

Everyone wants to know what to do about the many issues facing our city.

What strategy will support our 21st century workers, attract hi-tech business, foster innovation, reduce our carbon budget, and provide new revenues for our city's continued growth and prosperity? Whatever path our city follows must consider climate, income inequality, access to economic opportunities and fiscal challenges to our city's government.

A solution to the above lies in community networking, and investing in the driving technology of our age: the Internet. Community networking is a citizen-based approach to managing and deploying Internet access, and fiber optic is the premium carrier for Internet, hands down.

What is community fiber?

You might have heard it called municipal fiber, or community broadband. We propose a public/private partnership to create world-class Internet infrastructure for a world-class city. Cities around the country are deploying fiber-optic cable to provide access to 21st century technology for their citizens. Davis has the ability to harness this new and successful model of delivering Internet, phone or video to our homes and businesses, and now is the perfect time to make this happen.

There are several ways to bring fiber Internet access to a city. Some cities wholly own and run the network at a retail level, while some have a private equity company that has provided investment for an expected long-term payback. Others work with an electric utility service. Our approach draws on the best elements of past and current fiber-optic deployment strategies.

The Davis community should finance the creation of the network, and retains ownership. A local nonprofit (or cooperative) representing community stakeholders would oversee the installation and operation of the network. Private Internet companies would lease access to the fiber-optic cables from the Community to provide roaring-speed Internet, video, and phone services using the community-owned fibers to the homes and businesses of Davis. Municipal ownership of the physical network elements and leasing access encourages competition, and disrupts the vertical integration in the marketplace Big Telco/Cable use to extract exorbitant prices, and control the vital technology of the 21st century..

DavisGIG is a group of citizens working to make this happen, and needs your support; see [www.davisgig.org](http://www.davisgig.org). In this effort, DavisGIG is joined by Davis Community Network, (DCN), a venerable 501c3 non-profit that first brought dial-up Internet access to Davis over 20 years ago.

Both groups are prepared to provide the human and volunteer framework necessary to oversee the installation and operation of this fiber optic network. All we need is your excitement, encouragement, and support to make this happen in our community.

Please join us at a community outreach meeting, where you can learn more about fiber-optic and community networks and ask any questions about the project: Mary L Stephens Library Blanchard Room - July 14th 2015 6:30pm. We are also available at the Saturday Farmer's Market throughout June should you wish to contact us there. See [davisgig.org](http://davisgig.org) for more information and sign-up for notices of upcoming events.

Robert Nickerson is an Internet pioneer in Davis, has owned Internet-access company Omsoft in Davis since 1996. He is the current President of DCN, and a DavisGIG volunteer