

News

ConnectGRADD expected to remain an internet option

By Nathan Havenner Messenger-Inquirer

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Daviess Fiscal Court is working on bringing fiber internet to every residence in Daviess County that's outside the Owensboro Municipal Utilities service area, but it is expected the long-running ConnectGRADD wireless internet service initiative will remain an option for county residents.

"I am assuming they would continue to operate together," Judge-Executive Al Mattingly said. "ConnectGRADD is a consortium of eight counties, so it is not just dependent on Daviess County."

ConnectGRADD, which began in 2007, is a partnership between WATCH Communications and GRADD that provides internet services to rural areas in Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, Hopkins, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster counties.

Mattingly said Daviess County residents currently subscribing to ConnectGRADD services will have the option of subscribing for high-speed broadband internet or remaining with their wireless services.

In recent months, Daviess Fiscal Court has been reviewing proposals for the installation of broadband internet, and Mattingly announced during his annual "State of the County" address Thursday that the project should be happening "sooner rather than later."

"There are holes in wireless that you don't have in fiber," he said. "Wireless depends on where you are located in relationship to a tower."

Mattingly said he expects to have an item on the agenda for the next Daviess Fiscal Court meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 13 that will be a proposal for Fiscal Court to hire a company to complete the process for a final contract of a public-private broadband partnership.

According to the ConnectGRADD website, the wireless coverage area offered to those in the GRADD region is 2,660 square-miles.

The ConnectGRADD network is in the process of being upgraded to provide services capable of streaming video, and older equipment is being replaced.

"Certainly, if this public/private partnership goes through, and we are able to wire all of rural Daviess County with high-speed fiber, depending on the price point, I think you will find a lot of folks switching over," Mattingly said.

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