

Public Benefits of Broadband Improvements to Westmoreland, NH

Feb 1, 2020

Housing Value:

From data available at the City-Data website (link below), in 2016, the Mean prices of all housing units in Westmoreland was \$265,143.

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Westmoreland-New-Hampshire.html>

Documentation on the effects of Broadband coverage on Home prices is available from an on-going nationwide study at the University of Colorado at Boulder published in *Applied Economics* which is a professional journal in the area of Economics.

“High-speed Internet Access and Housing Values”

[*Gabor Molnar, Scott J. Savage & Douglas C. Sicker*](#)

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Using the \$265,143 average assessment and the effect on prices for various available broadband speeds, one can calculate the effect on total property values in Town as shown (see chart below).

Therefore, if the Town invested \$1.219M to improving Broadband to 1Gbps in Westmoreland, then the benefit to the Town would be an increase in Total assessment value of approximately \$4.5M. Hence there is a net benefit to the Town, even if one ignores other Economic Development, Safety, Quality of Life, Scholastic and various other factors.

Broadband Speed Available	Number of Locations	% Effect on Price	Total Property Value Change
0 to 20 Mbps	361	3.3%	\$3,158,649
25 to 45 Mbps	321	1.4%	\$1,191,553
50 to 100 Mbps	84	0.7%	\$155,904
100 Mbps and Higher	0	0.0%	\$0.00
Total	766		\$4,506,106

Note: A best effort has been made to use realistic and representative numbers for this estimate. The fact that the benefit to the Town is a factor of 3.7 times the Town investment indicates that even if there are some small errors in the numbers used in the calculation, that there is plenty of margin in making this conclusion.

Additional Public Benefits:

- Economic Development: Town residents will have a stable, high speed network allowing them to telecommute, create and manage small businesses, as well as allow the Town to entice companies to locate along the Rt 12 business corridor (thereby expanding the tax base of the Town).
- Public Access: Town residents who do not opt for service will be able to access the Internet at the library.
- Quality of Life: A reliable, high speed broadband network will allow residents to stream a variety of movies, television programs, Internet-based educational videos plus share photos, etc. with distant family without buffering or interruption.
- Safety: The Westmoreland Fire Department will have a faster, more reliable communication link in the event of an emergency, as will the Town Hall and Highway Department.
- Scholastic: Students will be better able to complete school-based assignments if they have a reliable, faster network available at home. Note: The Westmoreland PTA agrees with this statement and is in favor of this approving this Warrant Article.
- Town Desirability: Today's homebuyers insist on having high speed Internet access. Selling your home will be easier if a high speed fiber optic network is available in the town, whether you subscribe to it or not. This has been proven by Westmoreland residents' comments during public meetings, referencing their personal experience when dealing with potential home buyers, as well as residents who have recently moved into the Town.