



# CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Information & Technology Services

## Bloomington Digital Underground BDUAC Meeting Memorandum

Per Executive Orders issued by the Governor, this meeting was conducted electronically.

### **Thursday, August 5, 2021 4PM**

Location: Zoom

Facilitator: Rick Dietz

Board Attendance: Mike Allen, Chris Robb, Mike Sullivan, Mike Trotzke, Tim Pritchett, Michelle Cole

Staff Attendance: Desiree King, Rick Dietz

### **ITS Updates**

ITS is working on a number of infrastructure projects. Fully expect Council approval for wi-fi in parks. Working on estimates for facilities we haven't built out to: Fire stations. Would like to see BDU infrastructure extend to training area and animal shelter. Past talk of consolidated Public Works campus there. Right now they are located in different places (street, fleet, etc.)

Looking at old designs for BDU. Originally designed a northern and southern loop. Have good engineering maps. These are good investments, will save us funds on bandwidth and connectivity.

Pritchett: Let MCCSC know and we can look at potential MOUs.

Sullivan: Will there be wi-fi at Switchyard? Rick: Currently has it at some buildings, doesn't cover entire park.

Allen: Do we throttle? Rick: City public wifi routes through a Comcast business line. It is what's available through them. Planning for 2022 upgrade to our network, but currently at 100MB.

### **Fiber Broadband Initiative Update**

Discussion continues with potential broadband provider. They are planning a site visit on Monday where they will meet with senior staff. Between now and the end of this month we will be working on Letter of Intent language, documenting our permitting process, documenting our BDU infrastructure. Decision will be made if project goes forward. Initially they looked at Bloomington but it wasn't big enough. Now they are looking at three nearby communities. They see an opportunity for their model stepping into a stagnant duopoly broadband marketplace.

Robb: Anything from other communities that would make a difference? Rick: All part of the same

proposal. They don't do investments less than \$100 million. Robb: Other communities engaged? Rick: Yes, but not as much. We have coordinated with other mayors to get conversations going.

Rick: Three of four communities have some municipal fiber. If this is approved, it will be a big project.

Sullivan: Will other community involvement increase state resistance we've encountered in past? Rick: This potential provider is a private business entity and wants to make multi-million dollar open access network investment in Bloomington and other communities. It would bring a new provider into our market and eventually existing providers to expand their reach.

Trotzke: As long as it's viewed as an economic development project, it will be difficult for legislature to harm it.

Rick: Possible that future BDUAC meetings will have more rapid cadence, but won't kick in until we know this is happening.

## **Digital Equity**

Desiree updated on DE. Robb asked if any changes. Restrictions for reapplication.

Pritchett: Thoughts on making it more competitive, larger amounts for few orgs? Dietz: Goal is to impact more in the committee. If project has broad reach and needs a large portion, certainly will be considered. Other Cities are larger, pretty amazing that for our size we have a large amount. Bigger cities often have a digital inclusion alliance and get a majority of the funds awarded. We're starting with much smaller entities. Directions from grant moving.

City Council has voted to approve ARPA plan. One element is \$75K allocation to expand wi-fi in City parks, especially Crestmont, Butler, 3rd, and People's Park. Pritchett: Wireless mesh, switch? Rick: Mostly switch, already have infrastructure in some parks. Crestmont will be the more challenging build. Has discussed with Rural Opp. Initiative, has group pursuing funds. Pitched a project idea to them that would expand wi-fi in parks effort. May potentially get more dollars, have broader impact. Trotzke: Submitted already? Rick: Council still needs to approve appropriation. Proposal submitted to ROI. Has also proposed a digital equity navigator and a marketing initiative to reach out to lower income individuals to make them aware of subsidies. Trotzke: Encouraged Rick to apply...

## **Member Reports (Items not on the agenda)**

Allen: Member status still shows as red, not approved. Rick will look into it, verify.

Robb: IU grappling with sending staff back to the office. Mask mandate.

Transition to new base network starts, been a two year project,, will be working on it over the next few weeks.

Trotzke: Mill revenues went down, came back up. Members have signed up, activities happening. Don't know how mask mandate will affect things. Most people would prefer a virtual meeting to in-person masked meeting.

As far as Combine, won't be doing anything in October or maybe something small. Will plan to do something big in person in April.

Allen: Went to Westgate for AI conference this week. Brought in people from DoD, Crane, people from IU talked about machine learning. Fantastic experience. Talk of doing more quarterly, encouraged others to attend.

Rick: Trucking through budget process, hold on to CARES, ARPA funds.

Cole left at 4:30, Pritchett left at 4:50.

Meeting Adjourned