



January 30, 1992

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Richard Cville, Program Director
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Dear George,

We are writing to invite you to attend the CPSR policy roundtable on February 20 and 21, 1992 entitled "Cyberspace Citizenship: Creating Local Civic Networks". The meeting will be held at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace at 2400 N Street in Washington, DC. Please take a moment to mark your calendar and return the response sheet by fax or mail today.

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This meeting will explore local civic networks. Public terminals could be located in shopping malls, public schools, libraries and city halls in communities across the country. Such systems could increase participation in city council and school board meetings and provide access to national computer networks. Court appointments, job searches, AFDC and Food Stamp applications could be streamlined. Organizing civic action groups, connecting public school classrooms, linking government and service agencies, and providing telecommuting services are other benefits such local civic networks could bring.

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A number of these projects are now taking shape around the country. Some focus on public access and make use of computer conferencing, electronic mail, voice mail or cable TV. Other initiatives emphasize ease of use and employ touch-screen or multi-media technology. Policy proposals for regional networks include OTA's Rural Area Network and Hawaii's telecommuting initiatives. Campus-wide networks serving college communities also have much to offer designers of civic networks. Yet, none of these current efforts appears to bring together the critical mass of public access and service features that could promote widespread network services.

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This past year CPSR organized two roundtable meetings on network policy issues. These meetings helped shape the broad contours of a national policy agenda now being pursued by the Electronic Frontier Foundation and others. This new agenda addresses large scale infrastructure issues — the National Research and Education Network, removal of information services restrictions regulating phone companies, advanced network deployment of ISDN and ultimately fiber optics to the home — and speaks to a vision Mitch Kapor and others have called a "National Public Network". Encouraging the development of local civic networks will provide an opportunity for state and local leaders to participate in the development of this emerging national network.

We hope you will join us to discuss the creation of local civic networks .

Sincerely,


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CPSR Public Policy Roundtable
"Cyberspace Citizenship: Building Local Civic Networks"

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

February 20-21, 1992

To: Richard Civile
Marc Rotenberg

From: George Gerbner

Re: Cyberspace Citizenship
Local Civic Networks

_____ Yes, I've marked my calendar. I will attend. I understand you will call to discuss my participation and that I will receive final agenda materials.

_____ Yes, I've marked my calendar. I'd like more information before I can plan on attending. Please call.

_____ I understand there may be some travel support for demonstrated need. Please call me to discuss.

_____ I'm sorry but I will not be able to attend.

Please give us any comments or ideas on the agenda you would like, or any special request you may have.

Thank you very much.

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**CPSR PUBLIC POLICY
ROUNDTABLE**

"Cyberspace Citizenship:
Building Local Civic Networks"

February 20 -21, 1992

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
2400 N Street, NW
Washington, DC

Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility
CPSR Washington Office
21st Century Project

Sponsored by

The Electronic Frontier Foundation
The Rockefeller Foundation

This meeting will explore new modes of democratic participation, various civic computer network projects, and multi-media innovations that could promote local civic networks. Local civic networks could provide a range of public services with current technologies. These networks should be accessible in shopping malls, libraries, city halls, public schools and the home.

During Day 1 theories of democratic participation, multi-media design and various network projects will be examined. During Day 2 participants will discuss the requirements for developing civic networks and produce the outline of a handbook that could be used by state and local policy makers, civic leaders and activists.

Thursday, February 20

9:00 am Welcome

9:30 am Political Participation and the Role of Small Groups

Social change often results from the effects of small group meetings on the political life of the individual. In today's mobile and fragmented society, such meetings are increasingly difficult to organize and participate in. This tends to broaden the gap between citizens and their leaders and puts democratic governance at risk. Some activists have turned to telecommunications as a means of narrowing this gap — with mixed success. Can today's network technologies be adapted for the needs of small groups? How can social activists and civic leaders use public access cable, conference calls, fax machines, and advanced network technologies to encourage the formation of small groups and to broaden public policy debates?

11:00 am Community Overviews: Suburban, Inner-City, Rural, Indian

What are the obstacles facing developers of local civic networks? What are the special needs and concerns of particular communities? This session will set out a matrix for network development in several different model communities and explore their communication needs, access concerns, expected benefits, and necessary costs. This framework will be used

throughout the rest of the roundtable. The goal will be to develop a framework to implement community and regional-based networks and to enhance political participation. Presenters will have particular expertise with community-based networks.

12:30 pm *Lunch*

2:00 pm *The Community Network Drop: Access, Services, Costs and Benefits*

What are the services a local civic network should provide to a community? How could such a network promote citizen participation in local activities? Where should terminals be located? Would terminals differ somewhat in form, function and cost depending upon where they were installed? Would they provide access to the disabled? How would they accommodate cultural styles and literacy levels? What cost savings or benefits would result? What oversight would be necessary? Who could join a local civic network? How could a local civic network be interconnected to state, federal or even international backbones?

At the state level, what would be the role of public utility or service commissions in promoting new services? How might telephone companies and cable providers be encouraged to provide carriage and service to such systems at below market or state contract rates? Would flat rates be feasible? What mix of voice, data, and image capacity would be required?

3:30 pm *Designing Network Products and Services for Citizen Participation*

Nintendo enjoys 40% market penetration to American homes. There is clearly a market demand for multi-media entertainment products and services. Can demand be generated for multi-media public access products and services?

The design of software for individual users is based on a set of assumptions about how individuals best work with computers. What design principles would encourage the development of services that would enhance the work of small groups in public policy debates and advocacy? How can public interest groups and government work together to encourage the development of multi-media network products, services and interfaces? How could such efforts fit within constraints of current technology and local budget priorities? What kinds of strategies could be adopted for networks ranging from plain old telephone service to ISDN to fiber optics?

6:30 pm *Reception*

7:30 pm *Dinner*

Friday, February 21 - Crafting the Community Network Drop

9:00 am *Coffee*

9:30 am *State and Local Telecommunication Policy Initiatives*

Presenters will describe recent policy initiatives that may affect the development of local civic network systems. Topics to be addressed may include access to legislative information, use of networks for economic development, privacy, public access law, tax credits or other forms of R&D incentives.

11:00 am *Designing a Local Civic Network*

The following two sessions will address practical considerations of implementing a local civic network within several types of communities from both metro and non-metro environments. In particular, these sessions should make use of the community matrix developed in Day 1 as well as design principles and democratic objectives identified. These sessions are intended to be somewhat more open-ended than Day 1 and provide room for brainstorming and broader discussion. Several presenters with particular expertise with various communities will also serve as resource persons during the sessions.

11:00 am *Local Civic Networks in Metro Areas*

- The Suburban Drop
- The Inner-City Drop

12:30 pm *Lunch*

2:00 pm *Local Civic Networks in Non-Metro Areas*

- The Rural Community Drop
- The Indian Reservation Drop

3:30 pm *Outlining the Process: A Handbook on Local Civic Networks*

This wrap-up session will focus on developing the outline for the resource book. In this exercise, participants should assume that the audience for the handbook will be members of local city councils, library committees, and PTA's without technical backgrounds generally. It is likely that some readers will have experience with personal computers. It is not likely that any readers will have understandings of network systems, what is technically possible, how to follow emerging technological or policy issues, or how to participate in designing a community network or approaching telephone companies, cable operators or public utility commissions.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Services

- Remote participation in city council, PTA and school board meetings
- Library access to the Internet and NREN
- Making court appointments or appointments at other public agencies
- Public forums and bulletin boards of topical interest
- Want ads and electronic yellow-pages
- Maps, locators and directions
- Teleconferences connecting groups
- Parent/teacher correspondence
- Job searching
- Applying and receiving public assistance such as AFDC and Food Stamps
- Organizing civic action groups and neighborhood meetings
- Connecting public school classrooms for distance learning purposes
- Interconnecting local government and service agencies
- Telecommuting services to home workers and entrepreneurs

Implementation Issues and Costs

- Technical system
- Use of multi-media, voice, data, video
- Carrier and telco/cable relationships
- Design
- Capitalization
- Operation and Maintenance
- Administration
- Usage Costs, fees, tax policies
- Security
- Membership
- Interconnection

Projects and Initiatives

- Santa Monica Public Electronic Network
- Tulare Touch AFDC program
- IBM 24 Hour City Hall
- Cleveland Free-Net
- Community Memory Project
- Rainbow Pages
- Hawaii's telecommuting initiatives

Benefits

- Reduced workload on agency staff
- Improved public information access
- Reduced travel to and from work
- Improved access to educational opportunities
- Improved access to employment opportunities
- Improved access to public meetings