



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Marianne Bichsel, 206-684-8878 / 206-730-8291 (cell)
marianne.bichsel@seattle.gov
Karin Zaugg, 206-733-9810 / 206-465-8387 (cell)
karin.zaugg@seattle.gov

Free Wi-Fi Access for Columbia City, U-District *Pilot project to attract customers to neighborhood business districts*

SEATTLE - Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, with community and business leaders, launched a City pilot project providing free wireless access to the Internet in the neighborhood business districts of Columbia City and the University District today at The Wellington restaurant in Columbia City.

Free Internet access will also be available within the next month in the downtown parks of Occidental, Freeway, Westlake and Victor Steinbrueck.

“Using technology as a tool to help businesses in our communities attract more customers is another the way the City is working to strengthen our neighborhoods,” said Mayor Greg Nickels.

The goals of the City’s Wi-Fi pilot project are to attract more customers to local business districts, support small businesses, encourage the use of public parks and facilities, and enable more citizens to access City services online.

“This pilot project is a great way to promote Columbia City and the Rainier Valley, and support small businesses,” said Darryl Smith, President of the Rainer Chamber of Commerce, one of the participating organizations.

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The City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development and Department of Information Technology financed this pilot project with support from the University of Washington, Homesight, a non-profit community development corporation, and the Atlantic Street Center, a non-profit organization helping families and communities raise healthy, successful children and youth.

"We're very excited about having free Wi-Fi on the Ave as another way to attract customers to the local businesses here," said Teresa Lord Hugel, Executive Director of the Greater University Chamber of Commerce.

The coverage area for the Columbia City business district is along Rainier Avenue South from South Alaska Street in the north to South Dawson Street, including the Columbia City library, Rainier Valley Cultural Center and the Farmer's Market location.

The coverage area for the U-District business district is along University Avenue between 40th Street and 50th Street and along 45th Street from 15th Street to 12th Street.

For more information about the City's pilot Wi-Fi project, please visit the Mayor's website at www.cityofseattle.net/mayor or call 206-684-8811.

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