



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING | INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY | LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PRESS RELEASE

Release Date: June 13, 2022

Contact: LeeAnn Tinney, Director
Tioga County Economic Development & Planning

Address: 56 Main Street
Owego, NY 13827

Phone: 607-687-8254

E-Mail: TinneyL@tiogacountyny.gov

For Immediate Release

Town of Nichols to be Part of ConnectALL Program Pilot Initiative

The Town of Nichols has been named one of four communities to take part in New York State's ConnectALL program, an initiative aimed at bringing affordable broadband internet access to rural communities across the state. The ConnectALL program will work to transform New York's digital infrastructure and expand broadband access, affordability, and equity statewide. The program is investing \$10 million to target areas where existing state-owned fiber can create a fiber bridge between large data centers (first mile) and individual homes (last mile), primarily in rural areas that are not serviced by private broadband providers.

In the Town of Nichols, the capital funding provided by ConnectALL, along with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds provided by the Tioga County Legislature, and ARPA funds from the Town of Nichols, will allow Southern Tier Network (STN) to build a 35-mile open access, fiber-to-the-premise network to reach unserved and underserved households. STN will collaborate with Tioga County, the Town of Nichols and New York Power Authority (NYPA) to complete the project.

The infrastructure will leverage STN's existing middle-mile, dark fiber, open access network running through the Town of Nichols. STN will own, operate, and maintain

the telecom infrastructure, and will contract with internet service providers who will provide high-speed broadband internet service to each connected residence.

Southern Tier Network President and CEO Steve Manning said, “NYS ConnectALL and the New York Power Authority (NYPA) have created a vision for creating effective, municipal focused, long-term fiber to the home solutions that will address the broadband needs of the State’s unserved and underserved households for years to come. This coordinated plan strategically aligns non-profit, municipally focused fiber optic telecommunication organizations like Southern Tier Network, Development Authority of the North Country, and Sherburne Electric Coop with NYPA and the New York State ConnectALL office to creatively leverage their collective assets and resources for ultra-high-speed broad band infrastructures to serve these residents who have desperately needed a quality, reliable, and affordable internet service for years.”

LeeAnn Tinney, Director of Tioga County Economic Development & Planning said, “NYS ConnectALL funds will give us the leverage we need to bring high-speed internet to the residents of the Town of Nichols. Access to high-speed broadband is necessary for economic development and we are excited to work with Southern Tier Network, the Town of Nichols and New York Power Authority to make high-speed broadband availability in Nichols a reality.”

Esther Woods, Town of Nichols Councilperson said, “The Town of Nichols is very pleased with receiving the grant to install high speed internet for the Town. It has been very difficult since the pandemic started with people working from home, children doing online classes, and not being able to have access to high-speed internet. I would like to thank LeeAnn Tinney with Tioga County Economic Development & Planning and her team for their help with the grant process, the Tioga County Legislature for providing us with the additional funds necessary to complete the project, and Governor Kathy Hochul for considering our little town and putting us into the 21st century.”

Work for the project is expected to begin in the summer of 2022.

For more information about ConnectAll, visit: <https://broadband.ny.gov/>

#