



HISTORY OF BROADBAND PLANNING IN LINCOLN COUNTY

In 2010, Lincoln County learned that new high-speed broadband fiber was coming. The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) had funded the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) to expand access to broadband services. That program had awarded grant money to Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet) to bring high-speed broadband fiber to rural counties in Washington. We were on the list of counties to receive the fiber – a \$5 million investment in Lincoln County alone. The fiber news set off a series of events that are summarized below.

2010

- The EDC was working with the Department of Commerce Information Services on a national broadband mapping project when the news broke about NoaNet's grant award.
- Lincoln County Commissioners and their Information Services & Public Works Departments worked with NoaNet so that their fiber installation was not problematic.
- A Community Forum with Michael Henson of NoaNet was held to introduce the project to the public.

2011

- The EDC hosted a regional Broadband Roundtable & NoaNet Project Launch in Davenport.
- A NoaNet Project roundtable for Commissioners, Mayors and Public Works was held to facilitate communication throughout the install.
- The County's Librarians and the EDC began working with the Washington State Library to plan for their new fiber connections.

2012

- Lincoln County and NoaNet signed mutual inter-local agreements to locate NoaNet's fiber optic hub in the County's datacenter in Davenport.
- The County & the EDC partnered on an application for the first round of LTPT grants, but were not awarded.
- The Lincoln County PUD joined the broadband discussion.
- The County's Economic Development Strategy was adopted and included *Broadband Expansion* as a planned infrastructure investment. *Establishing a Broadband Planning Team* and *Implementing a Broadband Expansion Plan* were included in the action plan. The County's Comprehensive Plan will also incorporate those strategies.

2013

- NoaNet expanded their connections beyond original anchor institutions.
- The County moved forward with broadband planning by holding a workshop facilitated by Monica Babine.
- The County and the EDC partnered on an application for the second round of LTPT grants and were awarded.