



The Town of Highlands has suffered from the ban on municipal broadband. Our town is made up by largely of second home owners. Many of these home owners come from Atlanta, GA and are accustomed to having Gigabit broadband. They can only stay for short lengths of time in Highlands because in most areas the broadband speeds will not support their needs. This causes our businesses to lose sales and our town to lose sales tax revenue.

We also have telecommuters who love the Highlands area, but choose to permanently move elsewhere, because they cannot telecommute from Highlands. There is no residential service in the Highlands area where more than 2 Mbps upload speed can be achieved. Many companies boast of high speeds, but they are only referring to download speeds which does not meet the needs of the telecommuters. With potential home owners turning to other locations, our city and county loses tax dollars as vacant lots remain empty, builders go unemployed, and building suppliers lose sales as well.

The town has spoken to Internet Service Provider's (ISP) in the area about improving speeds and coverage areas. These providers have expressed to the Town that they are simply not interested in serving our community with high bandwidth rates. This is largely because Highlands is a small mostly rural town and cannot offer the Return on Investment (ROI) of large metropolitan areas. Highlands owns its power utility and is prepared currently to pull fiber throughout the city and offer Gigabit speeds to our residents if the FCC will lift the bans on Municipal Broadband.