

Supervisor's Column
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Wi-Fi in the Works for Brighton

When was the last time you logged on to the Web? Some of you may be reading this column on-line, right now. At some point today, many of you will likely check your e-mail, chat with family and friends, browse news and sports, watch a program, research a topic or conduct business on the Internet.

As the world goes wireless, and Rochester renews its focus on supporting a high-tech economy, Brighton is diligently pursuing Town-wide wireless Internet access, or Wi-Fi, through the placement of broadband network connectivity antennas at regular intervals throughout the Town. Our progress on this front re-affirms our commitment to narrow the “digital divide,” our position at the vanguard of local municipalities, and our enthusiasm in embracing progress for the public good. By encouraging WiFi providers to offer service to all residents, our goal is to make Brighton a wireless “hot spot” – yes, even in the winter! – and give every household and business the means to hop on-line with minimal hassle.

A recently-completed feasibility study is allowing us to create proactive Town code regulations governing the placement of antennae, which will enable vendors to “blanket” the Town with Wi-Fi service while maintaining its visual beauty. We are preparing to issue a Request for Proposals, or RFP, to encourage vendors to provide service within the Town, with an eye toward achieving a partnership that will offer the best value and service. To that end, we are in discussions to enter into a consortium with other Towns to jointly pursue wireless service. In consultation with experts at RC

Hawaii, Ltd., we are seeking to leverage Town assets, such as light poles and buildings and public rights-of-way, to support a network of access points with Town-wide reach.

Earlier this year, Monroe County announced a partnership with Frontier Communications to set up a wireless network along shared thoroughfares, such as county roads, to cover patches of the county. This is a good first step, but this Wi-Fi may be limited to “hot spots” along commercial corridors and in parks, lacking sufficient reach to extend into neighborhoods. The configuration of our Brighton Wi-Fi system would enable residents in all neighborhoods to connect to the Internet, boost their productivity, reach out to friends and family, and start exploring virtual worlds!

Whenever you're on-line, we hope you'll visit www.townofbrighton.org. Why not make it your home page? In August, you will enjoy a redesigned, user-friendly municipal Web site with easy navigation, enhanced accessibility, and other features to improve communication between our Town government and those we serve.

In the meantime we hope to see you at upcoming spring and summer festivities in the Town, such as the annual Bike Rodeo this Saturday, May 19 at Twelve Corners Presbyterian Church on S. Winton Road - where children from ages 5 to 11 can test their riding skills, receive bike safety check-ups and learn the rules of the road. Children will also enjoy food and drinks, painting, balloon animals and entertainment by Rosco the Clown. Please call Brighton Recreation at 784-5260 to sign up for this traditional Brighton safety program.