

For Immediate Release

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**City of West Plains Fiber Project to Focus on Completion of City Network,
Dedicated Internet Service in 2018; Will Continue Researching “Fiber to the Home”**

A recommendation to continue offering “Dedicated” Internet service to West Plains’ businesses and connecting all City buildings with a fiber network was made to the West Plains City Council during a special work session April 5.

That meeting, held as an overview of the upcoming City budget, featured an update on the City’s two-year long fiber project. Since 2016, the City has successfully built a fiber “ring” around West Plains, established its own network connecting some of its buildings, and started a fiber pilot project in the Southern Hills shopping area. That pilot, currently underway in some commercial and residential locations in Southern Hills, is testing point-to-multipoint “GPON” business and residential Internet service – which is different technology than Dedicated service.

To date, costs for the entire project are \$873,321, with most of the expenditures due to the establishment of the City’s fiber network (\$576,903) and the Southern Hills pilot project (\$296,418).

As part of the update, City council members were presented various options for full deployment to all users, or “fiber to the home.” Associated Communications and Research Services (ACRS), which provides professional engineering services for all facets of broadband, presented various build and cost options for consideration.

Based on the information provided by ACRS, city officials felt additional research was needed on providing fiber-to-the-home, with an emphasis on options that would best fit the needs of the City and its citizens. In the meantime, West Plains’ fiber project representatives recommended continuing on its current project path, which includes working with ACRS on creating a high-level design around West Plains for its fiber infrastructure, continuing to provide Dedicated Internet and dark fiber services to existing West Plains businesses, connecting the remaining City buildings with the fiber network, and monitoring the current Internet pilot in the Southern Hills area until July 1.

With this recommendation, City officials will continue researching fiber-to-the-home options, and crews will receive additional training required for the construction and networking side of the project. The City of West Plains is also seeking to add a Network Administrator and two additional construction personnel specifically for the fiber project.

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