



## ***Connecticut cities lead Northeast gigabit push***

Fairfield County Business Journal

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The Fairfield County Business Journal highlights the fact that the OCC has spearheaded the effort to respond to the demand that OCC's Listening Tours have uncovered among residents, businesses, and municipalities in Connecticut. All sectors of the state's economy are demanding cheaper, faster, more reliable Internet services as an essential tool to develop and grow high-tech business and social sectors such as bioscience, aviation, and healthcare and education.

As the map created by the OCC and displayed in this article clearly indicates, no Gig networks are presently planned for development in Connecticut or New England. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) described in the article promises to start a process for Connecticut industry and municipal governments to successfully collaborate through public-private partnerships to develop reasonably-priced ultra-high speed gigabit "Gig" fiber networks. It is hoped that Internet service providers from around the US and globe will be attracted to the municipalities participating in this RFQ, either stimulate true competition in the broadband market, or at least demonstrate the threat of competition which will spark increased speeds and access at reasonable prices. The current market for broadband services in Connecticut is unfortunately characterized by below-average speeds at excessive prices, with gigabit service only available for the largest companies in the state at prices of many thousands of dollars a month.

The OCC is sponsoring an open-invitation meeting at Middletown's city hall on October 31<sup>st</sup> to provide guidance to all interested municipalities for submitting a Municipal Addendum in order to join the project described in the Request for Qualifications, and hopefully lead to successful public-private partnerships that will furnish ultra-high speed Internet access in Connecticut.

We would note that statements of Bill Vallee of this office were perhaps subject to typographical errors: the US pays three-to-four times as much for much slower Internet access than does South Korea, not 3-400 times. Also, the term "fiber" and "glass" are often used interchangeably for fiber optic cables that permit ultra-high speed access, not "fiberglass."