



# Vermont Community Broadband Board **2025 Annual Report**



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Submitted to: Senate Committees on Finance and on  
Natural Resources and Energy, the House Committee on  
Energy and Technology, and the Joint Information  
Technology Oversight Committee

*30 VSA § 8089. ANNUAL REPORT (a) Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), on or before January 15 of each year, the Board shall submit a report of its activities pursuant to this chapter for the preceding year to the Senate Committees on Finance and on Natural Resources and Energy, the House Committee on Energy and Technology, and the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee. The report shall include an operating and financial statement covering the Board's operations during the year, including a summary of all grant awards and contracts and agreements entered into by the Board. In addition, the report shall include a description of the progress each start-up communications union district has made in achieving long-term financial sustainability that is not dependent upon public funding, an update on its efforts to secure additional federal funds for broadband deployment, and progress made towards meeting the State's goal of ensuring every E-911 location has access to broadband capable of delivering a minimum of 100 Mbps symmetrical service as required in subdivision 202c(b)(10) of this title.*



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# About the VCBB

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## Mission Statement

It is the purpose of the VCBB and Vermont Community Broadband Fund to support policies and programs designed to accelerate community efforts that advance the State's goal of achieving universal access to reliable, high-quality, affordable, and fixed broadband. The VCBB was created to coordinate, facilitate, support, and accelerate the development and implementation of universal community broadband solutions.

## Board Members

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## Executive Summary

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### Progress in 2025

This report will show a snapshot of the progress VCBP made in FY2025, as well as where we are at the end of the calendar year. In 2025, Vermont continued to advance toward universal access to reliable broadband, focusing on building durable, community-driven networks that support rural economies, strengthen local resilience, and ensure every Vermonter can participate fully in the opportunities broadband provides.

The year brought both progress and major policy disruptions. Most notably, the federal cancellation of the Digital Equity Capacity Grant halted anticipated funding for statewide digital inclusion work. This required VCBP and its partners to reevaluate plans for device access, skill-building programs, and community capacity initiatives. Despite the loss of federal support, Vermont continued prioritizing digital inclusion and focused on planning for state-level coordination to keep essential efforts moving.

2025 also brought significant changes to the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program at the federal level. In June, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) issued a Policy Notice directing states to revise aspects of their BEAD processes, including technology neutrality and requirements for additional competitive review steps. These federal shifts introduced uncertainty and required rapid adaptation, but VCBP responded swiftly to keep Vermont's BEAD planning on track.

Amid these shifts, VCBP continues efforts to construct fiber broadband infrastructure to locations that are beyond the standard installation policy of the CUDs, with priority to locations serving lower income Vermonters. A key accomplishment was the creation of the Affordable Long Drop Program, which covers installation costs for households located far from the main fiber route. These "long drops" are common in rural Vermont and traditionally come with installation charges that can prevent lower-income or geographically isolated residents from connecting.



In 2025 Communications Union Districts (CUDs) continued expanding world-class fiber networks into rural and underserved communities. Strategic construction sequencing, improved coordination with utilities, and careful stewardship of ARPA and BEAD planning funds helped Vermont maintain momentum during a turbulent policy year. Workforce development training and partnerships also addressed shortages in fiber technicians, construction crews, and splicers.

VCBB's core work in 2025 centered on four priorities:

- (1) accelerating fiber construction into unserved and underserved areas;
- (2) reinforcing digital empowerment efforts despite the loss of federal equity funding;
- (3) adapting Vermont's BEAD implementation to evolving federal policy; and
- (4) building long-term sustainability and resiliency with VCBB grant funded networks.

By the end of 2025, thousands of additional Vermont homes and businesses had gained access to high-quality fiber service. Several CUDs reached new deployment milestones, and many began preparing for BEAD-funded construction phases despite shifting federal expectations.

In a year defined by policy changes and financial uncertainty, Vermont's broadband progress is a testament to the resilience of its CUD model and the dedication of state and local partners. As Vermont moves from planning into large-scale BEAD construction, the VCBB remains focused on building a broadband future that is reliable, equitable, resilient, and sustainable for every Vermonter, in every community.

## Looking Ahead

- ▶ According to current plans, when the ARPA and BEAD Programs conclude, 82% of the state will be served with fiber-optic internet. About 17% will have cable because Comcast was awarded BEAD and because of [VCBB's Mapping and Service Data and Overbuild Policy](#). We expect these locations to be upgraded over time to fiber as the cable companies are switching to fiber for cost, maintenance, and quality reasons. Additionally, Low Earth Orbit satellites are currently an option across Vermont which can be used as an immediate solution for those that require it.

There are currently existing plans in place for service to more than 99% of Vermont addresses. Staff is in the process of drilling down address-by-address of the remaining locations to find out which will be included in updated construction plans, and which remain. The VCBB goal for 2026 is to make a plan to identify those addresses that may have been overlooked and ensure there is a plan to reach them.



Another future goal is to update Vermont's statutory definition of "served" broadband. 25/3 Mbps no longer reflects the need for higher bandwidth as well as current federal policy. This statutory change would bring Vermont within the new FCC standard, which lifted the definition of served from 25/3 to 100/20 to support advanced telecommunications capability, recognizing that higher speeds are essential for remote work, telehealth, education, and small-business operations. Maintaining Vermont's lower 25/3 standard risks undercounting communities that still lack functional broadband access and may limit eligibility for critical investment. Updating the state definition to align with the FCC standard will ensure Vermont's policies keep pace with current needs, accurately identify service gaps, and support equitable, future-proof broadband deployment statewide.



# VCBB Operating Budget and Expenditures

Please note that while the rest of this report covers calendar year 2025, this section covers state fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025).

## FY2025 Operating Budget and Expenditures and FY2026 Operating Budget

Budget Category	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Expenditures	FY2026 Budget
Personnel	\$1,548,436	\$1,542,358	\$1,684,960
Board Costs	\$35,000	\$26,149	\$24,500
Travel & Training	\$80,000	\$44,803	\$75,000
Internal Service Fees	\$113,887	\$59,825	\$122,399
Equipment & Software	\$35,604	\$36,228	\$32,852
Supplies	\$1,762	\$9,440	\$1,762
Miscellaneous	\$7,920	\$15,502	\$36,395
Contractual	\$3,727,096	\$1,500,985	\$2,702,625
Indirect	Not included	-	\$200,000
Total	\$5,549,705	\$3,235,290	\$4,880,493

## Federal Grant Funding

Financial Assistance Award	Period of Performance	Total Award	FY2025 Expenditures
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<b>National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program</b>	12/01/2022–06/30/2032	\$228,913,019.08	\$2,087,455.75
<b>NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant: Vermont Digital Equity Capacity Award (Canceled May 9, 2025)</b>	01/01/2025–12/31/2029 05/09/2025	<del>\$5,299,150.18</del> \$0.00	\$213,693.64
<b>NBRC Regional Forest Economy Partnership Grant Program: Model Funding Program for Community-Driven Broadband</b>	01/01/2021–09/30/2026	\$1,000,000	\$157,343.19
<b>Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) Economic and Infrastructure Development Grant Program: State Broadband Program</b>	01/01/2021–12/31/2026	\$2,500,000	\$586,924.01

## American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds

ARPA Fund	End Date	Total Allocation	FY2025 Expenditures
<b>State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)</b>	12/31/2026	\$150,000,000	\$25,306,383.23
<b>Capital Projects Fund (CPF)</b>	12/31/2026	\$95,000,000	\$32,424,881.07

## Universal Service Fund: State FY2025

Expenditure: \$1,269,289

Year End Balance: \$472,001.72



## Grants

### Broadband Preconstruction Grant Program

The purpose of the Broadband Preconstruction Grant Program is to provide grants to communications union districts for preconstruction costs related to broadband projects that are part of a universal service plan. Preconstruction costs include expenses for feasibility studies, business planning, pole data surveys, engineering and design, and make-ready work associated with the construction of broadband networks, including consultant, legal, and administrative expenses, and any other costs deemed appropriate by the Board.

All Broadband Preconstruction Grants were fully obligated by the State of Vermont's September 30, 2024, ARPA SLFRF obligation deadline.

Broadband Preconstruction Grant	Grantee	Obligation
02240-FY21-ACT71PREC-07	NEKCV	\$8,023,915
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-01	Maple Broadband	\$4,983,367
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-02	NEKCV (CVFiber)	\$8,804,667
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-03	DVFiber	\$5,220,118
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-04	Northwest Fiberworx	\$3,558,933
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-05	ECFiber	\$2,841,130
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-06	Lamoille FiberNet	\$2,991,536
02240-FY22-ACT71PREC-08	Otter Creek	\$1,701,936
02240-FY23-ACT71PREC-09	Chittenden County CUD	\$300,000
02240-FY25-ACT71PREC-10	Southern Vermont CUD	\$220,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$38,645,602</b>



## Broadband Construction Grant Program

The Broadband Construction Grant Program finances the broadband projects of eligible providers that are part of a universal service plan.

Broadband Construction Grant	Grantee	Obligation
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-01	NEKCV	\$39,634,088.00
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-03	NEKCV (CVFiber)	\$15,063,118.00
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-04	DVFiber	\$22,175,666.00
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-05	Maple Broadband	\$11,258,386.00
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-06	Southern Vermont CUD	\$9,002,448.85
02240-FY22-ACT71CONST-13	NEKCV	\$4,339,687
02240-FY24-ACT71CONST-02	ECFiber	\$13,878,764.00
02240-FY24-ACT71CONST-07	WCVT	\$9,194,256
02240-FY24-ACT71CONST-08	WCVT	\$9,000,000
02240-FY24-ACT71CONST-09	Otter Creek	\$8,564,566
02240-FY24-ACT71CONST-10	Lamoille FiberNet	\$13,814,536
02240-FY25-ACT71CONST-11	Northwest Fiberworx	\$20,191,480
02240-FY25-ACT71CONST-12	Chittenden County CUD	\$2,100,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$178,216,996</b>

## Affordable Long Drop Program

The Affordable Long Drop Program (ALDP) provides grants to eligible providers to cover connection costs for long or nonstandard drops, including underground installations. Grantees will prioritize funding for manufactured home communities, low- and moderate-income Vermonters, and customers at eligible addresses who have signed up and committed to service. ALDP grants are funded through VCBB's \$95 million ARPA Capital Projects Fund appropriation.



On October 13, 2025, VCBB approved five Affordable Long Drop Program awards. The Board will consider an additional award to Franklin Telephone Company at the December 2025 Board meeting.

ALDP Grantee	Awarded
NEKCV	\$2,186,293
DVFiber	\$952,729
Maple Broadband	\$1,122.232
ECFiber	\$3,000,000
WCVT	\$603,627
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,743,771</b>

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## Contracts/Agreements Entered into by the Board

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### CTC Technology & Energy: Fiber Optic Engineer Services

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 – 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 - \$62,927.50
  - FY2026 to date - 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$65,575.00
  - Calendar year 2025 (invoiced) – 01.01.2024 to 12.31.2024 = \$40,900.00
- **Purpose:** CTC Energy and Technology was the supplier selected in 2022 to review and evaluate [Act 71](#) Construction Grant Applications including applicants' business plans, USPs, reports, drawings, and calculations. CTC provides expert advice to the VCBB Board that identifies key questions to ask applicants,



confirms compliance with [Outside Plant Design Standards](#) and best practices for resilient and redundant networks, and provides recommendations for improvement. This supplier provides resources to support the application process, monitoring, and reporting to ensure accountability and efficient technical assistance to grantees pursuing the phased approach plans outlined in the [Act 71](#) Broadband Construction Grant Program Request for Proposal (RFP). This contract and the review and suggestions provided ensure the effective use of existing state assets and compliance with [Outside Plant Design Standards](#) set by the VCBB, among other goals established by [Act 71](#). The supplier also examines plans collectively to ensure the resulting statewide network follows good design practices and provides an assessment of notable issues and/or concerns to the Board.

## de Villiers, Eleanor: Operations Expert Management Consultant Services for CUDs

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 – 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 - \$0.00
  - FY2026 to date - 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$0.00
  - Calendar year 2025 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$0.00
- **Purpose:** Ms. de Villiers provides consultant services to the CUDs on behalf of VCBB including but not limited to guidance and optimization in all procurement events, in-depth analysis of operating agreements, evaluation of the viability of business plans, compliance monitoring of state and federal requirements and providing an effective plan identifying deficiencies and remedies.

## Garnet Government Relations, LLC: Governmental Affairs Consultant

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$15,000.00
  - FY2026 to date – 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$1,562.50
  - Calendar year 2025 (invoiced) – 01.01.2024 to 12.31.2024 = \$1,562.50



- **Purpose:** The consultant provides expert governmental affairs services to the VCBB, including intensive liaison services with State Representatives and their support staff.

## Luck Grove Telecom Inc.: Fiber Inspection Services

### *Luck Grove Telecom Inc:* Fiber Inspection Services

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 – 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 - \$270,351.00
  - FY2026 to date - 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$30,226.00
  - Calendar year 2025 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$30,226.00
- **Purpose:** Contractor completes field inspections of certain fiber optic installations (Fiber Optic Sites) to assess whether the fiber optic infrastructure (Infrastructure) has been built in accordance with the VCBB's [Outside Plant Design Standards](#) and other specified VCBB requirements.

## Lucy Rogers: Subject Matter Expert

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$23,074.00
  - FY2026 to date – 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$5,062.50
  - Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$2,363.00
- **Purpose:** Subject Matter Expert for Subrecipient Guidance to provide workshop sessions to potential subrecipients in the BEAD application process helping eligible subrecipients understand the technical and operational details of the VCBB funding opportunities.

## North Country Career Center: Broadband Technician Apprenticeship Program

- **Amount Spent:**



- FY2025 – 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 - \$48,825.00
- FY2026 to date - 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$39,150.00
- Calendar year 2025 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$39,150.00

**Purpose:** The contract is to support VCBB's workforce development goal to train broadband technicians throughout the state. To successfully deploy broadband infrastructure, it is essential that Vermont has a workforce which includes fiber optic technicians with the skills required to install, maintain, and operate the network

## Quantified Ventures: Creative financing services to support Vermont's CUDs

– This contract was terminated for convenience as of October 30, 2025.

- **Amount Spent:**

- FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$71,306.15
- FY2026 to date – 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$1,786.75
- Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$1,786.75

- **Purpose:** The Quantified Ventures Contract involves the identification and analysis of local, state, national, and international creative financing solution opportunities available to interested CUDs and the VCBB to facilitate the construction of broadband infrastructure; the provision of affordable service to low-income Vermonters, and to promote Digital Equity; and to leverage broadband networks in support of cross sector goals, including but not limited to, sustainable agriculture, telehealth, energy, and climate change. The contract also provides for ongoing strategic support to the CUDs and the VCBB in response to both time-sensitive opportunities and developing a long-term funding base in conjunction with any state and federal requirements if applicable.

## RISI: Digital Equity Research and Data Analyst to the VCBB in support of its Digital Equity Program

- This contract was terminated for convenience as of October 30, 2025.

- **Amount Spent:**

- FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$85,844.78



- FY2026 to date – 07.01.22025 to 06.30.2026 = \$2,731.60
- Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$2,731.60
- **Purpose:** This contract was to support VCBB’s successful implementation of the Digital Equity Plan. The Analyst was to assist the Digital Equity Officer in establishing a long-term research agenda, measurable objectives, and sustainable digital inclusion efforts across the state with respect to the covered populations.

## RSM US LLP: BEAD support services

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2024 = \$422,701.00
  - FY2026 to date – 07.01.22025 to 06.30.2026 = \$656,200.00
  - Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$656,200.00
- **Purpose:** Assist the VCBB in the development and implementation of the BEAD Program. The supplier provides strategic program development services, research and data analysis, training, and resource support, and writing services to support the Subgrantee Selection Process (SSR) and administer the program.

## Stone Environmental: GIS Services

### Amount Spent:

FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$439,136.60 (previous contracts now expired)

FY2026 to date – 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = Stone has 2 separate contracts at a combined maximum value of \$700,000.00

Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$307,241.49

**Purpose:** A continuation to update Vermont’s Broadband Maps and develop the necessary interactive GIS web applications to provide ongoing information status and capability to track progress updates for [Act 71](#) funding programs. The scope of work was amended to prepare and submit modifications to reflect data that is not present in the National Broadband Map by working with state leaders to refine methodology for aligning Vermont’s Broadband Map and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) location fabric to ensure all E-911 addresses are accurately included. Additionally, Stone prepares data for Vermont’s BEAD initial proposal eligible location classifications, including data compilation and aggregation to identify unserved locations, underserved locations, and Eligible Community Anchor Institutions (CAI)





using the most recently published National Broadband Map and developing the methodology, processing, and analysis of broadband service eligibility data to assist with Vermont's BEADs initiative, creating portals as required.

## Well Told Films – Production and editing of high-quality videos - This contract is now expired.

- **Amount Spent:**
  - FY2025 - 07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025 = \$12,500.00
  - FY2026 to date – 07.01.2025 to 06.30.2026 = \$0.00
  - Calendar year 2026 (invoiced) – 01.01.2025 to 12.31.2025 = \$0.00
- **Purpose:** This contract is to shoot, produce, and edit high-quality videos for outreach and marketing purposes. This included working with VCBB staff on pre-production to develop the creative concept and script, shooting interviews and B-roll at various locations across the state, and producing and editing into a final 30- minute documentary and a shorter form outreach video. The contract also includes shooting, producing, and editing a shorter video for marketing for the Workforce Development Plan Apprenticeship Program, which included shooting at locations where the job training program is taking place.

## Vermont Communications Union District (CUD) Update

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### Chittenden County CUD

The Chittenden County Communications Union District (CCCUD) includes Essex, Essex Junction, Jericho, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Westford, and Williston. In 2025, the CCCUD finalized a contract to partner with Consolidated Communications (CCI) to form a public/private partnership to provide broadband service to all the unserved and underserved locations in the eight-municipality district (~500+ locations).



Phase 1 of the project, funded with \$2.1M in Construction Grant funds from the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB), is complete. Phase 1 of the project brought symmetrical, multi-gig speed internet access to the unserved and underserved locations in Shelburne, Essex, Westford, and Williston.

Phase 2 will be funded with an additional grant award to Comcast from the Federal BEAD program and will include Jericho and Underhill.

## DVFiber

DVFiber undertook a number of critically important steps throughout 2025 that will significantly contribute to the long-term financial sustainability of this Communications Union District (CUD). Planned construction was completed in 2025, all 22 FSAs are lit and serving customers. In June we recognized that if we did not change course, we would complete planned construction and leave money on the table. So instead, after coordinating with the VCBB, DVFiber developed plans to continue construction well into 2026, serving new customers and generating additional unrestricted subscriber revenue. DVFiber is currently building network in west Brattleboro, Dummerston, Newfane, Marlboro, and Guilford using the unspent remaining H.360 grant funds.

Countless hours were spent in 2025 on developing a proper BEAD application. Initially submitted in April, the BEAD program was revised in June with all previous submissions set aside in order to undertake the Benefit of the Bargain round. DVFiber was identified by the VCBB as a preliminary potential awardee for FPA053, Wilmington and Searsburg. At the time of this submission, Vermont's BEAD proposal has yet to be accepted by the NTIA.

DVFiber's efforts to reach all un/underserved e911 locations with symmetrical 100 Mb service made great strides in 2025. As of the end of October, DVFiber had 1258 active customers, having started the year with only 824. This growth in our customer base not only helps us to achieve our universal service mission, but it increased our critically important unrestricted revenue from internet and VOIP subscriptions by 50% (at the end of October).

## ECFiber

ECFiber, unlike the other 9 CUDs, is not a "start up" -- it has been a going concern since 2011. In fact, ECFiber drafted 30 VSA 82 in 2014 in order to simplify its access to the municipal revenue bond market. ECFiber became a CUD in mid-2015, during its 4th year of operations, and issued its first bond series in 2016. ECFiber has never been dependent upon public funding at any time in its history. Because ECFiber has already



built or is in the process of building all un/underserved locations on the grid in its member towns, it did not seek BEAD funding. Every location it passes can get service ten times faster than the 100mbps minimum.

During the past year ECFiber added about 900 new customers and now serves nearly 10,500 premises in 29 of its 31 member towns via 1,900 miles of fiber-optic cable. Taken together, there are about 31,500 serviceable premises in the district located on almost 2,000 miles of roads.

The main goal of the ECFiber today is to reach 14,000 customers by the end of 2027. ECFiber will soon complete the remaining requirements of its \$13.8 million ARPA-based construction grant to reach un/underserved locations in the 8 towns admitted to the District in 2020. ECFiber has already been reimbursed by the grant for the work done to reach eligible locations in Fairlee, Bradford, and Newbury. ECFiber is in the final stages of construction in Topsham, Corinth, Washington and the northwest corner of Windsor.

## Lamoille Fibernet CUD

In 2025, Lamoille FiberNet CUD (“LFCUD”) successfully completed its Act 71 Universal Service Plan on time and under budget. Leveraging LFCUD’s Construction Grant, Fidium constructed approximately 25 miles reaching the remaining 187 unserved and underserved addresses in Elmore, Hyde Park, Morrisville, Stowe, and Wolcott. Cumulative mileage, funded in whole or in part by VCBB grants, is 353 miles. Fidium self-funded additional miles. The 2-year project reached 4650 unserved and underserved addresses for a total of 8652 passings.

Also in 2025, Fidium expanded its standard drop from 500’ to 2,000’; this significantly reduced the need for LFCUD or consumers to pay for long drops. LFCUD’s Long Drop Program (“LDP”) which connected more than 110 addresses, was also under budget. As a result of construction and LDP savings, LFCUD is amending its Construction Grant to reflect a \$1.2M deobligation. LFCUD does not anticipate applying for additional federal funds and will work to timely complete remaining long drops then close out its grants in 2026.

LFCUD continued to collaborate with other CUDs in 2025. LFCUD and NEKCV agreed to leverage LFCUD’s Fidium partnership to accelerate the completion of NEKCV’s Wolcott territory in 2026. LFCUD also resumed planning with Otter Creek and Southern VT CUDs to align and consolidate certain administrative and compliance tasks as part of the trio’s, long- term Sustainability Plan.



## Maple Broadband

### Progress Information for Legislative Report

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#### A description of the progress each start-up communications union district has made in achieving financial sustainability that is not dependent upon public funding

Maple Broadband's subscriber count is nearing 650 across nearly 250 miles of active service, and annual revenues for 2025 are projected to exceed \$700,000. The district expects to come close to achieving operational break-even in 2025, and the 2026 budget anticipates a comfortable operating surplus – meaning that our operating revenues are planned to exceed our operating expenses. Disconnection and churn rates are very low. Currently the district does not plan to incur interest-bearing debt. Unless the take rate decreases or operating costs exceed plans, Maple Broadband will be financially sustainable from 2026, although this may change should the district decide to incur interest-bearing debt.

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#### An update on its efforts to secure additional federal funds for broadband deployment

Maple Broadband participated in two rounds of bidding for funding under the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, and was declared the provisional winner for our project area with an award amount of \$9.27M. This grant award is currently pending NTIA approval of the VT-BEAD Final Proposal.

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#### Progress made towards meeting the State's goal of ensuring every E-911 location has access to broadband capable of delivering a minimum of 100 Mbps symmetrical service as required in subdivision 202c(B)(10) of this title

Maple Broadband is currently positioned to offer fiber-optic broadband service to 3,615 E-911 locations, of which 1,780 were unserved or underserved in 2022 when we received our grant award.



## Affordability Update

### Retail Service Rates and Access

***As part of grantee’s sustainable business plan, data that describes: a) rate tiers offered by grantee to consumers, and the 12-month take rate for each tier, including, as applicable, grantee’s compliance with the specific affordability requirements of the low-cost option and middle-class affordability plan of VT-BEAD grants***

Maple Broadband’s current rate/speed tiers, and current take rates are specified below:

Product Description	Recurring Charge	Take Rate
Amber Lite - 50/50Mbps	\$69.95/month	31.7%
Amber Medium – 100/100Mbps	\$89.95/month	43.3%
Amber Bold – 1Gbps/1Gbps	\$119.95/month	25.1%

***(b) the number of customers that received subsidized service (if any) during the reporting year, by subsidy program, and the number of customers in each program that terminated service during the reporting year;***

Two Maple Broadband customers received subsidized service this year in an amount of \$30/month. Both customers were previously recipients of the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). When the ACP lapsed in 2024, Maple Broadband continued providing the \$30/month subsidy to those two households and this has continued in the current reporting year.

No customers receiving subsidies terminated during the reporting year.

***(c) the fee charged by grantee to grantee customers for standard installation costs during the reporting period and the operating practices for installation;***

Maple Broadband’s standard non-recurring installation charge is \$149.95.



Customers with drops longer than 400 feet are charged a fee of \$1.75/foot, and customers with buried service are required to provide a usable conduit.

Maple Broadband applied under the VCBB's Affordable Long Drop Program and received provisional approval in October, which will enable us to subsize drop costs for qualifying households and other households prioritized under the program. The district is ready to launch the program shortly after receiving a grant agreement and ensuring that our policies and implementation are in alignment with the terms and conditions of the grant program.

***(d) policies and practices implemented by grantees to: retain customers whose payments are in arrears; expand access to and affordability of broadband service on the funded network; and participate (directly or through grantee's network operator) in programs that reduce the cost of broadband in the grantee's service area.***

Maple Broadband allows our customers to adopt a payment plan and makes multiple attempts to contact customers whose accounts have fallen into arrears to arrange the plan.

In October, Maple Broadband's Executive Committee voted to launch an affordability program modeled on the ACP to qualifying households, and on November 24<sup>th</sup> executed an agreement with CVOEO to perform verifications of the eligibility of households. This program, called the LEAF subsidy (Local Equitable Access Fund) will be launched concurrently with the Affordable Long Drop program launch.

Maple Broadband would be an active participant in any future federal or state affordability programs.

## NEKCV CUD

Since the merger in August 2024, NEKCV, dba NEK Broadband and CVFiber, has advanced toward long-term financial sustainability by enlarging its customer base to just under 2,000 customers and offering retail fiber plans (including 100/100 Mbps service up to 2Gig/2Gig and home telephone service), and reinvesting subscription revenues into infrastructure, per the Communications Union Districts (CUD) mission. NEKCV has successfully secured federal capital awards (USDA ReConnect and Community Connect grants) and has obtained VCBB construction and match grants intended to leverage BEAD and other federal funding, while issuing RFPs to lower build costs and prepare competitive BEAD applications. Taken together, these steps reduce dependence on ongoing public operating subsidies and accelerate deployment of fiber capable of delivering the State's required 100 Mbps symmetrical service to E-911 locations.



# Progress toward long-term financial sustainability (less dependent on public funding)

- **Grown scale and revenue base via merger and customer subscriptions.** NEK Community Broadband merged with CVFiber in August 2024 to form a larger 71-municipality CUD, increasing economies of scale for construction, operations, and customer acquisition — an important step toward producing operating revenue that can support network costs. In June 2025 the town of Montgomery voted to join the NEKCV Communications Union District (CUD), increasing the towns in the district to 72. This will help expedite deployment of high-speed internet services in another underserved and unserved area.
- **Active retail service offerings producing subscription revenue.** NEKCV is marketing tiered fiber plans (including a 100/100 symmetric plan at market rates and a 1Gig/1Gig symmetric plan based on the FCC Urban Rate), generating recurring operating revenue from customers just under \$2 million dollars in 2025, that reduces reliance on grants for day-to-day operations. These subscription revenues are explicitly intended to flow back into infrastructure, maintenance, and affordability programs. Also included in our service offerings is home telephone service.

Income Discount	Standard Fiber	Premium	Professional	Ultra
100/100 Mbps	100/100 Mbps	500/500 Mbps	1 Gig/1 Gig	2 Gig/2 Gig
\$49	\$79.00	\$103.00	\$119.00	\$249.00
\$99 Standard Installation Fee (one-time)	Residential Phone  (bundled with internet)	Commercial Phone  (bundled with internet)	Battery Back-Up  \$100/one-time	Battery Back-Up Service Plan  \$10/month
\$55.00/month Phone (stand alone)	\$29.00/month Home Phone (bundled) plus taxes	\$35.00/month Business Phone (bundled) plus taxes	Static IP Addresses  \$20/month	WiFi Extenders  \$99/one-time





## Northwest Fiberworx

### Introduction

Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 3075, the Northwest Vermont Communications Union District (NWCUD) is pleased to present its annual report and budget for your review. The NWCUD was officially formed on August 3, 2020. The NWCUD is a municipal body consisting of representatives from Northwest Vermont municipalities for the purposes of building communication infrastructure. As of October 14, 2025, the NWCUD represents 22 Northwest municipalities: Alburgh, Bakersfield, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Fairfield, Franklin, Fairfax, Georgia, Grand Isle, Highgate, Isle la Motte, Milton, Montgomery, North Hero, Richford, Saint Albans Town, Sheldon, South Hero, Swanton, Village of Alburgh, Village of Enosburg Falls, and Village of Swanton.

	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Projected Actuals	FY2026 Budget
TOTAL REVENUES	\$26,196,191	\$12,559,170	\$9,852,498
Total Cash Receipts	\$26,196,191	\$12,559,170	\$9,852,498
* Subtotal Capital	\$8,739,616	\$12,142,080	\$8,209,213
Subtotal Operational	\$202,319	\$149,521	\$642,640
Subtotal Staff	\$327,800	\$267,418	\$253,979
Subtotal Technology	\$8,000	\$150	\$500
Totals			
TOTAL CAPEX	\$8,739,616	\$12,142,080	\$8,229,213
TOTAL OPEX	\$538,119	\$417,090	\$897,119
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$9,277,735	\$12,559,170	\$9,001,695
Deferred Revenues	\$16,918,456	\$9,374,973	\$1,145,760
Net Income			

**The mission of the NWCUD, as adopted by the Board of Representatives, is:**

"Leverage partnerships and procure funding to connect Northwestern Vermont via fiber to ensure opportunity for all homes and businesses in our region." Activities of Northwest Fiberworx

### Make Ready

To date make-ready has been successful with the completion of eight licenses with Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC).

This milestone represents meaningful progress on the current project and reinforces our commitment to execution and excellence. Our collaboration with VEC highlights a shared dedication to efficient project delivery and robust utility partnerships





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## Construction RFP

This year, we successfully issued and awarded a Request for Proposals (RFP) for construction services, marking a key milestone in advancing infrastructure development and expanding project capabilities.

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## Breaking Ground at Last

After years of planning and persistence, we began construction in October 2025 — cue the confetti, hard hats, and high-speed dreams!

## Otter Creek CUD

### 2025 Annual Summary Report and 2026 Budget

In late 2024 and early 2025, Otter Creek Communications Union District (“Otter Creek CUD,” “OCCUD,” “the District”), along with our partners, completed the build-out of the fiber-optic network, making high-speed broadband accessible to our constituents in the Rutland County region. Ok

Since then, 2025 has been a year of issuing Otter Creek Communications Union District’s final project reports, reviewing our partners’ quarterly performance reports, and closing out our construction grant. Our operations have dramatically reduced as have our expenses.

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## Final Construction

The OCCUD’s previous annual report was issued in November 2024. At that time the construction of the fiber broadband network in the Consolidated Communications, Inc. (CCI) areas was complete. The construction of the fiber broadband network in the Go Netspeed area was completed in early spring 2025.

In April 2025, CCI submitted its final invoice, bringing the total construction grant expenditures to \$5,574,154.90, which was \$ 2,990,411.10 under budget. OCCUD was



then able to return this amount back to the VCBB to continue their efforts for universal service in other areas of Vermont.

The network buildout completed by Consolidated Communications, Inc. under the construction grant is 208.43 miles and ~3,626 addresses passed including ~1,278 unserved addresses.

The network buildout completed by GoNetspeed is 128 Miles and ~2,040 addresses passed, including ~1,300 unserved addresses under their own EACAM funding. Otter Creek Communications Unified District 2025 Annual Summary Report

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## Grant Close-out and Obligations

Near the end of June 2025, OCCUD officially requested that our construction grant be closed. The Chair presented a close-out project review to the Vermont Community Broadband Board on August 11 and it was received with praise and congratulations. (OCCUD then became the second of the now nine CUDs in the state which have completed their build-out). VCBB is currently in process of administering Otter Creek CUD's grant closure.

Now that the construction is completed and all constituents/addresses in our district towns have access to high-speed broadband, OCCUD is obligated to fulfill the terms of our grant approvals and those of our contract with CCI as well as the agreement with Go Netspeed. Thus, the quarterly performance reports from each provider are reviewed by OCCUD officers and results are reported to the OCCUD Governing Board at the quarterly meetings.

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## Operations in 2025

- We continued our relationship with our contracted consultant, Vantage Point Solutions, who manages and provides our grant reporting, our grant submissions for financial reimbursement and other assignments.
- We hired and worked with a CPA to complete our federal single audit of 2024. The audit was successfully completed and submitted to Treasury on August 18, 2025.
- With the revised open meeting laws requiring a physical location for board meetings as well as our desire to transfer treasurer duties we approached the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) for these services and in June, Otter Creek and Rutland Regional Planning Commission executed a memorandum of agreement for services related to management of governing board meeting locations and the remote platform, as well as treasurer duties.



- As the Board tasks have dramatically decreased post construction, we have chosen to meet only quarterly in 2025. We voted on the new schedule at the January 2025 Governing Board meeting. The 2025 Governing Board meeting dates were scheduled for: Jan, Mar, May (Annual Organizational Mtg), Aug, Nov, and in early 2026 for: Feb and May (Annual Organizational Mtg).

Officers and Executive Committee members elected at the 2025 Annual Organizational Meeting were: Chair, Laura Black (Shrewsbury)

Vice-chair, Larry Courcelle (Mendon)

Clerk, Laura Black

Executive Committee members – Chair Black, Vice-chair Courcelle, Steve Murray (Benson), Mike Small (Sudbury), Peter Werner (Brandon), Chris Custer (Hubbardton), Leslie Cadwell (Castleton).

- The Treasurer was appointed by the Executive Committee- Anna-Maria Barucco (Finance Assistant at RRPC). Notably, our volunteer treasurer, Jackie Savela, was relieved of her volunteer duties as of July 1st and we are immensely thankful to her steadfast and careful management of our financials over the past many years.
- As not every town in the district desired to remain a member of the CUD and obligate a representative to the Board, four towns withdrew membership (per statute guidelines). These towns remain district non-member towns and though they have no voting rights on the OCCUD Governing Board, they do have the ability to request to rejoin the CUD at any time. OCCUD considers the constituents of those non-member towns to have the same opportunity to contact OCCUD with requests for information as well as assistance in communicating and negotiating with OCCUD's service providers.
- Currently, District member towns are – Benson, Brandon, Castleton, Fair Haven, Goshen, Hubbardton, Mendon, Pawlet, Pittsford, Poultney, Rutland City, Shrewsbury, Sudbury, and West Haven. District non-member towns are- Chittenden, Rutland Town, Wells, West Rutland.
- The Otter Creek officers meet regularly with Consolidated Communications, Inc., and with Go Netspeed, to review performance metrics per contract and agreement. We are also in contact regularly to sort out miscellaneous constituents' construction and/or service issues.
- Otter Creek officers join VCUDA Board meetings to review and discuss current district issues, and state and national legislative issues. Chair Black is currently serving as the vice chair of VCUDA. The Chair and Vice-chair report both the VCUDA and VCBB activities to the Executive Committee and to the Governing Board quarterly meetings.



- A Sustainability Planning group, including members of Otter Creek CUD, Lamoille Fibernet CUD, and Southern Vermont CUD has recently begun to meet on a weekly basis.

## Otter Creek Communications Unified District 2025 Annual Summary Report

### **Sustainability Planning**

Otter Creek CUD officers and members have been meeting with Lamoille and Southern Vermont CUDs to start planning for upcoming years of our operations.

- Note that in 2024 a 10-year sustainability plan was developed and presented to the VCBB which included funding for our operations. This plan was a condition of VCBB's approval of our construction grant.
- Sustainability Planning for future years of operating: The CUD's executive officers have begun to meet with our fellow colleagues from Lamoille Fibernet CUD and Southern Vermont CUD to develop a structure to meet our needs in future years. We have drafted and signed an Interlocal Agreement defining our intentions to work together to find lowest costs of operations, and shared services where practical.

### **2026 Budget:**

- Otter Creek CUD's budget for year 2026 includes our operational costs, cost for our contractor (Vantage Point Solutions) who manages the required reporting and financial submittals to the VCBB, costs for an audit of 2025, treasurer and accounting services, and legal services related to our sustainability plan. Other costs include VCUDA dues. We included a 20% contingency.
- The budget numbers are based primarily on actual costs for services received in 2024.

### **Otter Creek Communications Union District 2026 Budget**

Operational Expenses (RRPC, Google Workspace accounts, website host & maintenance, bank fees, )	\$6,000
DNO and Business insurance	\$2,000
Contracted Project Management (Reporting, Managing grants)	\$8,000
Legal Services	\$20,000



Audit	\$15,000
Accounting – Bookkeeper and Treasurer	\$10,500
Association Fees/Membership	\$15,000
Events & Conferences	\$2,000
Contingency (20%)	\$15,700
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$94,200</b>

## Southern Vermont CUD

The Southern Vermont Communications Union District (SoVT CUD) has been able to ensure efficient use of financial resources throughout the length of its operating agreement with Fidium (formerly CCI). SoVT CUD secured \$220,000 from its remaining pre-construction grant funding to cover operational expenses through 2026. Through the joint sustainability plan with the Otter Creek and Lamoille Valley CUDs, the three CUDs executed an agreement with CCI to fund administration and compliance from 2027 to 2034.

SoVT CUD completed its buildout with Fidium in November 2023, and its construction grant closeout was approved by the VCBB in 2024. SoVT CUD does not see the need to request additional federal construction funds at this time.

We understand that funding supplied through the BEAD program will be used to provide service options to the last 17 high-cost E-911 addresses in the district that are currently served by providers in New York and Massachusetts.