

Shedding Light on Fiber and What that Means to Our Campaign

**Campaign support continues to build with backers from new neighborhoods joining. Please continue to spread the word.**

With many new backers we will continue to answer commonly asked questions.

**How is fiber different from cable (Comcast) or DSL (Verizon) and why is fiber deployment critical to our campaign?** Fiber optic cables contain small flexible glass strands over which data travels as light. Fiber can be deployed above or below ground. Comcast uses coaxial cable, which you see connecting to your television. DSL uses standard copper phone lines. Both coaxial and copper send data as radiofrequency signals rather than light. **Currently, fiber carries data between 20-50 times faster than coaxial cable and typically greater than 100 times faster than DSL.** Imagine you wanted to rapidly fill a pool and could choose a fire hose (analogous to fiber), a garden hose (cable) or an eye dropper (DSL). As data transmission requirements continue to increase, fiber is the future. Fiber deployment also increases competition for high speed Internet services. Comcast owns their cable, but fiber will open the market to new Internet providers.

**How, where and when will we see fiber deployment occurring?** Our campaign is citywide and inclusive; we believe fiber should be deployed to all Baltimore neighborhoods and should occur with every city utility and work project along major corridors. Currently 20-40% of Baltimore residents do not connect to the Internet and we believe that Internet access is a necessity in today's world.

**How does this campaign influence the type of fiber deployment?** Fiber deployment is not one-plan-fits-all, however. We understand that fiber is expensive and use our Crowdfunding campaign to demonstrate the size and patterns of potential market demand. Where demand is sufficiently strong, we favor immediate fiber deployment; where market demand is less strong, fiber could extend along corridors (so-called middle mile) and then connect to individual homes and businesses (so-called last mile) with other technologies like high-speed wireless. Connectivity is critical even in neighborhoods where demand does not drive the need for fiber connections to all homes.

**Who owns the fiber and manages the fiber and what difference does it make?** Fiber is organized in cities in multiple models of ownership and management. There are very important tradeoffs. Municipal ownership of fiber offers cities most control (Chattanooga). Private ownership (the Google model) releases control but a city could by so doing reduce its risk and upfront cost. It may also be releasing important revenue streams which is critical. Then there are public-private partnerships. Also important is whether the fiber ownership model allows and facilitates more than one ISP to use it. This article <http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/fast-Internet-speed-wifi-municipal-broadband> describes what many cities are doing. Our campaign will help to motivate and influence this discussion.

### **Public Meetings to Explain the Campaign**

We are looking for opportunities to explain and answer questions about the campaign. These can be neighborhood association meetings or gatherings in schools, faith based organizations, business meetings or clubs – really any good size meeting (at least ~50 people). Please help us to find such opportunities and share that information with us at [BaltimoreBroadband@gmail.com](mailto:BaltimoreBroadband@gmail.com).

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