FAQ

How much does it cost to join?

It's free if you connect to the "peoplesopen.net" WiFi hotspot! We provide compatible routers at cost. If you need other hardware, such as an antenna, we also provide them at cost between $60 ~ $120.

Should I be concerned about radio frequency (RF) energy from the WiFi router or antennas?

RF signals from WiFi are considered non-ionizing forms of radiation. That means unlike ionizing radiation — such as l ultraviolet light from the sun or X-rays—they don't carry enough energy to directly alter your DNA, which is one way cancer can occur.

Does joining the network put me at greater security risk?

Joining our network, as a bandwidth donor or recipient, does not put you at any greater risk than joining other public WiFi hotspots. You should take the same precautions you would joining any WiFi hotspot. For example use a virtual private network (VPN) or only connect to secure encrypted (HTTPS) websites. See https://ssd.eff.org for more info.

Contact

People's Open Network
Omni Commons
4799 Shattuck, Oakland, California

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peoplesopen.net

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—

Come join us at our weekly meet-ups!

Tuesdays 7:30-9:00pm
@ Omni Commons

People's Open Network

A community-owned and operated wireless network for digital communications in the East Bay Area.

The Problem

Most people in the U.S. have little to no choice when it comes to how they access internet at home. According to a report by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), **half of the U.S. population as of June 2017 had no choice** when it came to their high-speed broadband provider.

Companies like Comcast, Cox, and Time Warner dominate large swaths of the country as **centralized monopoly providers** of internet. They only serve areas where the largest profit can be made, ignoring areas that are already under-resourced, thereby worsening existing economic inequalities.

Without competition, corporate **internet service providers (ISPs)** are able to get away with delivering poor service quality for expensive fees. Even subscribers who can afford it are often locked in without an alternative.

Corporate ISPs also want to restrict our connections, bundle apps and services, and force us to pay more for certain types of content over others. **Net neutrality** rules safeguard users against such information discrimination. However, corporate ISPs lobby heavily to quash these legal protections.

Our Mission

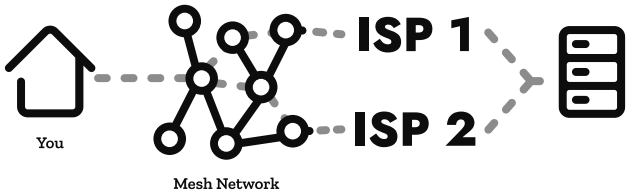
People's Open Network's (PON) mission is to build a distributed, free/libre open source network for the East Bay. We believe in:

* the creation of local internets and locally-relevant applications as a digital commons;

* network layouts that are as decentralized as possible, to minimize the impact of chokepoints, and ensure community members maintain control over their own networks;

* the cultivation of community-owned telecommunications networks in the interest of grassroots collaboration;

* and supporting the solidarity economy movement by upholding democratic, transparent, and inclusive governance processes.



"mesh-topology" by Toronto Mesh, used under CC BY-SA 4.0 / Desaturated from original

How to Join the Network

Step 1 — Get a compatible router* that has People's Open Network software on it OR install the software on the router yourself (we have step-by-step tutorials on our website).

* Only certain router models are compatible with PON's mesh network software.

Step 2 — Connect your router to an antenna using an ethernet cable. Optionally, mount an antenna on your roof, balcony, or any spot with a line-of-sight to other locations to share or receive internet bandwidth.

Step 3 — Access bandwidth from your neighbor and/or share a part of your own internet bandwidth (from your paid subscription).

Case Example

Yuki has a People's Open router plugged in at her house. The device wirelessly connects, or "meshes", with Sam's People's Open router. They connect using two antennas, one at each house, that point to each other. Yuki has WiFi internet access at home because her router wirelessly connects to Sam's router.

Sam pays for an internet subscription with Sonic. He chose to share a portion of his bandwidth with the People's Open Network.