1. **James Prihoda**

Our family is very excited to hear of Google's interest in Portland. Gigabit internet would have many advantages for us:

* Allow my wife and I to work from home (review large image files - Cat scan, Ultrasound) to better care for patients and be home for our children. Present internet makes download time slow so large detailed CT scans and ultrasound videos are difficult to view.
* Allow me to pursue my hobbies - for instance I am a photographer and videographer for children's sports teams. Now takes hours to upload video - this would be great for the sports teams. I could provide more video for training of our sports teams
* Fun - better streaming of TV, you tube, gaming.
* Competition for phone, Comcast etc - VERY MUCH NEEDED.
* Attract companies to Portland - and lower my taxes win win

How can we help?

We signed up for google info about this on the web site.

Thank you for your work. Looking forward to closed lanes on roads for this construction :) (really I am). Hope to have it soon

1. **Kathleen Courian-Sanchez**

I saw the Oregonian article about the requirements being met for Google Fiber, and wonder if they intend to provide service in N. Portland, specifically St. Johns, if they move forward with their plans?

Thank you!

1. **Evan Siroky**I urge you all to do as much as possible to bring Google Fiber to Portland.  As a software developer, reliable high speed internet is very important to me and I am excited at the prospect of having super-fast download speeds.  This would cause significant time savings for downloading software components that I need to perform work.  It will also be good for the city as there are a whole bunch of other possible uses for this that the technology industry in Portland could capitalize upon.
2. **Stephen Mewald**

Hey I just read Google fiber is looking at coming to Portland. I want you to approve this, this will benefit our beautiful city so much. If this is approved I will do anything to support your office.

1. **Robin Haberman**

You may know this already, but I just ran across a news article about Google Fiber looking at Portland as a possible candidate. Do you know of any way I could volunteer to help Portland with their response.

1. **Bob Soper II**

No doubt you're aware that Google is once again considering Portland for possible expansion of its fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) gigabit internet.

Most of us in Portland have one choice for broadband, and it is Comcast: an overpriced, slow speed, monopolistic service. As you may know, rather than investing in upgrading its network to FTTH, Comcast wants to spend $42 billion on acquiring its main rival, Time-Warner cable. This demonstrates that Portland's sole broadband provider would rather continue to gouge us than upgrade its infrastructure.

PLEASE do everything in your power to help Google Fiber set up its gigabit service in Portland... and if they pass us over again, I urge you to build upon the city's current fiber infrastructure to create a robust municipal FTTH network. If Chattanooga can do it, why not Portland? We desperately need an alternative to Comcast's crappy, overpriced internet service.

If there's anything I can do to help make this happen, please let me know.

1. **Will Worthy**

I had already signed up to show my interest but thank you for the information.

Maybe (say with the next art tax communication) have the watch list info sent to everyone to raise awareness.

After all the arts would benefit from this also.

Thank you for taking the time to respond so rapidly, this is why we love it here.

1. **Marc Week**

I would like to express my enthusiastic support for the development of Google fiber in Portland. Not only will this break the monopoly the cable companies has over Portland TV and internet consumers, it will be a Job creator for our growing Silicon Forrest. A few years ago I was a service member stationed in the Republic of Korea where I saw that inexpensive high speed internet has spurred industrial growth in ways that is hard to imagine with the 25mbps we have here.  I know that officials are sometimes reluctant to waive or permits and fees, but in this case gains to the city would be immeasurable. I implore you to do whatever you can to make this reality happen. I have faith that you will do the right thing.

1. **Will Worthy**

Speaking both a Librarian and private citizen I was VERY excited to learn that Google Fiber is trying to work with the City of Portland to bring ultra high speed connectivity to the city I love without the shady business model of the Comcast current near monopoly.

1. I urge you to not allow bureaucracy to halt this innovation, and put this potential piece of business were in belongs at the top of your agenda for the benefits of all Portland residents. Nothing but good can come to Portland residents and businesses by adding a real competitor to the mix.
2. **Josh Hanna**

For many years now, I have lived in Portland and the surrounding metro areas. One of my largest complaints about my hometown is the fact that Comcast has a near monopoly on Internet service. Yes, in some areas one can choose from frontier century link there's always DSL, but if you want reliable high-speed Internet you're stuck with Comcast. Why does that bother me? Two major reasons-their prices are outrageous, and their customer service is absolutely horrendous.

Both myself and my wife, and everybody I talk to, fully supports the idea of Google fiber coming to Portland. Portland is such a great city, up-and-coming, and having gigabit Internet speeds would only make it a better place to live.

1. **Adrian Cook**
I think this is a great idea. This gives choices to the consumer besides Comcast and the fee help fund families who need housing. Do it!
2. **Christopher Frazee**

I beg of you to not accept terms that will not supply coverage of the google fiber to not be delivered to the whole city.  Too long have this country has bent over backwards, and even paid for Telco Companies (via tax credits) to not deliver on their promises (<http://www.techdirt.com/articles/20131012/02124724852/decades-failed-promises-verizon-it-promises-fiber-to-get-tax-breaks-then-never-delivers.shtml> please note the baby bells are also guilty of this same sham, and received billions in tax credits to deliver fiber to every house in the us, and never delivered), and now we are looking to go even farther and say it is ok.  What would the city say to the phone, electric, or gas companies if they said, "Sorry we cannot supply service to everyone."  We would still have a lot of houses without water and sewer.   This is not any different, if they want to make Portland somewhere where they want to do business, they do it with the whole city.  All or nothing.  Yes, I would love to have fiber to my house, and I will be one of those people whom pay for it if it is offered, but not at the exclusion of others.  That is ridiculous.

1. **Atticus Daniel**

I'm writing to let you know my friends and neighbors in St. Johns are very excited about the prospect of Google Fiber in our neighborhood. I understand that you are working to bring the service to North Portland and I wanted to thank you for your efforts and affirm the strong interest St. Johns has in the service.

1. **Dave Royer**

 I watched the May 7 City Council session on the Google Fiber franchise agreement with great interest. I'm fortunate enough to be one of the more well-off residents of Portland, working in the IT industry, and if the service is actually implemented most likely my neighborhood will end up being one of the "fiberhoods". Personally I am very much looking forward to the opportunity to switch from Comcast cable for phone/internet to Google Fiber, and hopefully the introduction of real competition would lead Comcast to improve the value of their service as well.

But just as important to me are the values we have in Portland around equity and opportunity, especially in making information technology accessible as widely as possible, given its ability to empower often-disadvantaged groups.

So while I understand Google's business decision to only build out fiberhoods where there are sufficient signups, I think Portland should aggressively exploit the opportunity Google is providing for the free service with $300 startup, by using the franchise fees to subsidize lower-income and disadvantaged Portlanders, as suggested by Commissioner Fish and others. I would go so far as to dedicate the full franchise fee revenues to that purpose, with the explicit goal to reach as close to 100% Portland fiberhood coverage as possible. I think that would also set a good example for Beaverton and Gresham, to encourage them in the same direction.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

1. **Gina Stalsberg**

As a consumer, I feel it is a necessity to have more options available to us for Internet use. Please do all you can to have Portland be one of Google's cities to provide these services. Comcast is basically robbing us!

1. **Rick Seifert**

 I urge you to require Google to underground all its new facilities, wires and razor-wired-protected "huts." Our commercial streets are blighted with wires and tech paraphernalia. At the very least use franchise money to underground in Metro-designated down centers. Hillsdale, which has fought for undergrounding on Capitol Highway for years, would be an excellent place to start. Note that Southwest Transit Corridor improvements are expected to be made there and on Barbur.

1. **Sean Magee**

This would be an amazing opportunity and the existing legacy providers are so noncompetitive and frankly, evil.

1. **Phil Japely**

I sure hope the people building their network are paid a decent wage...
Wait! Its Google, why would they do that?
Enjoy your 5 percent citizens.
Sincerely,
An amused Portlander.

1. **John Blomgren**It is my understanding that there was a City Council meeting Wednesday that discussed the possibility of implementing city-wide WiFi. As a small business owner who is currently dependent on using Comcast as my internet provider I cannot express well enough my deep frustration with the limited options we have for accessing the Internet. My business necessitates a reliable and affordable Internet connection not only for communication purposes but for processing transactions and receiving payment. On numerous occasions Comcast has proven to be less than reliable and has actually cost my company hundreds if not thousands of dollars in lost revenue over the years. Not to mention the countless hours that I have wasted trying to get an issue resolved and dealing with their incredibly incompetent customer service. I have lost my patience with them so many times now that at this point my expectations for good customer service or them responding to my needs is non-existent. Business owners and people of lower income would benefit exponentially by the introduction of a city-wide internet service that would serve as an alternative to Comcast.

Please take this testimony into consideration when you are weighing out the arguments for and against. And please do not let the opinions of Comcast influence your decision-making as they have no interest in anything but their own monopoly and ability to make profits.

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At the very least use franchise money to underground in Metro-designated down centers.

1. **Pinfold, Wilfred**

This is excellent news!

1. **Rick Seifert**

Hillsdale, which has fought for undergrounding on Capitol Highway for years, would be an excellent place to start. Note that Southwest Transit Corridor improvements are expected to be made there and on Barbur.

1. **Anton Vetterlein**

It has come the attention of Friends of Terwilliger that a potential Google "fiber hut" location has been proposed on Portland Parks and Recreation property at the intersection of SW Terwilliger Blvd. and Sam Jackson Park Rd. (next to 2800 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd.) Friends of Terwilliger believes that it is inappropriate to locate an industrial/utility structure on Terwilliger Parkway. PP&R currently leases this property to a gas station who uses it to access their pumps and for commercial car parking. It is unfortunate that a portion of the parkway was converted to commercial use at some time in the distant past, but there is no need to add insult to injury by further developing this site for non-park uses. It is our hope that the PP&R lot will someday be returned to park use; it will be much easier to restore if it doesn't have any further development on it than the current asphalt.

Goal A of the Terwilliger Parkway Corridor Plan (adopted by Portland City Council ordinance in 1983) is "To preserve and enhance the scenic character and natural beauty of Terwilliger Parkway and Boulevard." We firmly contend that fiber huts and smaller fiber boxes violate "the scenic character and natural beauty of Terwilliger Parkway and Boulevard" and that they are inappropriate anywhere along the parkway. We should also add that we object in principle to the conversion of any park property for locating utility equipment unrelated to park uses.

1. **Jeremy Schroeder**

I just wanted to pass on a word of support for the Google Fiber rollout in Portland.  We will gladly be moving to Google Fiber in our new building at 511 Broadway when it becomes available.  If needed I'd like to start conversations to become a "fiberhut" for the North park blocks.  We are in the middle of the building renovation and the conversation would go well I think.

Thanks for your work and time

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Thanks for your work and time

1. **Victoria Grandetta** Why can’t Portland just do internet as a utility at a moderate price with profits to go to the city and no identity theft.
2. **Cameron Brown**

I recently started researching whom I could buy broadband internet from in the 97202 area. The only realistic options are Comcast and CenturyLink. I was considering choosing CenturyLink, until I started reading reviews of their service. They receive far worse reviews than Comcast; I didn't think that was possible. I currently use Comcast, and I honestly have never had a bad experience with them. But the fastest residential speed they offer is 50 Mbps, that comes with a price of $65 per month. Google Fiber will offer 1 Gbps for $70. That's 20 times faster for 5 extra dollars per month!

We need Google Fiber in Portland to spur some competition here and to give Comcast an actual competitor. I'm tired of only having one choice for a legitimate internet connection here.

Thank you for reading this and please vote in favor of bringing Google Fiber to Portland.

1. **Frank H. Hilton Jr.**

I am writing you because of your work regarding the potential acquisition of Time Warner Cable by Comcast.

I am a member of the Board of the Fontaine Homeowner's Association in Portland. The Fontaine is an 89-unit 16-floor condominium. Decades ago The Fontaine signed an agreement for the installation of cable service with Comcast's predecessor, Cablesystems Pacific.

Recently Comcast approached our Board to "renew" the contract and I enclose a copy of its proposed contract.

Under the guise of renewing the old contract Comcast is attempting to cement a monopoly for the provision or internet and TV cable services by seeking a permanent, exclusive easement. See Sec. l(a) and (b) of Services Agreement and Grant of Easement.

I am told by the City of Portland that Comcast does not own the Homerun Wiring based on cable wire rules. By the proposed "renewal" of their contract they seek to block competitors from using the Homerun Wiring, and competition is coming to Portland.

I urge you to continue your resistance to Comcast's takeover of Time Warner Cable. I also urge Congress to adopt legislation that prohibits cable companies from obtaining by contract the exclusive use of Homerun Wiring.

1. **Tamara Tripp**

Let's be the change we want to see in the world!

1. **Inga Fisher Williams**

As the Portland City Council deliberates on the details of this agreement, it is critical that [beyond the income from franchise fees] certain deliverables are included and anchored as high priorities in the future contract.

This proposed contract should be seen as a technical innovation for the future and anticipate the City's needs just as the Comprehensive Planning process and capital improvement budgets look at the City as whole, considering its ramifications for quality, equity, future needs and consistency with the values of the community.

In that context, I wish to make the following points that address a number of public policy considerations:

(1) de facto 'exclusive' City Franchise

An agreement that is open-ended with respect to selection of neighborhoods and leaves the choice of service territory up to the franchisee, Google, is not in the interest of the citizens of Portland. It will allow Google to select "best prospects" and skim off those areas with the highest financial return. This makes the franchise agreement in effect an exclusive franchise as there is no likelihood that another provider will find it an attractive option to expand the service into the lower ROI neighborhoods of Portland.

One would expect the City to advocate for an averaging of costs (and returns) from highest to least profitable parts of the City - perhaps with a phased built-out over time - but a commitment to service for everyone nevertheless.  The Council discussion on a proposal to subsidize subscriber fees for lower income residents is not the same as guaranteeing access to connectivity.

The public policy goal should be an inclusive provision of services and provide a guarantee that the City is not carved up into "fiberhoods" and Google-ghettos".

(2) Value

As an exclusive franchise, the proposed contract with Google has a much greater value than a shared franchise, i.e., garbage collection; and, this ought to be reflected in the City's fee structure. The City has a mandate to advocate within the process of negotiating on behalf of its citizens a franchise fee income structuring that covers the proposed life time of the cables. Once the construction has commenced, the City's leverage to negotiate fees is much diminished.

(3) Other public policy considerations

Aside from revenue generation, the City's service priorities should be reflected in the contract terms.
Therefore the City should designate certain facilities and institutions as priorities for providing Internet access via fiber optic cable. A tiered structure of priority targets should reflect the City's public service priorities, taking into account that neither the franchisee nor any other private entity or corporate interests will do so.

High on that list ought to be the 'education community', i.e., Multnomah County libraries, high schools and magnet schools, technical institutes, PSU, PCC, UP, UO, etc.

In the next tier for priority service the designation should include relevant local, state and federal government sites, the Port of Portland, etc. A third tier level priorities might include hospitals, target industries, Starbuck-type Wi-Fi providers, etc.  The input from corporate and business leaders will no doubt flesh out sectors for inclusion as part of a Portland 'business climate' consideration.

In conclusion, the approval of an exclusive franchise is equivalent to selling a valuable City commodity and the City needs to hold applicants to a higher standard in Portland than asking for profit-sharing via franchise fees.

1. **Don Westlight**

Hello Portland City Council

Today you must decide whether or not to pass a fiber hut license with Google to allow them to develop fiber to the home. Please make this happen.

I’m not going to talk about OHSU’s interest as I believe Dr. Miles Ellenby has already done so. Broadband to the home will be useful for healthcare serving our aging in place population among other healthcare needs. Broadband will also be useful to education, outreach, civic involvement, and indirectly tax revenue.

I’m here to talk about infrastructure. I’ve delivered several successful broadband projects over the past sixteen years. I was the lead engineer on Portland’s Internet2 bid in ‘98 for Oregon Graduate Institute, PSU, and OHSU. In 2000, I co-founded the regional Internet Exchange (NWAX) which ties various public and private networks together to improve Internet quality in our region. In 2007 I wrote the technical plan for the Oregon Health Network, one of the most successful programs of its type in the country - deploying across multiple providers to over 300 underserved areas around the state, so I have an idea what is involved and at stake in this proposal

I’m sure there are aspects of this franchise agreement that some among us don’t like. It was much the same in the 1800s when this country was building the great railroads. In simple terms, the towns that did not get a railroad deal are either gone, or quaint places to stop on the way to somewhere else. Those with railroads had the opportunity to develop into the 20th century, and many are still viable today, Portland among them.

Timothy Geitner has recently been in the news defending his actions during the financial meltdown and subsequent bailouts. His position was simple – quit focusing on the banks and instead focus on the public. Mr. Geitner did everything in his power to reduce the severity and duration of the depression following the economic collapse. Tim Geitner succeeded.

The google deal is a good deal even though it won’t initially serve everyone, and you shouldn’t be looking at Google as a direct source of revenue. You are not going to get a better deal, nor does Portland have the resources to do this ourselves… something about roads and length of school year...

Portland recently went through the exercise of developing a civic broadband plan. The very first stated goal in this plan is “Portland attracts Broadband intensive businesses and institutions.” This goal was placed first because this would enable all subsequent activity. Google can help you do that, all they need is some space for junction boxes and permitting. Please make it happen.

1. **Rob Wilcox**

I'm Rob Wilcox, policy and technical consultant in optical communications and utility infrastructure.

There were no human-made structures in our area before about 30,000 years ago. Today we have streets, utility poles, fire hydrants and signposts in our right of way, all dedicated to public good. We have buildings in our parks and on City lands, dedicated to the public good.

I support this measure to add cabinets to the City right of way and equipment buildings to City properties. To do so is the greatest benefit Portland can provide to every Portlander; for public good.

A fiber network to our homes, with expanded bandwidth, with (follow on last mile Internet providers and) Google's laser focus on cost efficiency, speed and quality, makes possible:

- well paid jobs, including professionals seeking our quality of life who telecommute to companies based out of town

- telecommuting reducing our carbon footprint and wear on our roads

- better quality online education and job retraining

- greater fidelity video exchanges between parents and children

- a boost to our startup community which can prototype new applications, creating new businesses

- a reliable path for cloud-managed medical, energy efficiency, security services and more

Council and the bureaus mediate between residents who want no change, and those who want rapid change. Its role is to listen to each, and chart a path that benefits the overwhelming middle, looking forward to the future.

Yes, these cabinets will be in front of 250 Portlander's homes. I have spoken to friends who would volunteer for curbside cabinets in front of their homes. We can reach out to homeowners who may have cabinets in the city right of way near their property and create a harmonious solution.

The equipment should be a point of pride, a gateway to the Internet, and something to be protected by the neighborhood, and celebrated.

We support the Bureau to Transportation program to develop a library of options to harmonize the cabinets with the neighborhood, including photographic landscape or art wraps, plantings, adjacent owner benefits and more. We believe they will do so.

I'm proud of Portland for its change from baseball speed to basketball speed in City approval processes to bring better Internet connections to our neighborhoods.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide experience to Council.

1. **Cece Hughley Noel**

Re: Support of Google Fiber Franchise Ordinance,

Second Reading, June 11, 2014

Dear Portland City Council,

Portland Community Media (PCM) is writing in support of the Google Fiber Franchise

Agreement presented to the City Council for its second reading on June 11, 2014. The

adoption of this Franchise Agreement implements a key strategy in the City’s Broadband

Strategic Plan, adopted by City Council in 2011.

PCM participated in the development of the Broadband Strategic Plan (BSP), providing

insight to the recommendations and goals of the Digital Inclusion and Civic Engagement

strategies. As such, PCM recommends that City Council consider going further in

adopting this franchise with Google by incorporating recommendations from the

Broadband Strategic Plan simultaneously to ensure that the equity and inclusion goals of

the plan are supported by dedicating 1% of Google Fiber Franchise Fees to Digital

Inclusion Programs and services.

The Broadband Strategic Plan under Goal 2, recommends dedicated funding and City

staff to support community groups and institutions that can work in partnership with the

City to close the digital divide. This strategy will establish practices and policies to

create equity for all communities to access broadband services.

Having affordable access to the internet is essential, but having the skills to use the

devices to access the internet are just as important. Without increased access and training,

people in marginalized communities will have even less opportunity to work and

participate in this new networked society.

PCM is committed to support our most vulnerable populations by providing them with

the training and support to be active online and to benefit from the opportunities to

learn, connect with their neighbors, families and communities, apply for jobs, access

services and many of the other activities people who have access to the internet can do.

We urge City Council to provide the means to close the gap by dedicating the funds to

support our shared equity and digital inclusion goals by adopting the Google Franchise

Agreement with a dedicated 1% of franchise fees to Digital Inclusion Programs and

services.

1. **Steve Nelson**

I had a question about your work to deploy Google Fiber.  I am a big fan of this project.  I would imagine many Portland residents will object to the fiber guts and closets.  To mitigate that issue, is it possible, or would a city like Portland and the Google Corporation consider leasing part of a private residence, that could be secured?  Like someone's basement with a separate residence?  I live in Ladds Addition in Portland and I imagine my fellow residence would scream at a hut or even a cabinet being placed in the public right if way.  I own a very large basement in a large duplex on SE Ladd Ave close to Hawthorne.  I am willing to bet that there are home owners in all the targeted cities who would be happy to lease space to advance telecom build outs that would reduce the public complaints in the process.  In an area like Ladds that has ally's behind every street it might be interesting.  I'm not selling my property in the next 20 years and have owned it since 1995.

Just a thought.  Thank you for all of your efforts to bring this project to  Portland.

1. **Carl Vandersanden**

Portland Broadband Plan calls for providing fiber. Portland doesn’t meet any of the criteria of excellent internet. Comcast only values profit, not product, customer service, honesty or integrity. Predatory. Excellent internet is becoming more important than a library network. Asimportant as a transportation system. It’s local government’s role to ensure that the this essential service is excellent.

**INTERNET SERVICE IN PORTLAND**

What is “Excellent Internet for Portland”?

1. Fast - world class speed.
2. Reliable connectivity; you can depend on it for business operations.
3. Easy to order, purchase, set up without spending huge amounts of time.

1. Clear product - you know what you’re buying (an honest vendor)
2. Reliable customer service - they show when they say and do what you bought.
3. Predictable, clear, standardized, consistent, appropriate and adequately disclosed pricing.
4. Accurate tech support - technicians give accurate information and advice.
5. Problems with service and performance are promptly addressed.
6. Easy access throughout the city.
7. “Universal service” (concept from the days of building the telephone system). We strive for everyone in the city to have access.
8. Access & price promotes entrepreneurs and new businesses in this small business city. (Portland benefits from a large percentage of small businesses, and a diverse and thus resilient local economy.)
9. Ensures net neutrality and protection from censorship - complete & equal access to all content.
10. Improves & develops with technical & social advances, and the needs of the city & its population.

**We believe that:**

* Internet access is more important than a library network.
* Excellent internet is as important as an excellent transportation system.
* Internet in Portland does not meet any of the criteria listed above - we do not have excellent internet.
* It is our local governments’ role to ensure that this essential service is excellent.

**POSSIBLE STRATEGIES THAT THE CITY COULD USE TO IMPROVE INTERNET**

*(These are typical strategies used to improve the provision of a service or product.)*

1. Systematic tracking, monitoring & reporting of service & performance - “we’re watching”
	1. For example, at the simplest level, do Mary Beth & The Mayor’s office track complaints?
2. Requiring specific disclosures from ISPs.
	1. performance, price, product.
3. Having/stating expected performance standards (product and service) of ISPs.
4. Imposing penalties for non-compliance or poor performance.
	1. tax, franchise fees, reimbursement to customers, fines, tie existing fees to performance. Etc.
5. Advocacy for consumers. (CUB, Ombudsman, etc.)
6. Imposing accessibility standards, so that the population of the city can easily access the internet.
	1. For example, in Paris, if your ISP provides a wi-fi box, it creates 2 networks, yours and a second public one so that anyone can access the signal.
7. Provide alternatives/competition (other private operators)
	1. Subsidizing new systems or ISPs.
	2. Accommodating new providers by allowing easy access, low cost right-of-way, etc.
8. Promote community efforts to provide internet access.
	1. for example the work of PersonalTelco. (personaltelco.net)
9. Open & expand existing publicly owned systems
	1. free wifi around all public buildings (city, county, school, libraries)
	2. share them with PersonalTelco
10. Municipalize/”publicize” (the opposite of privatize) current IPSs or their assets.
11. Start a new, publicly owned (fiber-optic based) internet service provider.
	1. Who? City? Library District?
12. Involve the PDC to start laying fiber-optic cable in regions of the city that are targeted for urban renewal.
13. In general, we need to broaden the idea of “development” beyond “districts” and “transportation”, and include the concept that development is virtual as well, and that creating an excellent internet network is a form of development.
14. Other strategies that we’re not aware of.

**OUR HOPE:**

We want the city, as it says in the strategic plan, to act boldly to address this, to take necessary action so that Portland & Portlanders have excellent internet service. How can we make this happen?

1. **Amber Case – Director of Esri’s Portland R&D Center**

Esteemed Portland City Council members,

My name is Amber Case. I'm a member of the software development industry.

I've lived in Portland for the past 8 years. I am here today in support of the Google Fiber Initiative.

Sony Ericsson states that by 2020 -- just six years from now -- 50 billion digital devices will be in use. Optimizing those devices and the new opportunities they could unlock for cities, businesses and individuals, will require a new level of connectivity. For a city like Portland, that means building a fiber-based infrastructure for the bandwidth we know we need but do not have.

I urge you to take Google Fiber very seriously — for at least two highly interconnected reasons. The first is to increase the overall quality of life in and around Portland. To be able to leverage all of our connected devices, sensors and services as they multiply. To use them to track, research and improve the city's safety and medical services, our education, traffic, pollution trends, watershed changes and all our urban ecologies. This is the only way we can afford to maintain and improve the quality of life here. But it will require a level of connectivity far beyond anything Portland's Internet providers offer today.

The second reason is to improve Portland's competitive edge as a small but innovative city participating in a global information economy. Our open source, geeky communities, programming skills, food, fashion, design, and green lifestyle have already won us a place on the global map. But ultimately, what makes economies and companies prosper in an information economy is connectivity and the access to data it enables. Portland still lacks the last piece in all this -- which is modernizing our connectivity.

A few years ago I helped create a start-up here for low-power mobile technology. We had many opportunities to move it to the Silicon Valley, but when we were acquired by a 30 billion dollar global company based in California, we argued that being in Portland was a strategic advantage. Our quality of life is an asset in hiring and feeds creativity. Our small size enables agility.

Recently, however, we did have to move offices to a connectivity hub. Better connectivity attracts better talent. Without it you risk frustrating talent. Meanwhile, many of my friends in high tech have abandoned Portland for the faster Internet available in places like South Korea and Japan. My own recent visit to South Korea (to give a talk on technological change) was eye opening. The speed with which products and services can be developed there totally outpaces what we can do here. Korean students learn from home quickly with high bandwidth. They are able to play with large data-sets and do graduate-level work while still in high school or even middle school. Why don't we have that Portland?

Connectivity is opportunity. I cannot say it simpler.

The kind of connectivity Google Fibre offers nests well with our identity as a city and even better with the economic future to which we aspire. I see Portland becoming a major center of research and development for tech companies globally. I intend to build my next company here. But still I worry that my development — and our city’s development as well — will be stunted by our lack of world-class connectivity.

That is why I urge the City of Portland and all it’s departments... with all possible speed...to affirm and embrace the Google Fiber Initiative... and open up our city gates... to the Gigabit Opportunity. Thank you.

1. **Kate Titus**

Common Cause Oregon commends the City Council and the Office for Community Technology for your leadership to expand internet infrastructure and access in Portland. That said, we are concerned that the proposed Google Fiber franchise agreement may prove shortsighted, precluding the opportunity for publicly controlled internet infrastructure, selling short the goal of universally shared access, and potentially leaving us at the mercy of a new cable/internet monopolist several years down the road.

Our interest in this issue stems from recognizing that inclusive and informative communications networks are key to a functioning democracy. For this reason Common Cause supports connecting Americans to the best broadband possible, on affordable and nondiscriminatory terms. We also promote media diversity and localism, through policies – including local franchise agreements – that support media vibrancy.

Like many cities across the country, Portland recognizes the economic and community development opportunity that gigabit fiber represents. Many cities have indicated that they are prepared to expedite permitting or otherwise relax right of way obligations, thus enticing providers such as Google to offer the highest level of service available. However, as Portland City Commissioners consider the Google Fiber franchise proposal, we urge that you proceed with caution, since the terms of this agreement may inadvertently set troubling precedents and undermine future franchising negotiations.

The City manages a franchise process for a reason, serving important hard-won public interests. The process should guarantee quality service throughout the city at reasonable prices, ensure that public rights of way are used appropriately, and provide a basis for an engaged and informed electorate via community media outlets that run programming not seen elsewhere on the television dial.

While Common Cause welcomes the commitments Google has made in the proposed franchise agreement as well as those expressed verbally, it is important to note that trading the use of public assets for verbal commitments and a few good will gestures is not good precedent. A commitment to make a minimum level of service for residents across the city should be ratified contractually through a traditional franchising process, since any provider may later revisit said commitments. Trading strong public interest requirements in exchange for speeds today may induce other current or future franchisees to seek similar accommodations, a troubling “race to the bottom.”

The City should tread carefully in pursuing any provider – even one offering very high speeds – because doing so may foreclose other options that would deliver more communitarian benefits – such as municipal or not-for-profit provision.

Thank you for considering this input, and for your service to this community.

1. **Michael Liimatta**

I just wanted to reach out to you since we have been dealing with Google Fiber for about three years now.

We have worked hard to fill in the large gaps left by them where it comes to the Digital Divide.  Google Fiber's coming to Kansas City certainly accentuated the huge gap between the digital have and have nots.

By itself, Google Fiber has more potential to increase the Digital Divide by giving faster Internet to those who already have it while leaving those without even farther behind.  That's why it is so important in these early stages to begin formulating a strategy to keep that from happening.  It's especially important for the low income populations that is mostly renters and whose landlords are unlikely to pay for the fiber drops in their properties.

Also, a community wide educational effort is also needed, along with a plan for providing inexpensive computers to those who could not otherwise afford them.

Here is a pretty complete run down of our organization's dealings with Google Fiber since they came to KC almost three years ago and what we have done to make sure no on in our city is left out of the digital revolution:

<http://www.connectingforgood.org/history/>