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### **ZiPLY Fiber™ and Port Partner to Bring Fiber-to-the-Home in Whitman County**

*Network build will accelerate service and provide opportunity for economic growth in the region; underserved towns will be first to receive technology boost*

**Colfax, Washington (Aug 6, 2020)** – ZiPLY Fiber™ and the Port of Whitman County have today announced a collaboration which will bring the most advanced, purpose-built fiber internet network to new areas of Whitman County for the first time. Construction will take place in Rosalia, Tekoa, Oakesdale, Garfield and Palouse. By entering into this agreement with ZiPLY Fiber, the partnership allows the Port of Whitman County to save about \$1.5 million towards the fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network, which can be redirected to other areas.

“At the end of this project, these rural communities will have services on par with the largest urban areas, and that’s really exciting,” said Joe Poire, Executive Director of the Port of Whitman County. “At the same time, we’re freeing up capital to expand our county’s access to high-speed internet. This is a win-win.”

ZiPLY Fiber, which recently acquired the Northwest operations of Frontier Communications in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, has committed to invest more than \$500 million in its network and services throughout the region. The company is beginning fiber build-out and network improvement projects in markets that have never before had fiber, many of which are underserved communities such as Whitman County.

“We believe you don’t have to live in a big city to get great internet, especially in this time where so many people across the region work from home and engage with their schools, community groups, friends, customers, and work teams online,” said Harold Zeitz, CEO of ZiPLY Fiber. We can make the former Frontier network better and that is why we are here improving service for our existing customers, and alongside the Port, enabling new customers in Whitman County to access fiber internet.”

The CERB (Community Economic Revitalization Board) of Washington supports the Rural Broadband Program awarding grants and opening the door for partnership opportunities with telecommunications providers such as ZiPLY Fiber. In turn, a key component of ZiPLY Fiber’s Northwest-focused strategy is providing the best possible internet services to residents of smaller towns, and stimulating economic development where people have the same needs as in larger cities, but still rely almost solely on DSL or other older technologies for internet connections. Customers will see the best speed, capacity and reliability possible when fiber is introduced.

While some of these projects may take time to finish depending on complexity, scale and geography, the builds will start this year and will continue to take place over the coming year. The agreement maintains an open-access fiber optic network. The Port of Whitman County has long championed this model to promote competitive services for rural residents.

**About Ziplly Fiber**

Ziplly Fiber is headquartered in Kirkland, Washington, and has major offices in Everett, Washington; Beaverton, Oregon and Hayden, Idaho. Most of Ziplly Fiber's executive team, which consists of former executives from AT&T, CenturyLink and Wave Broadband, either grew up in the Northwest or have spent the better part of 30 years living here. That local ownership and market familiarity is an important part of the company mindset and culture.

**About Port of Whitman County**

The Port of Whitman County is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all citizens of Whitman County through industrial real estate development, preservation of multi-modal transportation, facilitation of economic development and provision of on-water recreational opportunities.

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