

2019 Annual Minnesota Broadband Profiles | Stearns County

Rank: 32 (out of 87) for broadband speeds of 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.

Stearns County: data and community action

Stearns County could reach the Minnesota speed goals for both 2022 and 2026 with a concerted effort. They have recent momentum happening in the area; that will help.

Percentage of Served Population by Speed and Date			
	2019	2018	2017
100/20 (2026 goal)	81.07	40.17	38.01
25/3 (2022 goal)	91.72	88.96	87.58

Stearns County has benefited from two state broadband grants:

- 2017 - Albany Mutual Telephone Association - Two Rivers Area - GRANT \$616,743**
 Serving serve 121 unserved households and home-based businesses in an area northeast of Albany in Stearns County with service levels to exceed the 2022 state goal of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload.
- 2016 - ALBANY MUTUAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION BIG WATAB LAKE – GRANT: \$726,185**
 Serving 242 unserved households near and around Big Watab Lake in Stearns County with service levels to 1 Gbps.

Stearns County also is in line to benefit from FCC funding [because Midcontinent Communications¹](#) will receive \$719,916 over ten years to expand services in Stearns County. Also, in June 2019, Stearns County Board met to hear the conclusions of a Blandin Foundation-supported feasibility study. The future of the county’s progress toward the MN broadband speeds goals relies, to a great degree, on how that study is received.

Stearns County could benefit from future grants. In 2019, Albany Telephone, Meeker Coop and Arvig applied to upgrade service in Stearns (That doesn’t mean they will get the grant; they have only applied.)

¹ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2019/08/14/more-on-fcc-funding-going-to-stearns-county/>



Checklist:

- 100/20 ranking: 32 (up from 64)
- 25/3 ranking: 29
- Has worked with Blandin: yes
- Has received a MN Broadband grant: no
- Household density: 40.5
- Number of providers: 13

Details:

- Find more articles on broadband in Stearns County (<http://tinyurl.com/z463nan>)
- Districts: CD 6
Senate: 12, 13, 14
House: 12B, 13A, 13B, 14A, 14B
- [Find your reps²](#)

Analysis: Code Red

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

² <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>