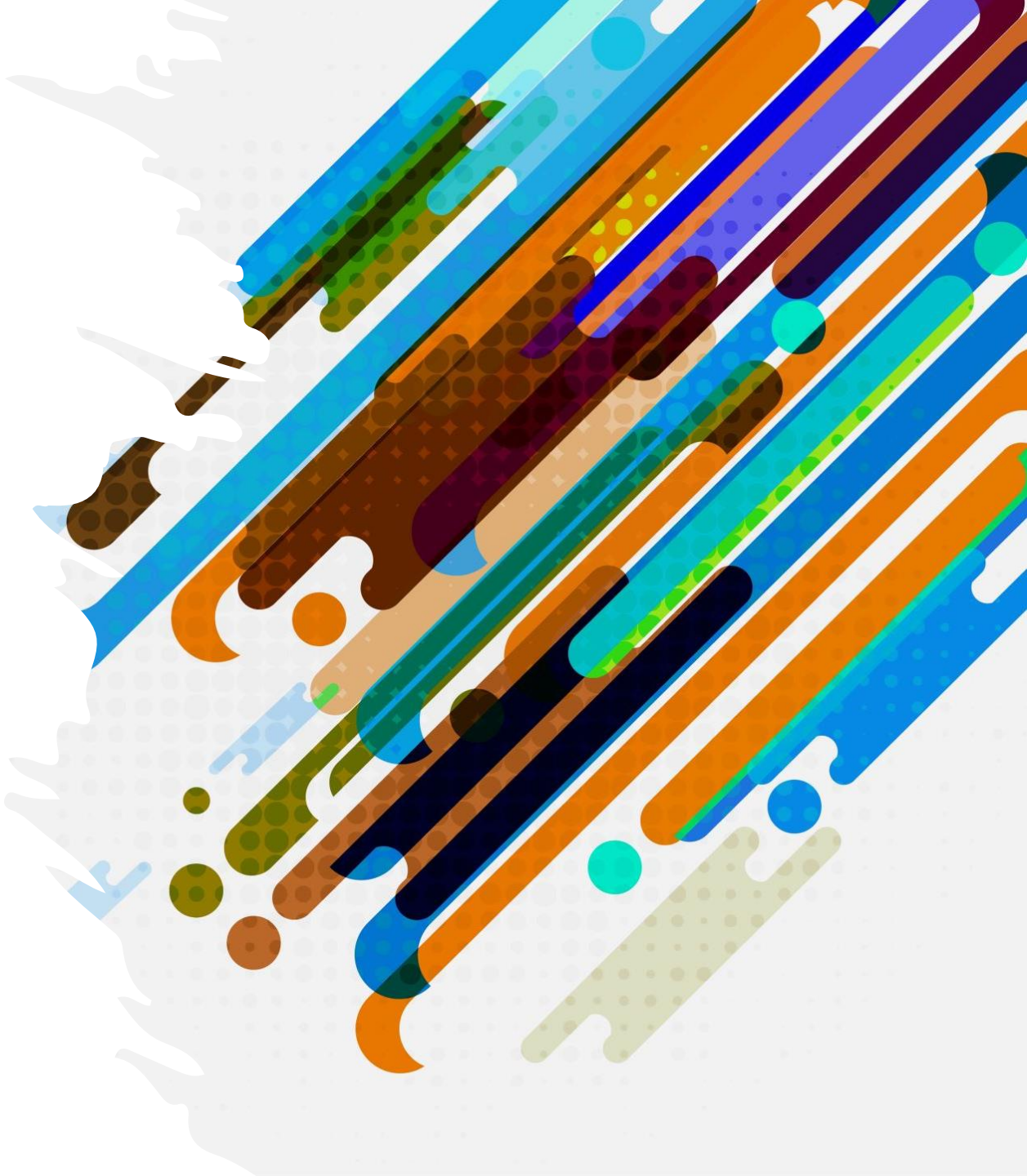
Region 5 Broadband Event

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

7-8:30PM



Welcome
Cheryal Hills, Executive Director, Region Five Development Commission

Current Broadband Climate (Data from Dept of Broadband)
Diane Wells, MN Dept of Education and Economic Development
Bill Coleman, Broadband Coalition

Panel of Storytellers
Josh Netland, Emily Cooperative Telephone Co.
Mark Diehl, Little Falls School District
Jim Roeder, Lakewood Health
Facilitated by Don Hickman, Initiative Foundation

Update from Elected Official (Kresha/Poston)
Introduced by Paul Drange, Sourcewell

Small group discussions

Recap from small groups and Elected Official (Kresha/Poston)
Facilitated by Dawn Espe, R5DC

Next Steps- State Broadband Conference
Bill Coleman, Broadband Coalition

Adjourn

Diane Wells
Minnesota
Dept of
Broadband

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Office of Broadband Development
North Central/5 Regional Meeting
September 30, 2021

Diane Wells at diane.wells@state.mn.us

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 (B2B) Broadband Infrastructure Grant created in law; $20M appropriated

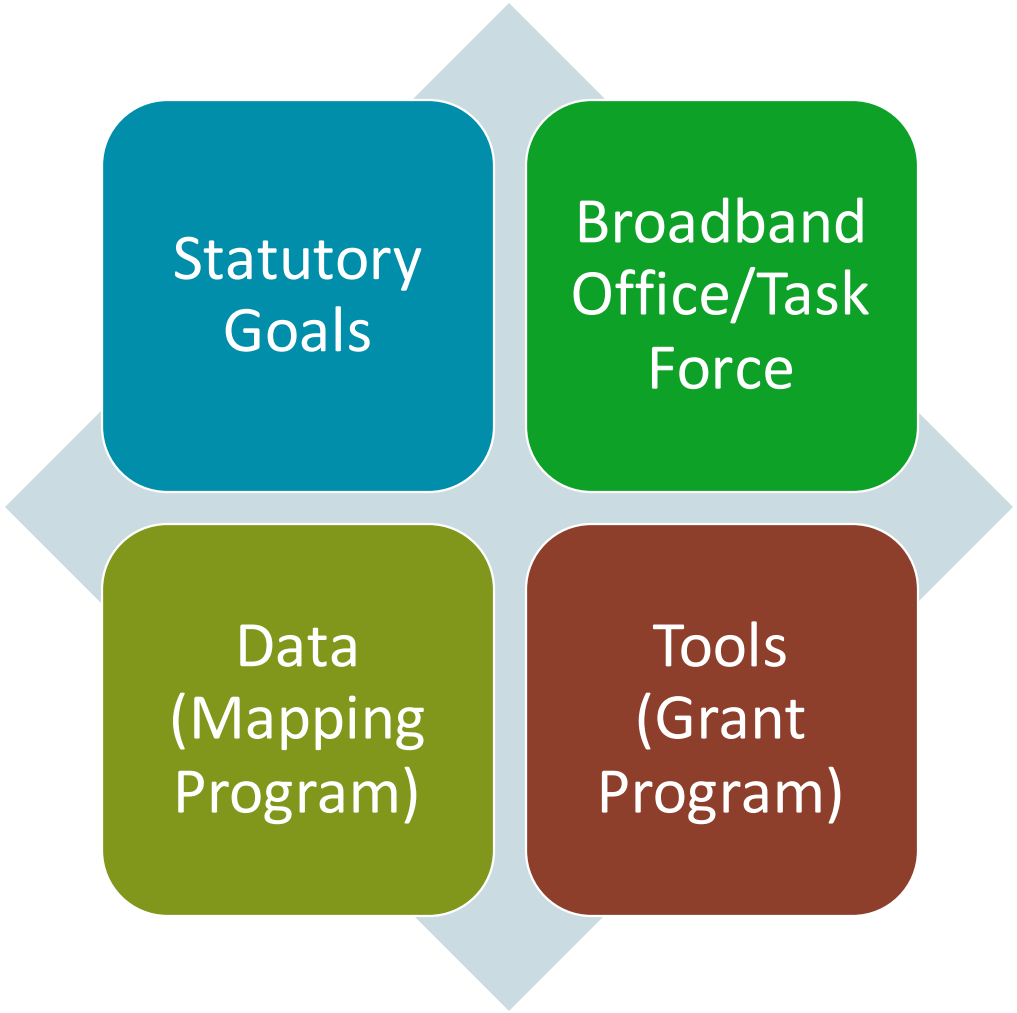
2015-2018

- 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

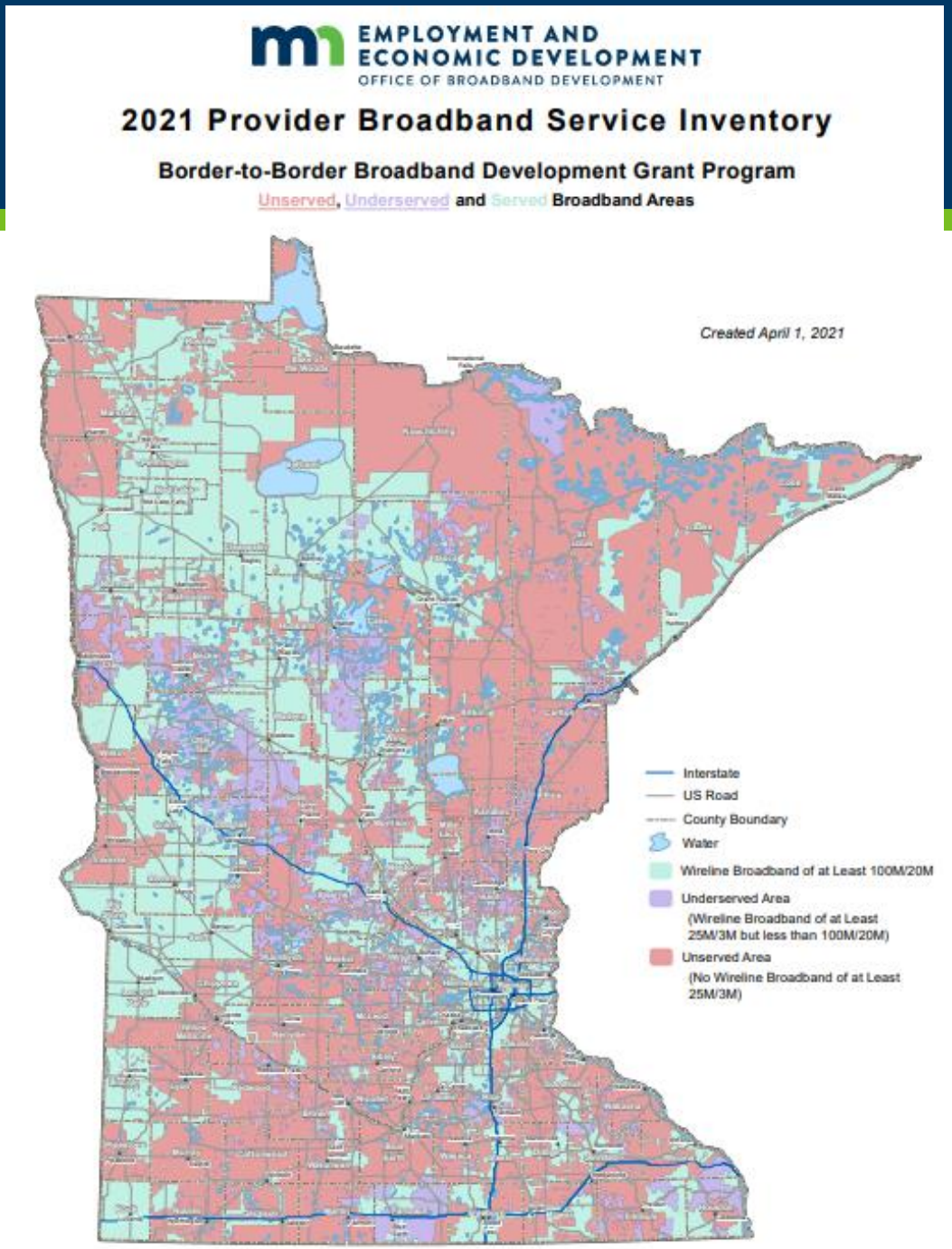
2019-2021

- 2019 – B2B 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 – Border to Border grant funded at $35M for FY22 and $35M for FY23 with federal (ARPA) funding

MN Broadband Policy Framework



Progress…but not done yet



State Statutory Broadband Goals:

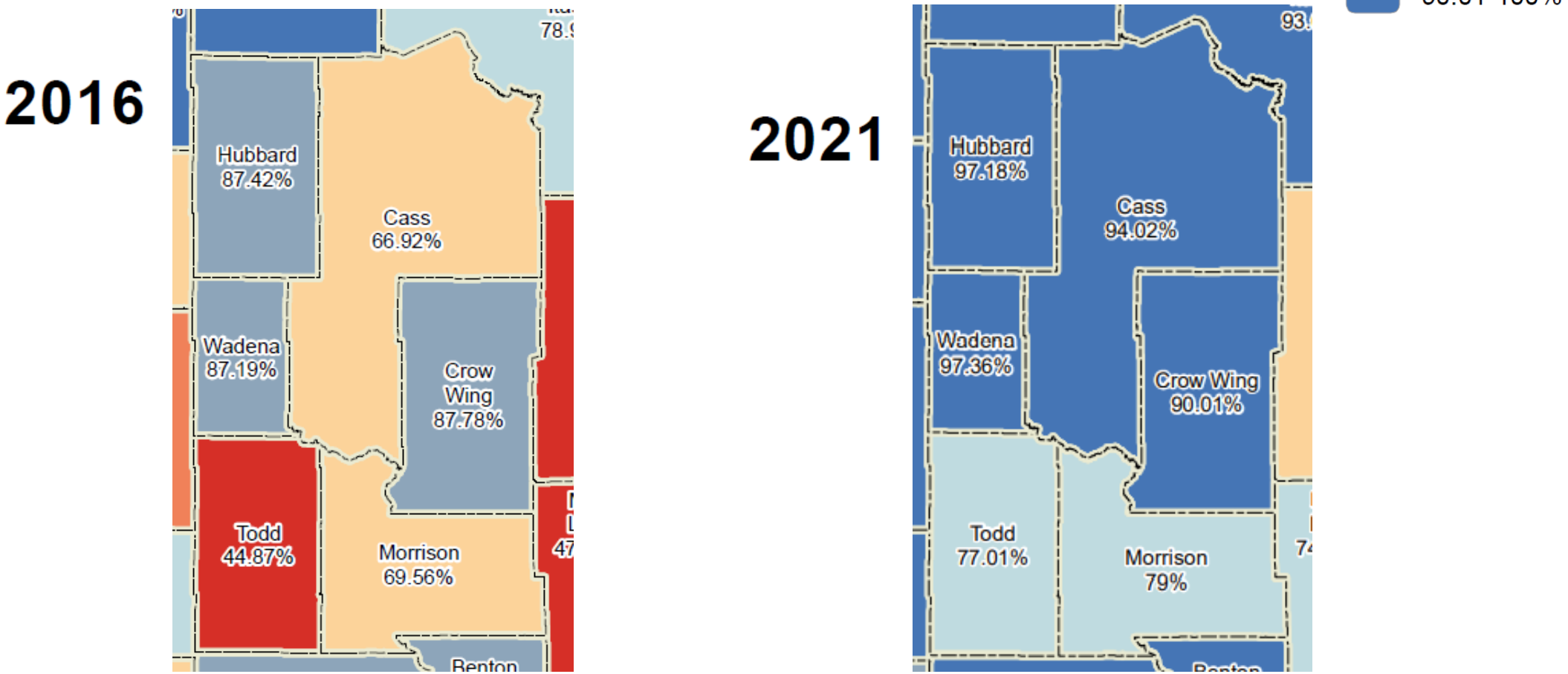
All Homes and Businesses will have access to broadband service of at least:

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

- **140,000 households without access to 25/3 (2022 goal)**
- **231,000 without access to 100/20 (2026 goal)**

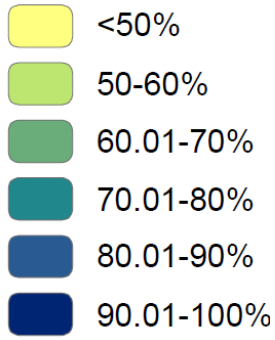
Percentage of Households Served by Wireline Broadband Service

At Least 25 Mbps Download/3 Mbps Upload Speeds (2022 State Broadband Goal)

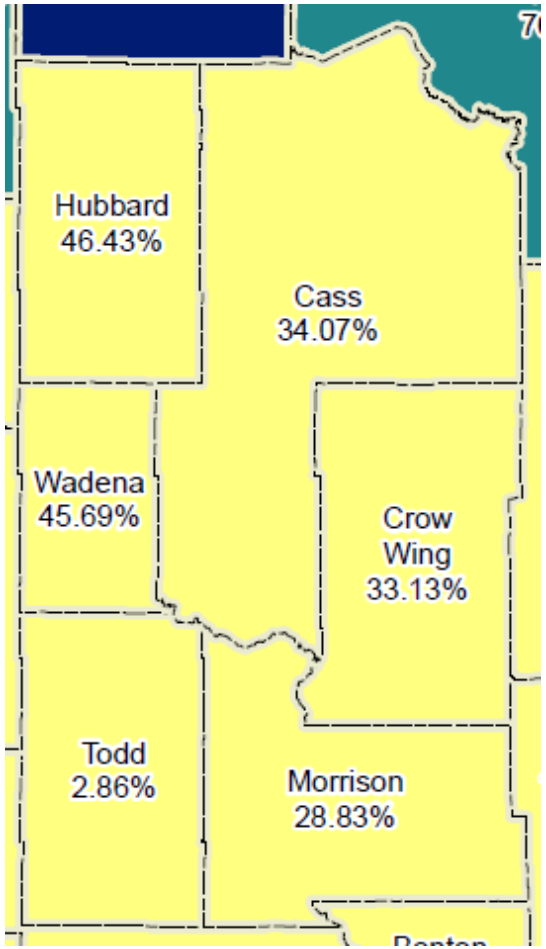


Percentage of Households Served by Wireline Broadband Service

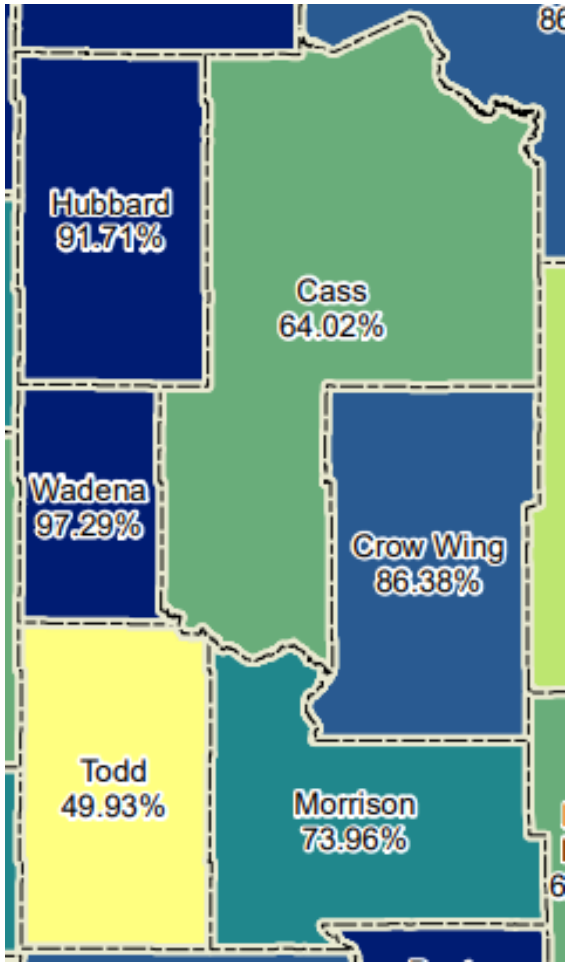
At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds (2026 State Broadband Goal)



2016



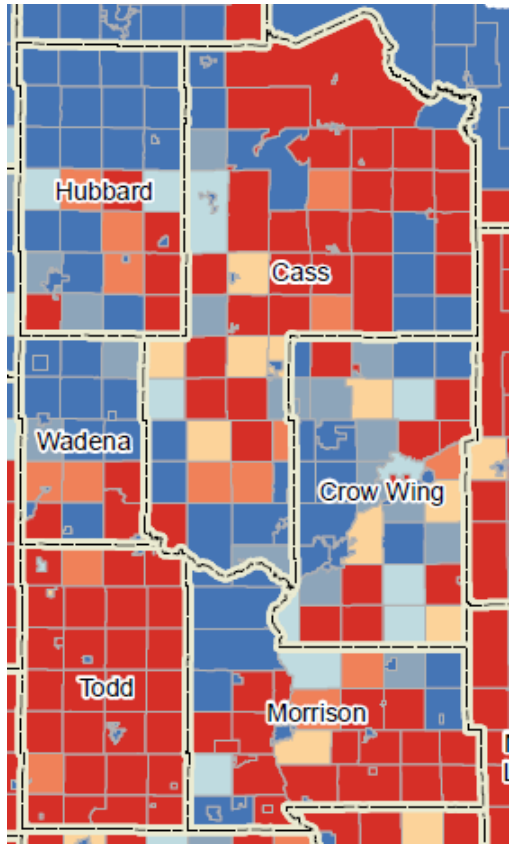
2021



2017 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline
Broadband Service by City/Township

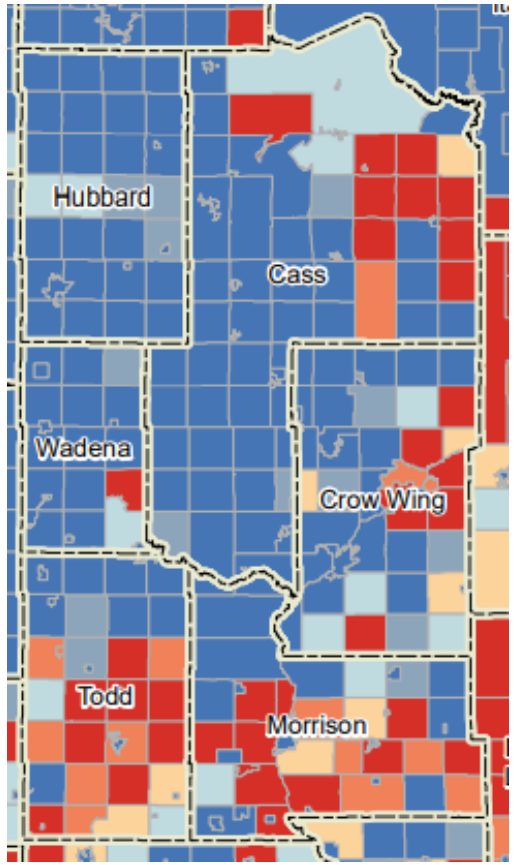
At Least 25 Mbps Download/3 Mbps Upload Speeds
Statewide Availability: 87.94%, Rural: 73.07%



2021 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline
Broadband Service by City/Township

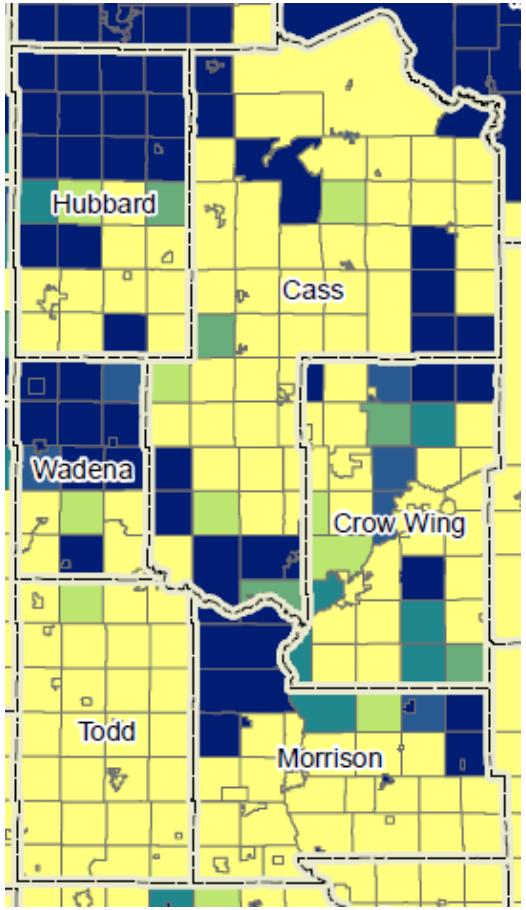
At Least 25 Mbps Download/3 Mbps Upload Speeds
Statewide Availability: 93.27%, Rural: 84.99%



2017 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline Broadband Service by City/Township

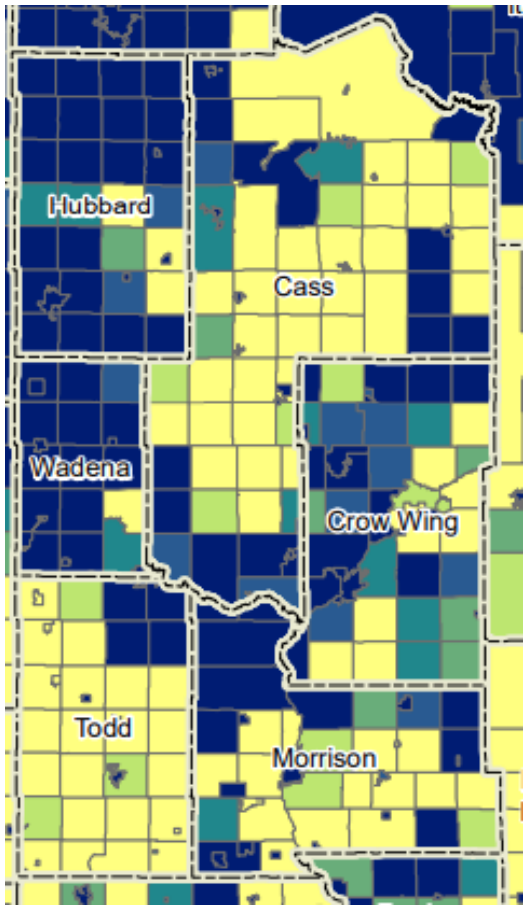
At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds
Statewide Availability: 69.86%, Rural: 52.46%



2021 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: 88.91%, Rural: 75.19%



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.

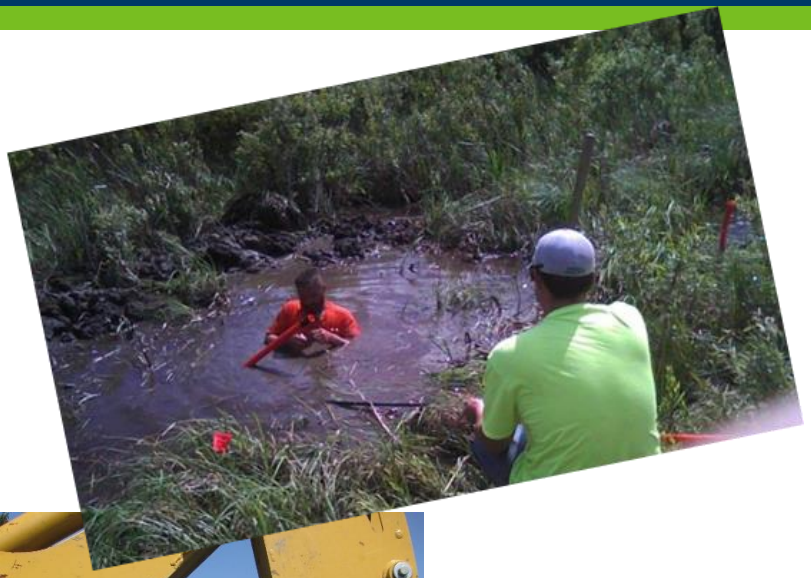
MN Border to Border Broadband Development Grant

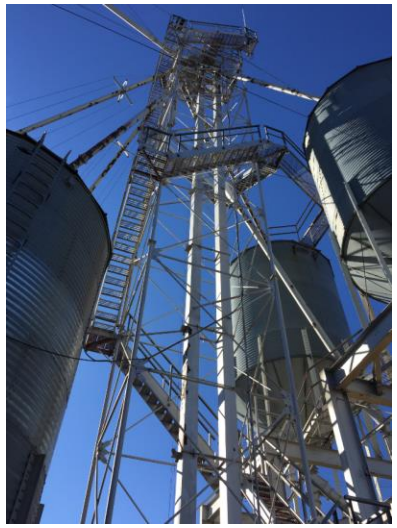
- **Grant purpose**: To provide financial assistance for the acquisition and installation of middle-mile and last-mile broadband infrastructure to areas of the state that do not have wireline access at federal and state minimum standard speeds.
- **Allowable costs:** Examples of allowable costs: final 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

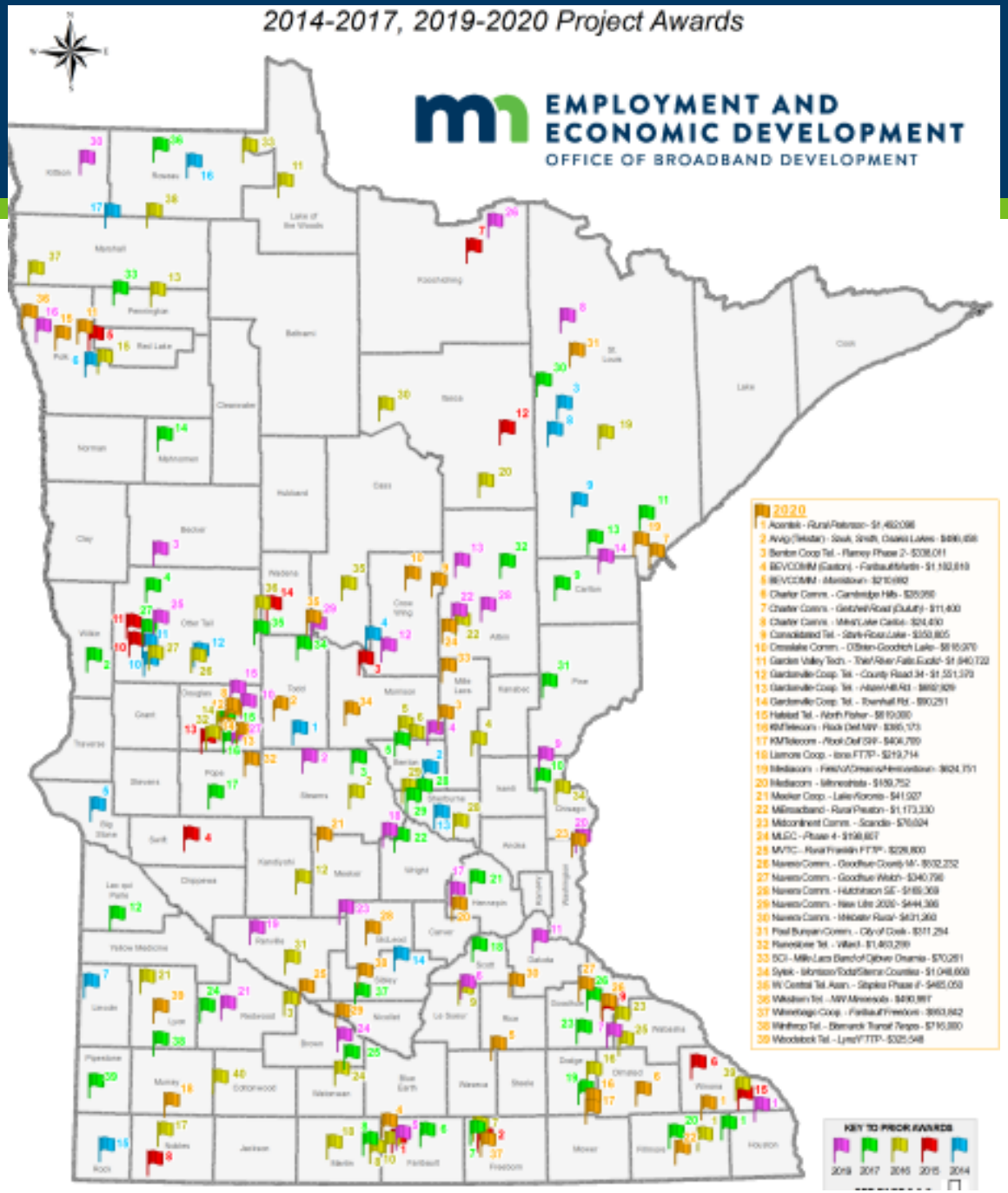
Border to Border Broadband Development Grant Overview—Prior Years





- 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	$33.7M	$180.2M
Completed	--	~109

Federal Funding Opportunities

- USDA Community Connect—*App window closed 12/23/20; unclear when next window opens*
- USDA ReConnect—*Round 3 should open soon; approx. $600M*
- FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)—*FCC reviewing long form apps; a handful approved*

<u>Consolidated Appropriations Act</u> (passed December 2020):

- NTIA Broadband Expansion to Underserved Communities ($288M) –*Applications were due August 17; $2.5B in requests*
- NTIA Tribal Connectivity ($1B)—*Applications were due September 1; $5B in requests*
- FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit ($3.2B)—*Eligible household enrollment continues*

Federal Funding Opportunities-cont.

American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA (passed March 2021)

- State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
  - Broadband is an allowed use
  - Some local governments are funding broadband projects
  - State fiscal recovery funds-to date, none allocated for broadband in MN
- Sec. 604 Capital Projects Fund
  - Minnesota's allocation is $180,702,620 – Treasury guidance issued 9/20/21 – includes the $70M for the Border to Border grant program

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Passed Senate, Pending in House)

- Possible add'l funding for infrastructure and digital equity programs

For more information:

- Link to interactive map: Minnesota Map
- Link to training on how to use interactive map: Recording
- DEED Office of Broadband Development website: Office of Broadband Development / Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (mn.gov)
- Contact information:
  - Deed.broadband@state.mn.us
  - 651-259-7610

Thank you!

Bill Coleman Broadband Coalition

Blandin Community Broadband Resources: *Accelerate!*

A four-month process to spur community acquisition and deployment of federal and state broadband funds.

Blandin Foundation™
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA

$4.8M

in broadband infrastructure funding

"Thank YOU Bill, Bernadine and Mary. This would not have been possible without the guidance and learning that we received from you."

Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator for Aitkin County

Blandin Foundation™
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA

ACCELERATE!
Community Broadband Resources
Aitkin, Kanabec, & Pine Counties, & Mille Lacs Tribal Economy

$3.7M

in broadband funding and building retrofitting

"Without the knowledge and connections made through Blandin's broadband program this couldn't have happened!"

Lezlie Sauter, Economic Development Director for Pine County

Blandin Foundation™
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA

ACCELERATE!
Community Broadband Resources
Aitkin, Kanabec, & Pine Counties, & Mille Lacs Tribal Economy

Community Broadband Engagement Strategies

- Partner & support grant applications
  - Five - 2020 DEED grants awarded in Todd, Crow Wing, Morrison & Wadena Counties
- Serve as anchor tenant on sub-regional fiber ring
  - Brainerd School District
- Provide direct grant funding to broadband providers
- Create community owned infrastructure w/long-term single provider lessor/operator
  - City of Little Falls, Long Prairie & Monticello
- Create community owned infrastructure w/open access, multiple providers
  - Ammon ID and Utah Utopia Project
- Create community owned infrastructure and municipal operations
  - SW MN Broadband, Chattanooga TN and many others
- Create regional broadband cooperative
  - RS Fiber in Renville and Sibley Counties

Panelists

Josh Netland, Emily TelCo
Mark Diehl, Little Falls Schools
Jim Roeder, Lakewood Health

Josh Netland, Emily Cooperative Telephone Co.

Background

Why Fiber

Deployment Challenges

Conclusion

Emily Cooperative Telephone Company – ECTC

- Cooperative
- Provider of voice, internet, and video services
- 100% fiber to the home

Crosslake Communications

- For profit partnership, ECTC is one of three owners
- Provider of voice, internet, and video services
- 80% fiber to the home – 3 to 5-year plan to complete remaining 20%

Fiber Technology

- Dedicated bandwidth speeds of 1Gig and beyond
- Symmetrical speeds Upload and Download
- Allows for high bandwidth technology and services

Internet Usage

- Bandwidth usage increased by 200% in 18 months
- Increased bandwidth technology
  - Video conferencing
  - Telework/remote working
  - Smart device connectivity – cameras, home automation, video streaming services, etc.
  - Telehealth/Healthcare services
  - Schools and distance learning

ECTC

CROSSLAKE COMMUNICATIONS

Fiber Deployment Challenges

- Capital Investment – construction costs range from $25K to 50K per mile depending on rural, city, or lake areas
- Short construction season
- Permitting, easements, or right of way congestion
- Product lead times have increased
- Seasonal implications

ECTC

CROSSLAKE COMMUNICATIONS

Wrapping Up

- Funding Available for Unserved or Underserved Areas
- Partnerships
- Contact providers in your area, determine if there is interest or plans to deploy broadband services

ECTC

CROSSLAKE COMMUNICATIONS

Mark Diehl, Little Falls School District

Jim Roeder, Lakewood Health

Elected Official Update

Small Group Discussions

Small Group Share Back

Elected Official Update

2021 Broa

BUILDING

Inspiring Pr

October 12 – 14

Register here:
http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org

Thanks!