



## Broadband discussion from HSVPOA CMP

### Description

The HSVPOA Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) discusses Hot Springs Village broadband service and the many challenges associated with this issue. This is discussed on pages 154 and 155. The CMP makes some very valid points regarding the challenges HSVPOA faces in providing adequate broadband service to the community.

### OBSERVATIONS

The HSVPOA CMP makes some detailed observations regarding broadband service in the Village.

- There are several providers of broadband in the Village and while some Villagers are given a choice of providers, there are other Villagers that do not have adequate broadband service.
- Some Property Owners' Associations provide free public wifi.
- There may be home sales lost due to the broadband issue.

### Lack of broadband services affects Villagers and potential Villagers

The limitations and lack of access to adequate broadband in Hot Springs Village may be affecting home sales. Many potential residents will not consider moving to a location where they cannot obtain the internet service they need to work out of their home and/or conduct personal business online. In this modern life, people spend a lot of time banking, shopping, working from home, corresponding with friends and relatives; all this is done on the internet. People are increasingly less apt to do without adequate broadband coverage.

### Covering the Village with broadband services may be unprofitable to service providers

It may not be profitable for broadband providers to service the Village as population density is very spread out over a large area. Broadband providers need to recoup their costs and make a profit. Due

to the rural environment of the Village, it is less profitable for broadband providers to provide service than in a highly-dense city environment.

### **Service providers offering more cellular network services**

The CMP states that AT&T is providing more service using cellular networks. In the past, broadband was provided to homes using cable, fiber optics and phone. AT&T is providing more services using cellular technology.

Much more of the Village has cellular coverage than broadband coverage. But presently, we do not know when higher-speed cellular broadband will be available. This may take time before it reaches the Village.

### **AT&T Discontinuing DSL**

According to the CMP, AT&T will no longer be offering DSL services. While AT&T's services in the Village are becoming fewer, Suddenlink has expanded its services. But, due to the Village's sparse and spread-out population, this expansion is limited.

Broadband service within the Village is not limited by trunkline access and capacity. LightWave provides major fiber optic infrastructure along our main thoroughfare, DeSoto Blvd. There is available space on the [trunkline](#) equipment.

### **It is illegal for Arkansas municipalities to provide broadband service**

Across the United States, there are many cities like Albany, New York, and Honolulu, Hawaii that offer free wifi to their citizens. Unfortunately, in Arkansas, state law does not permit municipalities to do this. As Hot Springs Village is not a municipality. The CMP suggests that possibly the POA could provide broadband services to the residents.

### **Cost is significantly reduced**

The CMP states that lately, the cost of major broadband service equipment has been greatly decreased and providing services to a large area is not as costly or as complicated as it used to be, making the possibility of the POA providing this service possible.

Quoting the CMP:

“Because Cooper and the POA own cell tower land, they could negotiate access to towers for wire-speed wireless broadband not offered by existing service providers. Around POA facilities and within activity centers, the POA could offer free wireless. And in new activity center developments, the POA could offer fiber-optic service to housing and businesses.”  
*Hot Springs Village POA Comprehensive Master Plan*

## Lack of broadband cripples real estate sales

While installation and management of Broadband service require funds, it could be detrimental to real estate sales to not address this issue and provide an adequate solution. The broadband service in Hot Springs Village ranges from good to inadequate. The CMP suggests:

“As an alternative to POA management, they could joint-venture or invest in an independent business which would provide these services, with access to POA infrastructure.”  
*Hot Springs Village POA Comprehensive Master Plan*

## Recommendations

The CMP recommends that Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association work with broadband providers to address this issue. The Governmental Affairs Committee and management have been working on this.

This issue was recently discussed by Greg Jones and the CEO, Lesley Nalley at the Governmental Affairs Committee meeting on July 12, 2019.

[Click here to read Cheri Nelson's report on the Governmental Affairs Committee meeting](#)

Secondly, the CMP advises the POA to

“Inquire about an equipment cost-sharing option with cellular broadband suppliers to encourage faster equipment upgrades in the Village.”  
*Hot Springs Village POA Comprehensive Master Plan*

Thirdly, it is recommended that the POA study the “cost and capacity” of broadband provided by the POA around POA facilities, activity centers, and Village-wide.

Tom Blakeman wrote an article about the broadband issue in Hot Springs Village. Tom made some very interesting observations.

[Click here to read Tom's Blakeman's article](#)

[Click here to read more about the CMP](#)

[Click here to watch Dennis Simpson's video, How to get internet anywhere in HSV](#)

Please consider giving Dennis a thumbs up on his video.

[How to get internet anywhere in Hot Springs Village](#)

[Click here to like Village Venues Facebook Page](#)

While we still have a way to go, management appears to be addressing this issue. Most of this

information was taken from the Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association Comprehensive Master Plan, available for public viewing on [Explore the Village dot com website](#).

I do not profess to be an expert on this subject and the purpose of this article is to start a conversation about this issue. Please scroll down to the comment section below and let us know your thoughts and rate your experience with your Hot Springs Village internet service provider. Thank you.

Cheryl Dowden, July 24, 2019

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