

2019 Annual Minnesota Broadband Profiles | Murray County

Rank: 69 (out of 87) for broadband speed 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.

Murray County: data and community action

Murray County is not poised to reach the state broadband goals for either 2022 or 2026. However, they are supporting [Lismore's 2019 state broadband grant¹](#) proposal, which would help.

Percentage of Served Population by Speed and Date			
Murray	2019	2018	2017
100/20 (2026 goal)	51.59	50.78	41.65
25/3 (2022 goal)	65.37	51	50.90

Murray has benefited from one Minnesota broadband grant:

- **2015 - MVTW Wireless Middle Mile -- Grant award: \$808,080**

This project is a Middle Mile broadband infrastructure buildout to upgrade backhaul capacity between site locations within 20 southwestern Minnesota counties : Blue Earth, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Rock, Redwood, Renville, Sibley Swift, Watonwan, and Yellow Medicine.

In 2018, with support from the Blandin Foundation, released a [feasibility study²](#) that showed challenges.

Our analysis shows that it is not economically feasible to build fiber everywhere in the rural parts of the county using the existing Border-to-Border grant program—the 50% grant matching in that program is not high enough to create a sustainable network. However, it would be possible to fund fiber using these grants if the percent of the grant matching is increased above

¹ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2019/09/04/murray-county-endorses-lismore-coops-broadband-proposal-with-possibility-of-loan/>

² <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2018/05/01/murray-county-broadband-feasibility-study-fiber-in-stages-may-be-possible-over-years-fixed-wireless-already-available/>

the 50% level used in awarding these grants today. It might also be feasible to build the fiber in stages over multiple years to get the needed grant funding.

It is likely to be a challenge for a service provider to building fiber today since almost all of the rural area is served with newly-built fixed wireless technology that is capable of delivering speeds of at least 25 Mbps download. Any potential fiber provider is going to worry that many households will be satisfied with that level of broadband speed.

Bearing that in mind in September 2019, Murray County committed up to \$200,000, which could be taken from the county's Economic Development Authority revolving loan fund, to support Lismore Coop's grant application to the state fund.

Murray County could benefit from future grants. In 2019, Lismore applied to upgrade service in Murray. (That doesn't mean they will get the grant; they have only applied.)

Checklist:

- 100/20 ranking: 69 (down from 51)
- 25/3 ranking: 80
- Has worked with Blandin: yes
- Has received a MN Broadband grant: yes
- Household density: 5.2
- Number of providers: 5

Details:

- Find more articles on broadband in Murray County (<http://tinyurl.com/j9sr5gf>)
- Districts: CD 7
Senate: 22
House: 22A
- [Find your reps³](#)

Analysis: Code Red

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

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