



## **\$19 Million Fiber Broadband Expansion in Anoka County**

Connect Anoka County, a cooperative project between Anoka County and Zayo Bandwidth of Louisville, Colorado, has received a \$13.4 million grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), to expand fiber broadband connectivity across the county.

### **Project Overview**

The Connect Anoka County project will link 145 anchor institutions with three core rings, creating a 286-mile fiber optic backbone. The backbone will connect police, fire, public works, libraries, K-12 schools, colleges, city and town halls, and county buildings. This network will provide a direct advantage to local businesses, passing directly through the county's key business districts and economic development zones.

### **Cost**

The total project cost is \$19.1 million. The federal grant will cover \$13.4 million with Anoka County and Zayo Bandwidth each contributing \$2.9 million.

### **Public Benefits**

The project will give Anoka County high-speed broadband capacity services at 145 anchor institutions for 20 years, and the right to use dark fiber – unused optical fibers that can be used for future services and expanded bandwidth — for 120 years. The local government's financial share of the project will be offset through savings realized by eliminating approximately \$400,000 of T1 lines and other connectivity costs annually. Ultimately, the fiber will provide faster and more reliable service.

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With this infrastructure in place, there will be many more opportunities for collaborative efforts and shared services via fiber connections and expanded wireless governmental networks for public works, public safety, and other mobile staff. It also expands opportunities for distance learning for educational institutions. The Connect Anoka County project includes a connection to the Anoka-Ramsey Community College Cambridge Campus in Isanti County as well as a connection to Ramsey County at the Mounds View Public Library.

The project also will enhance emergency services by creating redundant 800MHz radio tower connections and improved electronic dispatch capabilities as well as back-up data service to key locations.

### **Community Benefits**

The countywide fiber network will be owned and operated by Zayo Bandwidth, a private company, allowing service to local businesses and homes. A high-speed broadband data infrastructure is essential to the economic survival of towns, cities, and entire regions today and in the future. By leveraging federal grant funds, Anoka County is able to jumpstart this important economic development tool to stimulate the local economy.

The Connect Anoka County project will create competition for broadband services and help attract technology-based employers, support home-based businesses, and improve competitiveness for local business.

### **For more information**

[www.ConnectAnokaCounty.com](http://www.ConnectAnokaCounty.com)  
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