



**EMPLOYMENT AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Office of Broadband Development  
AMC Transportation & Infrastructure Policy Committee  
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# Enhance Broadband Development



- Access to quality, high-speed broadband is a critical factor in the economic and social sustainability of all Minnesota communities, and it is a need which has grown dramatically since the start of the pandemic.
- Governor Walz proposes investing **\$50 million** to increase access to reliable, high-speed internet across Minnesota.

# Timeline

## Minnesota Broadband Development Policy

2008-  
2010

- 2008 - First broadband taskforce created (by statute)
- 2009 - First broadband map created (prior to federal mapping program)
- 2010 - Broadband goals established (10/5 by 2015)

2011-  
2014

- 2011 - Dayton Administration Broadband Task Force created (by executive order)
- 2013 - Office of Broadband Development created in law, placed at DEED
- 2014 - Border to Border Broadband Infrastructure Grant created in law; \$20M appropriated

2015-  
2018

- 2015 - Additional funding for broadband grants: \$10.58M
- 2016 - Broadband goals revised (25/3 by 2022; 100/20 by 2026); \$35M appropriated for grant program
- 2017 - Border to Border program renewed; \$20M appropriated
- 2018 - Bi-partisan support but no funding for grants appropriated in 2018

2019-  
2021

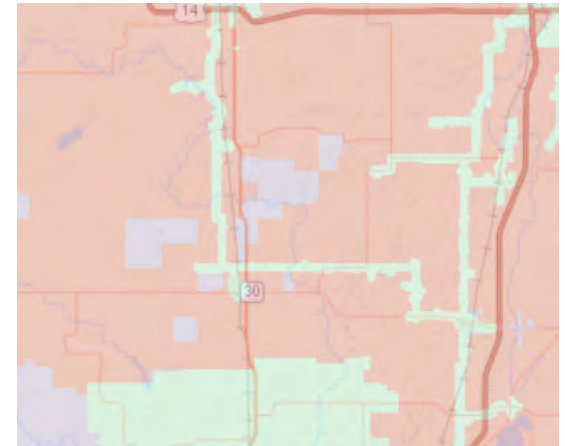
- 2019 - Border to Border grant: \$20M for FY20 and \$20M for FY21; Telecommuter Forward!; Walz Admin. Task Force created
- 2020 - \$20M from biennial appropriation; some local govts using CARES Act funding for broadband
- 2021 - Governor recommends \$50M for broadband grants; Task Force recommends \$120M for broadband grants for the biennium

# MN Broadband Policy Framework

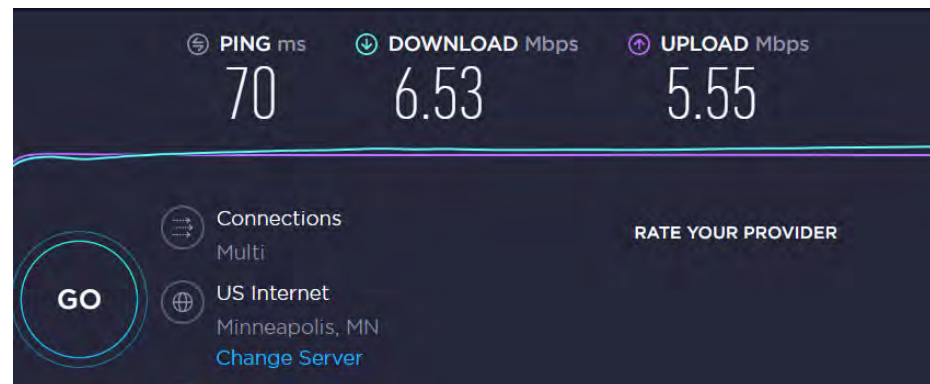


# MN Broadband Speed Goals

- By 2022, all homes and businesses have access to broadband service of at least 25Mbps download and 3Mbps upload
- By 2026, all homes and businesses have access to at least one provider offering service of at least 100Mbps download and 20Mbps upload



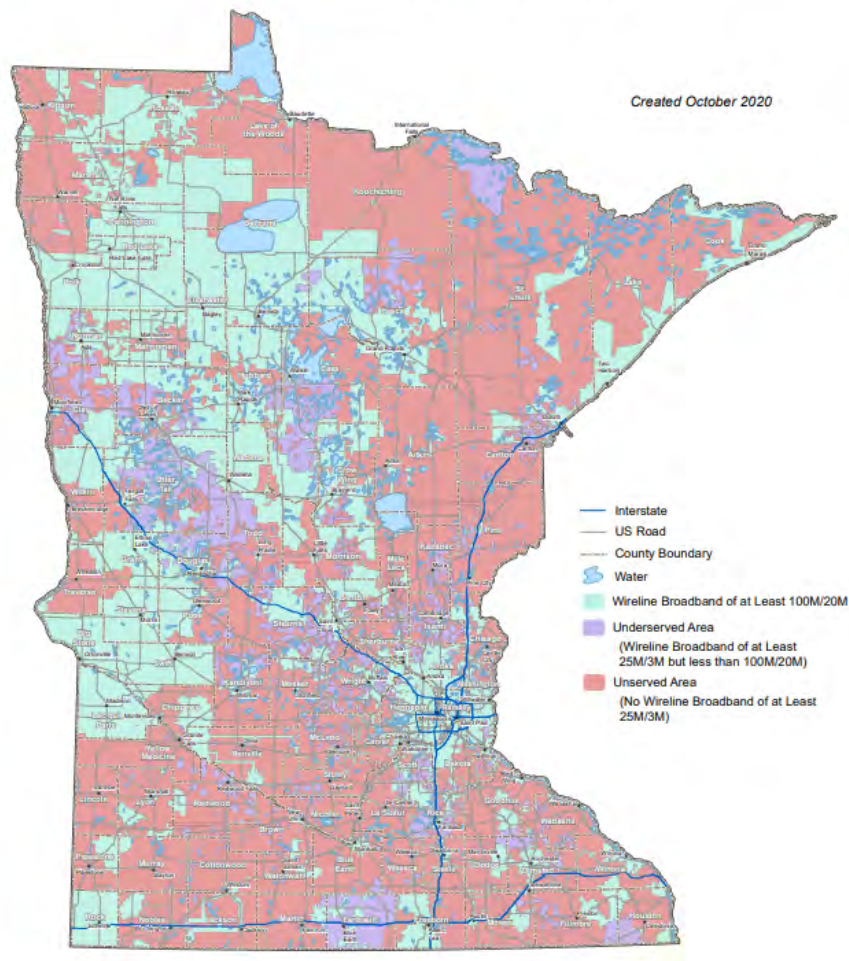
Minn. Stat. 237.012



## 2020 Provider Broadband Service Inventory

### Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program

Unserved, Underserved and Served Broadband Areas



# Progress...but not done yet

- **157,000** households without access to 25/3 (2022 goal)
- **256,000** without access to 100/20 (2026 goal)

### State Statutory Broadband Goals:

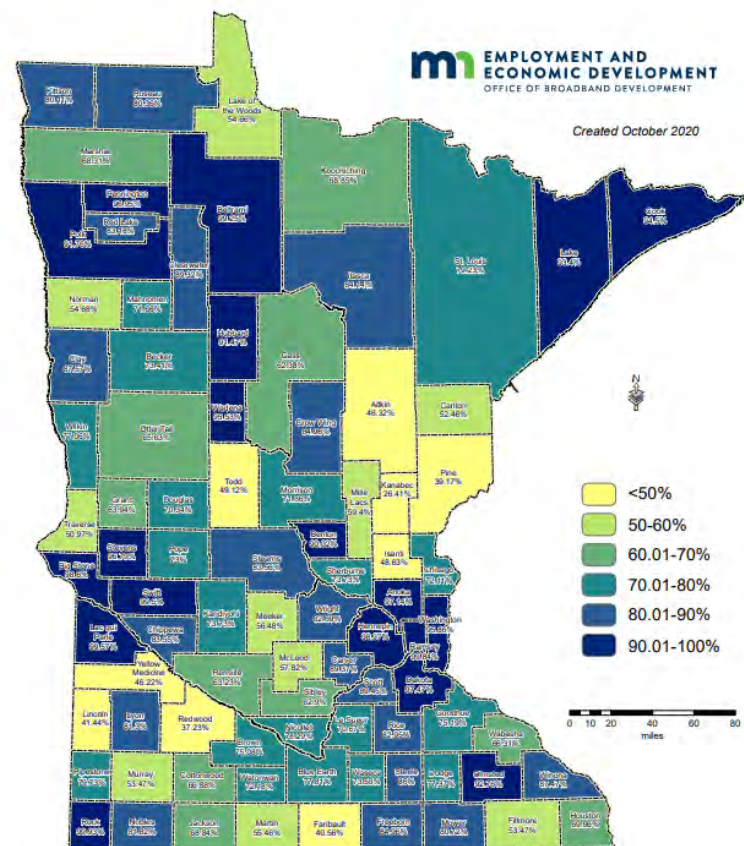
All Homes and Businesses will have access to broadband service of at least:

- 25 Mbps download by 3 Mbps upload (Current FCC definition) by 2022
- 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload by 2026



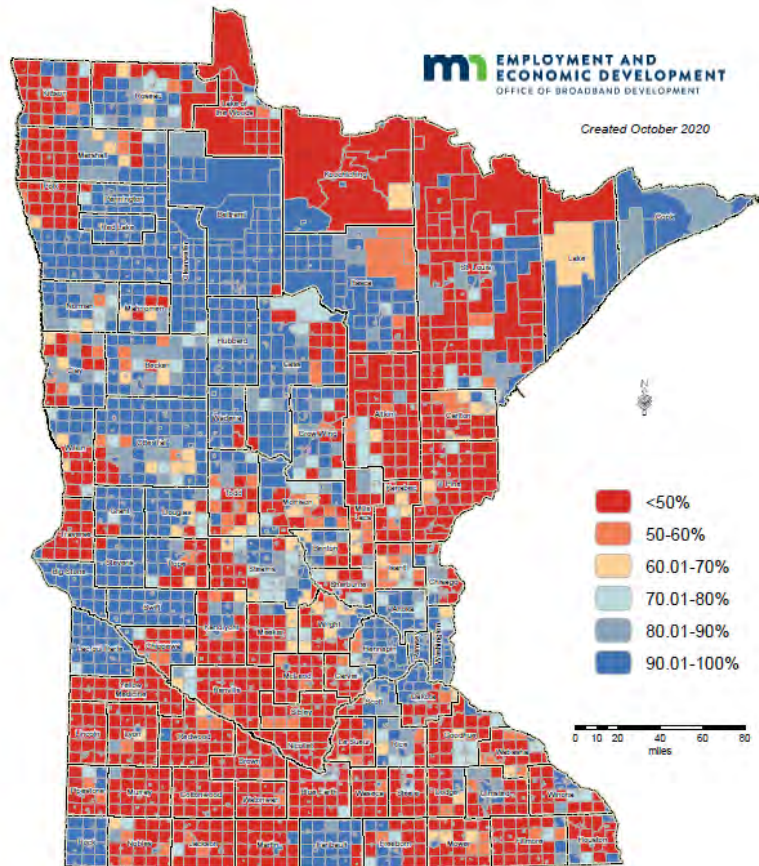
## 2020 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline  
Broadband Service by County  
At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds  
Statewide Availability: 87.75%, Rural: 72.53%



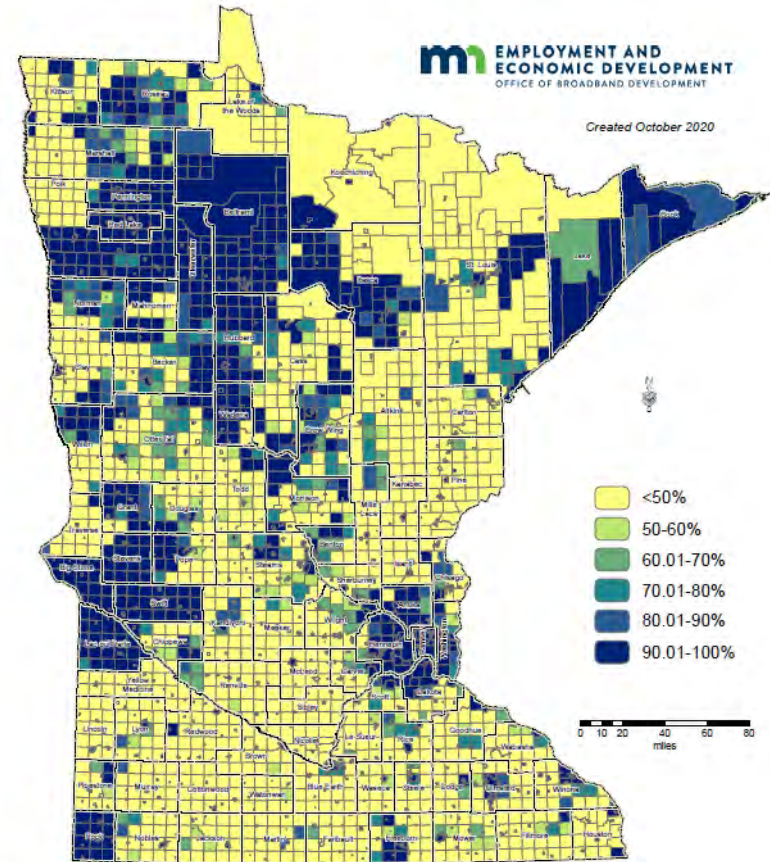
## 2020 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline  
Broadband Service by City/Township  
At Least 25 Mbps Download/3 Mbps Upload Speeds  
Statewide Availability: 92.47%, Rural: 83.10%



## 2020 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline  
Broadband Service by City/Township  
At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds  
Statewide Availability: 87.75%, Rural: 72.53%





# Broadband Grant Program

Since 2014, the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant program has provided broadband access to over 56,800 homes and businesses in unserved and underserved areas.



# MN Border to Border Broadband Development Grant

- **Grant purpose:** To provide financial assistance for the acquisition and installation of middle-mile and last-mile broadband infrastructure to areas of the state that do not have wireline access at federal and state minimum standard speeds.
- **Allowable costs:** Examples of allowable costs: final project design; obtaining construction permits; purchase and/or construction of facilities, including construction of both “middle mile” and “last mile” infrastructure; and installation and testing of the equipment used to provide broadband service.



# Border to Border Broadband Development Grant – Overview - Eligibility

- Who is eligible to apply?
  - An incorporated business or partnership
  - A political subdivision
  - An Indian tribe
  - A Minnesota nonprofit organized under 317A
  - A Minnesota cooperative organized under 308A or 308B
  - A Minnesota limited liability corporation organized under 322C for the purpose of expanding broadband access





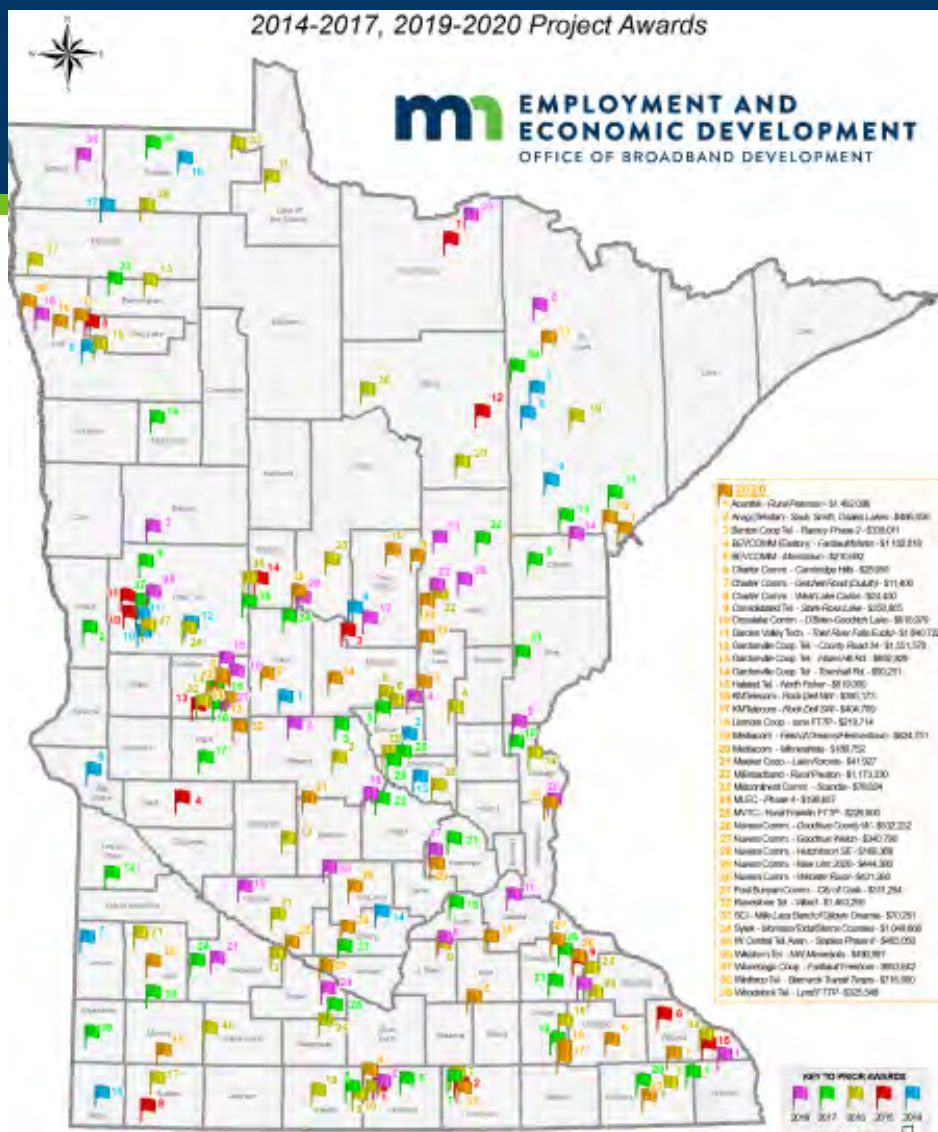
# Border to Border Broadband Development Grant Overview



- Annual general fund appropriations in 6 out of 7 years
- Distributed in a single competitive grant round each FY funding received
- Technology must be scalable to at least 100Mbps Up/Down
- Cap of \$5M per grant award
- At least 1 to 1 match (50% of eligible expenses) required  
(More points awarded for higher match)
- Grant awards are to be geographically dispersed
- Speeds offered must achieve 25/3, most offer 100/20 or 1G







## MN Border to Border Broadband Incentive Grants

	2020	All 6 Years
Funding	\$20.6M	\$126.2M
Applications Received	64	360
Awards:		
Awards Made	39	179
Households Served	5180	48,430
Businesses Served	1708	8,377
Institutions Served	34	394
Projects:		
Matching Investments Completed	\$33.7M	\$180.2M
	--	~109

# Federal Funding Opportunities

## FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)

- ~\$408M preliminary award for MN projects
- 142,000 MN locations

## Consolidated Appropriations Act (passed December 2020):

- NTIA Broadband Expansion to Underserved Communities - \$300M
- NTIA Tribal Connectivity - \$1B
- FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit - \$3.2B

# FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit

Congress has tasked the FCC with developing a new \$3.2 billion program to help U.S. households that are struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. With this new benefit, eligible households can get or stay connected in order to work remotely or find jobs, access critical healthcare services, and keep students connected to the classroom.

## About the Emergency Broadband Benefit

The Emergency Broadband Benefit provides a discount of

- up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households
- and up to \$75 per month for those on Tribal lands.

Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of

- up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop, or tablet from participating providers, if they contribute \$10-\$50 toward the purchase price.

Program eligibility details and participating providers will be announced in late February 2021.



**Become an Outreach Partner**

The FCC is mobilizing people and organizations to help share important consumer information about the Emergency Broadband Benefit. To participate, sign up at: <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

# Broadband and COVID-19

- Digital Divide is availability and affordability—State resources have only focused on availability
- Broadband needed for distance learning, telecommuting, telehealth, “ordering online”, communicating with family and friends
- FCC definition/Minnesota 2022 speed goal—25Mbps download/3Mbps upload—not adequate
- Necessity of broadband apparent—how to solve?





# Thank You!

Questions?