



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Communications

Date: November 30, 2009

To: City Council Member Paul Ostrow, Chair, Ways & Means/Budget

Referral to: City Council

Subject: Wireless Community accounts

Recommendation: Approve applications for 14 free Wireless Community accounts

Previous Directives:

Department Information

Prepared by: Jennifer Lastoka, Community Engagement Coordinator

Approved by: Sara Dietrich, Director of Communications

Presenters in Committee: Jennifer Lastoka, Community Engagement Coordinator

Financial Impact

- No financial impact

Supporting Information

In its continuing efforts to make Minneapolis a wireless city that bridges the digital divide, on August 24, 2009 the City of Minneapolis approved 51 accounts for 100 "Wireless Community" accounts, which are free wireless Internet accounts intended for non-profit organizations that provide free computer access to the public. The free accounts will be good through 2010.

From August 25, 2009 to October 31, 2009, staff completed a second call for applications, with targeted outreach to groups that serve people with disabilities, seniors, charter schools, and agencies/organizations that serve populations or geographic areas where there may be service gaps. The applications received since have been reviewed by the City of Minneapolis staff using the criteria established by a group of community representatives who have been working with the City on digital inclusion. The eligibility requirements established by the community representatives for Wireless Community free accounts:

Must be non-profits located in the city of Minneapolis, and that:

- Provide public computer access ("community technology centers")
- Provide technology literacy training, and/or
- Provide technology support for underserved communities

The staff recommendation is that the City Council approve the 14 applications for Wireless Community accounts.