



TRANSFORMING AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE ONE PARTNERSHIP AT A TIME™



EXPANDING BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY TO UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED RURAL COMMUNITIES

Broadband touches almost every aspect of our lives — from electronically paying the balance of your utility bill to doing research online. Yet, those in rural communities don't always enjoy the same access to broadband as those living in larger communities. To help alleviate this digital divide, underserved and unserved rural municipalities are taking responsibility for building the infrastructure necessary to bring high-speed broadband services to their communities.

MOUNT WASHINGTON, MA

Mount Washington — one of Massachusetts' smallest towns — is located within the Mount Washington State Forest where internet was generally unavailable and cell service was sporadic at best. With only 145 full-time residents, Mount Washington had remained underserved by incumbent service providers. Determined to provide 21st century broadband services, the Town implemented a municipally owned communications network providing the critical infrastructure necessary to deliver high-speed broadband connectivity that otherwise would not exist.

Facing opposition, the Town sought special permission from the Massachusetts' state legislature to finance, own and operate a municipal FTTH network without having to set up a municipal light plant per Massachusetts law. Through overwhelming citizen support, the Governor signed a bill allowing Mount Washington authority to build and operate

the infrastructure. The Town maintains network ownership and selected a third-party service provider to offer end services to subscribers.

Mount Washington received \$230,000 in grant funding from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute which helped offset some of its network build costs. To cut back on construction costs, town residents chose whether fiber was connected to their homes. Those choosing a connection signed a three-year commitment, paying up front for high-speed internet and telephone services and contributed \$300 as a startup fee toward installation costs.

eX², in partnership with White Mountain Cable (a subsidiary of Dycom), provided Mount Washington with engineering and installation services, including final design, procurement and turn up and testing of the electronics. The network has dedicated fiber strands to each household and provides the capability to expand to all town buildings and residents who choose to pay monthly for these internet and telephone services.

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