

Selected Project Descriptions

GIGABIT NETWORK EXPANSION

Gigabit networks are 100 times faster than typical broad band networks. Faster speeds will enable small businesses to more quickly and seamlessly:

- Upload, download and share large data files and images,
- Back-up data remotely in the cloud at one or multiple locations, and
- Conduct videoconferences with suppliers, business partners, and customers.

Other benefits include:

- Telemedicine,
- Education Applications
- Cloud computing as a way for small business to have access to an IT network with a much lower investment threshold.

As application development continues to advance, companies and residents will demand faster speeds and bandwidth capacity. Falmouth schools are experiencing ever-increasing bandwidth demands as computer-enabled education and internet applications are becoming essential teaching tools.

Bandwidth expansion has caused Town network expenditures to increase significantly as we ask our third party providers to increase speeds and capacity. If we want to be able to keep up with advancements in software and applications, a gigabit network throughout the Town is a necessity for continued economic development.

Town staff have met with Oxford Networks, GWI and Fairpoint about ways to build a Town network and leverage that network in a public-private partnership to expand fiber coverage throughout the Town. Many communities in Maine and around the country are building their own gigabit networks or looking at innovative ways to facilitate private investment in gigabit-speed networks by optimizing deployment times and costs.

Sources:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/community-based_broadband_report_by_executive_office_of_the_president.pdf

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/revenue/article/482965?>

<http://mdf.org/publications/Maines-Investment-Imperative-II-Unleashing-the-Potential/283/>

<http://www.maine.gov/connectme/about/docs/GigabitCommunities.pdf>

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

A revolving loan fund (RLF) is a gap financing measure primarily used for development and expansion of small businesses. It is a self-replenishing pool of money, utilizing interest and principal payments on old loans to issue new ones. Often the RLF is a bridge between the amount the borrower can obtain on the private market and the amount needed to start or sustain a business. For example, a borrower may obtain 60 to 80 percent of project financing from other sources.

Revolving loan funds provide critical financing when credit access is limited, supporting the development and expansion of local businesses and other special initiatives. While a revolving loan fund cannot finance projects on its own, it is an integral part of the small business loan package. Borrowers benefit from flexible and favorable terms, and financial institutions enjoy lower overall risk in supporting small businesses. The results include new jobs, new businesses, and a healthier local economy.

As a public investment instrument, revolving loan funds are expected to result in public goods – namely projects contributing to economic growth and community revitalization. Borrowers therefore, must address performance measures established by the loan administrator such as:

- Number and type of jobs created or retained
- Increase in tax revenue
- Private funding relative to public investment, and
- Benefits to low and moderate-income citizens, from business ownership to job opportunities.