

Moving from Words to Actions on Fixing Broadband in Baltimore

11:44am July 12, 2015

The Mayor's task force on smart cities has released a draft report that includes discussion on broadband and they have requested public comment by July 19. You can link to that report at <http://baltimorebroadband.org/>

We need you to write to your elected officials emphasizing the importance of this issue.

Here are suggested talking points:

Fast broadband is now essential like other utilities such as electricity and water

Broadband is broken in Baltimore

- · This interferes with economic development, modern education and public safety
- · 20-40% of city residents do not connect to the Internet resulting in economic injustice
- · Baltimore Broadband Coalition survey shows broad dissatisfaction by city residents in their choices

Elected officials must get involved with this important issue. What is critical now is moving from words to effective actions

An entity should be established to lead the city's effort. This can be city government itself but would more appropriately be a non-profit organization recognized, supported and facilitated by the city.

- · There must be effective leadership, delineation of entity scope and adequate funding
- · Entity will lead city effort to deploy fiber optic infrastructure and oversee fiber network operations

Create a balanced broadband plan. All must benefit.

- · Initially target our schools and libraries and areas of concentrated aggregate demand for broadband as identified by the Baltimore Broadband Coalition
- · Provide low cost connectivity options for those with low incomes
- · Create free Wi-Fi zones in public spaces such as within parks or areas of large public gathering and around schools and libraries
- · Offer commercial stakeholders and anchor institutions connectivity options superior to existing choices

Work towards an open fiber infrastructure promoting competition among Internet service providers

Understand that deployment of fiber requires public and private investment. Fiber deployment like other infrastructure is expensive but is necessary and economically wise.

You can access the email and mail addresses for the City Council at <http://www.baltimorecitycouncil.com/members.htm>

You may contact the Mayor at mayor@baltimorecity.gov or through <http://archive.baltimorecity.gov/OfficeoftheMayor/MayoralOffices.aspx>

Please copy baltimorebroadband@gmail.com on your submissions.

Congratulations to Guilford. They reached their neighborhood campaign goal this past week! Thanks to Anthony Gill who is leading their effort.