

Poor or No Broadband Even in Silicon Valley, California

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I have lived in Silicon Valley since 1989. I have been involved with Internet Technology and Infrastructure since the late 1980s. I started an ISP, InterNex, in 1993 because there was no affordable broadband at that time. In that case we pioneered the use of ISDN to deliver speeds greater than dial-up. There was no xDSL or Cable Modems at that time.

Eventually CELECs and Pacific Bell started to roll out xDSL. I was an advisor to Covad and got to see how the RBOCs fought tooth and nail to slow down the deployments and sabotage their competitors.

I watched when the FCC and FTC allowed the re-monopolization of the Telco and Cable TV industry. Each time the monopolists promise to deliver broadband to the masses. SBC promised to use Project Pronto to cover all the areas that were not currently covered by DSL. But soon as the mergers were complete the promises were forgotten and expansion of coverage to areas beyond the basic 12,000 - 18,000 feet from the COs was practically nonexistent.

I lived in Tokyo, Japan in 2002 - 2003. I was able to purchase 12Mbps DSL for less than \$15/month. If I was going to stay longer I could have gotten FTTH 100Mbps connection for \$50/month. Today the DSL speeds in Japan and S. Korea are 24Mbps or more still at less than \$15/month and FTTH is now available at Gigabit speeds for less than people pay for cable tv in the US.

Since 1996, I have lived in Saratoga, CA which is part of Silicon Valley, the home of technological innovation and hotbed of the Internet. I nor my neighbors have not been able to get ANY form of

DSL or Cable Modem service. NONE! And this was one of the areas that was supposed to be covered by Project Pronto after the merger of Pacific Bell and SBC. Every time I called and asked Pacific Bell (then SBC, now AT&T), the answer was call back later, it will be there soon. Same thing with Comcast for Cable Modem service.

I have limped along on wireless services that I have had to build myself. But the wireless performance does not compare with what would be possible from DSL, Cable Modem or FTTH.

Wireless is NOT a viable alternative to wired/fibered links to homes and businesses. I have been involved as leader in the muni-wireless technology market since 2000 when I formed a company, UltraDevices, to develop mesh wireless. Later I was the original VP of Network Engineering at MetroFi, building out muni-wireless networks. That was followed by working at SkyPilot Networks where I developed their muni-wireless product.

Wireless is great for creating ubiquitous connectivity for nomadic activities, but its not broadband. It is not an effective way to connect homes and businesses and expect to deliver broadband or support VoIP, video and other modern Internet services. The technology of today or anything that is on the horizon can not cost effectively deliver multi-megabits/second to millions of homes in urban or suburban environments (and this includes WiMax which is completely over hyped and under delivering)

So there is a duopoly in the US that has a stranglehold on the last mile bottleneck of the Internet. They are not addressing the basics of coverage, while at the same time trying to control the content of the Internet.

AT&T is still deploying copper and have no plans for major roll outs of Fiber To The Home. Verizon is selling some FTTH but it is crippled to deliver only 15Mbps downstream.

The US telecom policies of the last 10 years have been a failure. Instead of the US moving ahead and keeping its lead as the most connected country with open and vibrant Internet, it has fallen way behind. To consider that 1.5Mbps down is broadband is 5 year old thinking. And the fact that people even in Silicon Valley can not get ANY broadband reinforces the fact of this policy failure. If its this bad in Silicon Valley consider how bad it must be in many other places throughout the US.

Congress and the FCC must realize that this has been a major wrong turn in Telecom Policy. It is driving us backwards and making the US become less and less competitive in multiple dimensions. It is a disaster with long term consequences for our economy and our democracy.

Radical measures are required to repair this failure.