

Internet Infrastructure

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just over two years. We've dedicated a lot of attention there. The council declared this of the highest priority, and it has received the utmost attention."

Young continued about the internet project, saying, "As we've gone along with the project, we learned a lot and have gotten more comfortable with how the project flows. Now we're up and running, we see how easy it is to get it built, and the contractor is getting more familiar with our area. We spoke with other entities that have done this. Sallisaw, Ponca City, and communities outside the state.

"Another thing that made us so successful is hiring the right people. We've definitely hired the right people to design our project, with Monte R Lee Engineering. It's kind of like having a house built. If you pay a little extra to hire the right people, you're going to get a much better product with a lot less frustration.

"When we were doing our budgeting, we projected a 50% take rate. For most neighborhoods, receiving closer to a 60% take rate. Regardless of how many people take the Internet service, the amount the city has to pay back stays the same. Because of that, we've taken steps to adjust our price accordingly. This last week, at the city Council meeting, the council voted to formally lower the price of a Gig package. Now you can get one gig, up and down, for \$99. That replaces our 100 meg package which cost \$100. We expect to make further adjustments to our Internet pricing and packages later this year as we get more people signed up. We will definitely be examining the other packages and their pricing as we get more of the system built this year."

The city has built the internet utility out aggressively.

"We're pretty excited," Ward 3 council member Todd Littleton said of the project. "We've about run



the line as far east as it will go, and we're building out all of the additions along Highway 37, within city limits. We'll have lines from Highway 4 to County Line, from the south all the way to the north boundary. That is, barring the usual weather and construction issues, we should be online by the end of Spring. Then, the attention turns to what we call the downtown area of Tuttle. If everything remains the same, with all of its unforeseen obstacles, we're hoping that between September of this year and January of next year, we should have 96-97 percent of people served."

Littleton said the fiber project is huge for the city. "We think the fiber project will be kind of a

marquee thing for the city," the council member said. "We've discovered there are some other municipalities around the state that are actually looking to see how this works out, because they need some service. There are municipalities in the metro area, adjacent Tri-City communities, one in the north-central part of the state that people would be very familiar with. We hear a lot of criticism that municipalities should maybe not be getting involved in the fiber business. Around the country, there is actually a movement in this direction."

For more information, including monthly costs, visit cityoftuttle.com/fiber, email fiber@cityoftuttle.com, or call 381-8920.

Blanchard

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of July and then go see the bigger cities do their shows.

With a population of 8,267 and the average age of 39, the City of Blanchard's median income is \$169,000. Blanchard is seeing rapid growth, with over 400 new homes being built and several new business openings. This growth is due to its closeness to OKC, Moore and Norman, while also giving families

enough separation from big city problems, as the city was listed as the No. 2 safest city in Oklahoma. (for 2019)

While Blanchard is still listed as a small city, there is never a reason to have to leave town to have great family fun. The Blanchard Parks & Recreation Department invites you to join them for any of their 35 events held throughout the year.

From a laid back concert in the park or a Bluegrass Festival, to the OKC

Symphonic band playing the Stars & Stripes as fireworks light up the sky, this city enjoys all genres of music. If it's parades you like, then you're in luck. The Parks Dept hosts four parades each year: St. Patrick's Day, Homecoming, one of the larger Veterans Day parades, and a lighted Christmas parade.

If you like the big screen, then catch a movie under the stars, grab a bite from some awesome food trucks

as you enjoy other events like Mufflers on Main Car & Truck show, Pumpkinfest and Christmas on Main. With over 35 events held throughout the year, city officials are hopeful they can show you a good time.

"You can find something you and your family can enjoy," said Parks Director Chris Wittenbach. "We are very fortunate to have such a supportive council and administration to work with, and would not be able to do

all that we do without all of our donors, sponsors and volunteers."

For 2019, the City of Blanchard is currently developing a 40-acre park with new walking trails, a fishing pond, and equestrian/mountain bike trails, along with pavilions and facilities. And in 2020, plans are to add another 43 acres, which will include 3.5 more miles of walking track, and will feature more amenities for local residents.