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**Florida County Saves Millions by Building its own Broadband Network**

A new report just released by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR) reveals how Martin County saved millions of dollars by building its own fiber optic network to link schools and county facilities rather than leasing lines from Comcast.

The report, *Florida Fiber: Martin County Saves Big with Gigabit Network*, reveals how Martin County transformed the threat of a near ten-fold cost increase for its telecom budget into cost savings and new opportunities for economic growth.

“Martin County is a model example of how local governments can cut costs, increase efficiencies, and spur economic development,” according to Christopher Mitchell, Director of ILSR’s Telecommunications as Commons Initiative. “Local governments will need broadband networks in 10, 15, 30 years – they should consider owning the asset rather than leasing indefinitely.”

The new report highlights challenges the County faced, creative tactics used to reduce the cost of the investment, financial details on the incredible cost savings from the network, and how the new connections are already being used.

Mitchell is a national expert on community broadband networks and was named a 2012 “Top 25 Doer, Dreamer, and Driver” by Government Technology. He also regularly authors articles at MuniNetworks.org.

The *Florida Fiber* report is available here: [*http://www.ilsr.org/florida-fiber-gigabit/*](http://www.ilsr.org/florida-fiber-gigabit/)

**About ILSR:** *Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR) proposes a set of new rules that builds community by supporting humanly scaled politics and economics. The Telecommunications as Commons Initiative believes that telecommunications networks are essential infrastructure and should be accountable to residents and local businesses.* [www.ilsr.org](http://www.ilsr.org), [www.MuniNetworks.org](http://www.MuniNetworks.org)