

Infrastructure would put town on cutting edge

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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GIC wants fiber operator who has storefront in Gothenburg

The spectrum of services, reliability and speed available through fiber optics is incredible.

Just ask Nate Wyatt, who heads up the Gothenburg Improvement Company's fiber infrastructure committee.

Faster Internet service, more bandwidth for more devices and "more bells and whistles" for television and devices is how Wyatt describes what fiber optic technology would do for the community.

Speed is a huge factor.

For example, Wyatt compared technology in the past as driving 10 mph.

"Now we're going 35 mph and with fiber optics, we could go 100 miles per hour," he said. "As a community, soon we will need to drive 1,000 mph and new infrastructure will prepare us for this reality."

That's possible because Internet, telephone and television service would be provided by a single fiber to each home or business rather than sharing bandwidth (data through the line) with other users which is typical now.

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“You avoid slowdowns when lots of people are using the service,” Wyatt said.

And, he claims, fiber optic service is extremely competitive with the prices residents and businesses now pay for the same service through telecommunication companies.

“If you bundled your cable television and phone service together, there could be a savings with fiber optics,” he said.

Wyatt said three surrounding communities—Cozad, Lexington and North Platte—have fiber optic infrastructure and providers that offer services and technology that Gothenburg cannot.

“We’re at a competitive disadvantage because they can offer services and technology that our current system cannot support,” Wyatt said.

What the GIC is trying to do, he said, is to recruit a fiber optics operator who will put up a storefront in Gothenburg and hire people to work for the business.

“Can you imagine calling a local number to get service on your Internet, phone and cable?” he asked.

Wyatt said the GIC doesn’t want a call center but someone that people know and recognize in the community who would service the network.

CenturyLink is the community’s last-mile provider for telecommunication infrastructure.

Wyatt said the company has chosen not to reinvest in upgrading Gothenburg’s infrastructure to

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fiber.

However there is a company that wants to install fiber infrastructure in Gothenburg but a provider is needed to operate the technology.

Completed surveys, included in city electric bills this week, will show whether or not the technology is wanted and needed in Gothenburg.



“An ideal response from GIC’s perspective is the community’s willingness to consider the options available,” Wyatt said.

GIC president Mike Bacon said answering the survey does not commit anyone to switching cable, telephone or Internet.

Enough responses, indicating high interest, will give a prospective company valuable information to decide whether to put another provider in town, Bacon said.

“This will give current providers a push to lower prices and provide better service,” he said.

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