

Case Studies: Community fiber pays off

Key concepts

- Telecommunications and technology are now critical public infrastructure
- Investments pay off in increased economic development
- Community networks pay for themselves

Case One

	Waterloo, IA	Cedar Falls, IA
Water/Sewer	53,900,000 capacity	25,000,000 capacity
Sanitation	36,500,000 capacity	7,680,000 capacity
Elec/Gas	MidAmerican	Municipal
Airport	yes	no
Industrial parks	(3) 2,275 acres	(1) 1,350 acres
Cost of land	less expensive	10%-20% higher
Housing	\$72,000 median	\$105,000 median
Roads	Interstate access	Interstate access
Businesses in industrial parks	10	125
New construction	1996 - \$58 mil 2001 - \$76 mill 2002 - \$53 mil	1996 - \$32 mil 2001 - \$65 mill 2002 - \$101 mil
Telecom	Tied to cable/DSL	Municipal, city-wide telecom network
Schools	Using expensive T1 circuits	Use less expensive municipal fiber
Population	68,747 (+3.4%)	36,145 (+5.3%)
Comments	“I believe it has hurt us economically not to be able to provide fiber optics to businesses locating in our city.” Mayor Roof (Waterloo)	“(Communities) that harness its power and the opportunities it presents will stand tall as great powers and those that do not will shrink in every aspect of civilization.” Michael Powell, Chairman, FCC

Source: Cedar Valley Economic Development Corp.

Case Two

- Tillsonburg, Ontario adopted a technology strategic plan in 1999
- Town leveraged an investment in municipal fiber and wireless
- Businesses say, “Tillsonburg is a better place to do business because of the fiber network.”
- Town lowered tax rates by 2% when nearby communities raised them 4-5%
- More than 80% of citizens and businesses satisfied with Town operation of the network
- More than 2/3 of citizens and businesses thought the investment was worthwhile
- Implementation cost--\$1,253,279, or \$84 per citizen
- Benefits--\$2,126,441, or \$142 per citizen

Source: Strategic Networks Group



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