

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

August 1, 2022

Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar and Via ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Mark Boeschen, Donna Boonstra (via Zoom), Bruce DeBlieck (via Zoom), Jason Hulstein (via Zoom), Roger Imdieke, Tony Kirby (via Zoom), Larry Kleindl, Michelle Marotzke, Ryan Nelson (via Zoom), Rollie Nissen, David Sisser and Brian Zawierucha

Excused: Dean Bouta

Absent: Goldie Smith

Staff: Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager

Secretarial: Cathy Skindelen, Legal and Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Mark Boeschen called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

AGENDA—The agenda was approved as emailed.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY David Sisser, to approve the Minutes of the July 11, 2022 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS—

Mediacom Lake Project. Chair Boeschen reported Mediacom has proposed a project of 967 passings located in Lake Andrew, Colfax, Norway Lake and Dovre Townships. This project will cover the passings in Dovre Township that were dropped in an effort to keep the West Project under \$10 million, as required by the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program regulations. It will overlap areas with proposed coverage in the Northwest Project. Chair Boeschen spoke with Kevin Beyer at Federated Telephone Cooperative (FTC) and he agreed Kandiyohi County should work with Mediacom since the Northwest Project is stalled due to funding. Mediacom is willing to respect the boundaries of other ongoing projects and make corresponding adjustments. The project would be completed within two years of funding, contingent on material availability. Expansion into a second phase is a possibility. Mediacom has no plans to apply for a Border-to-Border grant and is requesting funds for 13 percent of the total project cost of approximately \$2.8 million. Lake Andrew Township is in favor of the project; however, it has requirements, one of which is including the Lake Andrew Town Hall in the project. Colfax Township favors the project and will discuss it at tonight's township meeting. The townships will be asked

to contribute \$200 per passing, up to 75% of its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and Chair Boeschon recommended the committee request up to \$400,000 from Kandiyohi County. Mediacom, as an additional provider in Kandiyohi County, will help ensure the County's ARPA funds are disbursed before the deadline. Currently \$2.8 million of the funds have been committed, with \$3 million still available.

[Ryan Nelson joined the meeting]

The following concerns were raised:

- Is there any assurance that the price won't change as costs go up? Chair Boeschon responded the \$400,000 requested is in anticipation of rising prices and the requirements added by Lake Andrew Township. Once Kandiyohi County enters the agreement the cost will not change. The locations shown on the map will be noted in the agreement and Mediacom has the option to add more.
- Will this project make it more difficult to service the last-mile customers? Chair Boeschon responded this could be an issue, but having some infrastructure in place should help reach these residents eventually and meanwhile many people would gain service. There is no guarantee the Northwest Project will receive a Border-to-Border grant and the 2024 deadline for spending the ARPA funds could be missed. If this project is not accepted, the provider will move to another area. Now that additional providers are expressing interest in Kandiyohi County, the township-to-township model of providing service may not be feasible in the future.
- Are we using subsidized dollars to support only higher-income people since much of the project runs along the lakes? Chair Boeschon responded the population density is high around the lakes and providers need to show a return on investment, making the lakes areas a good starting point. There are several miles between the lakes and into Colfax Township that are included. Chair Boeschon requested Mediacom add the south side of Lake Andrew and it agreed. The east side of Lake Andrew and north side of Lake Ringo will also be considered. When this project is completed the committee will have two options, FTC and Mediacom, for filling in the service gaps.

IT WAS MOVED BY Michelle Marotzke, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to bring the Mediacom project of 967 passings at a local cost of up to \$400,000 to the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners, and to ask Lake Andrew, Norway Lake, Colfax and Dovre Townships to contribute \$200 per passing located in their respective townships. MOTION CARRIED.

Border-to-Border Grant Letters of Support. Chair Boeschon asked the committee to consider recommending that the Kandiyohi County Board issue letters of support for area providers. A primary letter of support would be issued for FTC, and secondary letters for other providers in the county as long as they are not competing directly with FTC. The following providers have requested letters of support:

- **Mediacom.** Mediacom's inquiry evolved into the proposed project, so it is off the table.
- **TDS.** TDS plans to apply for a Border-to-Border grant for the Kerkhoven and Sunburg areas, but will not provide specific information. The committee will not propose a letter of support.
- **Frontier Communications.** Frontier is proposing fiber to the premise in a section from Blomkest to Svea and the town of Lake Lillian, as well as a small section on the southwest side of Atwater, south of Diamond Lake, and a few passings north of Atwater, totalling 450 passings. None of these areas conflicts with existing projects.

IT WAS MOVED BY Larry Kleindl, SECONDED BY David Sisser, to recommend that the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners issue a secondary letter of support for Frontier Communications. MOTION CARRIED.

- **Charter (Spectrum).** Charter is proposing a project in New London Township using Border-to-Border grant funds. The proposed project contains 347 passings at a cost of approximately \$3.1 million. It will commit at least 50 percent, but doesn't have a final number of what will be asked of the State. Charter already has projects in New London Township and they plan to avoid overlapping with other local projects.

IT WAS MOVED BY David Sisser, SECONDED BY Roger Imdieke, to recommend that Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners issue a secondary letter of support for Charter Communications. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY Larry Kleindl, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to recommend that the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners issue a primary letter of support for Federated Telephone Cooperative. MOTION CARRIED.

Sisser reported the City of Willmar is putting a request for proposal (RFP) out to providers to install fiber for residents and commercial buildings within the City of Willmar. The RFP went out on July 8, 2022, and evaluation will take place on August 8th. Applicants will be notified on August 19th. The final round will be on August 22nd, and findings will be presented to the Willmar City Council on September 6, 2022. Sisser reported that Arvig has run fiber from the City Public Works building out to Northern States Supply and will continue on to the Willmar Municipal Airport.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

West—Federated Telephone Cooperative Border-to-Border Grant. Sarah Swedburg reported the Border-to-Border grant application is 95 percent complete and she plans to submit it by Wednesday, August 3, 2022. The first step, the creation of an account by the State, has been completed. FTC has been doing a fantastic job helping with the verbiage, indication of permits needed, timeline, etc.

Vibrant. The Hawick portion of the Long Lake project is complete and residents can sign up for service. The Long Lake area will be complete within three weeks.

Charter. Thirtieth Avenue west of Eagles Landing is complete, 141st Avenue is complete, with the exception of an area around a boat landing that is waiting for a permit, and 199th Avenue is under construction.

Arvig. Arvig has completed work on the main street in Prinsburg and has begun work on the side streets.

Kandiyohi County Line Extension Grant. The Kandiyohi County Line Extension Grant discussion is tabled until next month.

REPORTS—

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). Chair Boesch reported meeting with NTIA to discuss why Kandiyohi County wasn't awarded a grant. It was an excellent debriefing and some of the information will be used in the Minnesota Border-to-Border grant application.

Swedburg thanked Kevin Beyer from FTC, Chair Boesch, Brian Zaweirucha and Tim Johnson from MVTV for their participation in the broadband panel at the Partners in Ag Innovation Conference.

Kleindl gave special thanks to Chair Boesch for the all of the extra time he has spent with providers looking for letters of support.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **10:00 a.m., Monday, September 12, 2022** at Room 2057, Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building, Willmar and via Zoom video conference.

EDC Broadband Committee

Project: Lakes – Mediacom

Total Project Cost	\$ 2,789,266.65	Total Passings	967
Provider Commitment	\$ 2,439,266.65	Cost per Passing	\$ 2884.45
County Commitment	\$ 227,400.00	Add'l Cost Notes: Townships \$200/passing up to 75% of ARPA	
Township/etc Commitment	\$ 122,600.00 (proposed)		

Project Overview:

Mediacom is proposing to do a Fiber-to-the-Premise project in Lake Andrew, Colfax, Dovre and Norway Lake townships. Mediacom will install, operate and own the network and provide its standard services. Internet speeds of up to 2 Gbps (gigabits per second) download and 1 Gbps upload would be available, well above the state of Minnesota internet speed goal. The project would serve approximately 724 locations in Lake Andrew, 223 locations in Colfax, 12 locations in Norway Lake and 8 locations in Dovre townships. All these locations are either unserved or underserved according to the state of Minnesota. The provider is requesting a grant of 13% of the total project. Mediacom currently provides services in Sunburg and Atwater in Kandiyohi County. The project would be completed (citing material availability) within 2 years of grant execution.

We are asking townships to contribute \$200 per location up to 75% of their ARPA funds.

Request:

If recommended by the EDC Broadband Committee, approve designating \$350,000 of county ARPA funds toward this broadband project and authorize staff to enter into a Grant Agreement with Mediacom Minnesota LLC.

Broadband Project Evaluation Criteria

Project Name Lakes – Mediacom Provider Name Mediacom

Date 7/25/2022 Expected Start/Completion Est complete by end of 2024

Township Board Date 7/26/2022 8/1/2022 County Board Date 8/2/2022

Total Project Cost	\$ 2,789,266.65	Total Passings	967
Provider Commitment	\$ 2,439,266.65	Cost per Passing	\$ 2884.45
County Commitment	\$ 227,400.00	Add'l Cost Notes: Townships \$200/passing up to 75% of ARPA	
Township/etc Commitment	\$ 122,600.00 (proposed)		

Population Density – Describe location of passings relative to each other.

(The Committee's goal is to reach all residents within the County, no matter the density.)

Majority around dense lakes. However, there is significant fiber running in the middle of Lake Andrew and Colfax townships. Goal would be to branch out and serve additional areas. _____

Existing Infrastructure – Where are current providers located or could this provide a benefit long term?

(The Committee is provider agnostic and work with existing providers should be prioritized if possible.)

This area is served by TDS who has been unwilling to share any future plans. Federated also has a potential project to the West.

However, the current estimated cost to complete the township is too high and depends on a second successful grant. _____

Demand – Are residents, businesses, townships, or other parties seeking increased internet speeds or a different provider?

(Even though the Committee's goal is to reach all properties within in the County, those with more demand should be targeted first.)

Demand from Lake Andrew residents and the boards of Lake Andrew and Colfax has been high. They have been waiting for TDS to provide needed service but it never comes. Board members are looking forward to broadband. _____

Location Distribution of Funds – Are government funds being fairly spread around the County?

(The Committee desires to spread funds throughout all County districts.)

This project has the smallest contribution per passing so far at \$361. This allows the County to keep more of its funds. _____

Existing Grant Areas – Are existing grant areas included in the project? If so, why?

(The Committee does not want to "double-up" on funding and existing grant areas should be avoided.)

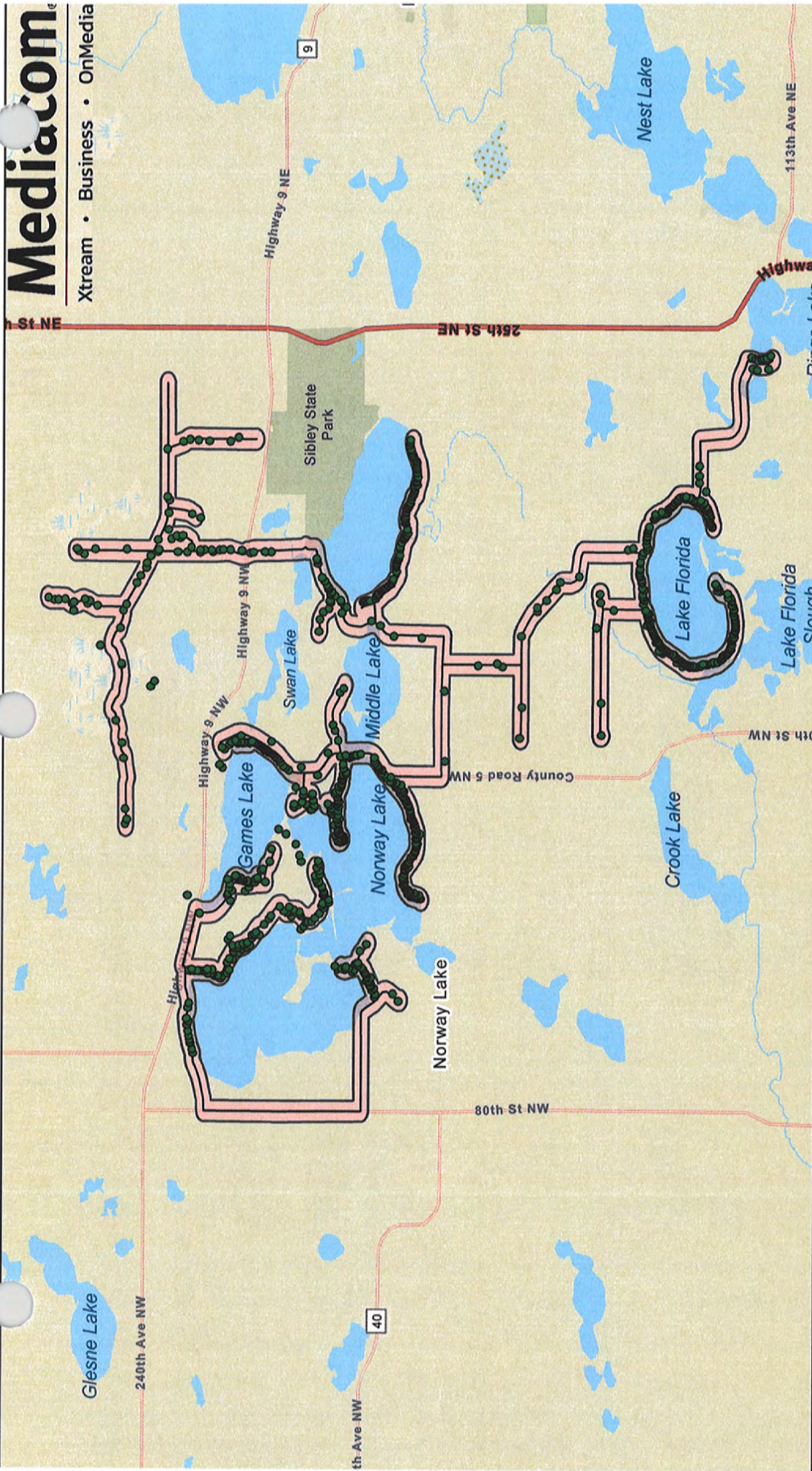
No. No known existing grant areas are within the project. The West Federated project was specifically excluded as to not double-up.

Technology / Speed – Does the project include fiber-to-the-premise or does the project meet the minimum speed standards as defined by the State?

(The Committee gives preference to fiber projects and all projects must meet the 2026 State speed goal of 100/20.)

Fiber to the premise project with speeds up to 2 Gbps download, 1 Gbps upload _____

**nothing in this document prevents the Committee from making exceptions to stated goals.*



Kandiyohi County - Project 01

Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

2022

- Homes_Passed
- Fiber_Service_Area
- Fiber

Broadband Project Evaluation Criteria

Project Name Kandiyohi County Project 2 Provider Name Charter Communications

Date 7/29/22 Expected Start/Completion _____

Township Board Date _____ County Board Date _____

Total Project Cost	\$3.1 m	Total Passings	347
Provider Commitment	At least 50%, request not finalized	Cost per Passing	\$7k
County Commitment	\$	Add'l Cost Notes:	
Township/etc Commitment	\$		

Population Density – Describe location of passings relative to each other.

(The Committee's goal is to reach all residents within the County, no matter the density.)

This project will serve all remaining unserved/underserved locations in New London Township, along with portions of Burbank and Lake Andrew Townships. _____

Existing Infrastructure – Where are current providers located or could this provide a benefit long term?

(The Committee is provider agnostic and work with existing providers should be prioritized if possible.)

Charter already serves portions of New London and Burbank Township _____

Demand – Are residents, businesses, townships, or other parties seeking increased internet speeds or a different provider?

(Even though the Committee's goal is to reach all properties within in the County, those with more demand should be targeted first.)

County and New London Township have expressed interested in serving remaining un/underserved addresses _____

Location Distribution of Funds – Are government funds being fairly spread around the County?

(The Committee desires to spread funds throughout all County districts.)

Existing Grant Areas – Are existing grant areas included in the project? If so, why?

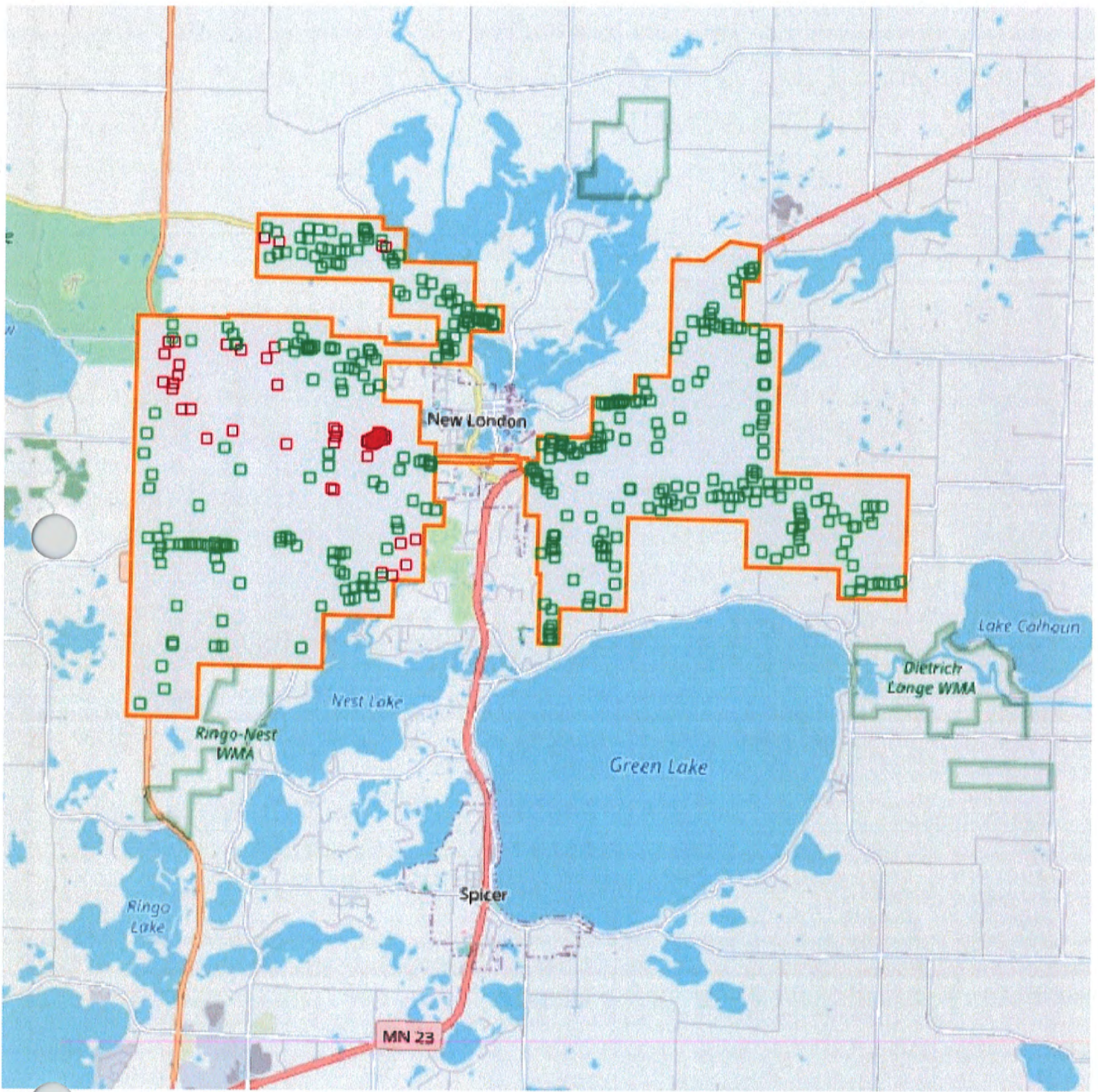
(The Committee does not want to "double-up" on funding and existing grant areas should be avoided.)

No, prior Charter builds are not included in project area _____

Technology / Speed – Does the project include fiber-to-the-premise or does the project meet the minimum speed standards as defined by the State?

(The Committee gives preference to fiber projects and all projects must meet the 2026 State speed goal of 100/20.)

*nothing in this document prevents the Committee from making exceptions to stated goals.



Broadband Project Evaluation Criteria

Project Name Kandiyohi County Project Provider Name: Frontier

Date _____ Expected Start/Completion _____

Township Board Date _____ County Board Date _____

Total Project Cost	\$2.00M \$3.7M	Total Passings	352 (est) 450
Provider Commitment	XXXXX Estimate is \$703K requested from State, with \$1.31M from Frontier	Cost per Passing	\$5712 (est)
County Commitment	\$	Add'l Cost Notes: Project will deploy fiber-to-the-premises, providing speeds up to 2 Gig, symmetrical.	
Township/etc Commitment	\$		

Population Density – Describe location of passings relative to each other.

(The Committee's goal is to reach all residents within the County, no matter the density.)

Existing Infrastructure – Where are current providers located or could this provide a benefit long term?

(The Committee is provider agnostic and work with existing providers should be prioritized if possible.)

Demand – Are residents, businesses, townships, or other parties seeking increased internet speeds or a different provider?

(Even though the Committee's goal is to reach all properties within in the County, those with more demand should be targeted first.)

Location Distribution of Funds – Are government funds being fairly spread around the County?

(The Committee desires to spread funds throughout all County districts.)

Existing Grant Areas – Are existing grant areas included in the project? If so, why?

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Technology / Speed – Does the project include fiber-to-the-premise or does the project meet the minimum speed standards as defined by the State?

(The Committee gives preference to fiber projects and all projects must meet the 2026 State speed goal of 100/20.)

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Subject to Change

