

2019 Annual Minnesota Broadband Profiles | Becker County

Rank: 87 (out of 87) for access to 100/20 megabits per second (Mbps)

Background

Every year since 2017 Blandin Foundation has contracted with Ann Treacy of Treacy Information Services to synthesize data from the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development and broadband news from communities across the state to gauge progress toward the state broadband goals (2022: 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up and 2026: 100 Mbps down and 20 Mbps up).

Leaders can use this information to plan and act to improve broadband access and use in their communities.

Becker County: data and community action

Becker County is in a precarious position. They might make the speed goals for 2022, but it will be a stretch to make the 2026 goal. The reason that gap is a problem is that the majority who today are feeling okay about their 25/3 Mbps access may not be motivated to mobilize for improvement to meet the impending 2026 goals.

Percentage of Served Population by Speed and Date			
Becker	2019	2018	2017
100/20 Mbps (2026 goal)	6.22	12.95	6.58
25/3 Mbps (2022 goal)	91.36	88.94	69.41

In 2016, Becker County benefitted from a Minnesota State Broadband grant that built a network that exceeds Minnesota’s 2026 goals:

- **2016 - PAUL BUNYAN COMMUNICATIONS HUBBARD, BECKER & ITASCA COUNTIES - GRANT: \$1,742,232**

This last-mile project will serve 785 unserved households, 26 unserved businesses, 2 unserved community anchor institutions and 143 underserved households and 2 underserved businesses in a multi-county region in north central Minnesota. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Itasca County, Paul Bunyan will improve service levels in the project area to 1 Gigabit service, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps.

There are seven providers in Becker County, but much of the area is covered only by one.

Becker was also in line for [\\$821,889 in CAF 2¹](#) (federal) funding to cover 2,341 locations. Unfortunately, CAF 2 only requires providers to build to 10/1 Mbps access. This might explain some of the county’s

¹ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2015/09/24/connect-america-phase-2-funding-in-minnesota-a-blessing-and-a-curse/>



strides towards the 2022 goals of 25/3 Mbps. That level of service clearly is better than 10/1 Mbps, but it isn't likely to meet future needs.

Given that there is [one provider for much of the county](#)², Becker County could try to partner with them for a future Minnesota broadband grant. Or find a provider who might be interested in coming into the area.

Checklist:

- 100/20 ranking: 87
- 25/3 ranking: 32
- Has worked with Blandin: yes
- Has received a MN Broadband grant: yes
- Household density: 9.2
- Number of providers: 7

Details:

- Find more articles on broadband in Becker County. (<http://tinyurl.com/jkah37b>)
- Districts: CD 7
Senate: 02, 04
House: 2B
- [Find your reps](#)³

Analysis: Code Red

- Red (action needed)
- Yellow (warning – ramp up efforts)
- Green (good shape)

² https://mn.gov/deed/assets/providers-county_tcm1045-190762.pdf

³ <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>

