



Date: September 15, 2021

Press Release

Immediate Release

Office of the Mayor
Gustavo Olivares

The City of Rio Hondo is pleased to announce that free internet service is now available at the City/County Park at 801 South Reynolds Road. **The Mayor stated “that the service is very much needed and will provide our children a place to do their homework if they do not have internet at home.”** This is a free service to the public made available through a grant from The International City/County Management Association (ICMA-RC), the Bridging the Digital Divide Initiative, a social responsibility campaign to support efforts to increase broadband and internet access in small and rural communities.

“Access to high-speed internet has proven to be essential in our everyday lives,” said Marc Ott, executive director of the International City/County Management Association, “especially during a time when a global health crisis has limited access to many public services. Every member of every community deserves quality broadband connection, regardless of location or demographic barriers.”

Members of ICMA’s Smart Communities Advisory Board selected one winner and four finalists out of 16 competitive submissions from communities across the United States based on population size, community demographics, and barriers to broadband access. The city of Rio Hondo, Texas was announced the winner, receiving \$15,000 in funding courtesy of ICMA-RC to be used towards implementing programs to expand high-speed internet access.

Other finalists were Dumfries, Virginia; Prospect Park, New Jersey; Mathews County, Virginia; and Highwood, Illinois.

“The City of Rio Hondo is very grateful to ICMA-RC for assisting us in providing internet service to our community and to the many citizens that internet is out of their reach” Mayor Olivares.

The Bridging the Digital Divide Initiative was a key theme of ICMA’s UNITE: A Digital Event, and is among one of the first efforts of ICMA’s new Race, Equity and Social Justice Team in their work towards achieving thriving communities

About ICMA

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government management worldwide through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics.

ICMA provides member support, publications, data and information, peer and results-oriented assistance, and training and professional development to more than 12,000 appointed city, town, and county leaders and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA’s members affect millions of individuals living in thousands of communities throughout the world, from small villages and towns to large metropolitan areas.

The City/County Park is open from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm. The Park pavilion will be open daily for use of the internet. The identifier is **RHPublicaccess4**

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