



Litchfield Broadband Information Update

Public Hearing - October 19, 2021

Broadband Committee

Larry Bell - Chair

Joline Bell

Cheri Cooledge

Tom Wood

Judy Bullimer

Dick Cutliffe

John Upham



Broadband Committee Charter:

Support the Select Board to provide everyone in Litchfield with quality broadband services at a competitive cost:

Includes the Unserved: Without Internet (239 households)

And the Underserved: Slow connection speeds
 Periodic disconnects
 Excessive monthly fees
 Some even include data limits

Also need to plan for future information / speed needs



Planning Report Summary

\$8250 grant request written by Broadband Committee

Awarded to town - covered 50% of the cost of Report

Report mapped current broadband capabilities in town

Produced by Casco Bay Advisors (telecom consultants)

Report (posted on town website) includes:

Mapping of served areas by incumbents Charter & CCI

Also mapped unserved locations

Basis for RFQ sent out to 12 providers in Maine for buildout



Litchfield Internet Survey Process

September 2021 Survey

2,500 surveys mailed to Litchfield households & businesses

356 responses received

14% response rate considered excellent for paper survey

Survey results reviewed by Select Board & Committee

Data received very helpful to recommendation process



1. If you use the internet in Litchfield, please check the ONE option that you use most of the time (even if you use more than one).

Charter Spectrum:

66% (230)

Consolidated Communications:

15% (52)

HughesNet & Viasat (Satellite):

2% (6)

TK Networks:

5% (17)

Cellular Hotspots:

6% (22)

None:

7% (23)



3. *If you have internet service in Litchfield, are you satisfied with it?*

Very satisfied:

26% (82)

Somewhat satisfied:

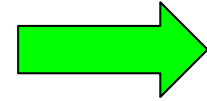
49% (152)

Somewhat dissatisfied:

15% (46)

Very dissatisfied:

10% (32)



75%

No justification for total replacement of any service provider



4. *If you are dissatisfied, what is your biggest issue? (Check only ONE)*

Cost:	45% (105)
Speed :	20% (47)
Quality / reliability:	27% (64)
Customer service:	3% (8)
Available options:	4% (10)



5. What do you use the internet for? (Check all applicable)

News, weather, etc.: 88% (312)

Email: 91% (324)

Social Media: 65% (232)

Music/podcasts: 49% (176)

TV/Video streaming: 66% (235)

Video meetings: 47% (167)

Work from home: 47% (166)

Telehealth: 22% (77)

Schoolwork: 21% (74)

Games/Gaming: 22% (79)

None: 1% (4)



7. Which of these elements of internet service in Litchfield are important to you for your own household use?

(Please check as many choices as you wish).

Reliability of service:	87% (309)
Widespread availability in town:	56% (200)
Low cost internet (affordability):	50% (177)
The highest possible speeds:	45% (160)
High speeds for uploads:	31% (112)



Evaluated Options





1) Axiom Technologies Summary

Run Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) to every household

Requires 20 year bond by town (\$4 - 5 million dollars)

Tax neutral after year two with enough subscribers?

Future proof for 30 - 40 years

Town owns fiber infrastructure

Town control if Axiom provides poor service

Local Maine company

Encourages monopoly of service to establish tax neutrality

Spectrum may reduce costs to be competitive



2) Bulk Agreement Summary

Total town buildout of service included

No bond required (100% funded by Charter)

Town billed for services for all 2000 locations

Higher speeds to be phased in over 60 months

Lower subscriber monthly costs expected

Town would need to hire collection resource

Significant legal resources req'd. for contract negotiation

Spectrum history - lack of responsiveness

Creates monopoly - severely limits competition or choice

Adding future customers not included



3) Franchise Agreement Summary

Shared infrastructure costs between Charter and Town

Requires franchise agreement update

Town can finance with ARPA funds - no bond required

Most residences mostly satisfied currently

Does not bring any new competition to town

Spectrum history - lack of responsiveness

No provision for adding future households & businesses



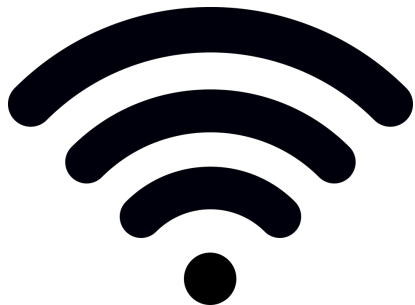
4) Redzone Wireless Summary

Public private fixed wireless partnership proposed
Install infrastructure at four existing cell towers in our area
Broadband coverage for all locations in Litchfield
25 Mbps down /3 Mbps up low cost option package
Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) - \$0 if qualified
100/10, 100/100, & 500/100 higher cost options
Redzone to contribute 70% of infrastructure cost
Litchfield to contribute 30% in partnership
ARPA funds can be utilized for broadband (no bond req'd.)
Project completion within 6 to 9 months
Future-proof investment (100% of town covered)



Recommendation: Redzone

- Competitive monthly rates with private public partnership
- Future-proof design with fixed wireless (geography based)
- Higher speeds (500/100) available as needs increase
- Very short implementation schedule (6 - 9 months)
- Town can finance with ARPA funds - no bond required
- Local Maine company based in Rockland
- Brings new competition to town
- Charter may reduce costs in the future to be competitive
- Households can still keep their existing service if satisfied



Questions / Comments?