



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

FROM: CHRIS MCGINNIS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/TOWN ENGINEER

RE: RESOLUTION 25-20: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND TOWN CLERK TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH GLASS ROOTS CONSTRUCTION LLC FOR THE FIBER OPTIC BROADBAND NETWORK CONSTRUCTION SERVICES PROJECT IN FRISCO COLORADO

DATE: MAY 13, 2025

Summary and Background:

Broadband, or high-speed internet, offers numerous community benefits, including improved public services, education, economic growth, cellular coverage, and support for smart infrastructure.

Currently, Town facilities rely on Xfinity business internet and a Lumen copper network, both of which lack speed, reliability, and secure interconnectivity. The Town's current broadband setup is limited as Xfinity business internet provides basic service but lacks symmetrical 1 Gbps speeds, has occasional outages, and does not offer dedicated "dark fiber" for secure use. Additionally, a separate Lumen copper ethernet system is required between Town facilities to provide a secure network and results in slow speeds for the Town servers, and most water facilities completely lack internet access.

Frisco began exploring broadband as early as 2013 with discussions to install conduit for future fiber use during Town project construction. In 2018, over 90% of voters opted out of SB 152, allowing the Town to explore its own broadband solutions. Council revived the conversation in 2019 due to poor cell service and community interest.

In February 2020, Frisco Town Council passed a "dig once" ordinance, requiring joint trenching and conduit installation during utility work in Town rights-of-way. This ordinance has been applied in various areas, including Granite Street, to install conduit for future broadband use. Also in 2020, the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) completed Project Thor, a middle-mile network designed to bring reliable broadband to communities across western Colorado. Concurrently, Town staff were in discussions with NWCCOG about the Thor project, as well as Summit County Government and the Towns of Silverthorne, Breckenridge, Dillon, and Blue River about how to work together to secure grant funding. Since then, several municipalities

in Summit County have connected to Project Thor to provide broadband services to municipal buildings and residents.

Following renewed Council interest in 2022, Frisco issued an RFP for a broadband strategy. However, no contract was awarded, and the project was deferred for another year.

In 2024, the Town was in a better position to pursue broadband options and issued a new RFP for a broadband feasibility report and design with a phased approach that would address both municipal infrastructure and the broader community. A contract was awarded to Bonfire Broadband in early 2024. By August 2024, Bonfire had completed a feasibility report, which provided critical analysis of existing broadband options, competition, community feedback, financial modeling, and high-level network designs for both municipal buildings and key community facilities. This report offered a roadmap for addressing the Town's infrastructure needs and broader broadband requirements, helping to shape the future of connectivity in Frisco.

The findings of the feasibility study were presented to the Council during the September 24, 2024 meeting.

Highlights from the feasibility report:

- Xfinity provides coverage to 99.8% of Frisco with speeds up to 1200/35 MBPS download/upload speeds
- Lumen, AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and satellite internet provides offer services at slower speeds.
- Resident speed tests show a median Xfinity speed of 207 / 24 Mbps upload/download
- 43% of residential respondents said they would definitely switch providers and 50% said they would consider switching
- 82% of business respondents stated they would switch providers
- Residential and business respondents cited a desire for faster speeds, lower costs, and greater reliability as primary reasons for considering switching providers
- Several private sector providers are interested in building broadband in the Town
- Frisco has high housing density and resident desire for another provider, but also has high construction costs due to subsurface ground conditions

Broadband is a wide-ranging term with many different models and options which vary between municipalities. Below is a summary of the major models and differences between these options, all of which were analyzed in the feasibility report and discussed during September 24, 2024 meeting.

Network Models Considered

- *Town Facilities Network (Phase 1)*: Fiber “backbone” serving municipal buildings only.
- *Fiber-to-the-Curb (FTTC)*: Fiber to property lines; private provider completes the last connection.

- *Municipally Owned, Third Party Operated:* Town owns infrastructure; private operator runs the network.
- *Municipally Owned & Operated:* Town owns and manages all infrastructure and services.
- *Public-Private Partnership (P3):* Shared investment and operation between Town and private provider.

The feasibility report showed several broadband models could be feasible in Frisco, but there were also many risks and considerations. The capital costs of the various models and phases ranged from approximately \$2 million to over \$25 million depending on the phases/business model. While a return on investment was possible for many of these models, the payback periods were long, microtrenching of streets would likely be required, and the Town would assume many financial risks due to uncertainty in subsurface conditions and other factors. Additionally, a municipally owned Town-wide network would require additional staff and expertise beyond the Town's current staffing.

For these reasons, Council direction was provided to pursue the municipal network to Town facilities only (Phase 1) and then pursue the possibility of a public-private partnership (P3) to explore fiber to the premise options for businesses/residents without the need for a significant financial contribution.

The Phase 1 Town network would include approximately three miles of Town fiber optic cable and conduit connecting all Town-owned facilities to Project THOR through an existing connection at the County Commons Building.

Following the September 24 Council meeting, Town Staff finalized the Phase 1 Town network design and advertised the project for bids.

Analysis:

A request for proposal (RFP) was publicly advertised from February 27, 2025 to March 21, 2025 to solicit construction proposals for the project. Nine proposals were received from the following companies at the following bid prices:

Glass Roots Construction:	\$1,000,665.91
Sage Telecommunications:	\$2,843,873.35
Sitewise:	\$1,533,030.54
TAK Broadband:	\$1,463,605.06
Strata Networks:	\$1,771,443.80
Peak Communications:	\$2,332,219.25
MP Nexlevel:	\$1,657,578.81
Neucomm:	\$6,294,731.62
Zero dB Communications:	\$1,543,747.86

Note: The RFP was written for a base bid and a bid alternate. The bid alternate added cost to the contract total, but removed subsurface condition risks off the Town by creating a guaranteed maximum price instead of "adders" which could significantly increase the contract cost. The prices above include the base bid cost plus the add alternate costs.

The Town's procurement policy emphasizes "Best Value" considerations, including price, quality, experience, and sustainability. The proposals were reviewed by Town Staff, and Glass Roots Construction was the highest scoring proposer based on their price and quality, while also being qualified to complete the work based on their experience, past projects, and project team.

Financial Impact:

The 2025 budget includes \$2,000,000 from the Capital Fund and \$250,000 from the Water Fund for a total of \$2,250,000. Additional expenses beyond the \$1,000,665.91 construction contract will be required for pavement restoration, IT equipment, and other miscellaneous costs. However, the total project cost is expected to be within the \$2.25 million budgeted.

The annual operating costs of the network are estimated at \$50,000 annually, but would eliminate approximately \$120,000 per year currently paid to Comcast, resulting in annual savings of \$70,000 per year.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Broadband improvements enhance Core Services by adding valuable infrastructure, improving communication, enhancing public safety through greater reliability, and improving security. Broadband can also support a thriving economy through future phases which could serve businesses and provide for further economic development.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that Council adopt Resolution 25-20 and authorize the Mayor to sign the Fiber Optic Broadband Network Construction Services contract with Glass Roots Construction.

Reviews and Approvals:

This report has been reviewed and approved by:

- Tom Fisher, Town Manager
- Diane McBride, Assistant Town Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Resolution 25-20
- Attachment 2 – Fiber Optic Broadband Network Construction Services Contract