



Council Study Session Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA

Monday, June 2, 2025

Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street

Live stream via RVTV Prime at rvtv.sou.edu or broadcast on Spectrum 180 & 181.

Public testimony will be accepted for agenda items only.

If you would like to submit **written testimony** or **speak electronically** during the meeting, please complete the online [Public Testimony Form](#) by **10 a.m. the day of the meeting**.

5:30 p.m. Study Session

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **Strategic Communications**
 - a. Strategic Communications
- III. **AFN Pilot Program Update and Next Steps**
 - a. AFN Pilot Program Update
- IV. **Council Appointment Voting Method**
 - a. Council Vacancy Appointment Options
- V. **ADJOURNMENT**

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Alissa Kolodzinski at recorder@ashlandoregon.gov or 541.488.5307 (TTY phone number 1.800.735.2900). Notification at least three business days before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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Council Study Session

Date: June 2, 2025

Agenda Item	Strategic Communications
Department	City Manager's Office
From	Dorinda Cottle, Communications Officer

TIME ESTIMATE

15 minutes

CATEGORY

Informational - this is to inform the body on a particular topic. No motion or direction needed.

SUMMARY

Informational Presentation on City of Ashland communication strategy and approach: Where We've Been, Where We Are, and What's Next.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Communications support the City's core priorities.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For nearly five years, the City operated without a dedicated Communications professional. During that time, engagement with media was minimal, website updates were inconsistent and social media use was sporadic at best. The City newsletter stopped entirely for more than two years. Meanwhile, our website became outdated, difficult to navigate and functionally limited.

With the hiring of a Communications Officer, the City has revamped its communication approach. This agenda topic is to present slides on what improvements the City has made and what changes are ahead.

FISCAL IMPACTS

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. StrategicCommunication_CoA_6.2.25



Photo Bob Palermi

Strategic Communications

City Council Guidance – June 2, 2025

Communications Goals

When it comes to communicating, we are...

Accurate – We are a trusted source of information for the community.

Accessible – Information is in a style and format that people can easily access and understand.

Timely – Information is available early enough that the community can proactively provide feedback and make effective personal decisions, if needed.

Engaging – Communication is two-way, interesting, and it helps people feel connected to our community.



Communication in the Past

We struggled to meet our goals.

NO DEDICATED VOICE –The Communications role was vacant from March 2018 for nearly 5 years, leaving the City without a consistent communications presence.

NEWSLETTER PAUSED –Production of the City Newsletter ceased in October 2021 and remained inactive for approximately 2.5 years.

OUTDATED WEBSITE –Challenging to navigate, limited search functionality, inefficient content discovery, and outdated information.

STALE BRAND –The City brand had lost its spark.



Communications Presently

We are making progress.

Accurate

- Dedicated PIO
- Website protocols

Accessible

- New Website
- Sneak Preview
- City Corner/Ashland.news
- Social Media
- Sandwich Boards

- Monthly communications
- Website project pages
- 2x per week News Releases

Timely

- Website Q&A
- Coffee & Conversation
- Office Hours
- Town Hall
- New Brand Identity

Engaging



Better Together

Communications in the Future

Here is what we plan to implement this coming year.

Accurate

- The current protocols in place are working

Accessible

- Videos
- Fully digital newsletter
- Infographics
- Regional outreach

- Welcome new residents & business
- General communication calendar

Timely

- Get-to-know your City (staff and services highlights)

Engaging



Better Together

Challenges

Core issues we will continue to address.

Challenges

Capacity: we are communicating a lot of information, with only one dedicated staff member.

Timing: It can be challenging to match the timing of our communication with when decisions actually get made.

Relevance: we are still learning what topics matter most to our community.

How we plan to address them

Reduce the number of communication channels and/or reduce how we use certain channels.

Better align communication plan with City Council agendas. Share when decisions are delayed.

Continue to assess which topics have the most engagement on our various platforms.



Priority Topics

Here is how we prioritize what we communicate.

- Emergency messaging
- Changes to fees or cost-of-service
- Large-scale projects that will impact access or City services
- Council agenda topics
- Community events



Measuring our Success

How we know if we are meeting our goals.

Website analytics

Social Media statistics

Qualitative feedback



Questions?

Thank you for the guidance and being Better Together!





Council Study Session

Date: June 2, 2025

Agenda Item	AFN Pilot Program Update
Department	Department of Information and Technology (DoIT)
From	Chad Sobotka, AFT Manager, Mariane Berry, Finance Director

TIME ESTIMATE

20 minutes

CATEGORY

Staff Direction - provide direction to staff on the body's desired next steps.

SUMMARY

The Ashland Fiber Network (AFN) will provide an update to the PON Pilot Project, which was approved by the City Council in the Spring of 2023. We will also present options for continued growth and expansion, with the goals of extending gigabit service to more than 60% of Ashland and acquiring more than 5,000 customers.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

AFN's mission aligns closely with many of the Council's goals. The 100% fiber network we are deploying is estimated to reduce power costs by 60% to 80% annually compared to the traditional DOCSIS 3.0 HFC network currently in use. Approximately 4% of our customers qualify for our Internet Assistance Program, which we offer at a rate of \$25 per month. Our focus on delivering high-speed services also benefits local businesses. Throughout the downtown corridor (and beyond), many businesses have access to 500 Mbps service for just \$50 per month. Additionally, we have deployed wireless access points in the downtown corridor and at the Lithia Park Bandshell to provide free internet service.

Vision Statements for Success

Ashland is a resilient, sustainable community that maintains the distinctive quality of place for which it is known

Community

Community affordability

Organization

Excellence in governance and city services

Quality infrastructure and facilities through timely maintenance and community investment

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Council approved the PON* Pilot Project in the spring of 2023 with the goal of passing 500 homes per year with fiber. Funding of \$1 million was approved and allocated from AFN's ending fund balance. Although the project officially began on July 1, 2023, it experienced significant delays due to timing of contract approval and finding/retaining fiber contractors. The work only began in the Fall 2024.

In our presentation, we will provide an update on project construction, costs incurred against budget, and customer reach. We will also review the financial outlook with the increase in market share and Staff-recommended next steps to continue providing stable, cost-competitive high-speed internet to the City of Ashland residents. Part of the presentation will also look at local competition and review what other municipal fiber networks are doing.

As of April 30, 2025, AFN's current Ending Fund Balance is \$2,935,402 with a cash balance of \$2,704,585. It had retired its debt last August 2024, relieving itself of annual debt service of approximately \$1,245,000.





Council Study Session

* *Passive Optical Network*

FISCAL IMPACTS

Staff's presentation includes the recommendation of continuing fiber expansion to increase access to cost-competitive, high-speed internet access across the City. It will include using PON Pilot Project carry-over, funds freed from debt service, and the use of ending fund balance, which is intended to grow as market share increases.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

Staff recommends Council continue to support AFN in its mission to modernize the network infrastructure and approve the use of AFN's ending fund balance.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Communication - AFN 04.03.2023

Council Business Meeting

Date April 3, 2023

Agenda Item	Ashland Fiber Network (AFN) - Business and Technology Planning Presentation	
From	Jason Wegner Chad Sobotka	Director of Innovation and Technology AFN Operations Manager
Contact	jason.wegner@ashland.or.us , chad.sobotka@ashland.or.us ,	

SUMMARY

The Ashland Fiber Network (AFN) provides tremendous value to the City of Ashland. Taxpayers, local businesses, and municipalities throughout the Rogue Valley benefit from our presence. We are a viable alternative to Spectrum and CenturyLink, excel at customer service, and provide significant cost savings to the taxpayers, the City of Ashland, and local businesses.

AFN is a hybrid fiber-coax (HFC) network. Fiber is connected to each of our 38 cable modem nodes. At the node, the fiber is converted to coax which is run to every customer. We currently have 65 miles of fiber and over 125 miles of coax.

Three options for the future of AFN

1. Self-funded full deployment (current model)
2. Non-traditional Public-Private Partnership (network still owned and maintained by the City)
3. Traditional Public-Private Partnership (network owned and maintained by our private partner)

Option 1: Obtain funding to deploy fiber city-wide

This option presents the most risk to the City and also the most reward. For a timely deployment, we will need to hire a third-party company to build the network. We believe it will take 3 to 4 years to connect every building in Ashland to the new all-fiber network at a cost of \$8 to \$10 million.

To help mitigate the risk, we recommend a pilot project first. We will need to bring on temporary staff provided by the union hall to assist with construction. We will connect a maximum of 1024 homes and businesses through four remote OLTs. We anticipate this project will cost between \$885,000 and \$1 million and will take 2 years to complete. The four remote OLTs will be deployed in a wide variety of neighborhoods. This pilot project will allow us to better estimate take rates and build public support for a widespread deployment.

	Vendor 1	Vendor 2
OLT/ONT	\$259,040	\$188,698
Residential Router	\$259,040	\$188,698
Fiber	\$208,000	\$208,000
Labor	\$300,000	\$300,000
Total	\$1,026,080	\$885,396

This table shows pricing from two vendors for the active electronics. The four OLTs will be deployed in the field and the ONTs will be installed at each customer location.

Option 2: Non-traditional Public-Private Partnership

A typical Public-Private Partnership (P3) involves the private company financing, building, and operating a fiber network. Since the City has the staff and experience operating a broadband network, we will likely partner with a private company to assist with financing and building the fiber network. In this approach, the private company will be responsible for designing the fiber layout, purchasing all outside plant materials (fiber, splice cases, optical splitters, etc.), and providing the labor. The City will be responsible for purchasing the active electronics (OLT/ONT). We will continue to operate and maintain the network once it is built. In this option, the city will continue to own the customer revenue base.

It will be difficult to find a private partner who is willing to enter this type of business relationship. Most fiber construction companies are busy building out their own networks, especially with the federal government grants for rural broadband.

In the following table we have provided two examples of how the financial arrangement might be structured. In both scenarios, the City will pay a yearly fee and a per customer fee for 10 years to the private partner.

	Vendor 1		Vendor 2	
OLT/ONT	\$2,660,000		\$1,850,000	
Residential Router	\$804,000		\$636,000	
City Total	\$3,464,000		\$2,486,000	
Supplies	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000
Labor	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
Private Partner Total	\$4,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$7,000,000
Grand Total	\$7,464,000	\$10,464,000	\$6,486,000	\$9,486,000

This table shows the cost estimate for a non-traditional P3. The top section in green shows the cost to the city. The bottom section in orange shows the potential cost to our private partner.

The following two tables provide cost estimates and payout schedules.

	Annual Payment	Customer Count	Payment per Customer	Yearly Payment Total
Year 1	\$250,000	2000	\$5	\$120,000
Year 2	\$250,000	2000	\$5	\$240,000
Year 3	\$250,000	2000	\$5	\$360,000
Year 4	\$250,000	600	\$5	\$396,000
Year 5	\$250,000	400	\$5	\$420,000
Year 6	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$432,000
Year 7	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$444,000
Year 8	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$456,000
Year 9	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$468,000
Year 10	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$480,000
Totals	\$2,500,000	8000		\$3,816,000
Grand Total				\$6,316,000

	Annual Payment	Customer Count	Payment per Customer	Yearly Payment Total
Year 1	\$250,000	2000	\$10	\$240,000
Year 2	\$250,000	2000	\$10	\$480,000
Year 3	\$250,000	2000	\$10	\$720,000
Year 4	\$250,000	600	\$10	\$792,000
Year 5	\$250,000	400	\$10	\$840,000
Year 6	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$744,000
Year 7	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$648,000
Year 8	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$552,000
Year 9	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$540,000
Year 10	\$250,000	200	\$5	\$540,000
Totals	\$2,500,000	8000		\$6,096,000
Grand Total				\$8,596,000

These tables show two potential profit-sharing models.

Option 3: Traditional Public-Private Partnership

This option presents the least risk to our private partner and the most risk to the city. This option represents a typical Public-Private Partnership (P3). Cities who enter a P3 typically receive money through franchise agreements. Most franchise agreements are for 7% of gross revenue minus the cost of any services provided to the municipality. Conservatively, the net value AFN provides the city is \$767,770 (refer to the table on page 6 for details). Assuming the private partner has a typical franchise agreement, they will need to gross nearly \$11 million dollars (7% of \$11 million is \$770,000). A private partner may also value fiber services at a higher rate (which is standard in the Rogue Valley). AFN currently grosses \$2.7 million.

This is the text from Central Point's franchise agreement with Hunter. AFN has a similar arrangement with the City of Medford.

*Grantee shall make its telecommunications services available to the City at its most favorable rate offered at the time of the request charged to a similar user within Oregon for a similar volume of service, subject to any of Grantee's tariffs or price lists on file with the Oregon Public Utilities Commission. **Grantee may deduct the applicable charges from franchise fee payments.** Other terms and conditions of such services may be specified in a separate agreement between the City and Grantee.*

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

AFN is unique because it is one of the few municipally owned and operated service providers in the nation. It is extremely rare to find an internet service provider that has a fiduciary responsibility to their customers. We also have an incredible team that provides superior technical support.

Digital equity and inclusion are a top priority. During the pandemic, we offered free internet service for students and teachers until classes returned to in-person learning. We believe that all citizens are entitled to high quality internet service. This summer we started a pilot program using technology to provide fiber services to apartment complexes. We connected Snowberry Phases I and II (Jackson County Housing Authority) to this service. We offer reduced internet service to those in need (\$25/month). That price will not increase when we deploy fiber. We also offer free wireless internet connections throughout the downtown corridor.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION

From its inception, the Ashland Fiber Network was a bold idea, developed by a community of visionary leaders. Ashland became one of Oregon's pioneers in municipal broadband, developed partnerships with local businesses for construction, and spawned several local internet service providers to assist with sales and customer support. Indirectly, AFN was an economic driver for the community that brought many businesses into the area. Symbolically, AFN served as a beacon to forward thinking people who were attracted to Ashland as a location to create clean businesses and perform digital jobs; residents saw a city with vision, committed to its people, and willing to invest in their future.

Today, AFN continues to receive awards and recognition from state and regional organizations for leadership in delivering broadband internet to their local community. AFN was recognized by other state telecom members with an Excellence in Telecommunications Award for 2021. Despite the introduction of legislation in many states to prevent competition by municipally owned networks, at least 177 other cities either own, or are in the process of constructing their own fiber networks. Over its history, Ashland has been hailed as a pioneer on the path to the smart city of the future.

In 2020, the onset of the pandemic highlighted how even residential access to the internet had become critical for both schools and businesses. Because AFN's mission is based on putting community first, they offered an unprecedented, free cable-modem installation and service plan – for over a year – so that no local students or faculty were excluded from at-home learning, during the 2020 peak of the pandemic. When the Alameda Fire temporarily left AFN as the only operational broadband provider in Ashland for a week, AFN demonstrated the value of having a local team dedicated to their community who – even in the event of a statewide or national emergency – has no higher priority than Ashland families, businesses, and government.

This highlights an aspect of AFN that is seldom recognized: From the beginning, the sole objective of municipal broadband has been to serve the community. All of AFN's operational decisions are made in Ashland, for the benefit of the Ashland community. No competitor can make that claim.

This serve-the-community focus is reflected in every operational decision of AFN. While some providers look for opportunities to monetize customer information or online behaviors, AFN strives to provide customers with the fastest, most consistent, and most economical access to the Internet possible, while covering operational costs and paying down infrastructure build-out debt. These are core values the Ashland community should keep in mind, while investigating new to carry AFN into the future.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Terminology

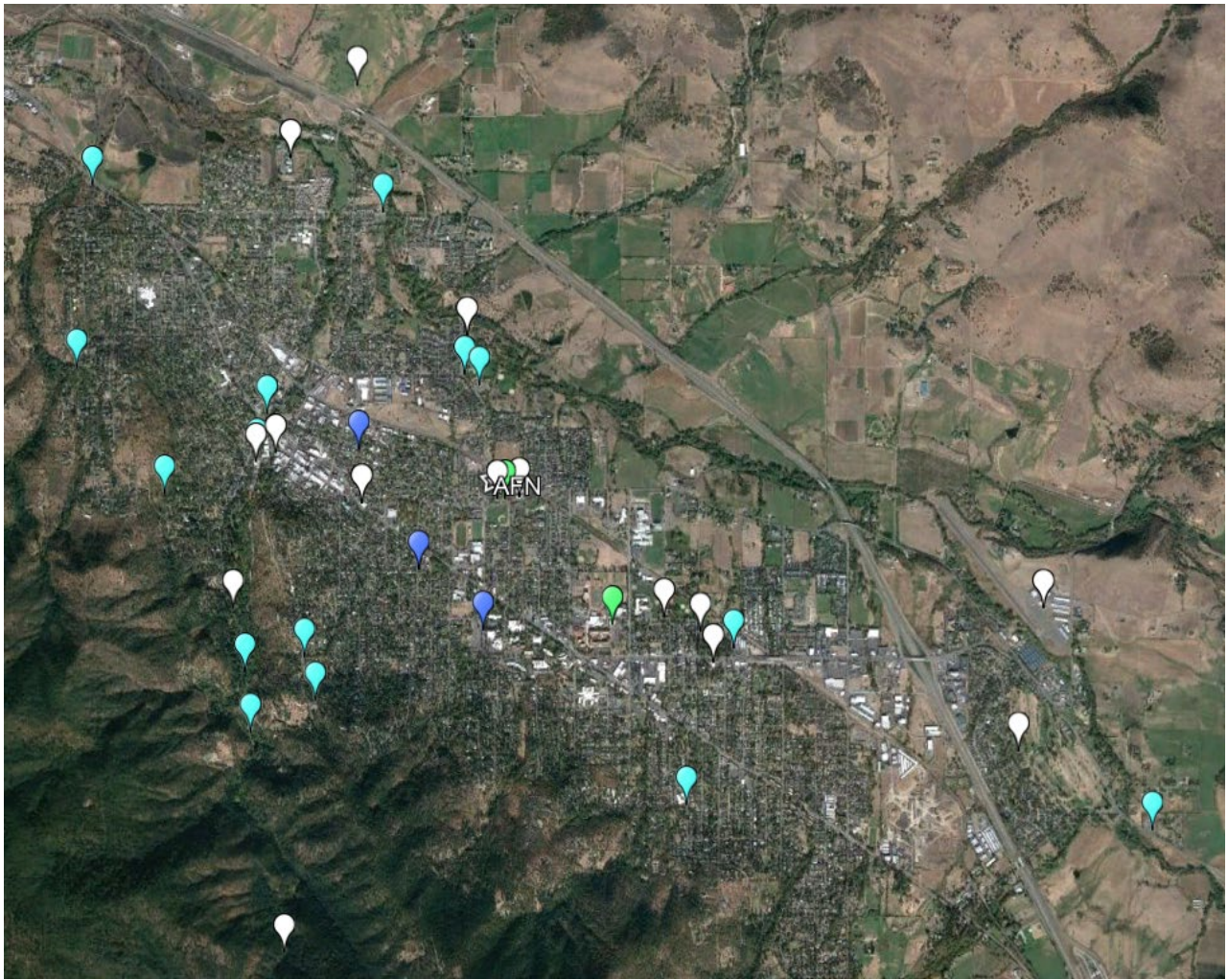
- **Dark fiber:** Dark fiber is when a service provider leases a dedicated strand or strands of fiber to a customer for their sole use. Dark fiber means the service provider will not “light” the fiber with their equipment. Dark fiber typically costs more than lit service because the service provider must dedicate a single strand to a single customer.
- **Lit service:** Lit service means the service provider supplies the equipment to connect the fiber to the customer, usually through a network switch. Lit service has two options: internet service (also called DIA) and point-to-point (connecting two locations with no internet access). Lit service is often connected to a fiber ring where a single strand serves multiple customers.
- **GPON:** Gigabit Passive Optical Network. Internet technology that uses prisms (Passive) to split the laser light (Optical) to deliver Gigabit internet service to multiple customers. Since the cost is shared among up to 64 customers, profit margins are greater than lit service.
- **XGS-PON:** The latest GPON standard. XGS-PON delivers up to 10 gigabit symmetrical service.
- **ONT:** Optical Network Terminal. Sometimes referred to as an ONU (Optical Network Unit). This is the GPON equivalent of a cable modem. It is installed at the customer premises and converts fiber into Ethernet. The customer plugs their wireless router into the ONT.
- **OLT:** Optical Line Terminal. Up to 64 customers connect to a single OLT port. There are multiple OLT ports on a network device. Also referred to as a PON port.
- **Remote OLT:** This device contains anywhere from 4 to 8 OLT ports in a hardened (weather sealed) enclosure. The remote OLT can be pole or strand mounted and is powered by our existing cable node power supplies. Anywhere from 256 to 512 customers will connect to each remote OLT.

Municipal Services Provided

AFN provides 47 strands of fiber to the city:

Fiber for City Services	
Fiber for City Buildings	27
Fiber for SCADA	17
Fiber for RVTv	2
Fiber for APD to Medford	1
Total number of strands	47

AFN also provides the City with redundant internet connections and as many public IP addresses as they need. AFN does not charge an installation fee for City fiber projects. We bill the department for raw materials (fiber, splice cases, etc.) but do not mark-up our costs.



This map of Ashland shows every fiber connection provided to the city. White markers are City buildings. Aqua markers are SCADA. Dark blue are current fiber projects. Green markers are for RVTV.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Value of Municipal Service

To calculate the value of services AFN provides the City, we have researched previous fiber contracts between the City and other service providers, current contracts with other municipalities, franchise agreements, and fiber pricing within Oregon and across the country. Using this information, each strand of dark fiber that AFN provides the City is valued between \$400 to \$900 per month. The value of the multiple redundant 1 gigabit internet connections (DIA) is valued between \$1,500 to \$2,000 per month.

In addition to fiber services, AFN also contributes \$584,170 to the city each year in the form of central services fees, facility fees, and maintenance fees. Please refer to the following table for the breakdown of services and fees.

Customer/Provider	Service	Monthly Cost
Ashland Police Department	Point-to-point lit fiber (100 megabit)	\$648
Ashland Police Department	Dark fiber	\$864
City of Medford	Point-to-point lit fiber (100 megabit)	\$355
City of Medford	Point-to-point lit fiber (100 megabit)	\$408
City of Medford	1 Dark fiber & 1 point-to-point lit fiber (1 gigabit)	\$1,286
City of Medford	BGP internet service (100 megabit)	\$1,800
Medford Water Commission	DIA (1 gigabit)	\$1,699
Medford Water Commission	DIA (1 gigabit)	\$1,789
Medford Water Commission	DIA (1 gigabit)	\$915
Medford Water Commission	DIA (100 megabit)	\$495
Medford Water Commission	DIA (1 gigabit)	\$600
Private school	DIA (1 gigabit)	\$1,100
City of Tualatin	Point-to-point lit fiber	\$600
Clackamas Broadband eXchange (CBX)	Dark fiber	\$255
Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB)	Dark fiber	\$31.70 per mile
Tennessee Valley Public Utility	Dark fiber	\$1,000 - \$2,000 per mile
Palo Alto Utilities	Dark fiber	\$213 - \$425 per mile

This table shows the pricing for fiber services in select markets. The top section in orange shows pricing for fiber customers in the Rogue Valley. The bottom section in green shows service provider prices from around Oregon and other locations. CBX and EWEB are both public utilities that were formed to provide the lowest cost services to public entities. CBX estimates that it saves taxpayers over \$2 million each year.

Gross and Net Value of Services and Fees	
Number of strands used	47
Monthly value of each strand	\$400 - \$900
Total monthly value of all strands	\$18,800 - \$42,300
Monthly value of DIA circuit	\$1,500 - \$2,000
Total monthly value of all services	\$20,300 - \$44,300
Yearly value of all services	\$243,600 - \$531,600
Yearly central services fee	\$467,068
Yearly facility use fee	\$83,519
Yearly fleet maintenance fee	\$33,582
Total of all fees	\$584,170
Gross value of all services & fees	\$827,770 - \$1,115,770
Yearly fee paid by the City to AFN	\$60,000
Net value of AFN services & fees	\$ 767,770 - \$1,055,770

*This table shows the breakdown of all services and fees provided by AFN. This does **not** include the \$518,816 that AFN contributes to the debt.*

Ashland School District

AFN provides multiple services to the Ashland School District:

- 2x10 Gbps internet connection
- Network rack in our head-end
- 17 strands of fiber

The value of these services is listed in the table below:

School District Services	
Number of strands used	17
Monthly value of each strand	\$450 - \$900
Total monthly value of all strands	\$7,650 - \$15,300
Monthly value of DIA circuits	\$2,500 - \$3,500
Monthly value of rack	\$1000
Total monthly value of all services	\$11,150 - \$19,800
Yearly gross value of all services	\$133,800 - \$237,600
Yearly fee paid by ASD	\$12,000
Net value of AFN services	\$121,800 - \$225,600

Local Businesses

Local businesses also benefit from AFN's presence in town. Spectrum's least expensive business plan costs \$65 per month for the first year. The full retail price for their business internet is \$80 (non-bundled).

Value Provided to Local Businesses	
Estimated number of AFN cable modem customers	418
Average monthly cost savings for cable modem customers	\$15 - \$25
Total yearly savings for business customers	\$75,904 - \$127,009

This table shows the estimated savings provided by AFN to local businesses.

Total Value of AFN

Conservatively, AFN saves the local taxpayers and businesses almost \$1.2 million each year.

Total Yearly Value of AFN	
Net value of municipal services and fees	\$767,770 - \$1,055,770
Net value of services for ASD	\$119,400
Yearly savings for businesses	\$255,600
Total value of AFN	\$1,161,257

Revenue Forecasts

For the fiscal year of 2021, AFN's revenue from cable modem service was \$2,371,495. The monthly average number of cable modem customers was 4,098. The Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) for 2021 was \$48 per month. AFN has captured about 35% of the market share in Ashland.

We anticipate a slightly higher ARPU for GPON. The ARPU increases as customers upgrade to higher tier service plans.

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Customer Count	4098	4142	4183	4246	4289	4417	4550
Cable Modem Ct	4098	4142	4142	4034	3860	3755	3185
GPON Ct	0	0	42	212	429	663	1365
Cable Modem ARPU	\$48	\$51	\$51	\$51	\$52	\$52	\$52
GPON ARPU	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50	\$50	\$51	\$51	\$52
Market Share	34.15%	34.52%	34.86%	35.38%	35.74%	36.81%	37.92%
Yearly Revenue	\$2,371,495	\$2,514,755	\$2,559,751	\$2,596,109	\$2,670,961	\$2,748,439	\$2,839,082

Year	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Customer Count	4823	5112	5163	5215	5267	5320	5373
Cable Modem Ct	2411	1534	774	0	0	0	0
GPON Ct	2411	3579	4389	5215	5267	5320	5373
Cable Modem ARPU	\$52	\$52	\$52	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GPON ARPU	\$52	\$52	\$52	\$52	\$52	\$52	\$52
Market Share	40.19%	42.60%	43.03%	43.46%	43.89%	44.33%	44.77%
Yearly Revenue	\$3,009,427	\$3,189,992	\$3,221,892	\$3,254,111	\$3,286,652	\$3,319,519	\$3,352,714

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

To remain competitive, we recommend upgrading AFN from hybrid fiber-coax network to one that is 100% fiber (GPON). This is what is known as "fiber to the home." Fiber is a future proof medium. The same strand of fiber that delivered 1 gigabit service yesterday delivers 10 gigabit service today, 25 gigabit service in five years, and 100 gigabit service in ten years. To achieve this, staff recommends pursuing option #1, deploying fiber through a pilot project, which is the lowest cost and presents the least amount of risk. We anticipate this project will cost between \$885,000 and \$1 million and will take 1 to 2 years to complete. Funding sources will need to be identified before proceeding.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

NA



Council Study Session

Date: June 2, 2025

Agenda Item	Council Vacancy Appointment Options
Department	Mayor and Council
From	Sabrina Cotta

TIME ESTIMATE

20 minutes

CATEGORY

Staff Direction - provide direction to staff on the body's desired next steps.

SUMMARY

City Council shall appoint an individual to fill the Council vacancy due to the resignation of former Councilor Doug Knauer. City Council must do this within 60 days (June 14th, 2025) per the City Charter. The appointed individual will service until the next biennial election. Council has supported two options for voting to fill the Council vacancy: 1) Exhaustive Ballot Method, 2) Small Group Ranked Choice Voting. Staff need direction on which method Council will use at the June 3rd, 2025 Business Meeting.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

- Fairness to all applicants
- Transparency, with process conducted entirely in open session
- Simplicity to carry out and follow as an observer
- Clarity in overcoming deadlocks

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The City has 8 applicants to fill the current Council vacancy.

Relevant Charter:

City Charter Article III – Elective Officers, Section 4 – Vacancies specifies the City Council has sixty (60) days from an effective resignation date to fill a vacated Elected Officer position:

Section 4. Vacancies. An office shall be deemed vacant upon the incumbent's death; adjudicated incompetence; conviction of a felony; other offense pertaining to his/her office, or unlawful destruction of public records; resignation; recall from office or ceasing to possess the qualifications for the office; or, in the case of the Mayor or Council Member, upon his/her absence from the City for thirty (30) days without the consent of the Council or upon his/her absence from meetings of the Council for sixty (60) days without like consent, and subsequent declaration of the vacancy by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Council.

A vacant elective office in the City shall be filled within sixty (60) days by the Council electing some qualified person to fill such vacancy. The appointee's term of office shall begin immediately upon appointment and shall continue until a successor, elected at the next biennial election, takes office for the unexpired term. The Council shall have the power, by a two-thirds affirmative vote, to expel any member of the Council for disorderly conduct in Council or inattention to duties. No Council member shall be expelled without notice and a hearing by the Council.

Option 1: Exhaustive Ballot Method

Round 1: Initial Vote

- Each Councilor votes for one applicant.



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- Votes are tallied aloud by the City Recorder.
- If any applicant receives 3 or more votes, they are immediately appointed.
- If no one receives 3 votes, proceed to candidate elimination.

Tie-Breaking Scenarios

Scenario A: 1-1-1-1-1 Split

(Each Councilor votes for a different applicant.)

Step A1 – Revote

- Council votes again using the same pool of candidates.

Step A2 – If Tie Persists

- Each Councilor submits a second-choice ranking.
- First- and second-choice votes are combined (e.g., if Applicant X is ranked 1st once and 2nd twice, they receive 3 points).
- The applicant with the lowest combined support is eliminated.
- Voting resumes with the remaining applicants.

Scenario B: 2-1-1-1 Split

(One applicant receives 2 votes; three others receive 1 vote each.)

Step B1 – Advance the 2-Vote Candidate

- The 2-vote applicant automatically advances to the next round.

Step B2 – Runoff Among 1-Vote Candidates

- A runoff vote is held between the three 1-vote candidates.
- Each Councilor votes for one of the three.
- The applicant who receives the most votes advances to the final round.

Step B3 – Tie in Runoff (e.g., 2-2-1)

- If two applicants receive 2 votes each in the runoff:
 - Both 2-vote candidates advance.
 - The 1-vote candidate is eliminated.

Final Round

The final round consists of either:

- 2 candidates (original 2-vote applicant + runoff winner), or
- 3 candidates (original 2-vote applicant + two tied runoff candidates from Scenario B)

Step Final-1 – Vote

- Councilors vote for one of the remaining candidates.

Step Final-2 – No Majority?

- If no one receives 3 votes:
 - The lowest vote-getter is eliminated.
 - A new vote is held between the final two candidates.



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Step Final-3 – Appointment

- The first candidate to receive 3 votes in any round is appointed.

Option 2: Small Group Ranked Choice Voting

Round 1: Initial Vote

- Each Councilor ranks all eight candidates on a paper ballot in order of preference, one through eight.
- Votes are collected and read aloud by the City Manager while the City Recorder puts them on a spreadsheet projected onto a shared screen and visible to all
- If any applicant receives 3 or more first choice votes, they are immediately appointed.
- If no one receives 3 first choice votes, proceed to eliminate candidates receiving the fewest first choice votes and reallocating their votes to the next ranking candidate still in the running.

Round 2: Using rankings

- If no candidate receives three or more first choice votes, then all candidates who did not receive any first choice votes are eliminated, and the City Recorder strikes through their names on the publicly visible spreadsheet.
- The City Recorder then calls out the name of the candidate with the fewest first choice votes and strikes through their name on the spreadsheet.
- The City Recorder reallocates the vote from the councilor who voted for the candidate with the fewest first choice votes and allocates that councilor's first choice vote to their next ranking candidate still in the running.
- If that results in a candidate reaching three votes, then that candidate is declared winner.

Round 3: If no candidate is declared winner in Round 2, then Round 3 is conducted by repeating steps 4, 5, and 6.

Round 4: If no candidate is declared winner in Round 3, then Round 4 is conducted by repeating steps 4, 5, and 6.

Methodology for breaking ties

- If there is a tie among candidates with just one first choice vote, then the candidate with the highest average score (i.e. the lowest average ranking) is eliminated and vote reallocated to the councilor's next ranked choice still in the running.
- With eight ranked candidates, it's unlikely that candidates receiving one first choice vote would have the same average score, but if that happens, then one of the candidates is eliminated by a coin toss.

FISCAL IMPACTS

NA

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

Staff needs direction on which voting method Council will go with at the June 3rd Business Meeting.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

None



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