

FAYCONNECT Fayetteville's Digital Connection

FY2026 Strategic Priority

4. Evaluate and expand transportation, transit and other **Connectivity** needs for residents.

The City of Fayetteville is actively prioritizing CONNECTIVITY by investing in new sidewalks, expanding public transit, and strengthening pedestrian infrastructure. In our efforts to establish a more connected community, we should strongly consider DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY, investing in our residents via a robust notifications system.

Benefits of FayConnect

1. Supports proactive engagement, trust in City leadership and stronger participation in public initiatives. **2.** Reinforces equitable access to critical updates and reduces information gaps that can leave vulnerable communities behind. **3.** Creates a cohesive, resilient, and well-informed community. **4.** Complements current physical connectivity initiatives as part of the "...other connectivity" efforts outlined in the city's priorities.

By connecting residents through inclusive, timely, and accessible communications, the city ensures that every household — regardless of income, language, or digital capability — remains digitally connected to essential services, safety information, and civic opportunities.

Scope and Capabilities to Consider

Multi-modal Communication: across devices and platforms (Delivering messages simultaneously via voice, SMS, text, email, social media, push notifications.)

Interoperability: integration with existing city IT systems, CRM/persona records, public safety systems, and emergency management platforms.

Geo-fencing: The ability to send alerts to specific, targeted districts/ neighborhoods rather than the whole city, reducing "alert fatigue".

Two-way Communication: Allowing residents to report incidents (FPD currently looking into) or confirm safety, Survey Responses, Feedback Collection.

Accessibility and inclusion: ADA-compliant interfaces, alternative formats, and multilingual support / Automated translation for diverse communities.

Consent and privacy: opt-in processes, data minimization, retention policies, and compliance with applicable laws (e.g., state and federal regulations).

Analytics and reporting: reach, engagement, delivery success, opt-in rates, and feedback loops. **Security:** robust authentication, encryption in transit and at rest, incident response planning. **Cost model:** initial setup, per-message costs, licensing, training, maintenance, and total cost of ownership. Consider unlimited messages, weigh cost and savings.

Governance: policy framework, roles and responsibilities, and change management.

Governance and Oversight Consideration

1. Establish a FayConnect Steering Committee with representatives from: City Manager's Office, Office of Communications, IT, Public Safety, Emergency Management, Public Works, Community Relations, Legal | 2. Define charter, milestones, and reporting cadence to City Council. | 3. Develop a policy framework for opt-in, data retention, and message frequency guidelines.

Conclusion

A modern, robust notification system is not just a technological upgrade; it is a strategic investment that helps create a more informed, engaged, and digitally connected community.

If approved, staff would be tasked to explore the full spectrum of notification system options, including potential vendors, integration with existing city IT systems, implementation approaches, privacy and security considerations, accessibility, multilingual support, budgeting, and a realistic timeline.

A thorough assessment and recommended path should be presented back to Council. Plan a robust public engagement strategy to inform residents about FayConnect and how to enroll. Provide multilingual resources and accessible formats. Consider a 12-18 month phased rollout with clear milestones and feedback loops.