

# S U C C E S S S T O R I E S

Community & Economic Development Program

[http://www.lanecounty.org/CAO\\_EconDev/](http://www.lanecounty.org/CAO_EconDev/)



[www.highspeedfx.net](http://www.highspeedfx.net)

## What is Broadband?

*Faster than dial-up, broadband is any internet connection that transfers data at speeds between 256 KB/second and 3 MB/second.*

*Cable, DSL, Ethernet and Wi-Fi are all high-speed broadband internet connections.*

## Lane County Prioritizes County-wide Broadband Access

By Michael J. Weston

The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has ordered the preparation of a Strategic Telecommunications Plan. After reviewing recommendations from the Community & Economic Development Program, the BCC has identified multiple benefits in providing broadband access to its underdeveloped areas. Lane County is collaborating with local governments through the Fiber South and Lane/Klamath Regional Consortia to narrow the digital divide between communities with high-speed internet access and those without.

“Lane County has an opportunity to offer its rural communities with the same opportunities as its urban areas,” says East Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart.

In December 2005 Lane County’s EDSC approved the high-tech business cluster as an economic development priority. The EDSC is investigating available options for new technologies by conducting its own research as well as consulting with experts in the field from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisers (NATOA), the University of Oregon, City of Eugene Telecommunications Program and private internet service providers.

Broadband internet services are enhancing economic activity, promoting job creation, connecting communities, improving emergency medical services, offering distance learning programs.

Attracting businesses to rural areas can offer job opportunities to residents who don’t have the same access to employment as their urban counterparts. Accessible high-speed internet can round out vacation economies along the coast, provide tourists with a service they’ve come to expect and even attract satellite offices from existing businesses seeking to relocate to lower-cost regions.

Current market pressures have lowered the costs of Wireless Fidelity (WiFi - 802.11g) equipment to more affordable levels. WiMax (IEEE 802.16 standard) technologies expand the coverage areas and allow for better reception and increased capabilities. The developing technology shows unlimited potential as it evolves and Lane County sees this as the opportunity to pursue the benefits of high-speed county-wide connectivity.

### Contact Lane County Economic & Community Development

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