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Title: Report on Town of Carrboro Participation in the Orange County Public and Education Network (OPEN) Initiative

PURPOSE: To report to the Board of Aldermen on the Town's participation in the local OPEN initiative and the efforts being made toward interconnecting, sharing and expanding fiber optic infrastructures located throughout Orange County.

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TITLE:

Report on Town of Carrboro Participation in the Orange County Public and Education Network (OPEN) Initiative

PURPOSE: To report to the Board of Aldermen on the Town's participation in the local OPEN initiative and the efforts being made toward interconnecting, sharing and expanding fiber optic infrastructures located throughout Orange County.

DEPARTMENT: IT

CONTACT INFORMATION: Andy Vogel, 919-918-7305

INFORMATION: Information Technology Departments from Orange County, Town of Carrboro, Town of Chapel Hill, OWASA, UNC, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) and Orange County Schools have begun exploring ways to interconnect, potentially expand and leverage these organizations' existing networking infrastructures. Interconnecting local organizations with very high bandwidth capable infrastructure is the foundation on which meeting current needs and allowing for future advancements depend.

Working informally as the Orange County Public and Education Network (OPEN) the group is currently exploring the initial steps toward connecting the various organization's network infrastructures. When technically possible and economically feasible the group will leverage existing member owned fiber optic cable and duct infrastructure to interconnect. Wireless links may be deployed in some cases. The overarching idea is that all organizations will attempt to build toward each other when the opportunity presents itself.

At the core of this initiative is also the desire for the participating organizations to swap and share unused fiber

optic strands and wireless connections across member's infrastructure at no cost (while original ownership is maintained).

Smaller and more localized break off opportunities from the larger OPEN discussions have also occurred. The Town continues to work locally by maintaining the free Downtown Wi-Fi, now based almost entirely on fiber optic infrastructure - fast and reliable, while also using that same infrastructure to partner in different ways directly with various Carrboro based organizations.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: None

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend that the Board of Aldermen Receive the Information.