THE CLIC/AAPB / BROADBAND BREAKFAST SUPER SESSION:

Embracing Community Fiber
The Lafayette, Louisiana Story
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Lafayette, Louisiana

• Population approximately 120,000

• University of Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns

• Lafayette Utilities System (LUS)
  • 100+ years community-owned water, wastewater and electric Utilities
  • Established telecommunications Services in 2008
Fiber Vision

• LUS needed to address its antiquated communication system within its infrastructure including lift stations and substations

• Recognized the benefits and cost-efficiency of a fiber ring around the city of Lafayette

• Took note of other communities around the US, exploring and utilizing fiber to the home
Community Attitudes

- Held discussions with local chamber of commerce board as well as other community advisory groups to measure the temperature.
- Support from local business leaders in a variety of industries who recognized the benefits to their companies.
- Grassroots efforts by local citizens energized the swell for the initiative.
"Slick Sam"

A Fiber Film by Kevin Domingue and John Snyder
Key Strategic Assets

- Elected officials
- Well-respected and knowledgeable consultants & advisors:
  - Telecommunications
  - Legal
  - State regulatory officials
  - Marketing and public relations

LUS assembled a group of varied individuals to ensure that all facets of this initiative were properly addressed.
Obstacles

- Immediate pushback from major telecom providers
- Misinformation regarding:
  - Funding
  - Costs
  - Quality of services
- Multiple attempts by the telecom providers to use state legislation to shut down the initiative.
Lafayette’s Legacy

- Vote signified Lafayette’s strategic and progressive attitude towards improving its infrastructure
- Attracted companies to the Lafayette area
- Solidified relationships with large employers
- Improved educational opportunities