



April 26, 2017

Senate Committee on General Government and Accountability  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Riley and Members of the Committee,

The City of Eugene would like to express its support for HB 3213, which expands the contents of the report by the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council to the Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology to include role of broadband technology in local, state, and regional economics and economic development.

The City has been working for the last two years to implement our downtown fiber network. We have partnered with our local electric utility to build an open-access fiber network in our downtown. The fiber network is the City's top economic development priority. It is an essential tool to increase the number of jobs in our region and the average wage in our region.

Eugene's fiber network is greatly expanding internet connectivity. The buildings that are now part of the network have gigabit service. That means one gigabit per second, or 1,000 megabits per second and the price tag is \$99 per month. The fast service and its affordable rates are our infrastructure for the 21st century.

Quality telecommunications service is essential infrastructure for the 21st century, in the same way that having a freeway on-ramp in the 20th century was key for communities, and a railroad stop in the 19th century was key for communities. The lack of quality telecommunications will limit economic prosperity in the 21st century.

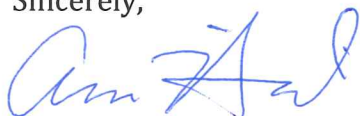
The City of Eugene has seen positive outcomes from our small fiber network. For example, a growing tech firm recently relocated from a small office in north Eugene to a larger space in downtown, because they wanted to have access to our fiber network. Another firm told us that if they could connect to the network, the expanded telecom service would allow them to take on a new project with an existing client. That project would require that they hire 40 new employees. But to create those 40 new jobs they, they need broadband.

As the City has worked to apply for non-local grant funds, local businesses have provided letters of support. Eighteen Eugene businesses wrote letters for one grant application, and those businesses estimated that they could create 215 new jobs—if they had better telecommunication services. The jobs are good jobs, paying about \$17,000 more year more than our region's median wage.

In Eugene, we have seen real evidence of how quality telecommunications infrastructure positively affects our economy.

If any of you have any doubts about the role that broadband plays in economic development , I would like to invite you to visit our small fiber network in Eugene. The City of Eugene would be happy to show the fiber infrastructure and the growing businesses that are using it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne Fifield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "F".

Anne Fifield  
Economic Development Planner