



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Portsmouth Launches Citizen Connectivity Survey**

**(PORTSMOUTH, VA – January 25, 2019)** – In August 2018, the Portsmouth City Council engaged Federal Engineering Inc. (FE) and its subcontractor Magellan Advisors (FE/Magellan Team) to develop a Citizen Connectivity Study that would gather information on the state of connectivity of local businesses, residents and other organizations in the city. Now available, the city has posted an electronic survey on the website at [www.portsmouthva.gov/connectivitysurvey](http://www.portsmouthva.gov/connectivitysurvey) so that residents, business owners, etc. can express their opinions on their internet needs. Additionally, the survey will ask respondents questions about using the City's planned fiber-optic backbone network that will serve:

- to increase the area's quality of life
- as a platform for digital inclusion initiatives
- as a driver for economic development, and
- as support of efficient municipal operations

The consultants will survey households, businesses, medical facilities and higher education centers to understand how they currently use technology and to gauge the importance of digital high-speed connectivity. The FE/Magellan Team will engage key stakeholders from major businesses to neighborhood champions to define current gaps and goals. In addition to the web survey, some surveys will be mailed. Network service providers are also invited to share connectivity issues they have encountered and how they might help address community needs. City officials hope that the results will reveal the benefits of and barriers to technology use, particularly available internet access options.

Portsmouth's community broadband network will include connections to community anchor institutions such as hospitals, higher education centers, and will serve as a catalyst to narrow the digital divide and regional broadband initiatives. Construction began in July 2018, on the five-year build-out that will make Portsmouth a digital port. The community broadband network is a \$9 million multiphase capital project.

Results from the surveys, discussions, and infrastructure inventory will be analyzed in conjunction with input from these stakeholder groups to establish a strategy and action plan for the City.

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