

2016 Border to Border Broadband Grant Awards Project Summaries

ACENTEK RURAL LANESBORO FIBER BUILD – GRANT: \$1,777,936

This last mile project will serve 431 unserved households, 42 unserved businesses, and 1 community anchor institution in the rural Lanesboro area, including Whalan, Carrolton Township, and Holt Township. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Fillmore County, Acentek will improve service to 1 Gigabit up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. The project directly affects 22 physical business buildings and provides telecommuting opportunities for employees of Rochester-based Mayo Clinic and IBM who live in the Lanesboro area, reducing 45-minute commutes to zero-minute commutes. This project has several non-financial partners, including Tri-County Electric and surrounding townships. Total eligible project cost is \$4,678,780. Local match is \$2,900,844.

ALBANY MUTUAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION BIG WATAB LAKE – GRANT: \$726,185

This last mile project will serve 242 unserved households near and around Big Watab Lake in Stearns County, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Albany Mutual will improve service levels to 1 Gbps, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal. Many families work in and around the St. Cloud area and need high speed broadband service for school and work. Albany Mutual will leverage its existing network infrastructure to build out to this area. Total eligible project cost is \$1,452,370. Local match is \$726,185.

ARVIG - REDWOOD COUNTY TELEPHONE MIDDLE MILE FIBER EXTENSION – GRANT: \$27,998

This middle mile project will serve 15 unserved households and 20 unserved businesses near Morgan, MN, in an area southeast of Redwood Falls. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Arvig – Redwood Telephone will improve service levels to 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, meeting the 2022 state speed goal. This is a rural farm area, home to Minnesota’s annual FarmFest, and relies on quality broadband service for precision agriculture applications and to monitor crops and livestock. Total eligible project cost is \$62,218. Local match is \$34,220.

BENTON COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY BOCK – GRANT: \$510,000

This last mile project will serve 337 unserved households, 37 unserved businesses and 1 community anchor institution in the city of Bock and portions of Hayland and Borgholm Townships in Mille Lacs County and a portion of South Fork Township in Kanabec County. In a

funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Benton Cooperative will improve unserved levels to 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload, reaching the 2026 state speed goal, increasing opportunities for educational access for all ages, telemedicine, telecommuting, and improved business development. Total eligible project cost is \$1,760,897. Local match is \$1,250,897.

BENTON COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY BUCKMAN – GRANT: \$276,230

This last mile project will serve 130 unserved households, 17 unserved businesses and 1 community anchor institution in the city of Buckman and sections of Buckman and Morrill Townships in Morrison County in central Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Benton Cooperative will improve unserved levels to 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload, reaching the 2026 state speed goal, increasing opportunities for educational access for all ages, telemedicine, telecommuting, and assisting the Morrison County Economic Development to enhance opportunities for existing businesses and those with an interest in locating to the area. Total eligible project cost is \$708,287. Local match is \$432,057.

BENTON COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY RAMEY – GRANT: \$225,100

This last mile project will serve 122 unserved households and 5 unserved businesses in the rural Ramey, MN exchange. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Benton Cooperative will improve unserved levels to 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload, reaching the 2026 state speed goal, increasing opportunities for educational access for all ages, telemedicine, telecommuting, and improved business development. Total eligible project cost is \$776,220. Local match is \$551,120.

BLUE EARTH VALLEY TELEPHONE CO. (DBA BEVCOMM) RURAL WINNEBAGO - GRANT: \$152,828

This last mile project will serve 18 unserved households (including farms), 8 unserved businesses, 2 underserved households, and 3 underserved businesses in the rural Winnebago area in Faribault County in Southern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Blue Earth Valley Telephone will improve unserved and underserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. Broadband is the backbone for newer tools farmers use today. Rural Winnebago is home to livestock and grain agricultural production. Better broadband access provides greater outputs at a lower cost, including soil mapping, GPS systems for precision farming, irrigation and grain bin monitoring, livestock feed and environment monitoring, security, video surveillance, and energy management. Total eligible project cost is \$382,070. Local match is \$229,242.

CANNON VALLEY TELECOM, INC. (DBA BEVCOMM) RURAL FREEBORN – GRANT: \$150,700

This last mile project will serve 10 unserved households, 6 unserved businesses, 9 underserved households, and 6 underserved businesses in the rural Freeborn area in Freeborn County in Southern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Cannon Valley Telecom will improve unserved and underserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down,

exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. The economic engine of the proposed grant area is agriculture. Building a fiber-to-the-premise network to the farms and residences of the proposed grant area enables access to applications and tools to make their operations more efficient and enhance crop production. It will also improve access to health care and education, all factors supporting a robust local economy that is globally competitive, too. Total eligible project cost is \$376,750. Local match is \$226,050.

CENTURYLINK THIEF RIVER MIDDLE MILE – GRANT: \$1,324,400

This middle mile project will serve 491 unserved households and 118 unserved businesses in a 71.4 mile fiber build from Thief River to Roseau in Northern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and CAFII federal funding, CenturyLink will improve unserved levels to meet the 2022 state speed goal of 25 Mbps download by 3 Mbps upload in CenturyLink’s Baudette, Roseau and Warroad exchanges. The higher capacity broadband will help improve business development opportunities in the area, and increase access to education and health care. Total eligible project cost is \$2,648,800. Local match is \$1,324,400.

ECKLES TELEPHONE COMPANY (DBA BEVCOMM) RURAL HEIDELBERG– GRANT: \$188,000

This last mile project will serve 51 unserved households, 7 unserved businesses, 40 underserved households, and 4 underserved businesses in the rural Heidelberg area in Le Sueur County in Southern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Eckles Telephone Company will improve unserved and underserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. The economic engine of the proposed grant area is agriculture. Building a fiber-to-the-premise network will enable these farmers to access applications and tools to make their operation more efficient and enhance crop production. It will also improve access to health care and education, all factors supporting a robust local economy that is globally competitive, too. Total eligible project cost is \$470,000. Local match is \$282,000.

FRONTIER KANDIYOHI INITIATIVE – GRANT: \$1,015,275

This last mile project will serve 1147 unserved households, 7 unserved businesses, and 7 unserved community anchor institutions in rural areas within Kandiyohi County, including the Atwater, Kandiyohi, Svea, Prinsburg, Raymond, and Lake Lillian exchanges. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Frontier will improve service levels to a minimum of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, meeting the 2022 state speed goal. For the businesses located in the project area, increased broadband speeds will improve work-life balance for employees, provide greater opportunities to grow and expand their customer base via increased productivity, and increase profit margins through better efficiency. Total eligible project cost is \$2,030,550. Local match is \$1,015,275.

GARDEN VALLEY TELEPHONE COMPANY RURAL THIEF RIVER FALLS EAST – GRANT: \$2,027,035

This middle and last mile project will serve 330 unserved households, 23 unserved businesses, and 2 community anchor institutions in rural Thief River Falls in northwestern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Garden Valley Telephone will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. Over 100 residents and businesses in Pennington and Marshall Counties submitted petitions nearly a year in advance to support Garden Valley's B2B broadband grant application. They made both an economic and community vitality case, including the fact that two large Thief River Falls-based companies -- DigiKey and Arctic Cat -- struggle to find employees and spend considerable resources advertising for them. Broadband is essential to economic prosperity in rural communities. It enables employees to work from home when applicable and provides their children improved access to homework and educational resources. Total eligible project cost is \$4,222,990. Local match is \$2,195,955.

GARDONVILLE COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE DOUGLAS COUNTY LAKE LOUISE – GRANT: \$68,240

This last mile project will serve 28 unserved households and 7 unserved businesses in Douglas County near and around Lake Louise. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Gardonville Cooperative Telephone Association will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. With high-tech training provided by Alexandria Technical College, and major employers such as Douglas Scientific, Alexandria Industries, and Tastefully Simple, Douglas County is poised for growth. The lack of adequate broadband has been an obstacle in business development. Gigabit broadband will help to attract new residents and employees to the area, and enable current residents to more effectively run their home-based businesses and work from home. All residents will be able to tap into the power of the internet to continually self-improve and learn. Total eligible project cost is \$153,348. Local match is \$85,108.

GRANADA TELEPHONE COMPANY (DBA BEVCOMM) SOUTH RURAL GRANADA – GRANT: \$157,920

This last mile project will serve 26 unserved households and 14 unserved businesses in the rural Granada area in Martin County in Southern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State

of Minnesota, Granada Telephone Company will improve unserved and underserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. The economic engine of the proposed grant area is agriculture. Building a fiber-to-the-premise network that provides advanced broadband services to farms and residences in the proposed grant area improves access to applications and tools to make operations more efficient and enhances crop production. It will also improve access to health care and education, all factors supporting a robust local economy that is globally competitive, too. Total eligible project cost is \$394,800. Local match is \$236,880.

HALSTAD TELEPHONE COMPANY KERTSONVILLE AREA - GRANT: \$296,665

This middle and last mile project will serve 51 unserved households in Kertsonville and Onstad Townships in Polk County in northwestern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Halstad Telephone Company will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. Small communities and farms in the area have changed drastically over the last decade. Farm operations now rely on and expect high-speed access to ensure they remain competitive in a high-speed global economy. Due to the very rural nature of this area and the distance required to travel to find employment, many residents have become self-employed. In Onstad Township, 30% of residents are self-employed, followed by 29.5% of residents in Kertsonville Township, nearly three times the United States national average of 10.9%. Residents use home offices to buy products, sell commodities, and do the majority of their business online. With advanced broadband access they can diversify beyond the limitations of the rural landscape and the often complicated weather challenges. Total eligible project cost is \$593,330. Local match is \$296,665.

KMTELECOM RURAL MANTORVILLE – GRANT: \$764,663

This last mile project will serve 195 unserved households, 9 unserved businesses, and 1 unserved community anchor institution near Mantorville in east central Dodge County, with a small section of west central Olmsted County, in southeastern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, KMTelecom will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit per second up and down, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal. With broadband access to the Kasson-Mantorville school system, the Minnesota higher education system, the healthcare systems, and improved ability to compete in the business development arena, KMTelecom's subscribers will all share an enhanced quality of life. Total eligible project cost is \$1,960,674. Local match is \$1,196,011.

LISMORE COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE NOBLES COUNTY BROADBAND – GRANT: \$2,944,578

This middle and last mile fiber and wireless hybrid project will serve 469 unserved households, 1060 unserved businesses, and 6 unserved community anchor institutions across Nobles County. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, along with community support from Nobles County and Nobles Economic Opportunity Network, Lismore Cooperative will improve unserved levels in the county to 25 Mbps download by 3 Mbps upload via a fixed

wireless solution for nearly 1,000 passings, and fiber to obtain gigabit levels for close to 500 passings. Long-term, revenue from the hybrid project will fund fiber builds throughout the entire county, future-proofing a key economic development infrastructure and allowing enhanced access to healthcare, education, and employment via telecommuting. Total eligible project cost is \$5,889,156. Local match is \$2,944,578.

MARTIN COUNTY (WITH FRONTIER) RURAL BROADBAND INITIATIVE – GRANT: \$1,677,823

This last mile project will serve 1784 unserved households, 51 unserved businesses, and 9 unserved community institutions across Martin County in south central Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Martin County and Frontier Communications, the project will leverage federal CAFII funds and Frontier's existing hybrid fiber & coaxial network to improve unserved levels to a minimum of 25 Mbps download by 3 Mbps upload, reaching the 2022 state speed goal. Some areas will reach 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps, the 2026 state speed goal. Community leaders worked together to organize and fund a feasibility study for the project which showed a strong need for improved broadband. Without advanced broadband, future economic development would be impossible and current businesses would not be able to compete. Total eligible project cost is \$3,355,646. Local match is \$1,677,823.

MEDIACOM FAYAL TOWNSHIP – GRANT: \$263,345

This last mile project will serve 167 unserved households, 3 unserved businesses, and 92 underserved households in Fayal Township, south of Eveleth in St. Louis County in northeastern MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Mediacom Minnesota LLC will improve unserved and underserved levels to 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload, reaching the 2026 state speed goal. The Township and Mediacom partnered to identify areas in which broadband access should be made available, led by residents' desire to improve their quality of life through broadband expansion. Total eligible project cost is \$675,243. Local match is \$411,898.

MEDIACOM HARRIS TOWNSHIP – GRANT: \$224,369

This last mile project will serve 262 unserved households and 6 unserved businesses in Harris Township in Itasca County. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Mediacom Minnesota LLC will leverage its existing hybrid fiber & coaxial network to improve unserved levels to 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload, reaching the 2026 state speed goal. These improvements will support business development, health care and educational opportunities in the area, including enabling telecommuting to jobs and businesses outside the project area. Total eligible project cost is \$773,686. Local match is \$549,317.

MIDCO CANBY TO MARSHALL MIDDLE MILE AND LAST MILE – GRANT AMOUNT: \$623,000

This middle and last mile project will serve 1029 unserved households, 29 unserved businesses, and 11 unserved community institutions in and around the towns of Porter, Taunton, Minneota, Ghent, and Canby, between Canby and Marshall in Yellow Medicine and Lyon Counties in southwestern Minnesota. It will also serve several Minnesota businesses served by third parties leasing the Midcontinent Communications (Midco) network in this area. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Midco will improve service levels in the project area to 200 Mbps down by 20 Mbps up, meeting the 2026 state speed goals. One hundred percent of the homes and businesses in those communities will have access to improved broadband, significantly improving quality of life for local residents and the economic vitality of the region. Total eligible project costs are \$1,599,000. Local match is \$976,000.

MILLE LACS ENERGY COOPERATIVE FTTP PROJECT - GRANT: \$1,757,640

This last mile project will serve 763 unserved households, 2 unserved businesses, 2 unserved community anchor institutions and 31 underserved households and 2 underserved businesses in Aitkin County in north central Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, MLEC and Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC) will improve service levels in the project area to Gigabit speeds via fiber-to-the-home, exceeding 2026 state speed goals and bringing vital communications to Aitkin and Mille Lacs Counties. The initial project phase is located entirely within Aitkin County, the most unserved of all of Minnesota's 87 counties. CTC and MLEC are both cooperatives, following the 6th cooperative principle: *Cooperation amongst cooperatives*. This unique partnership will build a robust, future-proof network that helps provide new business solutions, along with enhanced employment, health care, and educational experiences. Total eligible project cost is \$3,515,280. Local match is \$1,757,640.

NEW ULM TELECOM, INC. GOODHUE-BELLECHESTER - GRANT: \$ 332,328

This last mile project will serve 15 unserved households, 46 unserved businesses and 25 underserved households, 43 underserved businesses, and 1 underserved community anchor institution in the city limits and surrounding area of Bellechester in Goodhue County in southeastern MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, New Ulm Telephone will improve service levels in the project area to Gigabit speeds via fiber-to-the-home, exceeding 2026 state speed goals. Nearly all of the passings in this project area are farms or home-based businesses. Other businesses that will benefit include the USDA office, Ag Partners, Goodhue school system, and several banking institutions and insurance companies that interface with customers through online tools. The area also hosts many residents who will

now be able to telecommute for Mayo Clinic and IBM in Rochester, MN. Since this project area is over 30 miles from Rochester, telecommuting will save significant costs on gas for and use of vehicles, and road safety and travel time. Total eligible project cost is \$738,507. Local match is \$406,179.

NEW ULM TELECOM, INC. HANSKA - GRANT: \$ 200,397

This last mile project will serve 14 unserved households and 32 unserved businesses in Lake Hanska Township in Brown County and Riverdale Township in Watonwan County. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, New Ulm Telephone will improve unserved levels in the project area to Gigabit speeds via fiber-to-the-home, exceeding 2026 state speed goals. Nearly all the passings in this project area are farms or home-based businesses. It is prime area for rural/home-based businesses and farming. Access to high speed broadband can help many of these smaller operations remain in business into the future and open the doors to expansion. Total eligible project cost is \$445,326. Local match is \$244,929.

NEW ULM TELECOM, INC. MAZEPPA - GRANT: \$ 317,761

This last mile project will serve 87 unserved households, 11 unserved businesses and 66 underserved households in Mazeppa Township in Wabasha County, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, New Ulm Telephone will improve service levels to Gigabit speeds via fiber-to-the-premise, exceeding 2026 state speed goals. Nearly all of the passings in this project area are farms or home-based businesses. Other businesses that will benefit include the USDA office, Ag Partners, Mazeppa school system, and several banking institutions and insurance companies that interface with customers through online tools. The area also hosts many residents who will now be able to telecommute for Mayo Clinic and Fairview. Total eligible project cost is \$706,135. Local match is \$388,374.

OTTER TAIL TELCOM BATTLE LAKE - GRANT: \$ 238,170

This last mile project will serve 62 unserved households in the Clitherall and Battle Lake areas in Ottertail County in northwest central MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Otter Tail Telecom will improve unserved levels in the project area to at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to meet the 2022 state speed goal. The build will enable telecommuting opportunities for workers, encourage existing residents to consider new business initiatives, and serve as a magnet for attracting new businesses to the area. Total eligible project cost is \$476,340. Local match is \$238,170.

OTTER TAIL TELCOM FERGUS FALLS AREA - GRANT: \$ 279,271

This last mile project will serve 79 unserved households near Elizabeth, MN, and in rural Fergus Falls in Ottertail County, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Otter Tail Telecom will improve unserved levels in the project area to at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to meet the 2022 state speed goals. It will enable telecommuting opportunities for workers, encourage existing residents to consider new business initiatives, and will serve as

a magnet for attracting new businesses to the area. Total eligible project cost is \$558,542. Local match is \$279,271.

PALMER WIRELESS BIG LAKE INDUSTRIAL PARK - GRANT: \$ 90,988

This last mile project will serve 17 underserved businesses and 1 underserved community anchor institution in the Big Lake, MN, industrial park on the east edge of town, adjacent to US Hwy 10. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Big Lake, Palmer Wireless will improve unserved levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. The project will bring fiber-to-the-premise technology to the businesses, seeking to replicate the success of the 2014 Border-to-Border broadband grant project with the Becker Industrial Park, to make a positive impact on the economic health of Big Lake and the businesses in the park. Total eligible project cost is \$211,600. Local match is \$120,612.

PALMER WIRELESS DEL TONE ROAD AND ST. CLOUD AIRPORT - GRANT: \$ 179,400

This last mile project will serve 14 unserved businesses and 1 unserved community anchor institution on the east side of St. Cloud, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Sherburne County, Palmer Wireless will improve unserved levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. The Del Tone Road, St. Cloud airport, and Hwy 10 fiber project will build fiber-to-the-premise technology to the businesses locations, leveraging the current Palmer network and other network partner assets to bring a cost effective solution to this unserved area. The resulting improvements will upgrade business connectivity in the Hwy 10 corridor, increasing business development opportunities and customer access. Total eligible project cost is \$460,000. Local match is \$280,600.

PAUL BUNYAN COMMUNICATIONS HUBBARD, BECKER & ITASCA COUNTIES - GRANT: \$1,742,232

This last mile project will serve 785 unserved households, 26 unserved businesses, 2 unserved community anchor institutions and 143 underserved households and 2 underserved businesses in a multi-county region in north central Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Itasca County, Paul Bunyan will improve service levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. The proposed project area includes rural portions of Itasca, Hubbard, and Becker counties. Combined, these areas are home to an estimated 2,750 people and nearly 50 small businesses. Businesses include restaurants, resorts, retailers, professional service providers, home-based ventures, and construction and landscape companies. For owners and employees alike, these businesses represent an economic engine and make possible a rural way of life. To be competitive, expand markets, ensure long-term viability, and increase employment, small businesses require access to high-speed broadband meeting or exceeding the state's broadband goals. This project will provide these businesses, households, and community institutions with that level playing field. Total eligible project cost is \$3,904,083. Local match is \$2,161,851.

RENVILLE COUNTY HBC & RS FIBER - GRANT: \$807,966

This last mile project will serve 193 unserved households, 99 unserved businesses, and 3 community anchor institutions in portions of Preston Lake, Boon Lake, Brookfield, Osecola, Kingman, Winfield, Crooks, Erickson, Sacred Heart (North), Emmet, Flora, Henryville, Norfolk, Birch Cooley, Camp, and Cairo Townships in Renville County, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Renville County, Hiawatha Broadband Communications (HBC), and RS Fiber will improve unserved levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. For Renville County, fast broadband is as essential to its communities as quality roads, schools, hospitals and electricity, stimulating business and population growth. Total eligible project cost is \$2,071,709. Local match is \$1,263,743.

RUNESTONE TELEPHONE HOLMES CITY 2 -- GRANT: \$700,674

This last mile project will serve 267 unserved households and 32 unserved businesses in the Holmes City area in Douglas County in northwest central MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Runestone will build on its 2015 broadband grant project to expand further into the Holmes City area with 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload. Community members came to Runestone Telecom in search of a solution to their lack of Internet. They door-knocked to determine support and interest for the project. They established a practical and compelling need for broadband access to improve quality of life, including how it will positively impact their vocations, employment opportunities, access to education, health, and social connections. This project specifically addresses how providing broadband access can reduce the factors contributing to the outward exodus from unserved rural locations, reduce economic disparities, and mitigate the digital divide. Total eligible project cost is \$1,401,348. Local match is \$700,674

SJOBERG'S INC. ROSEAU AND LAKE OF THE WOODS COUNTIES -- GRANT: \$354,740

This last mile project will serve 126 unserved households, 30 unserved businesses and 1 community anchor institution in several areas in Roseau and Lake of the Woods Counties in northwestern MN, including Jadis, Spruce, and Gulrid Townships. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Sjoberg's Inc. will improve unserved levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. Broadband connectivity gaps remain one of the most significant barriers to furthering economic development in rural Minnesota. This investment will improve community well-being and serve as an infrastructural element that encourages job growth and business expansion. It will also enable residents to productively telework or operate a home-based business. Total eligible project cost is \$709,481. Local match is \$354,740.

SUNRISE TOWNSHIP (CENTURYLINK) FIBER TO THE HOME - GRANT: \$1,074,852

This last mile project will serve 584 unserved households, 10 unserved businesses, and 2 community anchor institutions in rural Sunrise Township in Chisago County, MN. In a funding

partnership with the State of Minnesota and Sunrise Township, CenturyLink will leverage CAFII funding from the FCC to bring 1 Gigabit service to two-thirds of the township, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps. When Stepp Manufacturing based in the township found that one of their highest operating costs was broadband, they started making calls to CenturyLink, Sunrise Township, and the Chisago County HRA-EDA. That resulted in the entire community working together, including a township match of nearly \$600,000 in bonding, to get this fiber-to-the-home project that will improve business, education, health care, and telecommuting opportunities in the area. Total eligible project cost is \$2,388,560. Local match is \$1,313,708.

TDS TELECOM CASS & CROW WING COUNTIES -- GRANT: \$3,000,000

This last mile project will serve 3459 unserved households, 62 unserved businesses, and 4 community anchor institutions in Cass and Crow Wing counties in north central Minnesota including Backus, Hackensack, Ideal Corners, Pequot Lakes, Pine River, and Woman Lake. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, TDS Telecom (dba Arvig Telephone Company) will improve unserved levels to the 2022 state speed goal of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload. Within the proposed project's footprint, 142 small enterprises (e.g., farms, breeders, taxidermy, auto shop) currently do not have access to high speed internet service. Given access to affordable high speed broadband through this project, these rural businesses will be able to expand their market beyond their local area and reach across the nation. Total eligible project cost is \$6,000,000. Local match is \$3,000,000.

WCTA WADENA RURAL NORTH -- GRANT: \$718,850

This last mile project will serve 174 unserved households, 13 unserved businesses, and 2 community anchor institutions in Otter Tail County in northcentral MN, covering portions of Bluffton and Blowers Townships and also in Wadena County covering portions of Rockwood, Leaf River, North Germany and Wing River Townships, including the community of Bluegrass. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, West Central Telephone Association will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit speed, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. The project will bridge the digital divide for government, businesses, consumers and students in the area, enabling this area of the state to find new ways to thrive. Total eligible project cost is \$1,497,605. Local match is \$778,755.

WIKSTROM TELEPHONE COMPANY (WITH BEAMCO, INC.) RURAL ALVARADO – GRANT: \$43,481

This last mile project will serve 11 unserved households and 1 unserved business in the Alvarado area, in a remote part of Marshall County, in northwestern Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Beamco, Inc., a local engineering and manufacturing company, Wiktel will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit speed, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. This project exemplifies how rural businesses may realize greater benefit from effective Internet use than their urban counterparts because online services can remove geographic barriers to reaching customers

and supply-chains. In this case, Beamco Inc. is helping fund the most up-to-date telecommunications at the highest upload and download speeds to reach its suppliers and customers in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and China. In doing so, it is also helping local residents and households benefit from the same upgrades. Total eligible project cost is \$86,963. Local match is \$43,482

WIKSTROM TELEPHONE COMPANY WIKTEL NW MN – GRANT: \$950,823

This last mile project will serve 236 unserved households and 26 unserved business in rural sparsely populated areas in Kittson, Marshall, Roseau, and Lake of the Woods counties in NW Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Wikel will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit speed, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. Broadband has been clearly identified by Minnesota regional economic development agencies (including the Northwest Regional Development Commission) as an infrastructure element that encourages job growth and business expansion. Northwest Minnesota is considered to be a recreation and transportation industry cluster with major RV manufacturers such as Polaris Industries and Arctic Cat. This public-private partnership will benefit those businesses and area households alike. Total eligible project cost is \$2,112,941. Local match is \$1,162,118.

WINONA COUNTY PICKWICK AREA – GRANT: \$416,640

This last mile project will serve 88 unserved households, 89 unserved businesses, 2 unserved community anchor institutions, and 23 underserved households and 23 underserved businesses within Wilson, Homer, Richmond, Pleasant Hill, and Wiscoy Townships in Winona County in southeastern MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Winona County with Hiawatha Broadband Communications will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit speed, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. In addition to brick and mortar enterprises, a survey completed for the project shows at least 39 home businesses being operated in the area and an additional 45 or more individuals working from home or who would be able to work from home with improved broadband. Total eligible project cost is \$868,000. Local match is \$451,360.

WOODSTOCK TELEPHONE WESTBROOK – GRANT: \$412,391

This last mile project will serve 368 unserved households, 29 unserved businesses, and 7 unserved community anchor institutions in the city of Westbrook in Cottonwood County in southwest Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota, Woodstock will improve unserved levels to 1 Gigabit speeds, surpassing the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. Access to high-speed broadband will improve the quality of life in several different ways: new growth opportunities for businesses; more access to healthcare, education, and also employment via telecommuting. Westbrook has 10% less high school graduates than the state average. The school system has struggled to provide Internet for students. Higher education via distance learning would also become a better option with better

broadband. Westbrook residents recognize that better broadband is a key element to attain, maintain, and strengthen thriving communities. Total eligible project cost is \$916,424. Local match is \$504,033.

For more information, contact the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development at:

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