

Dear Orland Community,

Hello again from the Orland Broadband Committee (OBC)! This letter is to update you on the progress towards Orland's broadband project and to raise awareness of opportunities coming your way!

First, a big THANK YOU to all who participated in the online Maine Connectivity Authority (MCA) state broadband survey! Your input is guiding MCA to make data-driven decisions, prioritize funding for rural, unserved areas, and maximize the impact of federal funds coming to Maine.

Please remember, Orland is partnering with internet service provider Fidium Fiber to bring high speed broadband to all residents. To pay for the majority of this \$3.7 million project, Fidium Fiber is applying for a "Connect the Ready" grant from MCA this August. Orland Selectmen have agreed to present an "Article on the Warrant" to utilize \$50,000 of the town's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds to put towards the total cost of the project, pending the MCA grant award. This is intended to be the town's good faith contribution on the 'Connect the Ready' grant application.

More good news! On May 16, the Hancock County Commissioners voted to allocate \$200,000 of the county's ARPA funds for our Orland broadband project! This allocation is pending the approval of Orland's \$50,000 ARPA funds and the MCA grant award. Fidium Fiber is offering a significant sum toward the project. The total funding for Orland's project is listed below. **A reminder, Orland's ARPA fund contribution will have NO impact on your property's taxes, and is dependent upon a positive vote on the Warrant Article on June 14.**

- MCA grant (dependent on favorable award in late 2023) \$3,052,225
- Fidium Fiber contribution \$ 461,440
- Hancock County ARPA fund contribution \$ 200,000
- Town of Orland ARPA fund contribution pending approval \$ 50,000

Total cost of broadband project \$3,763,665

Please come to the Orland Annual Town Meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, to vote on Orland's Funding Article!

You may have questions as we move closer to Fidium Fiber's submission of Orland's broadband grant to MCA in August. Please be on the lookout for a mailing to homes and flyers/handouts around town. The mailing will give information about the Orland fiber optic broadband project, definitions of terms, and funding opportunities for many residents to offset the cost of equipment and monthly service fees.

MCA announces grant awards in late 2023. The OBC is optimistic that there will be townspeople support on June 14, Fidium Fiber will be awarded this grant, and the project build will start mid to late 2024! More to come!

Please feel free to send feedback and questions to the OBC at meeting@townoforland.org.

Thank you from the Orland Broadband Committee