



# TOWN OF CONCORD MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

ELECTRIC | WATER | SEWER | TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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## August 2024 – Broadband Updates

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Concord Broadband is pleased to share the following updates and information from the past month. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [broadband@concordma.gov](mailto:broadband@concordma.gov) should you have any questions, concerns, or feedback.

### Operations

We have been reviewing applicants for the Network Engineer position. We have had over 50 applicants since the position was posted. Interviews are expected to begin in the next two weeks and continue until we have a successful candidate.

A few weeks earlier, Jason Bulger was named the permanent Director of the Concord Municipal Light Plant. Town Manager Kerry Lafleur has decided that Jason will retain oversight of Concord Broadband, keeping this important subsidiary under the Light Plant umbrella. The next CIO will likely continue to provide strategic input and security review over operations.

### Capital Planning

Several staff at the Concord Municipal Light Plant met in early October to discuss the capital budget for Concord Broadband. We are at the tail end of the planning phase for our new equipment roll-out, so we are expecting our XGS-PON project to hit during calendar year 2025. We also anticipate having to replace one of our vans, which are used to pull fiber and perform repairs.

### The Benefits of Municipal Fiber-to-the-Home Internet

In today's digital age, high-speed internet is no longer a luxury but a necessity. From remote work and education to streaming entertainment and online gaming, a fast and reliable connection is essential for seamless participation in modern life. While various internet providers offer different solutions, municipal fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) is a compelling alternative due to its numerous advantages.

One of the key benefits of municipal fiber is the provisioning of symmetrical upload and download speeds. Unlike traditional cable or DSL internet, which often offer slower upload speeds, fiber provides consistent speeds in both directions. This is particularly advantageous for activities that require significant data uploading, such as online backups, video conferencing, and live streaming.

Another significant advantage of municipal fiber is reduced congestion. Fiber optic cables have a much higher capacity than traditional copper cables, allowing for more data to be transmitted simultaneously. This

### Upcoming Maintenance

We have identified some fibers that pulled out of a splice case at Conant and Laws Brook. We are working with a vendor to make plans to replace the whole case, which could result in a multi-shift operation to complete.

We will post more information about this and other maintenance windows here:

<https://concordma.gov/3144/Broadband-Maintenance>

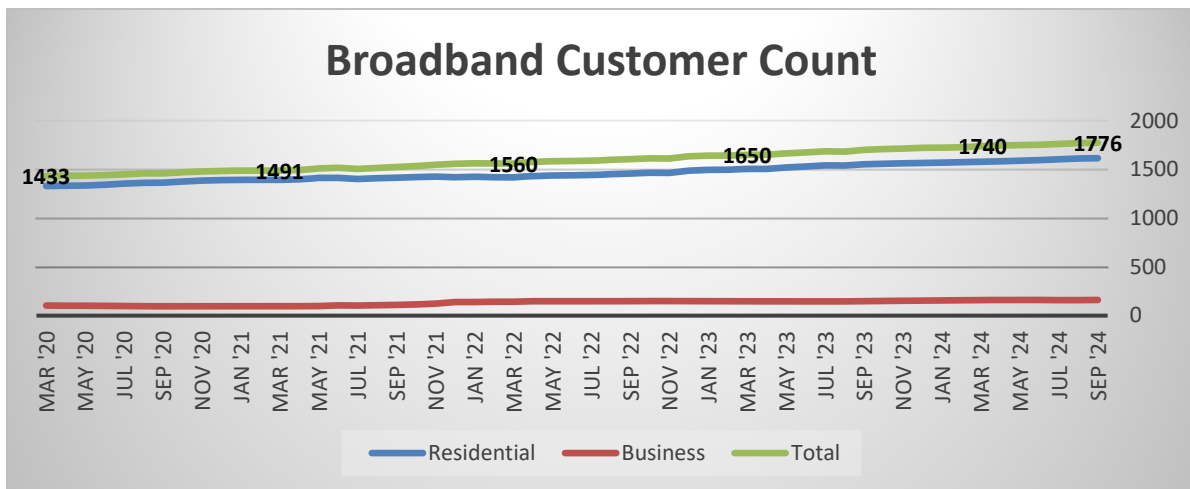
translates to faster speeds, even during peak usage times, ensuring a consistent and reliable internet experience.

In addition to technical benefits, municipal fiber often offers transparent pricing models. Unlike some commercial internet providers that may bundle services or include hidden fees, municipal fiber networks typically provide straightforward pricing plans with no surprises. This allows users to accurately budget for their internet expenses and avoid unexpected charges. Concord Broadband has not raised its rates... ever! But we have increased our speeds for no extra charge.

Municipal fiber networks are generally owned and operated by local governments, which means they are less likely to sell customer data. This commitment to privacy provides users with peace of mind knowing that their personal information is protected and not used for commercial purposes. Concord Broadband lays out our commitment to the community and our stance on privacy here: <https://concordma.gov/3011/Why-Concord-Broadband>

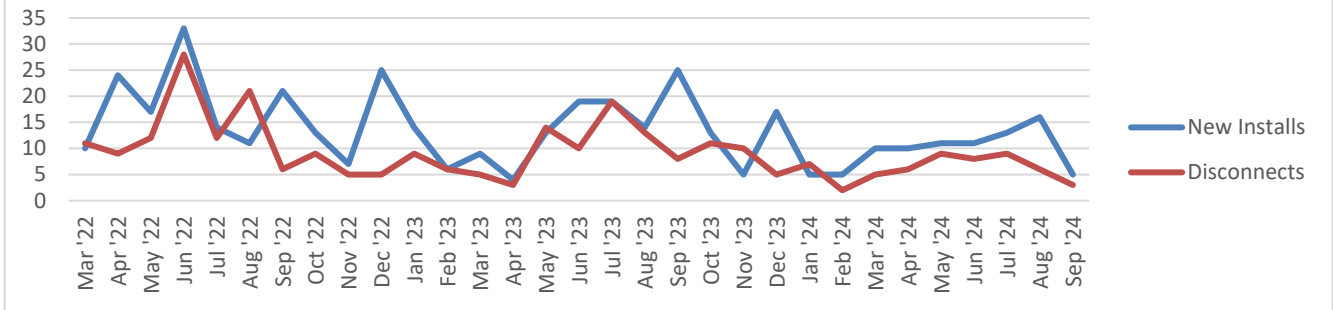
We think this value proposition is clear, and so do 1776 customers in Concord, Massachusetts! If you want to learn more about signing up for Concord Broadband, head over to <https://concordma.gov/broadband> to learn more.

## Monthly Metrics and Business Data



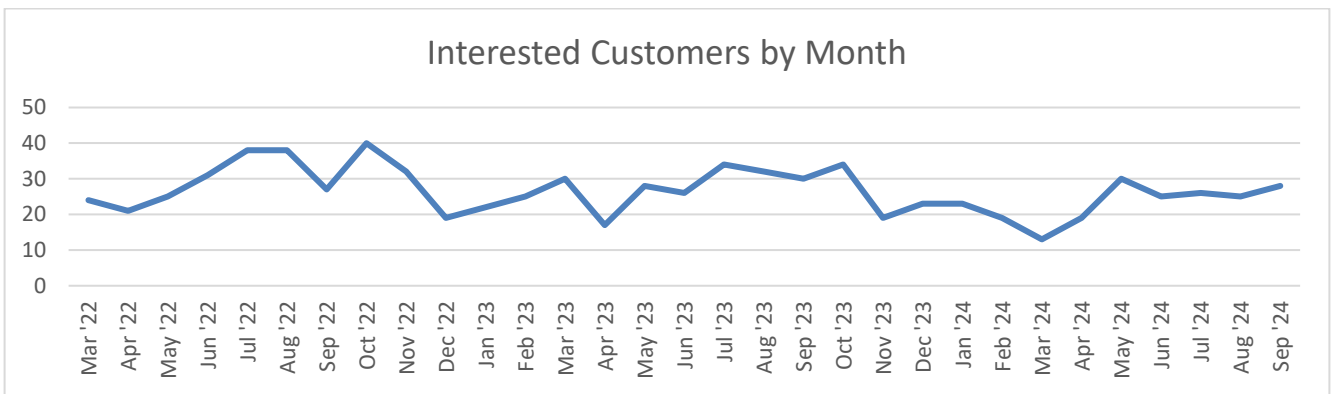
(Customer count: March 2020 – September 2024)

### Monthly New Customer Installs and Disconnects



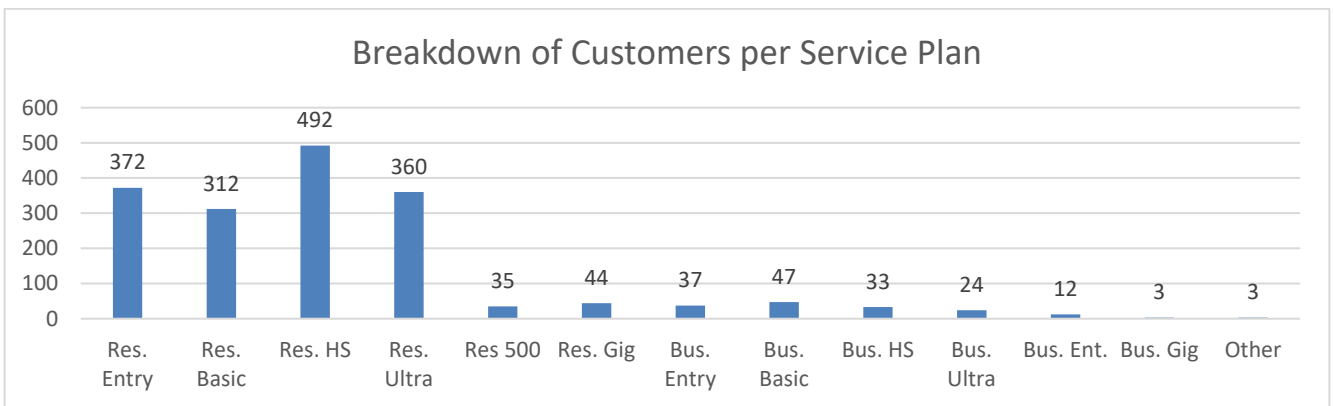
(The number of new installations and disconnects completed each month.)

### Interested Customers by Month



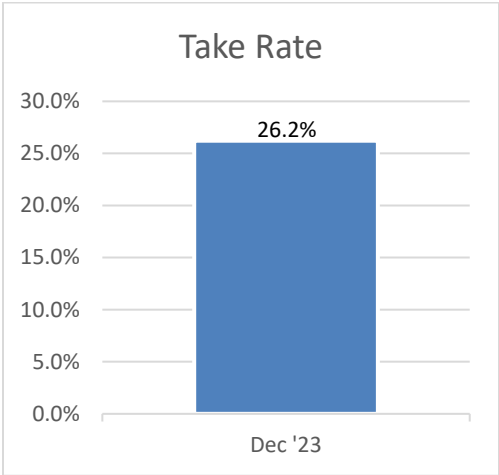
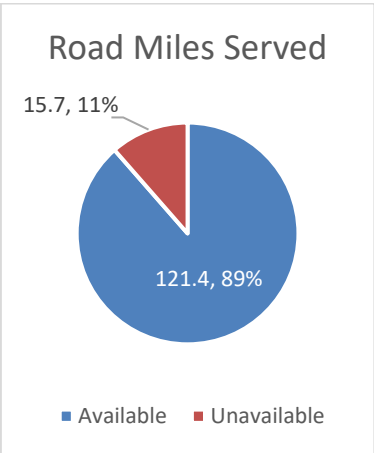
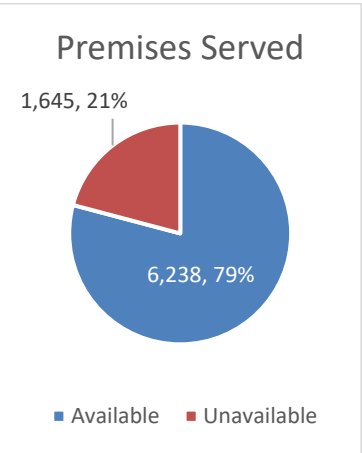
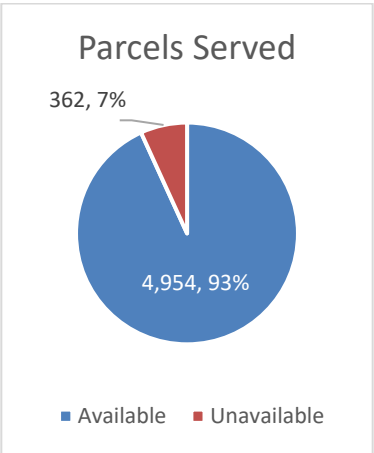
(This is the number of individuals who submit the Broadband interest form, whether they are in the current service area or not.)

### Breakdown of Customers per Service Plan



(This is the number of each customer on our different service plans as of 9/30/2024.)

Other Metrics



(As of 12/1/2023)

## Appendix

### Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force's Report Goals

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
<b>Policies (p.39)</b>				
• Universal Access	Policy	Highest	Select Board/Town Meeting	
• Expansion outside current territory	Policy	Low	Select Board/Town Meeting	Conversations happening
• Support Economic Vitality, Sustainability, Equity & Inclusion	Policy	High	Select Board/Light Board/TM Economic Development	Rate subsidy planned
• Affordable Housing	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Housing Groups	Rate subsidy planned; working on Concord Housing Authority properties
• Public Safety	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Town Manager	
• Education	Policy	Medium	Select Board/School Dept.	
• Government Access (PEG)	Policy	Medium	Select Board/PAAC	
<b>Recommended metrics for tracking (p.41)</b>				
• Parcels served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Premises served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Road miles served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Subscribers	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
• Take rate	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Churn	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; included in monthly report
• Installations	Metric	Highest	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
<b>Governance (p.39)</b>				
• Track progress against completion	Metric	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Rate of return policy	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Financial goals with regular reporting	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this
• Retained earnings and reserve policy	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
<b>Strategic Planning Goals (p.43)</b>				
• Marketing and growth	Metric	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Business return	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
<b>Budgeting Process for Fiber Expansion (p.41)</b>				
• Expand to fill existing opportunities	Planning	High	Light Board/Town Staff	
• External funding sources	Research	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• ARPA Relief Funds Allocation, incl. Lost Revenue	Finance	Highest	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
• Review/Confirm Internal Loan Findings	Finance	Highest	Financial Audit Comm/Staff	Complete
• Review and Rescind PILOF to MMN	Finance	High	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
<b>Capital Planning Process (p.42)</b>				
• Review/Revise Debt financing schedule	Policy	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	In progress; due to positive financial situation, anticipating being able to repay faster.
• Quantifying cost of expansion	Planning	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• How to fund expansion	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/refine methods for computing ROI	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
<b>Construction and Logistics (p.42)</b>				
• Vibratory plow – direct buried fiber cables	Operations	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/Refine Communication conduit construction standards and guidance	Policy	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Integrate Fiber construction with the Roads Program – focus on Streets without fiber that already have underground electric	Planning	High	Town Staff	Working on this