



Think big with a gig

Google's plan to build and test ultra high-speed broadband networks

On February 10, 2010, Google announced an experiment that we hope will lead to better and faster Internet access for everyone. We plan to build and test ultra-high speed broadband networks in a small number of trial locations across the United States. These networks will deliver Internet speeds more than 100 times faster than what most Americans have access to today over 1 gigabit per second, fiber-to-the-home connections. We plan to offer service at a competitive price to at least 50,000 and potentially up to 500,000 people.

From now until March 26, 2010, we're asking interested municipalities to provide us with information about their communities through a request for information (RFI), which we'll use to help determine where to build. We'll announce our target communities later this year.

Background

Broadband will be just as vital to economic growth and job creation in the 21st century as national highways and the electric grid were in the 20th century. Setting ambitious, long-term goals will be crucial to the future of Internet access in the U.S. – one reason why the FCC is hard at work on a National Broadband Plan.

Recently [we suggested](#) that as part of its Plan, the Commission should build ultra high-speed broadband networks as test beds in several communities across the country, to help learn how to bring faster and better broadband access to more people. We thought it was important to back up our recommendation with concrete action, so we've decided to build an experimental network of our own.

Like our [WiFi network in Mountain View](#), the purpose of this project is to experiment and learn. We don't think we have all the answers – but through our trial, we hope to make a meaningful contribution to the shared goal of delivering faster and better Internet for everyone.

F.A.Q.

Why is Google doing this?

Our goal is to experiment with new ways to help make Internet access better and faster for everyone. Here are some specific things that we have in mind:

- [Next generation apps](#): We want to see what developers and users can do with ultra high-speeds, whether it's creating new bandwidth-intensive "killer apps" and services, or other uses we can't yet imagine.
- [New deployment techniques](#): We'll test new ways to build fiber networks, and to help inform and support deployments elsewhere, we hope to share key learnings with the world.
- [Openness and choice](#): We'll operate an "open access" network, giving users the choice of multiple service providers. And consistent with our [past advocacy](#), we'll manage our network in an open, non-discriminatory, and transparent way.

How can communities apply?

Responses to our request for information can be submitted at <http://www.google.com/appserve/fiberrfi>.

What criteria will Google use to select the community or communities for this project?

We're interested in deploying our network efficiently and quickly, and are hoping to identify interested communities that will work with us to achieve this goal. We'll assess local factors that will impact the efficiency and speed of our deployment, such as the level of community support, local resources, weather conditions, approved construction methods and local regulatory issues. We'll also take into account broadband availability and speeds that are already offered to users within a community. The RFI is a first step – we plan to consult with local government organizations, as well as conduct site visits and meet with local officials, before announcing our final decision.

When does Google plan to announce a community?

We'll collect responses to our RFI until March 26, 2010, and we'll announce our target communities by the end of the year.

Does Google plan to offer Internet service?

Yes, as part of the planned trial, Google will offer competitively priced, ultra high-speed Internet access service to residents of the chosen communities. In addition, we will allow third-parties to offer their own Internet access services, or other data services, on our open network.

What will be the economic impact of this project? Will Google be creating new jobs?

To the extent that our network encourages innovation in broadband, we anticipate it will have a positive impact. It's too early to speculate what specific impact this will have on job creation, but we look forward to sharing more information as we begin to develop more specific plans.

How does this fit into the debate over network neutrality?

Google is 100% committed to operating a truly open and neutral network, with zero traffic prioritization based on the source, ownership or destination of the content, fully consistent with our past advocacy on this issue. We will not favor our own applications or content in any way.

How will this affect user privacy?

We intend to operate this network in a way that's fully consistent with our design principles with respect to privacy. Because we haven't started building it yet – let alone identified where to build – it's impossible to comment on specific details, but we intend to design strong privacy protections for user data into the offering, and provide users with a robust set of choices about their use of this and other Google services.

Will Google be a regulated entity at the FCC?

Regulatory oversight will depend on what services we ultimately decide to offer, but we expect our network to be treated like any other network.

Is Google seeking federal subsidies as part of this project?

No, we're not seeking federal subsidies of any kind.