



Office of Mayor Tom Potter
City of Portland

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Portland Closer to Becoming “UnWired”
MetroFi selected to build Portland wireless network

Portland, OR – April 12, 2006 – Free and dependable wireless Internet access for all Portland residents moved one step closer to becoming a reality as the City released a Notice of Intent to Award a contract to MetroFi, an innovative company headquartered in Mountain View, California. MetroFi beat out two competitors – EarthLink and VeriLAN – by submitting a proposal that excelled in demonstrated operational experience and its level of public benefit.

“We are proud to partner with MetroFi in this effort to bring ubiquitous wireless Internet access to the city of Portland” said Portland Mayor Tom Potter. “I am eager to see the technology employed to help streamline city services and enhance public safety communications.”

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman also praised the announcement. "This partnership between MetroFi and the City represents a monumental effort to bridge the digital divide. Free wireless Internet access will benefit residents, businesses and the city’s many visitors."

Wireless technology also advances Portland’s competitive advantage at the global level to attract and retain businesses. Having the right infrastructure to attract businesses and knowledge workers increasingly means digital, ubiquitous and unwired. In taking steps to better connect citizens to information, Portland will build an informed and educated citizenry with free access to key government, community, and business services.

The City will use wireless capability to make its own operations more efficient, including processing city parking meter transactions, connecting government employees stationed at field offices, and providing better information to emergency services. Project partners TriMet and Portland Public Schools will also benefit, as students and field workers will be connected at a lower cost than is currently possible.

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“As the industry leader in designing, building and operating Wi-Fi networks, we are excited to be selected by the City of Portland to deliver world-class, city-wide wireless Internet access,” said MetroFi CEO and co-founder Chuck Haas. “Portland’s vision of utilizing the MetroFi network for smart parking meters, fixed and mobile wireless connectivity, and affordable Internet to all residents is defining how cities partner with the private sector.”

Founded in 2002, MetroFi launched an advertising-sponsored free Wi-Fi service in Sunnyvale, California last year. The free service was quickly extended to the company’s subscriber networks in Cupertino and Santa Clara, California, and MetroFi recently won rights to unwire Aurora, Illinois. At 134 square miles, Portland represents MetroFi’s largest coverage area yet.

MetroFi will offer both a free service and a variety of subscriber-based plans to local businesses and citizens within Portland, based on Wi-Fi and pre-WiMAX technologies. Free service will be supported by advertisers purchasing banners and splash pages within the web browser. As part of this, the City has taken precautions to protect the privacy of individual users.

An evaluation committee made up of a diverse group of area citizens, business representatives and technology experts made the final recommendation to the City of Portland. The three primary anchor tenants of the network, the City of Portland, Portland Public Schools and Tri-Met, also participated in the review of proposals. Companies were evaluated on their business approach, relevant experience, financial capability, diversity in hiring and sub-contracting, proposed cost, and proposed public benefit.

Once contract negotiations are finalized, MetroFi will begin detailed design and permitting, with concept testing anticipated this summer. When the system is deemed fully functional, downtown and the inner eastside will be blanketed with wireless access. Full city coverage is expected within one to two years.

Recipient of the Wireless Ventures’ Investors’ Choice award, MetroFi is a private company with venture backing from Sevin Rosen Funds and August Capital. The company website is www.metrofi.com.

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