



Bridging The Digital Divide in Maupin, OR

In early 2019, LS Networks completed a \$2 million project connecting Maupin, Oregon to LSN's best-in-the-west fiber optic network. The project brings blinding ONE GIG speeds to Maupin's 430 residents at prices unheard of nationally. "The new network in Maupin is proof that no town is too small or too remote to connect to cutting edge broadband," said Governor Kate Brown. "It will allow businesses in Maupin to grow and add new jobs while helping the school, health care providers, and local government to provide quality services."

With the completion of the network, the rural community of Maupin is now among the state's most competitive when it comes to internet access. With speeds of 1 gigabit per second (gbps) per customer, the service is the fastest broadband service available in the Pacific Northwest. It's an infrastructure change that vastly improves the city's economic and educational opportunities.

The project, which took more than three years and financing from seven partners, including more than \$935,000 from the State of Oregon, is a boon to the Central Oregon town of 430, better known for its access to whitewater rafting and fly-fishing along the Lower Deschutes River than its high-speed internet.

"Maupin remained steadfast in its pursuit of attaining higher-quality internet for its residents. As a locally owned carrier, we want to see cities like Maupin be able to compete and grow. We're in conversations with numerous cities around the Pacific Northwest who are eager to leverage innovative funding strategies and technologies to make their communities more competitive — in areas like education, healthcare, emergency responsiveness and even tourism."

Byron Cantrall
President & CEO
LS Networks

The LS Networks fiber optic infrastructure covers most of the Pacific Northwest and sends information via small, flexible strands of glass that transmit light, which allows data to be sent faster than traditional cable. LSN is now connecting towns like Maupin to its best-in-the-west network. The technology is also less susceptible to conditions such as power outages and interference from power lines, and can withstand temperature fluctuations better than traditional cable.

“This is a total game-changer for Maupin,” says Maupin Mayor Lynn Ewing. “Three years ago, when we started down this path, our entire community lacked access to strong, reliable internet. This put our schools and businesses at a serious disadvantage. Even second homeowners and tourists who come to Maupin to ‘get away from it all’ still wanted access to high-speed internet. We knew that if we didn’t address this problem, our town could literally disappear.”

In addition to its new broadband network, Maupin is beautifying its downtown, improving pedestrian walkways, and building a new 3,000-square-foot library as part of a new 6,000-square-foot Civic Center. With rising housing costs and an influx of people moving to Bend and Portland, Maupin is attracting more young professionals, business owners and families to settle there.



“I have a dynamic and demanding work schedule, and I absolutely rely on high-speed internet to do my job,” says Michael Jones, director of research at San Francisco-based Salesforce. “But when I’m not working, I want to spend time getting to know my neighbors and being on the river.” He and his wife are in the process of moving from Portland to Maupin, where he will work remotely most of the time. “I think the word will get out and more telecommuters and tech companies will follow.”

Headquartered in Portland, OR, LS Networks is committed to the community and is owned by a collective of rural electric cooperatives and a Native American business enterprise, including over 60,000 citizens and communities. We’re not about the money. We’re about the service to and for our customers.

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