



# WILDWOOD

**Administration and Public Works Committee  
August 5, 2023 Meeting  
Internet Access Project: List of Phase 2 Addresses**

## **Overview**

The Department wanted to provide an update on Phase 2 of the Internet Access Project, specifically regarding the list of addresses collected from resident inquiries for potential inclusion in this phase. This address list has been provided in Agenda. The Department is recommending that the City submit the address list 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 Internet Access Project. 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.
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 Internet Access Project.

To ensure transparency and awareness, the City has been proactively informing residents about the upcoming second phase of the Internet Access 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. The City is still working to finalize the non-disclosure agreement with Spectrum. Once this agreement is finalized, Spectrum will provide the City with a comprehensive list of Wildwood addresses along with their corresponding internet speeds. This data will be pertinent in determining which addresses will be included in Phase 2 of the Internet Access Project.

## **Non-Disclosure Agreement**

The City is currently in the process of finalizing a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with Spectrum, our partner in this project. Once the NDA is finalized, Spectrum will furnish the City with a comprehensive list of Wildwood addresses along with their corresponding internet speeds. The Department's primary goal is to identify addresses not covered in Phase 1 of the project and addresses that have internet speeds of less than 100 Mbps.

To ensure that the addresses are genuinely underserved, the Department will meticulously compare the data provided by Spectrum with the addresses submitted by our residents. Presently, the Department does not have access to internet speed data from Spectrum, but the Department believes that it is essential to initiate the Phase 2 planning process by submitting the list included in the Agenda.

The City's goal is to commence Phase 2 immediately after the completion of Phase 1, which is currently scheduled to be finalized by April 3, 2024. In order to begin the planning process, the City would like Spectrum to begin working on the initial proposal based on the addresses provided by resident inquiries. The City will have the opportunity to modify this list once we receive the internet speed data from Spectrum.

### **Available Internet Coverage Data**

Please be aware that the City possesses some internet coverage data last updated on October 1, 2022. You can view this map at the following link: <https://broadband.money/broadband-audits/missouri/city/wildwood-broadband-audit>. Additionally, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has published data on internet speeds, which you can access at <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/>. This map provides details on the services available at specific addresses. Though these maps are useful, the Department is looking forward to receiving direct data from Spectrum. The hope is that this data will be easily transmissible via excel, so the Department can adequately compare the addresses provided through resident inquiries to the addresses lacking broadband speeds of 100/20 Mbps.

It's important to note that the data provided in the links above do not take into consideration the progress made in Phase 1 of the Internet Access Project. The Department anticipates a shift in these statistics as a result of the City's ongoing efforts.

By most definitions, unserved areas are those that lack broadband speeds of 25/3 Mbps, while underserved areas are defined as those lacking broadband speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps. This distinction is crucial when considering additional funding options from State and Federal entities.

### **Phase 1 Progression**

Phase 1 of the Internet Access 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 has completed its inspection of the addresses included in the invoice (Map's 1 & 3). In order to properly inspect the area covered in the first invoice, the Department had City team members visit all the addresses included in the first invoice and take note of Spectrum's presence in the area. Specifically, the Department was looking for pedestals or vaults along with the presence of restoration work (grading, straw, seed, etc.). The Department also visited Spectrum's website to assess the service options for each property included in the first invoice. It was determined that all the addresses in question had either subscribed to Spectrum's service or had viable service options from Spectrum.

Service is now available for homes included in Map's 1, 2, 3, and 5, with Map 6 nearing completion. Spectrum anticipates that two additional maps will be activated in September 2023. The Department believes that Spectrum remains on track to complete the project by April 3, 2024.

### **Phase 2 Funding**

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 Internet Access Project will present logistical challenges. Furthermore, the BEAD Program considers median/average household income when allocating funds, which may limit Wildwood's eligibility for funding. The Department and the City's legislative consultant, Jake Silverman, will be meeting with BJ Tanksley, the Director of Broadband Development for the State of Missouri, to discuss the BEAD Program on September 13, 2023.

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**

The Department expects that the NDA with Spectrum will be finalized within the next week, and the Department will provide a comprehensive update during the Committee meeting in October. In the meantime, the Department recommends allowing Spectrum to commence work on an estimate for the addresses provided through resident inquiries. This will enable the City to gather preliminary cost information for Phase 2, understanding that these initial cost projections will likely change as we obtain internet speed data.

With the understanding that prices in this sector have seen increases across the board, this early estimation will help the City adequately plan for Phase 2 and make informed decisions regarding funding and implementation.