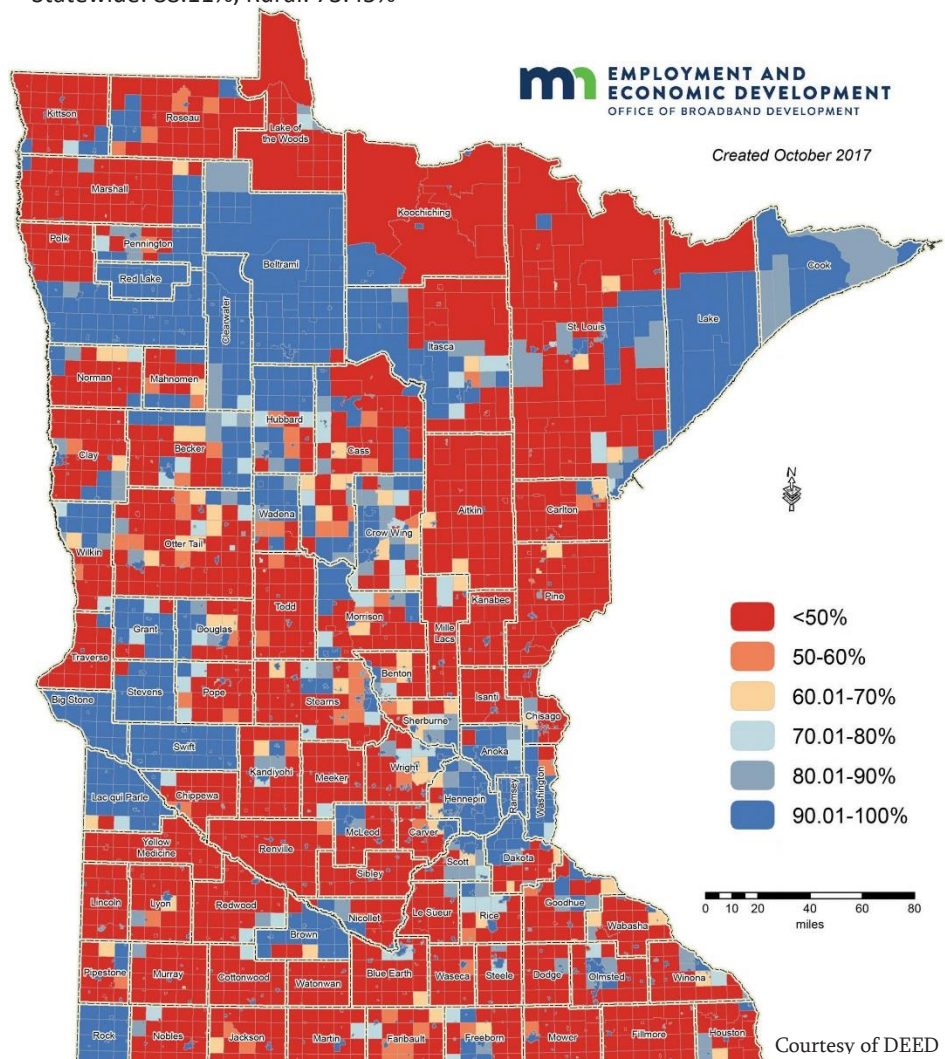
“Everyone in Minnesota will be able to use convenient, affordable world-class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe.”

-The Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition’s vision

## 2017 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households served by broadband service of at least 25Mbps/3Mbps

Statewide: 88.11%, Rural: 73.45%



“Expanding access to broadband has not and should not become a partisan issue; all Minnesotans, regardless of political affiliation, need access to broadband.”

– Margaret Anderson Kelliher, chair, Governor’s Task Force on Broadband, *MN Governor’s Task Force on Broadband Annual Report 2017*

## A Sustainable Rural Economy in Minnesota

There are proven economic benefits to reliable, high-speed broadband across all sectors of Minnesota’s economy: education, agriculture, main street businesses, manufacturing, and health care. To ensure rural areas, their businesses and citizens, do not get left behind, it is critical for them to be able to access high-speed internet.

- Investments in broadband infrastructure strengthen our state and regional economies by improving competitiveness and service delivery.
- Every dollar invested in broadband infrastructure results in significant direct and indirect benefits to the local economy.
- Business owners need consistent and reliable high-speed internet to increase revenues, reduce costs and improve customer service.
- Broadband is important for employee recruitment and retention. Businesses wanting to retain or attract young workers cannot compete with urban centers unless they have high-speed internet.



[mnbroadbandcoalition.com](http://mnbroadbandcoalition.com)

*“E-connectivity is fundamental for economic development, innovation, advancements in technology, workforce readiness, and an improved quality of life. Reliable and affordable high-speed internet connectivity will transform rural America as a key catalyst for prosperity.”* —USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue, *Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity*. October 2017.

## Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition

- Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
- Association of Minnesota Counties
- Cloquet Valley Internet Initiative
- Chisago County HRA/EDA
- Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota
- City of Winthrop
- Cloquet Valley Internet Initiative
- Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
- Community of Minnesota Resorts
- Community Technology Advisors Corp
- CTC
- Cooperative Network
- Cooperative Network Services
- Development Services, Inc
- East Central MN Educational Cable Cooperative
- East Central Regional Development Commission
- Economic Development Association of Minnesota
- Essentia Health
- Finley Engineering
- Fond du Lac Tribal Communications
- GPS 45:93
- Great River Energy
- Greater Minnesota Partnership
- Growth and Justice

- Headwaters Regional Development Commission
- Hiawatha Broadband Communications
- IMPACT 20/20
- Institute for Local Self-Reliance
- Iron Range Economic Alliance
- ISD 317 Deer River
- Kanabec County EDA
- Kandiyohi County Economic Development
- League of Minnesota Cities
- Mid-Minnesota Development Commission
- Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative
- Leech Lake Tribal Telecommunications
- Lincoln County EDC
- Meeker County EDA
- MN Association of Community Telecommunications and Administrators
- Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers
- Minnesota Association of Small Cities
- Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers
- Minnesota Association of Townships
- Minnesota Farmers Union
- Minnesota Library Association
- Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association
- Minnesota Public Broadband Alliance
- Minnesota Rural Education Association
- Minnesota Rural Electric Association
- MN River Valley Education District

- MN Rural Counties Caucus
- MVTV Wireless
- National Joint Purchasing Alliance
- Nemadji Research Corporation
- Nobles County Economic Opportunity Network
- North Region Health Alliance
- North Star Township
- Northland Foundation
- Northwest Minnesota Foundation
- NW Regional Development Commission
- PCs for People
- Project FINE
- Range Association of Municipalities and Schools
- Redwing Ignite
- Region 5 Regional Development Commission
- Region Nine Development Commission
- Sherburne County EDA
- Schools for Equity in Education
- Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative
- Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
- Southwest Initiative Foundation
- Southwest Regional Development Commission
- Turtle Island Communications
- Treacy Information Services
- Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission
- West Central Initiative