

## **Bedford Verizon Cable Franchise FAQ's:**

1. What is FIOS and when will FIOS TV be available to me?

FIOS stands for fiber optic services over FTTP (fiber to the premises), an advanced fiber-optic technology that uses strands of glass fiber and laser-generated pulses of light to transmit voice, data and video signals. The town controls availability of service on a macro level, not an individual residential basis. Pursuant to both the agreement and Public Service Commission (PSC) regulations, Verizon must complete the town-wide construction of its system within 60 months from the date the PSC confirms the franchise (12 months for businesses). Verizon has represented that the system is already 70% complete and it attain completion in accordance with the schedule set forth in Schedule B. (77% deployment within 12 months, 84% at 24 months, 92% at 36 months, 95% at 48 months and 100% by the 60<sup>th</sup> month) The town will not be able to inform individual residents when the service will be available to them at a specific address, but Verizon representatives and its website will certainly be able to assist residents in this regard.

2. I have FIOS internet through Verizon. Can't Verizon just flip a switch to provide FIOS TV? If not, what's involved? How long will it take?

This is NOT a case of simply flipping a switch. Customers desirous of opting for FIOS TV will need to schedule an installation of the cable system in their residence. Verizon's website has a link for FIOS TV installations, [www22.verizon.com/Residential/FiOSTV/installation/installation.htm](http://www22.verizon.com/Residential/FiOSTV/installation/installation.htm) that addresses this process.

3. Will Verizon cable be available in all of Bedford?

While the Service Area within the agreement encompasses the entire boundaries of the Town, there are limited exceptions. Pursuant to Article 3 of the agreement, Verizon is not obligated to provide service 1) where the property owner does not grant permission for access to the site, 2) in cases of economic infeasibility where nonstandard facilities are required which are not commercially reasonable, and, 3) where the density requirement is not met. The density requirement is a minimum of twenty-five (25) residential dwelling units (not homes) per mile measured in strand footage. Verizon has represented that based upon its engineering analysis this should not result in any gaps.

4. What if my home is not located within an acceptable density or if my home is set back substantially from the road? Does that mean I cannot get service?

Not necessarily. You may be able to get service, but may incur an additional expense. Other than a standard installation charge, Verizon would be obligated to install its service at residential dwellings at Verizon's sole cost and expense. However, where a request for a residential connection occurs at a location that is more than one hundred fifty (150') feet from the trunk or feeder lines, or is in an area that does not meet the minimum density requirements, Verizon would be authorized to collect from the customer the actual additional costs incurred by Verizon for such installation.

5. How do I know if my house is in the where Verizon already has put in the FIOS lines?

This can be checked directly with Verizon. There is a link on Verizon's website to check availability by either your address or phone number, [www22.verizon.com/Residential/FiOSTV/Check\\_Availability/Check\\_Availability.htm](http://www22.verizon.com/Residential/FiOSTV/Check_Availability/Check_Availability.htm), which can be accessed once Verizon secures a franchise from the town.

6. Will the Verizon franchise agreement bring competition on rates and service?

The following link to the FCC's website explains generally how cable television rates are set: [www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cablerates.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cablerates.html) Marketplace competition, rather than unilateral decision making, is expected to yield both more competitive pricing and improved customer service by *all* franchisees. Generally speaking, with options for the consumer comes greater accountability by the providers.

7. What does the Town do with the franchise fees?

Franchise fees represent part of the compensation a community receives in exchange for a franchisee's use and occupation of public property - the public rights-of-way. There is no federal or state directive as to how such funds must be used, and therefore can be allocated to meet any community need the town deems appropriate, including the general fund to offset general operating costs. See Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 542(h)(2)(i), which provides that no federal agency can regulate how a community chooses to use its franchise fees.

8. What's the purpose of the public hearing?

Federal and State law and rules require that a legally noticed public hearing be held prior to a vote of the municipality's lawmaking body, the town board. Final approval takes the form of a resolution. In assessing the relative merits of the application, the town board welcomes the input of its residents during this public hearing. While review, negotiations and considerations have been ongoing, it is the public hearing process that affords the community the opportunity to ask questions, share ideas and offer their perspectives on an issue that could have a lasting impact on the town. Through this informational exchange and public vetting the town board is then asked to vote on the application.

9. If the Town approves the agreement, then what takes place?

If the application is approved by the town board, the document is signed by appropriate officials of the municipality and the franchisee, the franchisee is required to file an application for a certificate of confirmation with the Public Service Commission within 60 days of the resolution of approval by the town. Once confirmed Verizon would be able to conduct business as a franchisee within the town. Issues related to confirmation by the PSC, including publication requirements, deadlines, requisite documentation and other statutory mandates can be found at the following PSC link: [www.dps.state.ny.us/issuescertif.htm](http://www.dps.state.ny.us/issuescertif.htm)

10. What links or sites would be helpful in gathering further information?

[www.fcc.gov/csb](http://www.fcc.gov/csb)

Federal Communications Commission Cable Services Bureau

[www.dps.state.ny.us/](http://www.dps.state.ny.us/)

New York State Public Service Commission