

Charlemont Fiber Network Status June 12, 2021

Construction Update

Charlemont's Municipal Fiber Network is going live! The town is on track to light the first fiber service area in July, serving most of the village and homes along South River Road. Other service areas will come online throughout the rest of the year. Maps and schedules for the remaining service areas are available online at www.charlemontconnect.org.

Getting Connected

Internet service is provided by Whip City Fiber, a division of Westfield Gas and Electric. You can sign up for service at www.whipcityfiber.com/charlemont or by calling 413-485-1251. Internet service is \$79.99 per month for 1 Gbps and optional phone service is an additional \$19.99 per month. If you have underground utilities, installations are already in progress in some parts of town and will continue throughout the summer. If you sign up for a year of service now, during the network build out, the town will pay up to \$1400 towards the cost of a standard installation. For most locations, this will cover the full cost of installation. For more details, including information on "cold drops" and special programs for rental properties, see the town's drop policy on the town web site or at www.charlemontconnect.org.

Special Programs

A new federal program called EBBP (Emergency Broadband Benefit Program) provides a discount of \$50/month (\$59/month if combined with the FCC Lifeline program) for qualified households. Qualifications are based on income, having a student at Hawlemont, or having lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. See ebb.whipcityfiber.com for details.

Finances

The project remains on budget with no major problems. Over 350 homes have already signed up for service, a 50% sign up rate. We are hoping to achieve a 70% sign up rate to eliminate any future tax impact. To date, we have received over \$1.4 million dollars in state and federal funding for this project and we anticipate receiving up to \$900,000 of additional grant funding. We continue to look for additional sources of grant funding.

We are projecting a balanced budget (warrant article 6) for the next fiscal year, the first year of operations. This budget funds operation of the network out of subscriber revenue and has no impact on the tax rate.

More Information

Regular project updates are posted at www.charlemontconnect.org and on the [CharlemontFiber Facebook page](#). You can reach the broadband committee at broadband@charlemont-ma.us or leave a message at 413-337-1199.