CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
Information & Technology Services

Minutes
Bloomington Digital Underground
Advisory Committee
Bloomington City Hall, 401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana
Hooker Conference Room and on Zoom
Thursday, November 14th, 2024

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER [4:10 pm]
Facilitated by Rick Dietz

ROLL CALL:

Board Members present: Michelle Cole and Mike Allen
Board Members present via Zoom: Chris Robb
Board absent: Mike Sullivan, Andy Koop, Marianne Chitwood, and Mike Trotzke
City staff, officials, and guests: Rick Dietz, Victoria Jones, Katie Hopkins the Digital Equity
Manager with Hoosier Fiber Networks, Eric, and Leigh

Dietz welcomes everyone and mentions the low board member attendance, which means this
meeting will not meet the quorum board member attendance requirement.

Information & Technology Services (ITS) Department Updates

- ARPA updates: The Digital Accessibility ARPA funding has been approved, and the City
  will partner with a vendor to craft a formal strategic plan.
- The Indiana University (IU) Data Center city server build is nearly complete. The plan is to
  relocate backup and hosting from the Trade District location to the IU Data Center and
  have the IU location become the primary location. This collaboration will serve the City of
  Bloomington, improving its infrastructure resilience and becoming a model for future IU,
  local, and state government collaborations.
- Public parks Wi-Fi update: The Seminary Park Wi-Fi project, delayed by electrical issues,
  will soon be up and running.
- The Indiana University (IU) Data Center hardware has been installed, and we anticipate
  establishing the connection sometime next week. The partnership with IU is compelling
  and cost-effective.
- NTIA Federal competitive Digital Equity Grant update: no new news at this time.
- The City recently notified the thirteen local nonprofit organizations receiving a Digital
  Equity grant in 2024. The Digital Equity Grant Advisory Committee selected the recipients
  and allocated $50,000 in 2024. The staff is contacting each nonprofit to confirm award
  acceptance and, if necessary, submit a revised budget. A press release with confirmed

recipients and award amounts will be issued soon. Michelle Cole asked about the number of applicants and the total amount requested. Rick Dietz noted that we received fourteen applications with around $70,000 in total grant funds requested and $50,000 to distribute. The committee funding focus was on technology devices and educational initiatives like skills-based training more than subsidizing internet costs. Staff confirmed we will share the press release on the ITS LinkedIn page.

- The ITS department is focused on the end of the year activities, like purchasing and contracting.
- Rick is meeting with the Human Resources director to discuss when ITS can repost the Digital Equity Specialist position with the more appealing and competitive 2025 salary rate.

City-wide Fiber Broadband Initiative

- Katie Hopkins with Hoosier Fiber reported on recent Bloomington fiber work and digital equity initiatives, with six slides detailing their progress and recent community engagements. The slides are attached.
- Slide 1 was titled *"BDU Advisory Committee November 14, 2024."*
- Slide 2 was an untitled Monroe County county map indicating the fiber network's completion in the north and eastside areas.
- Slide 3, titled *Construction Progress*, displayed two timeline graphs with the continued upward trends of construction progress, one with cumulative conduit feet and the other with units passed from January 2023 through September 2024.
- Slide 4, titled *Right of Way Activity*, is a timeline indicating a trend of fewer preventable utility strikes per mile since February 2023. Katie noted Hoosier Fiber's priority is to respond promptly to homeowner issues.
- Slide 5, titled *Digital Equity October 2024*, displays a photograph of the Bloomington Housing Authority launch event on October 9, 2024.
- Slide 6 was an untitled list of recent Digital Equity community initiatives and nine photographs depicting people attending the events. Includes links:
    - [Bloomington Housing Authority Fiber Launch Announcement](#)
    - [GigabitNow Fiber For All](#)
- Katie shared the attached Gigabitnow flier advertising the reduced rate of $9.99 for those who qualify. The fliers have been dispersed throughout the community, and more are being professionally printed. The federal program no longer subsidizes internet service, so the network provider is covering the difference in cost.
- Katie shared that access to Duke poles will be more limited than planned. Hoosier Fibers' contraction, Trueline (formally AEG), is pivoting to more underground buried line work. This will cost more and take time, but they anticipate finishing the project on schedule by the end of 2025. This will lead to a more robust infrastructure, and as progress continues west out of the City's dense areas, fewer ground strikes will occur.
- Mike Allen questioned the price tiering offered to lower-income applicants and asked if Gigabitnow could provide more information on why only the lowest level of service is provided. Rick Dietz shared that the service they will receive is significantly better than what other internet service providers can offer at this time.
- Katie mentioned their appreciation of the Affordability Connectivity Program (ACP) and said she would share their rubric scores with Rick to distribute to the committed.

MEMBER REPORTS (Items not on the agenda)

- Michelle Cole announced that the Mill's Innovation Week event would begin with the Sunday kick-off event. For more details, visit www.dimensionmill.org/innovation-week. She is excited about the Kiln opening soon.
- Mike Allen recommended the rebooting of all devices and computers weekly to avoid

persistence.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS (Items not on the agenda)

- Online guest Eric asked about the internet service provider subsidy and the additional air and conduit work done after the fiber installation. Rick Dietz followed up by saying that the additional conduit work may be performed by an independent contractor who verifies Trueline's work before Hoosier Fiber accepts ownership of that section. Eric expressed concerns about more utility strikes as more work is done underground and asked if the information the contractors gain from mapping the area will be passed on to the City. Rick replied that this is part of the agreement but not until the fiber work is complete and the City receives the "as-builts" for the entire network.

ADJOURNMENT [4:57 pm]

Contact: Rick Dietz / 812-349-3485 / dietzr@bloomington.in.gov

Memorandum prepared by:
Victoria Jones
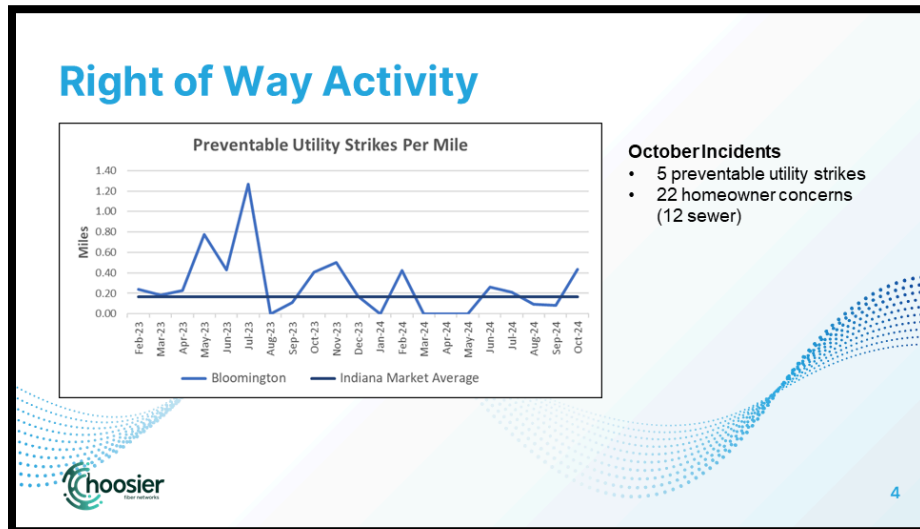
Hoosier Fiber Side Presentation

Hoosier Fiber Slide 1

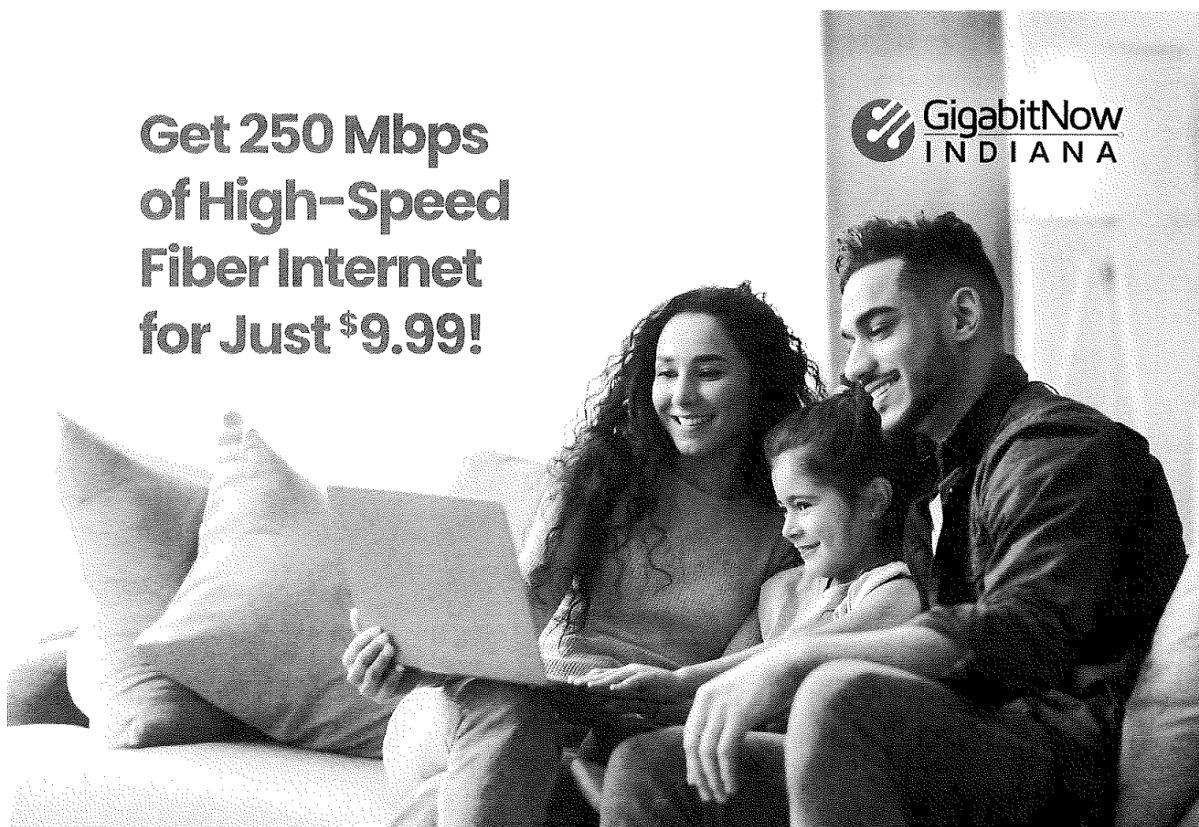Hoosier Fiber Slide 2
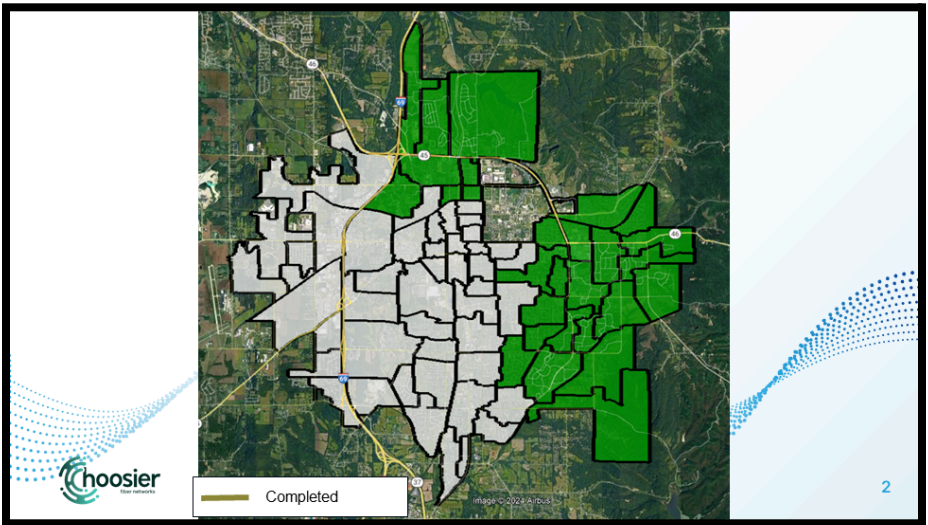
Hoosier Fiber Slide 3
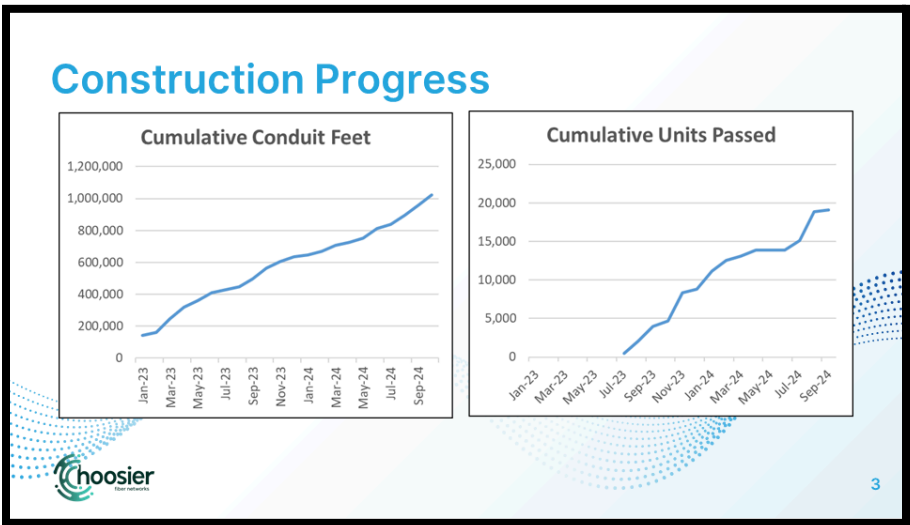
Hoosier Fiber Slide 4

Hoosier Fiber Slide 5

Hoosier Fiber Slide 6

Get 250 Mbps of High-Speed Fiber Internet for Just $9.99!

GigabitNow
I N D I A N A

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) has ended, but our commitment to provide affordable Internet service has not.

How to Sign Up

Go to our website or scan the code and complete the steps.

GBNIndiana.com/FiberForAll

Who is Eligible?

If you qualify or are currently enrolled in any of the following programs, you will automatically qualify for the $9.99 (250 Mbps) plan.

- ⊘ Assistance programs such as: SNAP, WIC, SSI, or TANF
- ⊘ Medicaid
- ⊘ Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits
- ⊘ DOE Free/Reduced Meals
- ⊘ Section 8 Vouchers or Housing Choice Vouchers (HVC)