

Memorandum

Date: March 21, 2013
From: Joanne Hovis, President, CTC
To: Ms. Dianne Stoddard, Assistant City Manager, City of Lawrence, Kansas
Subject: *Preliminary recommendation on KU-Lawrence fiber sharing*

I understand that the City Commission plans to evaluate the advisability of shared fiber strategies with the University of Kansas (KU). Given the needs of that project, the Commission is likely to address the matter before CTC's final report and recommendations are complete. Accordingly, I have prepared this brief memo regarding that issue, and will address it in more detail in our final report. We base our analysis on the materials we have seen in our conversations with both City and university staff.

The strategies contemplated here include installing fiber in existing conduit, sharing fiber already installed, and providing reciprocal access to rights-of-way and conduit facilities. In addition, there is the potential for future shared construction projects in which facilities would be simultaneously placed for both entities.

In brief, we recommend that the City proceed with this approach. It represents a mutually beneficial opportunity to share infrastructure and lower the aggregate costs to both entities (and the costs to each entity individually) in installing and connecting new fiber facilities. Both the City and university will benefit from sharing installation costs and from gaining access to the others' facilities to bridge gaps and expand the reach of each entity's fiber network.

Each of these strategies is far less expensive and disruptive than construction of new conduit/fiber facilities, with the labor and repair costs therein entailed. Further, the shared approach means that even new construction initiatives need be undertaken only once, rather than the second entity digging yet again to install fiber, which requires repairing the rights-of-way a second time.

These strategies represent best practices in municipal fiber construction and business planning. Similar strategies have been demonstrated in many communities over the past decade as a cost-effective means of expanding municipal fiber for government use and to the benefit of the community.

In particular, collaborative fiber strategies between cities and local universities have proven extremely cost-effective in many American communities: In Seattle, for example, the city, King County, and the University of Washington have collaboratively installed fiber for well over a decade, to mutual benefit; the city's fiber currently connects all local government facilities and enables the city to deliver cost-effective, world-class services to its own users. A similar arrangement in Austin, Texas has resulted in dramatic expansion of fiber facilities and capabilities for the University of Texas, the city, the county, and other public agencies.

In sum, we do recommend that the City proceed. I am available at your convenience to discuss this with you, or with any of the Commissioners. Please do not hesitate to contact me.