

**OpenPlanet is an international co-developer of 'open public local access networks' (OPLANs) - working in collaboration with cities, communities and developers to bring the benefits and value of 'next genus' communications infrastructure to end users through open access deployment.**



## What is an OPLAN?

What is a next generation 'open public local access network'? We characterise such networks as follows. An OPLAN:

- is truly 'broadband' in capacity - way beyond anything provided by existing telecoms and cable-TV networks
- provides abundant low cost connectivity on an 'end-to-end' and symmetrical basis, charging for access not bandwidth
- serves a geographic community ranging from a street or business park to an entire city
- is 'open' for access and use by any party located within the community it serves: public and private, business and residential
- provides infrastructure which is owned and controlled independently of any service or content which uses it
- is structured so as to serve the long term 'common good' as well as the fair interests of those who fund its development, maintenance and ongoing upgrade and extension

## What is the rôle of OpenPlanet?

OpenPlanet regards itself as a 'development company'. Whilst acknowledging differences between sectors, the model bears close comparison with that of the familiar model of a real estate/property development company. Our rôle is to appraise, initiate, plan, fund and create the special purpose vehicle (often on a public-private-partnership basis) and its business strategy for owning and operating a next generation broadband public local access network in the specific location concerned. While OPLANs will be individually developed and 'owned' around their specific local circumstances, OpenPlanet envisages that as they become increasingly commonplace, the potential will develop to transfer ownership of OPLANs to long term institutional 'passive' investors who have an appetite for low-risk, asset backed revenue streams but, like real estate, have no operational interest.

## What is driving the development of OPLANs?

The staggering growth of the internet is demonstrating the unexpected appetite that communities, households, businesses and individuals have on a global level to "converse". That is to say, to be 'creators' of content and value as well as 'consumers'. This is entirely due to the 'open' nature of the Internet – where 'a-bit-is-a-bit-is-a-bit'. The development of OPLANs is taking place as communities and cities (especially the public sector) want to derive similar benefits **within and throughout** their locale as well as affording 'open access' to all and any service provider beyond the confines of the local community. The combination of 'open' and passive local infrastructure, coupled with the possibility of local and global content and applications generated and consumed by anyone with the imagination and enterprise to do so, has tremendous potential to promote:

- wealth creation and economic development
- equip creative talent with local and global reach
- digital inclusion *within* the community concerned and competitive advantage over other cities/communities lacking an OPLAN
- environmental and social sustainability
- public sector savings and enhancement of customer-centric service delivery

## A world of Abundance not Scarcity

Central to the above is a shift in mindset in the management of connectivity infrastructure from managing 'scarcity' to accessing 'abundance' (what The Economist calls Telecoms II). This shift in philosophy is enabled by a set of building blocks to OpenPlanet's business model which include:

- viewing the funding of infrastructure on a long term basis, comparable to the funding of real estate and without assuming any risk relating to the demand for any specific service, content or application
- exploiting the latest developments in wired and wireless telecoms infrastructure technologies and architecture which fundamentally lowers the build costs for local *next genus* networks
- exploiting the capabilities, assets and demand of publicly-minded agencies such as municipalities and existing utilities
- recognising the current capabilities and long term limitations of existing copper local access networks: supporting and stimulating demand for services which are beyond the capabilities of such networks

## Who is OpenPlanet?

OpenPlanet is a private company owned and controlled by a number of experienced and successful entrepreneurs and managers, dedicated to the open access model. Its founder, Malcolm Matson, is widely regarded as a pioneer of the *open access* strategy and is also President of The OPLAN Foundation ( [www.oplan.org](http://www.oplan.org) ) which is 'opening minds to open networks' and has been advising The World Bank on the implications of the OPLAN model for the developing world. OpenPlanet has affiliates in many countries including the USA.

## How does OpenPlanet work?

Fundamental to OpenPlanet's strategy is that it will never initiate on its own behalf an OPLAN project – it will only respond to local interest or vision. Whether this comes in the form of a visionary Mayor of a municipality wishing to bring the benefits of the digital technologies to his citizens or whether it is a property developer seeking a strategy to secure benefit for a particular development, OpenPlanet is in a unique position to create a joint-venture, risk-sharing relationship with the relevant local interests in order to develop successfully and implement an appropriate OPLAN strategy. More information on this is available on the OpenPlanet website.

## Contact

[www.open-planet.net](http://www.open-planet.net) or ROD MITCHELL (Director) [rod.mitchell@open-planet.net](mailto:rod.mitchell@open-planet.net) +44 7812-366138