

State of North Dakota **Performance Report**

Capital Projects Fund 2026 Broadband Report

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Executive Summary

During the 2026 reporting period (July 2025 – June 2026), North Dakota’s Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Broadband Program achieved significant milestones toward its goal of providing reliable, high-speed fiber broadband access to all remaining unserved and underserved locations throughout the state. Multiple broadband infrastructure projects reached completion during the reporting period, while construction continued on the program’s remaining large-scale deployments. Together, these investments continue to expand access to future-ready fiber networks capable of supporting the needs of North Dakota residents, businesses, farms, and community institutions for years to come.

A key milestone during the reporting period was the successful launch of the CPF ExtEND Line Extension Program, an initiative that reinvests savings from projects completed under budget to extend broadband service to additional eligible locations that otherwise would not have been reached. By leveraging unused project funds, the program maximizes the impact of the State’s CPF allocation while bringing fiber broadband to additional rural homes and businesses without requiring additional federal funding.



(Above) Construction crews install underground conduit for North Central Communications’ Williston–Williams MVC Project, the largest remaining Capital Projects Fund broadband deployment in North Dakota.

With the completion of several projects and continued progress on the remaining construction efforts, North Dakota is entering the final phase of its CPF Broadband Program. Once the remaining projects are completed and the ExtEND initiative concludes, only a limited number of eligible locations will remain statewide to be addressed through complementary Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program investments, keeping North Dakota on track to become one of the first states in the nation to achieve universal access to high-speed fiber broadband.

Highlights from the 2026 reporting period include:

- West River Technologies completed its project \$2.1 million under budget, constructing approximately 125 miles of fiber and bringing symmetrical gigabit speeds to 47 rural residential locations.
- Red River Communications completed its project \$1 million under budget, constructing approximately 100 miles of fiber and connecting 358 locations, including 288 residences and 70 businesses, with symmetrical service up to 2 Gbps.
- Northwest Communications Cooperative (NCC), with two previously completed projects already in its portfolio, continued construction on its project in Williams County. As the State's largest CPF broadband project, accounting for over 20 percent of awarded funds, it aims to connect over 300 of the state's hardest-to-reach locations. Following Treasury approval of a project extension, progress will continue toward completion by June 2027.
- NCC and BEK Communications became the first subrecipients of the CPF ExteND Line Extension Program, which reinvests savings from previously completed projects to expand fiber service to additional rural locations that otherwise would have remained unserved.
- Halstad Telephone Company, Polar Communications, and MLGC continued advancing construction and customer connections across their remaining CPF projects, maintaining progress toward program completion.



(Above) A newly installed fiber distribution cabinet serves as a key network hub supporting West River's completed broadband expansion project.

Uses of Funds

North Dakota continues to administer its CPF Broadband Program in accordance with U.S. Department of the Treasury requirements, using grant funds to expand reliable, high-speed broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved locations throughout the state. During the 2026 reporting period, subrecipients continued investing CPF funds in engineering, permitting, materials procurement, fiber construction, network electronics, customer installations, and other eligible activities necessary to deploy scalable fiber broadband infrastructure.

The reporting period marked the beginning of a transition for the program, with multiple broadband infrastructure projects approaching successful completion. In particular, West River Technologies and Red River Communications completed construction and activated service to all eligible locations within their project areas. Like those completed in prior reporting periods, these completed projects expanded access to reliable fiber broadband for hundreds of rural homes and businesses while demonstrating strong stewardship of federal funds through efficient project delivery and cost management.

The program also continued supporting construction activities for the remaining large-scale deployments. NCC advanced construction on its Williston, Williams Project following Treasury approval of a project extension through June 2027, while Halstad Telephone Company, Polar Communications, and MLGC continued deploying fiber infrastructure and connecting customers throughout their project areas.

In addition to supporting ongoing construction, North Dakota launched the CPF ExtEND Line Extension Program during the reporting period. By reallocating savings from projects completed under budget, the program is extending broadband service to additional eligible locations that otherwise would not have been reached under the original awards. This approach maximizes the impact of the State's Capital Projects Fund allocation by ensuring available funding continues to expand broadband access without requiring additional federal investment.

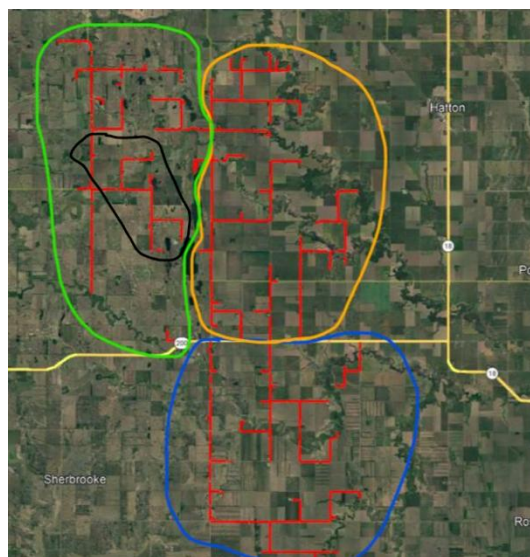
Throughout the reporting period, the State Broadband Office maintained active oversight of all subrecipient activities through regular progress monitoring, financial reviews, reimbursement processing, technical assistance, and compliance oversight to help ensure projects remain aligned with Treasury requirements and positioned for successful completion.

Addressing Critical Needs

North Dakota's CPF Broadband Program continues to address the challenge of providing reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband access to some of the hardest-to-reach locations across the state. Consistent with program requirements, investments are focused on locations lacking access to reliable broadband service capable of supporting modern residential, educational, healthcare, agricultural, and business needs. By prioritizing fiber-optic infrastructure, the State's program is delivering scalable, long-term broadband solutions that will continue serving North Dakota

Objectives: In North Dakota, the program is largely helping to expand broadband availability in rural areas where limited connectivity has historically constrained economic opportunity, education, healthcare access, public safety, precision agriculture, and quality of life. Throughout the reporting period, subrecipients continued deploying fiber infrastructure to eligible residential, business, and community anchor institution locations identified through the State's competitive grant process. As projects progress toward completion, these investments continue reducing the number of underserved locations while creating a foundation for universal access to reliable, high-speed broadband across North Dakota.

Awareness: Subrecipients continued engaging directly with residents, businesses, local governments, and community organizations throughout project implementation to ensure communities remained informed about construction schedules, anticipated service availability, and opportunities to subscribe once service became available. Outreach efforts included direct customer communications, project updates, public meetings, coordination with local officials, and ongoing engagement throughout construction. These activities helped maintain transparency, minimize construction impacts, and



(Above) Project completion maps such as this one from MLGC illustrate the expansion of fiber broadband service into previously unserved rural areas, reflecting continued progress toward universal broadband access across North Dakota.

support successful customer onboarding as projects reached completion.

Outcomes: The 2026 reporting period marked substantial progress toward addressing North Dakota's remaining

broadband needs. Multiple CPF projects reached successful completion, expanding access to reliable fiber broadband for hundreds of previously unserved and underserved homes and businesses while additional large-scale projects continued advancing construction. The completion of projects under budget also enabled the State to launch the CPF ExteND Line Extension Program, extending broadband service to additional eligible rural locations using savings from previously completed awards. Together, these accomplishments demonstrate measurable progress toward the State's objective of achieving universal access to high-speed fiber broadband and position North Dakota to leverage upcoming Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program investments to reach the limited number of eligible locations that remain.

Labor

North Dakota's CPF Broadband Program continues to support high-quality broadband infrastructure deployment through the use of experienced engineering, construction, and telecommunications professionals. Throughout the 2026 reporting period, subrecipients relied on a combination of internal



(Above) MLGC's Plant Manager verifies and records GPS data for contractor-installed duct near Beaver Creek, where the project route crossed the creek with a directional drill more than 20 times.

Across North Dakota's CPF projects, construction crews, engineers, and utility partners work together to deploy fiber infrastructure safely and efficiently across North Dakota's Capital Projects Fund broadband projects.

staff and qualified contractors to perform engineering, permitting, utility coordination, fiber installation, splicing, testing, customer installations, and network activation activities necessary to complete broadband construction projects across the state.

As projects progressed toward completion, subrecipients emphasized safe construction practices, effective project management, and coordination among engineering firms, construction contractors, equipment vendors, and utility partners. These collaborative efforts helped maintain construction schedules, efficiently address permitting and right-of-way challenges, and ensure that deployed infrastructure met industry standards for long-term reliability and performance.

The State Broadband Office continued monitoring project implementation through regular progress reporting, reimbursement reviews, and technical assistance to help ensure subrecipients remained in compliance with applicable federal and state requirements. Ongoing coordination between the State

Broadband Office and subrecipients supported timely issue resolution while promoting consistent project delivery across the statewide portfolio.

The successful completion of multiple projects during the reporting period demonstrates the effectiveness of these workforce practices. As the remaining projects advance toward completion, North Dakota remains committed to supporting a skilled workforce capable of delivering reliable, future-ready broadband infrastructure to rural communities throughout the state.

Community Engagement

Community engagement remained an essential component of North Dakota's CPF Broadband Program throughout the 2026 reporting period. The State Broadband Office and participating subrecipients continued working closely with local governments, community organizations, property owners, businesses, and residents to support successful project implementation and ensure broadband investments reflected local needs.

Subrecipients maintained regular communication with stakeholders throughout planning, construction, and service activation. Engagement activities included coordination with local officials and utility providers, public meetings, direct customer outreach, construction notifications, and ongoing communication regarding project schedules and service availability. These efforts helped minimize construction impacts, facilitate timely customer connections, and maintain transparency throughout the deployment process.

The State Broadband Office continued providing technical assistance and regular project coordination with subrecipients through recurring meetings, progress reviews, and compliance discussions. These collaborative efforts enabled the State Broadband Office to identify and address implementation challenges, share best practices among providers, and support consistent project delivery across the statewide portfolio.

As completed projects transitioned from construction to active service, community engagement efforts also shifted toward customer onboarding and long-term support. Providers worked directly with new subscribers to schedule installations, activate fiber service, and ensure customers could fully utilize the new broadband infrastructure. These continued partnerships with local communities have been instrumental in advancing North Dakota's goal of providing reliable, high-speed broadband access to rural and underserved areas throughout the state.