

Do you want cheaper, faster Internet?

It is possible with a community-owned fiber-optic network

"...Easy access to cheap, fast Internet services has become a facilitator of economic growth and a measure of economic performance." *The Economist*, Jan 2008



We Face Numerous Challenges in McHenry County

- No competition
- Services are unaffordable and slow
- Coverage and access is not universal
- The cost goes up year after year, and adds on many fees
- Customer service is awful
- The incumbents stifle our ability for innovation and economic growth

Community-Owned Fiber-Optics Can Save You Money

AT&T U-Verse	
50/10 Mbps	\$70
75/20 Mbps	\$100

AT&T Fiber	
300 Mbps	\$80
1000 Mbps	\$100

Comcast/Xfinity	
400/10 Mbps	\$100
1000/35 Mbps	\$140



Community-Owned Fiber-Optics Network Examples

Ammon, ID	
250/250 Mbps	\$48.38 ¹
500/500 Mbps	\$48.48 ¹
1000/1000 Mbps	\$48.49 ¹
City-Owned, Open-Access. Choice of Four Providers	

Lyndon Township, MI	
25/25 Mbps	\$57 ²
100/100 Mbps	\$68 ²
1000/1000 Mbps	\$92 ²
Township Owned, Operated by Co-Op (MEC)	

RS Fiber (Rural MN)	
50/50 Mbps	\$50 ³
100/100 Mbps	\$70 ³
1000/1000 Mbps	\$100 ³
Telecommunications Co-Op	

¹ Ammon, ID charges an infrastructure fee of \$22 per month for 20 years + a maintenance fee of \$16.50 per month. Totaling \$38.50

² Lyndon Township agreed to invest in a fiber-optic network. Voters agreed to pay an average of \$21.75 per month for 20 years.

³ RS Fiber financed their fiber-optic network through Revenue Bonds. Part of their monthly fee goes to paying the monthly bond payments.



Internet Freedom for McHenry County (www.ifmc.co) is a non-profit organization of community members joining together to drive civic action that will promote the improved use of fiber-optics that is sustainable, affordable, locally controlled, and provides for modernization of common infrastructure to everyone within McHenry County.

The Solution

- Fiber-optics to everyone
- Owned by you, like an electric cooperative
- An open free-market with multiple providers
- No new taxes, and community backed collateral with revenues to pay for the loans.
- Savings up to hundreds per year
- More choice for consumers
- Increased operational and fee transparency



Current Operators Failed to Invest and Compete

- State Representative Steve Reick (District 63) worked with Comcast and AT&T for months to get Internet access for residents on and near Rose Farm Road just outside of Woodstock. Both Comcast and AT&T refused.
- The Village of Richmond asked Time Warner Cable, Comcast, AT&T, and more to come into their area to provide more choices. They all refused.



Quick Facts

- 98% of households in McHenry County do not have access to fiber-optics.
- 92% of households in McHenry County do not have access to a gigabit or more.
- 50% of seniors do not have broadband at home.
- An estimated 40% of households making less than \$75K do not have broadband.
- Nearly 50% of children were unable to complete homework due to lack of access to the Internet or a computer.

Why Use Fiber Optics?

- It is the “Gold Standard” in technology
- Fiber optic networks are reliable, resilient, and offer nearly unlimited expansion.
- Fiber will last for many decades and capacity can be increased by upgrading the lasers on each end without having to lay new fiber.



A Utility Cooperative Model?

Illinois consumers cannot rely upon politicians when so many examples of bad decisions that champion privatization are evident.

Through years of neglect, our current infrastructure is crumbling. To make matters worse, cities throughout the state have already sold off or leased some of our infrastructure to private companies - all for a quick buck. Examples of this are sale of the Chicago Skyway, Chicago parking meters, Indiana Tollway, Illinois Lottery.

We cannot afford to have a critical investment, like fiber-optics, be subjected to the fickle political winds.

Many utility cooperatives exist in Illinois. Such examples are Rock Energy Cooperative, Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

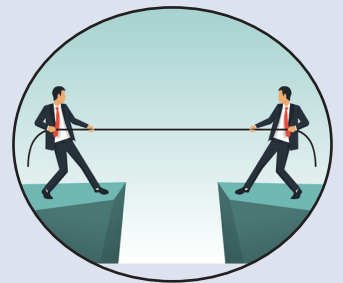
If Electric Co-operatives can work for Illinois, then a Broadband Cooperative can too.

Applying Free-Market Principles

It is now possible for customers with fiber-optics to be able to switch Internet, Television, and even Voice services in 20 seconds or less.

UTOPIA customers and residents of Ammon, Idaho have many choices. UTOPIA households are seeing a choice of 8 different providers. Ammon has four.

Applying free-market principles ensures that our coop stays focused on expanding service to everyone and maintaining the infrastructure, where the private market



Customer Satisfaction of Community-Owned Fiber Networks

- UTOPIA has a Net Promoter Score of 60, a high ranking that measures the willingness of UTOPIA customers to recommend it to others. Comcast has a Net Promoter Score of -3.
- In 2016, Consumer Reports rated Chattanooga's EPB Fiber-Optic Network (EPB) the best TV and Internet access utility in the county for customer satisfaction.

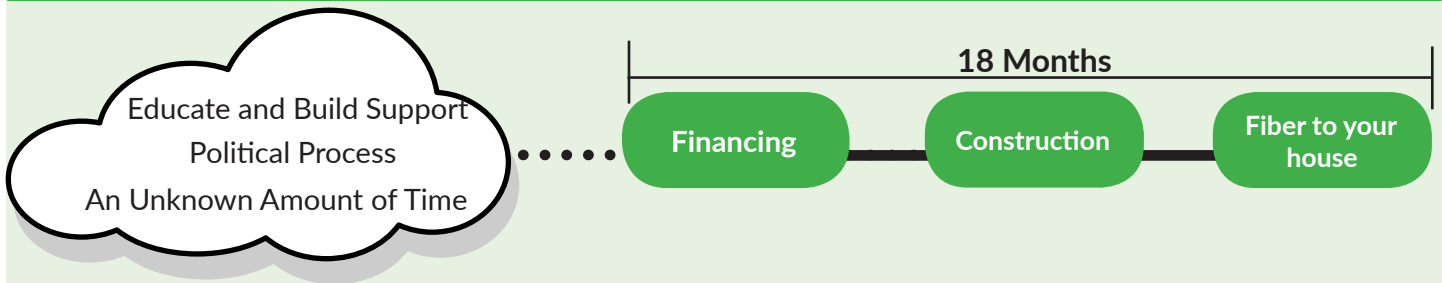


No Additional Taxes

- Most community-owned fiber-optic networks have been built through “revenue bonds” and other creative financing ways; the monthly cost for the infrastructure pays for the bonds.
- UTOPIA customers have the option of paying a one-time fee of \$2750 or financing it over 10-20 years for \$30 a month.
- Ammon, ID is providing owners an opt-in/opt-out option. Only those who opt-in has to pay the utility infrastructure fee of \$22 per month for 20 years or the one-time cost of \$3000.



How soon can I get fiber-optics to my household/business?



- Optimally, 18 Months from the point of a community agreeing on a financing option to your house/business.
- The political discussion, meetings, negotiations, and more can take years. It largely depends on the level of support from the community. Your support can help!

Take Action - Let's Make This Happen!

- Sign-up for our newsletter at www.ifmc.co
- Take a speed test to test your bandwidth speeds at www.ifmc.co
- [Fill out our Broadband Survey at survey.ifmc.co](http://survey.ifmc.co)
- [Talk with your elected officials. They need to hear from you](#)
- Become a local champion or help us in other ways
- Talk with your neighbors



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