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Portsmouth Building Broadband Fiber Network
Construction begins on 55-mile fiber network in July

(**PORTSMOUTH, VA – April 13, 2018**) – Earlier this year, the Portsmouth City Council, adopted four big new initiatives, one being that the organization would take strides to become a smart city. Implementing a fiber design master plan, Portsmouth has sent out an RFP (Request for Proposal) to construct a community broadband network. The project encompasses 55 miles of state-of-the-art fiber optics that will increase internet connectivity around the city. The 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. Construction could begin as soon as July. "It's a five-year build-out that will make Portsmouth a digital port as well as a seaport," said Daniel Jones, chief information officer. The community broadband network is a $9 million multiphase capital project.

Jones noted that the foundation for smart city initiatives is connectivity. "Our project will connect all municipal facilities including schools, libraries and municipal housing authority properties. Right now, Portsmouth is internet carrier dependent. The broadband network will improve municipal operations at a substantial cost savings."

Broadband, commonly referred to as high-speed internet access, provides wide bandwidth of data transmission which transports multiple signals and traffic types. "This project helps with regional connectivity between cities and will be a catalyst for economic development," Jones continued. "Knowingly or unknowingly, every business relies upon connectivity, just as they rely on public utilities. If you have a tech firm or other high bandwidth users – such as modeling and simulation, a pharmacy or research company, your company needs that high bandwidth." Jones added that it can be very expensive for these kinds of companies to purchase high bandwidth through a carrier – costing thousands of dollars per month. "If that business can connect to a fiber network and reach a wholesale provider, that same connection is a fraction of the cost. The options are limitless."

For more information on Portsmouth's community broadband network, contact Daniel Jones, chief information officer at 757-393-8871.

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