

A photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a dark blue sweater, sitting at a white desk. He is holding a pen and looking at a laptop screen. A baby is sitting on his back, looking at the laptop. The desk has a laptop, a pen, and some papers. In the background, there is a white desk with a lamp and some papers.

# Every Community Deserves Amazing Internet

How Advanced Midco® Internet Drives Local Economies and Facilitates Growth

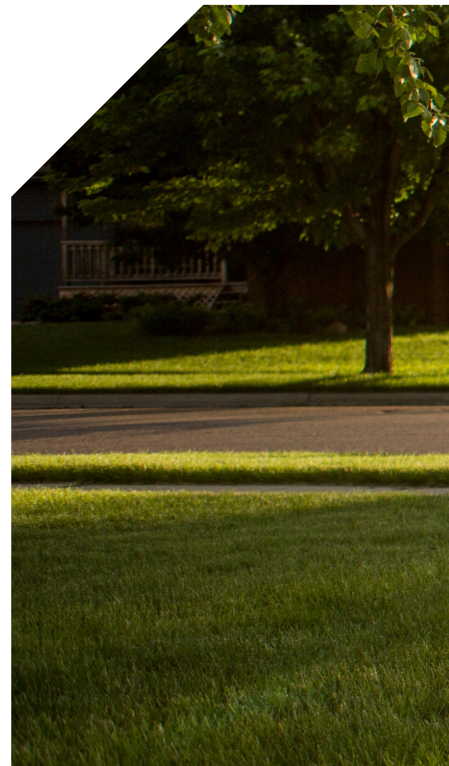
# Midco is committed to helping communities, their businesses and their residents thrive.

**We** strongly believe in strengthening communities with advanced fiber and high-speed internet services. That's why Midco has invested in extending our network to towns large and small throughout our footprint. And there's proof that investment pays off for communities like yours.

## **INTERNET AND THE ECONOMY**

Reliable internet is important for more than entertainment – it empowers economic growth and helps businesses and families thrive. Without fast internet, numerous industries suffer and risk falling behind economically. According to 2016 data from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), this disadvantage is a reality to 39% of U.S. rural residents who don't have access to broadband.<sup>1</sup> Also, a 2014 study found a 1.1% higher per capita GDP in communities with gigabit internet access.<sup>2</sup> As of the first half of 2018, Midco's gigabit internet service is available to over 80% of the homes and businesses passed by the Midco Network, and in 2018 more customers and communities will be gig ready. That includes cities as large as Sioux Falls, Fargo and Lawrence, to smaller towns like Colton, Casselton and Chisago City.

In today's world, reliable internet has become a necessity for households, businesses and communities alike.







“We’re in a global bandwidth race, and we need to ensure the U.S. has a strategic bandwidth advantage. Without it, we risk losing our global lead on innovation, and we risk watching jobs and investments flow elsewhere.”<sup>3</sup>

Julius Genachowski  
FCC Chairman • 2008-2013



# How Midco's Broadband Internet Helps Communities Achieve **Economic Growth**



## **Healthcare**

Midco's internet connectivity is a key component in telemedicine. Rural residents with geographical barriers need access to healthcare anytime and anywhere. MRIs,

ultrasounds, X-rays and other medical images can be shared online with distant specialists. Online consultations also reduce the number of costly patient transfers to other facilities. This saves money and lives.



## **Work from Home**

Midco's reliable internet connectivity is critical for home-based businesses or work-from-home employees.

With high-speed internet, your community can attract and retain residents who prefer to live and raise their families in Midwest communities, but work for a company elsewhere.

With Midco's internet infrastructure, your community is empowered to have work from home arrangements and telecommuters are not only more productive, but they also have higher salaries that increase spending power and keep dollars in your local economy. According to the 2017 State of Telecommuting Study:

- The average telecommuter earns \$4,000 more a year than a non-telecommuter.
- The typical U.S. telecommuter is 45 years old or older, and earns an average salary of \$58,000 while working for a company with more than 100 employees.

- Even though many work-from-home jobs don't require a college degree – telecommuters, on average, have more education than other employees. With Midco's reliable internet, you can reduce the brain drain often associated with rural residents leaving for college and not returning after they complete their education.<sup>4</sup>

Connectivity also gives workers flexibility to work from home when they are on-call, have a service call scheduled at their home or have sick children – improving worker morale and saving time and money.




## **Community**

When local residents have the opportunity to telecommute and stay in your community – they're driving less – reducing their carbon footprint, traffic congestion, and road wear

and tear. According to the 2017 State of Telecommuting Study, the current number of U.S. telecommuters saves \$1.5 billion in energy costs annually – and produces greenhouse gas savings equivalent to taking 600,000 cars off the road for a year.<sup>4</sup>

Smart meters, buildings and grids built with high-speed internet capabilities lead to increased control over energy consumption.

Reliable internet gives law enforcement instant information on warrants and other records, no matter where they're working. Police can also use live video to monitor high-risk situations to protect officers and citizens.



I've been able to telecommute for five years. I can start at 7 am, take quick lunch and work until 5 pm. I can get in 10 hours easily and still have a work-life balance.

**Jeff Singer**  
Scandia, MN • IT Professional  
**MIDCO CUSTOMER**

## HEALTHCARE

Effective Telemedicine & E-Visits

Cost-Saving Medical Imagery Sharing with Specialists

Streamlined Access to Electronic Medical Records

## LOCAL WORKFORCE & RESIDENTS

Greater Workforce Productivity & Flexibility

Reduced Population Loss & Increased Growth

Higher Work-from-Home Salaries

## EDUCATION

Increased Access to Online Learning

More Advanced Coursework

Better Online Enrollment, Grading & Testing

## BUSINESSES

Enhanced New Business Growth

Greater E-Commerce Options

Seamless Branch Connectivity

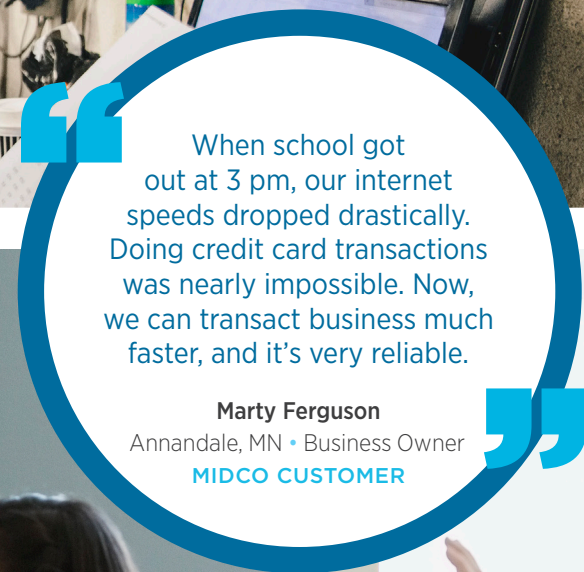
## COMMUNITY

Telecommuting Environmental Savings

Smart Electrical Grids

Better Law Enforcement Data & Access





When school got out at 3 pm, our internet speeds dropped drastically. Doing credit card transactions was nearly impossible. Now, we can transact business much faster, and it's very reliable.

**Marty Ferguson**

Annandale, MN • Business Owner

**MIDCO CUSTOMER**







## Business

Business owners looking to relocate need access to internet to stay connected with clients and maintain business functions.

Fast broadband connections also help businesses connect branch locations – and open new ones. If your community doesn't have the high-speed infrastructure, it could be driving away successful businesses.

Keeping your current local businesses – and keeping them open, efficient and productive – is just as important as attracting new business. Great connectivity is a reason for businesses to stay in your community. A study from the International Technological University found that for every 1% increase in broadband penetration in studied countries, productivity grows by 0.13%.<sup>5</sup>

With high-speed internet in your Midwest community, you can empower local businesses to take advantage of online consumer markets and e-commerce. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, these businesses “can reach customers, find suppliers, and tap talent on the other side the world and also use the internet to provide significant marketing and brand muscle. As a result, small firms can compete like big ones.”<sup>6</sup>



## Education

Students have access to limitless learning resources that schools cannot always provide on their own. In small communities, students have expanded access to learn world languages, take advanced placement courses, and choose from a variety of electives through online learning.

Students can complete online college courses before high school graduation – giving them an advantage. This means they can take lighter course loads and achieve their degree more quickly.

Schools can operate more efficiently with online portals used for enrollment, class registration, grades, testing, events and more. According to the United States Department of Education, 48 states and Washington, D.C., support online learning programs.<sup>7</sup> Students in your community could be taking advantage of these with a fast, reliable connection.

### How important is high-speed broadband?

“On a scale of one to 10, I'd put it at an 8 or 9. It's very important to our teachers trying to access content. There's a lot of online testing and along with that, you can get to the Smithsonian and look at primary artifacts – things that we just couldn't do before.”

Jeff Ward

Sturgis, SD • Meade School District

MIDCO CUSTOMER

## MIDCO COVERAGE

9,100

Midco Network Fiber Miles

385,000+

Customers

342

Communities

5

States:

Kansas, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin

# Midco is Committed to Connecting Businesses, Residents and Communities in the Midwest

## Lifeline Program

Regardless of income, internet connectivity is vital for finding and retaining jobs, achieving educational success and keeping up with finances.

With Midco Lifeline program, qualifying low-income households can take advantage of a federal program providing vital connections to the world via affordable internet and phone service. This service could impact unemployment rates, education and poverty levels in your community.

## Midco Gig

For years, we've offered gigabit speeds and higher – up to 10 Gbps – via direct fiber to business customers. Now available by cable modem, Midco Gig Internet is a cost-effective way for communities, homes and businesses of all sizes to enjoy the benefits of faster speeds and enhanced internet capacity. As of the first half of 2018, 80% of Midco communities will have access to gigabit via modem.

## Network Improvements

We serve and build our network in Midwest towns of all sizes – with recent fiber buildouts including the Fargo, ND, metro area and Littlefork, MN (with just under 700 residents).

Reliable, fiber connectivity is important for network speeds – that's why we build our network with a philosophy to go as deep as possible into the network with fiber. We also actively upgrade and build redundancy and rerouting capabilities into our existing network routes. As a result, Midco has remained one of the top four fastest ISPs in the United States since 2013.

For business connectivity and IT needs, Midco is investing in regional data centers serving key areas and expanding into underserved markets. Our data centers enable businesses to cost effectively house equipment and data – and keep it secure and always accessible on our highly redundant fiber network.

In a rural community with fewer people, it's nice having extra resources to lean on, the internet provides access to that.

Hannah Anderson  
Bemidji, MN • Business Owner  
MIDCO CUSTOMER

1. "2016 Broadband Progress Report," Federal Communications Commission, 2016.

2. "Economic Impact: Fiber speeds = improved economic performance," Fiber Broadband Association, 2014.

3. "Faster, Sooner: Why The U.S. Needs 'Gigabit Communities'," Forbes, 2013

4. "Latest Telecommuting Statistics," GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com, 2017.

5. "3 Ways Fast Broadband Contributes to Economic Growth," Tech.Co, 2016.

6. "The great transformer: The impact of the Internet on economic growth and prosperity," James Manyika, Charles Roxburgh – McKinsey Global Institute, 2011.

7. "Use of Technology in Teaching and Learning," U.S. Department of Education.

