

Feb. 1, 2001

CITY OF PHOENIX LEADS I-17 CORRIDOR FIBER INSTALLATION PROJECT

As part of a continuing effort to enhance the telecom infrastructure and business opportunities along the Interstate 17 corridor, the Phoenix City Council has asked staff to proceed with negotiations that will result in the construction of a 32-mile fiber optic loop in north central Phoenix.

This project is an integral component of a broader effort to expand the service of telecom providers to technology centers within the city. The city's Community and Economic Development Department expects that diversifying the base of providers will result in more high-tech companies locating to the area. "In order to compete," said Community and Economic Development Department Director Patrick Grady, "businesses must be able to access an up-to-date telecommunications system. Having a fiber optic loop in this area of Phoenix will greatly enhance economic development there."

The city of Phoenix issued a Request for Information to determine the level of interest from telecom providers to partner on a city-led joint trench. Telecom providers Adelphia, Americom, Mcleod and XO responded with their intent to purchase a total of 11 conduits. The project plans include that the providers will pay 50 percent of their financial commitment prior to the start of construction, with the remaining 50 percent being paid upon completion. Total project cost is estimated at \$13.6 million for a 16-conduit trench.

At its Jan. 30 meeting, the Phoenix City Council directed staff to negotiate contracts with the interested fiber providers, seek new telecommunication providers that may want to purchase conduit and release a Request for Proposals to select a design/build contractor including bid prices. It is anticipated that the Engineering and Architectural Services and Community and Economic Development departments will return to City Council in late summer for a final review of project scope and costs.

The fiber installation project has had strong support from the City Council Transportation and Technology Subcommittee. "This infrastructure located in the I-17 corridor will provide the diversity and capacity needed for high-tech companies to thrive in this New Economy," said District 1 Councilman and subcommittee member Dave Siebert.

The project is expected to take 12 to 18 months to complete from the beginning of installation.