

Fiber Optic Internet Access for the Tano Road Area

Introduction

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 provided funds to expand broadband internet access to underserved areas. The Tano Road area qualifies for some of the grant money. This can allow the installation of fiber optic cable for internet access to each household that desires it.

The grant money is given on a cost share basis, 75% of the all-in cost paid through the grant, and 25% paid by the customer. **Individual's outlay is estimated at around \$2,000, with the final cost depending on how many households install the fiber.**

To obtain the grant, around 300 household have to sign up for it. At this time, the La Tierra development (just west of TRA) has around 170 households signed up. They have reached out to us to see if there is enough interest among the TRA community to get them over the 300 minimum.

Fiber Optic Advantages

Fiber provides the fastest and most reliable internet connection available. This proposed service will be an FTTP (fiber to the premises). FTTP is a technology that provides seamless access to the internet by running fibre-optic cables directly from the exchange into your home. It's essentially an end-to-end fibre cable service from the exchange to your home. A fibre cable is stronger and doesn't disintegrate over time, unlike copper.

Typical upload/download speeds can be over 400 Mbps, depending on service. For example streaming a movie requires 5-10 Mbps to prevent buffering.

Way Forward

If anyone is interested in the fiber service, please contact Lorrey Muellenberg (LMUELLENBERG@Q.COM) by January 5.

We are submitting an initial application in early January and need an estimated number of interested parties to see if we have enough households to participate, no obligation at this time.

The grant money is offered, however, on a first-come, first-served basis, so anyone with an interest should let Lorrey know quickly. If there is enough interest he will contact the La Tierra community to further coordinate the way forward.

The Project

Cyber Mesa Telecom has offered to provide coordination, permitting, project and construction management for the installation, as they have for La Tierra. Cyber Mesa has a number of customers in the Tano area, especially in the Tano West / Heartstone district.

In return for this service, they, as an Internet Service Provider (ISP), would want the right to make the initial Internet offerings. Depending on how many households obtain the fiber service, Cyber Mesa charges are currently estimated to be around:

One-time installation: \$250 inclusive of a fiber modem.

Note: this is in addition to the ~\$2,000 outlay detailed above.

| <u>Speed</u> | <u>Monthly (plus tax)</u> |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| 50 Mbps | \$56.95 |
| 100 Mbps | \$89.95 |
| 200 Mbps | \$150.00 |
| 400 Mbps | \$250.00 |

Current Internet Options

The TRA area currently has other internet options available. The fees shown in the table below are approximate and will vary depending on your individual service and area.

| Internet Provider | TRA Coverage | Type | Speed, Mbps | Cost/mo., approximate |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Century Link | Partial | DSL, on phone line | 40 | \$65 |
| Comcast (Xfinity) | Partial | Cable | 75 to 1200 | \$30 to \$80 |
| Cyber Mesa | Partial | Line-of-sight microwave | 5 to 15 | \$35 to \$70 |
| NM Surf | Partial | Line-of-sight microwave | 10 to 100 | \$40 to \$80 |
| Star Link | Full | Low orbit satellite | 200 | \$110 |
| T-Mobile | Partial | Line-of-sight 5G | 150 | \$50 |

Homes east of Ridgetop may be able to get service from Comcast cable. Homes within a mile or so of the intersection of Tano and Montoyas can get good speeds from Century Link.

Cyber Mesa and NM Surf use microwave, so they need line of sight to their transmitter base. T-Mobile internet uses 5G from their tower on Camino de los Montoyas and also needs line of sight.

Star Link is a low Earth orbit satellite network that provides fast service to all the TRA area.

Check with your immediate neighbors for their experience. Also, call all of the providers to see which one can be the best fit for your requirements.