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NEWS RELEASE

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CITY REQUESTS PUBLIC'S FEEDBACK ON FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CITY OWNED FIBER-OPTIC NETWORK

Bristol City leaders are working with a consulting firm to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a city owned fiber-optic network to provide internet access. As part of this process, City leaders want to determine the public's interest in this project. "To date, we have received a couple of hundred responses but would like more to have a larger statistical sample," said Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu.

"Nobody will be forced to participate in the City-owned network. Subscription will be on a voluntary, opt-in basis," said Citywide IT Director Scott Smith. "The ongoing operation of the network must be self-sustaining and not dependent on any kind of subsidy from the City of Bristol, although the City may contribute a nominal amount to get the network started – but only if that amount can be paid back to the City over a short period of time."

The goal is to leverage the network to improve the services already provided in the City including public safety, transportation, healthcare, education, emergency communications, and new services that will become possible with advanced network infrastructure," said Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu.

"Our primary goals for this initiative are to lower the cost of internet access for residents and businesses, while significantly increasing the speed and reliability of internet access" said Councilwoman Brittany Barney. "Working from home, and relying on Zoom for meetings and some of my daughter's schooling during Covid really illustrated to me why this is so important for the City to investigate."

"Even prior to COVID, we had been discussing the role the City could play in increasing the competition and also giving residents and businesses multiple options for 4 or 5 new options for Internet Service Providers," said Councilman David Preleski. "Building a state-of-the-art network that will improve economic development and allow for innovation will also set Bristol above the rest."

City residents and businesses are being asked to take a few minutes to view the short informational video located at [HOME | Connect Bristol](https://www.connectbristol.org). (www.connectbristol.org). After viewing the video, residents and business owners will be asked to take the brief survey along with submitting any questions they may have regarding this project using the link below. Answers to all questions will be compiled and shared on this website along with the survey results about the community's feedback of establishing a city-owned fiber-optic network.

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City of Bristol

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