



Broadband Franchise Agreements

Recommendations for City Council
February 2022

Goals

- Options for City residents in their choice of internet access by building a fiber network that passed all City addresses in the public right-of-way
- Equitable access to the internet with guaranteed speed and financial support

Background

- Previous City efforts to encourage consumer broadband choice have not resulted in franchise agreement.
- Interviews with industry, subject matter experts and IT Commission suggest there is now renewed interest and funding.
- Federal and Virginia infrastructure funding focused on rural jurisdictions.

General Process

- City has ability to provide access to Right-of-Way to allow broadband network.
- Comcast has cable franchise and provides broadband services.
- Using a right-of-way ordinance process, City can request proposals.
- More than one franchise agreement allowed if it meets City's criteria.



Equitable Access

- Ensure the broadband network passes every dwelling and business in the right-of-way
- Provide access and monthly service for affordable housing units
- Provide service to new development affordable units
- Provide service to community service partners who serve residents in most need of broadband service
- Provide wireless access in selected City parks

Key Terms

- Franchise fee
- Microtrenching and undergrounding
- Significant investment of financial resources
- Communications plan
- Ability to access 1 gigabit speed
- Standards for 24/7 customer support
- Construction plan and timeline for completion
- Provision for damages or payments for non-completion



Responses

- Lumos Telephone, Inc.
- Ting, Inc.
- Shentel
- North American Tower Company

Responses Results

Agreements

Lumos Telephone, Inc.

Ting, Inc.

Respondent no longer pursuing franchise

Shentel

Not currently considering

North American Tower Company