Ohio's Community Broadband Solutions

Connecting Residents, Driving Economic Growth, Enhancing Resiliency

Cities across Ohio have expanded Internet infrastructure in thoughtful, forward-looking ways. These municipal networks have created local government savings, increased speeds, promoted service competition, and powered economic development.

Some cities have specifically addressed the affordability gap in cities, where many residents have been left behind in a broken market where large Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have underbuilt networks, leaving hundreds of thousands of broadband-hungry Ohioans in the digital dust.

- Since inception, the **Medina County Fiber Network** has grown to connect every major city in the county. It saves the county government [thousands of dollars a year](#) and [the local school district](#) at least $80,000 each year. It also will bring fiber service, via a [new public-private partnership](#), to tens of thousands of homes in Medina County at lower costs while encouraging competition. **One local business owner [called the publicly owned open-access network a "fire hose"](#) that far outperforms the "garden hose" of previous private providers.**

- **Fairlawn's** (pop. 7,500) city-run FairlawnGig network has consistently [ranked as one of the fastest ISPs](#) in the country, serving residents and businesses in Fairlawn, Akron, and Bath with affordable gigabit Internet services. The slowest service tier delivers 300 Mbps symmetrical speeds for $55/month. The municipal network has resulted in more businesses choosing to locate in Fairlawn, and [at least 700 jobs can be directly attributed to the network](#). In recent subscriber surveys, **95% of respondents rated FairlawnGig's service as "very good to excellent,"** with some [customer testimonials](#) referring to the network as "a life saver" throughout the pandemic.

- **Dublin's** (pop. 42,000) DubLINK has brought new jobs and research opportunities to Dublin's local economy while saving local institutions hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. The fiber network, which connects Dublin's business district, schools, community anchor institutions, and city buildings, has [saved the city approximately $400,000 per year](#) in connectivity and information technology expenses. As of 2014, approximately a decade after the network was complete, the city realized a [$35 million return on investment](#) from DubLINK, after spending approximately $5.5 million over the years to build the network.

- Just south of Dayton in Montgomery County, Ohio, the **GATEWay Public Fiber Network** connects the cities of Centerville, Kettering, Miamisburg, Moraine, Oakwood, Springboro and West Carrollton with more than 40 miles of fiber in one of the country's [first multi-jurisdictional networks](#). The infrastructure brings increased bandwidth, speed, and capacity at

an affordable price to the local governments, schools, nonprofits and public safety facilities of seven communities under the Miami Valley Communications Council (MVCC), as well as access to the Ohio Academic Research Network. In February 2020, the cities were recognized internationally for the network, winning the Smart 50 Award, which recognizes the most transformative, innovative and influential "Smart City" projects each year from a dozen countries around the world.

- In **Springboro** (pop. 19,000) after years of fielding complaints from residents about the speed, reliability, and poor customer service from incumbent providers, the city has committed to building a fiber loop for institutional service, while simultaneously laying conduit to bring new Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to town. The move will stimulate competition, promote new economic development, and generate tens of thousands of dollars in new annual revenue which will exceed its initial investment in the infrastructure.

- The **city of Wadsworth** (pop. 26,000) first built its hybrid fiber-coaxial network, called CityLink, back in 1997. The network has built momentum over the last few years, moving from 2,000 subscribers in 2017 to more than 5,400 today and making it the largest ISP in the city. It's success is in large part thanks to CityLink managers' proactive approach in upgrading infrastructure and providing outstanding customer service.

- **Hudson, Ohio** (pop. 22,000) has been building out incrementally for years, bringing fast, affordable, reliable service to area businesses. Newly available to residents, it provides faster speeds and more value than the offerings which existed before.

- The **Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition's** Central Ohio Broadband Access Pilot Program is targeting as many as 700 households in two poorly connected neighborhoods, offering 30 Mbps wireless connections to low-income neighborhoods on the South Side and the Near East Side for $15 to $25 a month. The coalition's work has also distributed hotspot devices with unlimited data plans to central Ohio households with k-12 students. While still growing, 2,300 hotspots distributed so far with the help of PCs for People.

As of June 14, 2021, the Ohio Senate is prepared to outlaw municipal broadband networks. The law firm IceMiller released an analysis of the overarching consequences if this amendment makes it into the final budget, outlining the threat not only for cities, but schools, port authorities, and intergovernmental agreements. Not only would it discourage future investment, but also require many existing operations to cease altogether to the detriment of Ohio residents and businesses. **Ohio needs more investment, not less.**