



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Grand Rapids Releases Wireless Broadband Request for Proposals**

**Grand Rapids, MI** - The City of Grand Rapids is pleased to announce the release of its request for proposals (RFP) for a citywide wireless broadband network. The City is seeking a vendor to construct a privately owned and operated outdoor wireless broadband network providing wireless service within the City's 45 square miles. The City is also hopeful that the selected vendor will be able to offer a low cost solution to provide service within nearly every building as well. This would be one of the largest projects of its type in the country. The City plans to select a vendor by this June and begin building the network by fall.

Mayor George K. Heartwell stated:

*Cities that prosper will be those that embrace and invest in new technology. This infrastructure will improve the quality of life for our citizens by strengthening the City's economy, transforming the City's neighborhoods, improving City services, and enhancing public safety. Imagine a city where government services can be delivered anytime and anywhere. Wireless broadband is not science fiction. It is technology already being implemented in communities around the world and we want to bring it here to Grand Rapids.*

### **About the Project**

Last year Mayor George K. Heartwell outlined a vision for bringing wireless broadband to our community. City Manager Kurt Kimball then assigned a City staff team to research wireless technology. A City team has researched wireless technology, what other cities are doing, best practices, funding models, applications, the types of technology available, and how each works.

The City does not plan to compete with private business to sell wireless broadband. Grand Rapids is committed to selecting a solution using proven technology that is cost effective and sustainable from a private vendor that will serve the City for an extended period.

The City's goals for a privately owned and operated wireless broadband network are to:

- Enhance public safety by increasing the information available to mobile police officers and firefighters
- Provide an economic development tool to attract and retain business
- Reduce the digital divide with affordable high-speed broadband service
- Improve service delivery to residents and reduce the cost of government
- Facilitate wireless technology use for citizens and visitors
- Create a seamless wireless infrastructure to attract and retain young professionals

- Establish a wireless broadband network without a burden on taxpayers

Over the summer, eight cutting-edge, innovative companies participated in the City's Hot Spots Cool City Wireless Demonstration Project, each installing a wireless hot zone network in an assigned location. Wireless network use was free to all for the duration of each demonstration. Grand Rapids is pleased and proud to have over a dozen partners who have been key to the success of this project (see web site for a list).

Excelsio Communications, an Atlanta based wireless engineering and consulting firm, spent several weeks evaluating the networks and reported their findings to our the City Commission and our partners. Excelsio also worked with City staff to define applications, to select a preferred business or partnership model, and to write the RFP.

For more information and to view the RFP visit: **[www.wirelessgr.com](http://www.wirelessgr.com)**

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