

Q4: What are your thoughts on TC Light & Power proposal to create a fiber internet network for their customers?

CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE

Tim Werner: I am proud to be a strong voice on the TC Light & Power Board in support of fiber to the premises. Fiber can be treated as a utility, and Traverse City has a chance to set itself apart by providing this valuable infrastructure for growing businesses and entrepreneurs.

Gary Howe: I'm in full support of lighting up municipal fiber to the premises occupied by the subscriber. We have paid enough in opportunity cost over the last 10-15 years while the discussion has started and stopped, over and over again. Fiber to the premises will give residents faster, more reliable, and more affordable internet access, and it will spur new business opportunities and investment in underperforming commercial corridors like State Street and 8th Street. Meanwhile, it creates another revenue stream for our municipal utility to help pay off the infrastructure investment already made. Win-Win-Win! Let's get it done.

Michele Howard: I am in support of this idea. For various reasons, our private communications companies do not see Traverse City as a place to make the investment of fiber. TCLP is poised to make that investment, pending board approval. At a City Commission meeting, it was explained that the fiber network backbone already exists and is in use by the City, County and a few others. If TCLP expanded this to our business community, it would be a very attractive feature for new businesses. Citizens will benefit from fiber too. TCLP has a proven track record for reliable energy and low rates, I think they could do the same with fiber. I also think it's a given that no one ever wished for slower internet. Fiber can take us into the future.

Brian McGillivray: It's critical to the future economic development of our city. TCL&P already has the backbone and my extending it to all city businesses and residences it gives Traverse City a leg up in the knowledge based economy over cities of similar size and larger. Once the city is covered, I would encourage the utility to look to expand its service in surrounding business centers outside of the city limits.

Jeff Leonhardt: I favor the TC Light & Power proposal to create a fiber internet network for customers. However, it needs to be nondiscriminatory and affordable.