



October 23, 2019

**ELECTRONICALLY FILED**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Notice of Ex Parte**

*Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Wireline Competition Bureau Seek Comment on WIA Petition for Rulemaking, WIA Petition for Declaratory Ruling and CTIA Petition for Declaratory Ruling (WT Docket No. 19-250, WC Docket No. 17-84)*

Dear Secretary Dortch:

On October 21, the undersigned, along with the following individuals, met with Travis Litman, Chief of Staff and Senior Legal Advisor, Wireline and Public Safety for Commissioner Rosenworcel, Alisa Valentin, Special Advisor for Commissioner Starks, and Preston Wise, Rural Broadband Advisor for Chairman Pai:

- Greg Evans, Councilmember, City of Eugene, Oregon and 2019 President of the League of Oregon Cities
- Jake Boone, Councilmember, City of Cottage Grove, Oregon and 2020 President of the League of Oregon Cities
- Peter B. Truax, Mayor, City of Forest Grove, Oregon
- Steve Callaway, Mayor, City of Hillsboro, Oregon
- Mike Cully, Executive Director, League of Oregon Cities
- Jim McCauley, Legislative Director, League of Oregon Cities
- Jenna Jones, Legislative Analyst, League of Oregon Cities
- Yucel Ors, Program Director, National League of Cities

During the meetings, we discussed the efforts by Oregon cities to ensure that all Oregon residents can access the benefits of broadband. Several cities in Oregon have built municipal broadband networks, which allow local governments to ensure residents are served when there are no affordable alternative commercial services – especially in areas where commercial carriers refuse to deploy. Attached is a sheet discussed during the meeting that outlines the commitments Oregon communities have already made.

We also discussed what communities need from the federal government to achieve our goals. Oregon cities need a greater partnership with the federal government to connect local school districts to broadband. We believe that connecting every anchor institution should be a top priority

for the Commission. The digital divide is contributing to an education gap in underserved communities. Oregon cities also need greater technical assistance and flexibility to find the matching funds that allow them to take advantage of federal dollars through programs such as E-Rate.

Finally, we discussed Oregon cities' opposition to the regulatory proposals included in the recent petitions by CTIA and WIA. We believe the preemptive policies proposed by CTIA and WIA would negatively impact our communities, and local governments need flexibility to deal with telecommunications providers, not heavy-handed federal preemption. We discussed the following points of concern about the petitions:

- Banning conditional approvals would harm the ability of localities to work with utilities and ensure that deployments are safe.
- Any policy to promote further wireless deployment needs to include updated federal resources for local officials and the public to address concerns about the safety of RF emissions from devices located in the rights-of-way.
- Further restrictions on shot clocks stretch the capacities of small jurisdictions, which frequently rely on contracted labor to manage permits, and prioritizes the desires of one industry above all other users of the rights-of-way. Expanding the number of sites covered by shorter shot clocks further exacerbates this problem.

Pursuant to Section 1.1206(b) of the Commission's rules, a copy of this letter and the attachment is being electronically submitted in the record of this proceeding. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned with any questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Cully  
Executive Director  
League of Oregon Cities

Cc: Travis Litman  
Alisa Valentin  
Preston Wise

## By the Numbers

- Estimates suggest that more than 400,000 people in Oregon are without broadband connectivity and over 200,000 have no access to internet service.
- Approximately 26 school districts (not schools) do not have a broadband connection.
- More than 50 public libraries are without broadband access.
- Internet access varies by region. Gaps in coverage can be seen especially in rural and remote regions of Oregon when looking at who has broadband in the home.

	Total	Portland	Central Coast	Central Oregon	SW Oregon	NW Coast	North Central	South Central	Eastern Oregon
% of Residents with Broadband in Home	82	85	83	83	79	78	76	69	67

## On the State Level

**Rural Broadband Capacity Pilot** – In 2018, Business Oregon funded 7 broadband planning and infrastructure projects in areas lacking adequate broadband service through the Rural Broadband Capacity Pilot Program. Business Oregon received 25 applications totaling more than \$4.8 million in requested funding for the \$500,000 available through the pilot program.

Cities that received funding for the Rural Broadband Capacity Pilot

- Baker City - \$137,000 for the deployment of a fiber distribution network throughout a 65-acre city owned industrial park.
- Boardman - \$10,000 to develop a broadband strategic plan.
- Glendale - \$140,000 for the deployment of a citywide fiber to home and fiber to home network via public private partnership.

Other recipients included Columbia County, Coos Curry Electric Coop, Harney County and Tillamook Lightwave.

**State Broadband Office** – The Oregon Broadband Office was created by Gov. Kate Brown through executive order in 2018. HB 2173 (2019) solidified the office in statute. The Oregon Broadband Office mission is to promote access to broadband services for all Oregonians in order to improve the economy and quality of life.

**State Funding for Rural Broadband** – While a great deal of federal money is available, accessing those funds takes planning and the means to leverage federal dollars as many of the federal programs require a 10% match from the state. Representative Pam Marsh and many stakeholders including the LOC are working on the 2020 Rural Telecommunications Investment Act that would include a broadband funding package to provide matching funds for communities.

## Municipally Owned Broadband

**Why Municipal Broadband?** Municipal broadband is sometimes the only way to bring high speed internet to a community and it can serve as an access point to neighboring communities. Additionally, municipal broadband adds competition to the market and can help lower prices for community members.

### ***Current Municipal Networks***

Ashland Fiber Network (AFN) – The city of Ashland owns, manages, and maintains the telecommunications infrastructure of AFN, then leases to preferred locally owned ISPs so customers can choose the best provider for their needs.

CGWiFi – The city of Cottage Grove manages the fiber-optic network and partners with an ISP to provide free and subscription Wi-Fi services. The fiber optic and WiFi system were developed to primarily to create infrastructure capacity, provide connectivity and enhance technology available for South Lane School District and Lane Community College and to improve broadband service for public safety and government operations.

EUGNet – The city of Eugene along with the Eugene Water Electric Board, the Lane County Council of Governments and the support of the Tech Association of Oregon created an open access fiber network in Eugene downtown. The fiber strands run underground from a central exchange to individual buildings.

HiLight – HiLight is a high-speed fiber broadband internet service provided by the city of Hillsboro. The city will be focusing on placing fiber for new developments as roads and homes are built and then they will prioritize parts of the city with the lowest connectivity rates. Recently, the City of Hillsboro partnered with the Hillsboro School District to connect all District schools and classrooms to a shared fiber network by spring 2020.

City of Maupin – QLife, GorgeNet, and the city of Maupin coordinated efforts to offer a fiber to home and fiber to business network. The fiber network servicing Maupin businesses and residents is owned by the city of Maupin through funding provided by the State of Oregon.

MINET – MINET is a joint venture between the cities of Independence and Monmouth. They provide fiber internet to the cities of Independence, Monmouth and recently Dallas.

QLife – QualityLife Intergovernmental Agency (QLife) is a collaborative effort between The Dalles and Wasco County. QLife created a 17-mile fiber optic loop through the city. The goal is to enhance the region's economic development efforts with a reliable, cost effective, open access link to the Bonneville Power Administration's fiber, which runs through The Dalles. The utility is managed and supported by the city through a contractual agreement.

SandyNet – The city of Sandy has owned and operated their own citywide broadband utility since 2003. SandyNet has been a successful economic development tool for the city.

Sherwood Broadband – The city of Sherwood owns and operates Sherwood broadband as a utility. The fiber network was created in 2005 and services Sherwood and neighboring cities.

