



# Minnesota Office of Broadband Development Updates

December 17, 2025

# 2025 in Review

- BEAD – we started the year accepting applications and making decisions and we are ending the year awaiting final approval
- Created position to streamline processes and collaborate with other state agencies and partners – and April 2025 hired a Broadband Environmental and Land Use Coordinator
- Ran a fourth round of the Line Extension Connection Program and expect to be announcing the awards very soon

And much more!



# OBD Broadband Grant Programs

## Federal Programs:

Broadband  
Equity Access  
and Deployment  
(BEAD)

*Digital Equity  
Act (DEA)  
State Digital  
Equity Capacity  
Grant Program*  
Terminated by  
federal government  
June 2025

## Minnesota State Programs:

Border-to-  
Border  
Broadband  
Development  
Grant Program

Lower-Population  
Density Broadband  
Development Grant  
Program

Line Extension  
Connection  
Program

# BEAD Final Proposal Timeline

- OBD submitted the draft of the BEAD Final Proposal on **September 4** to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) after a busy, BEAD summer:
  - July 8: NTIA approved Minnesota's IP BEAD Correction Letter required as part of NTIA's Restructuring BEAD Policy Notice.
  - July 14 - July 24: Prequalified applicants (all technologies) submitted applications for the Restructured BEAD Round, compliant with the updated changes to the NTIA's June 6 Restructuring BEAD Policy Notice.
  - August 5 - August 8: Direct Negotiation (All providers & technologies) for locations that did not receive bids in the Restructured BEAD Round.
  - August 28, 2025: Final Proposal posted for a 7-day public comment period.
  - August 28 - September 3: OBD statewide information sessions providing an overview of the Final Proposal, steps for public comment, and next steps for BEAD in Minnesota.
- OBD has so far had 18 rounds of curing with NTIA on the draft of the Final Proposal
- We expect approval on the Final proposal by the end of the year

# BEAD in Minnesota Recap + Preliminary Program costs

Original BEAD Allocation - **\$652 Million**

BEAD Project Grant Request - **\$381 million**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Total Eligible Project Cost</b>             | \$568 million |
| Total Grant Amount (BEAD request)              | \$381 million |
| Total Match Provided                           | \$187 million |
| <b>Average Cost per location</b>               | \$5,098       |
| <b>Lowest Cost per location for a project</b>  | \$490         |
| <b>Highest Cost per location for a project</b> | \$36,575      |

56% - awards will go to **fiber** expansion in Minnesota  
26.5% - awards will go to **LEOs** (low earth orbiting satellite)  
17.5% - awards will go to **fixed wireless**

# BEAD awards by County

Locations to be served by BEAD - **74,739 locations across 80 counties**

BEAD locations not served due to excessive cost 158 locations in one county

Now available on the OBD BEAD webpage: [mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/bead/](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/bead/)

## BEAD Awards (preliminary)

In 2025, OBD led the prequalification process and grant award selection for NTIA's BEAD program. This work ensured that eligible providers and partners could participate in expanding high speed internet access across Minnesota. To learn more about how the program was structured and implemented, you can explore the **Archived BEAD Materials** dropdown below, providing a complete record of Minnesota's BEAD activities prior to award announcement.

- [BEAD Eligible Locations \(XSLX\)](#) (6/30/2025)
- [Approved BEAD Participants \(PDF\)](#) (8/8/2025)
- [BEAD Preliminary Award Map](#) (Last updated 11/21/2025, new update coming soon)
- [Preliminary BEAD Awards by County and Entity \(XLSX\)](#) (12/17/2025)

58% - locations served by **fiber** expansion in Minnesota  
 25% - locations served by **LEOs** (low earth orbiting satellite)  
 17% - locations served by **fixed wireless**

## Minnesota BEAD Awards - Locations

Preliminary Awards by County with Provisional Winner, Technology Type and Location Count

**Minnesota's Preliminary BEAD awards are not final and require review and approval by the Nation**

| County     | Ace Telephone Association | Amazon Kuiper Commercial Services LLC | AMG Technology Investment Group, LLC d/b/a Nextlink Internet | CTC   |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------|
|            | Fiber                     | Low Earth Orbit Satellite             | Fixed Wireless   | Fiber |
| Aitkin     |                           | 261                                   |  |       |
| Anoka      |                           | 496                                   |  |       |
| Becker     |                           | 188                                   |  |       |
| Benton     |                           | 270                                   |  |       |
| Big Stone  |                           | 21                                    |  |       |
| Blue Earth |                           | 10                                    | 71   |       |
| Brown      |                           | 1                                     | 26   |       |
| Carlton    |                           | 292                                   |  |       |
| Carver     |                           | 111                                   |  |       |
| Cass       |                           | 46                                    |  |       |
| Chippewa   |                           | 4                                     |  |       |
| Chisago    |                           | 210                                   |  |       |
| Clay       |                           | 13                                    |  |       |

# After Final Proposal Approval: OBD Next Steps

- After Final Proposal approval, OBD will prioritize signing subgrantee agreements and preparing for NEPA and permitting processes as is outlined in [NTIA guidance](#).
- This will mean in the next 6 months, **OBD will be prioritizing:**
  - Signing and returning the Notice of Award (NOA) Amendment
  - Ensuring NTIA resources and guidelines are reviewed, and subgrantee agreement drafts are finalized
  - NEPA/Permitting activities
  - Submitting outstanding Tribal Resolutions of Consent within 6 months of the NOA Amendment issuance
  - Ensuring subgrantees have compliant Letters of Credit or Performance Bonds
  - Finalizing subgrantee monitoring plans
  - Sign final subgrantee agreements and signed certifications

# After Final Proposal Approval: Subgrantee Next Steps

After Final Proposal approval, OBD will prioritize signing subgrantee agreements and preparing for NEPA and permitting processes as is outlined in [NTIA guidance](#).

This will mean in the next 6 months:

## **ALL subgrantees will be required to:**

- Review NTIA resources and guidelines and ensure subgrantee applications are complete and commitments finalize. This means:
  - Updating Budget and Schedules to conform with BEAD reporting requirements
  - Uploading NEPA Geospatial Data and NEPA Questionnaire
  - Undergoing Pre-contracting Risk Assessment Review submitting Bill of Materials (BOM)
- Begin NEPA/Permitting activities
- Sign final subgrantee agreement and required certifications

## **As necessary and if applicable subgrantees will be:**

- Finalizing the Network Design (if necessary)
- Certifying Cybersecurity Plans and Supply Chain Risk Management plans are in place
- Certifying Compliance with BABA
- Submit Letter of Credit or Performance Bonds
- Submit Tribal Consent (if applicable)

# What's next for BEAD Grantees: NEPA and Permitting

Keep an eye on our [website](#) for coming MN NEPA guidance:

## *Environmental Permitting Resources*

### Minnesota National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Permitting Resources

- [Planning for MN BEAD Grant Environmental, Historic Preservation, and Permitting Success \(PDF\) – Coming soon](#)
- [MN BEAD EHP Grantee Questionnaire \(PDF\) – Coming soon](#)
- [MN BEAD EHP Grantee Questionnaire Instructions \(PDF\) – Coming soon](#)
- [Minnesota Broadband and Railroad Rights-of-Way \(PDF\)](#)
- [Environmental Historic Preservation \(EHP\) Requirements \(PDF\)](#) BEAD final proposal requirement documenting MN Environmental and Historic Preservation responsibilities.

### NTIA NEPA and Permitting Resources

- [NTIA Permitting Needs Checklist \(PDF\)](#): Details how to structure a permitting needs assessment and access considerations
- [NTIA's ArcGIS Pro Permitting and Environmental Information Tool \(APPEIT\)](#): Tool for federal broadband grant recipients and subgrantees to identify permits and environmental factors in planning routes for deployments.
- [NTIA Best Management Practices and Mitigation Measures \(PDF\)](#): Best management practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures to minimize impacts during construction, deployment, and operation of NTIA funded broadband projects.
- [NTIA NEPA for BEAD NEPA Milestone Schedule and Timeline \(PDF\)](#): Guidance on requirements established in Section 13B of the BEAD Terms and Conditions.
- [NTIA Local Permitting Importance and Challenges and Strategies \(PDF\)](#): Guidance explaining local permitting, providing strategies and examples addressing challenges and increasing processing efficiency. environmental factors in planning routes for deployments.

### Other NEPA and Permitting Resources

- [EHP Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement \(PEIS\) Memo Minnesota \(PDF\)](#)

# What's next for BEAD Grantees: NEPA and Permitting

## What preliminary subgrantee's can start working on:

- Identify a permitting, environmental compliance, and historic preservation point of contact who will work with our staff
- Begin refining your geospatial data to resubmit in the grantor portal
  - Refine applied vs awarded locations
  - Be sure to include all drop locations, vault/pedestal locations, borrow or staging areas, brush management, etc.
  - A file geodatabase (.gdb) with feature classes; or a map (.mpkx), layer (.lpx), or project (.ppkx) package is preferred. Shapefile is acceptable
  - KML/KMZ files will not be accepted.

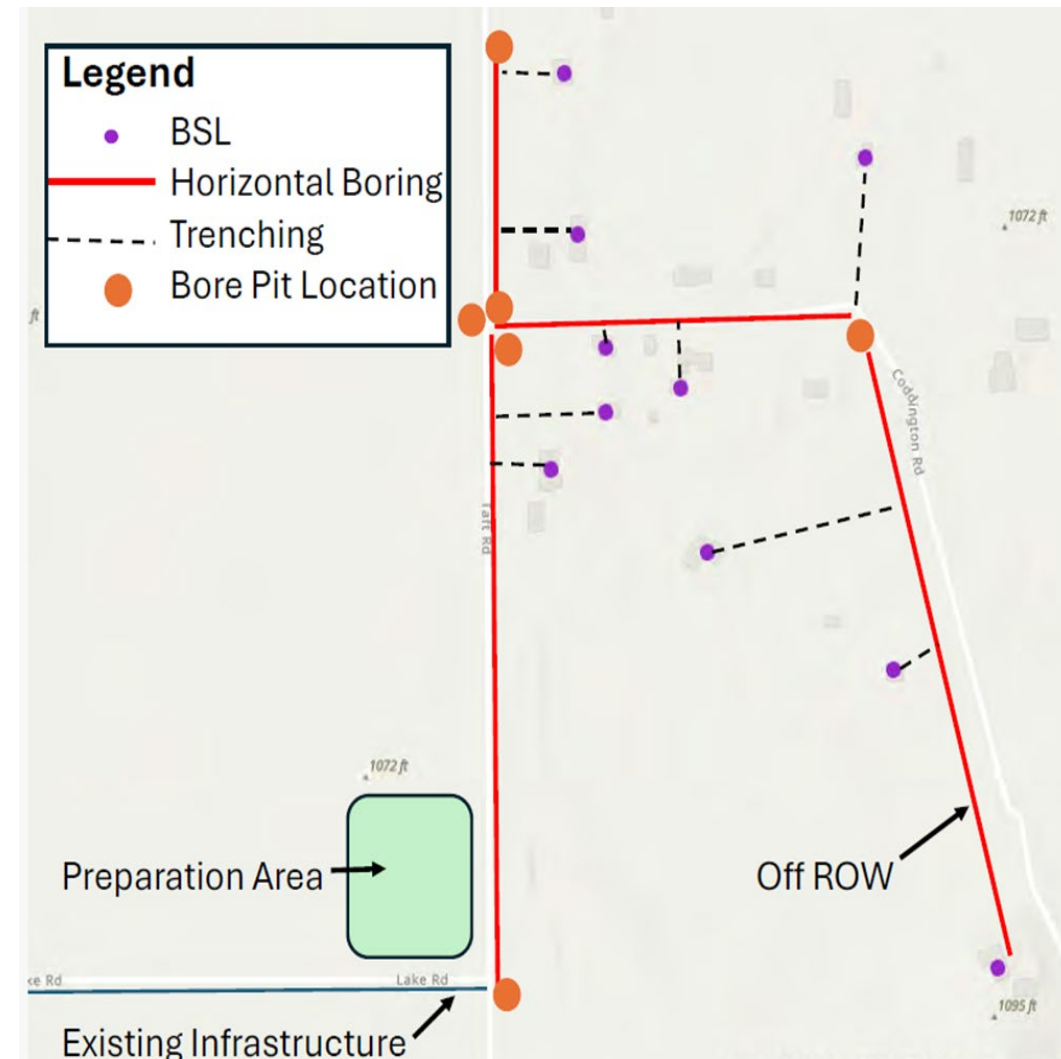


Image Source: Wisconsin Public Service Commission

# What's next for BEAD Grantees: NEPA and Permitting

## **Once final maps are received, OBD will take care of:**

- Initial National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA) desktop review
  - OBD will handle NHPA and ESA consultation (as applicable).
  - Grantee will be responsible for any additional surveys, if needed.
- Setting up a grantee permitting and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) kick-off meeting
- Use NTIA's Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT) to review NEPA documentation for each project and determine if a categorical exclusion applies, forward the determination to NTIA for review, and obtain a final NEPA decision document.

# Minnesota Broadband Programs, Border to Border + Low-Population Density

|  | Grant Dollars Awarded | Local Match Dollars | Locations Served |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Border-to-Border (B2B),<br><b>10 rounds since 2014</b> | \$323.9M              | \$476.6M            | 113,000+         |
| Low-Population Density,<br><b>3 rounds since 2023</b>  | \$76.7M               | \$27M               | 6,400+           |
| <b>Totals</b>  | <b>\$400.6M</b>       | <b>\$503.6M</b>     | <b>119,400+</b>  |

As of November 2025:

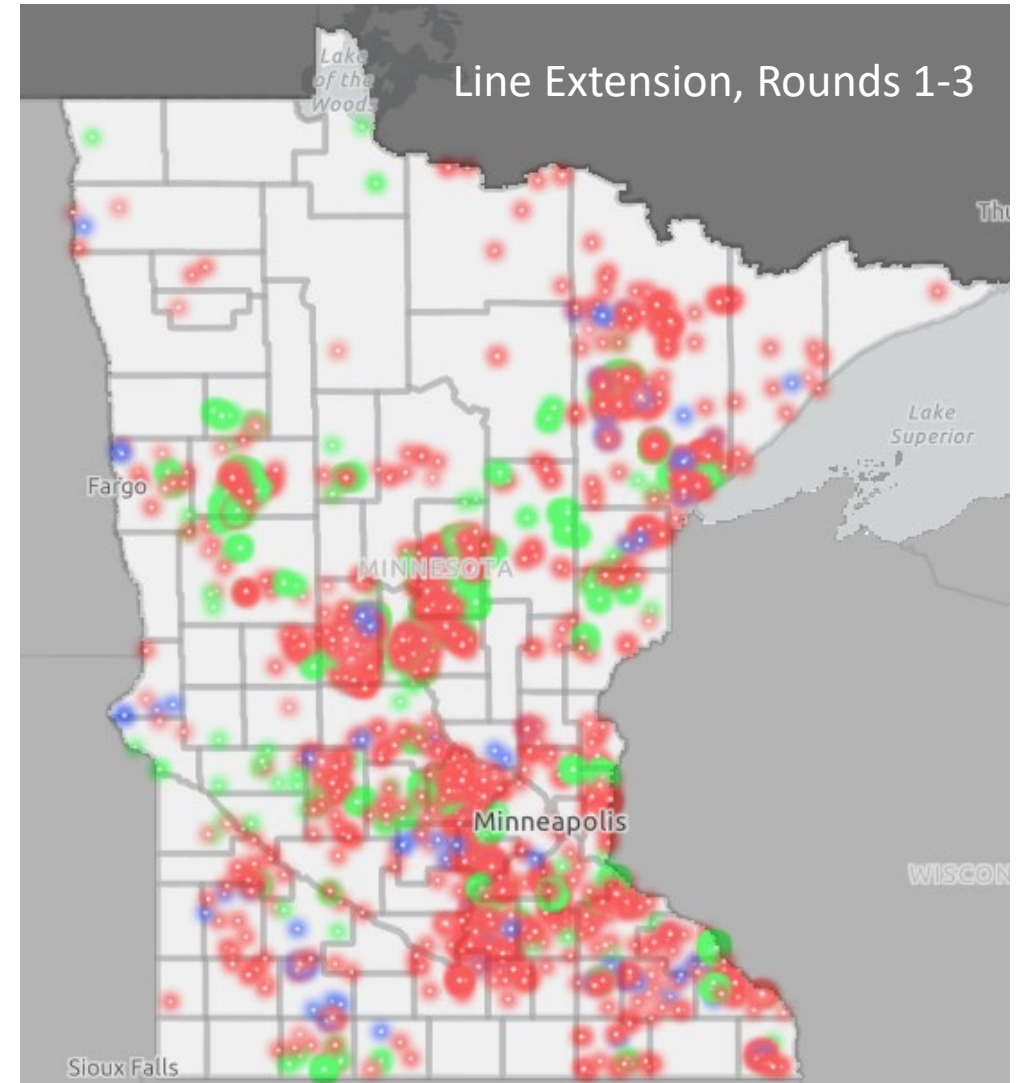
- Grant rounds 7-10 were awarded to a total of **141 projects**, includes B2B and rounds of Low-Population Density
- **68** grants are active
- **36** grants are pending close-out, expect all projects from B2B Round 7 to be closed out by the end of 2025

# Line Extension Connection Program

In the 2022 Legislative Session, the OBD was directed to create a new program, the Broadband Line Extension Connection Program.

The purpose of the program is to award grants for the **extension of existing broadband infrastructure to unserved locations.**

**An unserved location is a location that does not have a wired broadband service of at least 25Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload.**



# Line Extension Connection Program

| Round  | Total investment   | Locations awarded                  | # of bids                             | Project status  |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| LECP Round 1,<br>October 6–November 9, 2023 Awards     | <b>\$4,890,240.28</b> awarded:<br><b>\$3.2M</b> , and ISPs provided a <b>\$1.6M in match</b> | 494 locations across 40 counties   | \$15.3M requested for 1,733 locations | 19 grants, all projects built as of 12/31/2024  |
| LECP Round 2,<br>March 29–April 4, 2024 Awards         | <b>\$5,895,656.24</b> awarded:<br><b>\$4.2M</b> , and ISPs provided <b>\$1.7M in match</b>   | 687 locations across 25 counties   | \$5.8M requested 932 locations        | 13 grants, all projects built as of 6/30/2025   |
| LECP Round 3,<br>October 10 – December 31, 2024 Awards | <b>\$9,281,613.82</b> awarded:<br><b>\$7.5M</b> , and ISPs provided a <b>\$1.7M</b> match    | 1,088 locations across 31 counties | \$13.4M requested for 1,639 locations | 16 grants, 4 are closed and 2 pending close, all projects will be built by 12/31/2025 |

# Line Extension Connection Program

- Announcements for the fourth round of Line Extension will be made **soon**
  - OBD expects to award over 1,000 locations across approximately 30 counties
- As of November 2025, **6,900+** have registered for LECP – combination of eligible locations and awarded locations
- OBD expects to use state funds to run a fifth round of Line Extension later in 2026.

## Round 4 Timeline

| Activity                             | Date           |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Location Addresses Posted for Review | Sept. 15, 2025 |
| Challenges Due                       | Sept. 24, 2025 |
| Bidding Window Opens                 | Sept. 26, 2025 |
| Bids Due                             | Nov. 25, 2025  |
| Selections Announced                 | Dec. 2025      |

# Mark your calendars, Wednesday April 29

## Connecting One Minnesota 2026 Broadband Summit

- Registration info coming **soon**, will be shared via OBD's email blast
- Wednesday, April 29
- Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center, MN



# OBD Contact + Resources

**Minnesota Office of Broadband Development**

[mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/)

[deed.broadband@state.mn.us](mailto:deed.broadband@state.mn.us)

651-259-7610

**Stay connected! Sign up for newsletter updates from OBD:**

[mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/contact/](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/contact/)