

2019 Annual Minnesota Broadband Profiles | Lake County

Rank: 14 (out of 87) for broadband speeds 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.

Lake County: data and community action

Lake County is poised to meet the state broadband goals for both 2022 and 2026 but much depends on the success of the new management who recently took over the county network.

Percentage of Served Population by Speed and Date			
Lake	2019	2018	2017
100/20 (2026 goal)	93.40	94.30	94.32
25/3 (2022 goal)	93.86	94.30	94.30

In 2010, [Lake County got an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act \(ARRA\) award](#)¹ of \$66.3 million to improve about \$10 million of the award was an outright grant; the rest was a low-interest loan. There were [bumps along the road](#)² to getting fiber to the community and bumps remain. As it stands today, there are portions of the county that are not yet served with fiber. In the summer of 2019, the Lake County network was [sold to Zito media](#)³ for [\\$84 million](#)⁴. They are a small cable and data operator based in Pennsylvania with operations in 17 states. The company has said that their focus is to connect as many customers as possible.

Time will tell if the new management is looking to invest in the area; there is certainly local demand.

¹ <https://blandinfoundation.org/learn/research-rural/broadband-resources/broadband-initiative/measuring-impact-broadband-5-rural-mn-communities/community-profiles/lake-county/>

² <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2017/07/13/how-do-we-define-success-of-a-community-network-is-lake-county-a-model-or-cautionary-tale/>

³ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2019/07/02/lake-county-broadband-sold-to-zito-media/>

⁴ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2018/12/23/lake-county-accepts-84m-bid-for-lake-connections-from-pinpoint-holdings/>

[Lake County](#)⁵ was a 2013-2014 Blandin Broadband Community (BBC) and they were featured in a report on the community return on public investment in broadband, which found the following investments have been made in the community:

- \$56.3 million ARRA loan
- \$10 million ARRA grant
- \$17 million county investment
- \$118,170 from Blandin Foundation for Broadband Adoption
- **Total: \$83,418,170**

[Using formulas](#)⁶ devised to measure impact of broadband access, Lake County has the potential to realize from this investment:

- A combined household economic benefit of broadband of \$13,695,550
- A combined increase in residential real estate value of \$38,547,421

Checklist:

- 100/20 ranking: 14 (down from 11)
- 25/3 ranking: 21
- Has worked with Blandin: yes
- Has received a MN Broadband grant: no
- Household density: 1.6
- Number of providers: 7

Details:

- See Blandin Foundation's matrix of community broadband adoption projects: https://blandinfoundation.org/content/uploads/vy/BBC_2015-16_Project_Matrix.pdf
- Find more articles on broadband in Lake County (<http://tinyurl.com/j7pu3le>)
- Districts: CD 8
Senate: 03
House: 03A
- [Find your reps](#)⁷

Analysis: **Code Green**

- Red (yikes)
- Yellow (warning)
- Green (good shape)

⁵ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2014/09/12/strut-your-stuff-tour-lake-county-uses-technology-to-connect-youth-and-seniors-and-prepare-for-ftth/>

⁶ <https://blandinfoundation.org/learn/research-rural/broadband-resources/broadband-initiative/measuring-impact-broadband-5-rural-mn-communities/return-on-investment/#formulating-broadband-value>

⁷ <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>