

Broadband in the Town of Kinnickinnic

On Thursday, June 23 the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) announced its latest round of broadband grant winners which included three projects submitted by Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS) [1]. For the broadband project in the Town of Kinnickinnic, PPCS was awarded \$2.27 million of the \$125 million authorized by the PSC. In addition to the PSC grant and PPCS's investment, this project is funded with a \$500,000 grant from St. Croix County and \$200,000 from the Town of Kinnickinnic. In their public comments, the PSC noted the impact of public-private partnerships. "The public support we received from the towns and St. Croix County is an important part of getting universal broadband coverage across our communities," stated Nate Boettcher, PPCS president and CEO.

"This was a team effort", said Axel Bogdan, town supervisor and chair of the Kinnickinnic Broadband Committee. "I want to thank all residents who participated in our online survey last fall, PPCS for a successful grant proposal, and the members of the Kinnickinnic Broadband Committee for pulling things together".

The project is expected to begin construction next year with planning and initial make-ready work to begin later in 2022. PPCS have already begun the initial construction in the Town of Kinnickinnic this year, expanding their coverage area from the south (Town of River Falls). You may have seen work crews along the roads, burying orange plastic tubes that house the fiber optic cables.



Fig. 1: Burying fiber (Courtesy of PPCS)

The map below is included as a reference. The red line is the build that is going on currently; it is funded by a previous grant and separate from, yet related to, this project. As the ongoing project

progresses, the project timeline for expanding further into the town (blue line) will be developed. Over the next several months, the planning process will be advanced so that things are ready to go once the frost comes out of the ground in spring of 2023.

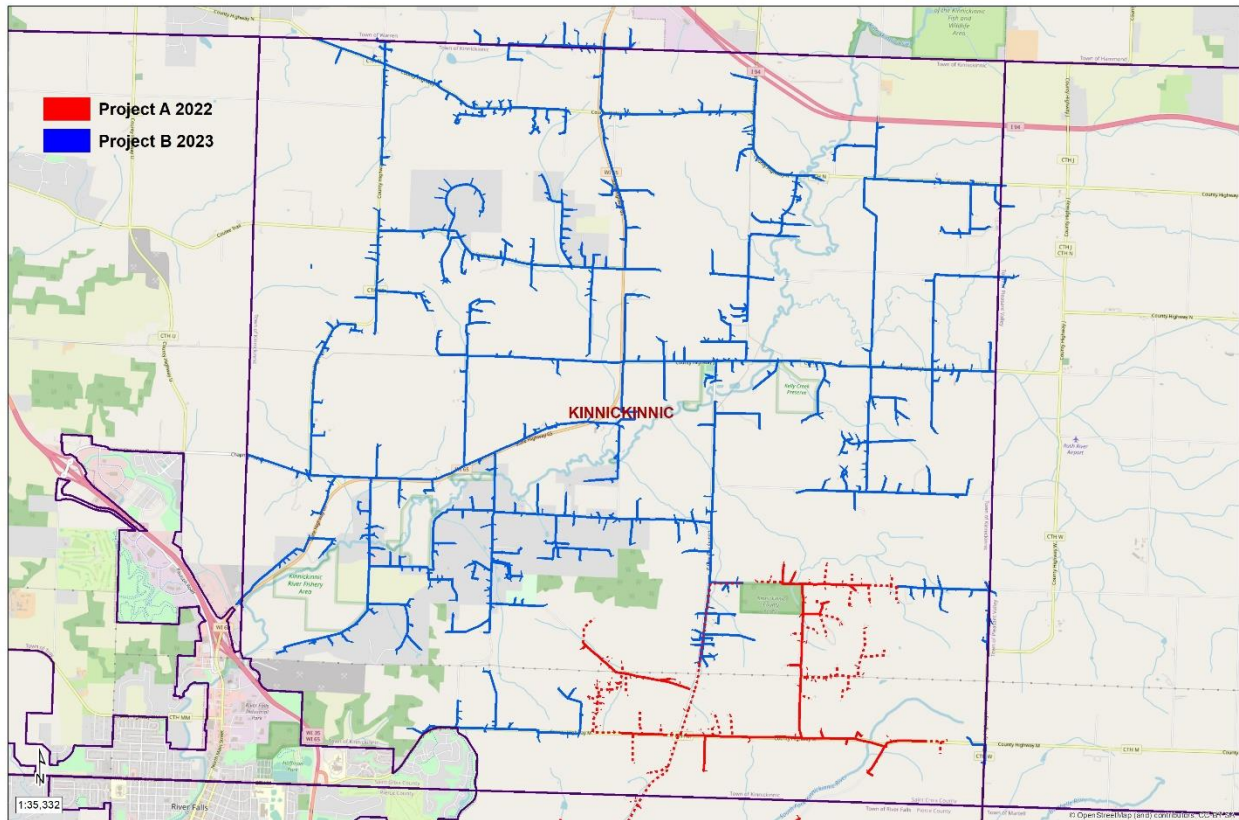


Fig. 2: Overview - Broadband Map Town of Kinnickinnic (Courtesy of PPCS)

“The PSC has demonstrated its commitment to helping community-owned organizations like PPCS build fiber to serve their friends, families, and neighbors. We are thankful to be good stewards of these funds and to ensure that we offer up to gigabit symmetrical service at an affordable price,” Boettcher said.

A town hall meeting is planned for this fall to go over this project in more detail and keep residents informed. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the town (kinniclerk@icloud.com) or Liz Gunderson at PPCS (lgunderson@piercepepin.coop).

About Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services and SwiftCurrent Connect

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services is an electric cooperative located in Ellsworth, Wisconsin, offering electric utility services to homes and businesses. As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative,

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services is committed to excellence, innovation, and integrity, and is dedicated to helping its communities live better. SwiftCurrent Connect is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services bringing high-speed, fiber-optic broadband internet to residents of western Wisconsin. For more information, call 800-924-2133 or visit www.piercepepin.coop and www.swiftcurrent.coop.

[1] The full announcement provided by the PSC can be found at the following link:
https://apps.psc.wi.gov/APPS/NewsReleases/content/PDF_download.aspx?id=728