



Goodhue County

Broadband Infrastructure Partnership Program

I. Purpose

Through the use of funds allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) this Program is to be established to encourage and assist in financing broadband projects across the county. These projects should be designed to serve unserved or underserved households and businesses. As defined by the [MN Office of Broadband Development](#), *“An unserved area is an area of Minnesota in which households or businesses lack access to wire-line broadband service at speeds that meet the FCC threshold of 25 megabits per second download and 3 megabits per second upload. An underserved area is an area of Minnesota in which households or businesses do receive service at or above the FCC threshold but lack access to wire-line broadband service at speeds 100 megabits per second download and 20 megabits per second upload.”*

II. Program Guidelines

- a. Funds will be used from American Rescue Plan Act.
- b. Funds are limited and are First Come, First Serve
- c. In accordance with the ARPA, funds must be Obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026.
- d. Any project must be completed within proposed timeline to ensure payment.
- e. Goodhue County encourages cost participation with provider and taxing jurisdiction.
- f. Preference will be given to those providers/projects that have relationships with a taxing jurisdiction
- g. Project must meet the definition of the guidelines as outlined by the US Treasury (Outline speed requirements, [Interim Final Rule – pg. 7](#))
 - i. Projects must also be designed to serve unserved or underserved households and businesses, defined as those that are not currently served by a wireline connection
 - ii. Reliably meet or exceed symmetrical 100 Mbps download speed and upload speeds; or
 - iii. In cases where it is not practicable, because of the excessive cost of the project or geography or topography of the area to be served by the Project:
 1. Reliability meet or exceed 100 Mbps download speed and between at least 20 Mbps and 100 Mbps upload speed; and
 2. Be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps download speed and 100 Mbps upload speed.

III. Project Submittal/Approval

- a. Project must be submitted by a provider or developer via the forms provided.
- b. Goodhue County will make every effort to respond to the project proposal within 30 days of submission.
- c. County staff, via a Committee structure, will review the proposed Project and work to ensure all elements have been properly addressed.
- d. Consideration for approval of each project will be rated on the following criteria (a more detailed breakdown of criteria is included in the application materials):
 - i. Anticipated Broadband Improvements
 - ii. Community Participation
 - iii. Project Readiness
 - iv. Project Sustainability
 - v. Economic Development & Community Impact Review
 - vi. Broadband Adoption Assistance
 - vii. Partnership Funding Request Amount
- e. County staff will then review the Project and work with the recipient to ensure all elements have been properly addressed.
- f. Once staff feels the project is ready, the recipient will review notice of the proposals advancement and the proposal will go before the County Board for consideration of approval.
- g. County Board has final determination of all grant awards.
- h. If approved, the County Board must approve an Agreement with the Provider or Developer.
- i. Applications can be submitted beginning November 3, 2021.
- j. An initial review of applications will begin on January 3, 2022.
- k. The County will continue to accept and review applications after January 3, 2022 until all funding has been allocated or as instructed by County Board.

IV. Payment for Project

- a. Following the completion of the Project, an invoice must be submitted to Goodhue County by the provider or developer.
- b. Payment for the Project will be made by Goodhue County after the Project has been completed.
- c. Payment through Goodhue County may take up to 30 days to process.