



DATE: Monday, June 18, 2012
TO: The Members of the Public Safety, Civil Rights, & Technology Committee
FROM: The Citizens' Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Board
RE: Council Bill Number 117487

On June 12, 2012, the Citizens' Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Board (CTTAB) was given a chance to review a proposed ordinance (Council Bill 117487), which gives the City of Seattle's Department of IT the authority to lease city-managed fiber optic cable to private parties.

After an extended discussion of the proposed ordinance, it was the unanimous decision of CTTAB to pass the following motion:

“CTTAB recommends the City Council support the proposed ordinance [Council Bill Number: 117487] that would allow broadband leasing and/or rental of the City's excess fiber by private parties; and that the City prioritize providers who emphasis citizen access, citizen coverage, and increased citizen choice.”

The members of CTTAB believe this proposed ordinance is a good mechanism to increase broadband deployment to enable:

- Higher quality broadband access for a wider set of residents
- Broadband coverage to reach new areas of our city which are currently underserved because they do not fall within the neighborhoods the current broadband providers consider their “highest profit centers”
- A greater choice of services, with the hopes the proposed legislation would spur market competition and lower prices.

In addition to the above benefits, this proposed legislation is also a good step towards the ultimate goal of a city-wide fiber optic network. As CTTAB has made clear in the past (see “CTTAB Position Regarding Broadband for Seattle” available at seattle.gov/cttab), building a Fiber-To-The-Premises network that is up to modern standards is crucial to our city's future.

This ordinance would enable private providers to begin building out such a network by bringing down the daunting barriers to entry that fiber optic cable installation presents. The fiber already exists and is either being underutilized or simply lying dormant. By leveraging this currently unused infrastructure, we can move in the direction of our City's broadband goals.

We urge this committee and, ultimately, the full Seattle City Council to pass this proposed ordinance and move us a step closer towards a city-wide fiber-optic network.