



St. Louis County, MN

St. Louis County Broadband Planning Grant

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Form

9000

Rev. 7-19-2021

Background: The 'St. Louis County Broadband Planning Grant' supports local broadband initiatives by providing financial assistance to eligible projects. Application and additional information can be found online at:

www.stlouiscountymn.gov/broadband

Funding Up to \$25,000 for eligible projects (\$250,000 total available for grants countywide)

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Program Purpose To assist communities with planning for and securing funds for broadband infrastructure in **unserved or underserved** areas of St Louis County.

Program Goal
Aligned with the State

Goal 1: By 2022, St. Louis County businesses and homes have access to or are in the process of planning for high-speed broadband that provides minimum download speeds of at least 25 megabits per second and minimum upload speeds of at least three (3) megabits per second.

Goal 2: By 2026, St. Louis County businesses and homes have access to at least one provider of broadband with download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second and upload speeds of at least 20 megabits per second.

Eligible Applicants Cities, townships, tribal units, and non-profits located within St. Louis County.
Multi-organization collaborations are encouraged.

Eligible Project Areas

Unserved or Underserved Areas in St. Louis County
An **unserved area** is an area in which households or businesses lack access to wire-line broadband service at speeds that meet the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) threshold of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 megabits per second (Mbps) upload.

An **underserved area** is an area of St. Louis County in which households or businesses do receive service at or above the FCC threshold of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload but lack access to wire-line broadband service at speeds of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload.

Eligible Projects

- ✓ Broadband plan development (e.g. feasibility studies)
- ✓ Broadband application preparation and submission (E.g. Federal, state, and other resources)

Project Costs	Eligible Costs	Ineligible Costs
	✓ Consulting costs and services, grant writing, personnel costs, surveys, and similar costs associated with planning	✓ Infrastructure installation, middle mile, last mile, acquisition of property, equipment purchases, right-of-way, food, rent, travel, conferences

Match Funds Requirement Requires a 1:1 financial match (one part applicant and one part County).
The match must be committed and can come from any private and/or public source.

Priorities
Scoring Criteria

- ✓ Leverages provider partnership/investment (20 pts)
- ✓ Serves unserved and underserved areas (20 pts)
- ✓ Number of households and businesses served (20 pts)
- ✓ Strong citizen participation and support (20 pts)
- ✓ Project readiness (10 pts)
- ✓ Leverages government investment (10 pts)

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Deadline **Initial Application Deadline: September 17, 2021**
All eligible applications received during this time period are reviewed and scored according to the evaluation criteria. Grants are awarded to the most competitive and ready to go applications. Applications submitted after deadline may be awarded on a rolling basis subject to meeting eligibility requirements and the availability of remaining grant funds.

Application Requirements All applicants must provide an approved resolution to apply for, accept and match grant funds.

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