



Annual Report

2020
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Central Vermont Internet (CVFiber) is a Communications Union District (CUD) representing the following twenty Central Vermont communities: Barre City, Barre Town, Berlin, Cabot, Calais, Duxbury, East Montpelier, Elmore, Marshfield, Middlesex, Montpelier, Moretown, Northfield, Orange, Plainfield, Roxbury, Washington, Williamstown, Woodbury, and Worcester. Three towns (Duxbury, Moretown, and Washington) were added to our CUD in 2020. Currently, many residences and businesses in Central Vermont have limited access to high-speed broadband, and in those areas served, the current internet service is slow or only offered in populous areas. This has been brought to light even more with the pandemic. As students and employees shifted to remote learning and working, it highlighted our areas limitations. The lack of truly high-speed broadband access stifles economic development, creates risk for public safety, reduces telehealth services, reduces property values, and restricts residents' abilities to access common online services.

Beginning in 2019 and culminating in 2020, CVFiber conducted a community survey regarding the current state of broadband, experiences with internet providers, and future interest in offerings. Through the survey CVFiber collected valuable information on a wide variety of topics to help guide its high-speed broadband feasibility and business planning.

The survey compiled nearly 2,000 responses with varied response rates based on location and current broadband offered. There were six communities with greater than a 15% return rate, which likely means these communities are desperate for improved broadband speeds. A more detailed breakdown of a number of the questions we asked across all communities can be found here: <http://bit.ly/CVFiberSurvey2020>

CVFiber received grant funding from USDA Rural Development and the State of Vermont to conduct a feasibility study and build a business plan to guide the next steps on improving internet connectivity in Central Vermont. The feasibility study affirmed a financially sound business case and demonstrated a need for high-speed broadband in the underserved and unserved areas of our communities.

CVFiber has joined nine other CUDs in Vermont in the Vermont Communications Union District Association (VCUDA). The volunteer group is an advocate for the mission of the CUDs. These efforts have advanced the legitimacy and financial support of CUDs

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Providing Central Vermont residents, businesses, and civic institutions with universal access to a reliable, secure, locally-owned and -governed communications network able to grow to meet future community needs.

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throughout Vermont. CVFiber has been working closely with the Vermont Department of Public Service and the Legislature to share our story and identify the financial means to begin serving our communities. We received some federal CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) funding allocated by the state. This has prepared us to really ramp up in 2021. Additional funding opportunities we're pursuing include a loan of up to \$4 million through the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) Broadband Loan Expansion Program. This money would be used for an initial pilot project identified in our feasibility study. Required matching funds would come through additional state grants. In anticipation of this funding, CVFiber has sent out queries to a number of internet service providers to gauge interest in running our pilot project once funded and built.

CVFiber's goal is ensuring everyone in its twenty-town area has access to internet speeds of at least 100 Mbps (megabits per second) for both uploading and downloading data. This far exceeds the federal standard for "high-speed broadband" of 25 Mbps for downloads and 3 Mbps for uploads.

In closing, we invite you to attend our Governing Board meeting on November 10th, where we will hold a public hearing to receive comments from you, the legislative bodies of district members, and hear all other interested persons regarding the proposed budget. You can connect to the meeting with your computer here:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/654169069> (Password CVF2020)

Or over the phone:

(571) 317-3112 (access code 654-169-069)

Respectfully submitted,

The CVFiber Governing Board

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Each community of CVFiber appoints a primary and an alternate delegate to the board. Here are the current delegates. To learn more about CVFiber, contact your local delegate.

Community	Delegate	Alternate
Barre City	Greg Kelly	Jonathan Williams
Barre Town	Josh Jarvis	
Berlin	Jeremy Hansen	Jerry Diamantides
Cabot	Andrew Gilbert	Seth O'Brien
Calais	David Healy	Jared Thomas
Duxbury	Henry Amistadi	David Wendt
East Montpelier	Tom Fisher	
Elmore	Bob Burley	Hans de Boer
Marshfield	John Morris	Richard Baker
Middlesex	Phil Hyjek	Lauri Scharf
Montpelier	Ken Jones	Dan Jones
Moretown	Chuck Burt	Karen Horn
Northfield	Raymond Pelletier	John Quinn
Orange	Siobhan Perricone	
Plainfield	Michael Birnbaum	Jeremy Matt
Roxbury	Tim Sullivan	
Washington	Katharina Mack	
Williamstown	Frank Moore	Francis Covey/Rama Schneider
Woodbury	Trevor Thorpe	Thomas (Skip) Lindsay
Worcester	Allen Gilbert	John Russell

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