



Disciplined Oversight for Successful Fiber Projects

How a rural Co-op leveraged The Broadband Group's program management to mitigate risks, enforce construction standards, and ensure financial accuracy across their multi-county fiber build.

In the Southeast, a Co-op's **Fiber Expansion Project** represented a massive undertaking in new construction, requiring the coordination of design, construction, and complex stakeholder management across multiple counties. To ensure the project's success, **The Broadband Group (TBG)** was engaged to provide comprehensive oversight, serving as force multipliers for the existing team.

The Challenge: Complexity at Scale

Designing and planning the construction of nearly **3,000 miles of new fiber-optic** infrastructure required a disciplined, enterprise-scale approach, combining advanced analytical tools, industry expertise, and rigorous validation to deliver constructable designs and predictable cost outcomes.

"Managing a construction project of this scale required experienced oversight capable of anticipating risks before they became cost drivers."

– Pat Thibeault, CTO, TBG

Establishing Centralized Control

TBG aligned with existing staff by embedding itself into every phase of the project, from design validation through construction. Key areas of focus included:

- **Architectures & standards:** Reviewed and strengthened construction standards for inclusion in vendor contracts; assessed the operating model and refined network architecture to fit the co-op's needs.
- **Design & engineering coordination:** Engaged and directed a design partner to support an aggressive delivery schedule; providing iterative feedback to enhance constructability and cost-efficiency. Supported pole surveys, design validation, and make-ready engineering, leveraging internal co-op resources and existing firms where appropriate.
- **Construction execution support:** Implemented a construction management platform to assign work, track redlines and reconcile labor/material units. Crews completed and documented nearly 34,000 construction tasks with photo verification. TBG reviewed and approved nearly 1,000 same-day change requests to maintain field productivity.
- **Quality assurance & inspection:** Deployed field oversight for proactive issue identification and final acceptance inspections. Conducted more than 35,000 QA inspections, driving over 10,000 vendor-funded corrections of out-of-spec work.

Results: Measured Accountability and Cost Control

Improved financial accountability was achieved through task-based invoicing and rigorous audit discipline. Key outcomes included:

- Identified **millions of dollars** in invoice discrepancies over the project life through detailed invoice reconciliation and audit controls.
- Continuous spend monitoring identified high-impact cost drivers early and enabled timely corrective action.
- Implemented **cost-to-serve** analysis to prioritize the lowest cost-per-home segments, re-validating designs before issuing each work package.
- Streamlined **grant reimbursement tracking** through standardized tools and documentation.



Protecting Quality, Costs, and Schedule

The Broadband Group provided independent oversight that improved build quality, reduced financial leakage, and accelerated decision-making, enabling the cooperative to scale its fiber deployment with confidence.

Benefits At A Glance

▪ Millions of Dollars Identified in Invoice Discrepancies Through Task-Based Financial Auditing
▪ 10x Year-over-Year Increase in New Home Passings
▪ 100% Network Plant Inspection Prior to Acceptance
▪ 35,000+ QA Inspections Conducted, Driving 10,000+ Vendor Corrections at No Cost
▪ 3,000 Miles of New Fiber Designed Across Multiple Counties
▪ 34,000 Construction Tasks Completed & Documented with Photo Evidence
▪ 1,000 Same-Day Change Requests Reviewed & Approved to Maintain Construction Pace

This model of disciplined oversight is essential for utilities, cooperatives, and developers executing large-scale fiber deployments under grant funding and aggressive deployment timelines.