

Q. Will this increase my taxes?

A. No, if we decide to go with NHEC there is no bond required. If we decide to go with Consolidated, it will require a bond however the bond is paid back from a "surcharge" that is applied to each subscriber's bill. If you don't want the service, you will never see this charge.

Q. Will this increase my property value and how does that affect my taxes?

A. It is possible that the availability of modern standards for internet could increase our property values by 1% (* Data according to a 2019 study from the [National Association of Realtors](#)). And because the service cost is absorbed by the subscriber resulting in no increase to the towns budget this should result in a lower tax rate, essentially keeping our property taxes the same (barring any other changes that the town may make)

Q. Can we use 5G (or other wireless) network?

A. Some folks have asked should we consider 5G wireless instead of or in addition to a wired broadband service. 5G is incredibly fast. As fast if not faster than a fixed/wired solution. However, it's speed (increased capacity) comes with a cost. The range of the signal is greatly reduced and is affected by obstacles, like buildings, trees, hills, etc. So, it requires a much more extensive tower system with limited or no obstructions, making this technology an unlikely candidate to solve rural broadband demand. Even in urban areas they are looking at a 10 year rollout. <https://www.bbcmag.com/rural-broadband/5g-is-not-the-answer-for-rural-broadband>

Q. How soon could we expect this service?

A. A solution that requires a bond takes months to process and there are time requirements that must happen before a town meeting. Requests for information (RFI) to vendors require a 60 day wait period. Requests for proposals (RFP) are then sent to all vendors. RFPs require a 30 day wait period. Once RFP's have been received and a recommendation determined, two public meetings must be held and finally a warrant article is required to be voted on at a town meeting. This process takes 6-10 months typically. For Acworth that means we are looking at Q2 of 2022 before a solution would begin rolling out.

The NHEC solution does not require a bond, and NHEC completed a limited rollout in the 4th quarter of 2020 which included some folks in Lempster. NHEC is to start work this spring in Acworth and rollout to some home will occur this year with the balance completing in first 2 quarters of 2022. We do not have a detailed schedule from them yet. I just pinged them on again this week, but because 95% of Acworth was covered by the grant they won and because they already started with 200 homes in Lempster, they have prioritized Lempster and Acworth to be the first of the 20+ communities that they are to provide broadband too. That is all I have so far. Like I stated I am trying to nail them down on a more definitive schedule. at this time.

Q. I have Liberty for electric and not NHEC. If we go with a NHEC solution how will I receive this service?

A. NHEC was awarded federal funds to roll out this service to most of Acworth regardless if they serve you with electricity or not. We have to submit an RFP to NHEC to receive the details of their plan with an associated schedule. [Award announcement](#); [Award coverage map](#)

Q. Would Acworth be able to leverage Starlink as a broadband service? How does this impact our town's actions?

A. Starlink is a new state of the art satellite service being constructed by SpaceX and Elon Musk. It's expected to deliver 1gb bandwidth at \$99 per month with a \$499 installation package. Starlink began their public beta rollout in late 2020 in northern US and southern Canada. This satellite service as well as the existing others (HughesNet, ViaSat and VSAT) will always be an option for individual households. At this point our Acworth Broadband Committee is considering options and we will be including the fact that this service will be available soon. This could influence our decision with regards to any options that require the town borrow funds (bond) over a 20-year period.

Q. What will be the Cost

A. This is an EXTREMELY competitive topic and standards are changing (for the better) every month. Consolidated is providing service to Unity with 50mb/50mb (download/upload) speeds as a baseline for \$47.99. NHEC has stated prices of 100/100 service for \$49.95 and 1 Gigabit/1 Gigabit service for \$89.95.

Q. Who in Acworth will be able to obtain NHEC's broadband service

A. All of Acworth. There were two topics that had to be addressed here. One was the fact that the grant NHEC won covers 95% of Acworth not all of it. The other topic is that NHEC provides electric for ~70% of Acworth. What about the others? They answer I've gotten from NHEC is that they are going to cover 100% The 5% was a no-brainer given that they will be everywhere else. NHEC is already working on agreements with the other electrical companies for use of their telephone poles.

Q. Who will provide me with my landline phone service?

A. You will continue with your current landline phone provider. NHEC is contemplating delivering telephone service but at this point they are focused on the broadband service. This is a change from their initial position.

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