

Municipal Broadband Fails to Connect Savannah.



Some Savannah officials want to build an expensive government-owned broadband system that will compete with private sector companies to provide Internet services. In April, the Savannah City Council approved a \$65,200 contract with a consulting group to explore whether Savannah should build a municipal broadband network.

<http://savannahnow.com/news/2016-06-14/savannah-city-council-oks-agreement-will-lead-250-million-parking-garage-hotel-and>

Requests made in the 2016-2017 Chatham County budget highlight that there are much more pressing financial needs in the area.

<http://savannahnow.com/news/2016-06-19/chatham-set-hold-final-public-hearing-spending-plan>



\$1.3 million

The amount requested by the jail and sheriff's office to fill 60 positions for public safety needs.



\$2.2 million

The amount requested by the county for additional road maintenance.

There are also funds requested for schools, parks and recreation, and safer playgrounds. Consider that Savannah has:



*One person equals 10%

94.7%

The percent of Savannah residents who have access to high-speed broadband.

<http://broadbandnow.com/Georgia#city-list>



*One tower equals three providers

26

The number high-speed broadband providers in Savannah.



The city of Marietta built a government-owned network that eventually led to a \$24 million loss. Provo, UT lost nearly \$40 million on their network, after it failed and was sold to Google for \$1, leaving taxpayers responsible for the debt. Peachtree City also recently rejected a plan like this one because it was too expensive.

Savannah is not underserved. City officials should use constituents' hard-earned tax dollars to address their true needs, like public safety and schools, not to build duplicative broadband networks.



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