

January 30, 2006

TO: John Szerlag, City Manager

FROM: John M. Lamerato, Assistant City Manager/ Finance and Administration
Brian P. Murphy, Assistant City Manager/Services
Gert Paraskevin, Information Technology Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item** – Wireless Oakland

SUMMARY:

This report is intended to address the concerns expressed by Councilman Martin Howrylak in regards to utilizing city assets to provide free wireless Internet access to Troy residents, and thereby potentially broadening the exposure of our youth to Internet predators.

1. The city assets provided by the City of Troy are merely the physical locations to attach the wireless devices to, such as light posts. The wireless network will in no way utilize the City's existing network.
2. To gain access to Wireless Oakland requires a personal computer, laptop, personal digital assistant (PDA), or similar device equipped with a standard Internet browser and a Wi-Fi compliant Ethernet card.
3. Each user must register via a connection gateway and create a login and password to gain access to the Internet.
4. The wireless network will be "open", in that it is not a secure network. Users should always make sure they are on a secure (encrypted) Web page prior to sending or receiving confidential data. Users should also always make sure that when accessing the Internet they take appropriate security measures such as utilizing a firewall, current virus protection, and updated software.
5. Similarly the Wireless Oakland Project does not include any content filtering or activity monitoring. Under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, content filtering may be permitted when children will have exclusive access. However, since Wireless Oakland makes Internet service available to all, content filtering would likely raise First Amendment concerns. Parents, as well as anyone browsing or accessing sites, should be aware of potential predators. Predators can establish contact with kids through conversations in chat rooms, instant messaging, and e-mail or discussion boards. As with any other Internet service (wired or wireless), it is the responsibility of the adult(s) in the household to have appropriate filtering software or to supervise on-line activity.

BACKGROUND

Resolution #2005-12-556a authorized the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Wireless Oakland Inter-local and License Agreement between Oakland County and City of Troy.