



WILDWOOD

September 9, 2019

The Honorable City Council
City of Wildwood, Missouri
16860 Main Street
Wildwood, Missouri 63040

Re: Update on the City's Rural Internet Project

Council Members:

The City, through its Department of Planning and Rural Internet Access Committee (RIAC), continues to work on several different initiatives relating to the extension of high-speed internet service to the underserved and non-served areas of Wildwood. Many of these initiatives have been presented to the City Council over the past years, via these regular updates from the Department, with the major current activities summarized below for the purposes of this report. These summaries are as follows:

⇒ **Committee Comments on Consultant's Preliminary Draft of the Internet Study**

The Department noted in its August 26, 2019 report that major progress on the further expansion of high-speed internet access to the rural areas of Wildwood would be slow, given the approaches the consultant identified in the report commissioned by the City. These approaches were either too expensive or would require a complete re-thinking of how the City is trying to address this serious and impactful issue of the lack of internet in certain areas of the City. The Mayor, the Rural Internet Access Commission (RIAC), and others continue to work on the consultant's information, but, equally important, certain steps are being taken to provide an interim solution to this situation.

To this end, here are some of the more recent steps in this regard for the City Council's consideration:

1. The Mayor and others continue to consider other interim solutions to the report's approaches and are planning a discussion on the same.
2. The owner of Bays ET continues to work on the installation of fiber optic line in the Hawks Rest Subdivision, which would bring 1gB speeds to this area, which are not available anywhere near this location.
3. The Department is working on its upcoming 2020 budget and planning to include a sizeable increase in the amount of funding set aside in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for this upcoming fiscal year for the expansion of the rural internet access. This information will be disseminated to City Council over the course of this fall.
4. The Department met with the President of the Homestead Estates Subdivision about a proposal to extend Spectrum internet service to that subdivision and potentially to other residential areas in its vicinity, i.e. Three Sisters Farm and the Shiloh Subdivisions. The Homeowners Association (HOA) is wanting to borrow the defaulted escrow funds the City currently holds in this regard to pay for the expansion of Spectrum's service, then repay the amount to it over a period of three (3) to four (4)

years. This proposal would delay the final repairs, replacements, and improvements to the subdivision's infrastructure and grading until at least 2022 or 2023.

5. The Department coordinated the efforts of Wisper ISP to finally address the westernmost internet pole in the Babler Forest Subdivision this past week. Unfortunately, after making the needed arrangements, contacting impacted neighbors, and having the police department on site to ensure everyone's safety, a glitch appears to have happened with the crane operator and the work was not completed. The Department is hoping to have the final details in this regard provided to it by Wisper ISP and try again to address the on-going situation in this area.

⇒ **Other Efforts – Meeting Results, Budget, etc.**

The Department also continues to assist individual subdivisions and residents with service requests with either Bays ET or Wisper ISP, along with providing information and guidance on extending Charter Communications (a.k.a. Spectrum) to underserved or unserved areas of Wildwood.

If any of the City Council members should have questions or comments in this regard, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning at (636) 458-0440. Thank you for your continued support of this project and the efforts to address the needs of rural Wildwood residents.

Respectfully submitted,

CITY OF WILDWOOD



Joe Vujnich, Director

Department of Planning and Parks

Cc: The Honorable James R. Bowlin, Mayor
Sam Anselm, City Administrator
Rural Internet Access Committee Members
John A. Young, City Attorney
Kathy Arnett, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks
Chris Bay, David Crabtree, and Nathan Stooke, Service Providers – Bays ET and Wisper ISP