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<b><i>Expenditures</i></b>	<b><i>\$0</i></b>	<b><i>\$250,000</i></b>
<b><i>Net Balance Effect</i></b>	<b><i>\$0</i></b>	<b><i>\$0</i></b>
<b><i>Total Budget Balance Effect</i></b>	<b><i>\$0</i></b>	<b><i>(\$250,000)</i></b>

***Budget Action description:***

This green sheet would increase appropriation authority in the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) by \$250,000 to hire a consultant to identify areas of the city that are disadvantaged and underserved with Wi-Fi, and to develop a strategy to secure Wi-Fi service for them. The funding would come from the Cable Television Franchise Subfund

The green sheet summary reflects double appropriations through the Cable Television Franchise Subfund and the Information Technology Fund. The total amount of spending is \$250,000.

**Background**

Internet access is the infrastructure challenge of the early 21st century. The internet, and access to the information and services it provides, is essential for economic growth, job creation, education, and a better quality of life. But, the internet only creates value for those who have affordable access and the digital literacy skills to use that access effectively. Not all households in Seattle will be able to afford broadband service or be able to have a provider install the service in their dwelling. However, delivering a Wi-Fi signal to all homes in the city would likely cost in excess of \$50 million.

While there are programs that provide free or low cost wired internet access to low income households in the City, there is still a need to provide adequate levels of connectivity to all of our residents. Previous studies indicate that 85% of Seattle residents have some level of internet access at home. Many of the remaining 15% of households rely on obtaining internet access at libraries, community centers, nonprofit organizations, coffee shops, and restaurants.

Wi-Fi connectivity can serve as a form of social safety net for those least able to afford broadband services. It can also provide a public amenity allowing Seattle residents and visitors increased access to the internet without using cellular data plans.

Currently, the City provides free Wi-Fi at City facilities including City Hall and Seattle Municipal Tower, public libraries, Seattle Center, Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center, and in areas at some Parks and Recreation facilities like Community Centers. Despite having some Wi-Fi deployments, we do not have a coordinated strategy for managing or increasing Wi-Fi access across the city.

This work aligns with the Digital Equity Initiative, which is currently in progress. This Initiative will result in measurable goals and action strategies for increasing internet access and literacy by February 2016. While separate from a Wi-Fi strategy project, the Digital Equity Initiative would inform this work.

**The Proposal**

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Hire a consultant to develop a “Public Wi-Fi Access Strategy” and help pursue both funding and partners to build out Wi-Fi projects. The estimated cost of consulting services is \$250,000 in 2016, to be paid from the Cable Television Franchise Subfund.

Tasks for the consulting engagement would include:

1. Develop and execute a methodology for selecting areas where Wi-Fi broadband can have a meaningful impact.
2. Identify potential funding sources and partners, such as corporations, federal agencies, and granting organizations.
3. Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit partnership ideas for offering Wi-Fi service at low or no cost to the City.
4. Raise awareness of Wi-Fi service currently provided by the City, including considering changes in how the City manages and markets public-facing Wi-Fi service.
5. Identify reasonable start dates for construction/delivery of Wi-Fi service.

Council requests that the consultant report be completed by September 1, 2016.

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**Budget Action Transactions**

**Budget Action Title:** Add \$250,000 appropriation to DoIT, funded by the Cable Television Franchise Subfund, to develop a Public Wi-Fi Access Strategy

#	Transaction Description	Position Title	Number of Positions	FTE	Dept	BCL or Revenue Source	Summit Code	Fund	Year	Revenue Amount	Expenditure Amount
1	Increase Cable Subfund Use of Fund Balance				CBLFEE	Use of (Contribution to) Fund Balance	379100	00160	2016	\$250,000	
2	Increase Cable Subfund Support to Information Technology Fund				CBLFEE	Cable Fee Support to Information Technology Fund	D160B	00160	2016		\$250,000
3	Increase DOIT Fund revenue from Cable Subfund				DOIT	Cable Fund Allocation	542810	50410	2016	\$250,000	
4	Increase DOIT appropriations for WiFi strategy development				DOIT	Digital Engagement	D4400	50410	2016		\$250,000