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Westminster Fiber Network Advancing Phase One Complete, Phase Two Underway

Westminster, MD – At the May 8, 2017 meeting of the Mayor and Common Council, City Administrator Barbara B. Matthews provided a status report on the construction of the Westminster Fiber Network, which got underway in 2013. Matthews reported that, to date, the City has constructed 40 miles of conduit, through which approximately 27 miles of fiber optic cable has been pulled.

The Westminster Fiber Network is the Mid-Atlantic's first community-wide gigabit fiber network, creating a competitive local marketplace for Internet services and providing community access to affordable gigabit Internet speeds. The City of Westminster constructs, owns, and maintains the dark fiber network. Under a lease agreement, a private partner installs equipment, lights the network, and provides service to customers. Westminster's private partner is Ting Internet.

Construction of the Westminster Fiber Network is taking place in phases. The Pilot phase, which became operational in September 2015, focused on the commercial areas near Carroll County Airport and the residential area near Carroll Lutheran Village. Matthews informed the Mayor and Common Council that the take rate (the number of customers divided by possible customers) for the Pilot phase of the network was 27% as of May 1, 2017.

Phase One of the Westminster Fiber Network, which became operational in February 2017, encompasses the northwest part of Westminster. This phase of the project includes Bolton Hill, Cliveden Reach, the Village of Meadow Creek, Stoneridge Overlook, and Whispering Meadows. As of May 1, 2017, Matthews reported that almost 52 percent of the homes and businesses in Phase One have elected to have a fiber optic drop brought to their location, positioning them for connection to the Westminster Fiber Network at a future date of their choosing. The take rate for Phase One was 11% as of May 1, 2017.

In her update, Matthews informed the Mayor and Common Council that Phase Two construction of the Westminster Fiber Network was well underway. Phase Two is the area generally bounded by MD 140, MD 31, Bell Road, and Old New Windsor Road. It includes the neighborhoods of Avondale Ridge, Avondale Run, Eagleview Estates, Fenby Farm, Furnace Hills, The Greens, and

Wakefield Valley. Matthews reported that, as of May 1, 2017, over 40 percent of property owners in Phase Two had requested a fiber optic drop be run to their home.

In response to Matthews' status report, Mayor Kevin Utz stated, "These results show that the Westminster model for municipal fiber network implementation is working. This project will positively benefit our community for many generations, and we are all very proud of it."

Common Councilmember Robert Wack added, "The continued success of this very difficult, complicated, and expensive project is a direct result of the outstanding work of City staff and our unique and innovative partnership with Ting, to create an amazing new asset for our community."

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