

PRESS RELEASE

TO: ALL LOCAL MEDIA
FROM: TAWNI THOMSON, BISHOP AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & VISITORS BUREAU
DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2015
SUBJECT: I-MAIN FREE WI-FI PROJECT IS NOW "LIVE!"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that the highly anticipated I-Main Street project is now up and running! I-Main is the system that provides free Wi-Fi access to people passing along Main Street and visiting the Bishop City Park.

The I-Main Street concept was first discussed at a Chamber Strategic Planning Meeting in August of 2012. At that time, Angie Aukee and Julie Faber led the discussion and all Chamber Board Members thought it sounded like a great idea. *"We began investigating logistics, budget and possible funding sources,"* explains Tawni Thomson.

When Inyo County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Terry McAteer learned of the I-Main idea, he expressed interest in collaborating with the Bishop Chamber. *"The I-Main Street project fits perfectly with ICSOS's desire to improve technology and internet access for local students and families,"* notes Julie Faber, current Chamber President.

Throughout 2013 and into 2014, Chamber representatives met with ICSOS, City of Bishop staff and several technical experts to develop system specifications and an RFP for the project. The group received bids from several providers and Schat.net was selected as the contractor for the project.

I-Main now provides free Wi-Fi in public spaces along Main Street from Lagoon Street to Maclver Street and into the Bishop City Park. I-Main is not intended to replace a business' regular internet service; the system is simply not designed for one user to have all day, every day access to large amounts of broadband. I-Main is for the benefit of students that need to access the internet for homework & school projects, as well as visitors that may need to check social media, get directions or answer emails.

I-Main users will be greeted with a "splash page" hosted at www.bishop.community. The splash page has basic information about the program and links to lodging, restaurants and activities on the Chamber's main website. Soon, the Chamber plans to offer advertising for sale on the splash page. Advertising revenues will offset the Chamber's ongoing purchase and distribution of the broadband.

"We're so proud of this project and so grateful to Inyo County Superintendent of Schools and the City of Bishop for working with us to bring I-Main Street to our community," states Bishop Chamber President Julie Faber.