From: Patrick Conant <patrick@prcapps.com>
Sent: 1/21/2015 3:36:54 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc:
Subject: Advocating for universal, low-cost fiber internet in Asheville

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Asheville City Council,

My name is Patrick Conant - I am Co-Captain of Code for Asheville and I operate a local web and mobile software development business named PRC Applications.

I studied Computer Science at UNCA - my experience in a technical program at a liberal arts college has furthered my belief that Asheville is an ideal environment to develop an “innovation economy” - one that combines technical talents and a creative, entrepreneurial spirit.

While I am extremely encouraged by the recent growth of our startup business community, innovation in local government, and my own experience starting a small business, we still have work to do to establish a sustainable, opportunity-rich local tech industry.

I do see one initiative that would have a dramatic and immediate impact on the development on a tech community in Asheville - universal, low-cost fiber internet. The options for high-speed internet, even in Downtown Asheville, are limited - and none match the value offered in cities such as Chattanooga, TN that have implemented municipal-broadband initiatives.

I’d like to encourage the city to explore options available for implementing this type of infrastructure, whether it’s provided as a municipal service, a public-private partnership, or a different model entirely.

Asheville has a lot to offer tech talent, companies, and investors - a superior quality of life, a supportive and accessible business environment, and a community of individuals full of innovation and energy. By offering affordable, high-speed internet, Asheville would solidify our creditability as a city focused on developing a 21st century economy, one where we export Asheville’s creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.

If the quality of our water brought New Belgium and Sierra Nevada to the area, universal access to affordable fiber internet could do the same thing for our tech community.

Sincerely,
Patrick Conant