



MEDINA COUNTY FIBER NETWORK

Project Description

The Medina County Port Authority (MCPA) plans to construct a fiber optics network consisting of approximately 151 miles of dark fiber throughout Medina County, connecting all major metropolitan areas in the County with 144 strands of dark fiber and providing connectivity to the existing fiber network in the City of Wadsworth and fiber networks in Cuyahoga and Summit Counties.

This will be accomplished by the creation of a high bandwidth, neutral platform that will enable governmental subdivisions and agencies, libraries, schools, hospitals and medical facilities, businesses and industry to gain connectivity on competitively advantageous terms. The MCPA will effectively create an e-Corridor linking the participants, not only to one another, but also to carrier facilities and carriers throughout the region and to serve as a gateway to alternative services and networks.

The MCPA intends to provide access to the network and does not intend to provide services on the network that would compete with local service providers. Network neutrality is a critical component of the fiber ring, in order to encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service throughout the county.

The MCPA has signed a letter of intent with OneCommunity, a non-profit network company located in Cleveland, Ohio, which has validated the business model and is negotiations with MCPA to complete construction and operating contracts.

The estimated construction cost of the fiber project is \$10.8 million. Once construction begins, the ring is estimated to be complete within 16-18 months. With OneCommunity's existing regional network, many users will be able to connect immediately as their portion of the ring is constructed, although full redundancy will not occur until the ring is completed. An estimated 66% of the fiber ring's initial customers are projected to be from the public sector.

The fiber network project has been endorsed by the Medina County Commissioners, Brunswick City Council, Medina City Council, the City of Wadsworth, the Medina Area Chamber of Commerce, the Medina County District Library, Medina Hospital, Westfield Group, Medina County Schools' Educational Service Center, the University of Akron and others.

Anticipated Benefits & Estimated Impact on Medina County

As a new start, the principal purpose of the fiber network is economic development and job creation. Using a federally-accepted economic impact model utilized by OneCommunity to project job creation data for this and other American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects, MCPA projects that construction of the fiber network will create 69 new direct jobs in Medina County. After the project is started, the model projects a total of 218 new jobs in the county as a result of multiplier and network effects of the use of the fiber ring. With an average estimated weekly wage in Medina County of \$674, these 218 new jobs are estimated to add \$7.6 million in payroll to the county.

To attract businesses which have significant broadband needs, such as data centers, Medina County has to offer increased broadband access, which can best be provided by MCPA through its neutral platform.

The rural nature of Medina County has led to a minimum level of competition which has resulted in higher costs and restricted connectivity. This fiber network will allow Medina County to become more competitive, as well as to maintain the growth and financial stability it needs to compete on a regional and global basis.

The fiber network will also allow the County to address some significant challenges facing the public and private sector as the demand for broadband services continues to grow. These issues include: 1) Convergence of voice, video, and data content networks; 2) Connectivity obstacles in Medina County; 3) Growing importance of connectivity services for economic development, including retention of existing businesses, attraction of new businesses and facilitation of education and job training.

In addition to these benefits, MCPA, in working with selected provider OneCommunity, will be able to leverage OneCommunity's Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rural Health Care Pilot Grant for regional fiber that will connect 22 counties throughout Northeast Ohio. This will expand the viability of community broadband and facilitate regionalization, collaboration and sharing of resources, lessening the burden on government and facilitating regional economic development.

Proposed Route of Fiber Ring

