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Honorable Members of the Broadband Opportunity Council:

Perhaps the most effective way for the federal government to collaborate with local (County/City) government is for Federal Highway Administration to direct the State DOTs to share the Federal Highway Administration funded fiber optic networks with the local governments. Also it would be very useful for County governments to be allowed to access federal and State rights of way to lay fiber or attach cable.

- Trench Collocation:
  - Any time a federally-funded project requires excavation or other disturbances of federal rights-of-way, the department or agency should give state and local governments, educational facilities, and libraries adequate notice and an opportunity to place their own facilities in the rights-of-way without charge
  - Any time states, local governments, educational facilities, or libraries place their own facilities in federal rights-of-way, they should have the right to use such facilities for any lawful purpose.
- Open Access:
  - Any time a federal department or agency deploys fiber-optic cables and facilities, it should set aside a sizable portion of it for open-access purpose.

AS an example, Martin County which already has a 153 mile buried cable system, could establish a sustainable fiber backbone with Federal Highway Administration grant funds building out networks connecting the County and municipal governments with anchors: hospitals; schools, colleges and universities, and medical research organizations. Such a network would provide hardened emergency management communications and sufficient capacity to address the high volume needs of medical and business applications.

The next step would be to allow various retail providers to ride the network and directly connect with businesses and individuals. The County would receive a portion of the monthly bill. In addition to participating in the monthly retail bill, the County would be charging the anchor tenants for service. Fiber would become another utility that could be supplied by the local government.

- Revenue Generation: to Remove barriers (legislation and policies) that prevent local governments from competing with the private sector in the provision of “telecommunication Services” (i.e. “lit” services). .

If Counties were allowed to recognize broadband as if it were infrastructure and develop accordingly, then American broadband would soon become competitive with the world. The

public/private partnerships would allow fiber to be laid as needed rather than only when it met return on investment criteria.

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