

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 28, 2005

CONTACT: Shannon Murphy,
Office of the Mayor
213/978-0741

Eva Kandarpa,
Councilwoman Perry's Office
213/473-7009

MAYOR HAHN, COUNCILWOMAN PERRY ANNOUNCE NEW STEPS TO BRING WIFI ADVANCES IN LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles – Mayor Jim Hahn and Councilwoman Jan Perry today unveiled measures that will further advance communication technologies and help establish broadband services in every neighborhood, announcing recommendations made by Mayor Hahn's Wi-Fi and Beyond Executive Advisory Panel. In addition, Mayor Hahn and Councilwoman Perry launched the Pershing Square Wi-Fi "Hot Zone" in Downtown Los Angeles.

"The City of Los Angeles is taking the lead in developing a plan that will build a citywide Wi-Fi network to establish wireless Internet capabilities across the city, and today represents significant and visionary measures that will positively impact the lives of every Los Angeles resident, visitor and business," said Mayor Jim Hahn. "We have collaborated to achieve the most comprehensive telecommunications partnership between a city and the private sector in the nation, and the recommendations announced today will help close the digital divide, stimulate our economy, and make city government even more efficient."

"This represents another step forward for implementing a Los Angeles community broadband network that will enable all residents and businesses to connect with their government, their communities and their world," said Councilwoman Perry, whose district includes Downtown Los Angeles.

"All of Pershing Square is now a Wi-Fi zone, providing communication access for downtown workers, residents and visitors," said Perry, who led the official Pershing

Square Hot Zone launch. “I’d like to applaud the leadership of the Community Redevelopment Agency and the City Departments they partnered with in making this a reality.”

Pershing Square Wi-Fi zone allows broadband Internet access leveraging the ExperienceLA.com web portal, which contains links to information on Recreation and Park activities at Pershing Square, the neighborhood, CRA/LA, and the City of Los Angeles. Partnering City departments include Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of Water and Power, Public Works/Street Lighting and the Information Technology Agency. Implementing the project on behalf of the City partners was Verge Wireless that received the contract award through a competitive process.

Last year, Mayor Hahn created a Wi-Fi and Beyond Executive Advisory Panel -- a special panel of telecommunications experts to help extend fast and easy wireless Internet access to every Los Angeles resident. The panel helped examine what role the City of Los Angeles could play in ensuring that these technologies are available to all residents, and how Wi-Fi technologies can be used to retain and attract businesses in Los Angeles and to improve the performance and efficiency of City government. Recommendations of the panel announced today included:

- Providing Internet access in all municipal facilities;
- Conducting a citywide broadband survey to determine if there are any gaps in broadband service availability in Los Angeles;
- Encouraging the adoption of a public/private partnership business model to deploy fast and easy broadband communications services in every neighborhood, and minimize gaps in existing service;
- Conducting a review of the available city-owned physical assets to determine available spaces that could potentially be used to construct broadband networks.

Mayor Hahn also recently announced a plan to eliminate all cellular “dead spots,” and remove unsightly cellular towers by leasing the city’s 120,000 streetlights, 4,500 traffic signals and 900 buildings to the private sector for telecommunication upgrades and revenues. Wi-Fi service is currently available in facilities through out the City of Los Angeles including the Los Angeles International Airport, Los Angeles Convention Center, the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center in Van Nuys, and in Downtown Los Angeles along 1st Street in Little Tokyo.

A copy of the Broadband Executive Panel report can be found at:
http://www.lacity.org/mayor/LA_Wifi&Beyond_0504.pdf

###