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## **Boulder Eyes Challenge to Colorado Law Blocking City Broadband.**

City leaders in Boulder, Colo., are preparing to fight state restrictions that prevent the city from connecting citizens with 100 miles of municipal fiber.

A 2005 Colorado state law prohibits cities from offering broadband services to citizens. But on June 17, the Boulder City Council is scheduled to vote on a plan to put a measure on the November ballot declaring the city's authority to offer high-speed Internet access and related services.

City officials believe the telecommunications restrictions are a major reason the city was passed over by Google Fiber, Boulder policy adviser Carl Castillo told Boulder News.

"Boulder remains a community that would significantly benefit from more economical, higher-capacity telecommunications services given our tech-savvy demographic, readiness for 'next gen' broadband services and available public fiber-optic infrastructure," a city memo states. "While no definitive plans are in place to create a telecommunications utility or engage in new public-private partnerships in Boulder, the planning and execution of new public initiatives will be unencumbered by the significant limitations in state law if an exemption measure is passed."

City IT Director Don Ingle said Boulder is unlikely to launch a city-run utility, but would more likely pursue private partners to build out the city's existing network. Following a favorable vote next week, a public hearing and second city council vote on the proposed ballot measure would be held later this summer.

Boulder's move to defy state law follows similar efforts by other Colorado cities. Montrose City Council voted on the issue in March, and Longmont, Colorado, proposed an exemption to the restriction in 2011. Construction on Longmont's fiber network is scheduled to begin this fall.

Today, Boulder's fiber network is used by city offices, the University of Colorado, and federal labs.

BY NEWS STAFF / JUNE 13, 2014