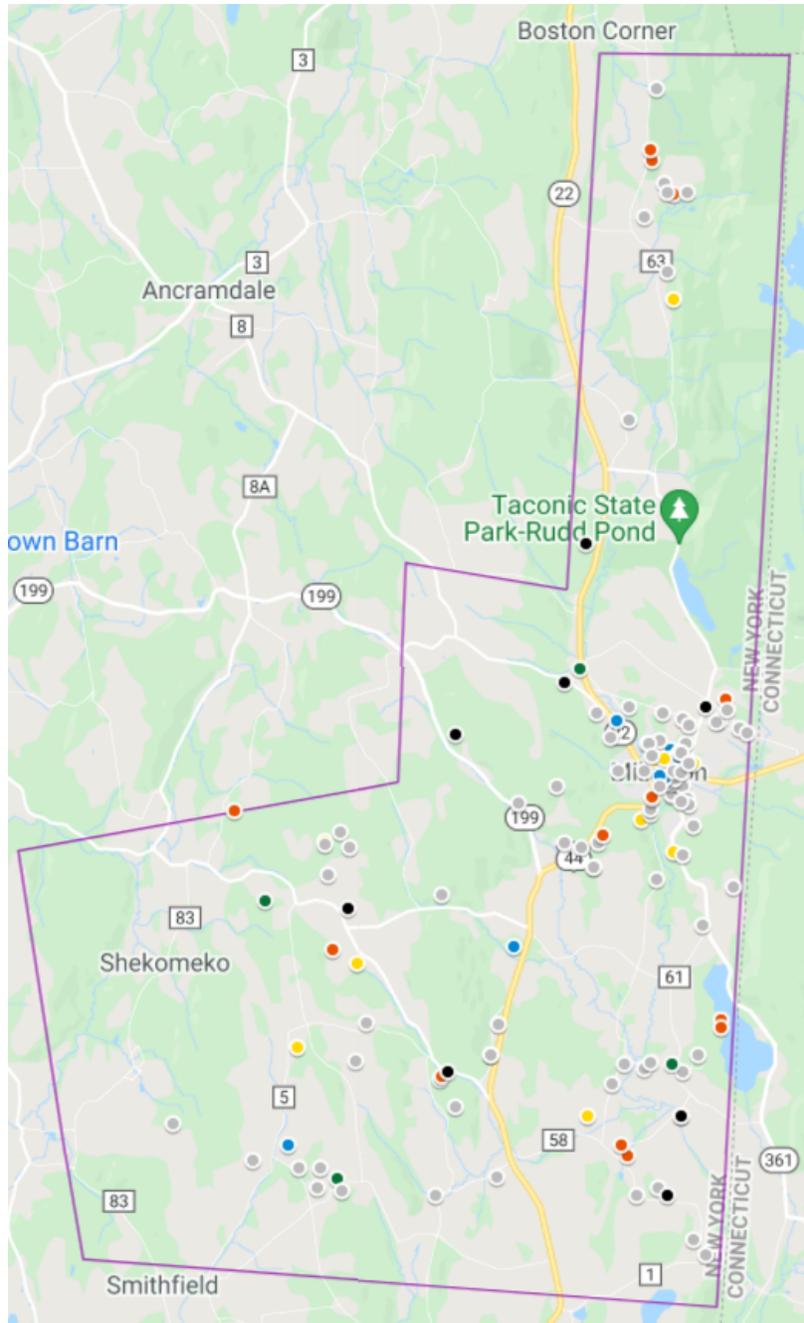


A Report on the Status of Broadband Access in the Town of North East and Village of Millerton



Prepared for the North East Town Board
By the North East Broadband Access Advisory Committee
November 9, 2021

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Summary

The Town of North East Broadband Access Advisory Committee was formed to study the availability and adequacy of local Internet service, with its first action to complete a community survey. The survey results show that while cable based broadband service, which should suffice for the current needs of most residents and businesses, is broadly available throughout the Town and Village of Millerton, there are some pockets where no wired service is available, or only substandard DSL, satellite or cellular service is available. Many residents reported dissatisfaction with the speed of their service and / or its cost. We also found very few locations that have access to fiber based service, which is preferable for the future as it is more reliable and capable of faster speeds. We received very few responses for the area west of Rt22 south of the village, and may well be missing areas without service there. The recently enacted federal Infrastructure bill includes \$65 billion in funding for broadband expansion, and we recommend that the committee participate in Dutchess County's recently started efforts to map broadband gaps and push Internet providers to improve the reach and speed of their networks within the Town and Village.

Background

In September 2020 Chris Kennan, Town of North East Supervisor, and Rich Stalzer attended a meeting organized by Sid Karmal, Chair of the Ancram Broadband Committee, that was also attended by members of the Pine Plains broadband committee. At this meeting, Sid presented a technical background on broadband, reviewed past government projects to expand access to broadband, and shared his findings on the state of broadband in Ancram. He then advocated for towns in our region to explore banding together to build a municipal fiber network to serve our residents, since the incumbent commercial Internet providers have been slow to provide basic (cable) broadband in some areas, and have no immediate plans to roll out fiber based Internet throughout our region.

Chris and Rich decided that a better understanding of the state of broadband in North East and Millerton was required to determine if joining any effort to build municipal networks was appropriate for our town. This led to the recruitment of several local residents to serve on an advisory committee to the North East Town Board.

Broadband

What is broadband?

According to the FCC, the definition of broadband internet is a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds. These speeds should be considered minimal and internet speeds in the 100–200 Mbps range are ideal for most households since they can handle common uses like streaming and video chat for 2–5 users at once. Broadband internet is delivered through

several different technologies with varying availability based on location. However, there are several factors that should also be considered, especially for use cases like home offices where upload capacity for files and reaction time for user actions is particularly important.

Fiber Optic: Fiber optic technology converts to light electrical signals carrying data and sends the light through transparent glass fibers about the diameter of a human hair. Many people can access the fiber network at the same time without affecting the overall performance. This makes it ideal for high demand use that needs to stay constant, even during peak periods. Fiber optic download and upload speeds can be as fast as 100 Gbps. The actual speed experienced, however, may vary depending how the service provider configures the service. The same fiber providing your broadband can also simultaneously deliver voice (VoIP) and video services, including video-on-demand.

Cable Modem: Cable modem service enables cable operators to provide broadband using the same coaxial cables that deliver pictures and sound to your TV set, though you can still watch cable TV while using a cable modem service. Cable download speeds range from 10-500 Mbps with upload speeds ranging from 5-50 Mbps. Transmission speeds vary depending on the type of cable modem, cable network and traffic load.

DSL: DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) is a wireline transmission technology that transmits data over traditional copper telephone lines already installed to homes and businesses. There are four types of DSL but the type primarily used for residential customers is ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) and typically provides faster speed in the downstream direction than the upstream direction. The speed decreases the farther a computer is from the phone companies DSL joining node.

Satellite: Internet connectivity is provided by satellites and is often the best option in rural areas. Satellite broadband is useful for serving remote or sparsely populated areas. Downstream and upstream speeds for satellite broadband depend on several factors, including the provider and service package purchased, the consumer's line of sight to the orbiting satellite, and the weather. Satellite service can be disrupted in extreme weather conditions. Speeds may be slower than DSL and cable modem, with download speeds from 12 Mbps to 100 Mbps with upload speeds at 3Mbps.

WiFi: Wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi) connects a home or business to the internet using short-range radio signals instead of cables. Fixed wireless technologies using longer range directional equipment can provide broadband service in remote or sparsely populated areas where other types of broadband would be too costly to provide. Mobile wireless broadband service is typically slower than either wired or fixed wireless alternatives.

Why is broadband important?

If it wasn't already obvious, the COVID crisis made clear that reliable, high speed Internet is a requirement for fully participating in education, employment, commerce, society and governance today. Remote work, distance learning, telemed visits and trying to book a Covid vaccination appointment, were impossible, or significantly more difficult, without good residential Internet.

Going back a few years, a survey done for the Town and Village Comprehensive Plan identified a "lack of broadband and fiber Internet" as a weakness. 15% of the people who completed that survey indicated that "limited availability and access to high-speed Internet town wide" was one of the top 3 issues facing the community, with almost 10% of respondents listing this as the top issue [Q8]. This issue was rated as very important or important by 83% of respondents. In response to another question, 82% agreed [Q20] that "high speed Internet and cell phone service needs to be improved outside the Village", and 61% answered yes for inside the village. So there seems to be a problem that needs to be scoped, and options to deal with it need to be developed.

Actions of the Broadband Advisory Committee

Forming the Committee

At the February 11, 2021 Town Board Meeting, the board passed a resolution creating a Broadband Access Advisory Committee, to function in an advisory capacity to the Town Board only. The committee was charged with undertaking investigation and research of ways in which the Town can improve its broadband coverage and perform such other functions and duties as it determines, with the advice and direction of the Town Board, are appropriate, but to include a survey of Town residents.

The initial members of the Committee were:

- Richard Stalzer, chairperson
- Claire Goodman
- Kristin Panzer
- John Merwin
- Andrew Stayman

John Merwin and Kristin Panzer have since resigned from the committee.

Why Towns are Conducting Internet Surveys

All Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are required to send the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) information on their Internet coverage, including technology used (e.g. cable, fiber) and available speeds. However, this information is submitted by census tract, so if an ISP connects at least one location in a particular census tract, that tract is considered served

by that ISP, even if no other location in the tract can connect. This provides an exaggerated picture of where high speed Internet is available. Based on this level of data gathering, Optimum Internet is available to 91.3% of NorthEast and Millerton locations, and Consolidated (DSL or Fiber) is available to 98.5%.

Complaints about the inadequacy of the census based reporting for state and local planning purposes, and for determining which areas qualify for federal funding, prompted congress to act. Last year the FCC received funding to create a system for gathering more granular data from the ISPs, which resist sharing address level information. The FCC will not be forcing them to provide this, rather the FCC will create grids containing multiple addresses, but smaller than a typical census tract, that the ISPs will then have to report against. The development of these grids is expected to be complete in 2022.

Given that the FCC will not be collecting better data for at least another year, many counties and towns are attempting to gather information from residents to build more accurate maps of where broadband is available.

Survey preparation

After researching surveys performed by other towns, including Pine Plains, the committee prepared an online form in Google Docs, as well as a paper version. The survey asked if the respondee has Internet service (and if not, why not), the cost and suitability of the service, and requested other details on Internet usage. Spanish versions of the online and paper surveys were created at the request of the Webatuck school district. The full survey is included as an appendix to this report. The committee also created a flyer which we distributed around town.

Survey outreach

To gather as many responses as possible, the committee members performed the following outreach:

- Provided the Town of North East clerk a survey description and link to post on the Town website.
- Provided the Town Supervisor a link to include in his email newsletter.
- Conducted an interview with the Millerton News to highlight the need for broadband and draw attention to our survey. An article based on the interview was published in the April 1, 2021 edition of the paper..
- Provided North East Community Center (NECC) and the NorthEast-Millerton Library with English and Spanish paper surveys to distribute to their clients, as well as online links to include in their email newsletter.
- Provided Webutuck School district with links to the Spanish and English online surveys, which they sent out via email and text message to all student families
- Provided Millerton Astor ECP with English and Spanish paper surveys to distribute to their clients.

- Made surveys available at the Climate Smart Community table at the Earth Day Farmers Market, April 24th.
- Tabled at the May 22nd Millerton NECC farmers market to promote the survey and answer questions and answer questions about broadband.
- Hung flyers throughout Millerton and NorthEast advertising the survey with a QRcode so that residents could complete the survey on their smartphone
- Emailed our personal local contacts requesting their participation in the survey
- Posted links to the survey to local Facebook and Instagram groups

Survey responses

A total of 159 residents of North East (106) and Millerton (53) completed our survey, as well as another 16 from surrounding towns who's surveys are not included in our results. The locations were mostly residential (122) but dual residential/business (27) and business (10) were also submitted. All but 11 of the respondents had Internet service. See Map 1 below which shows the locations of all those that included a street address (the online form required an entry but some paper forms did not provide this info). The different color dots show the type of service at each address.

Of the 11 without Internet service, most reported that the service was too expensive (8), and some reported they had no available options at their address (4), or that the available options were too slow (4). One had no interest and also no options at home, but used public Internet in the village (e.g. at the Library or stores). One respondent had no Internet capable devices in the home. The survey allowed for multiple answers for this question.

Of those who had Internet service, most had cable service (104), with some reporting DSL (14), cellular (12), fiber (5) and satellite (1) based Internet service. Another 8 did not know what kind of service they had. Most were customers of Optimum/Altice (126), but others reported Fairpoint/Consolidated (18), Spectrum (1), Verizon (1), Verizon Wireless (1) and unknown (1). Map 1 shows cable subscribers using grey dots, fiber with green dots and other colors representing DSL or satellite (both red), cellular (yellow) and no Internet (black). These other categories are better viewed in Maps 2, 3 and 4.

Most respondents who answered our question on cost reported paying \$75-\$99 (45) while others reported \$100-\$124 (29), \$50-\$74 (27), over \$150 (17), \$125-\$149 (8), \$25-\$49 (6) and less than \$25 (1). Many reported bundled service, and it is not clear if these costs were only for Internet, or their entire package. Most of the bundled packages were Internet/TV/Phone (52) but some were Internet/Phone (35), Internet/TV (16) and Internet only (42).

Survey participants were asked to rate the cost of their service, and 149 answered this question (which allowed multiple selections). Most feel that their service is "Too expensive" (91) or very expensive (2), as opposed to "affordable" (11). This question also included feedback on the

perceived “value” of the service vs cost, and again most perceived their service to be a “bad value for its cost” (35), followed by “OK value” (25) and “Good value” (8).

Most participants rated their service slow - either “Too slow, even when one person is using it” (40) or “Too slow, when multiple people are using it” (33). Participants could select multiple answers, and many did. A significant percentage were satisfied with the speed, selecting “Fast enough, when one person is using it” (21) and / or “Fast enough, when multiple people are using it” (36), but also many found their service “OK for most tasks, but not for others” (38).

The survey included a link to run an Internet speed test, and almost half the respondents (67) reported their download speeds. A large number reported substandard throughput, either less than 20Mbps (19) or between 21 and 40Mbps (8). Only 25 reported download speeds of at least 100Mbps, which is recommended for multiple devices simultaneously using the Internet. Upload speed and ping times were also requested, but few respondents provided this data.

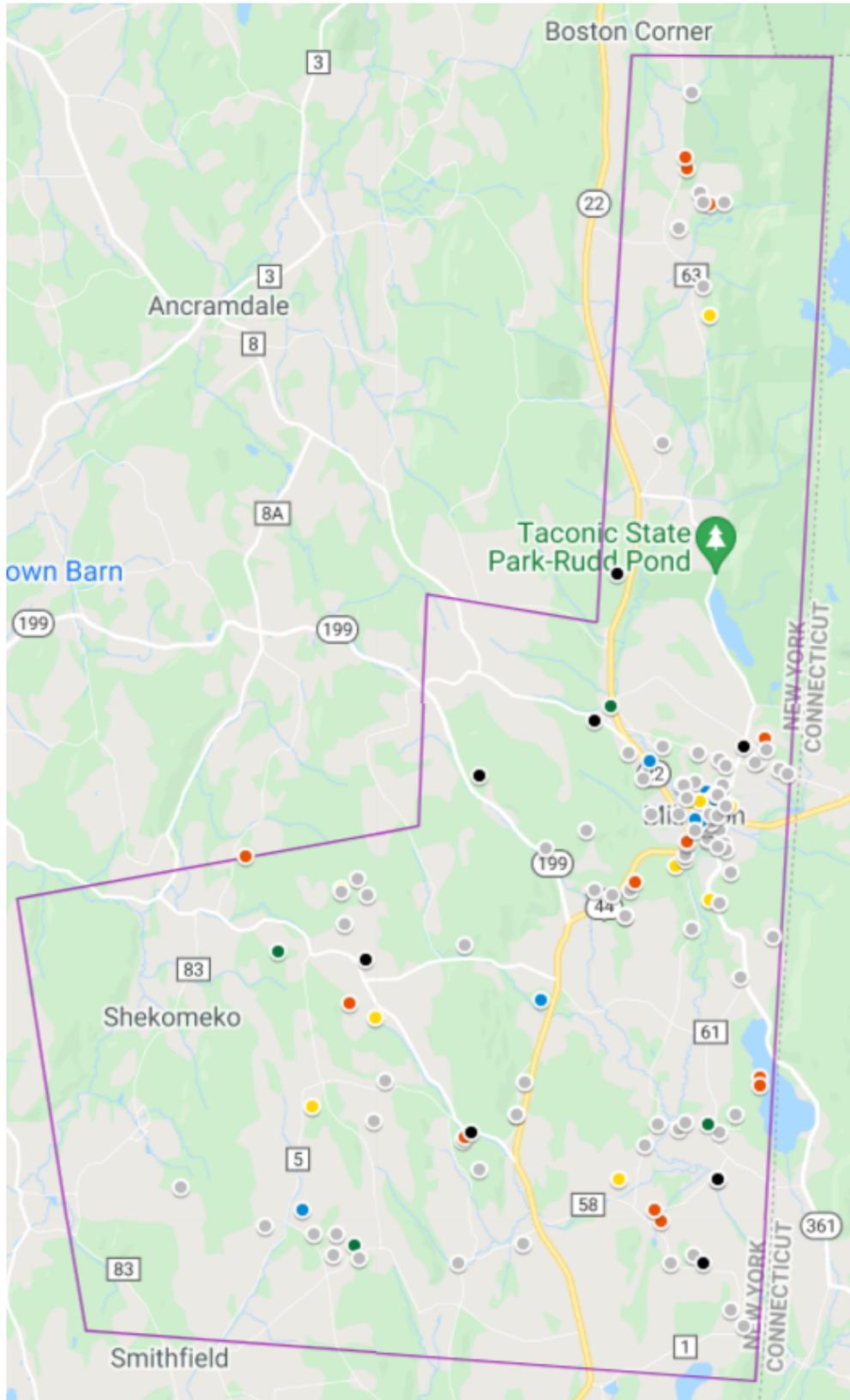
As expected, almost all participants were using WiFi (63) vs wired (7) or cellular (1) connections within their location. This reliance on WiFi could impact the speed tests, as local WiFi issues prevent some locations from reaching their full Internet speeds.

Many respondents use the Internet outside the home, particularly “At stores, restaurants, or other businesses while inside their location” (74), “Outdoors, using WiFi from a nearby business, school or library” (48), “work” (38), Library (29) or school (16).

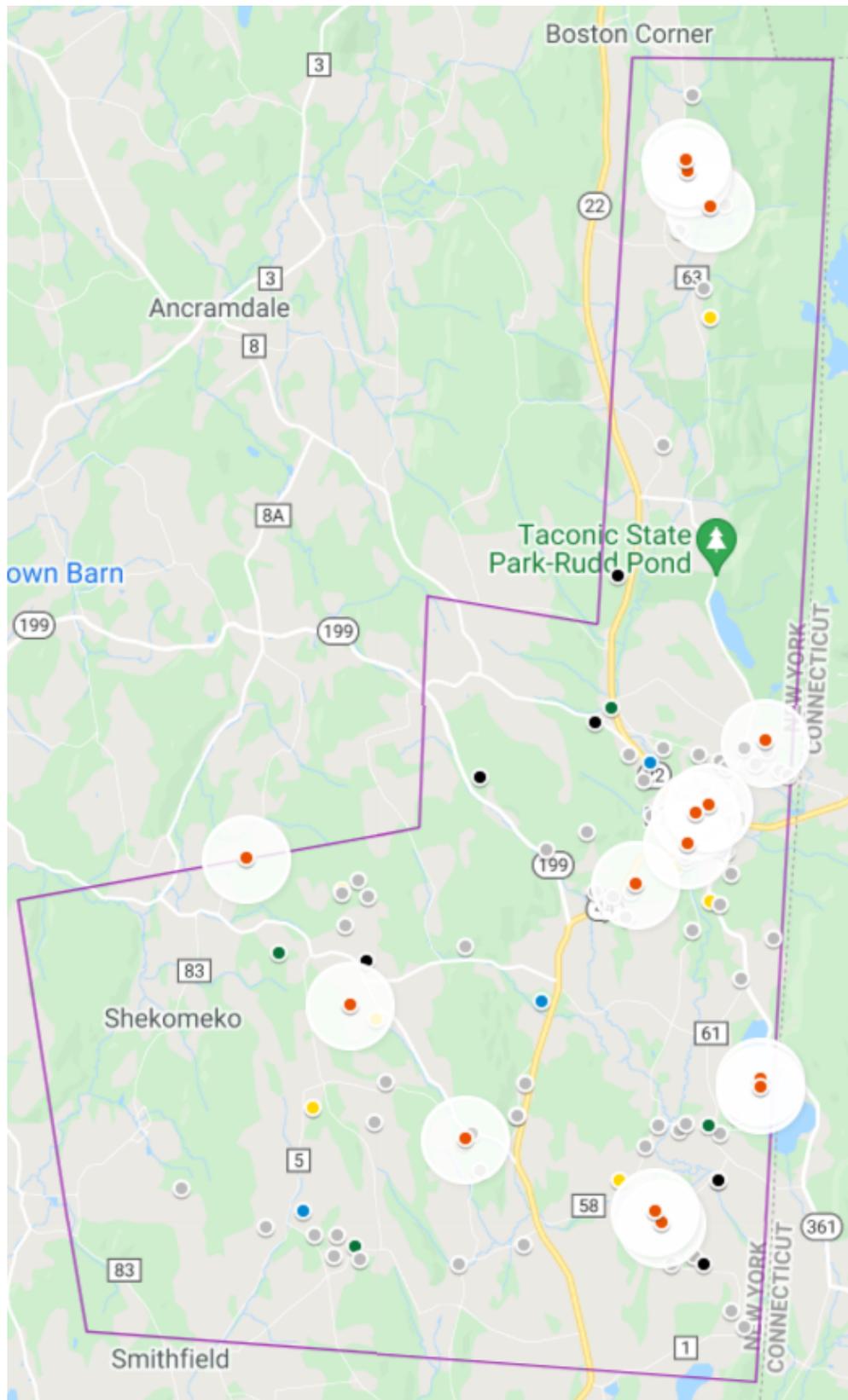
Most respondents access the Internet using laptops (38), followed by cell phones using data plans (36), tablets (30), desktop computers (30).

A full breakdown of the survey responses is available in the Appendix.

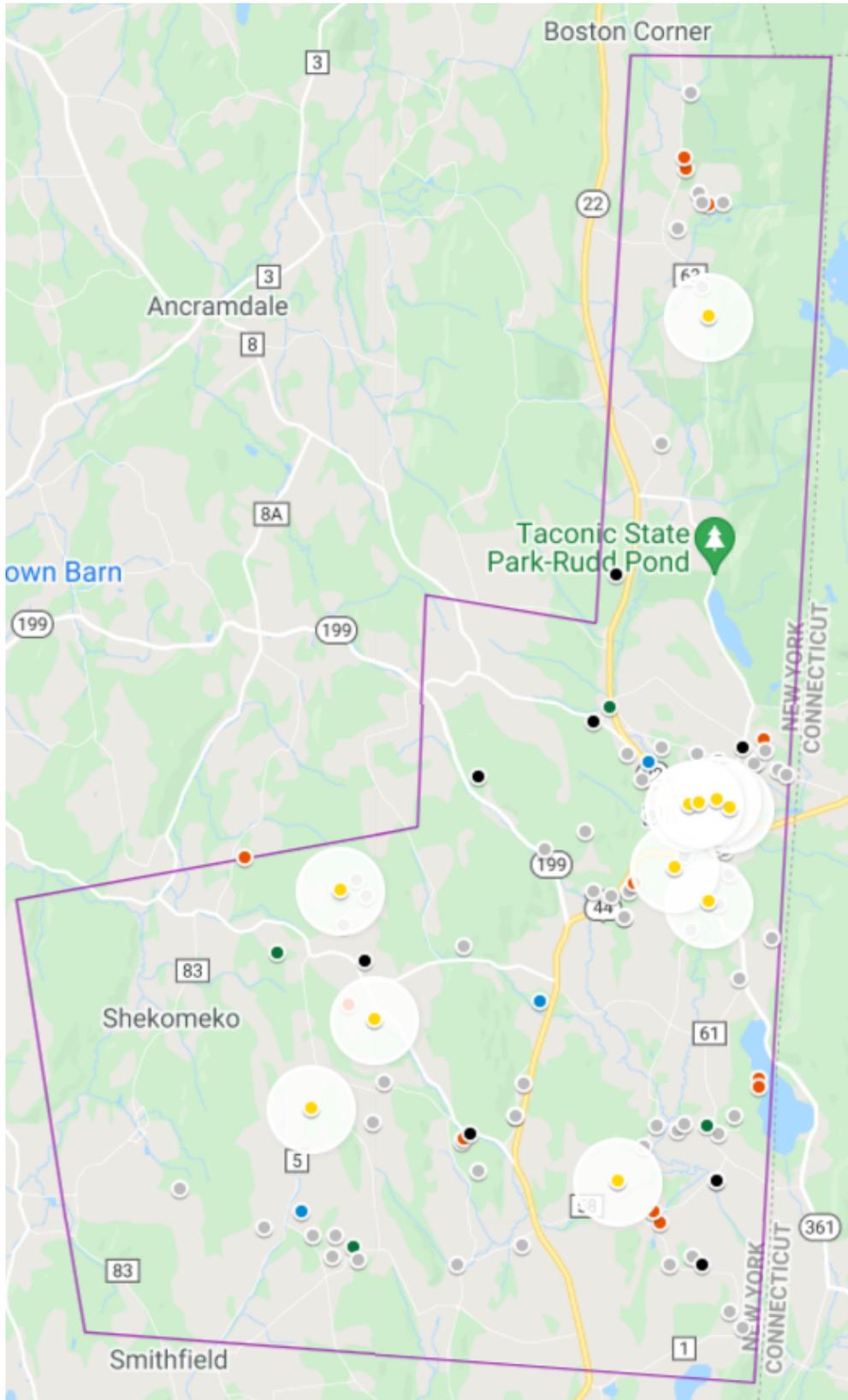
Map 1 - All surveys that included street addresses



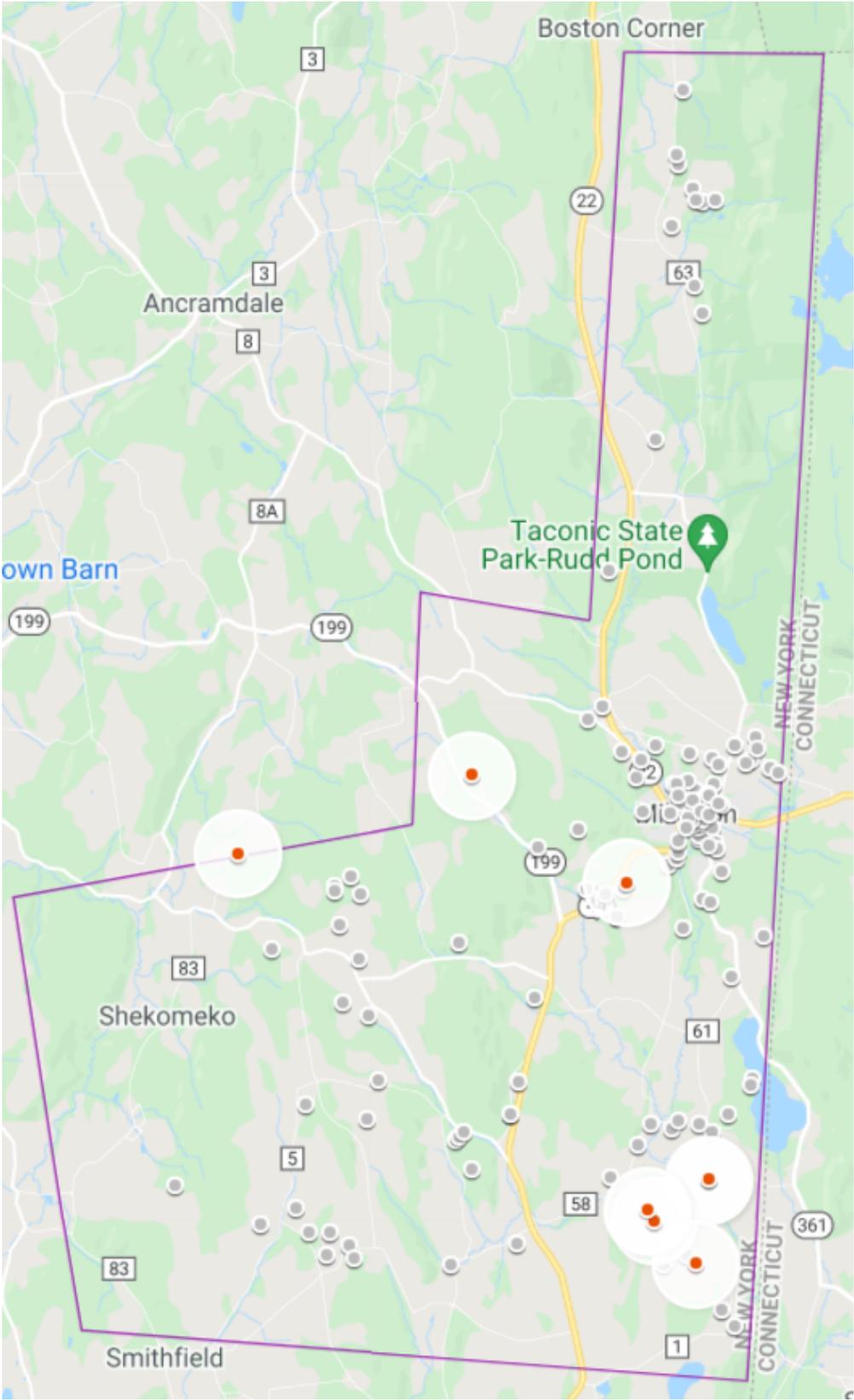
Map 2 - Fifteen locations with DSL or satellite Internet service (highlighted)



Map 3 - Eleven locations with cellular Internet service (highlighted)



Map 4 - Eight locations with no wired Internet available (highlighted)



Talking to Our Neighbors

During the past year we participated in many meetings with our elected officials or neighboring town Broadband Committees, to learn from each other on local efforts to build municipal broadband networks, to fund expansion of existing commercial Internet provider networks, and to track where these Internet providers may be investing. A summary of what we learned follows.

The Town of Pine Plains has been our most frequent partner. They completed a broadband survey last year and have had some success in getting a couple smaller Internet companies to share network maps, but not Altice.

The Town of Ancram allocated \$30K, from their federal American Rescue Act funding, to pay Consolidated Communications to run fiber to 28 houses in Boston Corner that lack wired Internet access. The Town of Ancram Broadband Committee has been active in exploring a municipal owned fiber network.

The Town of Mount Washington, MA built their own town-owned fiber network. Prior to this project, most of the town relied on satellite dishes for Internet and TV service. So far, the town network, whose build was subsidized by state funds, costs residents less than the landline plus satellite service most were paying for before the fiber network.

The Town of Stanford recently completed a broadband survey, and forwarded the result to Dutchess County's Broadband consultant to include in their project rather than map the data themselves.

The Town of Amenia has a board member interested in exploring a municipal network, but they don't have the resources to develop a plan.

The Town of Sharon, CT has a large and active Broadband Committee that completed a survey and just received \$30K from the town to retain a consultant to create an estimate for the cost of building a town-owned fiber network.

The Town of Salisbury, CT EDC has a broadband subcommittee, with no active projects as of our meeting in August. They were expecting to coordinate their efforts with other NW Connecticut towns through NWConnect.

Dutchess County has allocated funds from their American Rescue Act to retain a consultant, NYSTEC, to run a county-wide broadband survey and petition all the Internet companies operating in the county for data on which homes their networks serve, or pass by. This report is due by May 2022.

Columbia County EDC retained a consultant, MC Fiber Services, to map all of their unserved locations, and have released a report with their findings.

Findings

State of Broadband in Our Community

The survey results, supplemented by visual inspection of cables on the utility poles on select roads, confirm that cable based broadband service is broadly available throughout the Town and Village of Millerton, although there are some pockets where no wired service is available. Any cables found through visual inspections are assumed to be mostly coax, rather than fiber, based on survey results, as we do not have the technical expertise to determine with confidence their type. Fiber is preferred due to higher reliability and faster throughput, especially “upload” speeds - capacity from the home to the Internet. Cable Internet service upload speed is usually a small percentage of the advertised upload speed, whereas fiber upload speeds typically match the advertised download speed. This can be seen uploading media, but also impacts two way video service, e.g. Zoom calls.

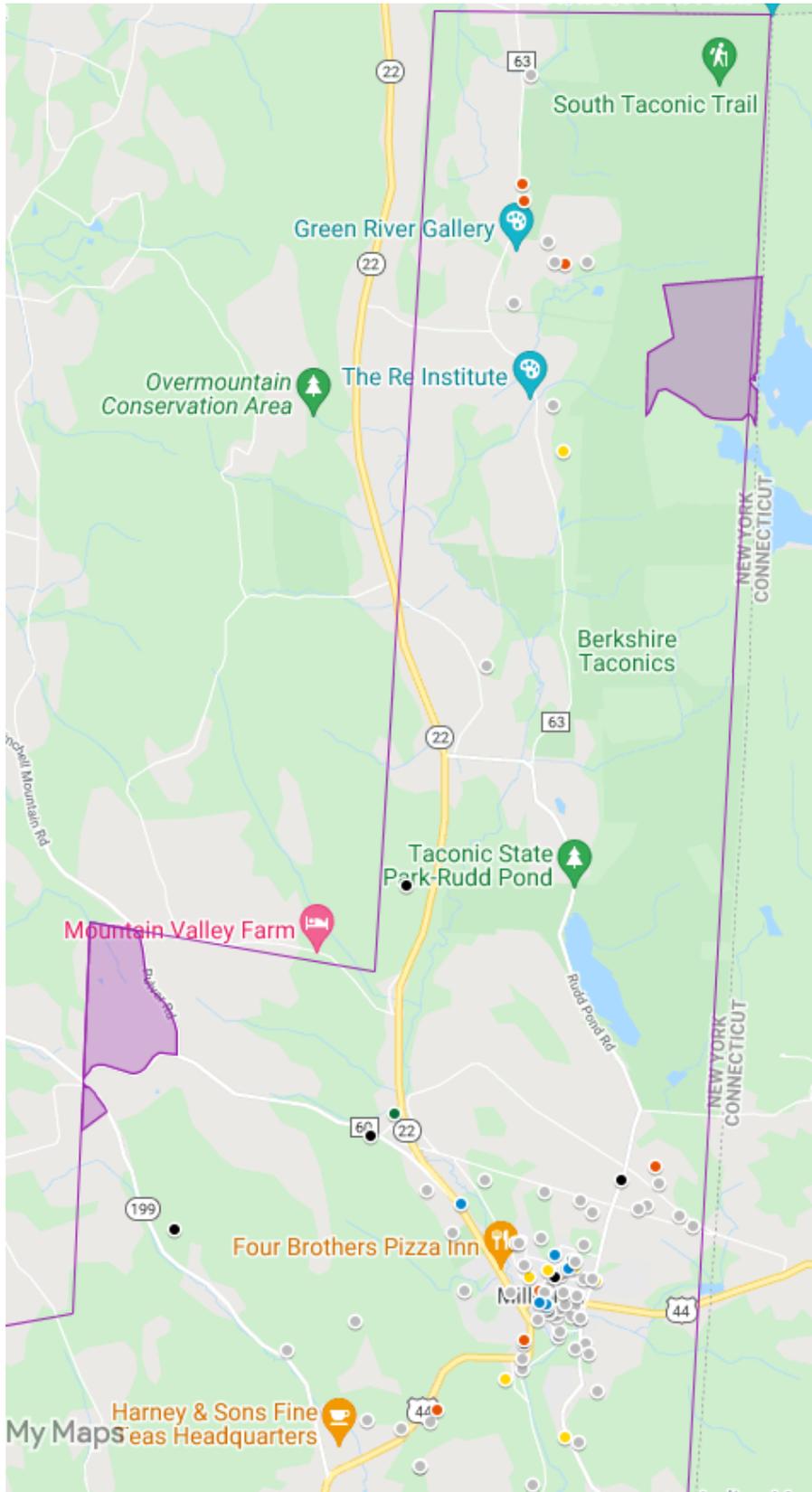
Some residents and businesses rely on substandard DSL, satellite or cellular service when cable is unavailable, or if a cable is not affordable. As found by mapping the survey results, some residents report using DSL even when their neighbors have cable, indicating they choose to remain on DSL or are unaware of all the available options.

We also found very few locations that have access to fiber based service, which is preferable for the future as it is more reliable and capable of faster speeds. We received very few responses for the area west of Rt22 south of the village, and may well be missing areas without service there.

Areas requiring attention

We confirmed that some of the houses near the intersection of Regan and Sheffield Roads in the south east corner of the Town do not have cable service and the several surveys received from this area indicate satellite Internet is typically used there. Areas nearer to Pine Plains may also lack cable service, although we did not survey these roads and only a few surveys were submitted from that area, so confidence is low for this area. We know that the Pine Plains survey found that their residents near our border have limited access to cable, so this may be an area that needs investment. We also discovered that Fairpoint (now Consolidated Communications) received \$32,958 of NY State funding in 2017 to connect 13 locations in five census blocks to “high speed” internet, four of these census blocks being along the Pine Plains border, indicating that this is an area that lacked high speed service. See Map 5 for the awarded census blocks, shown in purple.

Map 5 - Census Tracts That Received NY State Broadband Funds in 2017



Affordability as a Barrier to Broadband Access

Our survey results reveal that 5% (8) of respondents had no Internet service because it was “Too Expensive”. Webatuck School District also found that about 5% of their students lacked Internet access, although some of their families have intermittent access, with service being suspended as they fall behind on bills then restored as payments are made. Webatuck dealt with this by having a pool of WiFi hotspots that they delivered to homes as students stopped showing up for online classes.

Investing in additional infrastructure, i.e. wiring more roads, does not address the affordability gap, which is a problem nation-wide. Recognizing this, the FCC provided an Emergency Broadband Benefit - a direct to customer \$50/month subsidy during the COVID crisis, which the new Infrastructure Act makes permanent at \$30/month, for qualified individuals and families. A household is eligible if a member of the household meets *one* of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, or [Lifeline](#);
- Approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, in the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, or 2021-2022 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

Frontier offers a plan through the Federal or New York State Lifeline Plan, offering a \$9.25 / month plan for qualified lower-income residents. The Federal and New York State Plans have different eligibility requirements, so residents should check both programs.

Altice / Optimum participates in the FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit, and also offers a \$14.99 / month 50Mbs plan - Optimum Advantage Internet, to the following groups:

- Households that participate or qualify for the National School Lunch Program
- Seniors 65+ who receive or are eligible for Supplemental Security Income
- Veterans who receive state or federal public assistance.

The Optimum Advantage Internet plan is only available to new customers, or previous customers who discontinued service at least 60 days before applying, but were in good standing when the service ended.

Links to all these programs are included in the References and Useful Links section below.

Recommendations

Based on our survey data, and discussions with Broadband Committees from neighboring towns and Dutchess County, we recommend that:

- The Town not engage in any effort or consortia to build a municipal owned fiber network but rather work with existing providers, Dutchess County and the NYState Broadband Program Office to pursue Infrastructure Act funding to subsidize wired Internet service expansion to unserved portions of our town
- That the Committee share with Dutchess County, and their consultants, information from our surveys and cooperate with their effort to map all unserved areas in Dutchess County. This project, due to complete by May 2022, will include pressing Internet service providers to reveal their served locations - data that most of them (particularly Altice) has withheld from individual town broadband committees
- The committee continue to communicate with neighboring towns and track their efforts, and any investment by the Internet companies in areas abutting the Town borders

Glossary

Mbps: “Megabits per second.” A megabit is equal to 1 million bits. This is the standard measure of “speed” or “bandwidth” on internet connections. It measures how many bits (units of digital information) can be transferred each second.

Gbps: “Gigabits per second.” A gigabit is equal to 1000 megabits. This is the standard measure of “speed” or “bandwidth” on internet connections. It measures how many bits (units of digital information) can be transferred each second.

Bit: The speed the user moves data is measured in bits.

Byte: The amount of data the user uses is measured in bytes.

Download speed: How quickly your Internet connection can retrieve data from the Internet (web pages, video, cat photos, etc.)

Upload speed: How quickly your Internet connection can send data from your devices up to the Internet (uploading video to YouTube, sending documents via email, etc.) Download speed is much more important for the average user, since you only notice upload speed when trying to share large files. It is normal for your upload speed to be around one tenth your download speed. However, fiber internet users often have symmetrical (or identical) download and upload speeds.

References and Useful Links

FCC - Getting Broadband Q&A

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/getting-broadband-qa>

FCC - 2015 Report on Broadband Progress

<https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/broadband-progress-reports/2015-broadband-progress-report>

Netflix Internet Speed Recommendations

<https://help.netflix.com/en/node/306>

BroadbandNow Internet Speed Selector Tool

<https://broadbandnow.com/guides/how-much-internet-speed-do-i-need>

Ookla Speed Test Tool - User for the Online Survey

<https://www.speedtest.net/>

FCC - Broadband Map

<https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/#/>

Town of North East / Village of Millerton Comprehensive Plan

<https://townofnortheastny.gov/comprehensive-plan-2019/>

Town of Pine Plains Broadband Committee Final Report

<https://www.pineplains-ny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Broadband-Committee-Final-Report-2021.pdf>

Town of Sharon, CT Broadband Survey Results

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/603f9ce7f380ec0ad9b9a19d/t/604aabc861fa2c6596f0ff44/1615506376845/Sharon+Connect+Survey+Results+November+%285%29.pdf>

Town of Cornwall, CT Internet Survey Report is downloadable from this page:

<https://cornwallct.org/cornwall-internet-committee/>

Broadband Study for Columbia County, NY

<https://www.columbiaedc.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Columbia-County-Broadband-Study-final.pdf>

NY State Broadband Program Office

<https://nysbroadband.ny.gov/>

NY State Broadband Program Office - Broadband Plan Awards by Town

<https://nysbroadband.ny.gov/all-phases-municipality>

CNet article on the Broadband provisions included in the federal Infrastructure Act

<https://www.cnet.com/home/internet/digital-divide-fix-gets-a-boost-as-house-passes-1-2-trillion-infrastructure-bill>

FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

<https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

Frontier's Lifeline Program

<https://frontier.com/resources/discountprograms/lifelineprogram/new-york>

Altice / Optimum FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit

<https://www.optimum.com/emergency-broadband>

Altice / Optimum Advantage Internet Plan

<https://www.optimumadvantageinternet.com/>

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our gratitude to:

- Rhiannon Leo-Jameson @ NorthEast-Millerton Library, for distributing and collecting paper surveys at the Library, and sending a link to the online survey to library patrons via email newsletter and the Library's social media accounts
- Christine Sergent @ North East Community Center, for distributing paper surveys to, and collecting from, clients of NECC services, and including a link to the online survey in one of their newsletters
- Neomi Felicite, for translating our survey into Spanish.
- Athena Galarza @ Millerton Astor ECP for distributing to, and collecting, paper surveys to her client families
- Robert Farrier, Raymond Castellani and Lauren Marquis @ Webutuck School District, for meeting with us to describe their experience providing Internet to students without broadband, and for emailing and texting survey links to their students' families
- The merchants of Millerton who agreed to post our flyer promoting the survey
- The Millerton Farmers Market, for allowing committee members to do outreach at the May 22nd market
- Moore and More Printing, for printing our flyers for free
- The residents and business owners of North East and Millerton who took the time to complete the surveys
- The Town of Pine Plains Committee for allowing us to join their weekly meetings, and generously sharing all their working documents.
- Siddesh Karmal, Chair of the Ancram Broadband Committee, for kicking off regional efforts on improving bandwidth and freely sharing his data mapping work and resources.
- Devin Rigolino, Senior GIS Project Coordinator at the Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development, for providing the GPS coordinates for North East properties, which were used to map survey data

Appendix

1. Paper survey - English
2. Paper survey - Spanish
3. Survey flyer
4. Full survey results

PAPER SURVEY - ENGLISH

NORTH EAST AND MILLERTON BROADBAND SURVEY

Fast, reliable, affordable internet access has become a necessity in this day and age. It is no longer just a source of entertainment. It has now become a requirement for jobs, income, education, even for our health and wellbeing. Your responses to the following questions will help the Town of North East and Village of Millerton determine where Internet access is satisfactory, unsatisfactory, unavailable, too slow, or too costly for our residents and businesses. Thank you for participating in this survey. You can also complete this survey online at www.townofnortheastny.gov.

1. What is the street address of your home or business? (Do not enter a PO box.) This information is essential for our ability to map underserved areas of need in our community.

2. What is your zip code (5 digits only)? _____

3. Is this address: residential business both? (Please circle your response)

4. Do you subscribe to Internet service at this address? Yes No (if Yes skip to question 6)

5. Why don't you subscribe to Internet service at this address? Select all that apply then skip to question 13.

___ Too expensive

___ Can't find an Internet provider for my address

___ Available options are too slow

___ Don't own a computer, tablet or any other Internet device

___ No interest

Other: _____

6. What type of Internet service do you have? (If more than one, please choose the one you use most often)

___ Cable

___ Point to point or line of sight wireless

___ Fiber Optic (such as Verizon FiOS)

___ Dial up

___ Satellite

___ Smartphone, tablet or laptop with cellular/wireless plan

___ DSL

___ Mobile hotspot with cellular/wireless data plan

___ I don't know

Other: _____

7. Who provides your Internet service?

___ Optimum or Altice

___ HughesNet

___ Spectrum, Time Warner or Charter Communications

___ DISH

___ Verizon

___ Verizon Wireless

___ Fairpoint or Consolidated

___ AT&T Wireless

___ MidHudson Cable

___ TMobile/Sprint Wireless

NY Air

I don't know

Other: _____

8. Which devices do you use at home? (Circle all that apply)

Desktop computer Laptop computer Cell phone with data plan Cell phone with WiFi only (no data plan)

Tablet Chromebook SmartTV WiFi hotspot Other: _____

9. Optional - what do you pay for Internet service each month (if bundled try to answer with just the Internet portion of your bill)

\$0 - \$24

\$75 - \$99

\$125 - \$149

\$50 - \$74

\$100 - \$124

\$150 or more

I don't know

10. Optional - is your Internet service bundled with TV and/or phone service?

Internet only

Internet, TV and phone

Internet and TV

I don't know

Internet and phone

11. Which of the following describe the cost of your Internet service? Choose all that apply:

Affordable

OK value for its cost

Too Expensive

Bad value for its cost

Good value for its cost

Other: _____

12. Which of the following describe the speed of your Internet service? Choose all that apply:

Too slow, even when one person is using it

Too slow, when multiple people are using it

OK for most tasks, but not others (e.g. gaming, video conferencing)

Fast enough, when one person is using it

Fast enough, even when multiple people are using it

Other: _____

13. Optional- share any additional thoughts about your current Internet service, or if you don't have Internet, please share how that impacts your life:

14. Where else do you (or the people living with you) access the Internet within Millerton and NorthEast? Choose all that apply:

School Work Library

At stores, restaurants or other businesses while inside their location

Outdoors, using WiFi from a nearby business, school or library

**Thank you! Please return this form to the Millerton Library, NECC or mail to:
Town of North East Broadband Committee
19 North Maple Avenue, PO Box 516, Millerton NY 12546**

PAPER SURVEY - SPANISH

ENCUESTA DE BANDA ANCHA DE NORTH EAST Y MILLERTON

El acceso rápido, confiable y asequible de Internet se ha convertido en una necesidad en estos tiempos. Ya no es sólo una fuente de entretenimiento. Ahora se ha convertido en un requisito para el empleo, los ingresos, la educación, incluso para nuestra salud y bienestar. Sus respuestas a las siguientes preguntas ayudarán a la ciudad de North East y Village of Millerton a determinar dónde el acceso al Internet es satisfactorio, insatisfactorio, no disponible, demasiado lento o demasiado costoso para nuestros residentes y empresas. Gracias por participar en esta encuesta.

1. ¿Cuál es la dirección de su casa o negocio? (No introduzca una casilla postal) Esta información es esencial para nuestra capacidad de mapear áreas de necesidad desatendidas en nuestra comunidad.

2. ¿Cuál es su código postal (solo de 5 dígitos)? _____

3. ¿Es esta dirección: negocio residencial ambos? (Por favor, circule su respuesta)

4. ¿Se suscribe al servicio de Internet en esta dirección? Si No (si si saltar a la pregunta 6)

5. ¿Por qué no se suscribe al servicio de Internet en esta dirección? Seleccione todo lo que corresponda y, a continuación, vaya a la pregunta 13.

Muy costoso

No tengo interés

No puedo encontrar un proveedor de Internet para mi dirección

Las opciones disponibles son demasiado lentas

No poseo un ordenador, tableta o cualquier otro dispositivo de Internet

Otros: _____

6. ¿Qué tipo de servicio de Internet tiene? (Si es más de uno, elija el que utilice con más frecuencia)

Cable

Punto a punto o línea de visión inalámbrica

Marcando Fibra Optica (como Verizon FiOS)

Satelite

Smartphone, tableta o portátil con plan celular/inalámbrico

DSL

Mobile punto de acceso con plan de datos celulares/inalámbricos

No lo sé

Otro: _____

7. ¿Quién proporciona su servicio de Internet?

Optimum o Altice

Spectrum, Time Warner o Charter Communications

- MidHudson Cable HughesNet NYAir
 Verizon Verizon Wireless DISH
 Sprint/T-Mobile inalámbrico AT&T inalámbrico Fairpoint o Consolidated
 No lo sé Otros: _____

8. ¿Qué dispositivos utiliza en casa? (Elija todo lo que corresponda)
- Computadora de escritorio Computadora portátil
 Teléfono celular con plan de datos Tableta Chromebook
 Teléfono celular con WiFi solamente, sin plan de datos SmartTV
 WiFi hotspot Otro; _____

9. Opcional - ¿Cuanto paga por el servicio de Internet cada mes (si es un paquete, tratar de responder con sólo la parte de Internet de su factura)
- \$0 - \$24 \$50 - \$74 \$100 - \$124 \$150 o más
 \$25 - \$49 \$75 - \$99 \$125 - \$149 No lo sé

10. Opcional: ¿su servicio de Internet está incluido con tv y/o servicio telefónico?
- sólo Internet Internet y tv Internet y teléfono
 Internet, tv y teléfono No lo sé

11. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe el costo de su servicio de Internet? Elija todo lo que corresponda: _____
- Buen servicio por el costo Barato Muy caro
 Mal servicio por el costo Otros: _____

12. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe la velocidad de su servicio de Internet? Elija todo lo que corresponda:
- Muy lento, incluso cuando solo una persona lo está usando
 Muy lento, cuando varias personas lo están usando
 OK para la mayoría de las tareas, pero no para otras (por ejemplo: juegos, videoconferencias)
 Rapido, cuando una persona lo está usando
 Rapido, incluso cuando varias personas lo están usando
 Otro: _____

13. Opcional- comparta cualquier pensamiento adicional sobre su servicio de Internet actual, o si no tiene Internet, por favor comparta cómo eso afecta su vida:
- _____
- _____

14. ¿Dónde más usted (o las personas que viven con usted) acceden al servicio de Internet dentro de Millerton y North East? Elija todo lo que corresponda: _____ Biblioteca
- Escuela En tiendas, restaurantes u otros negocios mientras están dentro
 Trabajo Al aire libre, utilizando WiFi de un negocio, escuela o biblioteca cercana

¡Gracias! Por favor, devuelva este formulario a la Biblioteca de Millerton, NECC o mandelo por correo a:

Town of North East Broadband Committee
 19 North Maple Avenue, PO Box 516, Millerton NY 12546

SURVEY FLYER

**Town of North East Broadband Access
Committee wants to know**

**HOW'S YOUR
INTERNET?**

FAST, SLOW, NON-EXISTENT?

Tell us about it!

Take our community survey

Scan the QR code

to start, or visit

www.townofnortheastny.gov



Paper copies
available at Library

SURVEY ANSWERS

Responses to street address and zip code not included to preserve privacy

Municipality	
Millerton	53
North East	106
Is this address a home, business or both?	
Home	120
Business	10
Both home and business	27
Residencial	2
Do you subscribe to Internet service at this address?	
Yes	148
No	11
How does lack of Internet impact your household?	
Can't communicate.	
Access locally is too expensive for seniors and lower income households; only one provider with local monopoly. Closed marketplace. Unable to access online from home - especially during tax season and on weekends or inclement weather.	
I have to use my cell phone for everything. My hotspot is 1.5 hrs a day.	
terrible ! they kept (optimum) overcharging every month for the 4 months that I had service with the promise of "we will remedy the problem". I paid the extra money for 4 months then refused to pay again. after calling again (4 months in a row on the phone for 40 to 65 min) they said a supervisor will call in 24 hours to fix the overcharge problem. that was 58 days ago !!!!!	
The lack of wifi reduces the jobs I am able to have during the pandemic, and limits my options for providers to either hotspot data plans or satellite (which are both more expensive and slower).	
Virtual school work almost impossible. WCSD gave us a hot spot but it is very unreliable.	
We recently bought our house in Millerton as a second home (we live in NYC) - can't work remotely or have our children attend school via Zoom from our house yet.	
Yes sometimes. until it is less expensive, we will continue to tag our phones to our computers and TV to go online.	
Why don't you subscribe to Internet at this address? Select all that apply.	

No interest	1
Can't find an Internet provider for this address	4
None available	1
Too expensive	8
Available options are too slow	4
Don't own a computer, tablet or any other Internet device at this address	1
Have satellite (HughesNet) and AT&T wireless.	1
Cables don't reach the house	1
What type of Internet service do you have?	
Cable	104
DSL	14
Fiber Optics	5
I don't Know	8
Mobile Hot Spot with Cellular Plan	2
Satellite	1
Smartphone, tablet or laptop with cellular/wireless data plan	10
Who provides your Internet service?	
Consolidated Communications	1
Fairpoint or Consolidated	17
I don't know	1
Optimum or Altice	126
Spectrum, Time Warner or Charter Communications	1
Verizon	1
Verizon Wireless	1
What do you pay for Internet service each month (if bundled try to answer with just the Internet portion of your bill)	
\$0.00 -\$24.00	1
\$25.00 - \$49.00	6
\$50.00 - \$74.00	27
\$75.00 - \$99.00	45
\$100.00 - \$124.00	29
\$125.00 - \$149.00	8
\$150.00 or more	15
\$240.00	1
Over \$300.00	1
I don't know	12
Is your Internet service bundled with TV and/or phone service?	
I don't know	1

Internet & Phone	35
Internet & TV	16
Internet only	42
Internet, TV & Phone	52
Which of the following describe the cost of your Internet service? Select all that apply.	
Affordable	6
Affordable, Good value for its cost	2
Affordable, OK value for its cost	3
Bad value for its cost	16
Good value for its cost	6
OK value for its cost	21
Too Expensive	70
Too Expensive, Bad value for its cost	19
Too Expensive, OK value for its cost	1
Too Expensive, Wickedly expensive especially for weak thru-put	1
Very Expensive	2
Which of the following describe the speed of your Internet service? Select all that apply.	
Fast enough, even when multiple people are using it	36
Fast enough, when one person is using it	21
Inconsistent speed, sometimes drops entirely	1
It is OK for our purposes but if more than one person is streaming or using zoom, it can get difficult.	1
OK for most tasks, but not others (eg gaming, video conferencing)	37
Slow	1
Speed is highly variable, particularly with poor weather conditions.	1
Too slow, even when one person is using it	40
Too slow, when multiple people are using it	33
Unreliable even at 1 GB plan wifii goes down and does not reach all parts of house even with company owned hard wired extender.	1
Optional- share any additional thoughts about your current Internet service	
Altice/Optimum is a horrible service with poor range and bad customer service that has a monopoly in the town on high speed internet. The town should court and welcome FIOS, Spectrum and others which have much better service. I own a home in Brooklyn and have had each of these all of which have superior customer service and connectivity. Altice also forces you to listen to a lengthy sales pitch before you can even report your issue. I wonder why they have a monopoly here when they do not in the surrounding towns.	
Broadband was just OK until the surge in residents and telecommuting, no it's impossible to work consistently utilizing available service.	
Constantly dropping internet. Terrible service	
costs go up EVERY month!	

Could always be faster	
Customer service sucks, to be frank. Service sketchy.	
Download speed varies even for a single user from OK to glacial. Video streaming is OK, rarely a speed bump. Optimum was quick to repair an outage once, but its online customer service is lousy and its live customer service nonexistent. Right now, for instance, I can't log in to my account, all I get is a blank screen after the password is accepted.	
DSL provided by consolidated communications is just so poor, it is hardly good enough for any individual to work in the household let alone for all of us to work and do remote learning. It has been very difficult when we are at the house.	
Extremely poor quality, high prices, slow speeds, terrible customer service	
Frequent hiccups in service which is extremely problematic-- my zoom calls are frozen, lagged or dropped frequently.	
Generally I am reasonable regarding the cost of services and for me to feel strongly about the cost of this unreliable service says to me (& others who know me) how upset I get for paying for this service, should be an indicator of how I feel this company is taking advantage of the present situation because I don't have much of a choice.	
I am being extorted, frankly, by Optimum. They know that they are the only game in town, so to speak, and are perfectly happy to make people ensure terrible quality Internet for exorbitant monthly prices.	
I can barely stream a movie on Netflix some days	
i do not subscribe but piggy-back on a neighbor's, by invitation	
I don't need phone with bundle, but optimum says it if I turn it off, tv and internet will cost more than the current bundle. BS!	
I wish I had more of a choice of providers. Also, my cell phone has no service from my home.	
I wish there was more affordable just internet options	
internet service is intermittent and customer service is not very responsive . they do everything to not have to visit your home.	
It often cuts out.	
It sucks and is slow	
My internet is ALWAYS crashing. Even at 3 in the morning with just one device using it. I am also upset that I must purchase tv(that I don't use) to make my internet less than \$100 a month. I was told this by the customer service rep I spoke to when I called to cancel the tv portion.	
My sons had trouble doing online school because of the slow speed. One homework assignment took *a day and a half* to upload to his teacher (admittedly, it was a video). My oldest son could not come here to work from home because the internet is too slow. This has seriously impacted what we can do, economically, let alone doing things for fun like streaming a movie.	
Myself and neighbors have tried to get Optimum for years...we have no HIGH SPEED options on our road/neighborhood	
No CS don't understand my plan and the options available	
Optimum cable is great. Service and reliability	
Optimum has a monopoly	
Our service is incredibly unreliable with frequent outages. The fact that it cuts out so often is a much bigger problem than the speed (which admittedly is as fast as it gets for DSL and our house isn't wired for cable).	
outrageous costs for poor quality internet. Optimum has monopolized this area and gets away with terrible service.	
Please allow more companies to provide services to our address then just optimum	
Price keeps increasing, while speed diminishes.	

Reliability has improved over the past few years. Actually not bad service.	
Setting it up was a challenge with Optimum. But once that was done, it was good. Though already had to replace router. And we've only had Internet since September 2020	
Since Optimum is the only option, the customer doesn't have leverage to negotiate better pricing. Verizon is a much better company, both in technology and customer service. We need Verizon.	
Slows down even at higher speed plan	
Terrible customer service	
The cost is egregious considering the speed. As soon as we get Fiber Optics the better.	
The internet service will randomly cut off and the modem will reboot (this has not gotten better despite multiple visits from Optimum to investigate and replace hardware). This is extremely disruptive, especially when working and schooling from home.	
The provider is difficult to deal with	
the signal inexplicably goes unstable several days a week	
There always seem to be increases or different ways of charging me. I am constantly scrutinizing my bill and calling as soon as I see increases to try to reduce costs. The promotions and cheaper rates are there but I have to inquire a few times a year. Now, I have a yearly promotion which I have calendared. I am waiting to see when the first raise occurs this year.	
They're rip offs.	
Too expensive, not reliable, bad customer service	
Too expensive.	
Ver yexpensive, very antiquated. Slow. Awful service.	
Very expensive and not much of an offering. 25 mbps is most they can provide and monthly cost is outrageous. Customer Service and tech support also poor	
We are new homeowners. After 4 service visits, we still do not have wifi. The cable keeps getting ripped out due to trucks hitting the hanging line strung across the road. The cable needs to be buried. Optimum has been impossible to work with. We need an alternative!	
We pay for an upgraded Mbps but can never really get what is expected	
WiFi is always going in and out of service	
Wish we had more choices than only optimum	
Will you run a speed test (only available for online surveys)	
No, I want to skip this test	70
Yes, I will run this test	76
Download Speeds	
Speeds from 1 - 20	19
Speeds from 21 - 40	8
Speeds from 41 - 60	7
Speeds from 61 - 80	4
Speeds from 81 - 100	4
Speeds from 101 - 120	5
Speeds from 121 - 140	1
Speeds from 141 - 160	2
Speeds from 161 - 180	1

Speeds from 181 - 200	1
Speeds from 201 - 220	5
Speeds from 221 - 240	0
Speeds from 241 - 260	0
Speeds from 261 - 280	2
Speeds from 281 - 300	0
Speeds from 301 -320	2
Speeds from 321 - 340	2
Speeds from 413 - 499	4
Upload Speeds	
Speeds from 1 - 10	9
Speeds from 11 - 20	6
Speeds from 21 - 30	8
Speeds from 31 - 40	17
Speeds from 41 - 50	6
Ping Test	
Speeds from 1 - 10	3
Speeds from 11 - 20	10
Speeds from 21 - 30	7
Speeds from 31 - 40	3
Speeds from 41 - 50	1
Speeds from 51 - 60	2
Speeds from 100 - 197	3
Are you using Wifi, Wired or Cellular?	
Wifi	63
Wired	7
Cellular	1
Don't Know	4
Where else do you (or the people living with you) access the Internet within Millerton and NorthEast? Select all that apply.	
At stores, restaurants or other businesses while inside their location	74
Cellular	1
Hotspots	2
Library	29
No Where Else	1
Outdoors, using WiFi from a nearby business, school or library	48
School	16

Tagging our phones.	1
Tethered to Mobile Wireless	1
Vehicle Wifi	1
Work	38
Optional - Which Devices do you use at home / business? Select all that apply.	
Cell phone with data plan	36
Cell phone with wifi only - no data plan	18
Chromebook	11
Desktop Computer	30
Gaming Devices	2
Laptop Computer	38
Smart TV	24
Surveillance Cameras	1
Tablet	30
Wifi Hotspot	8
Optional - Do you have any questions or comments? If so, enter it here and include first name, email address or phone number where we can reach you. (Names, email or phone #s removed to preserve privacy)	
Do we have any options for wifi besides Optimum?	
Good survey Rich. [withheld] Thanks!	
I am glad to get involved as would my neighbor to help this process for FIBER BROADBAND service. [withheld] Thanks!	
I have a second home on [withheld].The internet service is dismal and will not improve until Consolidated is REQUIRED to run a fiber optic cable to these households. They certainly do not want to make the investment, as per several conversations with the c ompany Your survey would not accept my answer of the speedtest upload answer of 0.54. You may reach me at [withheld]. Thank you	
I have been working from home for over a year and my internet connection drops several times a day. I have called customer service on multiple occasions. They did replace cable ends and modem however i still have connection issues.[withheld]	
i think the optimum "Hotspots" especially in town of millerton are terrible, i usually have to turn it off and use my data	
I wish we had other options besides just optimum OR a less expensive internet option. [withheld]	
I'm mercifully not entirely aware of the details of our service from optimum. [withheld]	
If there is any way to get fiber pulled to these more remote areas of Coleman Station this would be a real blessing. DSL has been a real problem since the get go. [withheld]	
Install was expensive from pole to house (1300ft). However, not unreasonable for what it took.	
Internet should be more egalitarian.	
[withheld]. We unfortunately had to have techs come to where we rent 3 times in 21 days and our Internet is STILL horrible.	
Live up on Silver Mountain, would be great to have an an affordable option other than Optimum. [withheld]	
Monopolies don't work out for the consumer	

My daughter is disabled and we live in a very fixed income.[withheld]	
my download speed at less than 500 mb is far lower than the 1 GB i am paying excessive amount of money for. By comparison same service from Verizon is 75 dollars for me. Here it is 150 dollars. In addition the upload speed is abysmal. This company is fraudulent and should actually be replaced and not permitted to operate here. They scoff at customer service calls when you say you will cancel and say you have no other choices. Its shameful.	
Neighbors have Dish or WiFi, just a pretty bad internet situation out there, please help, hahaha	
Not having any other options for our cable internet services is not fair , the company is taking advantage of the people by over charging us .	
Optimum is a monopoly and that feels bad.	
Optimum needs competition and we need better service. Absolutely ridiculous	
[withheld]. We have been trying for years to get updated internet. It seems as though it might happen soon but we are reluctant to believe. Our neighbors at [withheld] have had Optimum/Altice service but the company has not been willing to extend the line the 1/2 mile to our house. However, it looks as though they are now in the process of preparing to lay the fiber cable to [withheld] and perhaps to us. Fingers crossed.	
see comments above, [withheld]...we need competition so this company will be more responsive and less expensive !!!	
The cable company keeps adding options to my Bill and difficult to remove	
The town needs alternate service to upgrade make competition cost wise.	
their hotspots stink, i usually shut it off	
We are new Millerton / North East residents. We're eager to discuss this.[withheld] is the best way to reach me.	
We have had to add boxes to boost WiFi in house	
When will we get a 5G boxes on utility poles?	
Without internet service, I have no cellular service at my home/farm.	
Would you be able to help persuade the Optimum cable company to run a wire to my address?	
You put together a very good survey form. Thanks for doing this for the community.	