



Otter Creek communications union district

2024 Annual Summary Report and 2025 Budget

In 2024, Otter Creek Communications Union District (Otter Creek CUD) continued its mission to expand broadband accessibility in the Rutland County region.

This past year has been highly productive for Otter Creek CUD and our partner-providers, and it will continue to be so through the very end of December 2024.

The following describes what we have accomplished along with our partner-providers and the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) for the period starting just after the 2023 Annual Summary Report, which was issued in October 2023, through this week of October 14, 2024.

- At the end of 2023, a new development to Otter Creek CUD's Universal Service Plan arose. The incumbent telecommunications provider, GoNetspeed, serving Benson, Hubbardton and areas of Sudbury and North Castleton, received federal funding through another grant program which enabled them to build and offer high-speed fiber broadband service to every un/underserved address in their territory. This meant that Otter Creek CUD's grant funds were shifted from the GoNetspeed territory to enable complete fiber broadband build-out to every eligible address in the member towns and areas served by Otter Creek CUD's partner-provider, Consolidated Communications before the end of 2024. With this new plan, Otter Creek CUD revised our construction grant request to the VCBB, and we got to work developing final contracts and agreements.
- The Final Construction Grant agreement with VCBB was signed Jan 2024.
- A Final Master Services Contract with Consolidated Communications was signed in Feb 2024.
- A Final Network Construction & Operating Agreement with GoNetspeed was signed in Feb 2024.

- Construction Progress in 2024. While GoNetspeed had already been building fiber in and to the north of the Otter Creek CUD member towns, their construction schedule was now concentrated to complete fiber build-out in our member towns to meet the terms of our agreement. GoNetspeed is scheduled to have completed the fiber build-out to nearly all un- and under-served addresses in their territory by the end of 2024, with a few areas by Mar 2025. Consolidated Communications meanwhile, expanded their crews in the summer construction season and have now completed the fiber build-out to all un- and under-served addresses in the Otter Creek CUD territory of Brandon, Castleton, Chittenden, Fair Haven, Goshen, Mendon, Pawlet, Pittsford, Poultney, Rutland City, Rutland Town, Shrewsbury, Wells, West Haven, West Rutland, as well as several addresses in Hubbardton and Sudbury.
- Sustainability Planning. Otter Creek collaborated with Lamoille Fiber CUD and Southern Vermont CUD to develop a ten-year sustainability plan for our operations through 2034.
- In August, Otter Creek CUD Governing Board held its first in-person meeting and picnic event sponsored by our partner-providers.
- Throughout the year, the Otter Creek CUD chair, vice chair and some Otter Creek CUD executive committee members met monthly with our partner-providers to review and discuss construction progress, communications with member towns and with constituents, and other related business.
- In Sept 2024 Otter Creek CUD submitted an application to the VCBB requesting an amendment to our pre-construction grant for funding our operations through 2026. The grant was awarded.
- Otter Creek CUD officially relinquished its unused allocated funds to the VCBB in September 2024. Total allocated funds relinquished = \$1,610,431.00.
- This year, Otter Creek CUD expanded its public outreach with monthly Front Porch Forum postings, a new website designed to be more accessible and informative to our constituents. We continued to respond personally to our constituents' inquiries and requests for assistance related to all telecom construction and service issues.

2025 Budget:

Otter Creek CUD’s budget for year 2025 includes our operational costs, cost for our contractor (Vantage Point) who manages the required reporting and financial submittals to the VCBB, costs for the single audit of 2024, other accounting services, and expected legal services related to our sustainability plan. Other costs include VCUDA dues and we included an approximately 13% contingency.

Otter Creek Communications Union District 2025 Budget	
Operational Expenses (Google Workspace accounts, website, DNO and Business insurance, bank fees,)	\$20,000
Contracted Project Management (Reporting, Managing grants)	\$120,000
Legal Services	\$100,000
Single Audit	\$30,000
Accounting – Bookkeeper and Treasurer	\$25,000
Association Fees/Membership	\$15,000
Events & Conferences	\$2,000
Contingency	\$40,000
TOTAL:	\$352,000