

## Expand and Enhance Wi-Fi Services Supporting Public Spaces at RC Facilities

We are proposing an investment into building infrastructure and wireless technologies to expand and enhance Wi-Fi services for staff and residents. With this proposal, we will eliminate a history of ad-hoc, disjointed investments with a centralized, enterprise-wide Wi-Fi service supported by Property Management and Information Services.

### Benefits of investing in enhanced Wi-Fi services

#### **Responsive to requests for expanded Wi-Fi coverage**

- Ramsey County's daily operations have modernized and now require high speed bandwidth capabilities for video streaming (and video calls) along with Bluetooth functions to enable modern life safety functions.
- We have seen a significant increase in requests from departments to expand the Wi-Fi coverage at facilities across the county. This solution would eliminate an outdated, patchwork approach to Wi-Fi services.

#### *Supports*

- ✓ Residents First strategic priority.
- ✓ Health, safety and legal mandates.
- ✓ Asset preservation.

#### **Reduce digital disparities**

The last few years have highlighted the digital equity disparities that exist in the county. Modeling after our libraries, we can provide safe digital spaces for residents to work, study, and play.

#### *Supports*

- ✓ Advancing Racial and Health Equity and Shared Community Power strategic priority.
- ✓ Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion strategic priority.

#### **Modern safety features for staff**

Modern Wi-Fi services at county facilities will also enable several new life safety features at Service Centers related to Deputy Call Alert and other "Staff Duress, Emergency Responder" features.

#### *Supports*

- ✓ Asset preservation.
- ✓ Efficiency.
- ✓ Health, safety and legal mandates.

#### **Strengthen community**

This investment will directly strengthen individual, family and community health, safety, and well-being.

#### *Supports*

- ✓ Advancing Racial and Health Equity and Shared Community Power strategic priority.
- ✓ Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion strategic priority.

### Modernize Library technology

- Wi-Fi service would now be able to support video conferencing and other high network traffic uses.
- Provides more spaces for residents to use county spaces for work, school or skills development.
- Enhances access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses at RC facilities.

#### Supports

- ✓ Asset preservation.
- ✓ Efficiency.
- ✓ Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion strategic priority.

### Planning and investment

We worked with a trusted vendor to obtain high-level quotes that can be used for planning purposes. Then partnered with Property Management to estimate facility infrastructure costs. Because of the scope and scale of this proposal, the final costs for this initiative will be impacted by requirements decisions.

Key future decisions will need to be made:

- How many facilities?
- What spaces?
- How much bandwidth should we provide to Ramsey County Residents at RC facilities?

<i>Category</i>	<i>Investment</i>
<i>Facility Infrastructure</i>	\$550,000
<i>WIFI Infrastructure</i>	\$1,400,000
<i>Installation Services</i>	\$500,000
<i>Contingency</i>	\$80,000
<i>Project Manager</i>	\$270,000
<i>TOTAL</i>	\$2,800,000

Because of the wide-ranging possibilities, we have made a very conservative estimate that proposes to expand Wi-Fi services at more than 30 different county facilities. All of the departments across the County have requested an updated, centralized approach.

**Funding source:** County funds

### Risks of not investing in enhanced Wi-Fi services

#### Critical updates and service centralization needed

- This work is already overdue at the Ramsey County Libraries. The public facing Wi-Fi services at those seven facilities has been out of support from vendors since 2021.
- At other county facilities, there is limited and often ad-hoc public Wi-Fi capabilities. Many departments at Ramsey County use their own department funding to pay for independent Comcast Cable Internet services to provide public Wi-Fi services.
- Departments that have submitted requests for enhanced Wi-Fi Services in past 18 months:
  - Public WIFI at all WIC Clinics.
  - Public WIFI at all Service Centers.
  - Public WIFI where Work Force Solutions operate.
  - Public and Staff WIFI throughout the RC Courthouse.
  - Public WIFI at dozens of Parks and Rec's Facilities.

#### Digital equity divide

Ramsey County facilities will continue to underserve the digital equity needs of county residents.