

Assessment of Blandin Community Broadband Program (BCBP) using the Mountain of Accountability Framework

2015 - 2016



Compiled by Blandin Foundation staff and consultants with input from program participants

Contents

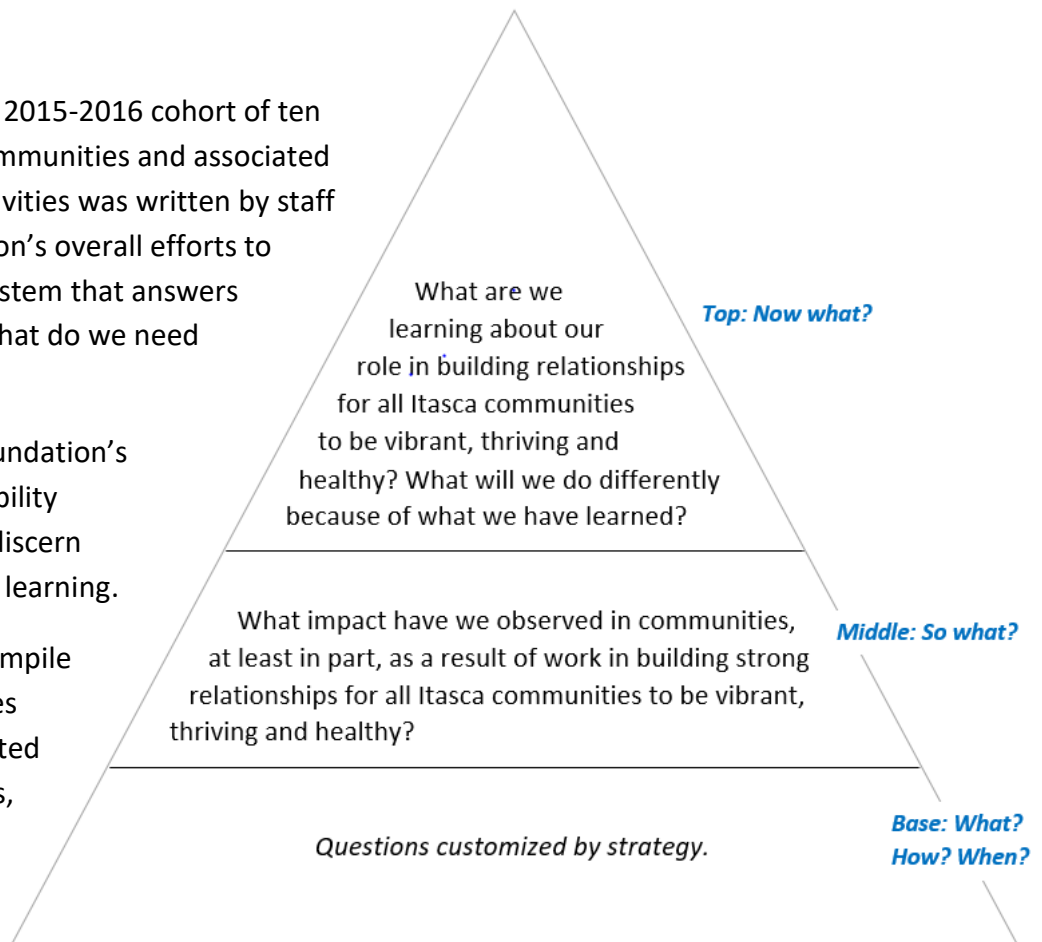
Introduction	3
Program Overview and Context.....	3
Foot of the Mountain: Basic Accountability for Management Processes	4
Inputs	4
Outputs	5
Middle of the Mountain: Accountability for Impact.....	10
Carlton County	10
Central Woodlands (east central Minnesota).....	11
Chisago County	11
Martin County	12
Nobles County.....	13
Redwood County.....	14
Red Wing.....	15
RS Fiber	17
Resilient Region (Region 5 in north central Minnesota).....	18
Sherburne County	19
Strut Your Stuff Tour	21
Technical Assistance: Meeting Communities Where They Are At.....	21
Organizational-level Impacts	24
Regional Impacts.....	26
Statewide Impact.....	26
National Impact.....	28
Mountain Summit: Accountability for Learning, Development & Adaptation	29
Appendix: Grants Awarded through BCBP from January 2014 - July 2016	31

Introduction

This assessment of the 2015-2016 cohort of ten Blandin Broadband Communities and associated broadband-related activities was written by staff as part of the foundation’s overall efforts to build an assessment system that answers the basic question: “What do we need to know to do better?”

The report uses the foundation’s Mountain of Accountability framework to help us discern and apply what we are learning.

Information used to compile the assessment includes written reports submitted by community partners, reporting on the Blandin on Broadband blog, and in-person site visits and convenings.



The reporting period for this assessment covers calendar years 2015-2016, roughly the period of that cohort.

Program Overview and Context

Blandin Foundation’s investment in the Blandin Community Broadband Program (BCBP) is based on the premise that affordable access to the Internet -- and the digital literacy skills needed to take full advantage of this access -- are essential for healthy communities. The program’s objectives are to advance sustainable broadband adoption, increase community economic vitality, and enhance quality of life and place.

BCBP advances the foundation's mission through three of the foundation's strategies:

Commitment to Home

Investing in Leaders

Expanding Opportunity

BCBP matches community resources and vision with technical support, grants, information and educational resources, webinars, convening and conferences. Program components include:

- Community Broadband Resources (technical assistance)
- Blandin Broadband Community (BBC) partnerships
- Annual *Border to Border Broadband* conferences
- Webinar series
- Convenings
- Broadband grants
- Minnesota Broadband Coalition policy work
- Blandin on Broadband blog

Foot of the Mountain: Basic Accountability for Management Processes



Inputs

Human Resources: 1.35 FTEs (Mary Magnuson .9; Bernadine Joselyn .4; Linda Gibeau .05); Consultants: 2,290 hours 2015 - \$206,100; 1,835 hours 2016 - \$165,150 (\$90/hr) plus travel; *due to the nature of the two-year cycle of the BBC program, consulting costs are always more in the first year.*

Strategy Board: advice and guidance - including deliberation on grant applications - on the part of 15 stakeholders representing a range of experiences and perspectives from business, internet service providers, local government, state government, education and healthcare. The Strategy Board meets quarterly.

Grant funds: \$1.5 million dedicated grant dollars allocated by Blandin Trustees for 2015-16, with

approximately one-half of that total amount expected to be expended in each calendar year.

Leveraged funding and other in-kind match: At least \$573,550 over two years in match contributed by partnering Blandin Broadband Communities and community project grantees.

BCBP-dedicated program funds: \$88,800 over two years (excluding staff salaries, consultant fees and including conference expenses)

2015-16 Blandin Broadband Community Partners: Carlton County, Central Woodlands (east central Minnesota), Chisago County, Martin County, Nobles County, Redwood County, Red Wing, RS Fiber (Renville & Sibley Counties), Resilient Region (Region 5 in north central Minnesota), and Sherburne County

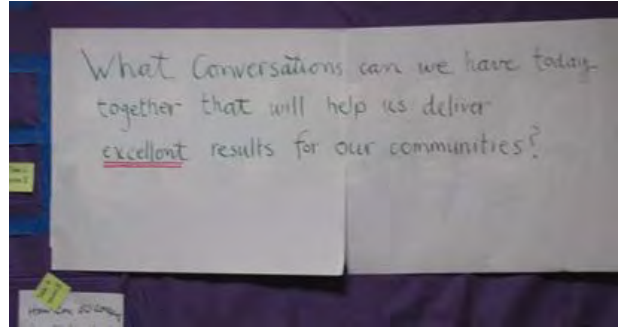


Outputs

Grants: 145 grants approved for a total of \$1,499,999 (See the Appendix for a complete grant list.)

- \$1,107,804 to fund 125 new and alumni **Blandin Broadband Communities** grants (*does not include Robust Network Feasibility Study grants to new and alumni BBCs*)
 - \$809,504 to new BBCs
 - \$298,300 to Alumni BBCs
- \$72,500 to fund two grants to PCs for People to distribute 625 computers in twelve communities, including the ten BBCs.
- \$240,325 to fund thirteen **Robust Network Feasibility Fund** grants.
- \$79,370 to fund five **Broadband Innovation** grants in support of projects that advance community-defined technology goals. Examples of funded projects include: two years continued operation of the Lac qui Parle Computer Commuter, coding classes for diverse and immigrant youth, online marketing education for diverse business owners, and general community technology education.

Technical Assistance: The *Community Broadband Resources* (CBR) component of the Blandin Community Broadband Program provides assistance to communities in three ways:



By providing consulting assistance

- Communities, when seeking to determine appropriate next steps towards technology vitality, are often without quality, tech-neutral, vendor-neutral advice. Community Broadband Resources uses select consultants to provide information and assistance to communities as they determine their appropriate role. No grant funds are made to the communities through this program, only short-term technical assistance.

By convening

- Blandin Foundation has a reputation for providing convening opportunities, both virtual and on location. Community Broadband Resources convenes community leaders and topic experts for dialogue and learning.

Virtually

- Blandin Foundation, through its [grant programs](http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/)¹ and the [Blandin on Broadband blog](http://blandinonbroadband.wordpress.com/)² has developed significant online resources for communities. These resources support CBR activities and are available to all interested persons to use and apply in their own communities.

Through this program component, participating communities are eligible to receive up to 32 hours of consultation and staff assistance. During this reporting period program consultant Bill Coleman delivered a total of 352 hours of assistance to eleven communities. The foundation was able to respond to every request received.

¹ <http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/>

² <http://blandinonbroadband.wordpress.com/>

Information/Education Support: Throughout 2015-16 reporting period the *Blandin on Broadband* (BoB) Blog and related monthly e-News continued to serve as the state’s key information resource on policy and practice related to broadband access and utilization. In addition, blog content frequently was cited and amplified by other state-wide and national media. The number of blog posts per month ranged from 32 to 54, with an average of 42 posts per month.



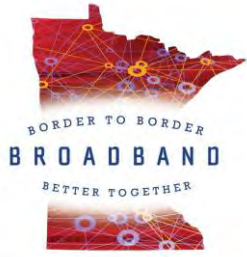
An average of 60 people visited the blog each day with 120 views (meaning multiple visits from the same browser). Events such as legislative action or funding opportunities increased traffic as did links from other news sources, especially national news sources. Traffic to the site is just one measure of exposure. We also saw an increase in subscribers to the site – or readers who get BoB posts via Twitter, email or WordPress. At the end of 2016 we had 1635 subscribers to BoB, and 2,232 subscribers to e-News. Subscribers include legislators, journalists, national broadband figures and community members.

Visitors to BoB are able to share posts with their colleagues through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social media channels. During this reporting period BoB articles were shared 4,045 times.

In addition, throughout 2015-16 Foundation staff coordinated the delivery of 15 webinars. Topics were generated by staff in response to stakeholder perceived needs and interests.³ Participation in the webinars ranged from 10 to 25, for a total of 269, with an average participation rate of nearly 18. All webinar content is archived on the Blandin on Broadband blog, where they have been viewed 338 times. The accompanying PowerPoint presentations have been accessed (via SlideShare) 1,579 times.

³ BCBP webinars offered between January 2015 and December 2016:

November 10, 2016	Census Webinar
August 11, 2016	Growing and Keeping Tech Talent
July 14, 2016	Attracting Tech Talent
May 12, 2016	Community Technology Centers
April 20, 2016	Broadband-Focused Economic Development Marketing
March 10, 2016	Spurring Small Business Use of Technology
February 11, 2016	Broadband Considerations in Site Selection and Data Centers
October 8, 2015	DEED Office of Broadband 2014 Projects: A Progress Report
September 10, 2015	Universal Service Fund: Supporting Broadband in Rural Places
August 13, 2015	Advocacy Groups: Who are They?
July 9, 2015	Creative Spaces, Creative Places
June 18, 2015	NTIA's Broadband Programs
May 14, 2015	Partnership Models
April 9, 2015	Organizing the Community Around Key Broadband Topics - Creating the Right Team
March 12, 2015	Wireless Broadband: It's Complicated!
February 12, 2015	Fiber and Gigabit Networks: The Future is Here

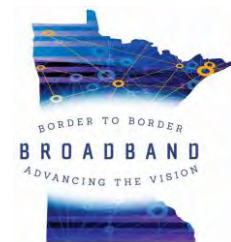


Convenings: In November 2015, Blandin Foundation and MN DEED's Office of Broadband Development co-sponsored a statewide conference, ***Border to Border Broadband: Better Together***, with the formal support of over 20 organizations from throughout the state. Over the course of the three day event, over 170 participants, including legislators, county commissioners, economic development professionals, representatives of the internet service provider community, and community broadband champions participated in this "So what? Now what?" conversation about how to make Minnesota a broadband leader.

Conference highlights included:

- Conference participants worked to create, and by consensus adopt, a new vision for broadband for our state: ***Everyone in Minnesota will be able to use convenient, affordable world-class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe.*** Since then, that vision has been formally endorsed by dozens of organizations from across the state.
- Legislative panel to respond to the broadband vision for Minnesota.
- Lt. Governor Tina Smith announced the 2015 Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant awards.
- Remarks by Congressman Rick Nolan and Senator Al Franken
- Keynote by internationally recognized speaker, Susan Crawford on the importance of municipal fiber networks
- Breakout sessions focusing on broadband partnerships, innovation, youth and community engagement, cooperative broadband, maker spaces, and increasing adoption.
- Digital storytelling workshop for Native American Youth

In September 2016 Blandin Foundation hosted ***Border to Border Broadband: Advancing the Vision*** with support of the MN Office of Broadband Development. The day-and-a-half long event was attended by nearly 100 participants, and featured:



- Learning Stations featuring projects funded through DEED's Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program.
- Panels on navigating challenging broadband decisions, and the role of coops in broadband development.
- Keynote address by Gary Johnson, president of Paul Bunyan Communications
- Video greetings from Lt. Governor Tina Smith, and Congressman Rick Nolan

Cooperative Convenings: Minnesota is blessed with a vibrant eco-system of locally-owned telephone co-ops who already for decades have invested in advanced fiber networks for their members, making Minnesota a leader in national rural fiber connectivity. For years, Blandin Foundation staff had been pondering the question, “What would it look like if more different (additional?) co-ops stepped in to partner with communities to bring broadband to hard-to-serve areas? How can we facilitate that?”

In May of 2015, the Foundation convened a group of stakeholders at Great River Energy in Maple Grove to have a facilitated conversation on Minnesota’s co-ops and broadband; what are some of the opportunities and challenges, and what is the Blandin Foundation’s role.

In the months that followed, Blandin Foundation hosted follow-up conversations with smaller groups of telephone coops, electric coops, public-private partnership advocates, and shared the results of those conversations in [A Blandin Foundation Call for Co-op Partners: Broadband is Good and Good for You](#)⁴.

To build upon the work, in the summer of 2016, the Foundation held another meeting at GRE with the theme *Cooperation Among Cooperatives*, where attendees heard from providers about different models for cooperative broadband being implemented across the state and nationally. Staff has built on this work in 2017.

Minnesota Broadband Coalition: In October of 2015, Blandin Foundation convened representatives from nearly 20 advocacy organizations from around the state, along with staff from several members of Minnesota’s federal congressional delegation, to share their broadband-related legislative agendas and discuss ways to work together to advance Minnesota’s broadband future. The group met five times in 2016, including hosting an educational and networking event, *Broadband & Chocolate: Conversation, Information and Dessert*, where dozens of legislators mingled with broadband champions from across the state, and brushed up on their “Broadband 101” knowledge thanks to quizzes and conversation. Staff also worked with the Office of Broadband Development and legislative planners to ensure broadband was among the topics addressed at during the legislature’s “One Minnesota” kick-off, and that rural community perspectives were included in that briefing, alongside those of incumbent providers.

⁴ http://broadband.blandinfoundation.org/_uls/resources/Cooperative_Next_Steps_Memo.pdf



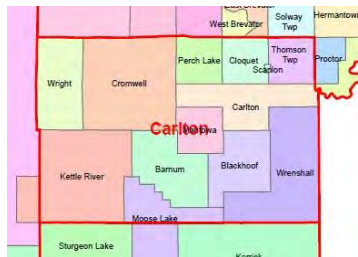
Middle of the Mountain: Accountability for Impact

BCBP program has impacts at multiple levels:

- Individual persons
- Individual grants/projects/events
- Individual businesses/organizations/institutions (schools, health care facilities, local governments, etc.)
- Communities
- Regions
- Statewide
- National

Given the foundation’s focus on communities as a unit of impact, this assessment discusses primarily what we are learning about BCBP’s community-level impacts. This summary of BCBP community-level impacts is informed by *Blandin on Broadband* blog reporting and reports submitted by Blandin Broadband Community teams, and staff site visits.

Carlton County



Carlton County focused on getting people using devices. One of their particularly innovative ideas was a Community Education class that invited attendees to come in with their new devices (post-Christmas) to work with students and others to ask questions and learn on a one-to-one basis.

Another area of focus was to improve broadband access in the rural countryside, outside of towns. One of the interim solutions they put into place was to acquire for the library a number of Internet hotspots that library patrons can check out for use at home (this project has since been duplicated by other BBCs).

Free Wifi, hot spots available for check out



The county also chose to explore a more comprehensive solution to the poor access experienced by many of its residents by commissioning a feasibility study as part of its participation in BCBP. The feasibility concluded that it would cost approximately \$70 million to bring fiber to the home across the county. It noted: “Carlton County is in a challenging position. With its geographic proximity to the Duluth/Superior area, many businesses and residents find it hard to believe how drastically the level of speeds diminishes within such a short distance from these population centers.”

The county board and broadband champions will use the report recommendations to determine a strategy for pursuing their goal of better broadband their residents.

Central Woodlands (east central Minnesota)

The Central Woodlands is a self-identified “community of place” comprised of the northern portion of East Central Regional Development Commission’s service area. It includes northern Mille Lacs, Kanabec and Pine Counties, and southern Aitkin County. This region is very rural, has high rates of unemployment, low incomes (75% live in poverty), and a large percentage of older adults. Thus, many of their projects focused on older adults.

Someday Isle is a nonprofit shop and community economic development center on Isle’s main street, where local artists sell their wares. *Someday Isle* also hosts public access computers for people to use and offers training in using technology for small business and marketing. One local artist, Art Carr, reported an increase in sales by 400% after creating a Facebook page for his art.



The Central Woodlands Steering Team also prioritized partnering with township boards on broadband access. The *Central Woodlands Inventory and Assessment* project was designed to help townships move forward on broadband projects. For example, in Wilma Township in eastern Pine County, a retired resident leveraged \$3000 in grant money for equipment to install new Wi-Fi technology to bring wireless internet to the town hall.

According to project coordinator Penny Simonsen of East Central RDC, “Do not underestimate the power of a local stakeholder to influence the success of a project. Wilma Township is an excellent example of this, in a very positive way.”

Chisago County



Chisago County leveraged their participation in the Blandin Broadband Communities program for a wildly successful entry in Frontier Communications’ America’s Best Communities (ABC) competition. Over the course of the competition, the Chisago Lakes Area was awarded \$150,000 to implement projects to promote their region. Many of the projects were born of the broadband steering committee’s visioning work. The team made it to the final round in the national

competition, and their enthusiasm to work on the projects begun under the competition’s auspices has yet to wane.

Chisago County's "Got Internet" survey yielded some striking results: of the 876 respondents, 35% said they would telecommute if they had better broadband; 45% would use it for schoolwork; 31% would open a business; and 94% would subscribe to better broadband if it was available. One respondent commented: "My son says he will never move back to Chisago County from college – not with the current broadband." Another: "I am a realtor – people do not buy in this area because the broadband is not sufficient."



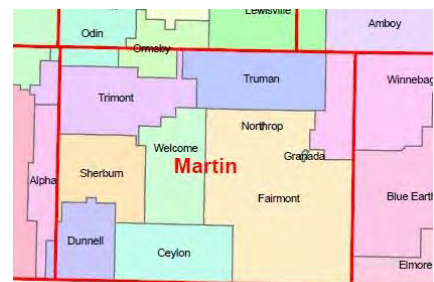
Chisago County broadband advocates have used these results to inform the state-wide debate over public funding for un- and under-served rural communities. Steering Committee chair and HRA/EDA Director Nancy Hoffman used the survey results in testimony before the Governor's Broadband Task Force and House and Senate committees.



Chisago's BBC and ABC Competition activities leaned heavily toward leveraging the capacity of the Internet to market their area, including tourism, arts and culture. These efforts include the creation of an integrated, collaborative website where cities, attractions and other agencies can now list their events in a "no-wrong-door" portal to the region; support for the *Old Hwy 61 Coalition*, a group of businesses and community boosters which works to preserve and promote the old thoroughfare including through the use of GIS-enabled map applications, and through extensive promotion of utilizing Google Maps to promote area businesses.

Martin County

Martin County went into the BBC program with high hopes for raising the level of service throughout their county. However, due to the complexity of the issue and the tough economics involved they decided to prioritize adoption projects while they built the knowledge and partnerships required to improve availability and access.



One such project was an "App Camp," offered to 5th and 6th grade students in several of the county's public and parochial schools. Participating students learned the basics of computer programming by building mobile apps. The camps were fully

enrolled and generated a lot of interest in the community, with area newspapers publishing photographs of students receiving their program completion certificates. They also enjoyed broad parental support.



Another successful project was the community calendar. The Steering Team was aware of the need of diverse organizations to collaborate better when it came to community activities. In small towns, when a spelling bee, hockey tournament and a wedding or two fall on the same weekend, amenities – particularly lodging – can be stressed! Their biggest

challenge wasn't generating support or funding from key organizations, but marketing and training to get those organizations to actually use it consistently. They learned that the marketing was well worth it, and the calendar has been a great success. They've already received positive reviews from visitors to the area, including a couple who learned of a kayaking club, and were able to make contact, borrow kayaks and attend an event while in town.

Martin County's efforts came full-circle in fall 2016 when they used the results of the Robust Network Feasibility Study they conducted as part of their participation in the program to apply for a Border-to-Border Broadband Development grant from DEED's Office of Broadband. The county was awarded \$1.68 million to serve 1,784 unserved households, 51 unserved businesses and nine unserved community institutions.

Nobles County



According to Nobles County Administrator and Blandin Broadband Community Steering Committee Chair Tom Johnson, the Worthington School District is the most diverse in the state. Thus, one of the goals of the Nobles County BBC Steering Committee was to use technology to implement programming for new Americans. One way they did this was through the myON Digital Library project. The myON program and tablet devices were purchased for use by Worthington schools, and utilized primarily by ECFE and ESL instructors at all grade levels. According to project implementers, the students and families who use the literacy resource are reaping great benefit. Project administrators report that both children and their parents have increased their English language skills through their participation.

Nobles County has also focused on digital literacy for other county residents, including through the creation of college credit technology classes for high school students and digital literacy programming in alternate languages including Spanish, Tigrinya, Amharic and Karen. Participating immigrant families have learned how to use the computer for connecting with relatives back home, saving a lot of money on long distance telephone charges.



Nobles County also conducted a feasibility study. Using the results of the study, the county’s provider-partner, Lismore Cooperative Telephone Co., was awarded a \$2.94 million Border-to-Border Broadband grant to create a hybrid fiber and wireless network to bring high-speed internet to the entire county. During testimony before the House committee charged with broadband policy, Johnson told state legislators: “If not for our participation in the Blandin Community Broadband Program we would not have been in a position to apply for and receive this much-needed state funding.”

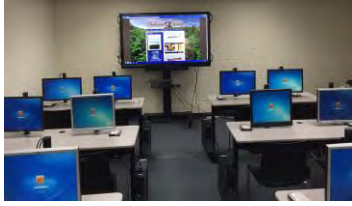


Other projects in Nobles County increased public access to broadband, including through the installation of new public hotspots and upgrading to world-class symmetrical fiber the broadband connection available at the county’s flagship Biotechnology Advancement Center.

Redwood County

Redwood County struggles with broadband access issues, ranking 81 of 87 Minnesota counties when it comes to reaching the state broadband speed goal of 25 megabits download / 3 megabits upload. As a Blandin Broadband Community, Redwood County undertook a feasibility study and market survey and have used the study to inform conversations with local internet providers about what might be done to improve broadband access across the county. In the meantime, the committee is working on providing new technology training, equipment and access, as well as on projects to connect the Lower Sioux Clinic and Community Center, and to launch a new telehealth initiative at Redwood Area Hospital.





One learning from the Steering Committee was the idea that you need to give people a good experience with broadband and technology; people won't use broadband if the experience is negative. That's why the focus on training, equipment and access to quality programs/applications is so important. When people have good experiences and learn how broadband can positively impact their lives, they will demand it – which will make it easier to make the business case to build it.

One project was to increase the library's ability to serve residents who lack access to computers or the internet at home. The committee purchased 20 computers and two tablets for use by patrons at the Redwood Falls Public Library. The users have been pleased, and staff has reported a reduction in noise on the part of students who now can use the computers when they come to the library. According to library director Teri Smith, "In order to have a healthy rural community, all citizens must have access to needed resources, feel connected, and have a safe place to work or play. The computers and technology provided through this grant will help the library provide the services that help our community be and stay strong and connected."

Coordinated marketing of the new training opportunities via print and social media proved extremely effective in increasing participation in the trainings. The committee created a Redwood Connect Facebook page, promoted Google Mapping for cities and businesses, and conducted internet usage and training surveys.



The committee also hosted social media events through a *Lunch 'n Learn* technology series and community education classes, which culminated in a well-attended Social

Media Rockstar event, a day-long, digital and social media marketing conference in rural Minnesota.

Red Wing

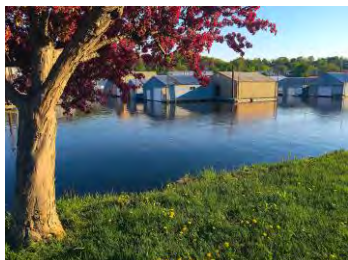


The City of Red Wing is in a unique position, as they are a rural community with Gigabit broadband and home to *Red Wing Ignite*, an organization dedicated to encouraging broadband utilization. The focus of the Steering Committee was to inspire, encourage and enable residents to maximize the benefits available to them from the town's world class broadband service.

Engaging Youth is one strategy they focused on – preparing young people for careers in technology – and demonstrating that tech careers are possible right in Red Wing. The committee designed and implemented a “STEAM in our Schools” project that included:

- A tech assessment of area K12 schools
- Coding classes for 6-7 grades
- Establishing a “Coder Dojo” club for youth, taught by volunteers, that was enthusiastically received by students, parents and the community at large
- Bringing TechnovationMN to Red Wing; a 3-month, 50-hour curriculum for young women. Participating students created an app called “College Bound,” designed to help young people make more informed college choices. The Red Wing group included both boys and girls and thus was not eligible to compete in the state competition, but they did earn an honorable mention at the Ignite Cup.
- Piloting in the United States a program developed in Europe called “Apps for Good.” “Apps for Good” seeks to “equip students to research, design and make digital products and take them to market.” It was a huge success, and the community has found a way to continue the program beyond the grant period.

The establishment of three “tech internships” was another very successful youth-oriented initiative undertaken by the Blandin Broadband Community Steering Committee. They recruited college students to come to Red Wing to help three enterprises – a local business, a non-profit and the county government – make better use of technology. The students all said they learned a lot; they were given challenging opportunities to really make a difference. The intern hosts all want more interns! One of the interns created a new e-commerce website for a local business, boosting sales significantly. Another helped prepare a local business for a large CRM migration, and a third worked with the county to create a web application to manage the county’s fleet of cars. Now employees can use the app to check out cars, track mileage, and a whole host of other features. The County fleet manager reported it has solved many headaches for all county workers who need to use county vehicles.



Marketing their town area as an area with world class broadband and a sophisticated “culture of use” tech-savvy was another important priority for the Red Wing Broadband Steering Committee. The committee worked with local partners to create www.RedWingInfo.com, a “one-stop shop” web portal for everything you need to know to live and work in Red Wing,

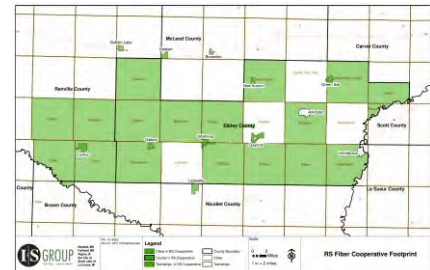
including a comprehensive community calendar and resources for new residents. As the “About Us” section on the site explains:

“Red Wing Ignite was awarded a Blandin Broadband Grant in 2015. A community wide vision meeting generated a lot of interest in the branding and marketing of Red Wing. This Community Landing Page demonstrates the connections within our community and provides a wide range of resources and information in one integrated place.”

RS Fiber



RS Fiber is the name of the new, home-grown broadband cooperative serving ten cities and 17 townships in Renville and Sibley Counties in southwestern Minnesota. They are in the process of building their fiber-to-the-home network, and offer plans of up to 50 Mbps, 100 Mbps, and 1 Gbps symmetrical. Therefore, happily, broadband isn't an issue for folks in the RS Fiber service area. The challenge is getting people to use it to its fullest potential, and stimulating economic growth.



The Steering Committee determined that many of the area residents were not tech savvy. They saw their challenge as not just teaching people how to use computers, but helping them see the almost limitless ways technology can improve their lives. To address the former, they offered well attended computer basics and more specialized classes and distributed 50 computers through BCBP's partnership with PCs for People. To address the latter, they are creating a number of innovation centers with Internet hotspots in towns throughout the region. The Innovation Centers will house things like 3D printers, and one will have a drone obstacle course.

Engaging youth is another area of focus. They offered 4-H programming at the Innovation Centers being established throughout the county, established public hotspots at schools, and implemented Wi-Fi on busses. They made available low-cost devices to student riders who didn't have their own to use and targeted bus routes that were experiencing a high number of behavioral incidences. Schools reported that the number of incidences of adverse behavior went down dramatically, and there was no longer a need for an extra adult supervisor on these routes.

Resilient Region (Region 5 in north central Minnesota)

The Resilient Region is a five county collaborative (Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena) working to create a sustainable and inclusive region through the disciplines of housing, transportation, natural environment, and economic development to improve the quality of life of all residents. Broadband connectivity is an critical component of the Resilient Region Plan; in fact, they found that broadband touched every edge of the other projects they were working on – positioning them well to begin their work as a Blandin Broadband Community.



The Region’s connectivity priorities include: improved and expanded broadband access across the region with a focus on fiber, using technology to retain businesses and encourage entrepreneurship, ensuring Internet access for all children, and identifying additional funding and service partners.

During the project period, the Resilient Region made significant progress towards improving the Internet access available to residents. A Feasibility Study commissioned by the region as part of its participation in BCBP was used to help secure a nearly \$3 million DEED Border-to-Border project grant that will bring world class fiber-based Internet to Fairview Township, Fort Ripley, and a portion of northern Wadena County. Resilient Region and its Internet provider partner, Consolidated Telephone Company (CTC), maximized learning from the Fort Ripley project by utilizing Blandin Foundation grant dollars to conduct a study on the [*Economic Impact of Broadband Infrastructure Expansion & Subscription*](#)⁵. Key findings of the survey include:

- Customer service and reliability of connection are more important than cost.
- Less than 2% of older adults surveyed do not use the internet.
- The internet plays a critical role in enabling customers to work where they live with more than half of households using their home internet for work; and 14% reporting that they “telework.”
- Over 20% of customers have a home-based business or farm with 36% reporting that the internet reduced their overall operating costs; and nearly 9% of customers have plans to start a home-based business in the next 1-3 years.
- Two-thirds of customers stated that the internet is very important for their family with almost 40% saying that they could not live in home without a reliable high-speed internet connection.

⁵ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2016/08/24/impact-study-from-mn-border-to-border-grant-for-fairview-and-fort-ripley-townships/>

These study findings were shared with the Governor’s Broadband Task Force and elected officials.

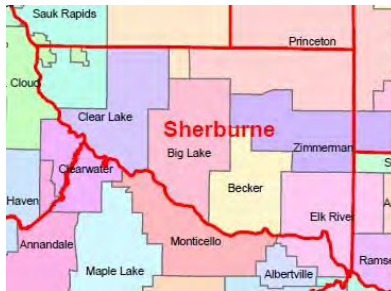
Using technology to improve learning was another priority for the Steering Committee. One of the Blandin grants was used to purchase SMART boards which are enhancing educational opportunities for the youngest learners in ISD 181 Brainerd Public Schools. Eight teachers were trained on the use of the four SMART boards and projectors that were installed for the Early Childhood Family Education program.

ECFE coordinator, Tahnee Flowers relayed a story:

One preschool room spent time learning the “3 little pigs” story. ... They developed the props and practiced acting out the play. The teachers were able to record the students acting out the play using the iPad from the Blandin grant and email it to the parents. They also had a “movie showing” on their classroom SMART board so that the class could watch themselves acting out the play. The children and parents loved it!

Other Resilient Region BBC projects focused on healthcare, teaching young people to refurbish and redistribute computers, introducing state-of-the-art videoconferencing facilities to the community, and using technology to attract and retain businesses.

Sherburne County



In 2014, 92 percent of Sherburne County had access to broadband as it was then defined (lower speeds back then). In 2016, when the definition of broadband was updated to take into account technological advances, only 75 percent of the county had access to broadband speeds of 25/3 (Mbps down/up), and 28 percent had access to Minnesota’s 2026 speed goals of 100/20.

Sherburne County is going the wrong direction; they have gone from well served to underserved as the definition of broadband changes. It’s therefore not surprising that as a Blandin Broadband Community, Sherburne County focused on improving broadband access and infrastructure. The strategy they adopted was to focus on educating the public, improving technology use in schools, and on smaller public access projects.

Jolene Foss, Community Development Director at the City of Princeton describes their journey to better broadband:

The City of Princeton is unique in that it sits on the line Between Mille Lacs County and Sherburne County. As I became more informed of the status of high speed, reliable and affordable internet in our community, I was shocked to find out how many residents are underserved, or completely unserved! Businesses were suffering economically due to high rates and lost opportunities. The students in our counties were struggling to complete assignments and do research from home, especially those who reside in rural locations. People couldn't bank or take care of their online medical needs with poor internet service. Quality of life was being affected and some of the leaders of our community recognized a need for change. The Blandin Foundation has graciously awarded these communities the resources needed to take necessary steps in the right direction. As a member of the Broadband Steering Committee for Sherburne County, our group decided to start a Community Outreach Subcommittee to educate and inform residents and elected officials on the importance of affordable reliable high speed internet service. We would like to see people reach out to the elected officials and express the need for more funding to enhance partnerships between providers and other stakeholders. These partnerships will pave the way for economic viability and secure our place in this fast paced world. Our people deserve every advantage that anyone else gets. We need to stay competitive if we want to see future success.

The Steering Committee used grant dollars to hire a marketing firm to create a brand for their group – “SherBand.” They created a webpage, education materials, and promotional items, and wrote bi-weekly blog posts. The community team contacted their elected officials, created a Facebook page, produced an educational video, and participated at various community events and meetings.



Infrastructure improvement and access projects included installing Wi-Fi at Rivers Edge Park, Lake Side Park, and the Becker Athletic Complex; extending fiber to the Sherburne History Center, and installing fiber to connect Elk River City Hall to Zimmerman City Hall and fire department. Additionally, while not part of the BBC project, internet at the industrial park in Princeton was upgraded during the project period.

Strut Your Stuff Tour

To help the cohort of Blandin Broadband Communities (BBCs) reflect on and learn from their experiences with the program, staff organized a “Strut Your Stuff” tour in the final quarter of the cohort’s second and final year in the program. These community meetings were designed to create an opportunity for each BBC team to bring community awareness and attention to the results of their work. The community meetings recognized and celebrated progress and spotlighted the learning from the project activities undertaken in each community. BBC Steering Committees used the occasion to recount the community goals that informed their activities, report on progress achieved against those goals, and recommit to continued efforts. Community teams responded to staff including:

- What need or purpose brought your group together?
- What community technology goals did you set?
- What community-wide impacts are you observing or expecting?
- What was most fun?
- If you knew then what you know now...
- How could Blandin Foundation have been more helpful to you in this work?

Results of these meetings were used to inform adaptations in program implementation for the Iron Range cohort in 2017.

Technical Assistance: Meeting Communities Where They Are At

The *Community Broadband Resources* component of BCBP is designed to meet communities “where they are at;” the kinds of assistance requested ranged from technical, educational, or informational to convening/facilitation support. In general, communities are not seeking highly technical advice. Rather, they want to know: 1) where they stand with broadband compared to other communities, and 2) what are their options for moving forward. In particular, providing an online survey tool that generates a data report – and help interpreting the data -- is appreciated by the communities. The need to get the survey promoted and distributed helps to build the local team and provides some pretty immediate feedback on the local broadband situation. The 32 hours of available assistance per community seems to be a good parameter for helping communities properly scope the services they are requesting from Blandin Foundation.

Below is a summary of the 352 hours of assistance delivered to eleven participating communities during this reporting period.

Impact from Community Broadband Resources Technical Assistance Delivery:

Community	Assistance Description	Highlights
Chippewa & Yellow Medicine Counties	Create presentation and present to joint meeting of county board members and staff.	Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission is taking the lead on next steps.
Chisago County	In addition to BCBP activities, assist Chisago County implement a countywide survey and hold multiple county broadband events.	<p>Sunrise Township application for DEED Office of Broadband grant funds in partnership with CenturyLink.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> A grant application by CenturyLink to serve the township was successful, based on residents’ agreement to bond (tax themselves) for \$600,000 to pay for better broadband. The funded project will serve 584 unserved households, 10 unserved businesses and 2 community anchor institutions in the township.</p>
Chisago Lakes Area	Assist the Chisago Lakes Area to prepare an application to Frontier Communication’s America’s Best Communities Program.	<p>Chisago Lakes has won over \$150,000 in contest funding and is one of eight finalists where the top three communities win \$3 million, \$2 million or \$1 million.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> Chisago Lakes did not win, but the Steering Committee continues to implement many of the projects developed in the process.</p>
Grand Lake Township, St. Louis County	Multiple presentations to board and community members. Provided technical assistance around survey implementation. Reviewed and presented community survey results.	<p>Township is awaiting county broadband promotion effort.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> Township residents have had the opportunity to participate in the Iron Range Broadband Community Program, thanks to financial support from IRRRB and St. Louis County board.</p>
Isanti County	Presentation created and delivered to county EDA and interested stakeholders. The results of interviews with local providers, as well as a written report, were presented to the full county EDA.	<p>Formal task force was created to work with the EDA to recommend the county board apply for a Blandin Foundation Robust Network Feasibility Fund grant.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> Isanti County applied for and was awarded a Robust Network Feasibility Fund grant. They have been communicating with existing wired and wireless providers in hopes of agreeing to partnership terms with one or more.</p>

Community	Assistance Description	Highlights
Martin County	In addition to BCBP activities, assist Martin County through its feasibility study process.	Martin County supported Frontier Communication’s grant application for DEED Office of Broadband grant funds. <u>Update:</u> the awarded “last-mile” grant project will serve 1,784 unserved households, 51 unserved businesses, and 9 unserved community institutions across the county. County officials agreed to provide a local match of over \$1.6 million.
Otter Tail County	Create presentation and present to county officials. Discuss current situation and broadband trends.	County broadband task force created and feasibility study underway.
Pope County	Create presentation and present to county officials and community members.	<u>Update:</u> Pope County applied for and received funding for a Robust Network Feasibility Study on how to improve Internet access and speed in underserved and unserved areas of the county. Results of the study were presented to the community in July 2017, and are now informing next steps planning.
Southwest MN Counties – Pipestone, Lincoln & Murray	Emerging collaboration of three broadband-poor Minnesota Counties. Presentation created and made to a joint ad hoc committee of elected county commissioners and town board members and county staff. Community meetings to be held in November in each county.	Collaborative approach across county lines. <u>Update:</u> this collaboration expanded to six counties and led in 2017 to a joint feasibility study and joint application to DEED’s border to border grant program.
St. Louis County	Create presentation and present to county staff. Follow-up presentation to county board at workshop meeting.	<u>Update:</u> In 2016, St. Louis County board agreed to participate as a funding partner with IRRRB and Blandin Foundation to bring the BCBP program to five communities in the county.
Upper MN Valley RDC	Assist RDC implement regional institutional fiber network feasibility fund.	Collaboration across five county region by counties and other local units of government and others to address regional connectivity issues. Feasibility study completed.

Recipients of CBR assistance say...

“Blandin’s Community Broadband Resources Program helped us to win a spot as a quarter-finalist in Frontier Communication’s America’s Best Communities Program. As one of 50 quarter-finalists, we were awarded significant community economic development planning dollars that we have used to engage more than 100 community members around ten significant project concepts. Blandin’s help make it happen!”

~ Tangi Schaapveld, Chisago Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

“Blandin Foundation has helped our broadband initiatives in Martin County and the City of Fairmont through your Community Broadband Resources program. Having an experienced consultant help us sort through the complexities of our broadband analysis and provider relationships has been very helpful. By helping us design our RFP for our upcoming feasibility study, we are sure that the study will give us the information that we need to make smart next steps.”

~ Scott Higgins, Martin County Coordinator

Organizational-level Impacts

Northwest Minnesota Foundation: While a significant portion of Blandin Foundation’s broadband grant awards were made to new and alumni Blandin Broadband Communities, meaningful outcomes were achieved through Broadband Innovation grants. One example is the ongoing work of Northwest Minnesota Foundation in Bemidji.

Awarded in April 2014, *IMPACT 2020 Business Broadband Initiative* sought to increase the number of businesses within the region which are taking advantage of broadband; and increase the sophistication and depth of technology use among those which are using broadband minimally.

A needs assessment was conducted, and from the results three workshops were developed: Digital Marketing I, Digital Marketing II, and Build Your Own WordPress Website. Nearly 200 people participated in nine workshops. Excerpt from the final report:

Rapidly changing technologies, especially those pertaining to broadband, have created a wealth of opportunities for businesses and organizations to engage their customer base, increase efficiencies, and improve their bottom line. However, many smaller, disadvantaged rural businesses and organizations do not have the resources or capacity to take full advantage of all the opportunities that these technologies afford.

The workshops, made possible with Blandin Foundation funding, provided nearly 200 small, disadvantaged rural businesses with a good understanding of social media, search engine optimization, and the powerful WordPress platform, along with the requisite knowledge to do the work themselves.

In July of 2016, through the Broadband Innovation Grant program, Blandin Foundation awarded Northwest Minnesota Foundation a follow up grant, *IMPACT 20/20 Business Broadband Advantage*, to continue their efforts to increase the use and sophistication of use of broadband by area businesses. In addition to continuing and expanding the workshops, project staff used grant funds to help local businesses “claim their place” on Google Search and Maps, and to host Bemidji’s first ever hack event on April 7-8, 2017.

The first component of the hack event was a *Youth Game Design Challenge*, where a capacity crowd of 22 young people participated in a workshop on Utility game development software, followed by a game design mini-challenge. Students presented their games to judges and awards were presented. Organizers noted that more girls than boys participated.



The *True North Hackfest* itself brought together eight teams of coders, programmers, designers, students and others, who competed to design and build apps to solve perceived problems or needs. Young people were well-represented, and the projects developed are as follows:

- Ten high school girls from St. Paul formed two teams. One team created a [website](#)⁶ with quizzes to educate immigrants, protestors and others on their constitutional rights, and the other a [website](#)⁷ that allows users share their stories of oppression or fear via video.
- Two teams of middle and high school students from Kelliher worked on games that were both fun and educational addressing aquatic invasive species in area lakes.
- A professional team created a website and database to combat food waste at a local level, which they called EcoSavvy.
- A family team created a Facebook solution to identify safe homes and routes for Halloween trick-or-treating.
- A professional team created a website and possible marketing campaign to educate Bemidji residents on proper driving skills, particularly as more roundabouts are built.
- An individual created a blog to help people identify rare or invasive plants along roadways, and share their discoveries with conservationists and government agencies.

⁶ <http://knowyourrightsreact.weebly.com/>

⁷ <http://realstoriesrealpeople.weebly.com/>

Regional Impacts

The foundation’s broadband work continues to have important impact at a regional scale. Staff efforts to bring individual community broadband efforts to regional scale began in 2013. An inaugural regional “broadband summit,” hosted by the East Central Broadband Initiative (ECBI) – representatives from five counties (Pine, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Carlton and Aitkin) with some of the poorest broadband service in the state who were initially convened by foundation staff – was repeated in 2014.



In 2015-16 ECBI members made presentations to the region’s chamber boards, county boards, city councils and town boards with a consistent message and supporting written materials. They also continued efforts to meet with the region’s incumbent providers in an effort to improve local broadband services. Those efforts have stalled because of the difficulties to find a willing service provider and the required financing.

As described above, many of the “communities” requesting assistance through the Community Broadband Resources component of the program are now regional in scale. For example, the now six (initially three) counties in southwest Minnesota partnering with the Southwest Regional Development Commission to conduct a feasibility study and use its results to apply for state infrastructure funding. One of the BBCs itself – Central Woodlands – is a regional “community” spanning the most rural parts of four counties.

Through Community Broadband Resources, during this reporting period the Blandin Community Broadband Program also provided important assistance to the Upper MN Valley Regional Development Commission in its efforts to implement a regional institutional fiber network feasibility fund grant and collaborate across five counties to address regional connectivity issues.

Statewide Impact

Unsolicited testimonial from the director of Minnesota’s Office of Broadband Development speaks to the statewide impact of Blandin’s broadband work:

Dear Kathy and Wade,

I just wanted to take a brief moment to express to you how much your investments and work on rural broadband mean to the state. I know your board



could choose to invest their resources in a multitude of ways, so it is particularly meaningful that you and your board recognize the foundational value of making investments in rural broadband access, adoption, and use.

I have had the honor and pleasure of working with the foundation's broadband efforts for many years, and have seen firsthand what a difference the work of Bernadine and her team's efforts can have on nurturing the seedlings of local understanding, engagement and leadership on this important, but decidedly complicated and un-sexy issue.

The existence of the broadband office at the state is due in no small part to the work done by Blandin Foundation to help raise awareness, build a vocabulary, and support local voices, who then had the tools to communicate their priorities to policy-makers. As our office gets its legs and begins to grow a more robust, multi-faceted state-level program, we work with Bernadine to navigate where best we can each leverage our strengths to work together to build a broadband support ecosystem that goes beyond anything that either organization could do on our own.

Areas of Foundation involvement that are particularly meaningful right now include your investments in local leadership and capacity-building, broadband adoption and use, and convening the voices around broadband, whether it be through the Better Together conference or the numerous influential rural organizational representatives. These are areas where Bernadine's team runs circles around what we have the capacity or resources to tackle.

As I hope you know, other states around the country, as well as federal agencies, call regularly to find out about the Minnesota Secret Broadband Sauce. Always at the top of the list is the fact that we have such a skilled and engaged organization as the Blandin Foundation and their experienced team of experts involved in getting this work done.

I know you are reaching that time where you need to assess your investments, I just want you to know how appreciated your involvement is and that your fan club reaches far and wide as you have led Minnesota to excel on this issue in so many ways.



Thanks to you, your board, and Bernadine for your years of commitment to this work. It is paying off.

Danna MacKenzie, Executive Director, Office of Broadband Development, MN DEED

During this reporting period Governor Dayton reappointed Bernadine Joselyn to a second three-year term as a member of his Broadband Task Force, representing rural community perspectives. Bernadine chaired the Task Force sub-committee on adoption and was primary author of the material in the [Task Force's annual report](#)⁸ addressing community efforts to

⁸ <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2016/other/160115.pdf>

expand broadband, efforts to expand broadband with public-private partnerships, and barriers to expanding access to broadband (pages 31- 34).

The Blandin on Broadband blog (BoB) continued to be a powerful tool for informing the statewide conversation and policy making decisions impacting broadband access and adoption. One of services BoB provides is covering Minnesota Broadband Task Force meetings. BoB provides the most comprehensive notes on the meetings available, and makes them easily accessible by the public.

BBC projects spotlighted on the blog have inspired other communities to try something similar. Examples of projects that have “self-replicated” include Wi-Fi on buses, public hot spot check-out programs, technology fairs, social media breakfasts, among others.

National Impact

In June 2015, Blandin Foundation responded to a request from the Obama Administration’s (then newly formed) Broadband Opportunity Council for input on how the federal government could more effectively support increased broadband access and adoption, especially in America’s underserved rural regions. Staff’s purpose was to help ensure that the perspectives of rural Minnesota communities reached Washington. The report was based on input solicited from rural broadband advocates across the state.

Among rural Minnesota’s key messages to the administration:

- Eliminating the digital divide that threatens the promise of equal opportunity at the heart of our democratic society is an urgent challenge that must be part of our national agenda. States and communities need the federal government and its resources as a partner in this work.
- Federal policies and programs can and do play an important role in bringing broadband to hard-to-serve communities, and in reversing the growing digital divide.
- Partnerships are key to success. The federal government can spur creative partnering by requiring and/or rewarding cross-sector and cross-agency collaboration.
- Broadband access alone is not enough! Investments in people, education and training are essential to achieve meaningful use of the Internet. Community-based broadband literacy and market development efforts can and do help ensure that all Americans can participate fully in our nation’s economy and civic and cultural life.

A number of the [recommendations submitted by Blandin Foundation](#)⁹ on behalf of its rural partners were reflected in the BOC's final report, including to empower communities with tools and resources to attract broadband investment and promote meaningful use, and to focus on public-private partnerships, including with philanthropy.

In 2015 Blandin Foundation accepted several invitations from Congress and national organizations to share its expertise and practices. The US Senate Democratic Oversight Committee invited the Foundation to provide expert testimony on best practices for addressing the digital divide in rural America. Foundation staff also were invited to showcase BCBP experience and expertise in community-based broadband adoption efforts at The Summit on Rural America, and at the National Grantmakers-in-Aging conference, both in Washington DC.



Mountain Summit: Accountability for Learning, Development & Adaptation

Once Blandin Trustees approved continuing BCBP beyond 2014, staff organized a retreat to craft an “Opportunity Statement” that would guide design for the program in 2015-2016. The reflective learning session was organized around the question: Based on our experiences and learning, what are the biggest opportunities for our work going forward, and how should the program be adapted to take advantage of those opportunities? We agreed on the following statement:

Building upon proven practices, leveraging our reputation and relationships and attracting additional passionate partners, Blandin Foundation will drive collaborative approaches to investment and adoption while continuing to influence and inform statewide policy and messaging.

We then tested this statement with a number of key stakeholder groups, including representatives from former and current Blandin Broadband and MIRC communities, and the Blandin Broadband Strategy Board.

During subsequent planning sessions staff developed a detailed program description to be used in recruiting new community partners and outlining explicit expectations for program participation. Another key learning we incorporated into criteria for selecting future community partners is that the bigger the geography, the more important local leadership is for success. Having a key staff person, willing to keep the initiative moving, is also very important.

⁹ <https://blandinonbroadband.org/2015/06/11/blandin-foundation-recommendations-to-the-broadband-opportunity-council/>

Key program design adaptations made as a result of this reflection include:

- Opening program participation to past and current MIRC and BBC partners
- Incentivizing collaboration across sectors and communities
- Introducing a Strut Your Stuff Tour into the third quarter of the cohort's first year, in lieu of requiring written progress reports.
- Adjusting the amount of funds available through the grant programs, and eliminating two of the grant programs (LightSpeed and Digital Inclusion Community Partnership)
- Applying for federal funding to increase the capacity of cooperatives to deliver broadband services
- Seeking new partners (e.g. Minnesota High Tech Association and the Rural Internet Technology Association) for community technology events (Hack-a-thons, Maker Faires, 'Hot Spot in a Box', and others)
- Recruiting new Strategy Board members to fill in gaps in experience and perspectives among board members.

Appendix: Grants Awarded through Blandin Community Broadband Program from January 2014 - July 2016

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Carlton County	Carlton County	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Carlton County	City of Cloquet	Makerspace Hot Spots	Project support to provide Cloquet and Moose Lake libraries with makerspace equipment and training, and six mobile hot spots to provide home access for un- and underserved residents of the County	\$6,500
BBC: Carlton County	City of Moose Lake	Connect Moose Lake	Project support to expand the Moose Lake Community Digital Messaging System to other community entities enabling them to broadcast messages to the public	\$5,000
BBC: Carlton County	Cloquet Public Library	“Appy Life “ Carlton County library iPad training project	Project support to provide mobile technology, Wi-Fi access and training to staff, county residents and visitors of the three Carlton County libraries	\$14,000
BBC: Carlton County	Independent School District 94	iPads for Lifelong Learning	Project support for technology training and resources for enrichment activities and parenting skills to pre-K students and their families	\$17,760
BBC: Carlton County	Moose Lake Community Schools	Rural Education Broadband Community Utilization Expansion	Project support to provide mobile devices to two rural school districts to increase educational attainment and to provide technology training through community education	\$18,000
BBC: Carlton County	Moose Lake Community Schools	School Bus Wi-Fi Hot Spots	Capital support to equip school activity busses with Wi-Fi to provide access for students to be able to work on homework assignments when travelling long distances	\$5,000
BBC: Central Woodlands	Aitkin County	Web Diagnostics for Small Businesses	Project support to increase the knowledge and use of e-commerce and social media tools for small businesses in Aitkin County	\$3,938
BBC: Central Woodlands	Aitkin County	Web Diagnostics for Small Businesses, Part II	Project support to provide technical assistance to businesses to market their products through online presence and social media	\$25,000
BBC: Central Woodlands	Audubon Center of the North Woods	Online public access to energy data	Project support to connect various alternative energy facilities into a unified network for data collection and analysis for integration into curricula and energy management systems	\$1,875
BBC: Central Woodlands	Depot Studios	Expanding Access and Learning Opportunities in the Central Woodlands	Project support to provide computer access with a Wi-Fi hotspot at an artist, craft and entrepreneurial center in Isle	\$9,000
BBC: Central Woodlands	East Central RDC	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Central Woodlands	East Central RDC	Broadband Inventory and Assessment	Project support to conduct an analysis of the region's existing broadband assets and services to inform community leaders about potential gaps and opportunities	\$10,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Central Woodlands	East Central RDC	Township Broadband Enhancements	Project support to work with up to five rural townships to identify and implement broadband solutions providing public access in areas with little to no existing broadband access	\$13,000
BBC: Central Woodlands	Isle Recreation & Education Center	Expanding Technology and Educational Opportunities in the Central Woodlands	Project support to provide computer classes and a Wi-Fi public access site in the Mille Lacs lakes area	\$14,000
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Community Outreach	Project support to mobilize community stakeholders to gather and share information about existing and proposed broadband services and to develop and implement broadband improvement strategies	\$10,000
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Community Survey and Outreach	Project support to conduct a combined community survey and outreach effort to spur interest and action around broadband networks and services	\$1,990
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Google Mapping Assistant	Project support to increase the number of local businesses that have an online presence	\$5,518
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Old Hwy 61 Grant	Project support to inventory, map and showcase businesses and attractions along Old Highway 61 through online web and mobile devices	\$3,050
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Quality Technology Training for Businesses	Project support to design, promote and conduct multiple e-commerce/social media training sessions throughout the county	\$10,000
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Teleconference Equipment Grant	Capital support for two video conference systems to enable distance learning for the county, local residents, businesses and organizations	\$11,133
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago County HRA- EDA	Wi-Fi Hot Spots	Capital support to create 8-10 Wi-Fi hot spots across Chisago County for enhanced public access	\$8,500
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce	Chisago Lakes Community Website	Project support to create and maintain a multi-community/area web site to serve visitors and residents with information on activities, attractions and community events	\$5,500
BBC: Chisago County	Chisago Lakes School District 2144	Chisago County Community Mobile Wi-Fi	Project support to provide Wi-Fi on school buses to enable more productive use of student time on long bus rides to and from school activities and to provide free Wi-Fi at community events	\$18,275
BBC: Chisago County	City of North Branch	North Branch Community Wi-Fi	Project support to create three new Wi-Fi hotspots at public parks within city limits	\$4,000
BBC: Martin County	Fairmont Area Schools ISD 2752	Digital Responsibility	Project support for the Digital Responsibility project to encourage responsible use of electronic media and inform students, parents, teachers, adults with disabilities, business people and community members about consequences and best practices	\$4,500

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Martin County	Fairmont Area Schools ISD 2752	Fairmont Area Community Calendar	Project support to develop and market a shared community calendar and facilities scheduler	\$9,000
BBC: Martin County	Martin County	App Camp	Project support for a technology learning workshop on mobile app creation for students	\$9,950
BBC: Martin County	Martin County	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Martin County	Martin County	Wi-Fi Hotspots Throughout Martin County	Project support to create a network of Wi-Fi hotspots throughout Martin County	\$7,150
BBC: Martin County	Martin County	Social Media and Online Presence Skill Training for Business	Project support to provide businesses in the Martin County area relevant training in social media and online presence	\$5,000
BBC: Martin County	Martin County	Technology Education and Training	Project support to provide broadband technology training opportunities for Martin County residents	\$15,000
BBC: Martin County	Martin County EDA	Devices for Martin County Schools	Capital support to provide a variety of devices for local school districts allowing them to upgrade their use of technology	\$15,000
BBC: Nobles County	Greater Round Lake Community Association	Technology Education for Round Lake	Project support for technology education classes at the Round Lake Community Center	\$5,850
BBC: Nobles County	ISD 518 Worthington Area	Changing Main Street through Technology and Education	Project support for the Changing Main Street through Technology and Education project, which includes classes on succession planning and technology for area business owners and educational opportunities for individuals interested in running a small business	\$9,750
BBC: Nobles County	ISD 518 Worthington Area	Community-Wide Reading through myON Digital Library	Project support to implement the use of the myON digital library in the Worthington area for the benefit of preschoolers and their families	\$5,000
BBC: Nobles County	ISD 518 Worthington Area	Digital Inclusion through Community Education	Project support for online marketing, technology and digital literacy training for area residents	\$9,000
BBC: Nobles County	MN West Community & Tech College-Worthington	Introduction to Digital Literacy	Project support to develop a two-credit college course on digital literacy targeted toward high school and college students	\$8,500
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County	BAC Fiber Access	Project support to bring fiber to the Biotechnology Advancement Center (BAC), its teleconferencing room, and the business incubators in the Worthington Industrial Park	\$6,600
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County	NEON Hot Spots	Project support to provide more accessible, reliable and affordable access to internet services for the rural residents of Nobles County by providing up to nine hot spots	\$9,755

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County	Regional Data Center Vision	Project support to determine the feasibility of developing a regional data center and disaster recovery site at the former county jail in downtown Worthington	\$8,000
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County Integration Collaborative	Digital Literacy for Diverse Communities	Project support to provide digital literacy training for diverse communities via a train-the-trainer approach (ethnic leaders will learn to teach basic computer skills in their native language)	9,000
BBC: Nobles County	Nobles County Library	iPads for Public Use	Capital support for mobile devices within two branches of the Nobles County Library for patron usage and check-out to community groups and preschools	\$7,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Innovation to Reality	Project support to facilitate and host community-based activities that will create and support a culture of innovation within Red Wing	\$10,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Innovation to Reality Part II	Project support for the second phase of the Innovation to Reality project (<i>described above</i>)	\$25,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Marketing of Red Wing	Project support to create opportunity by branding and marketing Red Wing to attract people, talent and investment	\$12,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Marketing Red Wing in 2016	Project support for a unified marketing and branding initiative across all key stakeholder organizations in Red Wing	\$10,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Preparing our Next Generation	Project support to engage community youth in technology skills and discover opportunities within Red Wing for employment and entrepreneurship	\$10,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Preparing our Next Generation Part II	Project support for the second phase of the Preparing Our Next Generation project (<i>described above</i>)	\$9,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	STEAM in our Schools	Project support to strengthen Red Wing School District's STEAM education by facilitating community partnerships with existing Red Wing technology-oriented companies	\$14,000
BBC: Red Wing	Red Wing Ignite	Technology Networks to Build Local Ecosystem	Project support to convene a regional network of IT professionals, improve and promote the co-working spaces at the innovation center, and host regular gatherings of entrepreneurs, startups and others to network and learn.	\$4,000
BBC: Redwood County	Lower Sioux Indian Community	Bringing Wi-Fi to the Lower Sioux Community	Project support to provide reliable, high-speed internet access to key tribal buildings for residents, service providers, officials and visitors	\$9,765
BBC: Redwood County	Red Rock Central School	3D Printing, Windows 10 & Office 2013 Training	Project support to provide technology training to students, residents, and businesses of the Lamberton area of Redwood County	\$6,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Area Developmen t Corporation	Marketing Broadband and Training Opportunities	Project support to market and promote the new Technology Training Center and Lunch-N-Learn technology classes for area residents and businesses while promoting the need for better broadband	\$4,000
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Area Developmen t Corporation	Redwood Connect - Marketing	Project support to promote the new Technology Training Center classes	\$4,000
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Area Hospital	Telemedicine / Health Pilot	Project support to utilize telemedicine and other services that leverage broadband networks to provide advanced and specialized medical care for the convenience of southwest Minnesota residents	\$25,000
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Area School District	Adult Education Classes - Lunch & Learn Technology Series	Project support to provide a series of computer/internet classes for residents and businesses of Redwood County	\$3,540
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Area School District	Early Childhood Family Education SMART Boards	Capital support to provide up-to-date educational technology to preschoolers and their parents to enhance learning and readiness for kindergarten	\$9,300
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood County	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood County	GIS to the Public (Geographic Information System)	Project support to provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to the public via the internet, creating efficiencies for both county staff and the public	\$12,100
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood County	Training Facility for Redwood County Citizens and Employees	Project support to equip a training lab in the courthouse to provide a venue for technology training for the general public, employers and Redwood County employees	\$9,150
BBC: Redwood County	Redwood Falls Public Library	Computer upgrades	Capital support to update technology for library patron usage so all community members have access to the latest technology	\$10,500
BBC: Resilient Region	Brainerd Lakes Area Dev Corp	Brainerd Lakes Area Talent Recruiter Launch	Project support to launch a talent recruitment program to market the area's technology services industry jobs to ensure a highly qualified workforce is available to the region's business community	\$15,000
BBC: Resilient Region	Brainerd Lakes Area Dev Corp	Enhanced Marketing of Our Technology Sector	Project support to implement the Tech Services marketing plan	\$4,000
BBC: Resilient Region	Brainerd Lakes Area Dev Corp	High-Tech Center Research and "Next Steps" Outline	Project support to determine the feasibility/strategy to create and sustain a high tech Live/Work Center in the Brainerd Lakes region	\$6,000
BBC: Resilient Region	Brainerd Lakes Area Dev Corp	Tech Ready Brainerd Lakes Area Hackfest	Project support for a two-day hack fest to share information, use local skills to problem solve local challenges, and develop new technology solutions	\$10,000
BBC: Resilient Region	Brainerd Lakes Area Dev Corp	Video Conferencing System	Capital support for video conferencing equipment for use by area businesses and organizations in CTC Technology Room at the BLAEDC/Chamber Offices	\$7,500

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: Resilient Region	Essentia Health Foundation	Launch Telehealth Development & Implementation	Project support to provide tele-health training sessions in Resilient Region Five's five-county area and on the Leech Lake Reservation	\$10,000
BBC: Resilient Region	ISD 181 - Brainerd Public Schools	CTC Schools Technology Bundle	Project support for technology and mobile devices in the Early Childhood and Family Education programs	\$5,000
BBC: Resilient Region	MN State Community & Tech College- Wadena	"What the Tech?" Technology Expo	Project support to host a one-day tech expo event in Wadena that will combine active learning by MNSCU students and displays and seminars for the general public	\$9,950
BBC: Resilient Region	Region 5 Regional Dev Commission	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Resilient Region	Region 5 Regional Dev Commission	Economic Impact of Broadband Infrastructure Expansion & Subscription	Project support to measure the changes in the lives of new CTC broadband customers who are now benefitting from a fiber expansion project supported by the DEED Border-to-Border Broadband grant program	\$10,500
BBC: Resilient Region	The Brainerd Baxter Youth Center	PC's for People Youth Project	Project support to continue to train youth to refurbish computers and distribute them to low- income families in the Brainerd area	\$5,000
BBC: RS Fiber	City of Gaylord	Tech Center Marketing and Planning Project	Project support to market the concept of tech centers/maker spaces across the Renville/Sibley Fiber area and determine the feasibility/market demand/next steps in the development process	\$3,750
BBC: RS Fiber	Gibbon Fairfax Winthrop Schools ISD 2365	Wi-Fi on Buses	Project support to outfit school buses with Wi-Fi to enable more productive use of student time on long bus rides to and from school activities, and to use those busses to provide free Wi-Fi at community events	\$24,605
BBC: RS Fiber	Joseph R Brown Heritage Society	Community Applications	Project support to create an e-marketing platform and tourism apps for communities in the Renville/Sibley Fiber Project area	\$10,000
BBC: RS Fiber	Joseph R Brown Heritage Society	Community Wi Fi Project	Capital support to create 26 Wi-Fi hot spots in five communities in Renville and Sibley counties	\$25,000
BBC: RS Fiber	RS Fiber Cooperative	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: RS Fiber	Sibley County	Business and Resident Computer Training	Project support to provide computer and online technology training to area residents and businesses	\$3,750
BBC: RS Fiber	Sibley County	Marketing in a Digital World	Project support to connect local businesses with high school students to increase the online activity of the businesses and provide real-life training opportunities for students	\$3,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC: RS Fiber	Sibley County	Website and Social Media Development	Project support to provide one-on-one consulting assistance to local small businesses as they develop and implement enhanced online presence and social media strategies	\$5,000
BBC: Sherburne County	City of Big Lake	Lakeside Park Wi-Fi	Project support to install Wi-Fi access points at the Big Lake City Park for community events as part of the Broadband Program for rural MN	\$10,000
BBC: Sherburne County	City of Elk River	Downtown Rivers Edge Commons Park Public Wi-Fi Project	Capital support for Wi-Fi access in downtown Elk River	\$10,000
BBC: Sherburne County	City of Elk River	Elk River - Zimmerman Fiber Connection	Capital support to extend an existing City of Elk River fiber network from Zimmerman School to Zimmerman City Hall to provide fiber-based broadband to the tenants and users of City Hall campus	\$10,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Independent School District 728	ISD 728 Expansion of Public Access to Broadband	Project support to increase public Internet access by opening the Community Education Center an additional 240 hours on nights and weekends	\$2,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Sherburne County	BCBP Planning Grant	Donation in support of planning and project development efforts	\$1,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Sherburne County	Becker BAC Internet Access Project	Capital support to build fiber and install wireless networking equipment to provide visitors to the Becker Athletic Complex with broadband access	\$12,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Sherburne County	Sherburne County Broadband Coalition	Project support to do research and create a shared marketing program to engage citizens and elected officials around the concept of improving broadband services in Sherburne County	\$15,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Sherburne County	Sherburne History Center Broadband Service	Project support to provide public access to computers in the Sherburne County Historical Building and equip a community meeting room with appropriate technology, including a robust Wi-Fi network	\$10,000
BBC: Sherburne County	Spectrum High School	Chromebooks for Spectrum	Capital support for classroom technology	\$10,000
BBC (Alumni): Cook County	County of Cook	Broadband Connections	Project support to expand county Wi-Fi access through creating and maintaining public hotspot and video conferencing locations	\$10,800
BBC (Alumni): Cook County	County of Cook	Co-Working facility	Project support to create a co-working center in Grand Marais that will provide space for entrepreneurs and tele-workers to congregate and work using the fiber optic network and center equipment	\$17,200
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Age to Age Mobile Learning	Project support for the Age to Age mobile learning program, where elders will receive instruction on the use of mobile devices from sixth grade students	\$6,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Application Creation Workshop "App Camp"	Project support for two sessions of a two-week technology learning workshop on mobile app creation for students	\$5,120
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Application Creation Workshop "Data Driven Apps"	Project support for development of device applications for youth in grades 4-12	\$8,620
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Interactive Conference Rooms	Capital support for the purchase and installation of interactive devices to enhance internal and external communications for government and community use	\$4,000
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Network Extension	Capital support for classroom technology to enhance staff professional development and encourage collaboration between school staff, students and community members	\$2,100
BBC (Alumni): Fond du Lac Band	Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Tablets for Community Ed	Project support to allocate appropriate devices to reservation community centers to increase technology knowledge and use through training programs, outreach and service delivery	\$12,750
BBC (Alumni): Itasca County	Itasca Economic Dev Corp	Itasca Area BBC Alumni	Project support to increase the technology sophistication of businesses and organizations through online resources, training and networking	\$25,000
BBC (Alumni): Itasca County	Itasca Economic Dev Corp	Itasca Area BBC Alumni II	Project support to increase the technological sophistication of businesses and organizations by providing educational and networking opportunities	\$15,000
BBC (Alumni): Kandiyohi County	Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC	Connecting with Wi-Fi	Project support to increase Wi-Fi access in Kandiyohi County by installing access points on busses, a mobile daycare center and at the community center	\$17,680
BBC (Alumni): Kandiyohi County	Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC	Willmar Hackfest	Project support to promote and host a Hackfest in Willmar	\$10,000
BBC (Alumni): Lac qui Parle Valley Schools	Lac qui Parle Valley ISD 2853	Pathways to a Knowledgeable Workforce	Project support for student career pathways programming	\$6,000
BBC (Alumni): Lake County	Two Harbors Living at Home Block Nurse Program	Using Tablets to Help Senior Citizens Access Healthcare Information	Donation to provide senior citizens of Lake County with access to online health information through the use of mobile devices and staff assistance	\$900
BBC (Alumni): Lake County	Lake Superior School District #381	Lake County Telepresence	Project support to implement and promote distance learning opportunities in Lake County for students, teachers, and community members	\$5,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC (Alumni): Lake County	Lake Superior School District #381	PC's for People	Project support to provide refurbished computers to low-income families with school-aged children	\$4,100
BBC (Alumni): Lake County	Two Harbors Community Radio	Leveraging Broadband to Web Stream	Project support to provide live streaming capacity for Two Harbors Community Radio, allowing interested listeners to hear broadcasts beyond the limited reach of the FM signal	\$5,000
BBC (Alumni): Lake County	Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center	Broadband Upgrade for Education	Capital support to provide reliable, high-speed internet access to promote the learning of K-12 students, graduate school students and community members visiting Wolf Ridge	\$5,000
BBC (Alumni): Lake of the Woods County	Lake of the Woods School ISD 390	Lake of the Woods School Digital Expansion Project	Project support to increase access to technology for students and area residents	\$9,875
BBC (Alumni): Lake of the Woods County	Pioneer Youth Center	Baudette Youth Broadband Expansion	Project support to provide interactive learning experiences for at-risk youth through access to Wi-Fi to enhance student success	\$9,950
BBC (Alumni): Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Replicates "The Shop"	Project support to create a tribal computer refurbishment program that will provide refurbished computers to Leech Lake Band members while also providing job and skills training	\$10,000
BBC (Alumni): Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Leech Lake Temporary Employment Program	Project support to continue and expand the Temporary Employment Program-hosted digital literacy program at four locations on the Leech Lake Reservation	\$20,680
BBC (Alumni): Mille Lacs County	Mille Lacs County	Community Education, Outreach and Customer Demand	Project support to conduct educational outreach and a consumer demand survey of county residents to develop a business plan for a fiber ring/wireless network for rural Mille Lacs County	\$10,000
BBC (Alumni): Mille Lacs County	Mille Lacs County	Technology Training	Project support to provide a series of technology workshops to increase the online presence of businesses via websites and social media	\$10,000
BBC (Alumni): SW MN Broadband Services	60/90 Corridor Initiative	60/90 Corridor Initiative	Project support to promote collaborative economic development activities through the use of social media and internet-based marketing and sales tools	\$16,250
BBC (Alumni): Stevens County	Chokio-Alberta Public Schools	Chokio-Alberta Schools	Project support to prepare students to work in a technology-based future through exposure to career opportunities and insight into the necessary skill sets for those jobs	\$2,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
BBC (Alumni): Stevens County	Hancock Public Schools	Chromebooks for School and Community	Project support to provide technology training to students and community members	\$3,675
BBC (Alumni): Stevens County	ISD 2769 Morris Area School	One to the World	Project support to fully integrate technology into classrooms for each learner through internet access and mobile devices	\$13,000
BBC (Alumni): UMRDC	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC	IT Connect II	Project support to maintain a regional IT professional network in the Upper Minnesota Valley region	\$2,600
BBC (Alumni): UMRDC	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC	Regional Technology Team	Project support to create a regional IT professional network to ignite cross-industry collaborations so the region can fully integrate technology in day-to-day efforts and large scale planning efforts	\$5,000
BBC (Alumni): UMRDC	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC	Rural Connect	Project support to create a shared marketing message and implementation strategy for the region in an effort to attract people and investment	\$15,000
BBC (Alumni): UMRDC	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC	Rural Connect Phase II	Project support for phase II of the Rural Connect project (<i>described above</i>)	\$20,000
Broadband Innovation	Big Stone Area Growth	Expand Usage of Online Digital Tools	Project support to expand the usage of online digital tools through the use of a community web/blog portal, and social media breakfasts	\$6,400
Broadband Innovation	Lac qui Parle County EDA	Lac qui Parle Computer Commuter	Project support to continue the LqP Computer Commuter mobile computer lab through December 2018	\$10,000
Broadband Innovation	Northwest Minnesota Foundation	IMPACT 20/20 Business Broadband Advantage	Project support to promote technologically stronger communities in NW Minnesota through educational opportunities for businesses and a Hackfest in Bemidji	\$12,970
Broadband Innovation	PCs for People	Distribute 500 computers to 10 Blandin Broadband communities	Project support to coordinate the distribution of 500 computers to eligible recipients in each of ten 2015-16 new Blandin Broadband communities	\$47,500
Broadband Innovation	PCs for People	Distribute computers to two rural communities	Project support to deliver 125 computers to two rural Minnesota communities	\$25,000
Broadband Innovation	Project FINE	.COM: Creative Online Marketing for Diverse Businesses	Project support for online marketing education and resources for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs	\$25,000
Broadband Innovation	Project FINE	LTC: Learn To Code	Project support to provide technology and coding education for ethnically diverse youth in the Winona and St. Charles area	\$25,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Carlton County	Carlton County Robust Network Feasibility Study	Project support to conduct a feasibility study to understand options for improving broadband infrastructure and services within the county	\$25,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC	Kandiyohi County Robust Network Feasibility Study	Project support to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of a new Fiber to the Premise network throughout Kandiyohi County	\$25,000

Program	Grantee	Project Name	Description	Amount
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Martin County	Robust Network Feasibility Fund Grant	Project support for a feasibility study to choose and prioritize programs and initiatives to stimulate development of state-of-the-art broadband networks throughout Martin County	\$20,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Mille Lacs County	Feasibility Study for Fiber to the Premise	Project support to conduct a study to provide information needed to install a Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) broadband system	\$10,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Mille Lacs County	Feasibility Study Part 2	Project support to facilitate implementation of a county-wide broadband feasibility study to review existing network services and infrastructure, market demand and technology alternatives for broadband	\$10,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Mille Lacs County	Detailed Fiber to the Tower Wireless Study	Project support for a feasibility study of using a wireless broadband system throughout the county	\$14,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Nobles County	Feasibility Study	Project support to conduct a feasibility study to gather information and provide a decision making path for local officials to meet the goal of ubiquitous broadband coverage across Nobles County as part of the Broadband Program in rural Minnesota	\$25,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative	Rural Broadband Feasibility Study	Project support for a feasibility study to extend broadband services to the under and un-served areas of the Todd Wadena Electric Cooperative service area	\$13,825
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Sherburne County	RNFF Feasibility Grant	Project support to complete a broadband feasibility study in Sherburne County that will identify needs, existing services and infrastructure, and partnership and operations options	\$25,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC	Public Sector Broadband Feasibility Study	Project support for a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a fiber network connecting all public buildings in the Upper Minnesota Valley Region	\$25,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	City of Long Prairie	Explore building a fiber to the premise network	Project support to prepare a pre-engineering proposal for the City of Long Prairie and surrounding area to build a fiber to the premise network through a public/private partnership	\$15,000
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Long Lake Township	Long Lake Township Broadband Access	Project support to conduct an engineering study to determine the cost and funding options for a high-speed broadband network in Long Lake Township	\$7,500
Robust Network Feasibility Fund	Traverse County	Traverse County Broadband Expansion	Project support to determine the feasibility of implementing high-speed broadband in Traverse County	\$25,000
			Total:	\$1,499,999



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STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA