



# A Community based Broadband initiative The Southern Tier Network

# ECC Technologies

## Who are we?

- Pioneers in community wide Broadband planning and analysis with >20-year history of developing infrastructure in needed areas
- Have supported \$2.5 Billion in Broadband development nationally
- Project consultants for a number of successful Broadband initiatives including privately owned for profit and municipal based not for profit projects across the US

# An example of a Community based Broadband project

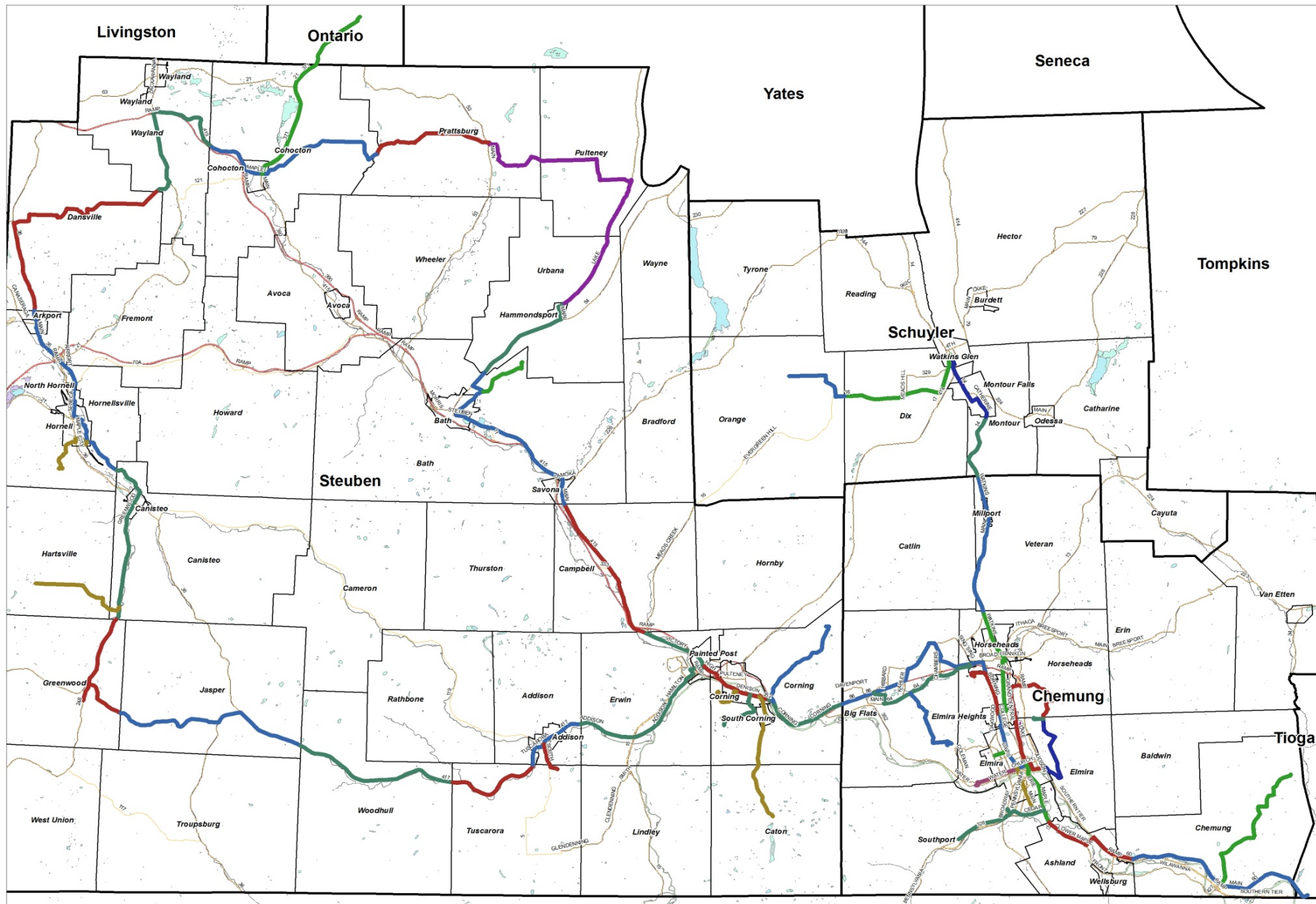


The Southern Tier Network  
A multi-county collaborative in NY

# What is the Southern Tier Network

- A community-based Broadband initiative resulting from a decade in planning
- A Not-for-Profit collaborative originating with 3 counties Steuben, Schuyler and Chemung
- The build out of 235 miles of fiber infrastructure built and managed as an Open Access Model
- An initiative managed by the community through a Local Development Corporation (LDC) and Board of Directors





0 11,000 22,000 44,000 66,000 88,000 Feet

Southern Tier Network  
Regional Fiber Map ANSI E

Date: 10/17/2011

Confidential Information: Do not distribute.

# Pre STN-Start-up, ECC:

- Aligned political leadership to the concept that Broadband was important
- Performed an Inventory and assessment which demonstrated the disparities in Broadband coverage within their respective counties and as a region
- Opened discussions with schools, healthcare, businesses and others who required Broadband to meet their business objectives
- Identified a “champion” who would lead the charge
- Developed a Plan and attainable goals

# What the Inventory and assessment showed ?

- It clearly showed significant gaps in broadband infrastructure and services in rural and metro areas across the Southern Tier
- Both residents and businesses were complaining about access to affordable suitable Broadband
- Incumbent providers were not willing to invest for further build outs. Competitive providers were, if we could help them they would also invest
- The Southern Tier region was falling behind in global competitiveness

# The development of the Plan



- During the Assessment process and during communications with many entities in the region, it was determined that if Broadband infrastructure could be built and or made available across the region, many of the Broadband issues could be solved
- Deploying fiber infrastructure would provide the best overall solution to meet long term needs
- A collaborative fiber infrastructure plan was developed to meet both the internal as well as competitive the needs of the 3 counties.
- Governance, funding and sustainability were key factors to consider



# Why the fiber based Open Access Model



- Fiber infrastructure can be used to support virtually any organization
- It reduces costs and barriers allowing Broadband expansion and competition
- It would be community based and managed
- It would provide a long-term competitive advantage to all communities

# STN was created its Goals were,



- Create an Open Access Fiber Network to support technology led development
- Consider the Broadband needs of multiple entities in the Southern Tier Central Region
- Develop collaborative partnerships between the public and private sectors for the development and use of the fiber
- To spur Broadband competition and investment in the region
- To create a globally competitive advantage for the region and those entities within it
- Enhance economic development in the region
- To be sustainable and not a burden to the taxpayers

# The STN Startup Process

- Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board was chosen to be the catalyst for the initiative (our champion)
- ECC wrote and managed the business and organizational plans, as well as designed the fiber network and project managed the build out
- The counties bought in to the project and committed to submitting for Grant funding
- An NTIA round 2 grant for \$10 million was submitted and due to an oversubscribed grant source was not funded
- Alternative funding options were researched with a local foundation providing the needed start up funds.

# The Startup Process (cont.)

- ECC aligned several enterprise supporters prior to the county commitments which gave the confidence to the team that sustainability could be gained whereby reducing risks
- The LDC was formed and Board of Directors consisting of county leadership and local community members representing business, education and healthcare was established
- The Counties each committed funds which were used to operate the network until it became sustainable
- Marketing with potential customers was being performed prior to the fiber being built

# 10 years later, what benefits has STN provided to the region?



- Promoted economic development
- Promoted world-class Broadband expansion
- Promoted Broadband competition
- Created a competitive advantage for the Southern Tier Region in terms of Broadband



## Benefits (cont)

- Promoted economic development by building fiber to and connecting 460 hi-tech locations. Some existing and some proposed
- ECC marketing team as well as STN Board members were in direct communications throughout the community. Marketing began well before fiber builds

## Benefits (cont)

- Promoted broadband competition by attracting 9 new competitive providers, low-cost access and lack of competition were the key variables. Talks with providers began prior to the fiber builds
- Promoted Fiber to the home buildouts in 27 communities in the region. More being added on a regular basis

# Where is STN today

- The Network has expanded into 9 counties >500 miles, Alleghany, Steuben, Schuyler, Chemung, Yates, Ontario, Tioga, Thompsons, Broome
- \$ 10 million in New York State Grants helped to support fiber expansion to these counties
- In total greater than \$30 million in public and private investments have been made to the network
- STN developing strategic plans for its future and the future of Broadband in the region





# ECC Broadband Solutions Roadmap



## Discovery

### 1. Discovery - Understand the existing environment.

**Inventory** landline and wireless infrastructure and available services. Develop, deploy and manage a countywide **Broadband survey** program. Analyze and GIS map the served and unserved areas, **assess** your Broadband environment.

## Formulate

### 2. Formulate – Make Plans for Improvement

**Consult** with client. Identify and review options to recommend solutions to achieve your strategic goals. Share information with interested service providers and facilitate public/private partnerships (PPP).

## Fund

### 3. Funding – Obtain Grants and Loans

Create executable Broadband initiative with **business plans** that become a foundation for grants. Assist with grant applications and other funding sources. Financial – Technical- Operational

## Construct

### 4. Construct – Fiber and/or Fixed Wireless

**Design** and **manage** Broadband infrastructure construction including manage path, permitting and other design requirements. Manage construction process, perform physical, logical and QC testing.

## Implement

### 5. Implement – Day to Day Operations

Produce, implement, and manage Broadband **operational plans**, and ongoing support. Support interactions between county or municipality, service providers and constituents/users.

*Building smarter schools, richer corporations, and integrated communities.*



# Where are the Counties in our region today?



- Madison County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory and BAAT Campaign in 2019-2020
  - FORMULATE
    - Created a FTTH solution to address unserved and underserved
    - Identified potential ISP partner
    - Developed Business Model supporting a \$16M broadband infrastructure project.
  - FUNDING
    - 2020-2021 Applied for USDA ReConnect Grant ( \$10M Currently Under Review)
    - County plans to bond for matching funds (\$3.5M)
    - ISP Partner will supply funds (\$2.5M)

# Where are the Counties in our region today?



- Lewis County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory & BAAT Campaign in 2020-2021
    - Identified areas that need broadband infrastructure
  - FORMULATE
    - Development of solution, partners and funding stage
- Jefferson County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory & BAAT Campaign in April 2021
    - Report and recommendations are in process May 2021
- St. Lawrence County”
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory & BAAT Campaign May 2021
    - Report and recommendations due in June 2021

# Where are the Counties in our region today?



- Warren County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory & BAAT Campaign in April 2021
    - Report and recommendations are in process June 2021
- Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga & Cortland Counties:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Broadband Inventory 2021
    - BAAT Campaign Kicked off April 30, 2021, will run through July 23, 2021
- Herkimer & Onieda Counties:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Completed Inventory BAAT Campaign in April 2021
    - BAAT Campaign Kicked off May 7, 2021, will run through July 30, 2021

# Where are the Counties in our region today?



- Washington County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Broadband Inventory Field Data Collected
    - Converting to Field data to GIS
    - BAAT Campaign scheduled to kickoff May 25, 2021
- Greene County:
  - DISCOVERY
    - Broadband Inventory data collection in process
    - BAAT Campaign scheduled to kickoff June 1, 2021

What in my view is the most important take a way from this presentation and a key to the success of STN to date?

- Continuous Communication



# Questions???