

## What is an MLP?

A **Municipal Light Plant** is a governing structure for Massachusetts cities and towns to own and operate public electric, gas or telecommunications utilities (including broadband internet services) for the benefit of residents. NO community may operate such a utility without adopting the governing legislation.

## Why is MLP Adoption on the ballot?

The legislation requires two affirmative votes by a Town Council followed by an affirmative ballot vote by the community for adoption. The East Longmeadow Town Council has twice voted unanimously in favor of adoption, and voted to place the question on the June 6, 2023 Annual Town Election Ballot.

Since 2019, The Town Manager's office, through the establishment of a local Broadband Committee, has researched the viability of expanding the town's **existing fiber-optic communications network** to support provision of high-speed, reliable internet service to town residents. In 2020, the closure of schools and businesses highlighted the significant costs to productivity, equitable access and community engagement when existing services could not adequately support demand or meet the needs of all residents.

After three years of studying the process and progress in other municipalities, the Broadband Committee, the Town Manager's Office and the Council have taken steps to move forward with MLP adoption in order that the voters may decide whether the Town should move forward with pursuing the feasibility and benefit to residents of a locally-operated public broadband communications network for the town's residents.

## Does MLP Adoption create a new utility?

No. Adoption is the legal process that **allows, but does not obligate** the town to create a new telecommunications utility to serve residents. A NO VOTE on the ballot question **prohibits** the town from moving forward toward establishing such a utility.

*continued on the other side*

# MLP Adoption

-Continued from the other side

A NON-BINDING QUESTION WILL  
APPEAR ON THE TOWN ELECTION  
BALLOT ON TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023

## Ballot Language

The text below is what will be printed on your paper election ballot on June 6th. The language is provided here to allow you read it and understand it in order to cast an informed vote on this question.

### Question 1

(A YES vote on this question is non-binding; a NO vote is non-binding)

Do you vote to ratify the two prior affirmative votes of the Town Council authorizing the town to take all necessary steps and appropriate action to establish and maintain, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 164 of the General Laws and in accordance with the rules, regulations and orders of the Department of Public Utilities and Department of Telecommunications and Cable, a municipal light plant for all purposes allowable under the laws of the Commonwealth, including without limitation the operation of a telecommunications system and any related services?

Summary: Question 1 would authorize but not require the town to establish a municipal light plant, which is a town-owned company that can provide utilities services including telecommunications systems. The municipal light plant, if approved, would be able to provide internet to homes and businesses in town.

A YES vote does not obligate the town to establish a municipal light plant, but the town cannot form a municipal light plant without voter ratification of the two prior Town Council votes in favor. A NO vote would prohibit the town from forming a municipal light plant.

## More information

is available on the Town of East Longmeadow website, or by calling:

**Tom Christensen, Deputy Town Manager 525-5400 x 1101**

**Don Maki, Chairman, E.L. Broadband Committee 525-4220**

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023