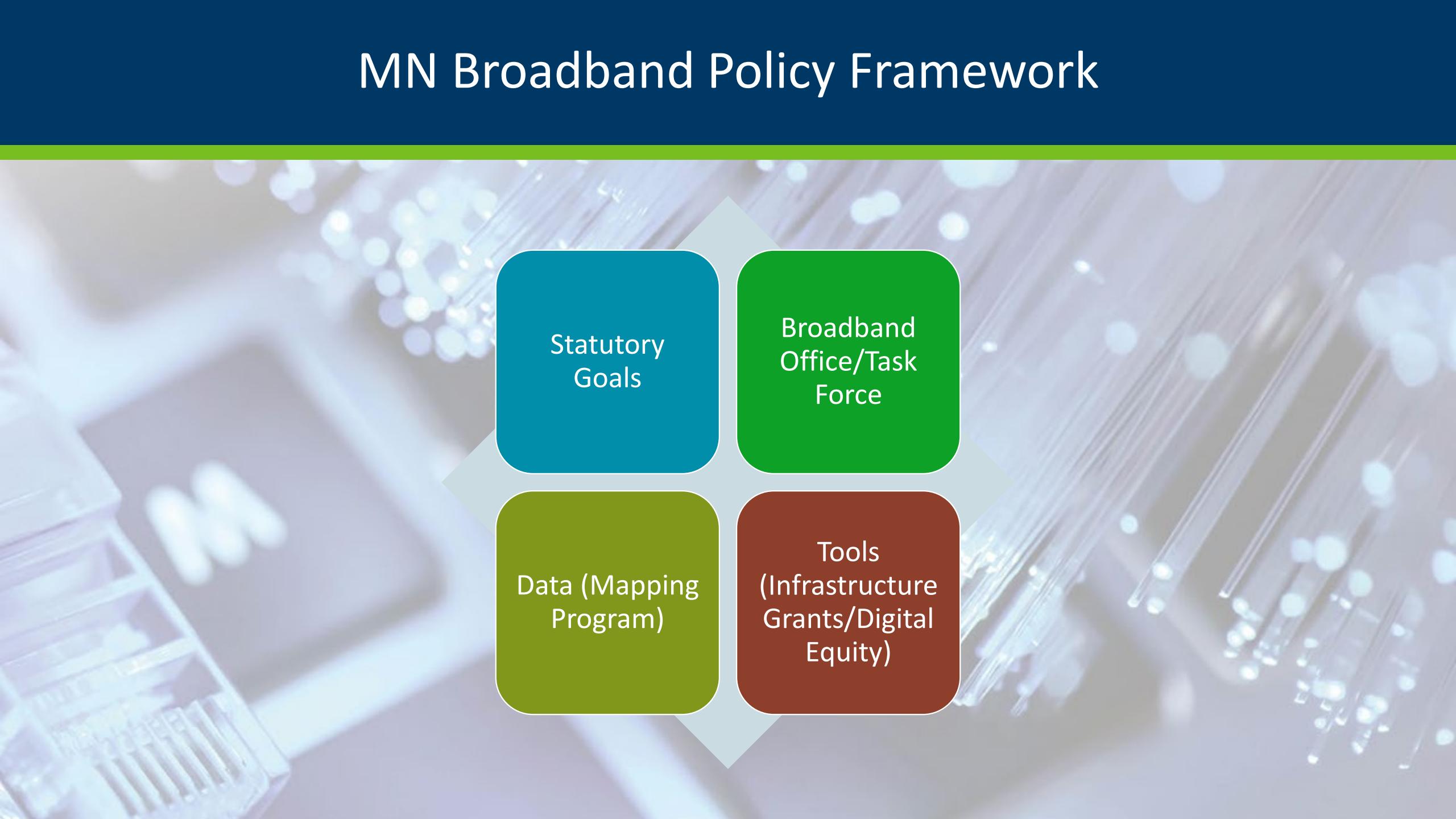




Minnesota Office of Broadband Development
Senate Agriculture, Veterans, Broadband, Rural Development Committee

February 18, 2026

MN Broadband Policy Framework



A blurred background image of a computer keyboard and a bundle of fiber optic cables with light glowing at the ends, representing technology and connectivity.

Statutory
Goals

Broadband
Office/Task
Force

Data (Mapping
Program)

Tools
(Infrastructure
Grants/Digital
Equity)

Meet the Office of Broadband Development (OBD) Team

- Established by state legislature in 2013
- 10 staff located throughout Minnesota
- Programs:
 - Border-to-Border Broadband
 - Low Population Density Broadband
 - Line Extension Connection Program
 - Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA): Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD)
 - IIJA: Digital Equity Act, terminated by US Department of Commerce (NTIA) May 9, 2025



OBD team at 2025 Staff Training

2025 Program Milestones

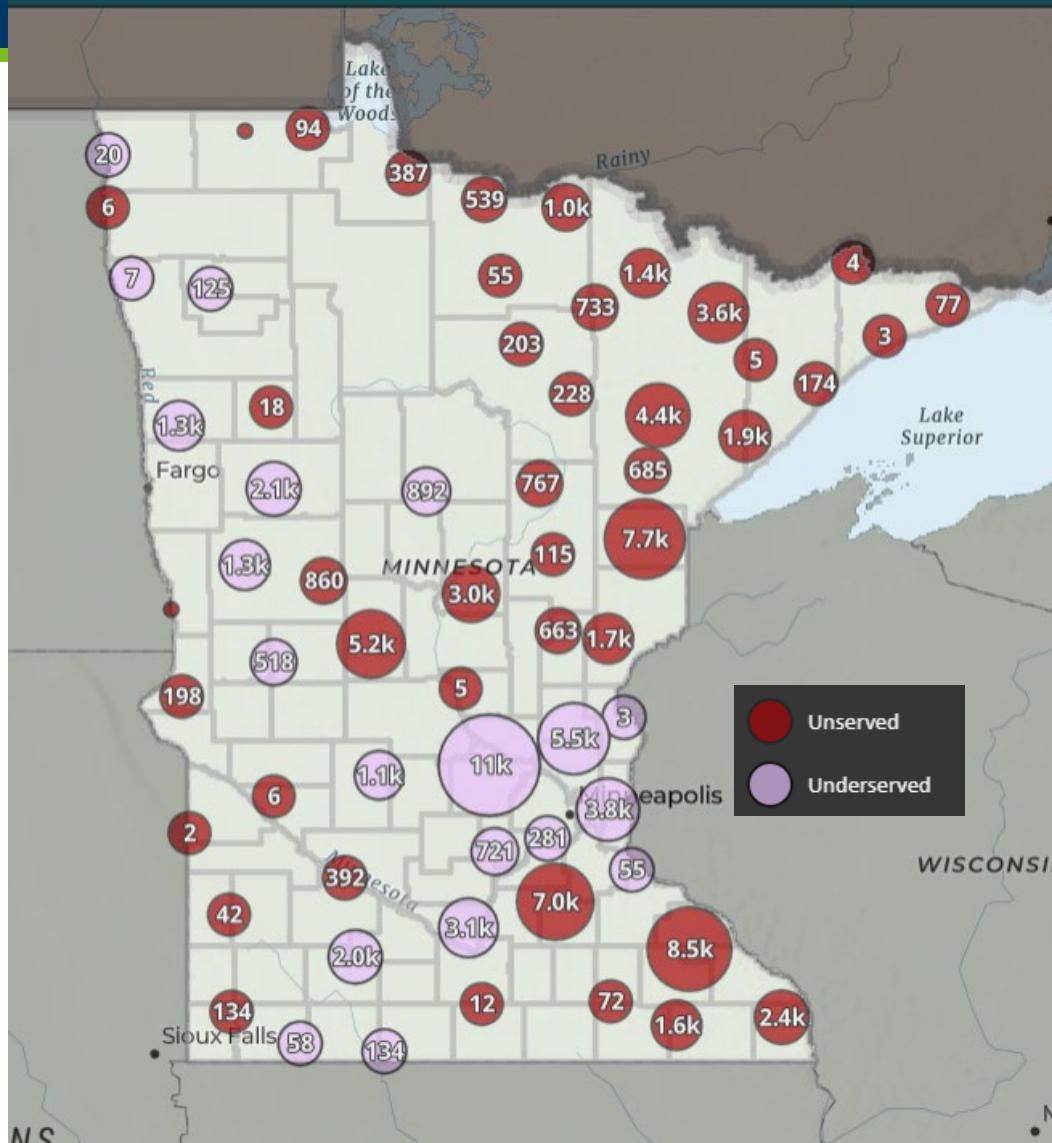
- Across broadband grant programs, **58 projects were closed out in 2025**, expanding connectivity to thousands of locations across Minnesota
- The second round of the Line Extension Connection Program saw **13 projects with a total of 687 locations built by June 30, 2025**, and the third round saw **16 projects for a total of 1,088 locations built by December 31, 2025**
- A bidding window for the fourth round of the Line Extension Connection Program ran from September 26 to November 25, 2025. OBD expects to award over **\$10 million in grants to 20 providers with 1,675 locations across 39 counties**
- Minnesota's Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) draft Final Proposal was submitted to the NTIA September 4, 2025. **OBD completed 18 rounds of curing since submitting and was notified of approval by NTIA on December 19, 2025**. The draft of the Final Proposal was submitted after the state navigated the BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice (issued 6/6/2025) which required a Restructured Round of subgrantee selection (ran 7/14–7/24/2025)
- OBD launched updated, interactive mapping platforms that provide information on broadband programs across the state and summary metrics on state program broadband availability

2025 OBD Milestones



- OBD's mapping vendor, Connected Nation, **completed field validation for over 70 grant projects, confirming broadband construction at more than 35,000 locations**
- Collected letters of support from statewide partners emphasizing the importance of fast, reliable broadband in their communities. In total, **OBD received 53 letters representing over 110 individuals and agencies from cities, counties, hospitals, regional groups, other government agencies, a labor union and Tribal entities**
- Continued to provide technical, administrative and staff support for the annual activities of the **Broadband Task Force**, including administrative support at 10 meetings throughout the year
- Facilitated **9 meetings of the Broadband Permitting/Land Use Charter Group**. This group was created at the end of 2024 to enhance coordination with other Minnesota state government agencies and continue review of the adequacy, effectiveness and expedience of the permitting process for broadband deployment projects
- Created a **Broadband Environmental and Land Use Coordinator position** on the team to assist internet service providers with federal, state, and local permitting challenges through collaborating with other agencies, proactive review of projects, training and outreach, and defining a process to streamline permitting
- Maintained the online **Minnesota BEAD Contractor Directory**, a list of over 50 contractors interested in being considered for BEAD program work
- Reached recognition of **50 Telecommuter Forward! Communities**

Minnesota BEAD Map



From OBD [Minnesota BEAD Program map](#).

Unaddressed Needs in Minnesota

Minnesota's state statutory broadband goal: All homes and businesses will have access to broadband service of at least:

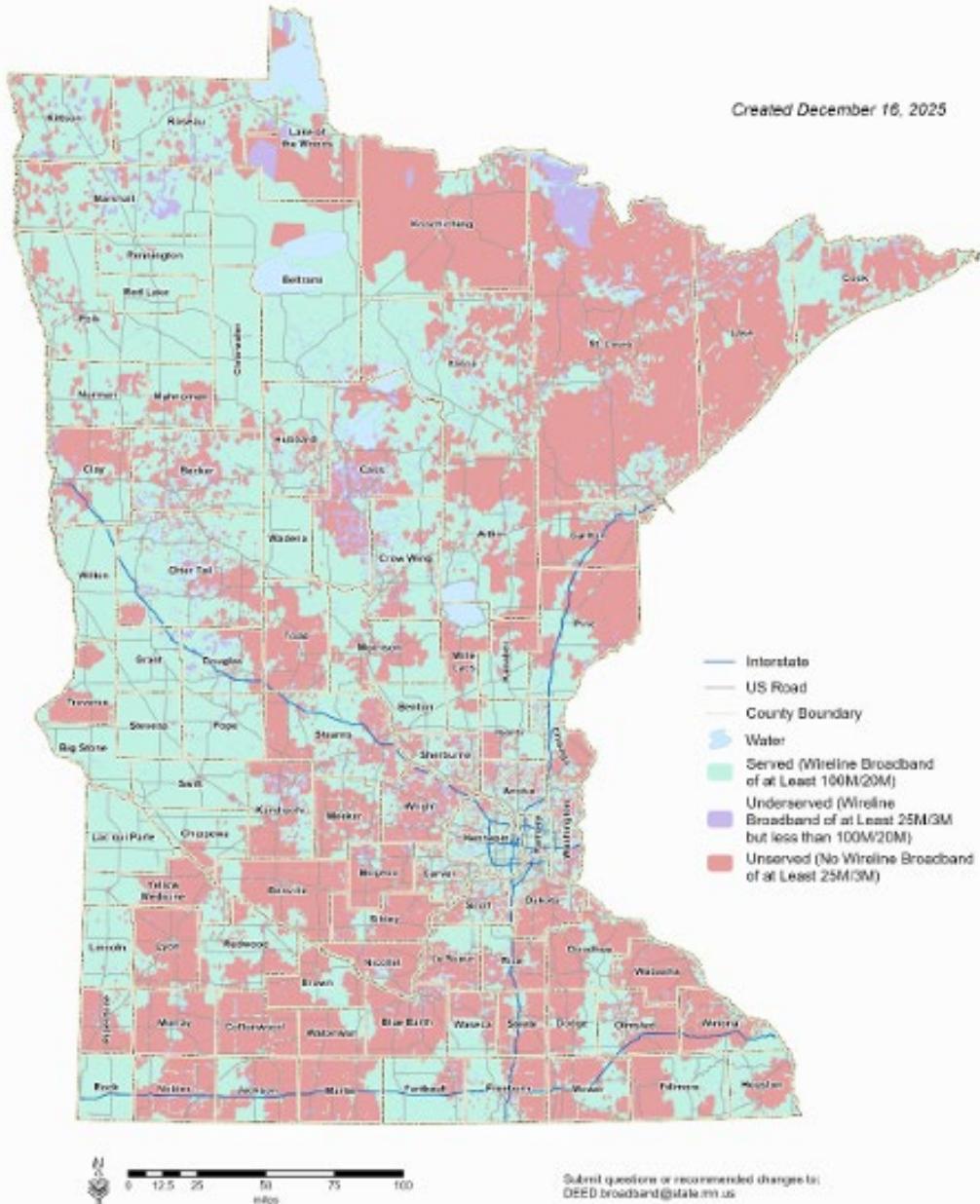
- 25 Mbps download by 3 Mbps upload (current FCC definition) by 2022
- 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload by 2026

Updated numbers as of December 16, 2025:

- **121,000 households without access to 25/3 (2022 goal)**
 - 143,000 households in December 2024
- **155,000 without access to 100/20 (2026 goal)**
 - 189,000 households in December 2024

BEAD eligible locations: 74,739

2025 Provider Broadband Service Inventory

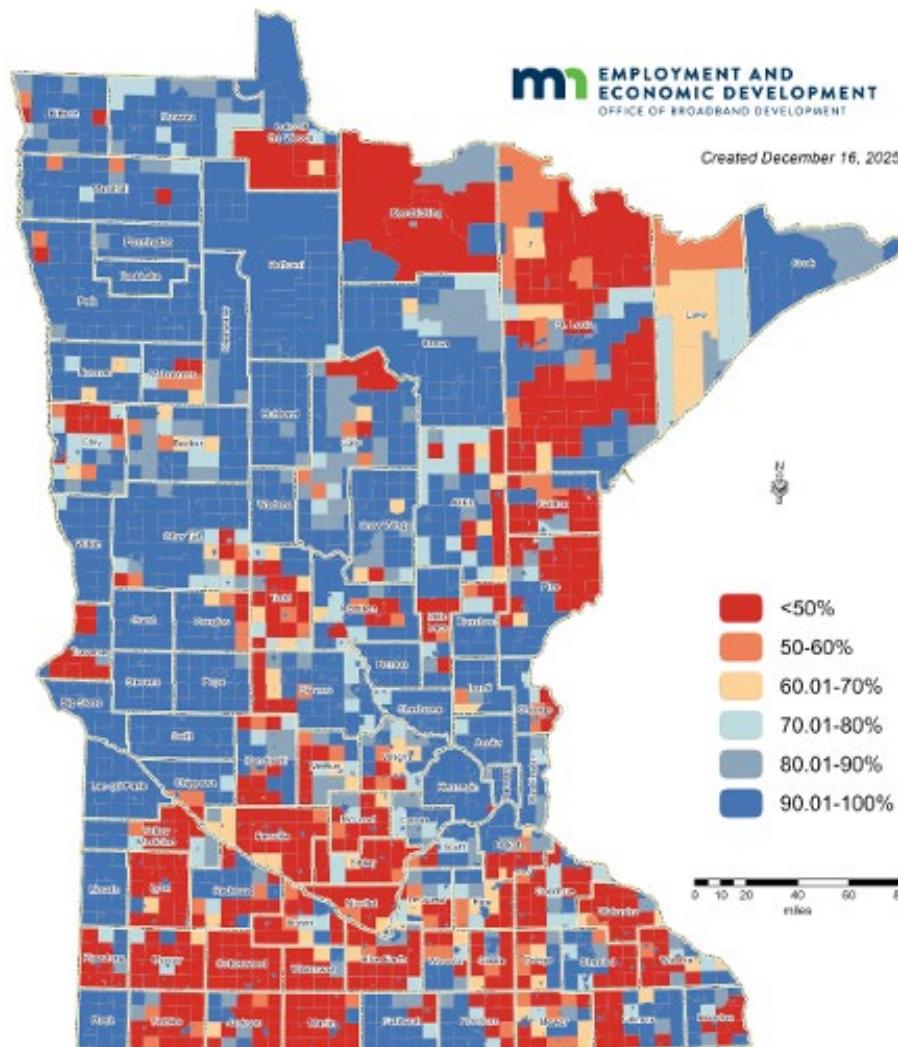


2025 Broadband Availability Served by at least 25/3 Mbps

Percentage of Residential Locations Served by Wireline
Broadband Service by City/Township

At Least 25 Mbps Download/3 Mbps Upload Speeds

Statewide Availability: 93.84%, Rural: 85.22%



This map was prepared by Connected Nation under contract with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The map represents areas of broadband service availability based on provider data submitted to and analyzed by Connected Nation. This release reflects updates received as of December 2025.

Residential locations are based on classifications from the FCC Fabric Version 7. Classified as either Residential or Mixed. Fabric location data provided by CostQuest Associates, Inc., all rights reserved.

Additional maps and data are available at
<http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/maps>

Upon request, this information can be made available in alternate formats for people with disabilities by contacting the DEED Office of Broadband Development at 651-299-7610.

Submit questions or recommended changes to:
DEED.broadband@state.mn.us

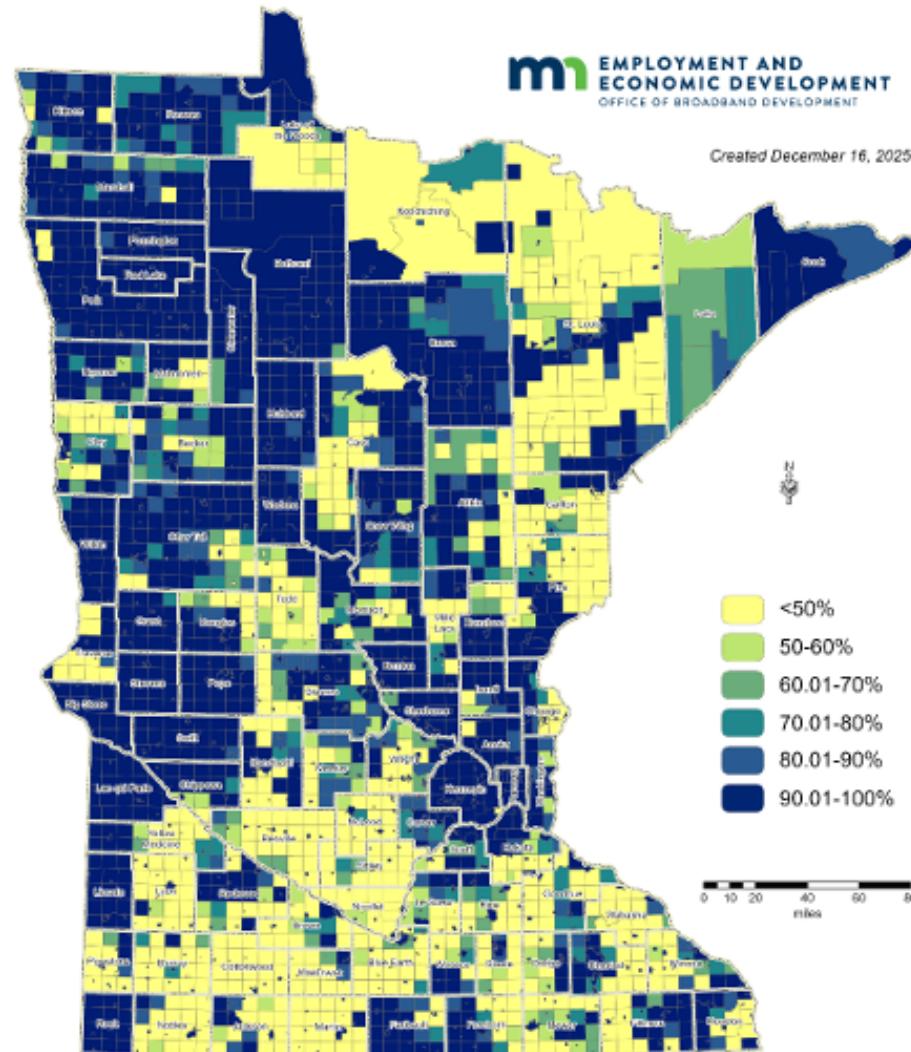
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2025 Broadband Availability Served by at least 100/20 Mbps

Percentage of Residential Locations Served by Wireline
Broadband Service by City/Township

At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds

Statewide Availability: 92.11%, Rural: 80.97%



This map was prepared by Connected Nation under contract with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The map represents areas of broadband service availability based on provider data submitted to and analyzed by Connected Nation. This release reflects updates received as of December 2025.

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Minnesota's Mapping Initiative and Its Advancements

Connected Nation, Minnesota's mapping vendor, completed field validation for over **70 Border to Border, including Capital Projects Fund grant projects**, in 2025, and in the process verified construction completeness at more than **35,000 locations**.

With Connected Nation, OBD has launched interactive maps (mn-cngis.hub.arcgis.com/) showing broadband coverage and expansion:

- **Broadband State Programs**, map showing all broadband programs in the state
- **State Program Dashboard**, summary metrics on state program broadband availability

The image is a screenshot of the Minnesota Employment and Economic Development website, specifically the Office of Broadband Development (OBD) section. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, State Programs, BEAD, Open Data, Help/FAQ, and Feedback. Below the navigation, there are four main sections, each with a title, a map, and a detailed dashboard view:

- BEAD**: Shows the "Minnesota BEAD Map" with a legend for various broadband programs and a "Web Map Experience" link.
- BEAD Dashboard**: Displays charts for "BEAD Challenges Resolved" and "Challenge By Type (500+ Resolved)".
- Broadband State Programs**: Shows a map of Minnesota with numerous dots representing broadband programs, along with a "Web Map Experience" link.
- State Program Dashboard**: Shows a map of Minnesota with county-level broadband availability, along with a "Dashboard" link.

OBD Broadband Grant Programs

Minnesota State Programs:

Border-to-
Border
Broadband
Development
Grant Program

Lower-Population
Density Broadband
Development Grant
Program

Line Extension
Connection
Program

Federal Programs:

Broadband
Equity Access
and
Deployment
(BEAD)

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

Border-to-Border and Lower-Population Density Broadband Grant Programs

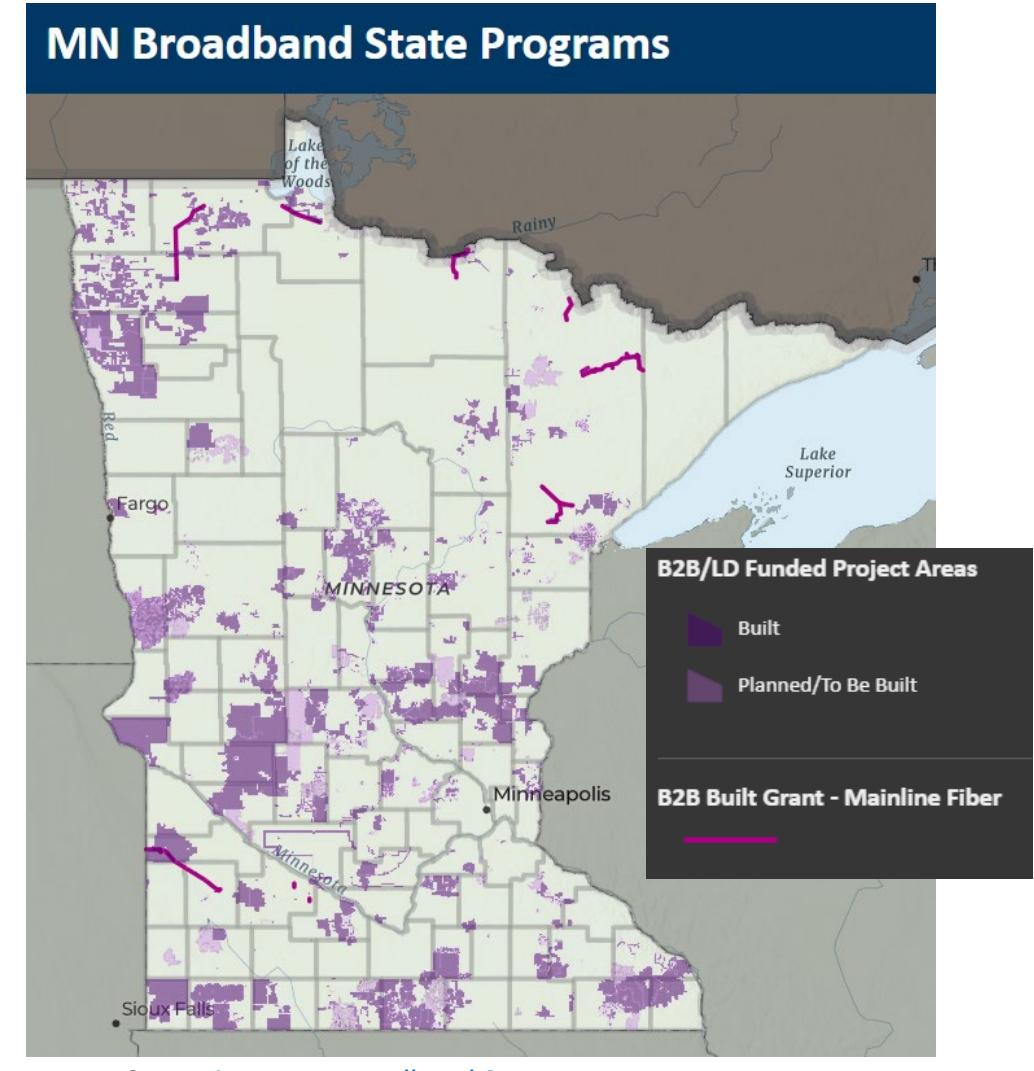
Border-to-Border Broadband Infrastructure (B2B) Grant Program

- Established 2014
- Provides financial incentive to applicants to deploy broadband service in unserved and underserved area
- On a reimbursement basis, the program pays for up to 50% of eligible expenditures with a \$10 million cap per award
- The cap increased from \$5 million in the 2023 legislative session

Lower-Population Density Broadband Development

- Established 2022
- Provides financial incentive to applicants to deploy broadband service in unserved and underserved areas where a 50% match is not sufficient
- On a reimbursement basis, the program pays for up to 75% of eligible expenditures with a \$10 million cap per award

OBD's mapping vendor, Connected Nation, completed field validation for over **70 grant projects**, confirming broadband construction at more than **35,000 locations** across all broadband programs.



Border-to-Border and Lower-Population Density Broadband Grant Programs Awards

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

As of February 6, 2026:

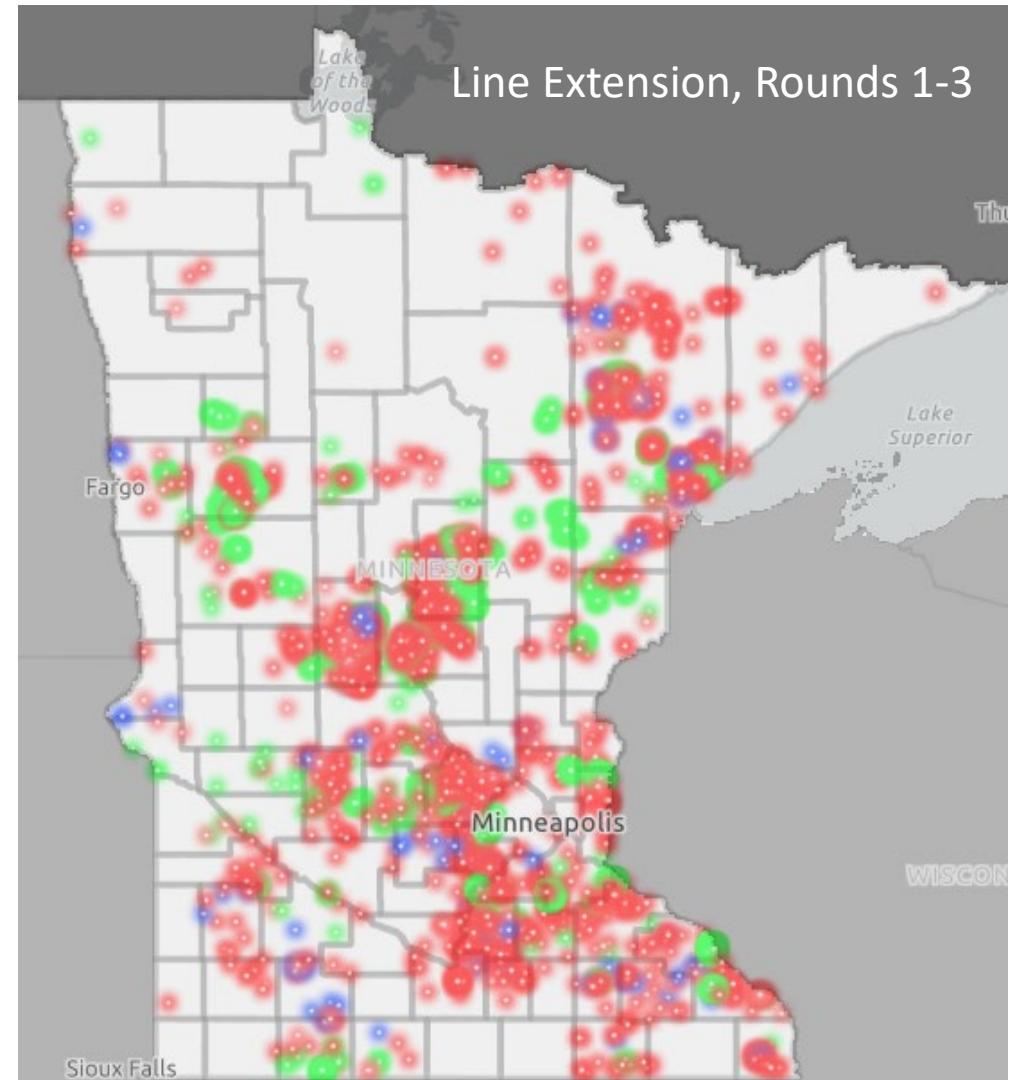
- Grant rounds 7-10 were awarded to a total of **141 projects**, includes B2B and rounds of Low-Population Density.
- Of these, **91 projects are built, 53 of which are fully closed out and 38 are in the final close out process**
- On average, **projects from Round 9 are 84% completed and Round 10 are 56% complete**. From Round 9, the 20 active grants will be completed by June 2026 and Round 10's 23 active grants by June 2027.

Line Extension Connection Program

In the 2022 Legislative Session, the OBD was directed to administer 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.



From OBD [Minnesota Broadband State Programs map](#).

Line Extension Connection Program Awards & Results

Round	Total investment	Locations awarded	# of bids	Project status - 12/8/25
LECP Round 1 Awards Oct 6-Nov 9, 2023	\$4,890,240.28 Grant \$3.2M ISPs match \$1.6M	494 locations 40 counties	\$15.3M requested for 1,733 locations	19 grants, all projects built as of 12/31/2024
LECP Round 2 Awards March 29-April 4, 2024	\$5,895,656.24 Grant \$4.2M ISP Match \$1.7M	687 locations 25 counties	\$5.8M requested for 932 locations	13 grants, all projects built as of 6/30/2025
LECP Round 3 Awards Oct 10-Dec 31, 2024	\$9,281,613.82 Grant \$7.5M ISP match \$1.7M	1,088 locations 31 counties	\$13.4M requested for 1,639 locations	16 grants, 11 are closed and 5 pending close, all projects built as of 12/31/2025
LECP Round 4 Awards Sept 26-Nov 25, 2025	\$13,183,900.69 Grant \$10.26M ISP match \$2.92M	1,675 locations 39 counties	\$12.7M requested for 1,800 applications	20 grants awarded on 12/24/2025, due to be built 12/31/2026

Later in 2026, OBD plans to run a Round 5 of the program with rolled-over funds.

Summary of BEAD in Minnesota and Initial Program Results

Original BEAD Allocation was **\$652 Million** and initial BEAD Project Grant Request was **\$381 million**

OBD was notified of initial approval of the Final Proposal by NTIA on December 19, 2025. That included:

Total Eligible Project Cost	\$ 569.8 million
Total Grant Amount (BEAD request)	\$ 378.9 million ***
Total Match Provided	\$ 190 million
Average Cost per location	\$5,098
Lowest Cost per location for a project	\$490
Highest Cost per location for a project	\$36,575

58% - locations served by **fiber**

25% - locations served by **LEOs** (low earth orbiting satellite)

17% - locations served by **fixed wireless**

***Non-deployment/remaining funds guidance has not been released from NTIA

BEAD Next Steps

Upon Receiving the Notification of Award from NIST

- OBD must submit the Notice of Funding Award within 30 days.
- Finalize grantee contracts within six months.



Currently in Progress

- Drafting contract language to include state and federal regulations.
- Designing the Grants Management System.
- Preparing permitting and environmental documentation.
- Engaging in communication and outreach with ISPs, constituents, and local government entities.

Minnesota Broadband Collaboration

A coordinated group of Minnesota state government agencies partners in the permitting process for broadband deployment projects.

Included:

- **MN DEED – Office of Broadband Development (leading)**
- **MN Department of Transportation**
- **MN Department of Labor and Industry**
- **MN Department of Natural Resources**
- **MN State Historic Preservation Office**
- **MN Office of State Preservation**
- **Gopher State One Call**
- **Office of Pipeline Safety**
- **MN Indian Affairs Council**
- **MN Department of Commerce**



Permit Map Processes Workshop, December 2024

Ways We Can Assist

- Connect grantees with the appropriate agencies
- Guide grantees through permitting requirements
- Conduct an initial assessment of a project area to identify possible challenges
- Organize permitting discussions for complex projects
- Assist in preparing consultation materials
- Support the review of cultural resource reports



Minnesota's Digital Opportunity Plan

- Minnesota's [Digital Opportunity Plan](#), developed as part of this program, is designed to ensure all Minnesotans have the necessary tools and skills to fully utilize broadband and benefit from the digital economy. The U.S. Department of Commerce had approved this plan in 2024 under the federal Digital Equity Act.
- Vision: "This plan envisions a future where comprehensive digital access connects all Minnesota residents to opportunities, options, and each other"

Goal 1: Connect people to people

Goal 2: Connect people to information

Goal 3: Connect people to resources

- Key Performance Indicators include measurable objectives: Adoption, Devices, Digital Skills and Accessibility

Governor's Task Force on Broadband

- The Governor's Task Force on Broadband consists of 15 members representing diverse sectors across Minnesota, including healthcare, education, non-profits, and internet cooperatives.
- This year's annual report recommendations are being developed by two subcommittees: **Affordability, Economic Opportunity, and Workforce Development** and **Mapping, Policy, and Funding**.
 - The Task Force's efforts and report aim to enhance the state's chances of meeting its broadband objectives.
 - Key recommendation areas include **modernizing affordability programs, expanding digital literacy and device accessibility, investing in local workforce development, continuing mapping initiatives, and maintaining targeted funding for last-mile broadband connections**.
 - The report is available upon request and will be published on the [Broadband Task Force webpage](#).

January to September: Task Force meets monthly to hear from industry experts and community partners on broadband across the state

October to November: Subgroups work on crafting recommendations for the annual report

December: Task Force refines report recommendations to submit

2026 Looking Forward



OBD remains proud to represent and manage the state's priorities, steward taxpayer dollars responsibly, ensure compliance, and deliver results. With continued collaboration and shared commitment, Minnesota will not only sustain its leadership in broadband but continue to set the standard for what is possible.

This will include:

- Administration of federal BEAD program funding
- Administering B2B + LD programs and Line Extension, and rolling out a fifth round of the Line Extension Connection Program
- Providing opportunity, connection, and assistance to state partners, broadband subgrantees, and community members on broadband access and adoption

Spring of 2026, OBD will be hosting:

- Thursdays in April, in a collaborative effort with partner state agencies OBD will be communicating updates on environmental permitting and processes to broadband subgrantees and community partners by offering a revised webinar series **Broadband Development Training Series: Navigating PLUS (Permitting, Land Use, and State Systems)**
- Wednesday April 29, **Connecting One Minnesota 2026 Broadband Summit** at the Heritage Center in Brooklyn, Center

Thank you.



Minnesota Office of Broadband Development
mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/

Stay connected! Sign up for newsletter updates from OBD:
mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/contact/

Bree Maki, Executive Director
bree.maki@state.mn.us