

State News for NSPE Members

Tennessee Has \$813M Broadband Expansion Plan Approved

Tennessee had its plan to spend \$813 million in federal broadband funding approved and will begin the grant process in November, [The Center Square reports](#).

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development submitted the plan for spending Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment funding, which will be used to bring high-speed broadband to areas of Tennessee for businesses and residents by 2028.

“High-speed internet has become an essential part of daily life for all Tennesseans,” Governor Bill Lee said in a press release. “This funding will allow us to make additional strategic investments to expand broadband infrastructure in rural areas and expand opportunity for success in education and the workplace.”

The funding is in addition to \$713 million of federal and state funds spent on broadband in the state during Lee’s time as governor. The state announced \$162.7 million in broadband and digital grants awarded earlier this year.

A Beacon Poll from July showed that reliable high-speed broadband is available at home for 85% of those responding to the poll, with 71% saying that it was very or somewhat affordable and 28% saying it was very or somewhat unaffordable at home. The biggest issue with broadband includes the cost of service for 37% of respondents, speed and reliability for 19%, availability for 10%, customer services for 6% and no issues for 24%. [Read more](#).

UT Leads \$25M Nuclear Technology Consortium

[The University of Tennessee, Knoxville reports](#) that the school is the lead institution for a \$25 million cooperative agreement awarded by the US Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration Office of Defense Nuclear

Nonproliferation to support research that underlies its nuclear security and nonproliferation missions. The Enabling Capabilities in Technology Consortium will receive approximately \$5 million a year for five years. Scheduled to begin in March 2025, it includes funding for 35 graduate and 26 undergraduate researchers each year with the potential to support additional students.

“This new consortium funded by the Department of Energy will lead advances in global security, clean energy and artificial intelligence that are especially critical to our nation and our world at this time,” said Jason Hayward, UCOR Fellow and professor of nuclear engineering at UT and the director of the consortium’s executive team. “In particular, our efforts will help produce the new knowledge and the diverse talented workforce necessary to enable the US and its allies to safely and securely triple nuclear power output throughout the world by 2050 and respond to emerging threats in space.” [Read more.](#)

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#).

Minnesota PE Takes the Lead of NSPE



Brian Malm, P.E., F.NSPE, was installed as the NSPE 2024-2025 President during NSPECon24 in Raleigh, North Carolina on August 8. He has been an active member of NSPE for 25 years and has served in a variety of leadership roles at the chapter, state, and national level.

Malm began his career in 1996 and has spent the majority of that time as a municipal consulting engineer with experience with a variety of infrastructure projects including streets and highways, sanitary sewer, water distribution, stormwater management facilities, and capital improvement planning. He is a principal engineer with Bolton & Menk, Inc., and manages the firm’s office in Rochester, Minnesota, and serves as the consultant city engineer for several cities

in southeast Minnesota.

Malm is a licensed professional engineer in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering at North Dakota State University and a master's degree in infrastructure systems engineering from the University of Minnesota.

Blueprint for Progress: Your Vote Shapes Tomorrow!

Let's make our voices heard! NSPE, the unified voice of professional engineers committed to excellence in engineering, is rallying behind the importance of voting in this election year. As professional engineers, dedicated to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public through your work, you understand the critical role of civic engagement. As stewards of our communities, you play a vital role in shaping our collective future. Whether it's casting your vote in the general election on November 5, your state primary, or participating in your local elections, your active involvement is invaluable. Together, let's exercise our civic duty and engineer a better tomorrow!



Before heading to the polls and casting your vote, we encourage you to [explore the educational and election resources](#), which include links to register to vote and verify voter registration.

[Access GOTV Resources](#)

Emerging Leaders Program Seeks Candidates



The [NSPE Emerging Leaders Program](#) is seeking the next group of engineering change-makers. Candidates with 5–8 years of professional experience in the engineering field who are prepared to think strategically about their career and begin taking on leadership roles are invited to apply. Selected participants come

from a variety of firms with a range of engineering expertise.

The 2025 ELP syllabus and related time-commitments are available and **the application for the program is due by August 31**. Candidates accepted into the program will receive notification in October.

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