

Video

Addressing the Digital Divide

Date: May 25, 2021

00:00:04 --> 00:00:07: Alright, well thank you so much for joining today.

00:00:07 --> 00:00:11: We're really excited about this and have been looking forward

00:00:11 --> 00:00:14: to doing this for a while and we're glad that

00:00:14 --> 00:00:17: the day is finally here on the day we get

00:00:17 --> 00:00:19: a really focus on broadband and Louisiana,

00:00:19 --> 00:00:22: but my name is Paul Angelo and I helped lead

00:00:22 --> 00:00:26: the ULI Curtis Infrastructure initiative where we're working to build

00:00:26 --> 00:00:28: a movement of folks like yourselves,

00:00:28 --> 00:00:31: focused on promoting infrastructure investments that are equitable,

00:00:31 --> 00:00:34: resilient and build long term community value today will be.

00:00:34 --> 00:00:39: Focusing on digital equity as partnership as part of a

00:00:39 --> 00:00:44: grant program that we're working with lots of different chapters

00:00:44 --> 00:00:48: and District Council members across the country.

00:00:48 --> 00:00:51: And and as part of this initiative,

00:00:51 --> 00:00:54: we're really working to try to convene tables and building

00:00:54 --> 00:00:56: new ones as needed.

00:00:56 --> 00:00:59: Support technical assistance and capacity building like what we're doing

00:00:59 --> 00:01:00: here,

00:01:00 --> 00:01:03: as well as also creating a better feedback loop to

00:01:03 --> 00:01:06: ensure the right types of infrastructure investment occurs.

00:01:06 --> 00:01:10: Today's session is being recorded and will be made available

00:01:10 --> 00:01:14: through utilized knowledge Finder as well as will also set

00:01:14 --> 00:01:16: it out to the participants today.

00:01:16 --> 00:01:18: We ask that you mute your line.

00:01:18 --> 00:01:21: If you're not speaking and you can also use the

00:01:21 --> 00:01:25: chat function in zoom to ask your questions or comment
00:01:25 --> 00:01:26: to fellow participants,
00:01:26 --> 00:01:29: we'd love this to be as interactive as possible throughout
00:01:29 --> 00:01:30: the day,
00:01:30 --> 00:01:33: so please chat on the side and will have several
00:01:33 --> 00:01:35: breakouts throughout the day.
00:01:35 --> 00:01:38: We we hope. That you leave today with a better
00:01:38 --> 00:01:40: understanding of broadband.
00:01:40 --> 00:01:44: How that will shape your own organizational goals and begin
00:01:44 --> 00:01:47: the conversation of how to create more digital equity.
00:01:47 --> 00:01:51: And then throughout the day I'll be coming on and
00:01:51 --> 00:01:55: off to help move the program forward and along.
00:01:55 --> 00:01:58: And with that I really.
00:01:58 --> 00:02:02: Want to introduce the folks who actually really helped to
00:02:02 --> 00:02:06: put this together and the first person I wanted to
00:02:06 --> 00:02:10: provide a few introductory remarks would be anti glandis.
00:02:10 --> 00:02:13: Who is the chair of ULI Louisiana,
00:02:13 --> 00:02:17: as well as the CEO of Landis Construction Company which
00:02:17 --> 00:02:20: operates throughout the southeast.
00:02:20 --> 00:02:25: Louisiana soan hey good morning everyone.
00:02:25 --> 00:02:28: Thank you Paul come so I'm just gonna take a
00:02:28 --> 00:02:31: couple of minutes to tell you a little bit more
00:02:31 --> 00:02:32: about you.
00:02:32 --> 00:02:35: Well, I knew a lot of Louisiana and why we
00:02:35 --> 00:02:36: have undertaken this.
00:02:36 --> 00:02:40: This initiative. So ULI is the oldest and largest group
00:02:40 --> 00:02:44: of cross disciplinary real estate and land use experts in
00:02:44 --> 00:02:47: the world and what ULI Louisiana does is kind of
00:02:47 --> 00:02:50: localize it and bring it to us here.
00:02:50 --> 00:02:53: So you align, Louisiana is made up of about 250
00:02:53 --> 00:02:56: professionals all across the state.
00:02:56 --> 00:03:00: We really focus on networking and education and then also
00:03:00 --> 00:03:05: have some opportunity to pursue specific initiatives like like
this.
00:03:05 --> 00:03:09: Just getting ready to get back to some in person
00:03:09 --> 00:03:12: stuff upcoming on our calendar.
00:03:12 --> 00:03:15: So I'm really excited by that hope.
00:03:15 --> 00:03:19: See all their, UM, one thing that's that is cool
00:03:19 --> 00:03:20: about you,
00:03:20 --> 00:03:23: lion. Call can touch on a little bit is that
00:03:23 --> 00:03:27: its mission driven and so the the mission of ULI
00:03:27 --> 00:03:32: is to shape the future of the built environment for

00:03:32 --> 00:03:34: transformative impact in communities worldwide.

00:03:34 --> 00:03:38: And so this infrastructure grant and bringing more equity and

00:03:38 --> 00:03:42: broadband clearly fits squarely into that and this.

00:03:42 --> 00:03:46: Curtis Infrastructure Grant, which is funding our initiative we

00:03:46 --> 00:03:46: we

00:03:46 --> 00:03:46: looked at

00:03:46 --> 00:03:48: a few different. We

00:03:48 --> 00:03:49: identified and looked

00:03:49 --> 00:03:53: at a few different opportunities to pursue it in the

00:03:53 --> 00:03:57: broadband on Plank Rd just really stood out as the

00:03:57 --> 00:04:01: greatest opportunity for us to help bring impact.

00:04:01 --> 00:04:04: So this symposium actually came as an offshoot to a

00:04:04 --> 00:04:09: technical assistance panel which is upcoming 'cause it was.

00:04:09 --> 00:04:12: It became clear that that there are.

00:04:12 --> 00:04:16: Multi facets to this, uhm this project we've undertaken so

00:04:16 --> 00:04:20: that app the technical Assistance Panel will focus more on

00:04:20 --> 00:04:22: issues of Community redevelopment,

00:04:22 --> 00:04:27: resilience, accessibility and then there's all this technical stuff

00:04:27 --> 00:04:29: which

00:04:27 --> 00:04:29: goes into broadband as well.

00:04:29 --> 00:04:32: And so that's where this symposium came out.

00:04:32 --> 00:04:35: Of was an attempt to make sure that we're we're

00:04:36 --> 00:04:40: also really investigating and understanding what's going on

00:04:41 --> 00:04:44: there.

00:04:44 --> 00:04:47: So we're super. Grateful for your presence here and come

00:04:47 --> 00:04:50: and look forward to an engaging discussion.

00:04:50 --> 00:04:50: And with that I'm going to turn it over to

00:04:50 --> 00:04:50: Chris Tyson,

00:04:50 --> 00:04:53: who is the executive director of build Baton Rouge.

00:04:55 --> 00:05:00: Good morning everyone. Thanks, uh and for the introduction

00:05:00 --> 00:05:03: and

00:05:00 --> 00:05:03: glad to be a part of this discussion.

00:05:03 --> 00:05:05: Today, I'm Chris Tyson, President,

00:05:05 --> 00:05:07: CEO of Bill Baton Rouge.

00:05:07 --> 00:05:11: We are the redevelopment authority and Land bank for the

00:05:11 --> 00:05:12: city parish feast,

00:05:12 --> 00:05:16: Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge City Parish and so we

00:05:16 --> 00:05:18: work to revitalize neighborhoods.

00:05:18 --> 00:05:20: We work on coordinated land development.

00:05:20 --> 00:05:24: We manage a land bank and work with a number

00:05:24 --> 00:05:25: of partners.

00:05:25 --> 00:05:29: To address systemic disinvestment in many of our cities,

00:05:29 --> 00:05:33: neighborhoods that work has taken us to a number of

00:05:33 --> 00:05:35: neighborhoods in the city,
 00:05:35 --> 00:05:39: but of special importance. Here is the plank Rd corridor
 00:05:39 --> 00:05:41: as was mentioned in 2018,
 00:05:41 --> 00:05:45: we began a transit oriented comprehensive redevelopment
 plan and in
 00:05:45 --> 00:05:49: concert with a number of partners focused on the plank
 00:05:49 --> 00:05:49: Rd corridor,
 00:05:49 --> 00:05:53: which is arguably the most blighted commercial corridor in
 the
 00:05:53 --> 00:05:54: city parish.
 00:05:54 --> 00:05:56: A lot of our history.
 00:05:56 --> 00:06:00: Runs through Plank Rd as a city.
 00:06:00 --> 00:06:03: But it is also home to many of our neighbors
 00:06:03 --> 00:06:05: and fellow citizens.
 00:06:05 --> 00:06:07: Businesses that still operate there,
 00:06:07 --> 00:06:10: but it is probably the greatest marker of the racial
 00:06:10 --> 00:06:15: and spatial stratification that we have talked about in Baton
 00:06:15 --> 00:06:18: Rouge is kind of a tale of two cities across
 00:06:18 --> 00:06:22: Florida Blvd and that across all of our cities,
 00:06:22 --> 00:06:26: divides I think has become something that many people
 focused
 00:06:26 --> 00:06:28: on and want to see addressed.
 00:06:28 --> 00:06:31: And so we saw the plank Rd.
 00:06:31 --> 00:06:34: Master plan as an opportunity to do that,
 00:06:34 --> 00:06:37: and now almost three years into that work,
 00:06:37 --> 00:06:41: we are excited to have a a transit oriented development
 00:06:41 --> 00:06:41: underway.
 00:06:41 --> 00:06:45: The city has been awarded funds for bus rapid transit
 00:06:45 --> 00:06:49: and a \$55 million project is underway to bring bus
 00:06:49 --> 00:06:53: rapid transit for the first time in Louisiana to a
 00:06:53 --> 00:06:56: corridor linking Plank Rd to Nicholson,
 00:06:56 --> 00:06:59: North and South. Really excited about that.
 00:06:59 --> 00:07:02: We have a number of developments in the pipeline,
 00:07:02 --> 00:07:06: including and. \$8 million mixed use development that will
 feature
 00:07:06 --> 00:07:10: early child care center and new affordable housing that is.
 00:07:10 --> 00:07:14: Now underway we're in the process of closing that
 transaction.
 00:07:14 --> 00:07:16: We're really excited about that,
 00:07:16 --> 00:07:19: and there are some other developments,
 00:07:19 --> 00:07:21: including a pocket park food incubator,
 00:07:21 --> 00:07:25: a grocery anchored mixed use development that are also in
 00:07:25 --> 00:07:26: the works.

00:07:26 --> 00:07:30: When we think about infrastructure as central to the revitalization

00:07:30 --> 00:07:33: of communities that have been left behind Plank Rd,

00:07:33 --> 00:07:37: kind of gives us a very stark and kind of

00:07:37 --> 00:07:38: understanding of that.

00:07:38 --> 00:07:41: As we see the broken sidewalks.

00:07:41 --> 00:07:44: And the, uh, dilapidated St networks.

00:07:44 --> 00:07:49: The the The UM in accessibility for pedestrians and those

00:07:50 --> 00:07:54: non car modes of transit to navigate the corridor.

00:07:54 --> 00:07:57: And we understand infrastructure that rate.

00:07:57 --> 00:08:02: But as we are are convened to discuss today,

00:08:02 --> 00:08:05: infrastructure is broader than that,

00:08:05 --> 00:08:10: and in the 21st century access to technology access to

00:08:10 --> 00:08:11: high speed.

00:08:11 --> 00:08:16: Internet is essential infrastructure. What we found in beginning the

00:08:16 --> 00:08:20: plank Rd master plan was that there were a number

00:08:20 --> 00:08:22: of statistics.

00:08:22 --> 00:08:25: Did parities that we see on Plank Rd visa vie

00:08:25 --> 00:08:28: the rest of Baton Rouge?

00:08:28 --> 00:08:29: And indeed the entire state?

00:08:29 --> 00:08:33: One of those is that we have the highest the

00:08:33 --> 00:08:37: greatest digital divide in the neighborhoods of plank roads.

00:08:37 --> 00:08:41: This has been underscored by conversations that we've been having

00:08:41 --> 00:08:45: with the library system and we are currently exploring the

00:08:45 --> 00:08:49: possibility of relocating the Delmont branch library to a location

00:08:49 --> 00:08:53: more prominently on Plank Rd in a brand new facility.

00:08:53 --> 00:08:57: That would bring the library systems offerings in that community.

00:08:57 --> 00:09:01: Up to you know, a state of the art standard

00:09:01 --> 00:09:05: and in that conversation what we found is that.

00:09:05 --> 00:09:09: A library system marks the Delmont branch is one of

00:09:10 --> 00:09:13: the most used branches in the system,

00:09:13 --> 00:09:16: and it is, uh and in part due to the

00:09:16 --> 00:09:20: ability of residents to access computers and technology.

00:09:20 --> 00:09:24: You need computers to search for jobs you needed to

00:09:24 --> 00:09:26: apply for social services.

00:09:26 --> 00:09:30: You can obviously you needed for communication and so this

00:09:31 --> 00:09:35: is the essential nature of access to technology and everyone's

00:09:35 --> 00:09:36: life regardless.

00:09:36 --> 00:09:40: Of their station, regardless of your income or where
00:09:40 --> 00:09:43: you live in the city is well understood in
00:09:43 --> 00:09:44: this effort,
00:09:44 --> 00:09:48: and so the opportunity to address the digital divide through
00:09:48 --> 00:09:51: this grant and through this initiative you know fits squarely
00:09:51 --> 00:09:52: within.
00:09:52 --> 00:09:55: I think everyone's priorities in visions for how we,
00:09:55 --> 00:09:58: as we say, imagine the future of Plank Rd.
00:09:58 --> 00:10:02: So that's a little background there on the on our
00:10:02 --> 00:10:04: work on Plank Rd it continues.
00:10:04 --> 00:10:07: You can follow the hashtag.
00:10:07 --> 00:10:10: Asian plank Rd uh, everywhere on social media you can
00:10:11 --> 00:10:15: visit us at buildbatonrouge.org and at build Baton Rouge
everywhere
00:10:16 --> 00:10:18: on social media to learn more.
00:10:18 --> 00:10:20: Happy to answer questions. Thank you.
00:10:21 --> 00:10:23: Well, thank you very much.
00:10:23 --> 00:10:26: Chris Kim Morrow, sick from the Who's the director of
00:10:26 --> 00:10:29: planning for the Capital Region Planning Commission,
00:10:29 --> 00:10:30: say a few words.
00:10:30 --> 00:10:32: Sure, thank you. My
00:10:32 --> 00:10:35: name is Kim marecek. I'm the director of planning with
00:10:35 --> 00:10:38: the Capital Region Planning Commission and we are one of
00:10:38 --> 00:10:42: eight planning districts across the state of Louisiana.
00:10:42 --> 00:10:45: We were established in 1967 to serve 11 parishes in
00:10:45 --> 00:10:46: our region,
00:10:46 --> 00:10:49: which stretches from point copied to Washington Parish and
as
00:10:49 --> 00:10:50: a regional body.
00:10:50 --> 00:10:54: We provide a form. For collaboration and decision making
around
00:10:54 --> 00:10:58: shared challenges and provide technical assistance and
capacity support for
00:10:58 --> 00:10:59: our Member agencies.
00:10:59 --> 00:11:02: And we're really excited to be a part of this
00:11:02 --> 00:11:06: forum from ULI because we believe that there is a
00:11:06 --> 00:11:10: lot of information that we'll be able to share across
00:11:10 --> 00:11:13: our region that we learn today moving forward,
00:11:13 --> 00:11:16: our agency is designated by the US Department of
Commerce
00:11:16 --> 00:11:20: and Economic Development Agency to maintain regional
economic,
00:11:20 --> 00:11:23: comprehensive economic development strategy, and we're
also.

00:11:23 --> 00:11:28: Part of the Federal Department of Transportation designated Metropolitan Planning

00:11:28 --> 00:11:31: Organization for Baton Rouge area and what that means is

00:11:31 --> 00:11:33: through these partnerships.

00:11:33 --> 00:11:37: It allows CRPC to assist in unlocking various federal dollars in

00:11:37 --> 00:11:41: 2019 when CRPC published our regional comprehensive Economic development strategy,

00:11:41 --> 00:11:45: we recognize the need for enhanced broadband.

00:11:45 --> 00:11:48: However, the events of 2020 further underscored and accelerated the

00:11:48 --> 00:11:51: need to find solutions to the broadband gaps that exist

00:11:51 --> 00:11:53: throughout our communities,

00:11:53 --> 00:11:56: region and state. We know these gaps are foundationally based

00:11:56 --> 00:12:00: on lack of access issues around affordability and an equitable

00:12:00 --> 00:12:02: distribution of broadband infrastructure,

00:12:02 --> 00:12:06: and we recognize the relative importance of broadband for economy,

00:12:06 --> 00:12:08: education, health care and jobs.

00:12:08 --> 00:12:12: And through that partnership with the Economic Development Administration,

00:12:12 --> 00:12:15: we have been able to dedicate staffing resources to support

00:12:15 --> 00:12:19: finding solutions to these broadband challenges across our region.

00:12:19 --> 00:12:22: And through that we've been able to participate in this

00:12:22 --> 00:12:23: symposium.

00:12:23 --> 00:12:26: Moving forward. We will also be working in partnership with

00:12:26 --> 00:12:30: the Delta Regional Authority to develop crowdsourcing speed test data

00:12:30 --> 00:12:34: to gauge broadband availability across their eight state region and

00:12:34 --> 00:12:38: this information will be critical as local communities worked to

00:12:38 --> 00:12:38: prioritize.

00:12:38 --> 00:12:41: The broadband investment needs so as I said,

00:12:41 --> 00:12:44: as we engage in conversations across the region and in

00:12:44 --> 00:12:47: partnerships with our sister agencies across the state will lift

00:12:47 --> 00:12:50: and leverage the information from today's symposium.

00:12:50 --> 00:12:52: As we look to identify best practices to meet the

00:12:52 --> 00:12:56: needs of the various broadband efforts across the state.

00:12:56 --> 00:12:58: So I thank you for allowing us participate and they

00:12:59 --> 00:13:01: look forward to the conversation today.

00:13:02 --> 00:13:04: Well, thank you very much Kim.

00:13:04 --> 00:13:07: And then finally Maggie Gleason from the Who's a planning
00:13:07 --> 00:13:10: manager with Baton Rouge Planning Commission to say a
few
00:13:10 --> 00:13:13: words and talk a little bit more specifically about this
00:13:13 --> 00:13:13: issue.
00:13:14 --> 00:13:17: So good morning everybody come.
00:13:17 --> 00:13:20: I'm going to share my screen 'cause I've got a
00:13:20 --> 00:13:22: couple pictures that I want everybody to.
00:13:22 --> 00:13:25: Look at, I find it very hard to talk about
00:13:25 --> 00:13:27: broadband in a visual way,
00:13:27 --> 00:13:31: but I'm going to give it a shot.
00:13:31 --> 00:13:34: So the picture on the right is this gorgeous picture
00:13:34 --> 00:13:35: of Baton Rouge.
00:13:35 --> 00:13:39: It's my favorite picture. And in it we can see
00:13:39 --> 00:13:42: all the things that we typically think of,
00:13:42 --> 00:13:46: infrastructure and things that connect people to their
environment.
00:13:46 --> 00:13:50: You know, we see the beautiful Mississippi Bridge we see.
00:13:50 --> 00:13:54: Parks, sidewalks, roads. All these things which are critical for
00:13:54 --> 00:13:57: us to connect to our environment.
00:13:57 --> 00:14:00: But uhm, what you don't see.
00:14:00 --> 00:14:03: Is that before we can connect to our environment,
00:14:03 --> 00:14:07: we need communication. We need to be able to
communicate
00:14:07 --> 00:14:09: with other humans.
00:14:09 --> 00:14:11: UM communication is really it's a.
00:14:11 --> 00:14:13: It's a basic human need,
00:14:13 --> 00:14:15: probably right up there with.
00:14:15 --> 00:14:20: Food shelter water communication. Uh,
00:14:20 --> 00:14:24: so the picture here on the left is kind of
00:14:24 --> 00:14:27: my personal issues with communication.
00:14:27 --> 00:14:30: That little cutie pie that you see right there.
00:14:30 --> 00:14:34: That's my son Jack. This is when he was four
00:14:34 --> 00:14:35: years old.
00:14:35 --> 00:14:38: And this picture is kind of showing a little breakthrough
00:14:38 --> 00:14:40: that he had with communication.
00:14:40 --> 00:14:43: Because you see, Jack is autistic.
00:14:43 --> 00:14:48: Jack is severely autistic and he has no spoken language.
00:14:48 --> 00:14:51: But it doesn't mean that he doesn't want to communicate.
00:14:51 --> 00:14:53: So here in this picture.
00:14:53 --> 00:14:56: That little binder that you see.
00:14:56 --> 00:15:00: At Black Binder is full of little images that we
00:15:00 --> 00:15:02: download off of Google.

00:15:02 --> 00:15:04: Uhm, we download these pictures from Google.

00:15:04 --> 00:15:07: We put it on a Word document.

00:15:07 --> 00:15:09: We assign a word to it.

00:15:09 --> 00:15:12: We laminate it and then we put it in this

00:15:13 --> 00:15:13: binder.

00:15:13 --> 00:15:16: And if you can see that little yellow strip there.

00:15:16 --> 00:15:20: His very first ways of communicating it was called the

00:15:20 --> 00:15:22: Picture Exchange communication system.

00:15:22 --> 00:15:25: So he finds these pictures in that binder and he'll

00:15:25 --> 00:15:28: build a sentence using those Google images,

00:15:28 --> 00:15:30: and then he'll give it to someone.

00:15:30 --> 00:15:33: And then he gets whatever it is that he needs

00:15:33 --> 00:15:35: using that picture exchange.

00:15:35 --> 00:15:40: So it was kind of a a big breakthrough for

00:15:40 --> 00:15:41: him.

00:15:41 --> 00:15:43: Uhm? Now that he's nine years old,

00:15:43 --> 00:15:46: you know we've worked with him for five years on

00:15:46 --> 00:15:47: assigning images to words.

00:15:47 --> 00:15:51: So now he's built up to using and what's called

00:15:51 --> 00:15:53: an AAC device.

00:15:53 --> 00:15:57: Which is basically a speech output device that is on

00:15:57 --> 00:15:57: his iPad.

00:15:57 --> 00:16:00: So now he can carry his words with him.

00:16:00 --> 00:16:04: He can ask for things he can comment on things.

00:16:04 --> 00:16:07: You know, before he had any kind of language,

00:16:07 --> 00:16:08: we had some very rough days,

00:16:08 --> 00:16:11: some very, very sad days because.

00:16:11 --> 00:16:13: Without just basic human communication,

00:16:13 --> 00:16:15: you really don't connect to other people.

00:16:15 --> 00:16:18: You don't connect to your world.

00:16:18 --> 00:16:21: But there's Jack and he is connected.

00:16:21 --> 00:16:25: 'cause now he's got a communication system.

00:16:25 --> 00:16:30: So for us personally, reliable Internet is so important

00:16:30 --> 00:16:35: to us it's going to be something that we consider.

00:16:35 --> 00:16:38: Anytime we move anytime we buy a house,

00:16:38 --> 00:16:40: you know where we work.

00:16:40 --> 00:16:44: Everything broadbands, it's just so ingrained into our lives

00:16:44 --> 00:16:46: because

00:16:44 --> 00:16:46: of Jack and his communication issues,

00:16:46 --> 00:16:49: which in a way are no longer issues.

00:16:49 --> 00:16:53: He's really connected to the world now.

00:16:53 --> 00:16:56: So I thought I would end this little presentation.

00:16:56 --> 00:16:58: By seeing this little guy in action.
 00:17:01 --> 00:17:02: And see we don't need any sound,
 00:17:02 --> 00:17:05: but here he is. He's building his sentences.
 00:17:05 --> 00:17:08: Using his little Google images.
 00:17:08 --> 00:17:12: I want the iPad. And then he gets the iPad.
 00:17:12 --> 00:17:16: Very basic. Uhm, but again we just need that reliable
 00:17:16 --> 00:17:19: Internet in order to create those images and for him
 00:17:20 --> 00:17:21: to use his iPad.
 00:17:21 --> 00:17:25: So there we go. I have humanized broadband.
 00:17:25 --> 00:17:27: Now I send this back to Paul.
 00:17:30 --> 00:17:30: Well,
 00:17:30 --> 00:17:32: thank you so much Maggie.
 00:17:32 --> 00:17:35: That was beautiful and I have tears in my eyes
 00:17:35 --> 00:17:35: now.
 00:17:35 --> 00:17:38: Just thinking about the power and the importance of this
 00:17:38 --> 00:17:41: session and and how important broadband is to communities
 and
 00:17:41 --> 00:17:45: and and fundamentally how important infrastructure is the
 people and
 00:17:45 --> 00:17:49: the way that we go about things to be assistance
 00:17:49 --> 00:17:51: and help us as we do things.
 00:17:51 --> 00:17:53: And so with that I want to turn first to
 00:17:53 --> 00:17:57: our first panel session of the day where a couple
 00:17:57 --> 00:17:59: minutes ahead of schedule,
 00:17:59 --> 00:18:03: which is great. Hopefully we can keep that going throughout
 00:18:03 --> 00:18:04: the day,
 00:18:04 --> 00:18:08: but I wanted to first introduce.
 00:18:08 --> 00:18:10: Uh beneath ayengar to speak a little bit 'cause I
 00:18:10 --> 00:18:11: know he has.
 00:18:11 --> 00:18:13: He has to step away in a little bit so
 00:18:13 --> 00:18:15: wanted to make sure he had a few comments.
 00:18:15 --> 00:18:17: Then after he speaks that I'm going to introduce the
 00:18:17 --> 00:18:20: two other panelists to talk a little bit more broadly
 00:18:20 --> 00:18:21: about this issue as well.
 00:18:21 --> 00:18:23: But with that I wanted to turn it over to
 00:18:23 --> 00:18:25: you beneath to talk a little bit about some of
 00:18:25 --> 00:18:27: the work that you're doing in the important work you're
 00:18:27 --> 00:18:29: doing for the state of Louisiana.
 00:18:30 --> 00:18:31: Yeah, so thank you Paul.
 00:18:31 --> 00:18:33: Can you guys hear me?
 00:18:33 --> 00:18:38: Good, well thank you Paul for A and really for.
 00:18:38 --> 00:18:42: Federal the DC state local team you lie in participating

00:18:42 --> 00:18:42: in Maggie.

00:18:42 --> 00:18:45: Thank you for humanizing the story.

00:18:45 --> 00:18:48: I know sometimes. Especially in my world,

00:18:48 --> 00:18:50: especially over the last two months,

00:18:50 --> 00:18:52: we when we think about broadband,

00:18:52 --> 00:18:55: we're thinking about terabytes of information,

00:18:55 --> 00:18:58: transmission of data we're talking about upload and download speeds,

00:18:58 --> 00:19:02: and it's important for us to continue to humanize the

00:19:02 --> 00:19:06: really societal impact that the lack of broadband is having

00:19:06 --> 00:19:07: in our state.

00:19:07 --> 00:19:09: And so, as Paul said,

00:19:09 --> 00:19:12: I have to apologize. We actually have a bill that's

00:19:12 --> 00:19:16: focused on broadband that's going to provide some significant financial

00:19:16 --> 00:19:17: resources.

00:19:17 --> 00:19:19: To help bridge that digital divide,

00:19:19 --> 00:19:22: it can be heard in the Commerce Senate Commerce Committee

00:19:22 --> 00:19:22: tomorrow,

00:19:22 --> 00:19:25: and I have to go speak to the speaker of

00:19:25 --> 00:19:27: the House in a few minutes.

00:19:27 --> 00:19:30: But what I wanted to do was I will also

00:19:30 --> 00:19:34: share my screen to give you a sense of the

00:19:34 --> 00:19:36: challenge that we have.

00:19:36 --> 00:19:37: And, uh, more importantly, though,

00:19:37 --> 00:19:39: the solutions that we have,

00:19:39 --> 00:19:42: and I think the solutions are going to be quick

00:19:42 --> 00:19:43: and obvious,

00:19:43 --> 00:19:46: and it's going to be really a function of financial

00:19:46 --> 00:19:49: resources to address variety of the challenges that we have

00:19:49 --> 00:19:50: in our state.

00:19:50 --> 00:19:54: If you start to look at the state of Louisiana

00:19:54 --> 00:19:56: and where we are today.

00:19:56 --> 00:19:58: Whether it's the US Census Bureau,

00:19:58 --> 00:20:00: whether it's the American Community Survey,

00:20:00 --> 00:20:05: whether it's the FCC we have a significant number of

00:20:05 --> 00:20:08: households in the state of Louisiana that lack.

00:20:08 --> 00:20:13: Broadband speeds now the broadband speeds.

00:20:13 --> 00:20:17: Are defined at the federal level by the Federal Communications

00:20:17 --> 00:20:18: Commission.

00:20:18 --> 00:20:23: Before the pandemic broadband speeds were defined at 25

three,
00:20:23 --> 00:20:27: so it's 25 download three upload I think for 2021
00:20:27 --> 00:20:30: they have adopted those speeds,
00:20:30 --> 00:20:35: but I I could imagine very well based on the
00:20:35 --> 00:20:40: shift of of technology to the household and how.
00:20:40 --> 00:20:42: Technologies permeating every aspect of our lives,
00:20:42 --> 00:20:44: whether in healthcare, healthcare, agriculture,
00:20:44 --> 00:20:46: education, that those speeds may actually be redefined,
00:20:46 --> 00:20:50: which I think is going to be really good for
00:20:50 --> 00:20:51: all of us.
00:20:51 --> 00:20:54: But if you were to take a look at it,
00:20:54 --> 00:20:56: the snapshot today we have,
00:20:56 --> 00:20:59: you know, close to half a million households representing
00:20:59 --> 00:20:59: 1.21
00:20:59 --> 00:21:04: point,
00:21:04 --> 00:21:07: 3,000,000 louisianians. She's really a quarter of the states
00:21:07 --> 00:21:07: population
00:21:07 --> 00:21:11: that doesn't have access to at least 25 by three
00:21:11 --> 00:21:13: speaks.
00:21:13 --> 00:21:16: 43.6% of those louisianians don't have access to a low
00:21:16 --> 00:21:19: cost Internet plan,
00:21:19 --> 00:21:22: and that is a major major affordability problem.
00:21:22 --> 00:21:27: Now on the affordability side,
00:21:27 --> 00:21:29: a lot of it has to do with structural issues
00:21:29 --> 00:21:31: with regards to the the economic social well being that
00:21:31 --> 00:21:34: Louisianans have had,
00:21:34 --> 00:21:38: particularly in the world parishes,
00:21:38 --> 00:21:41: places like Lake East, Carroll Parish,
00:21:41 --> 00:21:44: Tensas Parish in areas where the average medium.
00:21:44 --> 00:21:48: Household income may be between 18 and \$20,000 a year,
00:21:48 --> 00:21:52: and so because of that it becomes a even larger
00:21:52 --> 00:21:54: affordability issue in a number of those parishes in north.
00:21:54 --> 00:21:56: In the northern part of the state.
00:21:56 --> 00:21:59: So we talked about the infrastructure access.
00:21:59 --> 00:22:02: We talked about affordability and the last,
00:22:02 --> 00:22:05: which I think is critically important.
00:22:05 --> 00:22:06: That I don't think a lot of people talk enough
00:22:06 --> 00:22:09: about,
00:22:09 --> 00:22:12: which I think you guys will do over the next
00:22:12 --> 00:22:12: couple of hours.
00:22:12 --> 00:22:12: In fact, I've got a call at 3:00 o'clock today
00:22:12 --> 00:22:12: with my colleagues in North Carolina to talk about digital
00:22:12 --> 00:22:12: literacy.

00:22:12 --> 00:22:15: Is there are 3/4 of a million louisianians that may
 00:22:15 --> 00:22:18: lack the digital literacy required to even understand how to
 00:22:18 --> 00:22:20: base best utilized the services of broadband.
 00:22:20 --> 00:22:23: And So what that means?
 00:22:23 --> 00:22:27: Is. The inability to execute a Tele health visit.
 00:22:27 --> 00:22:31: What that means is the inability to pay bills online.
 00:22:31 --> 00:22:35: What that means is the inability to help your child
 00:22:35 --> 00:22:38: with facilitating a virtual schooling visit,
 00:22:38 --> 00:22:40: and this is a major problem,
 00:22:40 --> 00:22:43: and it's a specifically a major problem in a state
 00:22:43 --> 00:22:48: of Louisiana where we're beginning to see an increasingly
 aging
 00:22:48 --> 00:22:51: population and and so that's just keep in mind,
 00:22:51 --> 00:22:54: those are the three major issues.
 00:22:54 --> 00:22:56: Access affordability and digital literacy.
 00:22:56 --> 00:23:00: Now Despite that, if you start to take a look
 00:23:00 --> 00:23:01: at Louisiana,
 00:23:01 --> 00:23:05: we actually do OK when it comes to Gigabit infrastructure,
 00:23:05 --> 00:23:08: which is where we all want to go gigabits,
 00:23:08 --> 00:23:10: the highest form broadband. It's fiber.
 00:23:10 --> 00:23:13: If you look at that ranking,
 00:23:13 --> 00:23:14: that's the US news ranking,
 00:23:14 --> 00:23:18: so you know we've made historical investments really driven
 in
 00:23:18 --> 00:23:22: part by the universities industry to help drive and really
 00:23:22 --> 00:23:24: build out fiber connectivity throughout state.
 00:23:24 --> 00:23:28: If you start to look at then rankings that combine
 00:23:28 --> 00:23:33: wired low price plans plus broadband access for odd band
 00:23:33 --> 00:23:35: access plus speed test.
 00:23:35 --> 00:23:37: That's where we we fall a little bit,
 00:23:37 --> 00:23:38: but again, it's not catastrophic.
 00:23:38 --> 00:23:41: In fact, when I met with the governor yesterday and
 00:23:41 --> 00:23:45: the conversations I have with the National Governors
 Association.
 00:23:45 --> 00:23:47: I just wanted to let the folks on this call
 00:23:48 --> 00:23:51: now that every state is going through the same issue
 00:23:51 --> 00:23:55: at the same time in addressing both affordability accessibility
 in
 00:23:55 --> 00:23:59: digital literacy and so we actually are are a little
 00:23:59 --> 00:24:02: bit further ahead in in terms of what we're doing
 00:24:02 --> 00:24:03: in Louisiana.
 00:24:03 --> 00:24:06: We actually have for the first time in office on
 00:24:07 --> 00:24:07: broadband,

00:24:07 --> 00:24:10: which I'm leading. It's brand new office.

00:24:10 --> 00:24:13: There aren't many states that have purposeful offices that are

00:24:13 --> 00:24:16: focused on broadband development and connectivity.

00:24:16 --> 00:24:19: Uh, and so the governor really started kicking off the

00:24:19 --> 00:24:22: efforts around broadband in late quarter,

00:24:22 --> 00:24:26: four of 2019 through the development of the broadband for

00:24:26 --> 00:24:26: everyone,

00:24:26 --> 00:24:31: Louisiana Commission and and so here we are.

00:24:31 --> 00:24:34: We go into the next slide so the vision for

00:24:34 --> 00:24:36: Louisiana and why it's important.

00:24:36 --> 00:24:40: The goal is to eliminate the digital divide within the

00:24:40 --> 00:24:41: next 7 1/2 years.

00:24:41 --> 00:24:44: So we've got a a Sprint between now and the

00:24:44 --> 00:24:48: next 7 1/2 years to eliminate that access issue by

00:24:48 --> 00:24:52: providing high speed broadband to a number of different folks

00:24:52 --> 00:24:56: throughout the state. And why is this important functionally?

00:24:56 --> 00:24:58: Again, for every dollar invested,

00:24:58 --> 00:25:00: there's a defined economic multiplier.

00:25:00 --> 00:25:04: We have multiple pods of money that's now focused on

00:25:04 --> 00:25:05: broadband.

00:25:05 --> 00:25:09: If you start to look at the infrastructure bill that

00:25:09 --> 00:25:11: President Biden is proposing.

00:25:11 --> 00:25:15: Or the Republican counterpart for broadband to that infrastructure bill.

00:25:15 --> 00:25:19: Regardless if it's a Democratic 100 billion or the Republican

00:25:19 --> 00:25:19: counter,

00:25:19 --> 00:25:23: which is 65 billion, the Louisiana stands to get an

00:25:23 --> 00:25:27: additional \$1.2 billion over that eight year period to address

00:25:27 --> 00:25:29: the issues around the digital divide.

00:25:29 --> 00:25:33: And so again, critically important is for the first time.

00:25:33 --> 00:25:37: While we may, while we have the challenges we now

00:25:37 --> 00:25:41: have the the financial muscle that is ongoing and that's

00:25:41 --> 00:25:43: coming down the pipeline.

00:25:43 --> 00:25:47: Effectively address that digital divide and really the digital divide

00:25:47 --> 00:25:48: is again focusing on.

00:25:48 --> 00:25:50: Not only the access issue,

00:25:50 --> 00:25:54: but the affordability issue, the literacy issue and getting devices

00:25:54 --> 00:25:57: in the hands of folks that traditionally can't afford it.

00:25:57 --> 00:25:58: And I'll mention you know,

00:25:58 --> 00:26:02: my colleague who runs the planning authority here within within

00:26:02 --> 00:26:03: the Baton Rouge area,

00:26:03 --> 00:26:06: talked about the relationship that they were able to partner

00:26:06 --> 00:26:09: with with the Delta Regional Authority on speed test,

00:26:09 --> 00:26:12: and I'll explain why those speed tests are important,

00:26:12 --> 00:26:15: as in a little bit.

00:26:15 --> 00:26:18: So as we start to look at the first quiver

00:26:18 --> 00:26:22: in the arrow to address the digital divide,

00:26:22 --> 00:26:26: you know last year through the FCC conducted a reverse

00:26:26 --> 00:26:29: auction as part of a program called Art Off,

00:26:29 --> 00:26:33: which is really an acronym for the world Digitally Opportunities

00:26:33 --> 00:26:33: Fund,

00:26:33 --> 00:26:37: and through that 13 providers which are these 13 on

00:26:37 --> 00:26:40: the left will receive \$342 million over a 6P6 year

00:26:40 --> 00:26:45: period to effectively provide high speed broadband in all of

00:26:45 --> 00:26:48: the areas. Shaded throughout the state of Louisiana,

00:26:48 --> 00:26:51: the the impact that they're going to have is 100

00:26:51 --> 00:26:52: and 75,692 households,

00:26:52 --> 00:26:55: so SpaceX again, it's a name that I'm sure you

00:26:55 --> 00:26:57: guys are familiar,

00:26:57 --> 00:26:59: but this is really Elon Musk.

00:26:59 --> 00:27:02: He's got some geographical territories where he's going to provide

00:27:02 --> 00:27:03: high speed broadband.

00:27:03 --> 00:27:06: His obligation to the FCC is to provide high speed

00:27:06 --> 00:27:10: broadband throughout the state of Louisiana in the areas that

00:27:10 --> 00:27:11: are marked in red.

00:27:11 --> 00:27:14: Of course, you have Cox Communications.

00:27:14 --> 00:27:16: You have CenturyLink, you have all.

00:27:16 --> 00:27:18: Cultist saltes, you've got, uh,

00:27:18 --> 00:27:20: you know Allen's TV cable services.

00:27:20 --> 00:27:24: Anyway, you've got a consortium of folks that are really

00:27:24 --> 00:27:27: helping to address this issue now.

00:27:27 --> 00:27:30: The the challenges that they've got six years to do

00:27:30 --> 00:27:31: that right,

00:27:31 --> 00:27:34: and so by the end of three years their their

00:27:34 --> 00:27:37: obligation to the FCC is to complete 40%

00:27:37 --> 00:27:40: of the project and then incrementally sixty 1800.

00:27:40 --> 00:27:43: Ultimately getting to that goal of 175 thousand households.

00:27:43 --> 00:27:46: By the end of 2028.

00:27:46 --> 00:27:49: Now, the purpose of our office and what we're trying

00:27:49 --> 00:27:50: to do here is and,

00:27:50 --> 00:27:52: and this is something that.

00:27:52 --> 00:27:56: Is becoming clearly evident based on the dozen or so

00:27:57 --> 00:28:00: parishes that I've visited over the last month?

00:28:00 --> 00:28:05: Is there is a huge knowledge gap when I talk

00:28:05 --> 00:28:09: to folks on what is and isn't broadband?

00:28:09 --> 00:28:11: And why is it important?

00:28:11 --> 00:28:14: And so one of the things that we're going to

00:28:14 --> 00:28:17: create very soon is a broadband toolkit in Louisiana to

00:28:17 --> 00:28:21: help really provide that guide to parish community legislators.

00:28:21 --> 00:28:24: All sorts of folks on what it what is broadband,

00:28:24 --> 00:28:27: what it is, and why is it important,

00:28:27 --> 00:28:29: and how they need to get started.

00:28:29 --> 00:28:32: That's one, the second is.

00:28:32 --> 00:28:35: The creation of this crowdsourced mapping effort,

00:28:35 --> 00:28:39: so you know historically. Mapping has been one of the

00:28:39 --> 00:28:44: bigger pain points that everyone had in terms of really

00:28:44 --> 00:28:48: I looking at the census block and the address is

00:28:48 --> 00:28:50: in terms of who has what and at what speeds

00:28:50 --> 00:28:52: and what they can afford,

00:28:52 --> 00:28:55: and so the FCC has maps.

00:28:55 --> 00:29:00: Uhm? They recognize themselves and they have made

00:29:00 --> 00:29:03: public statements

00:29:03 --> 00:29:04: that the mass of the FCC has is not the

00:29:04 --> 00:29:08: most accurate in maps,

00:29:08 --> 00:29:13: and they're quickly resolving those issues of round accuracy

00:29:13 --> 00:29:15: in

00:29:15 --> 00:29:19: terms of really addressing what that nationwide fabric looks

00:29:19 --> 00:29:22: like

00:29:22 --> 00:29:24: on who has what and what speeds.

00:29:24 --> 00:29:28: What we launched and really what the Delta Regional

00:29:28 --> 00:29:31: Authority

00:29:31 --> 00:29:35: launched a couple of weeks ago in partnership with a

00:29:35 --> 00:29:38: number of the states in the South,

00:29:38 --> 00:29:39: including the governor in our in our office and adults.

00:29:39 --> 00:29:43: Regional authority is to really push out another data to

00:29:43 --> 00:29:44: capture tool to understand who has what and what speeds.

00:29:44 --> 00:29:47: But this time rather than the providers like ATT Cox

00:29:47 --> 00:29:50: sending U.S.

00:29:50 --> 00:29:53: data, what we are asking for or the households that

00:29:53 --> 00:29:54: send U.S.

00:29:54 --> 00:29:57: data on the speed. That they are currently obtaining by

00:29:57 --> 00:29:59: doing a simple one to two minute speed test.

00:29:50 --> 00:29:52: So it's a crowdsourced effort,
 00:29:52 --> 00:29:54: and so through that crowdsourced effort,
 00:29:54 --> 00:29:57: we want to start to identify is where those red
 00:29:57 --> 00:29:59: dots that are considered unserved,
 00:29:59 --> 00:30:03: and where are those green dots that are considered served.
 00:30:03 --> 00:30:06: That gives us a second data point on top of
 00:30:06 --> 00:30:09: the FCC for us that overlay and overlap those areas
 00:30:10 --> 00:30:13: that we want to specifically target through a variety of
 00:30:13 --> 00:30:16: different financial programs. The third is.
 00:30:16 --> 00:30:18: Helping to coordinate funding programs.
 00:30:18 --> 00:30:20: I mentioned at least 10 UM right now our
 00:30:21 --> 00:30:24: office is gathering the number of funding programs.
 00:30:24 --> 00:30:27: At this point we're up to 26 different federal programs
 00:30:27 --> 00:30:29: focused on some aspect of broadband,
 00:30:29 --> 00:30:32: and so a lot of the things that are are
 00:30:32 --> 00:30:33: are a struggle.
 00:30:33 --> 00:30:35: A lot of the areas that are struggle,
 00:30:35 --> 00:30:39: specially in the parishes, is given that the schools are
 00:30:39 --> 00:30:41: getting money that parishes are getting money.
 00:30:41 --> 00:30:43: We're getting money specifically for broadband.
 00:30:43 --> 00:30:46: The states getting money. How do you effectively create a
 00:30:46 --> 00:30:49: funding matrix so that we could start to leverage the
 00:30:49 --> 00:30:52: different pools of capital and different pools of money that
 00:30:52 --> 00:30:55: we can use to help address both access literacy and
 00:30:55 --> 00:30:56: affordability at the same time?
 00:30:56 --> 00:30:59: So we're working on a funding matrix that we think
 00:30:59 --> 00:31:03: will be helpful to the parish leaders and we're currently
 00:31:03 --> 00:31:05: in the purpose why I have to leave in a
 00:31:05 --> 00:31:09: few minutes is we have a House bill.
 00:31:09 --> 00:31:13: 648, which is going to be presented to the Senate
 00:31:13 --> 00:31:14: tomorrow,
 00:31:14 --> 00:31:18: which is to create a \$180 million state broadband grant
 00:31:18 --> 00:31:18: program.
 00:31:18 --> 00:31:22: So the grant program is going to piggyback off the
 00:31:22 --> 00:31:24: rule of Digital opportunities fund.
 00:31:24 --> 00:31:28: Look at those areas that the artof areas are not
 00:31:28 --> 00:31:32: considering in round one and look at continuing to make
 00:31:32 --> 00:31:34: those investments,
 00:31:34 --> 00:31:37: preferably in fiber, to the home and getting those speeds
 00:31:37 --> 00:31:39: significantly higher.
 00:31:39 --> 00:31:43: Then 25, three and in terms of incentivizing the private
 00:31:43 --> 00:31:46: sector to invest in areas that historically they would not

00:31:46 --> 00:31:47: reach,

00:31:47 --> 00:31:52: and so that bill hopefully doesn't run into any challenges

00:31:52 --> 00:31:54: which we don't think it is.

00:31:54 --> 00:31:58: And hopefully June 10th that Bill gets signed into law

00:31:58 --> 00:32:03: or shortly thereafter by the governor out once the session

00:32:03 --> 00:32:03: ends.

00:32:03 --> 00:32:07: So I mentioned the \$180 million that we're going to

00:32:07 --> 00:32:11: look at having when it comes to broadband.

00:32:11 --> 00:32:15: Now that program, that, 180 million that we're we're working

00:32:15 --> 00:32:18: on HP 648 that money has to be spent by

00:32:18 --> 00:32:20: December 31st,

00:32:20 --> 00:32:23: 2024, and we yet, even though we haven't got the

00:32:23 --> 00:32:26: rules for that program from Treasury,

00:32:26 --> 00:32:29: it is very likely that that money has to be

00:32:29 --> 00:32:34: spent towards infrastructure investments or investments

00:32:34 --> 00:32:38: where there is.

00:32:38 --> 00:32:41: The depreciation of capital assets and so that really means

00:32:41 --> 00:32:44: some middle mile but really last mile connectivity.

00:32:44 --> 00:32:48: So that's what we want to focus on to help

00:32:48 --> 00:32:49: really bridge that 450,000 household gap over the next

00:32:49 --> 00:32:52: couple

00:32:52 --> 00:32:56: of years.

00:32:56 --> 00:32:58: The second is the broadband regional assistance.

00:32:58 --> 00:33:02: You know, obviously Delta Regional Authority is working with

00:33:02 --> 00:33:03: all

00:33:03 --> 00:33:07: the planning development districts to gather input,

00:33:07 --> 00:33:09: regional surveys, and so they're going to start to roll

00:33:09 --> 00:33:12: that out.

00:33:12 --> 00:33:13: I think soon right in terms of their planning efforts

00:33:13 --> 00:33:15: and and so on and so forth,

00:33:15 --> 00:33:18: and then other broadband efforts that we're really pushing

00:33:18 --> 00:33:22: and

00:33:22 --> 00:33:23: looking at is.

00:33:23 --> 00:33:27: There's another house, Bill 465,

00:33:27 --> 00:33:32: which is going to give the state the opportunity to

00:33:32 --> 00:33:36: auction off some spectrum to to help encourage the sort

00:33:36 --> 00:33:40: of Verizon.

00:33:40 --> 00:33:41: Of 18 fees or whomever to really increase and expand

00:33:41 --> 00:33:45: on 5G and LTE technologies to help provide broadband in

00:33:45 --> 00:33:49: areas that again doesn't have it currently today and I

00:33:49 --> 00:33:53: got continue to work on those use cases between the

00:33:53 --> 00:33:57: public entities,

00:33:57 --> 00:34:01: the private sectors to help address specific tactical solutions

00:33:45 --> 00:33:49: to addressing broadband challenges that our farmers are having,

00:33:49 --> 00:33:53: right or or healthcare folks are having or education.

00:33:53 --> 00:33:55: And so on and so forth.

00:33:55 --> 00:33:59: Come with that, and this is really typical advice that we're giving them,

00:33:59 --> 00:34:00: giving oftentimes that I needed parish leaders.

00:34:00 --> 00:34:03: So a couple of different things.

00:34:03 --> 00:34:06: For more information on the speed test,

00:34:06 --> 00:34:08: go to the doa.gov website and through that you could find a speed test and ask folks to submit again.

00:34:08 --> 00:34:11: Very quick and painless, but it's very important for us to understand who has what and what speeds,

00:34:11 --> 00:34:15: but a couple of things May 12th.

00:34:15 --> 00:34:18: So a couple of weeks ago the FCC launched the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program.

00:34:18 --> 00:34:21: It's a \$3.2 billion program to really address the affordability piece,

00:34:21 --> 00:34:23: and this is first come first serve,

00:34:23 --> 00:34:26: and it's it's to provide temporary.

00:34:26 --> 00:34:28: Alleviation for broadband bills. So anywhere between 50 and \$75.

00:34:28 --> 00:34:31: Vouchers based on the eligibility,

00:34:31 --> 00:34:34: whether you're on SNAP low and moderate income, census tracts, families, and so on and so forth.

00:34:34 --> 00:34:36: On July 1st, there's gonna be another affordability program through

00:34:36 --> 00:34:40: the FCC called Emergency Connectivity Fund,

00:34:40 --> 00:34:42: which is to help reimburse costed devices hotspots.

00:34:42 --> 00:34:45: So a couple of weeks ago my colleagues and I,

00:34:45 --> 00:34:48: we we, we did a webinar with number of the IT directors.

00:34:48 --> 00:34:52: Around the schools in Louisiana.

00:34:52 --> 00:34:54: To get them ready to help us provide the kind of data that we need to help create some targeted programs around the emergency connectivity fund.

00:34:54 --> 00:34:58: August 17th is a deadline for the broadband Infrastructure Grant

00:34:58 --> 00:35:01: program which will provide grants between 5,000,000 and \$30 million

00:35:01 --> 00:35:05: to areas that absolutely needed and so that could be something that the plant Growth Corridor project could

00:35:05 --> 00:35:06:

00:35:06 --> 00:35:08:

00:35:08 --> 00:35:12:

00:35:12 --> 00:35:15:

00:35:15 --> 00:35:19:

00:35:19 --> 00:35:23:

00:35:23 --> 00:35:27:

00:35:27 --> 00:35:30:

00:35:30 --> 00:35:34:

benefit from.

00:35:34 --> 00:35:37: Based on the eligibility requirements there.

00:35:37 --> 00:35:40: Again, ongoing the DRA speed test that we're continuing to

00:35:41 --> 00:35:44: push out our goal is to get 100,000 households difference

00:35:44 --> 00:35:45: paid by the end of the year.

00:35:45 --> 00:35:48: We just launched this a couple of weeks ago and

00:35:48 --> 00:35:50: so we've got a long way to go.

00:35:50 --> 00:35:53: But the 100,000 gets us a really strong threshold in

00:35:53 --> 00:35:56: terms of how many people we think are are truly

00:35:56 --> 00:35:56: unserved,

00:35:56 --> 00:35:59: and again, at the end of the day,

00:35:59 --> 00:36:02: the advised that we're giving folks is this money that

00:36:02 --> 00:36:05: we're getting this 180,000,000 and other pots of money.

00:36:05 --> 00:36:09: If not, did not behave like chairs of money where

00:36:09 --> 00:36:12: there was a very quick finite period of time that

00:36:12 --> 00:36:15: we needed to expend that money here.

00:36:15 --> 00:36:18: If you've got we've got a couple of years to

00:36:18 --> 00:36:20: spend the financial resources.

00:36:20 --> 00:36:23: So what we're trying to tell people is have patients

00:36:23 --> 00:36:27: maintain us as much flexibility but that fundamentally to use

00:36:28 --> 00:36:29: our office to vet ideas,

00:36:29 --> 00:36:33: programs, and plans were very Cognizant that parishes and

00:36:33 --> 00:36:35: schools

00:36:33 --> 00:36:35: throughout the state are likely getting.

00:36:35 --> 00:36:39: Inundated by consultants wanting to offer a variety of

00:36:39 --> 00:36:41: different

00:36:39 --> 00:36:41: things to address their needs around water,

00:36:41 --> 00:36:45: sewer, and broadband. And so our our our advice is

00:36:45 --> 00:36:48: to exhibit as much patience and to do the right

00:36:48 --> 00:36:52: thing that makes the right sense for their community and

00:36:52 --> 00:36:55: and and to really be very judicious with trying to

00:36:56 --> 00:36:59: bring on people that may not have their best interests

00:36:59 --> 00:37:00: at heart.

00:37:00 --> 00:37:04: And so that's the advice that we were were giving

00:37:04 --> 00:37:06: to a lot of folks.

00:37:06 --> 00:37:08: While we look at how we can beef up the

00:37:08 --> 00:37:11: technical system side for for a lot of the parish

00:37:11 --> 00:37:15: leaders and for a lot of the communities who want

00:37:15 --> 00:37:18: to understand how they can participate in the broadband

00:37:18 --> 00:37:20: space

00:37:18 --> 00:37:20: but may not understand very tactically what they need to

00:37:20 --> 00:37:22: do to create those localized solutions.

00:37:22 --> 00:37:26: And so we're going to work with the parish leaders

00:37:27 --> 00:37:28: on that with that.

00:37:28 --> 00:37:29: I think I'm good Paula.

00:37:29 --> 00:37:32: Happy to answer any questions.

00:37:32 --> 00:37:32: Well,

00:37:32 --> 00:37:35: thank you. This is a we're really appreciated this.

00:37:35 --> 00:37:39: Feel free to ask some questions on this side and

00:37:39 --> 00:37:42: I think we can interject some comments into those,

00:37:42 --> 00:37:45: but I do want to see if we could bring

00:37:45 --> 00:37:45: in.

00:37:45 --> 00:37:49: Does anyone have any questions for beneath before he leaves?

00:37:55 --> 00:37:59: Alright, well. OK, we'll we'll put some questions in the

00:37:59 --> 00:38:01: chat and we'll kind of drop in.

00:38:01 --> 00:38:04: But until that happens until beneath leaves,

00:38:04 --> 00:38:06: I wanted to bring on Jeff.

00:38:06 --> 00:38:09: We're going to 1st have Geoff Ryman speak a little

00:38:09 --> 00:38:11: bit from a national perspective,

00:38:11 --> 00:38:14: and then we'll also have a Telus Freeman speak a

00:38:14 --> 00:38:15: little bit.

00:38:15 --> 00:38:18: Who can talk a little bit more locally specifically about

00:38:18 --> 00:38:19: Louisiana.

00:38:19 --> 00:38:22: Both of them have a very broad background in understanding

00:38:22 --> 00:38:25: of broadband experience and look at it from a slightly

00:38:25 --> 00:38:26: different.

00:38:26 --> 00:38:29: Models of actually how to implement and do those those

00:38:29 --> 00:38:29: projects,

00:38:29 --> 00:38:32: but I think it will help to have a really

00:38:32 --> 00:38:33: good conversation.

00:38:33 --> 00:38:36: Particularly, I think highlight some of the things that beneath

00:38:36 --> 00:38:39: talked about and how this can relay into something I

00:38:39 --> 00:38:42: wrote down something like 10 plus billion dollars potentially

00:38:42 --> 00:38:44: coming

00:38:42 --> 00:38:44: down the road to do broadband.

00:38:44 --> 00:38:47: And so this seems this is something that that's happening.

00:38:47 --> 00:38:51: And so how do we make this better?

00:38:51 --> 00:38:55: So with that Jeff, if you don't mind.

00:38:55 --> 00:38:56: Saying a few words here,

00:38:56 --> 00:39:00: great, no thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to

00:39:00 --> 00:39:02: participate in this symposium and.

00:39:02 --> 00:39:06: Great opening comments by Christopher Kim and Maggie.

00:39:06 --> 00:39:07: I'm with the broadband group.

00:39:07 --> 00:39:11: We are advisory firm were actually based in Las Vegas,

00:39:11 --> 00:39:13: NV of all places, but a longtime Urban Land Institute

00:39:13 --> 00:39:15: members and participants.

00:39:15 --> 00:39:18: My late father started the company about 25 years ago

00:39:18 --> 00:39:21: and we've been a part of ULI.

00:39:21 --> 00:39:22: Every step of the way,

00:39:22 --> 00:39:26: and it's just as we were talking earlier preparing for

00:39:26 --> 00:39:30: today's discussion it I mentioned just how incredible it is

00:39:30 --> 00:39:33: to hear broadband at the focal point of just about

00:39:33 --> 00:39:37: every discussion. Whether you're turning on CNBC or you're turning

00:39:37 --> 00:39:40: on the Sunday shows and listen to where we are

00:39:40 --> 00:39:41: on the political debate,

00:39:41 --> 00:39:43: broadband is a top billing.

00:39:43 --> 00:39:46: And what's interesting on the political side,

00:39:46 --> 00:39:47: it's not really a debate,

00:39:47 --> 00:39:51: and there might be some discussion about how much money

00:39:51 --> 00:39:52: should be allocated.

00:39:52 --> 00:39:56: But the the need is clear for so many years.

00:39:56 --> 00:39:59: The broadband group we have been working with cities,

00:39:59 --> 00:40:02: large developers and it's really been addressing the why.

00:40:02 --> 00:40:04: Why is this needed? Why?

00:40:04 --> 00:40:07: Why should cities be taken a proactive role in ensuring

00:40:07 --> 00:40:09: that the connectivity is in place?

00:40:09 --> 00:40:12: Don't the incumbents already meet that criteria?

00:40:12 --> 00:40:16: Technology is really outside our area of expertise and it's

00:40:16 --> 00:40:20: something that we're going to let the market take care

00:40:20 --> 00:40:20: of.

00:40:20 --> 00:40:23: And the need then it becomes very clear,

00:40:23 --> 00:40:26: until of course, when the pandemic hit.

00:40:26 --> 00:40:30: Now now the why is there's no longer a question

00:40:30 --> 00:40:33: now it's the House now it's the House.

00:40:33 --> 00:40:36: And right now there is a tremendous amount of monies

00:40:36 --> 00:40:40: being earmarked or already approved for broadband connectivity nationwide.

00:40:40 --> 00:40:44: And it's exciting. \$20 billion through our DOC program that

00:40:44 --> 00:40:45: was announced.

00:40:45 --> 00:40:49: Obviously a lot of dough that's over 10 years though,

00:40:49 --> 00:40:51: and scattered. Throughout the country,

00:40:51 --> 00:40:56: and it's also notable is that \$4.5 billion is allocated

00:40:56 --> 00:41:00: through the FCC SCAFF funding Connect America Fund every year.

00:41:00 --> 00:41:03: So it's not necessarily just having a mind.

00:41:03 --> 00:41:07: It's allocating the money correctly and creating the sustainable programs

00:41:07 --> 00:41:11: that are going to provide the connectivity that is needed

00:41:11 --> 00:41:13: in the areas that are needed most.

00:41:13 --> 00:41:16: I don't need to repeat too much of what has

00:41:16 --> 00:41:17: already been said,

00:41:17 --> 00:41:20: but there's three real layers that need to be addressed.

00:41:20 --> 00:41:23: Of course, it's the access to high quality connectivity.

00:41:23 --> 00:41:24: Fiber is the gold standard.

00:41:24 --> 00:41:27: It's not going to be able to be deployed anywhere,

00:41:27 --> 00:41:29: So what are the other opportunities?

00:41:29 --> 00:41:31: How can we create a program around 5G?

00:41:31 --> 00:41:34: What does that really mean understanding it?

00:41:34 --> 00:41:38: In a way that can be translated into a business

00:41:38 --> 00:41:39: model,

00:41:39 --> 00:41:44: translated into a way that your grant program is clear.

00:41:44 --> 00:41:48: The biggest challenge is that there tends to be this

00:41:48 --> 00:41:52: misunderstanding of wires and 5G and Wi-Fi.

00:41:52 --> 00:41:55: And that challenge then leads to still right.

00:41:55 --> 00:41:59: Like any good investor, people invest in what they understand.

00:41:59 --> 00:42:02: People promote and get on board with programs that they

00:42:03 --> 00:42:03: understand.

00:42:03 --> 00:42:07: Maggie, what you shared earlier that resonates more than just

00:42:07 --> 00:42:10: about anything that can ever be captured.

00:42:10 --> 00:42:13: And it's so important. And those type of stories are

00:42:13 --> 00:42:18: what will hopefully lead to programs that can advance investment

00:42:18 --> 00:42:20: in the areas that it needed most.

00:42:20 --> 00:42:24: And the 2nd is affordability and the third is adoption

00:42:24 --> 00:42:25: in use.

00:42:25 --> 00:42:29: All of these need to be addressed cones.

00:42:29 --> 00:42:32: Hand in hand to ensure a successful project.

00:42:32 --> 00:42:35: So we work with projects around the country with cities

00:42:35 --> 00:42:38: with electric utilities with land developers so happy to share

00:42:38 --> 00:42:39: some historical context.

00:42:39 --> 00:42:41: Uh, past handle floor back over.

00:42:41 --> 00:42:44: But before we go any further I just want to

00:42:44 --> 00:42:48: add just a little bit of trivia as we're talking

00:42:48 --> 00:42:50: about fiber to the home.

00:42:50 --> 00:42:51: My father and I would.

00:42:51 --> 00:42:54: All recent wrote a paper called Fiber Homes.

00:42:54 --> 00:42:57: Yesterday's news. If we were to take a guess at

00:42:57 --> 00:42:59: when the first fiber the home deployment occurred.

00:42:59 --> 00:43:03: I don't think anybody would predict that it was 1987.
 00:43:03 --> 00:43:06: It was 1987, the industry's first fire in the home
 00:43:06 --> 00:43:08: project that was in Central Florida.
 00:43:08 --> 00:43:10: So this is not cutting edge technology.
 00:43:10 --> 00:43:12: This isn't something that's new or innovative.
 00:43:12 --> 00:43:15: This is something that's proven and we just need to
 00:43:15 --> 00:43:19: identify the models to ensure the capital can be deployed
 00:43:19 --> 00:43:22: and as well as the operating expenses can be addressed.
 00:43:22 --> 00:43:25: So that's very important consideration as well.
 00:43:25 --> 00:43:26: When looking at these programs.
 00:43:29 --> 00:43:31: Well, thank you so much,
 00:43:31 --> 00:43:34: Jeff. And tell us, I know that you have really
 00:43:34 --> 00:43:35: taken approach.
 00:43:35 --> 00:43:39: That's happened in Lafayette is 1 approach for addressing
 00:43:39 --> 00:43:42: some
 00:43:42 --> 00:43:46: of these structural challenges that have been talked about.
 00:43:46 --> 00:43:50: And if you don't mind talking a little bit about
 00:43:50 --> 00:43:52: your story of LSU's fiber story within Lafayette and kind
 00:43:52 --> 00:43:54: of talking about that and kind of
 00:43:54 --> 00:43:58: starting the conversation there. Yeah,
 00:43:58 --> 00:44:00: so you know, I've been with LUS for 19 years
 00:44:01 --> 00:44:03: now so it's been a it's been a long time
 00:44:03 --> 00:44:06: and it's been a journey and you know,
 00:44:06 --> 00:44:12: back in come. Late 90s,
 00:44:12 --> 00:44:14: two thousand UM, that we have a a municipally owned
 00:44:14 --> 00:44:17: utility system.
 00:44:17 --> 00:44:20: In Lafayette, LA. And so the utility system needed to
 00:44:20 --> 00:44:24: a solution to connect their substations.
 00:44:24 --> 00:44:28: You know for connectivity and they decided at that point
 00:44:28 --> 00:44:29: they were going to be able to fiber network around
 00:44:29 --> 00:44:32: the city to do that.
 00:44:32 --> 00:44:37: And from there the you know the demand grew from
 00:44:37 --> 00:44:40: our citizens and our business customers and they want it
 00:44:40 --> 00:44:44: that you know access to that high broadband.
 00:44:45 --> 00:44:48: Our city leaders at the time approached other service
 00:44:48 --> 00:44:51: providers
 00:44:51 --> 00:44:55: in the area and you know begged them to come
 00:44:55 --> 00:44:59: to the table offered some of the fiber and and
 00:44:59 --> 00:44:59: you know they opted not to or for whatever reasons
 00:44:59 --> 00:45:02: they didn't feel that that it was worth investing in
 00:44:59 --> 00:45:02: Lafayette.
 00:44:59 --> 00:45:02: The time so uhm, you know we dove head first

00:45:03 --> 00:45:06: and we went through various legal battles and we went
 00:45:06 --> 00:45:08: to a public vote and ultimately,
 00:45:08 --> 00:45:12: you know we we move forward with building a full
 00:45:12 --> 00:45:15: fiber of the home network within the city of Lafayette.
 00:45:15 --> 00:45:20: We built fiber in front of every home in business.
 00:45:20 --> 00:45:24: Put in the city of Lafayette and we provide and
 00:45:24 --> 00:45:28: we serve our first customer in 2009.
 00:45:28 --> 00:45:32: We provide services. Symmetrical speeds.
 00:45:32 --> 00:45:36: From you know, 60 megs all the way to 10
 00:45:36 --> 00:45:36: gigs.
 00:45:36 --> 00:45:42: Uhm, and so we we've been successful in getting a
 00:45:42 --> 00:45:42: 40%.
 00:45:42 --> 00:45:47: Market share in our area and and we you know
 00:45:47 --> 00:45:47: we.
 00:45:47 --> 00:45:50: We initially got bonds to build it out,
 00:45:50 --> 00:45:54: but at this point we're we're financially successful.
 00:45:54 --> 00:45:58: You know, we're paying all our debt service we're making.
 00:45:58 --> 00:46:02: We have. We have positive cash flow and all our
 00:46:02 --> 00:46:02: cat.
 00:46:02 --> 00:46:06: All our capital is on our own cash flow at
 00:46:06 --> 00:46:07: this point.
 00:46:07 --> 00:46:11: And so in 2018 we started expanding beyond the city
 00:46:11 --> 00:46:12: of Lafayette.
 00:46:12 --> 00:46:17: Into the surrounding municipalities and we have a huge
 00:46:17 --> 00:46:20: demand
 00:46:20 --> 00:46:25: from customers there begging us to go.
 00:46:26 --> 00:46:27: And so you know, we strategically or or building that
 00:46:27 --> 00:46:31: out and in.
 00:46:32 --> 00:46:37: And. March of this year we were awarded a EDA
 00:46:37 --> 00:46:39: grant for \$3.1 billion to expand to Iberia Parish and
 00:46:39 --> 00:46:42: Saint Martin Parish,
 00:46:42 --> 00:46:47: and so that's in the works.
 00:46:47 --> 00:46:53: We are working through that process and planning on.
 00:46:53 --> 00:46:56: Starting construction this summer. And so we're really
 00:46:56 --> 00:47:00: excited about,
 00:47:00 --> 00:47:02: you know those opportunities we,
 00:47:02 --> 00:47:06: you know, I, I strongly believe and providing broadband
 00:47:06 --> 00:47:08: connectivity
 00:47:08 --> 00:47:11: and fiber connectivity,
 00:47:11 --> 00:47:16: and I believe that's the the solution for everyone you
 know ultimately,
 or in some form or fashion,
 right? And, you know, I will say one thing that.

00:47:16 --> 00:47:22: Lafayette has benefit from benefit from was that?

00:47:22 --> 00:47:28: Uhm? Even though not every citizen may take fiber services,

00:47:28 --> 00:47:33: we have brought competition to the market and so citizens

00:47:33 --> 00:47:36: are getting a lower price.

00:47:36 --> 00:47:40: Come with our service. In in the market so they

00:47:40 --> 00:47:44: can get services from any of the other providers.

00:47:44 --> 00:47:47: And because of the competition.

00:47:47 --> 00:47:50: They get a lower price and additionally we have.

00:47:50 --> 00:47:53: I I don't remember the exact numbers,

00:47:53 --> 00:47:57: but initially we only had two providers in the market

00:47:57 --> 00:48:00: and now I want to say 27 providers in some

00:48:00 --> 00:48:04: form or fashion that citizens can take advantage of.

00:48:04 --> 00:48:08: So we you know we have forced competition and.

00:48:08 --> 00:48:12: Uhm? You know with everything happening in earlier,

00:48:12 --> 00:48:14: earlier in the school year,

00:48:14 --> 00:48:17: we did work with the school board and went with

00:48:17 --> 00:48:21: a foundation called we can learn to provide connectivity to

00:48:21 --> 00:48:24: those low income students that needed,

00:48:24 --> 00:48:28: you know, remote access for learning and we continue to

00:48:28 --> 00:48:32: work with them to provide alternate solutions for all those

00:48:32 --> 00:48:33: all those students.

00:48:33 --> 00:48:37: And we continue to work with different aspects of the

00:48:37 --> 00:48:41: Community and different Community leaders to find solutions that help

00:48:42 --> 00:48:43: bridge the digital divide.

00:48:43 --> 00:48:47: And so I I could talk about LUS fiber forever.

00:48:47 --> 00:48:50: But, uh, that's kind of the,

00:48:50 --> 00:48:52: you know, the gist of it,

00:48:52 --> 00:48:56: and I encourage every community to find a solution that

00:48:56 --> 00:48:57: works for them.

00:48:57 --> 00:49:01: Obviously, you know, building LUS Fiber doesn't work for every

00:49:01 --> 00:49:02: community,

00:49:02 --> 00:49:05: but finding a partnership or some some Ave that works

00:49:06 --> 00:49:09: for that community and taking your fate into your own

00:49:09 --> 00:49:10: hands,

00:49:10 --> 00:49:14: whether that's partnering with a private provider in some form

00:49:14 --> 00:49:17: of fashion or finding some other ultimate solution,

00:49:17 --> 00:49:21: I encourage every. Community to to educate themselves on broadband,

00:49:21 --> 00:49:24: educate themselves on with their community needs,

00:49:24 --> 00:49:28: and and find that solution that works for them.

00:49:28 --> 00:49:32: It's it's important to your community and support to your

00:49:32 --> 00:49:37: economic development and your continual survival and your citizens survival.

00:49:37 --> 00:49:39: You know, broadband is now a necessity.

00:49:39 --> 00:49:42: It's not. It's not a want,

00:49:42 --> 00:49:47: it's a necessity. It's just like it's the 4th utility.

00:49:47 --> 00:49:47: Lafayette

00:49:47 --> 00:49:50: this is Jeff again. Lafayette is really one

00:49:50 --> 00:49:53: of the shining stars of the utilities that

00:49:53 --> 00:49:56: have taken control of their connectivity future for their own

00:49:56 --> 00:49:59: operational needs as well as with the connectivity needs of

00:49:59 --> 00:50:00: their community.

00:50:00 --> 00:50:03: There's obviously a lot of excitement and talk around Chattanooga,

00:50:03 --> 00:50:06: but there's a number of other utilities that are successful.

00:50:06 --> 00:50:09: Lafayette, of course, being one of them.

00:50:09 --> 00:50:11: Having said that, there's also a lot of utilities in

00:50:11 --> 00:50:13: a lot of cities and a lot of private service

00:50:14 --> 00:50:16: providers have had explored getting in the broadband space.

00:50:16 --> 00:50:20: And I feel. Or have faced tremendous amount of challenges,

00:50:20 --> 00:50:22: and I think that's important and hopefully everybody.

00:50:22 --> 00:50:25: I think on this in this conversation understands the importance

00:50:25 --> 00:50:26: of connectivity.

00:50:26 --> 00:50:27: So now the question is,

00:50:27 --> 00:50:30: well, how do we get there?

00:50:30 --> 00:50:33: And I think it's as important to understand what the

00:50:33 --> 00:50:37: challenges and risks are as it is about the opportunities

00:50:37 --> 00:50:38: you know over the many years.

00:50:38 --> 00:50:41: Really, since I entered the market in 2005,

00:50:41 --> 00:50:44: a lot of the driving thesis was around.

00:50:44 --> 00:50:47: Economic development will bring in this connectivity that will help

00:50:47 --> 00:50:48: for corporate relocation.

00:50:48 --> 00:50:51: Corporate retention. I mentioned that project in 1987.

00:50:51 --> 00:50:54: It was actually an economic development thesis that went into

00:50:54 --> 00:50:56: that deployment of all fiber network.

00:50:56 --> 00:51:00: There he through Heathrow Florida and helped them secure the.

00:51:00 --> 00:51:04: Corporate relocation of AAA. Today Triple H headquarters is based

00:51:04 --> 00:51:04: in Heathrow,

00:51:04 --> 00:51:08: Florida in many ways because of the fiber optic infrastructure

00:51:08 --> 00:51:11: that was in place which allowed for high quality and

00:51:11 --> 00:51:13: reliable voice services.

00:51:13 --> 00:51:16: AAA realized that at their core there are communications company

00:51:16 --> 00:51:20: one 800 AAA help and have that fiber optic infrastructure

00:51:20 --> 00:51:21: in place helped.

00:51:21 --> 00:51:24: He threw up to tell the story of why businesses

00:51:24 --> 00:51:27: should be located there and it was Maggie who said

00:51:27 --> 00:51:28: earlier connectivity.

00:51:28 --> 00:51:30: It's the most important thing.

00:51:30 --> 00:51:36: We do ask people. So understanding though the challenges that

00:51:36 --> 00:51:40: are in place is important because we know all the

00:51:41 --> 00:51:42: benefits so.

00:51:42 --> 00:51:44: Back on my train of thought,

00:51:44 --> 00:51:46: it has always been economic development.

00:51:46 --> 00:51:49: Now that has shifted. Economic development is still there,

00:51:49 --> 00:51:50: but now it's health care.

00:51:50 --> 00:51:52: It's education. It's working from home.

00:51:52 --> 00:51:55: I mean it's political being active in the in the

00:51:55 --> 00:51:56: Civic Society.

00:51:56 --> 00:51:59: There are so many reasons why it's important and yet

00:51:59 --> 00:52:03: the gaps still exist because of the challenges and the

00:52:03 --> 00:52:06: costs and the competitive nature of the broadband industry in

00:52:06 --> 00:52:10: the United States, consolidation was very good for the industry

00:52:10 --> 00:52:12: and it was challenging for those cities.

00:52:12 --> 00:52:15: Better outside of the top 20 and top 50 markets.

00:52:15 --> 00:52:19: You know these service providers are not bad people,

00:52:19 --> 00:52:22: but they're rational. Business actions lead to investment to where

00:52:22 --> 00:52:24: they can get the return.

00:52:24 --> 00:52:26: That's going to be afforded by the shareholders,

00:52:26 --> 00:52:28: so that's what's really positive.

00:52:28 --> 00:52:32: Now. Are all these new models that are being introduced

00:52:32 --> 00:52:33: at drive competition?

00:52:33 --> 00:52:38: Or opportunities for alternative providers like electric utility to invest

00:52:38 --> 00:52:39: in the infrastructure.

00:52:39 --> 00:52:42: But it has to be emphasized that any investment in

00:52:42 --> 00:52:47: the broadband industry introduces greater opportunity for challenges than it

00:52:47 --> 00:52:48: does for success.

00:52:48 --> 00:52:51: Understanding those challenges. Again, like any good

investor,
00:52:51 --> 00:52:56: you don't invest in opportunities that are just looking like
00:52:56 --> 00:52:58: it has nothing but upside.
00:52:58 --> 00:53:02: You invest when there's opportunity and then you can
identify
00:53:02 --> 00:53:03: what the risks are.
00:53:03 --> 00:53:07: You manage those risks. You control those risks and then
00:53:07 --> 00:53:10: you move forward on the investment and that's how any
00:53:10 --> 00:53:11: good investment goes.
00:53:11 --> 00:53:14: Now tell any good broadband deployment is going to go,
00:53:14 --> 00:53:18: and that's what LUS has succeeded on and looking at.
00:53:18 --> 00:53:20: Lessons learned and best practices.
00:53:20 --> 00:53:22: I I I highly encourage again,
00:53:22 --> 00:53:26: it's easy to look at all the benefits and want
00:53:26 --> 00:53:27: to move into this.
00:53:27 --> 00:53:31: There will be challenges and if not properly understood the
00:53:31 --> 00:53:34: program will fail and then that will leave the area
00:53:34 --> 00:53:38: in which you're looking to serve even further behind
potentially
00:53:38 --> 00:53:41: than when you started. A question came up and I
00:53:42 --> 00:53:46: want to address it because it's very relevant it came
00:53:46 --> 00:53:49: from I don't see their name or I apologize,
00:53:49 --> 00:53:52: but it had something to do with my comment fiber,
00:53:52 --> 00:53:53: the home is yesterday's news.
00:53:53 --> 00:53:56: Does that mean we should be focused on 5G and
00:53:56 --> 00:53:59: I want to address that immediately.
00:53:59 --> 00:54:03: What I was emphasizing is that fiber to the home
00:54:03 --> 00:54:07: is not a high risk cutting edge test technology.
00:54:07 --> 00:54:10: It's proven its infrastructure, it lasts.
00:54:10 --> 00:54:14: What I meant by it is that.
00:54:14 --> 00:54:17: It should be pursued and not viewed as a more
00:54:17 --> 00:54:21: riskier approach than legacy cable or copper infrastructure.
00:54:21 --> 00:54:24: When talking about fiber and 5G.
00:54:24 --> 00:54:28: To be very clear, all the promises of 5G cannot
00:54:28 --> 00:54:31: occur without a robust fiber network.
00:54:31 --> 00:54:33: 5G is highly dependent. In fact,
00:54:33 --> 00:54:37: Relyant on having a robust fiber network connecting to those
00:54:37 --> 00:54:40: antennas that then distribute the wireless signal.
00:54:40 --> 00:54:44: It's no different than the Wi-Fi router in your house.
00:54:44 --> 00:54:48: Wi-Fi is great, but your Wi-Fi router still needs that
00:54:48 --> 00:54:51: Blue Ethernet cable plugging into it,
00:54:51 --> 00:54:54: so that can then distribute the signal.
00:54:54 --> 00:54:57: Faster the signal going into that Wi-Fi router.

00:54:57 --> 00:55:01: The higher quality your Wi-Fi network is in your house.

00:55:01 --> 00:55:03: There's no difference with 5G,

00:55:03 --> 00:55:06: and when thinking about all the promises of 5G,

00:55:06 --> 00:55:10: those antennas need to be placed very close to the

00:55:10 --> 00:55:11: user.

00:55:11 --> 00:55:14: Which means, absent a robust fiber network throughout the region,

00:55:14 --> 00:55:17: you don't have 5G, at least a promise of 5G

00:55:17 --> 00:55:21: that we see every time we turn on the television

00:55:21 --> 00:55:23: or open up a new website.

00:55:23 --> 00:55:26: There's different spectrums of 5G which we won't get in

00:55:26 --> 00:55:27: the technicalities of it.

00:55:27 --> 00:55:30: I'm talking about the promise of 5G in terms of

00:55:30 --> 00:55:32: that high performance connectivity.

00:55:32 --> 00:55:34: Use case only occurs with fiber,

00:55:34 --> 00:55:37: so when someone says we should be focused on 5G,

00:55:37 --> 00:55:41: you know wireline. That's guys sound like a bunch of

00:55:41 --> 00:55:41: dinosaurs.

00:55:41 --> 00:55:44: Absolutely not. They go hand in hand.

00:55:44 --> 00:55:46: It needs to be in place in order to have

00:55:46 --> 00:55:48: that level of wireless connection.

00:55:52 --> 00:55:52: Oh sorry,

00:55:52 --> 00:55:54: go ahead. So

00:55:54 --> 00:55:57: I fully agree with Jeff's comments and I do see

00:55:57 --> 00:56:02: someone's asking about the K through 12 schools and students

00:56:02 --> 00:56:04: in Lafayette and what we did there.

00:56:04 --> 00:56:08: So there is a there was a local nonprofit that

00:56:08 --> 00:56:09: pulled,

00:56:09 --> 00:56:12: you know, working with the schools and pulled several service

00:56:13 --> 00:56:14: providers together,

00:56:14 --> 00:56:17: including now. Yes, fiber. And,

00:56:17 --> 00:56:20: uhm, that's the link and learn folks.

00:56:20 --> 00:56:26: So what we did was initially we provided connect wired

00:56:26 --> 00:56:31: connectivity to a list of students that they they had

00:56:31 --> 00:56:33: had get access to,

00:56:33 --> 00:56:35: and so we provide it.

00:56:35 --> 00:56:40: Just, you know, wired connectivity to those houses.

00:56:40 --> 00:56:45: And then recently we started a pilot program in which

00:56:45 --> 00:56:48: we were testing some wireless.

00:56:48 --> 00:56:52: You know 4G LTE type solutions with that that nonprofit,

00:56:52 --> 00:56:57: and they're they're moving forward with a larger scale

projects.

00:56:57 --> 00:57:02: So we did a small you know area in which

00:57:02 --> 00:57:05: we did some CBRS.

00:57:05 --> 00:57:06: Testing and to, you know,

00:57:06 --> 00:57:08: determine what solution is best,

00:57:08 --> 00:57:11: and right now they're they're fine tuning that and determining

00:57:11 --> 00:57:13: what solution they want to move forward with.

00:57:19 --> 00:57:23: Well, thank you and and then I know that you

00:57:23 --> 00:57:26: touched on this a little bit.

00:57:26 --> 00:57:29: Tell us. But can you talk a little bit more

00:57:29 --> 00:57:32: about your overall goals by

00:57:32 --> 00:57:37: putting together LSU fiber and providing more access within Lafayette?

00:57:37 --> 00:57:41: So initially the then mayor saw fiber the same way

00:57:41 --> 00:57:42: as he saw.

00:57:42 --> 00:57:47: You know, or Rd he thought as infrastructure and providing

00:57:47 --> 00:57:52: that infrastructure in that access to the citizens and giving

00:57:52 --> 00:57:55: them those highways to be able to.

00:57:55 --> 00:57:58: You know you lies we.

00:57:58 --> 00:58:01: Prior to LUS five years existence,

00:58:01 --> 00:58:05: the utility system was using that fiber network that they

00:58:05 --> 00:58:07: originally built.

00:58:07 --> 00:58:09: To offer a wholesale services,

00:58:09 --> 00:58:14: you know in which cost a wholesaler or purchase service

00:58:14 --> 00:58:15: add some value.

00:58:15 --> 00:58:19: Add service on top of it and resell the product

00:58:19 --> 00:58:25: and that that product was so successful it drove citizens.

00:58:25 --> 00:58:28: Businesses begging us to be able to provide that service

00:58:28 --> 00:58:29: to them.

00:58:29 --> 00:58:32: But the way we had built the fiber at that

00:58:32 --> 00:58:32: time,

00:58:32 --> 00:58:34: it was only on you know.

00:58:34 --> 00:58:36: It was a main, you know,

00:58:36 --> 00:58:40: core ring. We weren't building down every city and St

00:58:40 --> 00:58:43: and so that that need in that request to drive

00:58:43 --> 00:58:48: to provide citizens with the infrastructure to drive economic development.

00:58:48 --> 00:58:52: Were the two I would say were the initial initial

00:58:52 --> 00:58:55: goals that that our US fire removed into,

00:58:55 --> 00:58:59: and then you know we continue to.

00:58:59 --> 00:59:03: We we have certain requirements we have to operate in

00:59:03 --> 00:59:03: so we can't.

00:59:03 --> 00:59:08: We can't do some of the things we would like

00:59:08 --> 00:59:09: to do but but.

00:59:09 --> 00:59:13: You know our goal is to provide every home the

00:59:13 --> 00:59:15: access to to reliable broadband.

00:59:15 --> 00:59:20: Whether it's with us or whether it's with another provider.

00:59:24 --> 00:59:25: And this is

00:59:25 --> 00:59:27: and I think providing that access.

00:59:27 --> 00:59:29: How do you know whether it's Jeff or tell us

00:59:29 --> 00:59:32: to talk a little bit about this?

00:59:32 --> 00:59:35: Is thinking about how do you actually provide that access.

00:59:35 --> 00:59:38: So it's a is it just putting the fiber down

00:59:38 --> 00:59:41: and then how do the households actually?

00:59:41 --> 00:59:43: Access the Internet

00:59:43 --> 00:59:46: from that, so, so we're we're a service provider,

00:59:46 --> 00:59:50: right? So we ran fiber up and down every street

00:59:50 --> 00:59:52: a customer calls in.

00:59:52 --> 00:59:54: For this or we you know,

00:59:54 --> 00:59:59: market the service, however he's bit and we've area fiber

01:00:00 --> 01:00:04: line to the customers home for the device and that

01:00:04 --> 01:00:09: the side of their home and they just connect to.

01:00:09 --> 01:00:12: To our broadband and we also provide video and phone

01:00:12 --> 01:00:12: services.

01:00:12 --> 01:00:15: By the way, over that same fiber.

01:00:15 --> 01:00:18: But you know, obviously we're talking about broadband here.

01:00:18 --> 01:00:23: Yeah. And then are there and then can you talk

01:00:23 --> 01:00:27: with Jeff a little bit more about some of the.

01:00:27 --> 01:00:31: In some of the other communities that you've worked in,

01:00:31 --> 01:00:34: some of those little bit different models of how

01:00:34 --> 01:00:36: they work, and particularly happy,

01:00:36 --> 01:00:39: and I'll talk about how they worked in those communities

01:00:39 --> 01:00:42: and it goes back until why there are still such

01:00:42 --> 01:00:46: gaps despite all the monies that flow annually into expanding

01:00:46 --> 01:00:50: broadband networks. It's the traditional economics that drives

01:00:50 --> 01:00:50: the broadband

01:00:50 --> 01:00:50: industry.

01:00:50 --> 01:00:54: The costs of deploying new or improved broadband

01:00:54 --> 01:00:57: infrastructure is

01:00:54 --> 01:00:57: often greater than the economic benefits that can be directly

01:00:57 --> 01:00:58: achieved.

01:00:58 --> 01:00:59: So what do we do?

01:00:59 --> 01:01:03: Was Blair Levin, who was the lead author at the

01:01:03 --> 01:01:05: FCC's National Broadband Plan?

01:01:05 --> 01:01:09: He's now a senior visiting fellow with the Brookings Institute,

01:01:09 --> 01:01:12: Blair Levin, LEVINI. Read every piece of his work.

01:01:12 --> 01:01:16: I highly encourage anybody who's truly interested in the broadband

01:01:16 --> 01:01:17: industry to follow,

01:01:17 --> 01:01:20: and if his writings or his work.

01:01:20 --> 01:01:23: He's both brilliant and it it presents it in a

01:01:23 --> 01:01:28: way that's understandable and easy to follow and relatable.

01:01:28 --> 01:01:30: But Blair talked about having to change.

01:01:30 --> 01:01:33: The math on traditional network build economics.

01:01:33 --> 01:01:34: So what do we do?

01:01:34 --> 01:01:38: We either lower the capital costs for service providers or

01:01:38 --> 01:01:41: for communities to deploy to deploy our infrastructure,

01:01:41 --> 01:01:43: or we increase the visible revenues.

01:01:43 --> 01:01:46: So what kind of community do well potentially increase visible

01:01:46 --> 01:01:47: revenues?

01:01:47 --> 01:01:49: You have service providers, you might have one.

01:01:49 --> 01:01:52: You might have two even if you have two.

01:01:52 --> 01:01:55: Obviously, a duopoly doesn't really drive investment,

01:01:55 --> 01:01:57: doesn't really drive low pricing,

01:01:57 --> 01:02:00: I mean it's our classic business 101 class that we

01:02:00 --> 01:02:01: all took.

01:02:01 --> 01:02:02: Back even in high school,

01:02:02 --> 01:02:04: but prisoners dilemma over the years,

01:02:04 --> 01:02:07: they have learned that as long as they both do

01:02:07 --> 01:02:08: the bare minimum.

01:02:08 --> 01:02:09: They both stand to benefit,

01:02:09 --> 01:02:11: and if it's not even a duopoly and it's one

01:02:11 --> 01:02:13: service provider with all the leverage,

01:02:13 --> 01:02:15: then you're kind of out of luck.

01:02:15 --> 01:02:18: In less you can figure out a way to create

01:02:18 --> 01:02:20: a larger revenue pool.

01:02:20 --> 01:02:23: And whether that's somehow consolidating all of your city

01:02:23 --> 01:02:27: assets,

01:02:27 --> 01:02:30: working with the business, different businesses who might agree to

01:02:30 --> 01:02:33: a single agreement with a service provider.

01:02:33 --> 01:02:37: And I understand it's complicated for public entities,

01:02:37 --> 01:02:39: but we do that a lot in private development.

01:02:39 --> 01:02:42: Creating competition where doesn't typically exist.

01:02:42 --> 01:02:47: We're saying guys this is an open market.

01:02:47 --> 01:02:50: You're going to compete for a longer term contract upfront.

01:02:50 --> 01:02:50: And that's going to encourage you to make the investments

01:02:50 --> 01:02:51: that we're asking for,
01:02:51 --> 01:02:54: and we understand it doesn't typically work,
01:02:54 --> 01:02:57: but now it does, because now you have these revenues
01:02:57 --> 01:03:01: that you're able to secure against the investments that we're
01:03:01 --> 01:03:02: asking you to make.
01:03:02 --> 01:03:05: So that's one approach. The other approach is lower and
01:03:05 --> 01:03:09: capital costs by combining the interests of multiple providers
in
01:03:09 --> 01:03:09: Huntsville,
01:03:09 --> 01:03:12: AL and Springfield, MO are two of our highest profile
01:03:12 --> 01:03:14: networks of success in Huntsville,
01:03:14 --> 01:03:17: AL. It was the electric utility.
01:03:17 --> 01:03:20: Much like Lafayette, who recognized they needed more fiber
in
01:03:20 --> 01:03:23: their network for their own internal operational needs,
01:03:23 --> 01:03:27: it had to happen. For their own purposes.
01:03:27 --> 01:03:29: But it was also expensive,
01:03:29 --> 01:03:32: too expensive for the deploy on their own.
01:03:32 --> 01:03:35: So what we did we designed a network that met
01:03:35 --> 01:03:40: their internal operational needs with excess capacity that
could be
01:03:40 --> 01:03:43: leased or sold to a service provider who could then
01:03:43 --> 01:03:47: essentially ride those railroad tracks and provide the services
to
01:03:47 --> 01:03:48: the residents and businesses.
01:03:48 --> 01:03:52: This serves two purposes, one it keeps the utility from
01:03:52 --> 01:03:56: having to expand too far outside of their core competency.
01:03:56 --> 01:03:58: As I mentioned OUS Chattanooga.
01:03:58 --> 01:04:01: Great success stories, but it's very challenging to move from
01:04:01 --> 01:04:04: your core competency into a whole new business vertical,
01:04:04 --> 01:04:07: and it is a whole new business vertical from an
01:04:07 --> 01:04:08: electric utility.
01:04:08 --> 01:04:11: Actually, how many go into the home of the customer
01:04:11 --> 01:04:13: when they have a service problem?
01:04:13 --> 01:04:17: There's a tremendous operational requirement that's needed
that is often
01:04:17 --> 01:04:18: overlooked.
01:04:18 --> 01:04:20: So this model in Springfield and in Huntsville,
01:04:20 --> 01:04:22: and I'm not saying the only one,
01:04:22 --> 01:04:25: but it's one that is working allowed for the utility
01:04:25 --> 01:04:27: to build out citywide network,
01:04:27 --> 01:04:30: sell it to a qualified anchor tenant in that city
01:04:30 --> 01:04:32: was Google Fiber.

01:04:32 --> 01:04:36: In Springfield, it's CenturyLink. Those service providers committed to a

01:04:36 --> 01:04:41: 20 year lease affectively reimbursing the utility for what otherwise

01:04:41 --> 01:04:42: would be a cost center.

01:04:42 --> 01:04:45: Transforming it into a revenue generating asset,

01:04:45 --> 01:04:48: lowering the barrier of entry for the service provider,

01:04:48 --> 01:04:52: enter into that market to private to provide competitive Gigabit

01:04:52 --> 01:04:56: symmetric connectivity to every resident and business in the city.

01:04:56 --> 01:05:00: Changing the math. On the costs and the traditional deployment

01:05:00 --> 01:05:01: economics,

01:05:01 --> 01:05:04: and that's all privately funded.

01:05:04 --> 01:05:06: It's not going to work in every market you have

01:05:06 --> 01:05:09: to have some degree of population based some degree of

01:05:09 --> 01:05:11: density or the costs are just simply going to be

01:05:11 --> 01:05:14: too high, which is why these grant and loan programs

01:05:14 --> 01:05:14: can be.

01:05:14 --> 01:05:18: Very beneficial in helping to bridge the gap there.

01:05:18 --> 01:05:20: But again, being creative, finding opportunities,

01:05:20 --> 01:05:22: increase revenue for your service providers.

01:05:22 --> 01:05:24: The incumbents are not the enemy.

01:05:24 --> 01:05:25: They often get the bad rap.

01:05:25 --> 01:05:27: Oh, they don't do enough.

01:05:27 --> 01:05:29: It's just the business model guys.

01:05:29 --> 01:05:32: It's the revenue against the capitalists be deployed.

01:05:32 --> 01:05:35: If it doesn't make sense they they can't do it.

01:05:35 --> 01:05:38: They're private businesses. So how can we work with them

01:05:38 --> 01:05:40: to identify these new programs?

01:05:40 --> 01:05:42: And if they can't, how can we,

01:05:42 --> 01:05:45: as public entities move forward on a sustainable initiative,

01:05:45 --> 01:05:48: but it has to be done with discipline,

01:05:48 --> 01:05:50: with an appreciation of the tremendous.

01:05:50 --> 01:05:52: Amount of risks that are inherent.

01:05:52 --> 01:05:53: I'll just touch on one point.

01:05:53 --> 01:05:55: We talked a lot about Wi-Fi.

01:05:55 --> 01:05:58: Very beneficial can serve a great number of folks.

01:05:58 --> 01:06:00: The economics of Wi-Fi or very challenging.

01:06:00 --> 01:06:02: Again, outdoor Wi-Fi is tough,

01:06:02 --> 01:06:04: high quality outdoor Wi-Fi is tough,

01:06:04 --> 01:06:06: and if it's not high quality,

01:06:06 --> 01:06:07: no one's going to use it.

01:06:07 --> 01:06:10: When you think about the economics of Wi-Fi,

01:06:10 --> 01:06:12: you still need the fiber or the cable.

01:06:12 --> 01:06:15: Then distribute that signal. You've got the equipment they have

01:06:16 --> 01:06:16: to maintain.

01:06:16 --> 01:06:19: You've got the circuit that you have to purchase from

01:06:19 --> 01:06:20: a service.

01:06:20 --> 01:06:22: Provider, and then there's idea.

01:06:22 --> 01:06:25: Well, maybe we'll sell ads on it being ad supported

01:06:25 --> 01:06:26: model no,

01:06:26 --> 01:06:28: it won't unless you're in New York City,

01:06:28 --> 01:06:31: the amount of money that can be generating AD supported

01:06:31 --> 01:06:33: revenue are negligible.

01:06:33 --> 01:06:35: It doesn't happen. Which is why so many have had

01:06:35 --> 01:06:38: challenges of deploying outdoor Wi-Fi systems.

01:06:38 --> 01:06:40: So again, understanding the risks,

01:06:40 --> 01:06:43: controlling the risks and then moving forward on a plan.

01:06:45 --> 01:06:49: Well, thank you and and tell us I think you

01:06:49 --> 01:06:53: know starting up you are part of the group that

01:06:53 --> 01:06:58: actually really started up LUS fibers initiative in Lafayette.

01:06:58 --> 01:07:01: Can you talk a little bit about some of the

01:07:01 --> 01:07:02: challenges,

01:07:02 --> 01:07:06: challenges and opportunities, particularly with folks on this call who

01:07:06 --> 01:07:10: are predominantly from the public sector or other areas who

01:07:10 --> 01:07:12: want to work to help to deploy,

01:07:12 --> 01:07:16: you know, understanding that there were some political constraints within

01:07:16 --> 01:07:18: Louisiana about your particular model,

01:07:18 --> 01:07:22: but at least thinking about from overall building out a

01:07:22 --> 01:07:25: network and system in both rural and urban areas that

01:07:25 --> 01:07:27: we're talking about today,

01:07:27 --> 01:07:29: right so? You know, challenge.

01:07:29 --> 01:07:31: Obviously we faced dumb legal battles from,

01:07:31 --> 01:07:34: you know, the incumbents and things like that and and

01:07:34 --> 01:07:35: uhm,

01:07:35 --> 01:07:38: there's a mention of the local government Fair Competition Act,

01:07:38 --> 01:07:39: which was created and you know,

01:07:39 --> 01:07:43: we all came to the table and agreed that for

01:07:43 --> 01:07:45: us to move forward we needed.

01:07:45 --> 01:07:49: We needed to make some concessions so everyone you

01:07:49 --> 01:07:53: know
 01:07:53 --> 01:07:55: ourselves and LUS and you know the other comments came
 01:07:55 --> 01:08:00: to the table and this act was created.
 01:08:00 --> 01:08:04: But outside of outside of the political and legal battles.
 01:08:04 --> 01:08:05: I'll say the hurdles or exactly you know what Jeff
 01:08:05 --> 01:08:07: said.
 01:08:07 --> 01:08:11: We we were, uh, uh,
 01:08:11 --> 01:08:12: a utility company. We understood infrastructure but and so
 01:08:12 --> 01:08:14: we
 01:08:14 --> 01:08:17: could build,
 01:08:17 --> 01:08:19: you know the fiber network,
 01:08:19 --> 01:08:21: run those fibers. There's some.
 01:08:21 --> 01:08:25: You know, complexity to that.
 01:08:25 --> 01:08:30: That's different from electric. However,
 01:08:30 --> 01:08:32: it's it's infrastructure, so it wasn't that form stretch,
 01:08:32 --> 01:08:36: but the real struggle that you know the the things
 01:08:36 --> 01:08:41: we struggled with were.
 01:08:41 --> 01:08:45: You know the. The different types of skill sets that
 01:08:45 --> 01:08:47: would be needed versus what's needed in the electric utility
 01:08:47 --> 01:08:51: or the water utility or wastewater utility.
 01:08:51 --> 01:08:57: So we focused. You know,
 01:08:57 --> 01:09:00: we we struggled with. Identifying all those skill sets,
 01:09:00 --> 01:09:02: making sure we had those appropriate skill sets and come.
 01:09:02 --> 01:09:04: You know, going into people's homes that struggle with that
 01:09:04 --> 01:09:06: interaction that we weren't.
 01:09:06 --> 01:09:10: We didn't deal with before.
 01:09:10 --> 01:09:14: The utility didn't deal with before that,
 01:09:14 --> 01:09:15: that troubleshooting that you know those technical calls that
 01:09:15 --> 01:09:17: troubleshooting
 01:09:17 --> 01:09:19: the customer service aspect is very different from a utility
 01:09:19 --> 01:09:23: customer service,
 01:09:23 --> 01:09:27: which is a much more monopoly,
 01:09:27 --> 01:09:31: and so it's it's a very different,
 01:09:31 --> 01:09:35: you know, skill set you're you're having to sell your
 01:09:35 --> 01:09:39: having to do things that you don't normally do.
 01:09:39 --> 01:09:42: In electric utilities, so all those things were struggle.
 01:09:42 --> 01:09:46: And we were. We were moving so quickly trying to
 01:09:46 --> 01:09:47: build server customers and learn everything at the same
 01:09:47 --> 01:09:49: time.
 01:09:49 --> 01:09:52: So those were, you know those were hurdles.
 01:09:52 --> 01:09:56: If if we would have done things a little bit
 01:09:56 --> 01:09:59: slower.
 01:09:59 --> 01:10:02: And recognize that you know,

01:09:49 --> 01:09:52: as the utility we don't know everything,
 01:09:52 --> 01:09:56: right? And we need we need to learn some other
 01:09:56 --> 01:10:00: aspects and we need to pull in some other resources
 01:10:00 --> 01:10:03: and these aren't areas we we definitely.
 01:10:03 --> 01:10:05: Although we may have a customer service center,
 01:10:05 --> 01:10:08: it's not the same type of customer service center,
 01:10:08 --> 01:10:10: although we may have, you know,
 01:10:10 --> 01:10:11: technicians out in the field.
 01:10:11 --> 01:10:13: It's not the same type of technicians.
 01:10:13 --> 01:10:15: It's not the you know.
 01:10:15 --> 01:10:17: The technicians don't have to go into the home,
 01:10:17 --> 01:10:20: understand the aspects of that and the customer relation
 01:10:21 --> 01:10:21: aspect
 01:10:21 --> 01:10:24: of that.
 01:10:24 --> 01:10:26: So all those things or hurdles that have to be
 01:10:26 --> 01:10:29: done and we you know we're lessons learned,
 01:10:29 --> 01:10:33: were things we went through.
 01:10:33 --> 01:10:35: Uhm, and every community would have to face that if
 01:10:35 --> 01:10:37: they did what we did.
 01:10:37 --> 01:10:40: But just like Jeff said,
 01:10:40 --> 01:10:44: there are other options there there.
 01:10:44 --> 01:10:45: Or that's why I encourage every community to really
 01:10:45 --> 01:10:48: understand
 01:10:48 --> 01:10:52: number one,
 01:10:52 --> 01:10:55: understand broadband, understand what the need is,
 01:10:55 --> 01:10:59: understand that there is a need.
 01:10:59 --> 01:11:01: And then. Try to identify the solution that works best
 01:11:01 --> 01:11:02: is not a one size fits all for every community
 01:11:02 --> 01:11:04: and every every citizen.
 01:11:04 --> 01:11:07: It's not, and it's not.
 01:11:07 --> 01:11:08: It's never going to be.
 01:11:08 --> 01:11:12: Ultimately it would be nice to have maybe fiber to
 01:11:12 --> 01:11:16: every every home,
 01:11:16 --> 01:11:17: but maybe that's not the solution for every community and
 01:11:17 --> 01:11:22: the solution for every community isn't for them to own
 01:11:22 --> 01:11:25: their own.
 01:11:25 --> 01:11:29: You know ISP, but that doesn't mean they can't partner
 01:11:29 --> 01:11:32: with an incumbent or partner with a new ISP or
 01:11:32 --> 01:11:36: or work with you know this broadband,
 01:11:36 --> 01:11:39: this new broadband office to find the right solution.
 01:11:39 --> 01:11:43: I do encourage you know or partner with the LUS
 01:11:43 --> 01:11:46: fiber that's also an option there too.
 01:11:46 --> 01:11:49: So Fons right solutions that fit what you need to

01:11:44 --> 01:11:44: fit.

01:11:44 --> 01:11:47: I see there's a question about.

01:11:47 --> 01:11:51: Uhm, is there anything you would do differently if you

01:11:51 --> 01:11:52: were to do it all again?

01:11:52 --> 01:11:54: Knowing what you know now so?

01:11:55 --> 01:11:56: You know, I, I think we

01:11:56 --> 01:12:00: learned a lot of. Things along the way,

01:12:00 --> 01:12:02: but I will say I think,

01:12:02 --> 01:12:06: had I. And not I I say this.

01:12:06 --> 01:12:08: Carefully, because I don't want it to sound like we

01:12:08 --> 01:12:11: have poor customer service 'cause I don't think we do,

01:12:11 --> 01:12:15: but. I think learning the customer service and the sales

01:12:15 --> 01:12:19: aspects and taking our time and building that portion out

01:12:19 --> 01:12:23: appropriately would have benefited us a lot and would have

01:12:23 --> 01:12:26: probably saved us a lot of heartburn and trials and

01:12:27 --> 01:12:27: tribulations.

01:12:27 --> 01:12:31: And you know, handling call flows that we couldn't handle

01:12:31 --> 01:12:34: all those things that we struggled with.

01:12:34 --> 01:12:38: And sometimes we still struggle with today and realizing how

01:12:38 --> 01:12:41: they are different from the electric utility I,

01:12:41 --> 01:12:45: I would say that. That would be one of the

01:12:45 --> 01:12:47: key important things.

01:12:47 --> 01:12:50: Focusing on on that aspect of the organization,

01:12:50 --> 01:12:54: because you'll get past the the construction and the building

01:12:54 --> 01:12:57: of you know those things you know.

01:12:57 --> 01:12:59: Pretty quickly and those things will pass.

01:12:59 --> 01:13:03: It's the ongoing day-to-day work that you need to figure

01:13:03 --> 01:13:05: out the right solution for.

01:13:06 --> 01:13:12: Uhm? Yeah,

01:13:12 --> 01:13:15: and so thank you very much for sharing that.

01:13:15 --> 01:13:18: One thing is, I'm curious.

01:13:18 --> 01:13:24: Jeff, if the. Well, Jeff comes back,

01:13:24 --> 01:13:28: sorry about that is is thinking about as we're kind

01:13:28 --> 01:13:30: of wrapping up a little bit on time.

01:13:30 --> 01:13:33: I'm wondering if it's what tell us,

01:13:33 --> 01:13:36: do you see as what if you had wild success?

01:13:36 --> 01:13:40: Whether it's you know there's a billion potential billion dollars

01:13:40 --> 01:13:41: of extra money coming in.

01:13:41 --> 01:13:43: Or you could prioritize or whatever.

01:13:43 --> 01:13:46: What what does wild success look like to you and

01:13:46 --> 01:13:50: and from the LUS fiber's perspective of creating broadband access

01:13:50 --> 01:13:51: and addressing digital
01:13:51 --> 01:13:53: access equity or 4L US.
01:13:53 --> 01:13:57: Fiber, uhm. So if we had access to,
01:13:57 --> 01:14:00: you know those funds we could.
01:14:00 --> 01:14:04: We could serve those communities that are struggling that
are
01:14:04 --> 01:14:08: struggling to find a solution that are struggling to come
01:14:08 --> 01:14:11: to the table with those incumbents and find the right
01:14:11 --> 01:14:14: solution. You know we have a different.
01:14:14 --> 01:14:16: We're a little different from incumbent.
01:14:16 --> 01:14:19: Obviously we do have to cover our costs and our
01:14:19 --> 01:14:22: debt service and all those things.
01:14:22 --> 01:14:26: But you know, our. Our business model is really we
01:14:26 --> 01:14:30: want to provide that access to those customers.
01:14:30 --> 01:14:32: We're not. We're not a for profit company,
01:14:32 --> 01:14:36: so we want to provide the access to those citizens
01:14:36 --> 01:14:39: and so having that access and being able to partner
01:14:39 --> 01:14:43: with other communities to be able to do what we
01:14:43 --> 01:14:45: did here, I think that would be.
01:14:45 --> 01:14:48: That would be what we would see as a huge
01:14:48 --> 01:14:50: huge win and a success.
01:14:52 --> 01:14:53: And I
01:14:53 --> 01:14:56: wanted to kind of throw that over to you too,
01:14:56 --> 01:14:57: Jeff, particularly thinking about, uh,
01:14:57 --> 01:15:02: tell us talked a lot about kind of incumbent.
01:15:02 --> 01:15:05: Groups and others, and if I can take a slight
01:15:05 --> 01:15:08: divergent to one of the questions,
01:15:08 --> 01:15:11: two of kind of addressing the rural divide issue thinking
01:15:11 --> 01:15:15: about like providing access to rural communities a little bit
01:15:15 --> 01:15:18: versus some of the more urban communities,
01:15:18 --> 01:15:21: or at least where there's more people at.
01:15:21 --> 01:15:24: So thinking about that. Well,
01:15:24 --> 01:15:26: if you could talk a little bit
01:15:26 --> 01:15:29: about that, I can't like null as we're wrapping up
01:15:29 --> 01:15:29: on time here,
01:15:29 --> 01:15:32: but it's important to note there's a lot of activity,
01:15:32 --> 01:15:34: a lot of attention towards rural broadband.
01:15:34 --> 01:15:37: But of course I think most on this call recognized
01:15:37 --> 01:15:39: that the digital divide is as as much,
01:15:39 --> 01:15:42: if not more so in the urban markets.
01:15:42 --> 01:15:44: But the rule market is the challenge.
01:15:44 --> 01:15:45: Again, it's a matter of economics.

01:15:45 --> 01:15:47: Even on that shared cost structure.

01:15:47 --> 01:15:49: Candidly, even if you give a service provider 100%

01:15:49 --> 01:15:51: of the capital cost to build out.

01:15:51 --> 01:15:55: The operating costs can be high in terms of maintaining

01:15:55 --> 01:15:57: the network customer service.

01:15:57 --> 01:15:59: The costs are are just dumb,

01:15:59 --> 01:16:00: can be unsustainable. So again,

01:16:00 --> 01:16:04: it's important to understand that and looking at and trying

01:16:04 --> 01:16:06: to figure out why this is the case,

01:16:06 --> 01:16:08: why aren't they serving here?

01:16:08 --> 01:16:11: All these customers will give you their business again.

01:16:11 --> 01:16:12: The revenues are just challenging,

01:16:12 --> 01:16:16: so understanding the problem is so important and when looking

01:16:16 --> 01:16:17: at the identifying a solution,

01:16:17 --> 01:16:20: I do want to make one note here because I

01:16:20 --> 01:16:22: I know it's so challenging.

01:16:22 --> 01:16:26: There's so many grant federal program state programs being discussed

01:16:26 --> 01:16:26: being proposed.

01:16:26 --> 01:16:30: It's challenging to even understand which might apply directly to

01:16:30 --> 01:16:30: you,

01:16:30 --> 01:16:32: which might just be talked about,

01:16:32 --> 01:16:35: which might actually be active at the NTIA,

01:16:35 --> 01:16:39: which is part of the US Department of Commerce Commerce.

01:16:39 --> 01:16:42: On May 21st released a notice of funding opportunity.

01:16:42 --> 01:16:46: It is allocating \$288 million in in grant programs.

01:16:46 --> 01:16:50: What's interesting about this is that the money is aimed

01:16:50 --> 01:16:53: entirely at public private partnerships.

01:16:53 --> 01:16:57: The application actually must be submitted by a public entity,

01:16:57 --> 01:17:01: so I would certainly encourage those that I think come

01:17:01 --> 01:17:05: from maybe the public space to look at that program

01:17:05 --> 01:17:07: \$288 million nationwide.

01:17:07 --> 01:17:11: Unfortunately, it isn't much, but it's a program that might

01:17:11 --> 01:17:13: resonate and support.

01:17:13 --> 01:17:16: Uh, yeah, your programs? It's still limited by,

01:17:16 --> 01:17:19: you know, only addressing those that have 25,

01:17:19 --> 01:17:23: three or don't have 25 three connectivity which we all

01:17:23 --> 01:17:24: know is far too low,

01:17:24 --> 01:17:28: then what's appropriate? But the opportunities to serve those rural

01:17:28 --> 01:17:29: markets.

01:17:29 --> 01:17:32: It's got to be a combination of changing the math

01:17:32 --> 01:17:34: on network builds,

01:17:34 --> 01:17:36: lowering the costs, increasing the revenue,

01:17:36 --> 01:17:39: and in many ways it's likely going to require some

01:17:39 --> 01:17:41: state or federal assistance.

01:17:41 --> 01:17:45: And the programs that are going to be successful.

01:17:45 --> 01:17:48: Are the ones that translate into direct benefits,

01:17:48 --> 01:17:52: whether it's a health care program and education program.

01:17:52 --> 01:17:54: I mean the list goes on.

01:17:54 --> 01:17:56: Ability to work from home.

01:17:56 --> 01:17:58: You know, again, the why is there?

01:17:58 --> 01:18:01: How do we address the how?

01:18:01 --> 01:18:05: Acknowledging the challenges. And then being able to move forward

01:18:05 --> 01:18:09: on a plan either with a qualified service provider 'cause

01:18:09 --> 01:18:12: I I caution again about the cottage industry that has

01:18:12 --> 01:18:16: emerged in making certain that any service provider that you

01:18:16 --> 01:18:19: align with has the financial wherewithal and the caution and

01:18:19 --> 01:18:23: doesn't get too entrepreneurial and excited about the opportunities but

01:18:23 --> 01:18:26: is appreciative of the challenges that the service writer you

01:18:26 --> 01:18:29: align with can help meet those goals.

01:18:30 --> 01:18:33: I would like to add so yes,

01:18:33 --> 01:18:37: the NTIA program encourages public private partnerships,

01:18:37 --> 01:18:41: which come without knowing the full rules yet.

01:18:41 --> 01:18:44: I do want to add that within the state of

01:18:44 --> 01:18:50: Louisiana there's this thing called the local government Fair Competition

01:18:50 --> 01:18:51: Act,

01:18:51 --> 01:18:55: and although it doesn't restrict public entities from getting into

01:18:56 --> 01:18:56: business,

01:18:56 --> 01:19:01: it does make it difficult for a public entity.

01:19:01 --> 01:19:05: To get into business and it also.

01:19:05 --> 01:19:08: It also it's not just about you know ISP,

01:19:08 --> 01:19:10: it also makes it difficult to.

01:19:10 --> 01:19:14: It also applies when you have some kind of partnership

01:19:14 --> 01:19:18: or whether it's official or unofficial partnership.

01:19:18 --> 01:19:22: So it is something that all these public entities need

01:19:22 --> 01:19:25: to understand need to be aware of.

01:19:25 --> 01:19:28: As they go for these funds come and it's not

01:19:28 --> 01:19:31: just about partnering with the LS fiber,

01:19:31 --> 01:19:36: it does impact you in partnering with the private image

01:19:36 --> 01:19:36: in.

01:19:36 --> 01:19:37: You know there

01:19:37 --> 01:19:40: are a number of states that have those limitations,

01:19:40 --> 01:19:43: and most of them of course are written by the

01:19:43 --> 01:19:45: incumbents to limit competition.

01:19:45 --> 01:19:47: And it's just I, I think,

01:19:47 --> 01:19:50: the absurdity of most of those limitations is becoming more

01:19:50 --> 01:19:51: and more clear.

01:19:51 --> 01:19:54: You know, I'm reminded of Thomas Friedman 2005 book.

01:19:54 --> 01:19:57: The world is flat and the idea was that commerce

01:19:57 --> 01:20:01: is going being available to everybody and opportunity is becoming

01:20:01 --> 01:20:02: accessible to all.

01:20:02 --> 01:20:06: But really, what's occurred with connectivity is the exact opposite.

01:20:06 --> 01:20:09: It is exasperated. The unfairness in so many ways of

01:20:09 --> 01:20:10: where you happen to be located,

01:20:10 --> 01:20:12: where you happen to go to school,

01:20:12 --> 01:20:15: or you happen to grow up.

01:20:15 --> 01:20:17: The networks need to be improved.

01:20:17 --> 01:20:20: It was said earlier. The most important thing we do

01:20:20 --> 01:20:21: is communicate,

01:20:21 --> 01:20:23: and that's health care. That's commerce.

01:20:23 --> 01:20:27: That's education. These type of networks with being discussed today

01:20:28 --> 01:20:29: is so important.

01:20:29 --> 01:20:32: The fact that we're having this discussion that we're sharing

01:20:32 --> 01:20:32: ideas,

01:20:32 --> 01:20:35: hopefully something today that was set today,

01:20:35 --> 01:20:38: resonates in a way that will support the building of

01:20:38 --> 01:20:39: your program.

01:20:39 --> 01:20:43: Whether it's the financing, the alignment with qualified service providers

01:20:43 --> 01:20:45: or the alternative approach such as LUS,

01:20:45 --> 01:20:47: was able to succeed with I.

01:20:47 --> 01:20:50: I just appreciate so much the opportunity to participate in

01:20:50 --> 01:20:51: this discussion.

01:20:51 --> 01:20:53: I hope it was valuable.

01:20:53 --> 01:20:55: I hope it was a somewhat entertaining.

01:20:55 --> 01:20:58: At least I know we're all great to meet in

01:20:58 --> 01:20:59: person,

01:20:59 --> 01:21:02: but Paul thank you for the efforts that you have

01:21:02 --> 01:21:04: made in organizing this event.

01:21:04 --> 01:21:06: Again, just so important.

01:21:06 --> 01:21:08: Well, thank you and tell us any.

01:21:08 --> 01:21:09: Any final

01:21:09 --> 01:21:10: closing thoughts? No,

01:21:10 --> 01:21:14: I mean thank you guys for for having me at

01:21:14 --> 01:21:14: uh,

01:21:14 --> 01:21:18: I really did enjoy it and I again I guess

01:21:18 --> 01:21:21: I've said it this probably.

01:21:21 --> 01:21:23: My third time, saying it,

01:21:23 --> 01:21:27: but I still I encourage everyone to to find the

01:21:27 --> 01:21:31: solutions that work best for their areas and make the

01:21:31 --> 01:21:35: most informed invest decisions they can come.

01:21:35 --> 01:21:39: Because it impacts your community for an extremely long time.

01:21:39 --> 01:21:44: For today and tomorrow. Well

01:21:44 --> 01:21:45: this this is beautiful and wonderful.

01:21:45 --> 01:21:50: And thank you so much coming back into this session.

01:21:50 --> 01:21:53: Welcome back and thank you so much for all your

01:21:53 --> 01:21:54: participation already.

01:21:54 --> 01:21:58: We seen some really interesting and good comments that have

01:21:58 --> 01:22:01: come out of some of those breakout sessions,

01:22:01 --> 01:22:02: and some of the discussions.

01:22:02 --> 01:22:07: So it sounds like those were pretty were good conversations

01:22:07 --> 01:22:10: and which is great to hear that.

01:22:10 --> 01:22:14: You've already started talking about so many wonderful things.

01:22:14 --> 01:22:19: Alright, is. Mia, Mia or Maggie?

01:22:19 --> 01:22:22: Let's see here, Mia. Hi Mia.

01:22:25 --> 01:22:29: I'm I'm wondering if if you don't mind providing a

01:22:29 --> 01:22:33: little bit of some of the key takeaways from your

01:22:33 --> 01:22:34: your first breakout,

01:22:34 --> 01:22:35: the

01:22:35 --> 01:22:36: breakout session for

01:22:36 --> 01:22:40: sure so. Let me get back to.

01:22:40 --> 01:22:43: It should be open right here.

01:22:43 --> 01:22:44: Uhm?

01:22:45 --> 01:22:46: That's a great

01:22:46 --> 01:22:47: conversation by the

01:22:47 --> 01:22:48: way, UM.

01:22:51 --> 01:22:52: But we did

01:22:52 --> 01:22:55: have a few ideas float to the top.

01:22:55 --> 01:22:56: Uhm,

01:22:56 --> 01:23:01: so we had three in total and they are closely
01:23:01 --> 01:23:07: related, so first. Affordability is a larger barrier than access
01:23:08 --> 01:23:10: for high speed broadband.
01:23:10 --> 01:23:14: Mind you, our group is in southeastern Louisiana,
01:23:14 --> 01:23:17: generally in the Baton Rouge
01:23:17 --> 01:23:18: area, UM.
01:23:19 --> 01:23:24: There is insight from rural communities in our group,
01:23:24 --> 01:23:28: but uhm. You know, I don't want to.
01:23:29 --> 01:23:32: Uh, color in a way to make it seem like
01:23:33 --> 01:23:35: this speaks to the whole metro,
01:23:35 --> 01:23:37: suburban and rural experience. These,
01:23:37 --> 01:23:38: I
01:23:38 --> 01:23:42: think largely are predicated on the the idea of
01:23:42 --> 01:23:44: broadband in Baton Rouge and.
01:23:44 --> 01:23:45: Rural area.
01:23:46 --> 01:23:52: And surrounding. Next we have affordability is a
01:23:52 --> 01:23:57: prerequisite for availability. High speed broadband is
01:23:58 --> 01:23:59: available for those
01:23:59 --> 01:23:59: able to afford it,
01:23:59 --> 01:23:59: and
01:23:59 --> 01:24:00: there is
01:24:00 --> 01:24:06: an idea of high speed broadband being redlined and
01:24:06 --> 01:24:06: somebody
01:24:06 --> 01:24:06: in
01:24:06 --> 01:24:09: our group actually spoke towards
01:24:09 --> 01:24:10: that being
01:24:10 --> 01:24:11: a turn.
01:24:12 --> 01:24:13: Use digital redlining
01:24:13 --> 01:24:14: colloquially in
01:24:14 --> 01:24:18: publications about broadband, which is really
01:24:18 --> 01:24:20: interesting. In our last
01:24:20 --> 01:24:23: takeaway was that systemically there
01:24:23 --> 01:24:24: are number
01:24:24 --> 01:24:25: of forces that
01:24:25 --> 01:24:27: work against marginalized
01:24:27 --> 01:24:29: communities. Adoption of, and
01:24:29 --> 01:24:32: their ability to attract Internet service
01:24:32 --> 01:24:35: to their communities. So cost
01:24:35 --> 01:24:37: seemed to be a
01:24:37 --> 01:24:42: very big barrier. And in our discussions,
01:24:42 --> 01:24:45: maybe more so than. Data
01:24:45 --> 01:24:48: more so than accessed indefinitely.

01:24:48 --> 01:24:50: Feeding into
 01:24:50 --> 01:24:51: infrastructural issues.
 01:24:55 --> 01:24:57: Well, well perfect. Well
 01:24:57 --> 01:24:59: thank you so much anything else?
 01:24:59 --> 01:25:01: There's a lot of great stuff,
 01:25:01 --> 01:25:02: but is there is
 01:25:02 --> 01:25:04: that it's at all, you
 01:25:04 --> 01:25:07: know, I could probably go through honestly and pick out
 01:25:07 --> 01:25:09: some things that I think we kind of because we
 01:25:09 --> 01:25:11: the discussion was so great we didn't,
 01:25:11 --> 01:25:13: you know, get a chance.
 01:25:13 --> 01:25:16: To summarize, we are more or less kind of feeding
 01:25:16 --> 01:25:17: off of each other.
 01:25:17 --> 01:25:23: Uhm? You know the comment that I think a lot
 01:25:23 --> 01:25:24: of us.
 01:25:24 --> 01:25:27: In this call can kind of relate to is the
 01:25:27 --> 01:25:30: idea that the data is incorrect or
 01:25:30 --> 01:25:33: inaccurate. And when I say the data,
 01:25:33 --> 01:25:35: most of us are referencing FCC data.
 01:25:35 --> 01:25:39: I hope that's not too big of a call out
 01:25:39 --> 01:25:39: to say,
 01:25:39 --> 01:25:42: but you know generally a lot of us are talking
 01:25:42 --> 01:25:46: about FCC data when we're talking about broadband,
 01:25:46 --> 01:25:48: generally because we can't really afford it.
 01:25:48 --> 01:25:51: I eat this is a call out
 01:25:51 --> 01:25:53: to everybody here. Do
 01:25:53 --> 01:25:55: your surveys of speed
 01:25:55 --> 01:25:57: tests in in your communities.
 01:25:57 --> 01:25:59: When you get the chance and
 01:25:59 --> 01:26:01: if you are a
 01:26:01 --> 01:26:03: local leader, please promote it because it's
 01:26:03 --> 01:26:04: very important that
 01:26:04 --> 01:26:06: we get accurate
 01:26:06 --> 01:26:08: data, not just CRPC but on the
 01:26:08 --> 01:26:14: whole. Uhm? But to resist taking up the floor in
 01:26:14 --> 01:26:16: the symposium,
 01:26:16 --> 01:26:17: Paul I will
 01:26:17 --> 01:26:18: just step back
 01:26:18 --> 01:26:23: and say that, UM. There is data.
 01:26:24 --> 01:26:24: Uhm it
 01:26:24 --> 01:26:28: is. Potentially inaccurate, but that was
 01:26:28 --> 01:26:32: in accuracies plus the inability to just even know what

01:26:32 --> 01:26:33: communities really

01:26:33 --> 01:26:35: can feed into the

01:26:35 --> 01:26:36: infrastructure makes

01:26:36 --> 01:26:39: it so that other technologies are having

01:26:39 --> 01:26:41: an issue. So

01:26:41 --> 01:26:42: 5G could

01:26:42 --> 01:26:43: be much more

01:26:43 --> 01:26:46: available. Potentially in Baton Rouge,

01:26:46 --> 01:26:49: but because we lack an understanding of the

01:26:49 --> 01:26:53: real infrastructure, it's hard to support permitting and such

01:26:53 --> 01:26:56: an expansion of the 5G

01:26:56 --> 01:26:58: infrastructure. Well, perfect thank you.

01:26:58 --> 01:27:01: I'm Maggie. Do you mind giving some of your takeaways

01:27:01 --> 01:27:02: from your group?

01:27:03 --> 01:27:07: Sure, so we had a really good discussion on how

01:27:07 --> 01:27:11: broadband would improve our communities with.

01:27:11 --> 01:27:13: Uh, a good representation. Of course.

01:27:13 --> 01:27:18: From Baton Rouge we also had someone from AARP.

01:27:18 --> 01:27:21: That consultant and then we had someone from the North

01:27:22 --> 01:27:26: Louisiana Economic Partnership who works on economic

development.

01:27:26 --> 01:27:29: Uhm, kind of. The over arching thing that came out

01:27:29 --> 01:27:32: of ours is that digital literacy education.

01:27:32 --> 01:27:35: I think we kind of all agreed that,

01:27:35 --> 01:27:40: you know. Even if we had the infrastructure and high

01:27:40 --> 01:27:41: speed Internet.

01:27:41 --> 01:27:44: You know what is it without digital literacy?

01:27:44 --> 01:27:47: Uhm, something else that came out of the conversation.

01:27:51 --> 01:27:54: So communities that have good broadband are better

positioned to

01:27:55 --> 01:27:56: attract economic development.

01:27:56 --> 01:28:00: So our consultant you know pointed this out that.

01:28:02 --> 01:28:06: Having that good broadband and Internet speeds you know

could

01:28:06 --> 01:28:08: be a tool for economic development.

01:28:08 --> 01:28:12: Uhm, it would definitely. Put us at least on par

01:28:12 --> 01:28:16: with other states you know you have to have at

01:28:16 --> 01:28:17: least the basics.

01:28:17 --> 01:28:21: And then come to kind of contrast that our person

01:28:21 --> 01:28:22: from.

01:28:22 --> 01:28:25: The rule areas up in north Louisiana.

01:28:25 --> 01:28:29: Said that, you know rural areas also have great assets,

01:28:29 --> 01:28:34: but without broadband they can't run effective websites to

01:28:34 --> 01:28:34: attract
01:28:34 --> 01:28:39: people.
01:28:34 --> 01:28:39: Working from home became very difficult.
01:28:39 --> 01:28:41: So even in the rural areas,
01:28:41 --> 01:28:46: it it poor broadband really inhibits economic competitiveness.
01:28:46 --> 01:28:50: And unfortunately, companies kind of assume that good
broadband is
01:28:50 --> 01:28:51: available,
01:28:51 --> 01:28:55: so you know. That's not always the case.
01:28:55 --> 01:28:59: UM, and then another thing that we kind of all
01:28:59 --> 01:29:01: touched on was that.
01:29:01 --> 01:29:06: Ah. We don't know where to start and.
01:29:06 --> 01:29:08: You know, we all talk about broadband,
01:29:08 --> 01:29:10: but maybe we don't know what that is,
01:29:10 --> 01:29:14: so we're really looking forward to that state toolkit to
01:29:14 --> 01:29:14: come out.
01:29:14 --> 01:29:17: Uhm, because even when we started with ULI and the
01:29:17 --> 01:29:18: suppose ehem,
01:29:18 --> 01:29:22: we didn't know. Even the technical terms broadband 5G
wireless,
01:29:22 --> 01:29:28: like it was, all it was all new to us
01:29:28 --> 01:29:28: so.
01:29:28 --> 01:29:31: So yeah, those were the kind of common themes that
01:29:31 --> 01:29:32: we talked about,
01:29:32 --> 01:29:34: not breakout room. Well,
01:29:34 --> 01:29:35: thank you so much Maggie.
01:29:35 --> 01:29:38: Those are very insightful. I'm all of you have made
01:29:38 --> 01:29:38: them.
01:29:38 --> 01:29:41: And finally I want to turn it over to Brian
01:29:41 --> 01:29:44: who I will also mentioned is it will be moderating
01:29:44 --> 01:29:46: the next panel as well?
01:29:46 --> 01:29:48: And which all those panelists are here now.
01:29:48 --> 01:29:51: So if we want to talk a little bit about
01:29:51 --> 01:29:54: the key takeaways and then kind of segue into that
01:29:54 --> 01:29:55: next panel,
01:29:55 --> 01:29:57: I think it will should go smoothly.
01:29:58 --> 01:30:02: Thank you we we had a little challenge with our
01:30:02 --> 01:30:06: group because pretty much everybody who was in our group
01:30:06 --> 01:30:07: was in the library.
01:30:07 --> 01:30:13: Spray talk. Uhm, actually it it was kind of fun
01:30:13 --> 01:30:19: having Mary and Kristen and Bryce and I think it
01:30:19 --> 01:30:21: was at Andrew.

01:30:21 --> 01:30:26: He has a very thick Shreveport accent is that?

01:30:26 --> 01:30:32: OK. Uhm, we we got the perspective from the from

01:30:32 --> 01:30:33: the library.

01:30:33 --> 01:30:36: These Baton Rouge library system,

01:30:36 --> 01:30:40: not one particular branch. And the the sense that we

01:30:40 --> 01:30:44: got the sense that I got from that discussion is

01:30:44 --> 01:30:49: that the people who were most negatively impacted from the

01:30:49 --> 01:30:52: the digital divide are going to the library.

01:30:52 --> 01:30:55: That's their go to place.

01:30:55 --> 01:30:58: Not only because it's a great place to go,

01:30:58 --> 01:31:01: but because there are little alternatives.

01:31:01 --> 01:31:05: Few alternatives for them, so they are going there to

01:31:05 --> 01:31:09: the library to fill out job applications to reach out

01:31:09 --> 01:31:13: of the example was after the 2016 flood that if

01:31:13 --> 01:31:15: you had to get with FEMA,

01:31:15 --> 01:31:20: you had to be online to do it.

01:31:20 --> 01:31:26: So broadband access not being just a.

01:31:26 --> 01:31:29: A A luxury item but a survival.

01:31:29 --> 01:31:34: A survival item, so the yeah the the library sees

01:31:34 --> 01:31:35: it,

01:31:35 --> 01:31:40: they see it up close and personal which means to

01:31:40 --> 01:31:45: me that that's an area to put resources to to

01:31:45 --> 01:31:49: reach out to those who need it for not only

01:31:49 --> 01:31:55: just the access but for the addressing of the digital

01:31:55 --> 01:31:56: literacy.

01:31:56 --> 01:31:58: Uhm, issues and and the solutions there.

01:31:58 --> 01:32:02: It seems like a library would be a fantastic place.

01:32:02 --> 01:32:06: Now we we did talk a little bit about the

01:32:06 --> 01:32:07: obstacles.

01:32:07 --> 01:32:10: To achieve the goals that they need,

01:32:10 --> 01:32:12: and as you might imagine,

01:32:12 --> 01:32:16: resources are are a barrier to success for the library

01:32:16 --> 01:32:17: system,

01:32:17 --> 01:32:21: not only in terms of just funds for general things,

01:32:21 --> 01:32:27: but also to hire additional people to address these things.

01:32:27 --> 01:32:30: So I one of the constant themes I'm hearing throughout

01:32:30 --> 01:32:35: here is vocabulary and understanding of the issues and

01:32:35 --> 01:32:36: understanding

01:32:35 --> 01:32:36: of the solutions.

01:32:36 --> 01:32:40: Maybe if we could use the libraries as A and

01:32:40 --> 01:32:42: not just in EBR Parish,

01:32:42 --> 01:32:46: but all across the state and the country we could

01:32:46 --> 01:32:49: use libraries to address those issues.

01:32:49 --> 01:32:53: That would be great, but we have to support them

01:32:53 --> 01:32:56: with people and with funds.

01:32:56 --> 01:32:57: Christian that I get that right.

01:33:03 --> 01:33:04: She's probably whispering, so I'll just.

01:33:04 --> 01:33:07: I'll just assume that that's where I can go from

01:33:07 --> 01:33:07: there,

01:33:07 --> 01:33:11: no. I have a long way to go to travel

01:33:11 --> 01:33:12: to UN mute.

01:33:14 --> 01:33:19: That definitely is. Hitting the nail on the head.

01:33:19 --> 01:33:21: Everybody's challenge as far as libraries,

01:33:21 --> 01:33:24: schools are slightly different from your rule.

01:33:24 --> 01:33:27: Libraries would definitely echo what you're saying about

01:33:27 --> 01:33:31: about funding

01:33:27 --> 01:33:31: and about the infrastructure in order to connect their patrons.

01:33:31 --> 01:33:34: And you know, a lot of those rural places.

01:33:34 --> 01:33:36: It's it's one. It's one building.

01:33:36 --> 01:33:38: We're fortunate that we have many buildings,

01:33:38 --> 01:33:42: and that's because the population in which we we have

01:33:42 --> 01:33:43: here we serve.

01:33:43 --> 01:33:44: But what you're talking about?

01:33:45 --> 01:33:47: And in the northern parishes they maybe have one.

01:33:47 --> 01:33:50: Maybe two locations and they cover,

01:33:50 --> 01:33:54: you know, a large footprint and then they they don't

01:33:54 --> 01:33:56: have the infrastructure up there either,

01:33:56 --> 01:33:59: so that does go back.

01:33:59 --> 01:34:01: Go back to funds as well so.

01:34:02 --> 01:34:04: Great, thank you so much.

01:34:04 --> 01:34:07: Paul, that's it for our group and less Jasmine did

01:34:07 --> 01:34:09: I leave anything out?

01:34:12 --> 01:34:14: Oh, that's good. I think so.

01:34:14 --> 01:34:15: They were good,

01:34:15 --> 01:34:17: Paul, thank you well,

01:34:17 --> 01:34:21: well, well, perfect, well with that I want to reintroduce

01:34:21 --> 01:34:24: you Brian Andrew as from the esteemed LSU.

01:34:24 --> 01:34:27: And and and will be the moderator for our next

01:34:27 --> 01:34:28: panel.

01:34:28 --> 01:34:31: That's really will be focused on economic development and

01:34:31 --> 01:34:33: opportunities,

01:34:31 --> 01:34:33: and I think that last comment is a really nice

01:34:33 --> 01:34:36: segue to some of the speakers as well.

01:34:36 --> 01:34:39: So with that, I'll turn it back over to you,

01:34:39 --> 01:34:40: Brian. So thank you.

01:34:41 --> 01:34:46: Great, thank you so much I I appreciate that and.

01:34:46 --> 01:34:50: Thank you for the panelists 2 for for coming here.

01:34:50 --> 01:34:55: We have three panelists with us today on the next

01:34:55 --> 01:34:55: slide.

01:34:55 --> 01:34:58: Starting off with Deborah Lamm,

01:34:58 --> 01:35:03: Deborah is at a small junior college and Georgia Georgia

01:35:03 --> 01:35:04: Tech.

01:35:04 --> 01:35:05: Sorry Debra, you're an academic.

01:35:05 --> 01:35:09: You gotta get that from me.

01:35:09 --> 01:35:12: Neverland was with Georgia Tech or wonderful institution.

01:35:12 --> 01:35:15: We've also got Molly McKay in Washington DC with Willdan

01:35:15 --> 01:35:18: financial and economic consulting services,

01:35:18 --> 01:35:21: and then we have Chuck Kirby in Herndon,

01:35:21 --> 01:35:26: VA, and how close is that to Richmond?

01:35:26 --> 01:35:28: Jack O about now and

01:35:28 --> 01:35:29: a half or so.

01:35:31 --> 01:35:32: 'cause you also have offices there.

01:35:32 --> 01:35:35: I believe yes, so this is this is our panel.

01:35:35 --> 01:35:37: This is a good group of people.

01:35:37 --> 01:35:41: I've read their VITAS. This is what I'm going to

01:35:41 --> 01:35:42: be doing.

01:35:42 --> 01:35:45: Each of our speakers is going to have five 710

01:35:45 --> 01:35:48: minutes to speak about their areas of expertise,

01:35:48 --> 01:35:50: during which time if you would.

01:35:50 --> 01:35:52: If you hear something interesting,

01:35:52 --> 01:35:55: or if you have a question if you would drop

01:35:55 --> 01:35:57: the question in the chat window,

01:35:57 --> 01:36:01: I'd appreciate that. Then we'll go to the next speaker

01:36:01 --> 01:36:03: in the next speaker after that,

01:36:03 --> 01:36:05: and then after Chuck finishes speaking.

01:36:05 --> 01:36:08: Then we'll open it up for a Q&A session where

01:36:08 --> 01:36:12: we will address the questions that you put in the

01:36:12 --> 01:36:12: chat.

01:36:12 --> 01:36:16: Window. And then we'll finish up by.

01:36:16 --> 01:36:20: Uhm, 1:30 will finish up by 1:30.

01:36:20 --> 01:36:24: With. Yeah, wondering with kind of a discussion between the

01:36:24 --> 01:36:28: panelists making sure that we have the key takeaways.

01:36:28 --> 01:36:31: So I'm going to. I'm going to open it up

01:36:31 --> 01:36:36: here and talk to our first speaker which is Deborah

01:36:36 --> 01:36:36: Lamb.

01:36:36 --> 01:36:40: A founding executive director for Inclusive Innovation at

Georgia Tech.

01:36:40 --> 01:36:44: The best profile picture I've ever seen and you can

01:36:44 --> 01:36:47: read her offer information there.

01:36:47 --> 01:36:51: She's the real deal, as are all of our panelists.

01:36:51 --> 01:36:55: I'm so glad that she's here with us,

01:36:55 --> 01:36:59: Deborah. Please tell us about you and what you're doing

01:36:59 --> 01:37:01: in the broadband industry.

01:37:02 --> 01:37:04: Thank you, Brian. Thank you.

01:37:04 --> 01:37:06: If there was a very kind introduction.

01:37:06 --> 01:37:10: Hello everyone, I I will keep my introduction very brief

01:37:11 --> 01:37:14: to leave more time for Molly and Chuck and and

01:37:14 --> 01:37:17: really just the most time for all of us to

01:37:17 --> 01:37:21: have a discussion. And looking forward to your questions and

01:37:21 --> 01:37:22: insight as as we go.

01:37:22 --> 01:37:24: But as Brian kindly noted,

01:37:24 --> 01:37:26: my name is Deborah Lamb.

01:37:26 --> 01:37:30: I am the executive director of the Partnership for Inclusive

01:37:30 --> 01:37:32: Innovation here in Atlanta.

01:37:32 --> 01:37:36: That partnership is a statewide public private partnership

01:37:36 --> 01:37:40: where,

01:37:40 --> 01:37:42: in its truest sense of the word we get resources

01:37:42 --> 01:37:46: from the state of Georgia,

01:37:46 --> 01:37:48: from Georgia Tech, and then from a series of corporate

01:37:48 --> 01:37:52: private sector dollars.

01:37:52 --> 01:37:56: The goal of the partnership is to essentially activate the

01:37:56 --> 01:38:00: whole state as a living laboratory for inclusive innovation,

01:38:00 --> 01:38:03: and therefore we really act more as a foundation or

01:38:03 --> 01:38:08: an Angel investor where we provide.

01:38:08 --> 01:38:12: Funding to Georgia entities, whether they are startups or

01:38:12 --> 01:38:18: nonprofits

01:38:18 --> 01:38:20: or local governments or community organizations.

01:38:20 --> 01:38:24: And if they have a locally successful Shovel Ready Project

01:38:24 --> 01:38:27: service program.

01:38:27 --> 01:38:31: Tech deployment. Uh, that's ready to scale.

01:38:31 --> 01:38:35: We will fund that scale across the state,

01:38:35 --> 01:38:39: and that's very much at the heart of the partnership.

01:38:39 --> 01:38:40: We also work a lot with Community research and really

01:38:40 --> 01:38:45: think about how multidisciplinary research can be used to

01:38:45 --> 01:38:50: address

01:38:50 --> 01:38:55: community issues.

01:38:55 --> 01:39:00: And then, of course, we really think about workforce

01:39:00 --> 01:39:05: development

01:39:05 --> 01:39:10: with our student engagement program and and have a

fellowship
that puts.

01:38:50 --> 01:38:51: Teams of students. So in three levels of intersectionality,
01:38:51 --> 01:38:54: one that's graduating undergraduates or different years,
01:38:54 --> 01:38:56: two, that's obviously different majors,
01:38:56 --> 01:38:58: disciplines, and then three from any university across
01:38:58 --> 01:39:01: Georgia,
01:39:01 --> 01:39:05: so they work in teams living in the community,
01:39:05 --> 01:39:08: and it goes into our philosophy of you can learn
01:39:08 --> 01:39:10: about it in the classroom,
01:39:10 --> 01:39:13: or you can be on the forefront doing it in
01:39:14 --> 01:39:18: the community and and working and and kind of gaining
01:39:18 --> 01:39:20: expertise and learning that way.
01:39:20 --> 01:39:26: Specifically for connectivity, we have a Georgia Smart
Community challenge,
01:39:26 --> 01:39:31: which is a award-winning program that provides research
and community
01:39:31 --> 01:39:36: funding for communities to essentially implement smart cities
projects.
01:39:36 --> 01:39:40: We have been doing this for the past four years
01:39:40 --> 01:39:46: and have 12 projects across the state from autonomous
vehicles
01:39:46 --> 01:39:48: to affordable housing.
01:39:48 --> 01:39:51: To see smart sea level sensors across.
01:39:51 --> 01:39:55: The coast to attract hurricanes and for connectivity.
01:39:55 --> 01:39:59: This year we have a specific project that's focused on
01:39:59 --> 01:40:02: what we call sandwich services,
01:40:02 --> 01:40:06: so we're assuming that with a lot of communities first
01:40:06 --> 01:40:11: and foremost you you're all familiar with the FCC mapping
01:40:11 --> 01:40:14: that's been done on communities.
01:40:14 --> 01:40:18: We through our broad Georgia broadband initiative have
taken it
01:40:18 --> 01:40:20: into a neighborhood granular level.
01:40:20 --> 01:40:23: So beyond that. Census block level.
01:40:23 --> 01:40:25: We now are covering 80%
01:40:25 --> 01:40:28: within the census block and so that gives us a
01:40:28 --> 01:40:33: much better understanding of the needs of connectivity
across the
01:40:33 --> 01:40:34: state.
01:40:34 --> 01:40:37: And then from that we are providing sandwich services in
01:40:38 --> 01:40:41: terms of trying to build the stakeholder engagement,
01:40:41 --> 01:40:45: the strategic plan and before the infrastructure development
and then
01:40:45 --> 01:40:47: after the infrastructure development.

01:40:47 --> 01:40:51: Thinking about the applications and IO T and additional research

01:40:51 --> 01:40:52: and economic development.

01:40:52 --> 01:40:54: That could be done afterwards,

01:40:54 --> 01:40:58: so it's an assumption that obviously between the state funded

01:40:58 --> 01:40:59: and the federal funding,

01:40:59 --> 01:41:02: there will be more infrastructure funds to be devoted for

01:41:02 --> 01:41:03: connectivity.

01:41:03 --> 01:41:07: But we need to better empower the communities so that

01:41:07 --> 01:41:10: they are prepared not only in terms of the development,

01:41:10 --> 01:41:13: but also in terms of the application afterwards to drive

01:41:13 --> 01:41:16: further community and economic development.

01:41:16 --> 01:41:19: So that's a lot. Let me just stop there and

01:41:19 --> 01:41:22: really look forward to additional conversation.

01:41:23 --> 01:41:23: Deborah, let

01:41:23 --> 01:41:26: me ask you something real quick.

01:41:26 --> 01:41:30: You you mentioned the public private partnerships that you work

01:41:30 --> 01:41:34: with is and we heard earlier Jeff was talking about

01:41:34 --> 01:41:35: the NTIA grants.

01:41:35 --> 01:41:38: That that communities can go after,

01:41:38 --> 01:41:42: but it probably should be done through a P3.

01:41:42 --> 01:41:44: Is that what you're finding?

01:41:44 --> 01:41:48: Is that public? Private partnerships are really again not a

01:41:48 --> 01:41:48: luxury,

01:41:48 --> 01:41:52: but I gotta do to be playing in this this

01:41:53 --> 01:41:54: this arena.

01:41:55 --> 01:41:58: Yeah, I find it quite useful in a lot of

01:41:58 --> 01:42:01: the not only the priorities we deal with,

01:42:01 --> 01:42:04: but just the problems and issues that have to be

01:42:04 --> 01:42:04: confronted,

01:42:04 --> 01:42:08: right so they're not owned by any single entity.

01:42:08 --> 01:42:11: They're not responsible by you know any single entity and

01:42:11 --> 01:42:14: they can't be solved by any single entity,

01:42:14 --> 01:42:17: especially given the complexity and the resources and the operation

01:42:17 --> 01:42:18: and maintenance.

01:42:18 --> 01:42:20: So it is really important to incorporate,

01:42:20 --> 01:42:24: which is why we've set up our whole organization to

01:42:24 --> 01:42:25: really in my mind.

01:42:25 --> 01:42:28: If you are responsible for the process,

01:42:28 --> 01:42:31: then you are responsible for the outcomes and the

01:42:31 --> 01:42:33: maintenance

01:42:33 --> 01:42:37: and the ongoing management.

01:42:37 --> 01:42:40: So it's about relationships that development build from that awesome

01:42:40 --> 01:42:43: thank you very much. I know we're going to have

01:42:43 --> 01:42:47: more questions for you and some great conversation,

01:42:47 --> 01:42:50: but I'm going to move it to our next speaker.

01:42:50 --> 01:42:54: Molly McKay. Molly is in Washington DC with and I'm

01:42:54 --> 01:42:58: hoping to pronounce it Weldon Wilden or Willdan financial,

01:42:58 --> 01:42:58: and no will, and Dan will then.

01:42:58 --> 01:43:02: Oh

01:43:02 --> 01:43:03: my gosh OK. Will there two engineers like that came

01:43:03 --> 01:43:08: up with?

01:43:08 --> 01:43:11: Well then. Molly McKay managing principal at Molly Willdan Financial

01:43:11 --> 01:43:15: and Economic Consulting Services and DC.

01:43:15 --> 01:43:17: Does a lot of great consulting and helping people put

01:43:17 --> 01:43:21: their deals together so Molly,

01:43:21 --> 01:43:22: please tell us how you work in this space and

01:43:22 --> 01:43:26: what we can learn.

01:43:26 --> 01:43:29: Sure, thank you Brian and also thank you Deborah.

01:43:29 --> 01:43:30: You had a terrific set up for the case studies.

01:43:30 --> 01:43:32: I'm going to share today.

01:43:32 --> 01:43:34: If I could share my screen.

01:43:34 --> 01:43:39: I do have a few graphics.

01:43:39 --> 01:43:44: Here we go. Uh, so.

01:43:44 --> 01:43:49: Just to give another a brief introduction,

01:43:49 --> 01:43:55: I am an infrastructure economist and a certified economic developer.

01:43:55 --> 01:44:01: By training, I've worked in economic development consulting for more

01:44:01 --> 01:44:05: than 25 years all over the United States and throughout

01:44:05 --> 01:44:07: the Middle East,

01:44:07 --> 01:44:11: Africa and the Caribbean. So I have a very broad

01:44:11 --> 01:44:18: experience and understanding the importance of infrastructure and also the

01:44:18 --> 01:44:20: importance of reaching.

01:44:20 --> 01:44:27: Uh, the community, that is is does not have the

01:44:27 --> 01:44:31: benefits of operational infrastructure and.

01:44:31 --> 01:44:35: More recently that my work has been focused on multi

01:44:35 --> 01:44:40: use community facilities and what we're finding is that.

01:44:40 --> 01:44:43: There, just as Deborah explained,

01:44:43 --> 01:44:46: it's so important in a P3 context to engage multiple

01:44:46 --> 01:44:52: stakeholders who would have responsibility for different aspects of funding.

01:44:52 --> 01:44:57: The design and programming of space and the ongoing operations

01:44:57 --> 01:44:58: of that space.

01:44:58 --> 01:45:01: To really maximize the economic development benefits.

01:45:01 --> 01:45:05: So today we're going to talk about some examples of

01:45:05 --> 01:45:10: the benefits in integrating broadband into design and programming.

01:45:10 --> 01:45:15: And P3 deal. Structuring, and a little bit deeper.

01:45:15 --> 01:45:20: Dive into the specific development program characteristics in a real

01:45:20 --> 01:45:24: estate context that we have identified as really driving the

01:45:24 --> 01:45:30: financial feasibility and economic development benefits of these types of

01:45:30 --> 01:45:34: projects. Partly so the first case.

01:45:34 --> 01:45:38: Today I wanted to share is with my White County,

01:45:38 --> 01:45:42: Virginia, where they partnered with a local landowner and developer

01:45:42 --> 01:45:46: who had acquired a an abandoned historic high school and

01:45:46 --> 01:45:49: was on a large plot of land and there were

01:45:49 --> 01:45:52: lots of ideas about what needed to happen in this

01:45:52 --> 01:45:56: space where it would make sense for the county to

01:45:56 --> 01:46:00: invest and it would make sense for the developer to

01:46:00 --> 01:46:03: partner with the county to come up with.

01:46:03 --> 01:46:07: A shared site, and in this context what we found

01:46:07 --> 01:46:12: is that the the County Library system was the most.

01:46:12 --> 01:46:17: Uhm, I think underserved in terms of both their their

01:46:17 --> 01:46:22: space and and their space is needed to house a

01:46:22 --> 01:46:24: variety of programs.

01:46:24 --> 01:46:28: Everything from Girl Scouts to after school care and job

01:46:29 --> 01:46:29: training,

01:46:29 --> 01:46:34: and they did not have sufficient Wi-Fi capability or capacity

01:46:34 --> 01:46:36: in this location.

01:46:36 --> 01:46:41: And a somewhat rural location in in in Virginia.

01:46:41 --> 01:46:45: And it was. Such that police UM state troopers were

01:46:46 --> 01:46:51: pulling into the one library location that was 100%

01:46:51 --> 01:46:55: maxed out in order to get a Wi-Fi signal to

01:46:55 --> 01:46:58: finish out traffic tickets.

01:46:58 --> 01:47:02: As another example, if they had people who were trying

01:47:02 --> 01:47:06: to go through an employment application process,

01:47:06 --> 01:47:12: they had such a such a backup for people using

01:47:12 --> 01:47:13: those.

01:47:13 --> 01:47:18: Uhm, computer monitor stations and accessing.

01:47:18 --> 01:47:22: The assistance of the of the job training and job

01:47:22 --> 01:47:26: placement program people that they were turning people away.

01:47:26 --> 01:47:31: So imagine that you you don't have a computer.

01:47:31 --> 01:47:33: Or a laptop, or Wi-Fi.

01:47:33 --> 01:47:36: Or a smart phone at home.

01:47:36 --> 01:47:41: And you can't find a place to actually produce a

01:47:41 --> 01:47:44: resume or to apply for a job.

01:47:44 --> 01:47:48: Then you were truly one of those people who's you

01:47:48 --> 01:47:49: are.

01:47:49 --> 01:47:52: You've been lost through the cracks of of the existing

01:47:52 --> 01:47:56: infrastructure to provide economic opportunities,

01:47:56 --> 01:48:00: so this became one of the county's primary objectives.

01:48:00 --> 01:48:04: So in this development. Program where I'm gonna show you

01:48:04 --> 01:48:07: in just a bit what the recommendations were.

01:48:07 --> 01:48:10: It it it really turned out that it was not

01:48:10 --> 01:48:14: the the commercial kitchen or the auditorium space or the

01:48:14 --> 01:48:18: workforce housing it was really driving the programming.

01:48:18 --> 01:48:20: It was the need for.

01:48:22 --> 01:48:27: Broadband and broadband that would be accessible to the entire

01:48:27 --> 01:48:31: community that was driving the development concept for this program.

01:48:31 --> 01:48:34: So that's one example. Uhm,

01:48:34 --> 01:48:39: then uh. And in this example.

01:48:39 --> 01:48:42: In order to accommodate the full spectrum of what the

01:48:42 --> 01:48:44: Community users needed.

01:48:44 --> 01:48:48: It really turned into having high tech space that would

01:48:48 --> 01:48:51: accommodate a variety of meeting types.

01:48:51 --> 01:48:54: An audience is a dedicated computer lab,

01:48:54 --> 01:48:59: an auditorium and lecture space that again was.

01:48:59 --> 01:49:02: Fully wired for people who could not be there in

01:49:02 --> 01:49:05: person and this was a little bit prior to COVID

01:49:05 --> 01:49:07: when this design concept was rolled out.

01:49:07 --> 01:49:12: Uhm, satellite office space and this this community cafeteria public

01:49:13 --> 01:49:17: kitchen that would be also a business incubator and a

01:49:17 --> 01:49:18: training,

01:49:18 --> 01:49:22: a training facility which again would be driven from IO

01:49:23 --> 01:49:24: T applications.

01:49:26 --> 01:49:31: Uh, so at the end of this long study where

01:49:31 --> 01:49:33: we were evaluating.

01:49:33 --> 01:49:35: How to make all of this work?

01:49:35 --> 01:49:38: It turned out that the the broadband and the IO

01:49:38 --> 01:49:42: T would enable the other White County to launch a

01:49:42 --> 01:49:45: variety of new community programs.

01:49:45 --> 01:49:50: And. These would range from workforce development and business training

01:49:50 --> 01:49:55: to serving their parks and rec departments for summer programs

01:49:55 --> 01:49:57: and after school programs.

01:49:57 --> 01:50:03: Again, food oriented, business incubation and after school care tutoring.

01:50:03 --> 01:50:07: Summer programs, and last but not least,

01:50:07 --> 01:50:12: a polling station. Where they had some you know difficulties

01:50:12 --> 01:50:14: in serving all of their public.

01:50:14 --> 01:50:18: So when I look at all of these applications together

01:50:18 --> 01:50:21: and the Community that will be served,

01:50:21 --> 01:50:25: it makes me very passionate about broadband and the and

01:50:25 --> 01:50:30: the clear benefits of broadband in a public private context.

01:50:30 --> 01:50:34: The next case study example is Rock Region Metro.

01:50:34 --> 01:50:37: That's the Transit Authority of Little Rock,

01:50:37 --> 01:50:41: AR, where they're redeveloping their downtown transit hub,

01:50:41 --> 01:50:46: and so we were asked to take a very open

01:50:46 --> 01:50:47: view of.

01:50:47 --> 01:50:51: Public and private activities that could occur in this space

01:50:51 --> 01:50:53: and in each example,

01:50:53 --> 01:50:57: whether it were a public public type development where it

01:50:57 --> 01:51:01: would be just the transit hub and some government operations.

01:51:01 --> 01:51:04: Or if it were a public private development where the

01:51:04 --> 01:51:07: transit hub would retain the use of that location,

01:51:07 --> 01:51:10: but it would also be developed for private use for

01:51:10 --> 01:51:13: housing and neighborhoods serving retail.

01:51:13 --> 01:51:17: Or even if it were a private private use where

01:51:17 --> 01:51:18: maybe protect,

01:51:18 --> 01:51:20: perhaps it could be sold,

01:51:20 --> 01:51:25: but the Transit Authority would be relocated and adjacent site

01:51:25 --> 01:51:29: in any of these scenarios broadband and the IoT were

01:51:29 --> 01:51:33: fundamental to to to serve the potential tenants or investors

01:51:33 --> 01:51:37: who would be using the space and.

01:51:37 --> 01:51:43: And so doing by anchoring this concept on the idea

01:51:43 --> 01:51:44: that with.

01:51:44 --> 01:51:49: Broad reaching. Uhm? Internet based outreach and services that they

01:51:50 --> 01:51:52: would increase their transit ridership,
01:51:52 --> 01:51:57: and I think that you may or may not be
01:51:57 --> 01:51:59: aware of of the use of.
01:51:59 --> 01:52:04: IoT for connecting the individual rider with a variety of
01:52:04 --> 01:52:04: transit.
01:52:04 --> 01:52:09: Public transit opportunities. So moving on to just a little
01:52:09 --> 01:52:11: bit more on P3 deal structuring,
01:52:11 --> 01:52:13: and please let me know if I've run out of
01:52:13 --> 01:52:14: time.
01:52:14 --> 01:52:16: You can cut me off and we can come back
01:52:16 --> 01:52:18: to some of these examples in it.
01:52:18 --> 01:52:23: Uhm? So and also just hopping onto what Deborah shared
01:52:23 --> 01:52:23: earlier,
01:52:23 --> 01:52:27: we've identified a clear opportunity to to achieve a broader
01:52:27 --> 01:52:31: scale of the public policy and economic development
01:52:31 --> 01:52:35: objectives that
01:52:35 --> 01:52:39: I just shared with you while also increasing commercial
01:52:39 --> 01:52:44: revenue
01:52:44 --> 01:52:44: streams which would serve to help secure infrastructure
01:52:44 --> 01:52:50: funding from
01:52:50 --> 01:52:53: the strategies or these development concepts that I've
01:52:53 --> 01:52:57: shared with
01:52:57 --> 01:53:02: you.
01:53:02 --> 01:53:06: Uh, in terms of up the economic development benefits.
01:53:06 --> 01:53:10: And I've touched upon some of these,
01:53:10 --> 01:53:17: but I think just really digging into the way that
01:53:17 --> 01:53:21: a public authority or the government would view these
01:53:21 --> 01:53:26: these different applications we're looking at.
01:53:26 --> 01:53:31: Such a broad variety of benefits that are that that
01:53:31 --> 01:53:36: are produced by integrating broadband and into these
01:53:36 --> 01:53:40: concepts and
01:53:40 --> 01:53:45: it ranges from public safety and efficiency.
01:53:45 --> 01:53:50: Increasingly, diversity, equity inclusion again bye.
01:53:50 --> 01:53:53: Providing more opportunity to reach those people who don't
01:53:53 --> 01:53:57: have
01:53:57 --> 01:54:02: direct access to broadband by either creating a network that
01:54:02 --> 01:54:05: is open and free and accessible or reaching out further
01:54:05 --> 01:54:10: to connect those people to job training programs or other
01:54:10 --> 01:54:15: resources to enable them to acquire a phone and to
01:54:15 --> 01:54:20: get training and or to use shared resources.
01:54:20 --> 01:54:25: Wellness another thing is very.
01:54:25 --> 01:54:30: It's it's emerging, but it is being incorporated into
01:54:30 --> 01:54:35: programming

01:54:02 --> 01:54:03: of space.

01:54:03 --> 01:54:07: Lifelong learning and entrepreneurial business and tech innovation.

01:54:07 --> 01:54:12: So all of these types of programs really do,

01:54:12 --> 01:54:18: at a certain point, rely on the availability and the

01:54:18 --> 01:54:25: capacity and the reliability of a broadband to function properly.

01:54:25 --> 01:54:27: So at the end of the day,

01:54:27 --> 01:54:30: I'm looking at all of us together as a real

01:54:30 --> 01:54:32: estate development consultant and thinking that.

01:54:32 --> 01:54:38: The value out of broadband and these opportunities are clearly

01:54:38 --> 01:54:38: up.

01:54:38 --> 01:54:42: Driving real estate development and and community facilities,

01:54:42 --> 01:54:45: especially with respect to the design and programming.

01:54:45 --> 01:54:50: So at this point I'm I'm I'm here both as

01:54:50 --> 01:54:50: a,

01:54:50 --> 01:54:54: you know, a long time you align member that chair

01:54:54 --> 01:54:58: of utilized reuse and Redevelopment Council but also as a

01:54:58 --> 01:55:04: recently appointed Economic Development Advisor to the Virginia Center for

01:55:04 --> 01:55:08: Innovation Tech. Innovative technology where I'm working on a research

01:55:08 --> 01:55:10: collaboration project with Chuck.

01:55:10 --> 01:55:16: Kirby, where we're going to be evaluating the public private

01:55:16 --> 01:55:18: financing models of up.

01:55:18 --> 01:55:21: Exactly what I've just shared with you today to uncover

01:55:21 --> 01:55:25: more funding opportunities and to connect those opportunities with our

01:55:26 --> 01:55:29: our city and county clients and also with within the

01:55:29 --> 01:55:33: real estate development community to make sure that these types

01:55:33 --> 01:55:36: of this type of infrastructure is really built in on

01:55:36 --> 01:55:39: the front end of any development program.

01:55:39 --> 01:55:42: So with that I'd like to turn it over to

01:55:42 --> 01:55:46: Chuck and thank you for sharing your time with me

01:55:46 --> 01:55:46: today.

01:55:46 --> 01:55:48: I really am excited to hear.

01:55:48 --> 01:55:50: What you all have to share?

01:56:00 --> 01:56:01: Go ahead, Chuck.

01:56:03 --> 01:56:04: Thank you very much Molly.

01:56:04 --> 01:56:08: Appreciate the the handoff and and thank you everybody for

01:56:08 --> 01:56:09: being here today.

01:56:09 --> 01:56:11: It's a it's a privilege to be a part of

01:56:11 --> 01:56:15: this broadband and smart technology is what I do day
01:56:15 --> 01:56:16: in and day out.
01:56:16 --> 01:56:20: Not just for profession but on a personal level like
01:56:20 --> 01:56:21: I got on this stuff.
01:56:21 --> 01:56:26: OK and so to provide a little bit of background.
01:56:26 --> 01:56:31: The Center for Innovative Technology for years has been.
01:56:31 --> 01:56:35: The the leader for the Commonwealth of Virginia in terms
01:56:35 --> 01:56:40: of organizing broadband deployment throughout the
Commonwealth of Virginia.
01:56:40 --> 01:56:45: To ensure that different. Different entities throughout the
Commonwealth have
01:56:45 --> 01:56:47: the Internet that they need,
01:56:47 --> 01:56:51: you know, we. So we work with federal and state
01:56:51 --> 01:56:54: agencies as well as the localities,
01:56:54 --> 01:56:57: all 130 plus cities and counties in Virginia.
01:56:57 --> 01:57:02: As well as private Internet service providers and other
nonprofits
01:57:02 --> 01:57:03: to bring.
01:57:03 --> 01:57:09: Broadband 2 the Commonwealth of Virginia and now I am.
01:57:09 --> 01:57:12: I've gotta focus overtime my.
01:57:12 --> 01:57:16: Job responsibilities I used to focus more on the connections
01:57:16 --> 01:57:20: about getting broadband where it isn't throughout the
Commonwealth and
01:57:20 --> 01:57:24: helping with the broadband planning for localities and having
a
01:57:24 --> 01:57:27: state larger plan. But also now I'll shift my gears
01:57:27 --> 01:57:32: to really focus on leveraging the technology and leveraging
the
01:57:32 --> 01:57:34: connections that now exist.
01:57:34 --> 01:57:39: In the Commonwealth, and we're doing that through IoT
technology
01:57:40 --> 01:57:40: and.
01:57:40 --> 01:57:43: Play I see you wrote in here about would be
01:57:43 --> 01:57:46: great to hear more about using IO T in conjunction
01:57:46 --> 01:57:48: with improving transit ridership.
01:57:48 --> 01:57:51: Since a lot of the Baton Rouge discussion is spurred
01:57:51 --> 01:57:52: by the plan,
01:57:52 --> 01:57:53: new bus rapid transit line,
01:57:53 --> 01:57:56: I'm actually working a lot on a variety of indoor
01:57:56 --> 01:57:58: and outdoor sensors,
01:57:58 --> 01:58:01: some of which are air quality sensors.
01:58:01 --> 01:58:03: One way the air quality sensors can be used is
01:58:03 --> 01:58:05: have air quality sensors.

01:58:07 --> 01:58:10: Pre and post ridership along bus rider routes to be
 01:58:10 --> 01:58:14: able to measure the particulate matter in the air and
 01:58:14 --> 01:58:17: to see the pollution before a bus route exists,
 01:58:17 --> 01:58:19: and then after the fact so you'll be able to
 01:58:19 --> 01:58:23: see the environmental impact overtime through that.
 01:58:23 --> 01:58:26: So that's one way you can use IO T technology
 01:58:26 --> 01:58:29: right there to be able to measure with.
 01:58:29 --> 01:58:31: Statistical data to back up.
 01:58:31 --> 01:58:33: You know the the improvement to the society.
 01:58:33 --> 01:58:36: Then in terms of the amount of pollutants in the
 01:58:36 --> 01:58:36: atmosphere,
 01:58:36 --> 01:58:39: things of that nature. Uh,
 01:58:40 --> 01:58:42: and so. He said, uh,
 01:58:42 --> 01:58:45: I'm focused a lot more now on the.
 01:58:45 --> 01:58:49: The IO T smart communities aspects of everything
 leveraging those
 01:58:49 --> 01:58:52: technologies that are two primary areas that are spending a
 01:58:52 --> 01:58:53: lot of time.
 01:58:53 --> 01:58:58: One is because I've done so much statewide planning before
 01:58:58 --> 01:58:59: through Cit's work.
 01:58:59 --> 01:59:02: It is very important to single thread broadband planning.
 01:59:02 --> 01:59:05: What we have found is over and over for many
 01:59:06 --> 01:59:07: many many years.
 01:59:07 --> 01:59:08: Localities, especially if they have very,
 01:59:08 --> 01:59:10: very little Internet and for and,
 01:59:10 --> 01:59:13: to be honest, until about three years ago my broadband
 01:59:13 --> 01:59:16: was so bad that on a good day a really
 01:59:16 --> 01:59:16: good day.
 01:59:16 --> 01:59:18: I had 3.5 megabits on the download,
 01:59:18 --> 01:59:21: 0.7 on the upload if it rained and there was
 01:59:21 --> 01:59:23: water in the copper lines it's timing out.
 01:59:23 --> 01:59:24: I'm not getting anything done,
 01:59:24 --> 01:59:27: so I've lived that life for years and years and
 01:59:27 --> 01:59:27: years.
 01:59:27 --> 01:59:30: I've been on that side of the broadband divide,
 01:59:30 --> 01:59:32: OK, and now I've got gig to the home.
 01:59:32 --> 01:59:35: I've been on the other side of the broadband divide.
 01:59:35 --> 01:59:37: I know if I had to summarize.
 01:59:37 --> 01:59:40: Robin, one word it's opportunity.
 01:59:40 --> 01:59:44: We need opportunity. Throughout it not just Virginia,
 01:59:44 --> 01:59:50: not just Louisiana nationwide, we need this opportunity for
 people.

01:59:50 --> 01:59:52: And so I think it's important to single thread broadband planning.

01:59:52 --> 01:59:52: What I mean by that is that singular focus so

01:59:52 --> 01:59:54: many localities have on just getting anything.

01:59:54 --> 01:59:56: You know they. They just got DSL in the community

01:59:56 --> 01:59:59: like we're talking about just a minute ago.

01:59:59 --> 02:00:01: They want more. They're so focused on getting that they'll

02:00:01 --> 02:00:03: take anything,

02:00:03 --> 02:00:04: and they're so focused on just getting and acquiring the

02:00:04 --> 02:00:06: Internet.

02:00:06 --> 02:00:07: They haven't thought at all.

02:00:07 --> 02:00:09: What are we going to do now?

02:00:09 --> 02:00:11: What are we gonna do in the future?

02:00:11 --> 02:00:14: Yeah, I used to joke around using the example of

02:00:14 --> 02:00:17: my grandads dog.

02:00:17 --> 02:00:18: My grandads doggies always chase a vehicle whenever I

02:00:18 --> 02:00:21: drove

02:00:21 --> 02:00:24: drove by and I was like what is he gonna

02:00:24 --> 02:00:24: do.

02:00:24 --> 02:00:27: He catches it. You need to think now what you

02:00:27 --> 02:00:29: gonna do when you get it going.

02:00:29 --> 02:00:32: You catch it when you get that broadband.

02:00:32 --> 02:00:34: Put that to good use and what we have found

02:00:34 --> 02:00:35: is localities.

02:00:35 --> 02:00:39: The single thread, smart community development and IoT development into

02:00:39 --> 02:00:41: their larger broadband planning efforts from the beginning.

02:00:41 --> 02:00:45: Tend to save themselves one to two years of worth

02:00:45 --> 02:00:46: of planning.

02:00:46 --> 02:00:50: As well as a whole lot of money because you're

02:00:50 --> 02:00:53: single loop instead of double loop learning here.

02:00:53 --> 02:00:56: And so I highly recommend doing that to save time

02:00:56 --> 02:00:57: and money.

02:00:57 --> 02:01:00: Broadband, I apologize that I didn't get to be in

02:01:00 --> 02:01:01: the morning session,

02:01:01 --> 02:01:04: so I don't know if this was was covered or

02:01:04 --> 02:01:04: not,

02:01:04 --> 02:01:07: but one of the things when we worked with localities

02:01:07 --> 02:01:10: we would do estimates on the economic impact.

02:01:10 --> 02:01:14: For locality. And you know some of the statistics out

02:01:14 --> 02:01:15: there,

02:01:15 --> 02:01:17: so you know if you've got a a fiber connection

02:01:17 --> 02:01:18: to the home.

02:01:18 --> 02:01:22: You could improve, improve your the actual worth of your

02:01:22 --> 02:01:25: house in terms of the real estate market by about

02:01:25 --> 02:01:26: three point 1%.

02:01:26 --> 02:01:29: Well, this is 1 locality I was working.

02:01:29 --> 02:01:32: We have you just do the three point 1%

02:01:32 --> 02:01:36: only. You're looking at approximately for the median household income

02:01:36 --> 02:01:37: of 1 locality in Virginia.

02:01:37 --> 02:01:42: You're looking at \$2778 of increased value to your home.

02:01:42 --> 02:01:45: Just by having a connection to your to your house.

02:01:45 --> 02:01:48: And then you know, in terms of residual effects of

02:01:48 --> 02:01:51: having broadband within your home at a speed of 25,

02:01:51 --> 02:01:55: three or better. We found that on average you know,

02:01:55 --> 02:01:59: well, really. The median would be about \$1850 per year

02:01:59 --> 02:02:00: of residual effects.

02:02:00 --> 02:02:02: So for this one locality in Virginia,

02:02:02 --> 02:02:03: where we did a study,

02:02:03 --> 02:02:09: we found that. There were 1167 houses that did not

02:02:09 --> 02:02:10: have broadband.

02:02:10 --> 02:02:12: Uh, you know doing the math,

02:02:12 --> 02:02:15: we found that in an annual.

02:02:15 --> 02:02:20: They were losing about two \$2,158,950 annually.

02:02:20 --> 02:02:26: The potential residual effects \$26,381,000 economic gain.

02:02:26 --> 02:02:31: Individually. That's with the three point 1%.

02:02:31 --> 02:02:34: You know as well as other residual effects,

02:02:34 --> 02:02:36: so it's well worth the time and the effort to

02:02:36 --> 02:02:38: get that broadband into the community.

02:02:38 --> 02:02:40: And like I said, single loop it.

02:02:40 --> 02:02:42: You factor in your your dig once policies,

02:02:42 --> 02:02:45: your funding, things of that nature all in at the

02:02:45 --> 02:02:47: same time for your IO T as well as your

02:02:47 --> 02:02:48: broadband,

02:02:48 --> 02:02:50: you will save a lot of time and money and

02:02:50 --> 02:02:53: then the other big thing I'm working on right now

02:02:53 --> 02:02:56: is similar to what the other people in the penalty

02:02:56 --> 02:02:57: talking about how to use it.

02:02:57 --> 02:03:02: Once you got it. Different different examples of smart communities.

02:03:02 --> 02:03:05: Doing a lot of sensor work,

02:03:05 --> 02:03:08: we're doing indoor sensors. You know,

02:03:08 --> 02:03:13: for public safety, we're also doing outdoor sensors such as

02:03:13 --> 02:03:15: flood sensors as well as.

02:03:15 --> 02:03:17: Sensors associated with air quality.

02:03:17 --> 02:03:21: We're also working on the associated data with that for

02:03:21 --> 02:03:22: predictive modeling,

02:03:22 --> 02:03:27: and we are also focused on augmented and virtual reality.

02:03:27 --> 02:03:31: For instance, we are doing a public safety simulations and

02:03:31 --> 02:03:35: buildings to be able to make buildings and public safety

02:03:35 --> 02:03:36: response safer.

02:03:36 --> 02:03:39: About two years ago, we did a federal,

02:03:39 --> 02:03:41: state, and local joint public safety.

02:03:41 --> 02:03:45: Uhm, exercise in the locality and help and was helped

02:03:45 --> 02:03:49: to be spurred in for improvements by augmented reality on

02:03:49 --> 02:03:51: top of what occurred.

02:03:51 --> 02:03:54: And then we also worked on unmanned systems,

02:03:54 --> 02:03:57: air, land and sea. And so,

02:03:57 --> 02:03:59: as a matter of fact,

02:03:59 --> 02:04:01: this morning, the reason I couldn't make it earlier today

02:04:01 --> 02:04:04: is that we had official ribbon cutting.

02:04:04 --> 02:04:06: Here I'm in Stafford, VA.

02:04:06 --> 02:04:09: And Stafford is a rural locality right next to the

02:04:09 --> 02:04:10: city of Fredericksburg.

02:04:10 --> 02:04:14: So the edge of the Northern Virginia.

02:04:14 --> 02:04:18: And it's relatively small, somewhat rural.

02:04:18 --> 02:04:22: The first statewide smart community testbed has just been

02:04:23 --> 02:04:23: unveiled

02:04:23 --> 02:04:23: today.

02:04:23 --> 02:04:26: And so we had members of Congress here.

02:04:26 --> 02:04:29: We had elected officials from the governor's office.

02:04:29 --> 02:04:31: We had General Assembly members here,

02:04:31 --> 02:04:34: elected officials from localities all over Virginia.

02:04:34 --> 02:04:38: Many, many. Vendors, it's been an all day event so

02:04:38 --> 02:04:41: far and the and just today alone the amount of

02:04:41 --> 02:04:45: money that that has been created by having so many

02:04:45 --> 02:04:49: people here and then the different technologies that are

02:04:49 --> 02:04:52: going

02:04:49 --> 02:04:52: to be able to test out here in in Stafford

02:04:53 --> 02:04:56: alone is going to be just fantastic and so.

02:04:56 --> 02:05:00: Getting the broadband and then leveraging that broadband,

02:05:00 --> 02:05:07: particularly through. Smart communities efforts IO T devices.

02:05:07 --> 02:05:09: Like I said, it's it's we're already seeing dividends today

02:05:09 --> 02:05:11: alone and then we've got different and I'd be happy

02:05:11 --> 02:05:13: to talk a bit more about this,

02:05:13 --> 02:05:14: but I don't take it too much time.

02:05:14 --> 02:05:16: I'll leave it open for questions,
02:05:16 --> 02:05:18: but they said we've got.
02:05:18 --> 02:05:21: A set up for procurement throughout Virginia for.
02:05:21 --> 02:05:25: A variety of different sensors and like said,
02:05:25 --> 02:05:29: the the. The residual effects from them can be enormous,
02:05:29 --> 02:05:32: and so I will stop there and just open it
02:05:32 --> 02:05:34: up so we have time to discuss.
02:05:34 --> 02:05:37: I could talk all day long on this stuff,
02:05:37 --> 02:05:37: but
02:05:37 --> 02:05:40: I want to open it up to everybody else.
02:05:40 --> 02:05:41: Thank you, thank you check.
02:05:41 --> 02:05:43: I appreciate that. You know,
02:05:43 --> 02:05:45: I I, I want to and please if you have
02:05:45 --> 02:05:46: questions,
02:05:46 --> 02:05:49: this is to everybody. You've got questions for for Chuck,
02:05:49 --> 02:05:52: Molly or Deborah please toss them in the chat window.
02:05:52 --> 02:05:55: If you don't feel comfortable dropping them in the chat
02:05:55 --> 02:05:55: window,
02:05:55 --> 02:05:57: just kind of do that.
02:05:57 --> 02:05:58: And we'll have it live,
02:05:58 --> 02:06:03: but check, I want to stick with you on this
02:06:03 --> 02:06:03: and and.
02:06:03 --> 02:06:07: You know, we there's a lot of you know we
02:06:07 --> 02:06:10: talked about planning and things like that.
02:06:10 --> 02:06:13: Where's the low? The low hanging fruit?
02:06:13 --> 02:06:18: I mean, what's what's the most important question that a
02:06:18 --> 02:06:20: locality should ask?
02:06:20 --> 02:06:22: And in doing their broadband planning.
02:06:30 --> 02:06:34: That's an excellent question, and that's one that.
02:06:34 --> 02:06:37: At least in Virginia, surprisingly.
02:06:37 --> 02:06:41: It's the least answered question and that would be what
02:06:41 --> 02:06:42: is your vision?
02:06:42 --> 02:06:44: What is your community vision?
02:06:44 --> 02:06:48: Uhm? I have only had one locality.
02:06:48 --> 02:06:51: Ever be able to even attempt to really answer that
02:06:51 --> 02:06:53: question right out of the chute.
02:06:53 --> 02:06:56: You need to be going in thinking about the next
02:06:56 --> 02:06:57: generation.
02:06:57 --> 02:07:01: I mean literally you should be thinking now 20 years
02:07:01 --> 02:07:02: down the line.
02:07:02 --> 02:07:05: Because broadband is a game changer,
02:07:05 --> 02:07:09: it can directly and indirectly affect virtually everything.

02:07:09 --> 02:07:12: In an entire community, from top to bottom.
 02:07:12 --> 02:07:13: And so you need thing now,
 02:07:13 --> 02:07:15: how are we going to use it?
 02:07:15 --> 02:07:19: And the reason why that is so important is that
 02:07:19 --> 02:07:22: that need dictates technology.
 02:07:22 --> 02:07:25: And so by having an answer.
 02:07:25 --> 02:07:30: That is going to impact how locality leverages broadband
 connectivity
 02:07:30 --> 02:07:33: and how that will impact local growth in terms of
 02:07:33 --> 02:07:34: where and how.
 02:07:34 --> 02:07:36: So don't be tunnel vision,
 02:07:36 --> 02:07:38: just focused on getting that broadband.
 02:07:38 --> 02:07:41: You need to really think largely about how.
 02:07:41 --> 02:07:44: He said, you know how you want to be able
 02:07:44 --> 02:07:46: to leverage that connectivity.
 02:07:46 --> 02:07:50: For instance, you know going back to ways that it
 02:07:50 --> 02:07:54: can impact the community by saying what that vision is
 02:07:54 --> 02:07:56: it that vision needs to be able to.
 02:07:56 --> 02:07:58: Be accessible and and work well.
 02:07:58 --> 02:08:01: Just 'cause you can doesn't mean that will be successful
 02:08:01 --> 02:08:04: in that vision needs to really go into the culture
 02:08:04 --> 02:08:07: of the community as well as the political economy.
 02:08:07 --> 02:08:10: For instance, if your locality does a whole lot of
 02:08:10 --> 02:08:12: farming in terms of its GDP,
 02:08:12 --> 02:08:16: well in smart agriculture something you want to look into.
 02:08:16 --> 02:08:19: And that could mean that instead of hitting the more
 02:08:19 --> 02:08:22: urban parts of the locality for and suburban areas for
 02:08:22 --> 02:08:23: future growth,
 02:08:23 --> 02:08:26: maybe you want to target early on for one of
 02:08:26 --> 02:08:28: your phase build outs.
 02:08:28 --> 02:08:32: Those areas to where you're smart ad can be leveraged.
 02:08:32 --> 02:08:34: If it is, you know a business need,
 02:08:34 --> 02:08:36: but what kind of business need is it?
 02:08:36 --> 02:08:38: You know, don't just say that we want 90%
 02:08:38 --> 02:08:41: of the locality covered in five years.
 02:08:41 --> 02:08:43: How old do you want that locality cover?
 02:08:43 --> 02:08:46: Do you want to know the square mileage?
 02:08:46 --> 02:08:48: Do you want it the the population?
 02:08:48 --> 02:08:49: Certain segments of the population?
 02:08:49 --> 02:08:54: Certain magisterial districts? What is it you're trying to
 accomplish?
 02:08:54 --> 02:08:56: You know, if it's a business need,
 02:08:56 --> 02:08:58: you need to feel is it Main Street America for

02:08:58 --> 02:09:01: small businesses right now with Tele work,
02:09:01 --> 02:09:04: is it going to be more work from home oriented,
02:09:04 --> 02:09:07: which means you'd be going into your homes as opposed
02:09:07 --> 02:09:08: to Main Street?
02:09:08 --> 02:09:09: Or is it going to
02:09:09 --> 02:09:11: be? You've got industrial parks?
02:09:11 --> 02:09:13: Well, let me let me ask a question if I
02:09:14 --> 02:09:14: could.
02:09:14 --> 02:09:17: And there there's some questions or popping up in the
02:09:17 --> 02:09:18: chat window.
02:09:18 --> 02:09:21: And Molly, I think this one is is for you.
02:09:21 --> 02:09:23: That's been a that's been posed there.
02:09:23 --> 02:09:26: I mean, you talked a lot about the your case
02:09:26 --> 02:09:29: studies and thank you so much for those there.
02:09:29 --> 02:09:33: There have got to be some some best practices.
02:09:33 --> 02:09:37: And the the the the new legislation that's coming out
02:09:37 --> 02:09:40: talks loud talks a lot about partnering up with anchor
02:09:40 --> 02:09:41: institutions.
02:09:41 --> 02:09:43: And there was a question here,
02:09:43 --> 02:09:46: Molly? What were some of the best practices or lessons
02:09:46 --> 02:09:50: learned you took away from using improved Internet at local
02:09:50 --> 02:09:54: anchor institutions as a launching point for Community
initiatives,
02:09:54 --> 02:09:57: Molly would have what have you got on that?
02:09:57 --> 02:10:00: What are some of the best practices?
02:10:00 --> 02:10:00: I'm
02:10:00 --> 02:10:03: so glad that you brought that up because,
02:10:03 --> 02:10:08: really. This is the foundation of economic development in
terms
02:10:08 --> 02:10:11: of the methodology to be most successful,
02:10:11 --> 02:10:16: it is. When there is any any sort of,
02:10:16 --> 02:10:21: you know an infrastructure planning initiative or a
redevelopment project
02:10:22 --> 02:10:24: or a business incubation concept,
02:10:24 --> 02:10:29: it's really important to engage the full spectrum of
stakeholders
02:10:29 --> 02:10:33: within your ecosystem within the region,
02:10:33 --> 02:10:38: not just within the city or within the county,
02:10:38 --> 02:10:42: but really take a much broader view.
02:10:42 --> 02:10:49: Because you can achieve, you can really leverage existing
resources
02:10:49 --> 02:10:54: in doing so and connect that project or that investment
02:10:55 --> 02:10:57: to a broader system,

02:10:57 --> 02:11:03: a connected system and. In terms of UM.

02:11:03 --> 02:11:07: Getting the stakeholders. You know,

02:11:07 --> 02:11:11: wind up as you're going through the planning process.

02:11:11 --> 02:11:15: It's it's important to start early and to be very

02:11:15 --> 02:11:20: clear about the concept of the objectives and have some

02:11:20 --> 02:11:25: sort of built in feedback mechanism where you clearly define

02:11:25 --> 02:11:30: what those touch points. Uh.

02:11:30 --> 02:11:32: You know those touchpoints interactions,

02:11:32 --> 02:11:35: when they will be, who will be there and what

02:11:35 --> 02:11:36: needs to be decided,

02:11:36 --> 02:11:39: so it can't be a situation where you get some

02:11:39 --> 02:11:43: people in the room and you talk about some things

02:11:43 --> 02:11:44: and you all go back off.

02:11:44 --> 02:11:48: It has to be really in a framework or in

02:11:48 --> 02:11:51: some sort of strategic plan.

02:11:51 --> 02:11:55: Uhm structure in that you have identified at a high

02:11:55 --> 02:12:00: level what the development concept is or what the infrastructure

02:12:00 --> 02:12:01: need is,

02:12:01 --> 02:12:06: and then you broadly identify what the costs could be

02:12:06 --> 02:12:07: within a range,

02:12:07 --> 02:12:10: and then the phasing of that.

02:12:10 --> 02:12:15: Because the thing about broadband is if you have to

02:12:15 --> 02:12:17: dig a trench.

02:12:17 --> 02:12:20: She install broadband, then you must make sure that you

02:12:20 --> 02:12:22: are coordinating that with.

02:12:22 --> 02:12:26: If it's, if it. Let's just say it's a city.

02:12:26 --> 02:12:28: Let's just say it's a city.

02:12:28 --> 02:12:32: You know this city and this is really well done.

02:12:32 --> 02:12:36: As an organization, you know our bread and butter is

02:12:36 --> 02:12:40: serving cities and counties is a municipal financial advisor.

02:12:40 --> 02:12:42: So we're we. We work through infrastructure,

02:12:42 --> 02:12:46: but really, we're focused on the capital improvement planning or

02:12:46 --> 02:12:47: levying taxes,

02:12:47 --> 02:12:50: or earmarking taxes, or tax increment financing,

02:12:50 --> 02:12:54: whatever the mechanism is, and it has to be integrated

02:12:54 --> 02:12:55: with.

02:12:55 --> 02:12:59: Capital improvement planning schedules and we're working with cities where

02:12:59 --> 02:13:01: they have aging infrastructure.

02:13:01 --> 02:13:05: They have no energy efficiency or reliability,

02:13:05 --> 02:13:09: and then you layer on the need for broadband.

02:13:09 --> 02:13:13: On top of that, where they've just re paved a
02:13:14 --> 02:13:14: road.
02:13:14 --> 02:13:18: Or they just. Installed smart streetlights,
02:13:18 --> 02:13:20: but they didn't dig the trench.
02:13:20 --> 02:13:23: They didn't add the broadband to it
02:13:23 --> 02:13:26: so you just mentioned smart lights.
02:13:26 --> 02:13:30: I had this umbrella so I can waive it.
02:13:30 --> 02:13:32: And get my lights turned back on.
02:13:32 --> 02:13:34: That's the way that works.
02:13:34 --> 02:13:38: Umbrella hey, we we've got about 18 minutes left and
02:13:38 --> 02:13:41: I want to throw a question to Deborah but Molly
02:13:41 --> 02:13:45: and check there's a ton of questions popping up in
02:13:45 --> 02:13:47: the chat window for you,
02:13:47 --> 02:13:50: so I'm going to ask Debra to talk about an
02:13:50 --> 02:13:50: issue,
02:13:50 --> 02:13:54: but can you and Chuck look at some of those
02:13:54 --> 02:13:54: questions?
02:13:54 --> 02:13:59: And maybe we can just get a discussion amongst the
02:13:59 --> 02:14:00: three of you?
02:14:00 --> 02:14:03: For some of these issues that are that that the
02:14:03 --> 02:14:06: attendees here are throwing at you,
02:14:06 --> 02:14:08: you and OK, that'd be great.
02:14:08 --> 02:14:12: Deborah, there's a question here talking about what you're
02:14:12 --> 02:14:13: doing
02:14:12 --> 02:14:13: in Georgia.
02:14:13 --> 02:14:15: Uhm, what is Georgia doing?
02:14:15 --> 02:14:19: How are you investing in communities to grow jobs and
02:14:19 --> 02:14:20: opportunities?
02:14:20 --> 02:14:24: 'cause that's the economic development that we're all really
02:14:24 --> 02:14:25: curious
02:14:24 --> 02:14:25: about about.
02:14:25 --> 02:14:29: How are you doing that through the state and the
02:14:29 --> 02:14:31: public private partnership?
02:14:31 --> 02:14:34: Angel investments? How are you guys doing it?
02:14:35 --> 02:14:38: Yeah, that's a great question.
02:14:38 --> 02:14:41: I think a very good example is a project that
02:14:41 --> 02:14:47: we just funded in December that essentially grows regional
02:14:47 --> 02:14:50: innovation
02:14:47 --> 02:14:50: hubs over a mesh network across the state.
02:14:50 --> 02:14:54: So basically we had one city in Augusta that had
02:14:54 --> 02:14:57: a program that targeted historically,
02:14:57 --> 02:15:01: disadvantaged and underrepresented entrepreneurs. And
this was a pretty good

02:15:01 --> 02:15:01: program.

02:15:01 --> 02:15:06: I got previous funding. It's it's kind of been.

02:15:06 --> 02:15:11: Been done a few times and they were going only

02:15:11 --> 02:15:14: going to do it in a gusta.

02:15:14 --> 02:15:18: What we did actually was we funded them to do

02:15:18 --> 02:15:23: it in four additional cities connecting it with other similar

02:15:23 --> 02:15:24: providers.

02:15:24 --> 02:15:29: A sensually creating regional innovation hubs across those five cities

02:15:29 --> 02:15:33: and with that five city network you suddenly have an

02:15:33 --> 02:15:36: annual catchment of 10,000 entrepreneurs.

02:15:36 --> 02:15:38: That you wouldn't have had,

02:15:38 --> 02:15:43: and then secondly, because you have that five city scale,

02:15:43 --> 02:15:47: you are definitely creating an annual sustainable revenue of about

02:15:47 --> 02:15:47: \$1,000,000.

02:15:47 --> 02:15:52: So then that program becomes sustainable without our grant funding,

02:15:52 --> 02:15:56: but you needed our initial funding to kick start it,

02:15:56 --> 02:16:00: and that is something that we're very excited to be

02:16:00 --> 02:16:01: targeting.

02:16:01 --> 02:16:03: And it's it's twofold. One,

02:16:03 --> 02:16:06: it is an understanding that.

02:16:06 --> 02:16:10: We need to focus on unserved or underserved communities right

02:16:10 --> 02:16:13: so we want to be able to celebrate the success

02:16:13 --> 02:16:16: that you know the Atlanta have,

02:16:16 --> 02:16:19: but know that that success has been unbalanced and unequal

02:16:20 --> 02:16:20: and in silos.

02:16:20 --> 02:16:24: So how do we translate that success to the rest

02:16:24 --> 02:16:25: of the state?

02:16:25 --> 02:16:29: And then two? Thinking about and respecting the local regional

02:16:29 --> 02:16:31: identities that are important?

02:16:31 --> 02:16:34: So you're not just cookie cutter and replicating a model

02:16:34 --> 02:16:37: without really understanding the local contexts?

02:16:37 --> 02:16:42: And then empowering the local communities to take ownership of

02:16:42 --> 02:16:46: that rather than dependent on a central system.

02:16:46 --> 02:16:49: So I I think that's that's a very important component

02:16:49 --> 02:16:51: to to a lot of this work.

02:16:51 --> 02:16:54: It's not only looking at the pure stats of job

02:16:54 --> 02:16:56: creation or a number of investments,

02:16:56 --> 02:16:58: you're also looking at economic mobility,

02:16:58 --> 02:17:01: which again, I'm sure this group appreciates and understands,

02:17:01 --> 02:17:04: and so we want to be able to look at

02:17:04 --> 02:17:07: that two fold not only in terms of attracting the

02:17:07 --> 02:17:08: talent,

02:17:08 --> 02:17:10: but also retaining it and grow in it.

02:17:16 --> 02:17:20: I, I think I've heard that the shirt for the

02:17:20 --> 02:17:23: rest of this year is you're on mute.

02:17:23 --> 02:17:26: That's the best catch phrase there is now.

02:17:26 --> 02:17:31: That's great, you know, and what you're talking about is

02:17:31 --> 02:17:36: some of what we've been hearing about leveraging existing resources.

02:17:36 --> 02:17:39: You know there is some low hanging fruit here,

02:17:39 --> 02:17:42: but as Chuck said, you gotta focus on it.

02:17:42 --> 02:17:44: You know work with your communities,

02:17:44 --> 02:17:45: find out what resources are available,

02:17:45 --> 02:17:49: what are the, what are the wants and the needs,

02:17:49 --> 02:17:51: and then focus on it and get it.

02:17:51 --> 02:17:55: It seems like you guys are doing that in Georgia

02:17:55 --> 02:17:57: and I I love love love.

02:17:57 --> 02:18:01: But it's not just all about Atlanta and in here

02:18:01 --> 02:18:05: in Louisiana we hear a lot about it's it's New

02:18:06 --> 02:18:06: Orleans.

02:18:06 --> 02:18:11: And then it's all those Dairy Queen cities out there.

02:18:11 --> 02:18:13: So good on you for four.

02:18:15 --> 02:18:18: But I think for all of us in this group,

02:18:18 --> 02:18:21: right? So there's there's always one major city in our

02:18:21 --> 02:18:22: state,

02:18:22 --> 02:18:24: or maybe a couple, but in in Georgia there's like

02:18:25 --> 02:18:26: 500 plus additional communities.

02:18:26 --> 02:18:29: And what happens to those 500 plus?

02:18:29 --> 02:18:32: And how can we make sure we understand those those

02:18:32 --> 02:18:34: needs and opportunities as well?

02:18:34 --> 02:18:37: Well, I was born and raised in New Orleans,

02:18:37 --> 02:18:40: and I'll tell you, the best way to to improve

02:18:40 --> 02:18:41: the city of Atlanta.

02:18:41 --> 02:18:44: Yeah, get rid of the Falcons.

02:18:44 --> 02:18:46: OK, Chuck and Molly. Uhm,

02:18:46 --> 02:18:50: you guys are are working together now on initiatives.

02:18:50 --> 02:18:54: And as a as a recovering banker and as a

02:18:54 --> 02:19:00: finance guy and I teach my students return on investment.

02:19:00 --> 02:19:03: You know there's there's gotta be a payoff there.
 02:19:03 --> 02:19:07: There is a little bit of of.
 02:19:07 --> 02:19:10: Altruism out there, but mostly in the business world.
 02:19:10 --> 02:19:12: There is return on investment,
 02:19:12 --> 02:19:15: and Chuck and Molly. I think you guys are working
 02:19:15 --> 02:19:18: on that with the finance initiatives and so forth.
 02:19:18 --> 02:19:21: Can you just talk a little bit about what you're
 02:19:21 --> 02:19:22: seeing?
 02:19:22 --> 02:19:24: What's important to you out there,
 02:19:24 --> 02:19:26: and what we can learn?
 02:19:29 --> 02:19:31: Do you want me to try jump
 02:19:31 --> 02:19:32: Why don't
 02:19:31 --> 02:19:32: in
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:32: you
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:32: for
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:32: start
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:32: a
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:32: off
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:33: minute?
 02:19:32 --> 02:19:33: now? Pick it
 02:19:33 --> 02:19:35: up I'm gonna keep it brief.
 02:19:35 --> 02:19:39: So this research collaboration I just shared with you,
 02:19:39 --> 02:19:43: it came out of the Urban Land Institute leadership Institutes
 02:19:43 --> 02:19:46: Innovation Day where I invited wanted trucks,
 02:19:46 --> 02:19:50: colleagues David Yeary, who's the CTO of the Virginia
 Center
 02:19:51 --> 02:19:52: for Innovative Technology,
 02:19:52 --> 02:19:57: and we had several sessions kind of leading into it.
 02:19:57 --> 02:20:00: And I shared with him that I'm in the process
 02:20:00 --> 02:20:05: of completing feasibility studies for microgrids and other
 smart.
 02:20:05 --> 02:20:08: Infrastructure in Massachusetts, New York and Florida,
 02:20:08 --> 02:20:11: and in each case either the city or the developer.
 02:20:11 --> 02:20:14: They didn't understand what it was or what the benefit
 02:20:15 --> 02:20:15: was,
 02:20:15 --> 02:20:18: or how much it would cost or how to phase
 02:20:18 --> 02:20:19: it,
 02:20:19 --> 02:20:22: or who should pay for it and.
 02:20:22 --> 02:20:24: I asked him if he had any models or case
 02:20:24 --> 02:20:28: studies or anything to help me finish these projects and
 02:20:28 --> 02:20:32: he said I'm I'm just wandering through the wilderness
 screaming.
 02:20:32 --> 02:20:35: And so that helped me to understand that.

02:20:35 --> 02:20:39: I mean, I've been researching this in an internal Willdan
02:20:39 --> 02:20:43: smart smart Infrastructure working group for two years and I
02:20:43 --> 02:20:46: kept Googling and doing things the way that I usually
02:20:46 --> 02:20:50: do. Talking to people searching and I couldn't find the
02:20:50 --> 02:20:52: answer to any of these questions.
02:20:52 --> 02:20:55: So we are fundamentally trying to with this case study
02:20:55 --> 02:20:58: research throughout the United States.
02:20:58 --> 02:21:02: We we've already identified 80 projects that are mixed use
02:21:02 --> 02:21:05: with the variety of smart infrastructure components.
02:21:05 --> 02:21:10: We're pulling them apart to understand the public and private
02:21:10 --> 02:21:12: perspective and investment.
02:21:12 --> 02:21:13: And then delineating the benefits,
02:21:13 --> 02:21:17: whether it's return on investment for the private sector or
02:21:17 --> 02:21:19: at some public economic development benefits.
02:21:19 --> 02:21:23: And defining those metrics. So that's the outcome of the
02:21:23 --> 02:21:25: work that we're doing.
02:21:25 --> 02:21:28: So, Brian, I I can't answer your question today,
02:21:28 --> 02:21:31: but I'd be happy to in about a year.
02:21:34 --> 02:21:37: And well, I will pick up with that to talk
02:21:37 --> 02:21:40: about prior to this job at CIT,
02:21:40 --> 02:21:44: I actually used to be in local government administration and
02:21:44 --> 02:21:47: headed their broadband efforts at the locality before I I
02:21:47 --> 02:21:48: came here.
02:21:48 --> 02:21:52: And one of the things learned pretty early on was
02:21:52 --> 02:21:53: that.
02:21:53 --> 02:21:56: Uh. It was not as easy of a cell believer
02:21:56 --> 02:21:59: now as one would think we had a lot of,
02:21:59 --> 02:22:02: particularly when it came to the Board of Supervisors,
02:22:02 --> 02:22:04: looked at broadband is another line item in the budget.
02:22:04 --> 02:22:06: They looked at as some cost and I was like
02:22:07 --> 02:22:07: no,
02:22:07 --> 02:22:09: it is a. It is an investment and you will
02:22:09 --> 02:22:11: get a return on this investment and examples.
02:22:11 --> 02:22:14: You know you get the people at an individual level
02:22:14 --> 02:22:17: like they will increase the value of their homes.
02:22:17 --> 02:22:19: And that will compound overtime.
02:22:19 --> 02:22:21: You know it will increase the opportunities,
02:22:21 --> 02:22:24: many of which have been talked about throughout the day.
02:22:24 --> 02:22:26: In earlier on this panel we don't need to go
02:22:26 --> 02:22:27: into that more,
02:22:27 --> 02:22:29: but it will help residual within the household.
02:22:29 --> 02:22:31: But then beyond that, for instance,

02:22:31 --> 02:22:34: I had a board member that was actually complaining to
 02:22:34 --> 02:22:36: me about how much money we had to spend on
 02:22:36 --> 02:22:39: a route called 220 that went through the locality because
 02:22:39 --> 02:22:41: a lot of people lived in this locality and worked
 02:22:41 --> 02:22:44: next door and we're spending so much money on responding
 02:22:44 --> 02:22:46: to traffic accidents there.
 02:22:46 --> 02:22:49: And it's like you know what if we had broadband?
 02:22:49 --> 02:22:50: And we had more teleworkers.
 02:22:50 --> 02:22:52: We would have less people on the road,
 02:22:52 --> 02:22:53: less congestion on the road,
 02:22:53 --> 02:22:55: fewer accidents on the road,
 02:22:55 --> 02:22:57: and less money we're spending on this road and their
 02:22:57 --> 02:22:59: responses to this area.
 02:22:59 --> 02:23:01: Plus, the more people that are able to work from
 02:23:01 --> 02:23:04: home and and it's one of the good things that
 02:23:04 --> 02:23:05: came out of COVID,
 02:23:05 --> 02:23:07: we've we've shown proof of concept.
 02:23:07 --> 02:23:09: Now telework works and we need to utilize that because
 02:23:09 --> 02:23:12: more people that stay home and the fewer bedroom
 02:23:12 --> 02:23:13: communities
 02:23:13 --> 02:23:16: that we have,
 02:23:16 --> 02:23:18: the more people that. You know actually live and work
 02:23:18 --> 02:23:20: there instead of living somewhere,
 02:23:20 --> 02:23:22: I'm going to somewhere else to work.
 02:23:22 --> 02:23:23: The more investment in the community,
 02:23:23 --> 02:23:25: the more jobs that it creates.
 02:23:25 --> 02:23:28: The more revenue that it creates.
 02:23:28 --> 02:23:31: The locality. Get from government side gets more tax
 02:23:31 --> 02:23:33: revenue
 02:23:33 --> 02:23:35: that it can use to improve services or expand services.
 02:23:35 --> 02:23:38: The the people get, you know,
 02:23:38 --> 02:23:41: more quality of life and benefits and more value to
 02:23:41 --> 02:23:44: their home and then you can reduce expenditures you know
 02:23:44 --> 02:23:48: at the at the business and the local level also.
 02:23:48 --> 02:23:51: I mean it's just to win all the way around,
 02:23:51 --> 02:23:55: it is a. Return on investment.
 02:23:55 --> 02:23:56: That's
 02:23:56 --> 02:23:59: awesome, that is awesome. It it sounds like the all
 02:23:59 --> 02:24:02: three of you really have got some outstanding work that
 02:24:02 --> 02:24:04: you're doing Paul.
 02:24:04 --> 02:24:07: Can we extend this by two or three hours?
 02:24:07 --> 02:24:10: Would that be OK? Uh,
 02:24:10 --> 02:24:13: 'cause you know it, Chuck,

02:24:04 --> 02:24:06: you say you're you're geeking out on this.
02:24:06 --> 02:24:09: I'm kind of and and I know my friend Jon
02:24:09 --> 02:24:13: Snow is back there kinda cool we gotta do this
02:24:13 --> 02:24:16: we gotta do that we got to do all these
02:24:16 --> 02:24:19: things everybody's taken a ton of notes on this and
02:24:19 --> 02:24:22: I think that right there says that this is where
02:24:22 --> 02:24:24: we all need to be focusing our attention.
02:24:24 --> 02:24:27: It really is where we need to and I'm looking
02:24:27 --> 02:24:30: at the the chat window here and there's so many
02:24:30 --> 02:24:32: fantastic issues coming up.
02:24:32 --> 02:24:35: And unfortunately we have 7 minutes left.
02:24:35 --> 02:24:38: So what I'd like to do is is make sure
02:24:38 --> 02:24:42: in just those couple of minutes that we have left
02:24:42 --> 02:24:46: is that each of our panelists has one final thought.
02:24:46 --> 02:24:49: If if you didn't get to say something.
02:24:49 --> 02:24:51: That is, a key takeaway,
02:24:51 --> 02:24:52: would you please you know,
02:24:52 --> 02:24:55: would you please go ahead and and tell us what
02:24:55 --> 02:24:56: that is?
02:24:56 --> 02:24:59: Chuck, I'm going to let you think about that for
02:24:59 --> 02:25:00: a second.
02:25:00 --> 02:25:03: Deborah. Do you have a final thought that you could
02:25:03 --> 02:25:04: do in like 2 minutes?
02:25:04 --> 02:25:07: Just something that you want to make sure that everyone
02:25:07 --> 02:25:10: who is here with us today walks away with this
02:25:10 --> 02:25:11: one nugget.
02:25:13 --> 02:25:15: No pressure or anything like that.
02:25:15 --> 02:25:17: UM, let me let me just I.
02:25:17 --> 02:25:18: I saw great,
02:25:18 --> 02:25:21: remember this is this is being recorded for posterity,
02:25:21 --> 02:25:23: so don't mess this up.
02:25:24 --> 02:25:28: It's kind of scrolling through the chat and I and
02:25:28 --> 02:25:32: I think one of the main questions that I saw
02:25:32 --> 02:25:36: was just obviously the application of connectivity and I I
02:25:36 --> 02:25:39: think the main thing for all of us to continue
02:25:39 --> 02:25:43: to be cognizant of when we talk about the application
02:25:43 --> 02:25:45: of connectivity,
02:25:45 --> 02:25:47: IE IO T. It's basically about data,
02:25:47 --> 02:25:51: right? So with increased connectivity you have more data
and
02:25:51 --> 02:25:55: so fundamentally behind all the sexy tech and.
02:25:55 --> 02:25:59: The the scary complications of it is just how you

02:25:59 --> 02:26:03: have access to data secure data and be able to

02:26:03 --> 02:26:05: apply the data right?

02:26:05 --> 02:26:10: So that's the fundamental. So the applications are basically what

02:26:10 --> 02:26:14: you do with the data in terms of that interpretation

02:26:14 --> 02:26:15: as well as the security.

02:26:15 --> 02:26:20: And in that literacy. So I would encourage all of

02:26:20 --> 02:26:24: us to think about it as data and then data

02:26:24 --> 02:26:26: being a literacy.

02:26:26 --> 02:26:28: Muscle or muscle that's needed.

02:26:28 --> 02:26:32: So I I really think about this as what is

02:26:32 --> 02:26:35: your ability to secure,

02:26:35 --> 02:26:39: interpret and access that data that will be exponentially increased

02:26:39 --> 02:26:41: with increased connectivity.

02:26:41 --> 02:26:46: That's fundamentally the application of it and know that that

02:26:46 --> 02:26:50: has an inherent inequity that's connected to it.

02:26:50 --> 02:26:55: So again, who has access to data who understands the

02:26:55 --> 02:26:56: data?

02:26:56 --> 02:26:59: You had can secure the data and so you're kind

02:26:59 --> 02:27:02: of peeling the similar economic development issues.

02:27:02 --> 02:27:06: It's just taken over in a digital space and it's

02:27:06 --> 02:27:07: with data.

02:27:08 --> 02:27:10: Awesome, thank you so much Molly.

02:27:10 --> 02:27:13: How about you? What a final thought that you have

02:27:13 --> 02:27:14: for the attendees.

02:27:15 --> 02:27:18: Yes. So to piggyback again off of Deborah,

02:27:18 --> 02:27:21: I was going to respond to the comments about the

02:27:21 --> 02:27:25: importance of broadband and IO T in in in libraries

02:27:25 --> 02:27:29: and so building on what Deborah just shared in the

02:27:29 --> 02:27:33: context of Isle of Wight County where I was thinking

02:27:33 --> 02:27:36: this is just like a YMCA building and there is

02:27:36 --> 02:27:40: a library next door and I don't get how any

02:27:40 --> 02:27:43: of these things connect when you layer in.

02:27:43 --> 02:27:46: The IO T if it you know when the the

02:27:46 --> 02:27:51: the director of the Central Library system achieves her vision

02:27:51 --> 02:27:54: for what this thing will be,

02:27:54 --> 02:27:57: she's going to be using that data not just to

02:27:57 --> 02:27:59: program the space,

02:27:59 --> 02:28:02: but also to demonstrate the need.

02:28:02 --> 02:28:07: And that's the economic development case for funding in any

02:28:07 --> 02:28:08: circumstance.

02:28:08 --> 02:28:13: And it also is another tool for addressing.

02:28:13 --> 02:28:18: The need for diversity, equity and inclusion because that that's

02:28:18 --> 02:28:21: where the value of the data is so clear to

02:28:21 --> 02:28:21: me.

02:28:21 --> 02:28:24: So what I've labeled this this entire series.

02:28:24 --> 02:28:26: I have a million case study examples.

02:28:26 --> 02:28:28: Also, if anybody is interested,

02:28:28 --> 02:28:31: I would love to share my research,

02:28:31 --> 02:28:35: but I've been calling this research series libraries of the

02:28:35 --> 02:28:36: future for the last.

02:28:36 --> 02:28:40: I don't know, let's say three or four years before

02:28:40 --> 02:28:43: I really got into this and.

02:28:43 --> 02:28:46: The you know what a library used to do many

02:28:46 --> 02:28:46: years ago.

02:28:46 --> 02:28:50: Just throw that concept away because a library of the

02:28:50 --> 02:28:53: future wrapped with broadband and IO T it will be

02:28:53 --> 02:28:56: an economic development hub and I really love what did

02:28:56 --> 02:28:58: were shared about hubs in five cities.

02:28:58 --> 02:29:01: And that's how we all need to be thinking.

02:29:01 --> 02:29:01: That's it.

02:29:03 --> 02:29:06: That's awesome, Molly. Thank you so very much Chuck.

02:29:06 --> 02:29:09: Bring us home, brother. Deborah

02:29:09 --> 02:29:12: I I just I want to pick your brain.

02:29:12 --> 02:29:15: OK, this is I've just enjoyed your comments so much.

02:29:15 --> 02:29:19: You're awesome. OK, you nailed it to me that the

02:29:19 --> 02:29:20: future of IoT,

02:29:20 --> 02:29:23: the future smart communities is all about the data.

02:29:23 --> 02:29:25: And then for us at Virginia,

02:29:25 --> 02:29:29: we've really been focused a lot with created a

02:29:29 --> 02:29:32: Commonwealth

02:29:32 --> 02:29:35: of Virginia data trust to address those issues that you're

02:29:35 --> 02:29:40: bringing up Deborah and for us it's all about the

02:29:40 --> 02:29:42: data privacy. The data security and the data ownership.

02:29:42 --> 02:29:44: Those things are going to be so crucial moving forward

02:29:44 --> 02:29:46: and you're right and and you know,

02:29:46 --> 02:29:49: tying it all together with Molly as well,

02:29:49 --> 02:29:52: you know. It's going to.

02:29:52 --> 02:29:55: Affect whether we shrink or we widen the gap between

02:29:55 --> 02:29:56: the haves and have nots in terms of digital literacy

02:29:56 --> 02:29:58: right here,

02:29:58 --> 02:30:00: we need to be very careful in how we plan

02:29:58 --> 02:30:00: out our broadband infrastructure,

02:30:00 --> 02:30:03: which affects where the type of infrastructure where it's at,
02:30:03 --> 02:30:04: how it will be used,
02:30:04 --> 02:30:07: and then that ties into the smart communities.
02:30:07 --> 02:30:10: The data that we're just talking about and we need
02:30:10 --> 02:30:13: to address this properly or that gap will widen.
02:30:13 --> 02:30:16: And that is the last thing anybody in this room.
02:30:16 --> 02:30:18: Once we're all here because of once again broadband.
02:30:18 --> 02:30:21: One word, opportunity. Let's maximize it.
02:30:21 --> 02:30:21: Awesome,
02:30:21 --> 02:30:24: Chuck. Thank you so so much.
02:30:24 --> 02:30:27: You know guys, one of the one of the downsides
02:30:27 --> 02:30:30: of having these virtual is you can't have a screaming
02:30:30 --> 02:30:34: round of applause for some awesome panelists,
02:30:34 --> 02:30:37: but thumbs up or whatever to these three panelists guys.
02:30:37 --> 02:30:41: You are rock stars and I appreciate so much being
02:30:41 --> 02:30:43: able to talk to you today.
02:30:43 --> 02:30:47: I am ton more smarter than I was on more
02:30:47 --> 02:30:48: smarter.
02:30:48 --> 02:30:50: Paul, please Get Me Out of here.
02:30:50 --> 02:30:51: It's all back
02:30:51 --> 02:30:53: to you. Well, thank you.
02:30:53 --> 02:30:54: This was awesome and wonderful.
02:30:54 --> 02:30:57: Thank you so much. Making a lively pin.
02:30:57 --> 02:30:59: All this is really great and as I said in
02:30:59 --> 02:31:00: the chat,
02:31:00 --> 02:31:03: I have a bunch of new research ideas and thoughts
02:31:03 --> 02:31:06: and how we can really help support you to make
02:31:06 --> 02:31:09: your opportunities better as well as also make the state
02:31:09 --> 02:31:11: of Louisiana better as well.
02:31:11 --> 02:31:13: So but our next session we're going to be doing
02:31:14 --> 02:31:15: is turning it back,
02:31:15 --> 02:31:18: building on what was just said on this panel.
02:31:18 --> 02:31:21: Turning it back to you all to really kind of
02:31:21 --> 02:31:24: dive a little bit deeper into some of the conversations
02:31:24 --> 02:31:26: you were having earlier,
02:31:26 --> 02:31:28: and so we're going to send you all back into
02:31:29 --> 02:31:32: your breakout groups so that you can start discussing and
02:31:32 --> 02:31:36: having conversations a little bit more about both better
defining
02:31:36 --> 02:31:39: what digital equity means as well as start thinking about
02:31:39 --> 02:31:42: what are those foundational elements that you all think from
02:31:42 --> 02:31:45: both your goals and the opportunities into this session.

02:31:45 --> 02:31:47: So thank you so much.

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