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Philly to buy former Earthlink muni-WiFi network

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Created Dec 17 2009 - 1:03am

The city of Philadelphia said it plans to buy the original muni-WiFi network constructed by EarthLink for \$2 million and turn the whole city into a WiFi hotspot.

The city is exercising an option in an agreement to buy the network from Network acquisition Co, which took over the network from EarthLink in June 2008. Philadelphia intends to purchase the network in a series of steps to enhance public safety and improve government efficiency as well as providing public access in certain areas.

The city said it will spend about \$17 million over its 2011 through 2015 fiscal years to build out both the core fiber network it already owns and the wireless mesh network. But that \$17-million price tag will enable it to save \$9 million in operating expenses over the same five-year period, the city claims. And if it constructed the network on its own, the cost would be more than \$30 million, the city said.

Philadelphia expects to be able to start using the network in a pilot mode as early as spring. EarthLink once had aspirations to blanket cities with WiFi access but abandoned the plan in 2008 as the company's financial position worsened.

For more:

- read this *Philadelphia Business Journal* [article](#) [1]

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