Mobile wireless is not an acceptable form of internet communication.

My wife and I have lived at this residence for 20 years, almost to the day. Our residence is 12 miles south of Morganton NC. I am now retired and work out of my home as a computer aided design engineer. I really need an always on broadband internet connection and have not been able to connect to this date.

My story is about being connected to the ‘Internet of Things’. Boiling it down, I’m not, and most likely never will be. My skepticism is based on past history and hopes to be a member of the internet world.

At this moment I am communicating using my cell phone as a hotspot to connect my laptop. It works, but is very limited in bandwidth and expensive. I pay $140 (discounted 22% thanks to my spouse’s employer) for 24GB of data a month ($3.33 per GB). If I go over that amount I have the option of paying $15 for an additional gigabyte or have my bandwidth reduced to 56kbps for the remainder of billing period. I’ll still be connected, but unable to do much more than check my email as long as it doesn’t have any attachments.

When we were having our new home built it took 3 months to get electricity installed. The building contractors used electric generators for their power equipment. It took another 3 months to get a telephone line run to the house. Homes less than 500 feet down the road had electricity and phone service, so what was the long delay. This was back in March of 1997.

Once we had the Bell South telephone line installed I was thrilled to find out we could get 96kbps service. I invested in a new “high speed” 96kbps modem. I realize that ISP’s don’t guarantee anything other than you will owe them money if you terminate service early. However, I was really disappointed when my 96kbps service panned out to be around 24kbps. It was unreliable, expensive and definitely did not fulfill their advertised service. Today, AT&T is my landline DSL provider. The maximum they offer today, with no guarantees, is 756kbps. Past experience tells me that I would be lucky to get 378kbps. They offer no guarantees other than a $180 early termination fee. That is totally unacceptable and not even ‘high-speed’ by your definition.

Realizing the landline ISP’s inability to provide acceptable service, satellite based ISP’s began to appear in the market place. Once my contract with Bell South’s 96kps service was fulfilled I subscribed to HugesNet. They were offering “broadband” internet to rural locations. If I recall it was around 3mbps. Their service was acceptable until the advertising industry saturated the network with all the things they wanted me to buy. My 200MB fair access policy cap was quickly maxed out. Ping latencies of 1000ms to 3000ms really frustrating. Today’s satellite providers still don’t come close to offering an acceptable service. I will never again subscribe to any of their services.

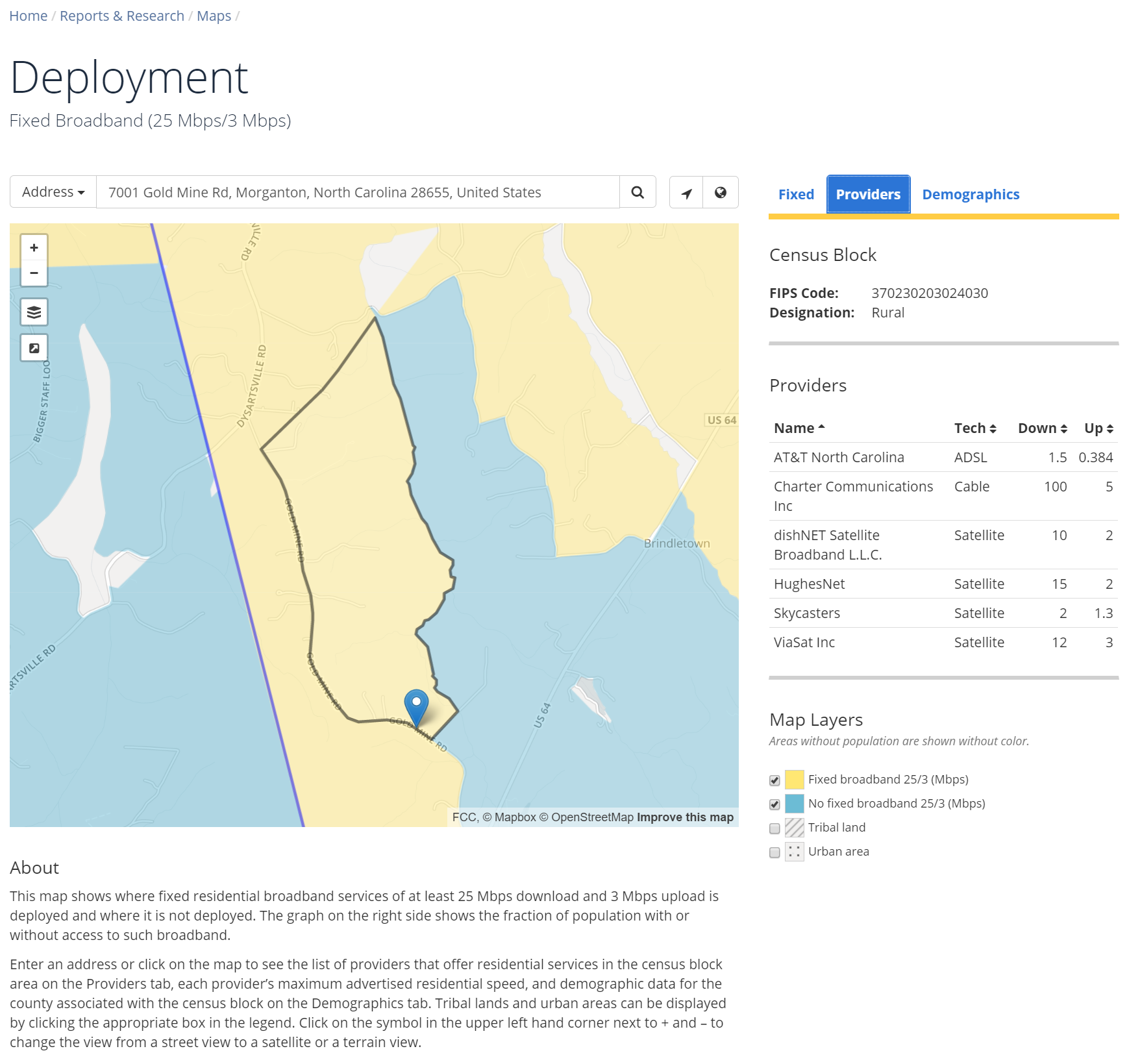
That brings us to today’s ISP offerings. Providers licensed in my area are Verizon Wireless, AT&T landline and wireless, Charter Communications for cable, T-Mobile and lastly Sprint. There are some MVNO’s in the area, but they come and go and are no better at providing wireless service.

I currently use Verizon Wireless for my cell phone service and hotspot. The Verizon tower is 6 miles away and coverage is spotty because of the terrain, so I use a Wilson repeater (an $800 investment) to get a signal inside my home. AT&T does offer some area coverage, but their prices are not competitive and they use different frequencies so I would have to replace my in-home repeater. T-Mobile does offer spotty coverage, but they can’t match my Verizon discounted price. Sprint is not even in the ball game. I cannot, for the life of me, figure out why you allow them to advertise ‘unlimited’ data when it is actually limited. I guess that’s a FTC issue, truth in advertising?

Charter Communications Cable is down the road about 7,000 feet from my home. I petitioned the neighborhood about 5 years ago to get a count on how many people would like to have an internet connection and came back with 16 homes. I submitted the results to Charter’s home office. They replied they needed at least 20. Had I come up with 20, would it have been 24? Who knows? Anyhow, I contacted our local Charter office and inquired as to how much it would cost me to have service extended to my residence. When they told me it would cost me $25,000 to $50,000 I had a mix of emotions ranging from flabbergasted to insult. I asked them ‘Okay, if I pay that can I at least lease out the line to the other people that would like to have an internet connection to recover some of my investment?’ and was told NO. They would own the line.

I recently contacted Charter again this past month. I told them I needed to get a real quote on how much it would cost me to extend the cable. They at least referred me to a contractor that does their cable work, but I have heard nothing back.

This FCC map clearly show my residence as having one broadband provider.



The map is incorrect or based on false information. AT&T does not provide 1.5 Mbps and Charter does not provide service at all. I’d say the ISP’s are pulling your leg or you want America to look more connected than it really is.

Having failed with Charter Communications ever extending their service I contacted AT&T on March 18, 2017 with a request to quote how much it would cost me to have 25 Mbps service extended to my residence. I explained that I was willing to absorb some of the cost for equipment, permits and such, but I needed information on the cost, be it $2,000 or $20,000. If I’m ever to have access to the internet I need facts to make a decision. The AT&T representative began to sell me the only available 756kbps service for $40 a month. When I explained that that service was not acceptable for my needs she went into a spiel trying to sell me HughesNet satellite service and seeing how I was already a DirecTV customer I would see all these tremendous savings, especially if I also switched over from Verizon Wireless to their wireless service. Connected AT&T customers get 45 Mbps for $40 a month. They should be giving 756kbps service away for free. As she began to exhaust her energy on selling me everything they had to offer, I once again asked her who I should contact to get a quote for service. She provided the same number I’d dialed that eventually connected me to her desk. Obviously they do not want me as a customer. Nobody does and that is one hell of a disappointment. I wonder why there is a USF charge on my phone bill and the Connect America Fund. Neither has ever done anything for me other than take money from my pocket and give it someone else.

Oh well, thanks for listening.

Sincerely,  
Rick Osborn  
Morganton, NC