



Carroll County United

Working together to make Carroll County a place where all generations can live, work and thrive.

Broadband Report to Carroll County Towns Part 1: Findings

Prepared by Carroll County United Team 4 – January, 2011

Why Broadband? CCU Team 4 explored the issue of access to broadband coverage in Carroll County because of the strong link between access and economic development. We have heard from business owners that the lack of access has impeded the growth or establishment of business and has thwarted opportunities to rent existing business, vacation, and residential properties that do not have broadband access.

What have we done so far? CCU Team 4 members reached out to all 17 towns in Carroll County to ask them about broadband access. Team 4 also hosted a presentation by and discussion with Carol Miller, Director of Broadband Technology, NH DRED.

What we have learned so far:

- All towns are serviced by Time Warner cable except for Chatham and Sandwich which have no cable and Wolfeboro which is serviced by Metrocast.
- Identifying broadband coverage within a town has proven to be difficult because town officials don't have that information and providers are reluctant to share that information.
- Awareness of what contracts contain seems low unless towns are in the process of renewing contracts or residents are rallying to get access.
- Long cable contracts seem detrimental because they often outlive the terms of town representatives or staff and technology changes quickly.
- Many towns were unclear whether they had any requirements for expanding service in their contract.
- Providers have communicated that density is the driving factor for expanding services.
- Citizens working together with willing providers can result in local solutions for expanded coverage. (Ex: Tamworth Wireless, Cyberpine in Sandwich)
- Wired broadband such as cable or DSL or wireless point to point networks are the current viable technologies for expansion in Carroll County. Fixed wireless (point to point) has higher speeds than 'cell-phone' wireless and satellite.
- It is possible for almost anyone to get broadband but it costs more at lower densities.
- Challenges for establishing a wireless network are the terrain and equipment location.

Team 1
Childhood Readiness & Success

Team 2
Aligning Education to Careers

Team 3
Individual & Family Economic Stability

Team 4
Balancing Economic Development & Environmental Stewardship

Team 5
Health & Wellness



Team 4 Goal
Community members steward both a vibrant economy and our human and natural resources so that all generations thrive.

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Recommendations:

1. Encourage all residents with an internet connection to “take the internet speed test” to get an accurate picture of what currently exists in Carroll County by participating in the state broadband mapping effort at <http://www.iwantbroadbandnh.org/>; the more homes that participate the better the data.
2. Use care when negotiating cable franchise contracts. Possible negotiation points include:
 - a. Leave a window for renegotiation if the assets of the company are transferred to another entity.
 - b. Get commitment for additional build-out on a yearly basis. (Conway example – they have a clause committing the company to add 1 ½ miles of cable a year.)
3. Track broadband coverage within a town’s Master Plan (this may need to be by service type rather than by provider name).
4. Watch for pending state legislation to create a broadband fund and help to support it.
5. Reduce the length of agreement –Boards of Selectmen, broadband providers, and technology will change within the time of a contract.
6. Encourage citizens who have inferior access to the internet to look to other examples in the state for improving the situation. Contact Carol Miller at NH Department of Resources and Economic Development:
carol.miller@dred.state.nh.us

Please circulate this report within your community. You can also access it at www.CarrollCountyUnited.org