



WILDWOOD

Administration and Public Works Committee

July 11, 2023 Meeting

Spectrum Internet Project: List of Phase 2 Addresses

Overview

The Department wanted to provide an update on Phase 2 of the Spectrum Internet Project and seek approval for the address list to be submitted to Spectrum for further evaluation and proposal development. Over the last year, the Department has been working diligently to compile a list of streets and addresses to be included in Phase 2 of the Spectrum Internet Project. This list has been provided in This list was generated through two primary means:

1. Recommendations from Spectrum: Spectrum provided a list of streets that are in close proximity to the area outlined in Phase 1, ensuring a logical expansion of the broadband infrastructure. These areas were also identified as underserved.
2. Direct submissions from residents: The Department encouraged residents to provide the City with their addresses and streets to ensure their inclusion in Phase 2 of the Spectrum Internet Project.

To ensure transparency and awareness, the City has been proactively informing residents about the upcoming second phase of the Spectrum Internet Project. It is important to note that Phase 2 is expected to commence immediately after the completion of Phase 1, for which Spectrum has until April 3, 2024.

Spectrum's Serviceability Program

In exploring options to maximize broadband access, the Department has been investigating a program offered by Spectrum. This program allows residents to request a "survey" at their property, during which Spectrum assesses the costs of running a line from their current broadband infrastructure to the resident's home. Spectrum covers installation costs up to \$6,000.00 for each participating resident. Properties opting for this program will not be included in Phase 2 of the project.

To optimize the benefits of this program, the Department will focus on identifying properties from the Phase 2 consideration list that would most benefit from utilizing the survey program, as proximity to the current broadband infrastructure often results in lower installation costs. The Department will reach out to residents living in the areas identified to let them know that this is an option for them. These efforts will allow the City to provide high-speed internet access to additional residents.

Phase 1 Progression

Phase 1 of the Spectrum Internet Project will cost the City \$6,750,000.00. Payments are made according to a specified schedule. Once Spectrum provides service availability to 10% of the homes included in the

project, the City has 60 days to inspect the completed homes and disburse 10% of the total amount (\$675,000.00). The City has received the first invoice for 10% of the total amount and is currently inspecting the completed area provided by Spectrum (Map's 1 & 3). The first payment is expected to be disbursed within the next month. Service availability has been achieved for homes included in Map's 1, 2, and 3, while Map 5 is nearing completion, and the second invoice is anticipated to be received in the coming month. Spectrum remains on track to complete the project by April 3, 2024.

Funding

Moreover, the City received \$7,218,561.46 from federal stimulus funds (American Rescue Plan Act) to invest in broadband infrastructure. After paying Spectrum the full amount due for Phase 1, the City will have \$468,561.46 remaining to invest in Phase 2 of the project. However, it is important to note that this amount will likely not cover all the homes included in the Phase 2 consideration list.

That being said, the federal government recently announced additional funding for Broadband Infrastructure. On June 26th, the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced that Missouri will receive over \$1.7 billion through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, as part of the federal Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA). The allocated funding for Missouri ranks as the third highest among all states, the District of Columbia, and five other territories. The City will apply for funding under the BEAD Program; however, it is important to note that applications are not expected to open until January 2024. Given this timeline, obtaining additional funding prior to approving Phase 2 of the Spectrum Internet Project will present logistical challenges. Furthermore, the BEAD Program considers median/average household income when allocating funds, which may limit Wildwood's portion of the funding. The Department will keep the Mayor and City Council updated regarding the progress and status of the BEAD funding application.

The Department would also like to note that Spectrum has indicated that Phase 2 of the project will see considerable increases in cost. The Department will have more information once it has received an official proposal from Spectrum.

Conclusion

At this time, the Department seeks approval of the Phase 2 address list. Once approved, the Department will promptly submit the addresses to Spectrum for the development of a proposal to provide internet service to these homes. This proposal will be presented to the Administration and Public Works Committee upon its receipt.