

## Annual Minnesota Broadband Profiles | Chisago County

Rank: 51 (out of 87) for access to 100/20 broadband 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.

### Chisago County: data and community action

Chisago County seems unlikely to meet either the 2022 or 2026 Minnesota speed goals. Access in the county is improving, but not as fast as other counties. Resident efforts to get service continue.

Percentage of Served Population by Speed and Date			
Chisago	2019	2018	2017
100/20 (2026 goal)	71.26	69.53	65.25
25/3 (2022 goal)	83.85	73.27	65.25

Chisago County was a 2015-2016 [Blandin Broadband Community](#)<sup>1</sup>; they have been working to encourage broadband use, including by conducting a county-wide broadband [market survey in 2016](#)<sup>2</sup>; communities in Chisago have used that survey or similar surveys to create Minnesota state broadband grant applications. Working at the community level rather than county-wide level has opened the door to working with incumbent providers.

In 2018, a [Blandin Foundation report](#)<sup>3</sup> looked at the impact of Federal CAF II funding in two towns in Chisago, Isanti and Kanabec Counties: Lindstrom and Braham. CAF II money went to qualifying providers to subsidize network deployments that can deliver service of at least 10/1 Mbps. The study found that while some areas were upgraded beyond that speed; some remain at speeds that do not meet the 2022 nor 2026 Minnesota broadband goals. Chisago found a way, in at least some areas, to encourage providers to build to higher speeds – by pursuing state grants that require higher speed buildouts.

Chisago County has benefited from two Minnesota broadband grants:

<sup>1</sup> <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2016/10/12/blandin-broadband-communities-update-chisago-county-abc-contender/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2016/05/27/chisago-county-broadband-summit-surveys-results-and-stories-of-a-community-that-wants-more/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://blandinfoundation.org/content/uploads/Impact-of-CAF-II-funded-Networks\\_WEB.pdf](https://blandinfoundation.org/content/uploads/Impact-of-CAF-II-funded-Networks_WEB.pdf)



**2017 - CenturyLink - Fish Lake Township FTTH Project – GRANT \$1,833,724**

- Serving 919 unserved households, 7 unserved businesses, and one unserved community anchor institution in Fish Lake Township in rural Chisago County. In a funding partnership leveraging federal (CAF II), state grant and local township funding, CenturyLink will improve broadband service levels to 1 Gbps down and 1 Gbps up, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal.
- **2016 - SUNRISE TOWNSHIP (CENTURYLINK) FIBER TO THE HOME - GRANT: \$1,074,852**  
Serving 584 unserved households, 10 unserved businesses, and 2 community anchor institutions in rural Sunrise Township in Chisago County, MN. In a funding partnership with the State of Minnesota and Sunrise Township, CenturyLink will leverage CAFII funding from the FCC to bring 1 Gigabit service to two-thirds of the township, exceeding the 2026 state speed goal of 100 Mbps by 20 Mbps.

Both grant projects were unique in that they used state funding to leverage CAF II money to reach state speed goals (100/20 Mbps) versus CAF II speed requirements (10/1 Mbps). [Sunrise built a model<sup>4</sup>](#) of citizen engagement, where the community came to the providers with a proposal and community investment.

Chisago could get to full coverage incrementally, but they'll have to keep at it.

Chisago County could benefit from future grants. In 2019, CenturyLink and CTC applied to upgrade service in [Franconia Township in<sup>5</sup>](#) Chisago. (That doesn't mean they will get the grant; they have only applied.)

Checklist:

- 100/20 ranking: 51 (down from 32)
- 25/3 ranking: 47
- Has worked with Blandin: yes
- Has received a MN Broadband grant: yes
- Household density: 44
- Number of providers: 7

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<sup>4</sup> <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2016/09/16/sunrise-township-moves-forward-to-petition-for-subordinate-service-district-bond/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://wp.me/p3if7-5jv>

Details:

- [Chisago County](#)<sup>6</sup> has worked with the Blandin Foundation
- There is a matrix of Minnesota broadband adoption projects conducted with the support of Blandin Foundation; it includes [projects from this area](#)<sup>7</sup>.
- Districts: CD 8  
Senate: 32 & 39  
House: 32A, 32B, 39A
- [Find your reps](#)<sup>8</sup>

**Analysis: Code Yellow**

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

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<sup>6</sup> <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2016/10/12/blandin-broadband-communities-update-chisago-county-abc-contender/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://blandinonbroadband.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/bbc-2014-16-project-matrix.docx>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>

