

Board of County Commissioners

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Commissioners Decide Direction for Broadband Infrastructure Fund to Benefit Economic Development

Westminster, MD, Thursday, November 9, 2017 – Today, the Carroll County Board of Commissioners (BCC) voted 4-1 (Commissioner Weaver dissenting) to take a three pronged approach to extend the county's current high-speed broadband network, using the \$1 million allocated for the county FY18 budget. Last week the BCC received a report from the Future of Broadband Committee providing a variety of recommendations for the commissioners to consider.

The approach approved includes:

1. Move forward with connecting fiber to four existing business parks in Carroll County which are identified as currently experiencing economic development activity and immediate development potential. The business parks to receive fiber are:
 - Eldersburg Business Center (Eldersburg)
 - Liberty Exchange (Eldersburg)
 - Twin Arch Industrial Park (Mount Airy)
 - Warfield Complex (Sykesville)
2. Direct staff to communicate with Carroll County municipalities to look into possible fiber connection opportunities on main streets.
3. Direct staff to develop an open application process and selection criteria by which businesses and property owners may apply to a grant program for assistance with new fiber development.

Construction for the four business parks is expected to begin by Christmas.

The BCC discussed future ideas for expansion to include starting a dialogue with Comcast encouraging collaboration to accelerate the growth of high speed service to residential customers and also to consider home based businesses in future planning.

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CARROLL COUNTY

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