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Take the NH Broadband Survey and Speed Test

A team of volunteers with Carroll County United encourage everyone to take the “I Want Broadband Now” survey and speed test. It’s easy. Just log onto the website (www.iwantbroadbandnh.org), and on the right hand side of your screen, you will see the link to the survey and the internet speed test.

So you might ask, why are volunteers promoting this in Carroll County? Because broadband communications to each home, business, hospital and school at good speeds and affordable rates is important to the economic growth of our community. The volunteers belong to an initiative called Carroll County United. Their mission is “Working together to make Carroll County a place where all generations can live, work, and thrive”.

Team #4, Balancing Economic Development and Environmental Stewardship, reached out to the 18 towns within the county and found that broadband coverage seemed like guesswork for many towns and raised a lot of questions. Contracts with broadband providers are complex, span long lengths of time, offered little in the way of expansion of service over time, and leave blocks of the county underserved. Folks who live or want to establish businesses in these underserved areas find that suitable service is financially out of reach. This impairs our county’s ability to attract small business, to rent residential and vacation properties, and for residents and businesses to get access to the fast internet they need that many areas of the country take for granted.

The volunteers invited Carol Miller, (Director of Broadband Technology - Division of Economic Development) to their meeting and learned that our state lacks broadband connectivity capable of delivering current and next generation services when compared to the rest of the country. She talked to the team about the Network NH Now project (www.networknhnow.org), where \$44.5 million dollars is being made available through an economic stimulus package to build new fiber optic pathways, to connect middle mile fiber in all 10 counties and which will create 700 new jobs. The team has made contact with towns, such as Sandwich and Tamworth, where residents aren’t waiting. They are organizing their own wireless services delivery from atop trees and church steeples.

The key to helping our county is to get the service speed from your location on the statewide map. If you don’t have acceptable access at your home or business to take the survey, go to your library or school and take it there. The more homes and businesses that participate, the better the map will be. Team #4 wants Carroll County to have the best chance of being included in the regional plans for expansion of broadband service. Log onto www.iwantbroadbandnh.org today, and get on the map. It only takes a minute. For more information go to <http://www.carrollcountyunited.org/>.