

Throughout history, technology has proven to be an effective way to boost economic performance. Technology has also been a useful indicator for showing how developed a nation or a smaller community is. The peak of America's advancement in the nineteenth century was the Transcontinental Railroad. As a result of this, business was done in a fashion that was extraordinarily more efficient and cheaper. Communication via mail and telegraph became much quicker too. The best modern equivalent to the Transcontinental Railroad is access to high speed internet. Quality internet is the key to continuing the economic success of the United States. It is also the key for local municipalities to continue to develop and rise to become economic powerhouses within the country much like cities connected by the Transcontinental Railroad did. High speed internet is the next technological advancement that will continue economic growth and stimulate community development.

Chicago is a prime example of how taking advantage of new technology can cause economic success and community development. Chicago was officially settled in 1833 by about two hundred settlers. The 1890 census showed that the population was around one million. In between these years, Chicago became the nation's railroad center. Chicago was able to use the new technology to their advantage for economic success and their community grow as a result of it. However, Chicago is not the only place that benefitted from this technology. Every place that invested in railroad infrastructure was able to maximize economic performance and community development. Little towns were able to thrive economically because food, sources of energy like coal, and many other products were able to be quickly transported with ease to these towns. When people spend less money on other resources, they can buy other things and invest more in development. Without the investment in railroads the United States would be far behind in development and could not be an economic superpower.

If fast, reliable internet is the “next railroad,” then it is immensely important for every level of government to invest in it. The most important level of government in implementing these investments can be debated, but there is no question that the local governments (towns, villages, cities, etc.) are in the best position to make decisions reflecting their constituents. The need and importance of internet is nearly equivalent to that of a public utility, and it is ever increasing. Internet based business is the latest trend, and it is proving to be an effective way to connect companies to their customers. Localities without broadband internet will surely be passed up by these new companies costing new jobs. If local governments do not allocate enough resources to provide high quality internet, the option to relocate for existing businesses will continue to grow more appealing and necessary. Reliable internet access is imperative to success in the modern market, and not having it will cost municipalities jobs and further development by local industry.

There is more harm to a locality than just jobs. When companies pass up or decide to relocate, it hurts everything the local government does. Non-existent companies cannot pay taxes. People with non-existent wages cannot pay for taxes, homes, and other merchandise driving down their sales and profit. This can be extremely unhealthy for a local economy. All businesses indirectly support each other with the people as the middleman. Businesses give some of its revenue to its employees who in turn spend it at a different business. When businesses leave or choose not to settle in a place, those workers are unemployed and unable to spend money at different businesses causing their profits to suffer. All of this causes tax revenue for very level of government, including local municipalities, to decrease. Without the money to pay for it, the government is unable to pay for important programs like education or community

projects like a community pool or library. Investing in internet access is vital to continuing to allow local governments the ability to do their job, which is taking care of their constituents.

Technological advancement is an important way for municipalities to thrive economically and develop into good communities. A historical example of this and the effect it can have is the Transcontinental Railroad and the city of Chicago. Fast and reliable internet access is the modern equivalent to the railroad system. Internet has become so important to the nation's infrastructure that it is unthinkable for many to go without it. Businesses not only require internet to do daily tasks now, they require it to compete with rivals and connect with customers. Internet access is a must for businesses both old and new. The impact of not having broadband good internet access is greater than just missing businesses, it could lead to local governments, including towns to be left unable to do their job, which is to properly take care of its constituents. Investing in and providing secure, fast, and reliable internet is critical to a municipality's economic and community development