



Information Technology

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TO: Digital Technology Committee Members

FROM: Paul Kronberger
CIO, Information Technology

SUBJECT: Housing Authority Facility Internet Service Project

In October of this year staff from the City of Madison Housing Authority approached Information Technology staff about the possibility of providing Internet service to one or more of their facilities. The Housing Authority identified the Romnes Apartments, located at 540 West Olin Ave., as their priority for Internet service. This site is already served by MUFN-built fiber-optic cable, which services Housing Authority administrative and maintenance staff at this location. Additional strands of fiber are available for use to provide residents with high-speed Internet service, which makes this a site a good candidate.

The Romnes Apartments is designated as a senior property with residents of age 50 or better. This building consists of three floors with approximately 44 units per floor. The plan was to install 802.11x wireless access points (AP) in common areas of each floor that would service four units per AP with some overlap coverage between AP's in order to provide redundancy in the event of an AP failure.

Information Technology Network Communications staff worked with the city's wiring vendor (IBS) to do a site assessment and then provide a quote to the Housing Authority. Because the facility does not have suspended ceilings and would require external raceway to be installed, the wiring quote came in at approximately \$20,000, significantly higher than we had anticipated.

In addition to the wiring, electronics would be needed in the form of wireless access points, network switches and a management system, which would consist of a server and some software. The estimate for these components was approximately \$20,000, bringing the total capital cost of this project to an estimated \$40,000. If the project were to move ahead, these costs would be funded using the Housing Authority's capital budget.

Operating costs for an Internet service provider were estimated \$5-10 per month per unit depending on the bandwidth requirements. The minimum bandwidth would be 5Mbps, which would be \$5/month with a maximum bandwidth of 10Mbps, which would cost \$10/month. Operating costs would include management and maintenance of the network by the ISP provider and a 24x7 call center. The source of the funds for the operating costs is unclear at this point and may be paid by residents or the Housing Authority.

This proposal was taken to the Housing Operations Committee for review and discussion. The Committee had concerns about spending \$40,000 without knowing whether residents had devices and/or the knowledge/skills to use the Internet service. The Housing Authority is planning on doing a survey of Romnes Apartments residents to get data regarding device availability and skills/knowledge information.

cc: Enis Ragland
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