

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****August 2, 2021**

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**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PLACING CONDUIT/FIBER IN ROW**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to respond to a City Council question regarding the possibility of installing conduit/fiber as part of City and developer projects in the City right-of-way (ROW) to support efforts to expand broadband and wireless access to the citizens of Fort Worth.

Staff from the Transportation and Public Works (TPW), Information Technology Solutions (ITS), Law, and Development Services Departments have discussed this matter, with the conclusion that installation of conduit (or conduit and fiber) can be required as part of both City and Developer projects. The following are limitations/issues:

- The City would be the owner/maintainer of the installed conduit and fiber facilities
- Third parties could lease the infrastructure for deployment of broadband or wireless networks, with the lease revenue used for maintenance of the conduit/fiber infrastructure
- Infrastructure leases would need to be on a first-come, first-served basis

**Current City Initiatives**

- ITS is leading an effort to enter into a public private partnership for the expansion of broadband access to City residents
- TPW is developing plans to install fiber in unserved and/or underserved areas along the Rosedale corridor to be funded by a \$3M grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments

**Next Steps (next 180 days)**

- Staff from key departments will collaborate to outline the process for, and make recommendations regarding, the development of a City-wide Fiber Master Plan. Such a plan would provide a strategy for implementing a City fiber system to serve the community, support economic development, and meet future communication needs for City infrastructure and services.
- Develop and task a working group (including City staff and stakeholders from the development and utility service provider communities) to recommend a process and associated policies and standards for the installation of conduit (or conduit and fiber) as a requirement of both City and Developer projects. Key process/policy considerations will include: minimizing cost and schedule impacts to City and private projects, funding strategy, and leasing arrangements for third party users.

An update on this initiative will be provided to City Council by mid-January 2023.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Michael Owen, P.E., City Engineer, at 817-353-2630 or at [michael.owen@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:michael.owen@fortworthtexas.gov).

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