

April 12, 2021



Special points of interest:

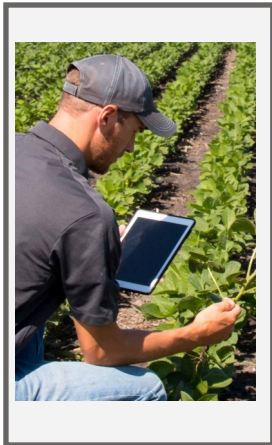
- Broadband Survey
- Gov. Evers recognizes Town of Cross
- 2021 Year of Broadband Access
- Partnering with CCT
- CCT Bid and Government Funding Offsets

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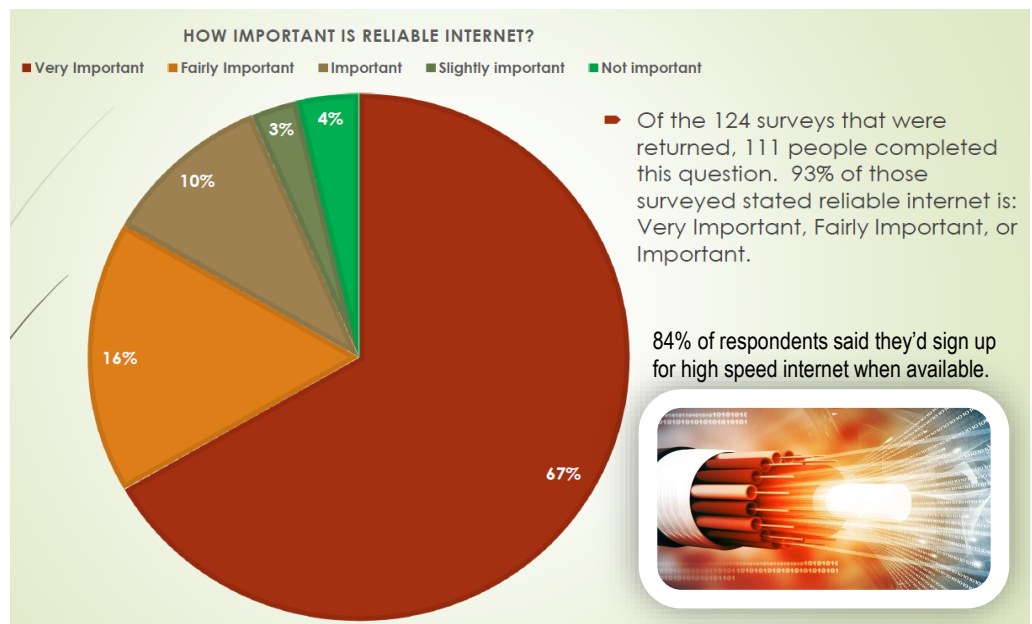
Broadband Update

Overwhelming Community Support for Broadband

Based on the results of our broadband internet survey last December, it became obvious how important reliable internet is to our

community. The majority of respondents said that they don't have adequate internet with comments ranging from parents

whose children cannot do school lessons to employed residents who can't work efficiently from home.



Broadband Sub-Committee on the Move

The Broadband committee has come along way since the survey in December. Board members and committee members joined forces to make the appropriate contacts and file the right papers. In a press release from Governor Evers, Town of Cross was announced as one of six communities selected for the new Broadband Connectors Pilot program. "As families, business owners, and communities across the state continue to face the challenges of

the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for affordable, accessible high-speed broadband is perhaps more important now than ever," said Governor Evers. "This joint program will provide support and resources to help local communities get connected." The joint pilot program will provide technical assistance to help these communities apply for federal, state, and private-sector broadband expansion funds. Evers, "2021—Year of Broadband."



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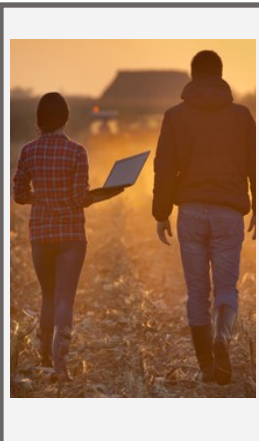


Did You Know:



A fiber-to-the-home connection can raise a home's value by 3%

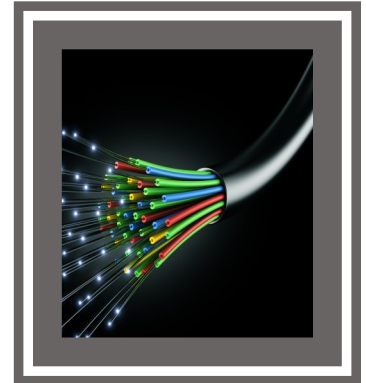
<https://magazine.realtor/technology/feature/article/2020/09/broadbands-inequities>



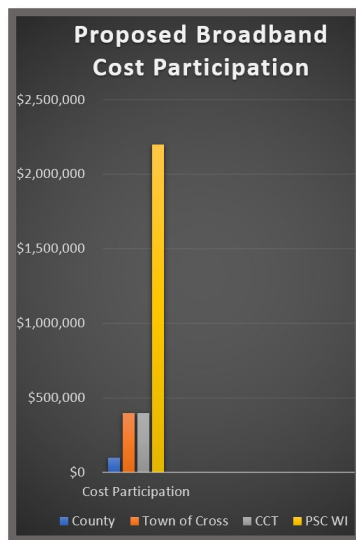
Partnering with Cochrane Co-op Telephone (CCT)

Bringing broadband fiber optic internet to our community requires a partner with the capability of providing the infrastructure and services. Interviews were had with three potential providers to determine their interest in helping us with the goal of having Fiber to the Home (FTTH). This includes plowing-in the cables, bringing the fiber into your

home, and making all necessary connections. The provider would need to include all of this in the initial bid—all inclusive. Of the three providers, CCT met all conditions and has expressed interest to partner with us on the project. This is great news since they recently provided services to the Town of Milton and have a proven track record!



CCT CEO Presents Broadband Bid and Current Opportunity



Proposed Town Contribution 12.9%

April 5 Town Hall Meeting on Broadband revealed some exciting new opportunities. Cochrane Co-op Telephone CEO, Gina Tomlinson, presented a detailed bid to deploy broadband throughout our township. Tomlinson explained that the Board and Broadband Committee has put us in a very favorable position to receive government dollars toward the project. Continuing, Ms. Tomlinson shared that the recent passing of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is pouring millions into Wisconsin broadband expansion. “All indicators are pointing to an

early grant cycle, meaning better prices on broadband equipment and supplies. We’d also be facing less competition from other groups who were not expecting a round so soon,” Gina said. The CCT bid is approximately \$3.1 million dollars. Our partnering with CCT and their successful submission for a large Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) grant could reduce our contribution to \$400,000 (12.9%). We will be discussing this proposed contribution at our monthly Town Meeting on **Wednesday April 14th** at 6 pm.

Rural Broadband Benefits

The benefits of Broadband Internet in a rural community come in many ways.

- ◆ Economic Development is improved as housing values increase and businesses are more productive.
- ◆ Teleworking is becoming the norm with more people working from home.
- ◆ Public Health and social distancing requirements has placed greater importance on internet visits with health care providers.
- ◆ Virtual Education, including lesson plans and homework, has become challenging for rural children with poor internet connections.
- ◆ Improved Quality of Life—Young people today rely on the internet for so many things. Having rural broadband internet allows families to have a choice on where they can live. We want these young families to experience our wonderful rural way of life without feeling they need to move away.