



Westport Municipal Advisory Council

P. O. Box 307, Westport, CA 95488
www.westportmac.org

April 27, 2011

To Whom it may concern,

I am sending this letter representing the Westport Municipal Advisory Council (WMAC). The WMAC is a county government liaison for the community in and immediately surrounding the Village of Westport. The WMAC has held public meetings on the topic of broadband access. As defined by the FCC, Westport is an un-served community. The overwhelming response of the community is that access to high-speed symmetric broadband is desirable. The preferred household distribution method is via copper wire. The proposed Mega*Link project will bring DSL service that is significantly better in performance and lower in cost than the only other alternatives available, satellite or cell phone based wireless technology.

The Westport area is remote, approximately 45 minutes by car from the nearest town and 90 minutes from county government offices. When questioned the local telco, AT&T, and the nearest cable provider, Comcast, indicated they had no plans or interest in bringing broadband internet service, or even cable TV in the case of Comcast, to the Westport area.

Westport is struggling economically. The only local private businesses that have employees are in the tourist business. They need to offer internet access to customers and use it to run their business. The current level of access hampers their level of business and impedes growth in the lodging / dining segment. Several people have home-based businesses, using the internet to communicate with customers and clients and to deliver products, which are usually long documents or large graphic files. Satellite, the best current connection, has been cited as inadequate. Anecdotal evidence from local realtors has suggested that lack of broadband internet service impedes the influx of new families into the community, keeping property values down.

Recent reductions in county government budgets including schools are shifting more of the interface and interaction between citizens and government to web based applications. All new applications and computer software is designed assuming high-speed internet access.

WMAC supports the efforts of Willits Online to bring Mega*Link to our community. We look forward to the community benefits of the new service and urge you to approve this necessary project.

Sincerely yours,

Bill Knapp, Director Westport Municipal Advisory Council