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## Fairfield to become second Ohio city with all fiber-optic network

By Eric Robinette

Staff Writer

**FAIRFIELD** — In 2015, Fairfield will become one of two Ohio cities in which Cincinnati Bell will replace its former copper network with an all fiber-optic network.

The \$200 million project, also being implemented in Bethel, Ohio, came about largely because of Fairfield's business clientele, said Cincinnati Bell spokesman Josh Pichler. Fiber optics are conducive especially to faster Internet connections, he added.

"We've been building out our fiber network here for the last couple of years and have about 40 percent of the region covered today. This coming year, in 2015, we're going to try to accelerate that ... the goal is that by the end of 2016, we'd have about 75 percent of the region covered," he said.

Fairfield and Bethel became pilot projects because "there's a good cross-section of about 700 businesses in both those communities," Pichler said.

Businesses have been notified, and they will notice advantages quickly, especially as companies take advantage of more cloud-based systems like the recently introduced Apple Pay, which allows customers to purchase goods using their iPhones.

"Fiber really meets the need for those kind of operations now. It provides the bandwidth that's necessary, and you can store more data in the cloud ... and at the same time, businesses are adding employees and having a mobile workforce where employees do more and more work on tablets and phones and they work in remote locations," said Pichler. "That speed and connectivity is really becoming the norm."

Moreover, fiber optics make businesses more attractive to companies, who become more likely to locate in cities that have such a network. So in that way, fiber optics becomes an economic development tool. But residential consumers will see their own benefits, Pichler said.

"More people get into gaming and streaming Netflix, and you've got more and more devices connecting on to your wireless network at home. You've got a Kindle and an iPhone and a television. And I think too, more and more people have the expectation that the speed they enjoy at work they want to have at home," he said.

Fairfield Mayor Steve Miller welcomed the project, saying it will give residents more choices.

"That creates more competition as far as digital television, phone and Internet, which is fantastic. It should help make for a great choice for people who live in Fairfield — as the mayor and a resident, I'm glad to see they're doing it."

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