



**CARVER  
COUNTY**

*minnesota*

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## **CARVER COUNTY BREAKS GROUND ON “CONNECT UP CARVER” PROJECT**

COLOGNE, MINN.--When the COVID-19 pandemic showed both the importance of high-speed internet and some community's lack of such access, Carver County's Board of Commissioners and staff recognized an opportunity. That opportunity turned into a reality when Commissioners and staff, along with local, State and Federal leaders, broke ground on an exciting project that helps rural County residents and businesses overcome the access hurdle.

The August 9 gathering, held at Zion Lutheran School in rural Cologne, officially launched the County's "Connect Up Carver" initiative. The project leverages the County's CarverLink broadband fiber optic network to bring high-speed internet access to more than 2,000 locations, both residences and businesses, primarily in rural areas of western Carver County. The program targets locations identified as either underserved or unserved for fiber internet access. Zion Lutheran School sits within that project area.

The project uses \$6.5 million of the County's Federal stimulus allocation. Metronet provides the actual service and partners with the County on the project, investing \$4 million. The project's anticipated completion date is December 2024.

"I'd like to thank our Board of Commissioners for supporting this project and realizing the positive impact on our residents and businesses," Commissioner Gayle Degler said during the ceremony. Degler represents District One and serves the chair of the Board. "Because of the pandemic, we realize how important this type of access is for everyone."

Tom Marcsisak, a teacher and administrator with the school, talked about the need for better high-speed internet access. "We would try to access an online learning modules during Spanish, and once each student got online, the speeds slowed so much we were unable to continue," he said. Once the Connect Up Carver service through Metronet arrives, these problems will no longer occur. The school, he shared, pulls in students from across the County.

"To bring high-speed internet access to places like Zion Lutheran School here, as well as underserved and unserved residents of our County, is sometimes the difference between being able to work, support a school curriculum, or reach your customers," Commissioner John P. Fahey said. Zion Lutheran School sits in his District, the fifth. "That's why we are so excited about this project, giving Minnesota's fastest growing county more space to grow and providing our residents options on where to live, attend school and start businesses within our great County."

**More...**

## **Carver County Breaks Ground on “Connect Up Carver” Project, two of two**

“This partnership spans the gap between public and private and urban and rural,” Rep. Dean Phillips, who represents Minnesota’s Third Congressional District, said. “I’m on a mission to bring more of our hard-earned tax dollars back to our state, and in doing so, give more Minnesotans the freedom to live and start businesses wherever they choose. Connected communities thrive, and these investments will yield immense returns.”

The program features a partnership between the County and Metronet, which provides the actual service. Rose Mulvany-Henry, Metronet’s Vice President for Regulatory Affairs, noted how the relationship between her company and the County provides an example for other government entities. “This project shows others in Minnesota and across the country what can happen when we come together towards a common goal for the betterment of our residents,” she said.

You can learn more about the initiative, as well as view interactive maps to see if a specific address lies within the Connect Up Carver zone, at the [CarverLink website](#).

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