



F R O M	NAME & TITLE	Michelle Pourciau, Director 	CITY of BALTIMORE M E M O	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation (DOT) 417 E Fayette Street, Room 527		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 18-0075R		

TO: Mayor Catherine E. Pugh

DATE: April 24, 2018

TO: Respective City Council Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

FROM: Department of Transportation

POSITION: Support

RE: City Council Bill 18-0075R - Informational Hearing – Municipal Broadband Feasibility Study

INTRODUCTION – For the purpose of requesting that the Department of Finance, the Department of Transportation, and the Mayor’s Office of Information Technology appear before the City Council to discuss how they can collaborate to produce a formal feasibility study on developing a municipal owned broadband network in Baltimore capable of ensuring that all Baltimore families have adequate internet access options.

PURPOSE/PLANS – This resolution, as written, is to ensure multiagency collaboration that will lead to creative solutions for sustainable funding and expansion options when considering the advancement of a larger municipal-owned FTTP network. This hearing will encourage the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, the Department of Finance, and Baltimore City Information Technology to engage with one another to ultimately bring a robust, and reliable broadband network to the citizens and community of Baltimore.

BRIEF HISTORY – Within Baltimore, 20 to 40% of residents do not connect to the Internet at home through wired access. Even those who do connect often lack access to the next-generation speeds that will be needed to fully take advantage of the newest group of online tools – only about 10% of Baltimore homes have access to speeds approaching that 1 Gigabit/second standard.

Baltimore has long sought, and been denied, investment in fiber to the premises (FTTP) internet networks from the private sector. The current federal administration’s repeal of Obama-era regulations ensuring that internet providers provide access to all content and applications regardless of the source may further reduce the incentive for private internet providers to build out their networks since they will now be able to financially benefit from internet congestion. In this environment, it is time for Baltimore to consider joining the roughly 150 or more municipalities nationwide who have deployed municipal-owned FTTP networks to ensure that their citizens have the ability to take advantage of all of the opportunities that the internet offers.

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT POSITION – The Department of Transportation strongly supports multi-agency coordination, and is eager about improving City wide infrastructure on every level. We believe that bringing these agencies together will facilitate meaningful conversations, and look forward to participating in this collaborative effort.

The Department of Transportation **supports** City Council Bill 18-0075R.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Katelyn McCauley at Katelyn.McCauley@baltimorecity.gov, (443) 677-9391.

Sincerely,



Michelle Pourciau
Director