

# A small town with a big vision joins the connected world.

The forward-thinking town of Troup, Texas, attracted visitors, boosted businesses and revitalized its downtown with Verizon Fixed Wireless Access.



Troup is an East Texas town of about 2,000 residents known for its holiday events and small-town friendliness. It's home to the annual Holiday in the Country event in November, a Christmas parade in December and other well-attended events. And its downtown is filled with local businesses, restaurants and the ever-popular Splash Pad—a water-spraying pocket park that keeps visitors cool in the mid-summer Texas heat. When city leaders explored new ways to attract visitors, new businesses and potential new residents to the town, they focused on one key question: How can we make downtown Troup even more attractive?



## Looking for an innovative amenity

Troup City Manager Gene Cottle, an avid proponent of technology, encouraged the Troup Community Development Corporation (CDC) to explore the potential of offering free Wi-Fi to attract visitors. The Troup CDC—a non-profit economic development group funded by local sales tax revenue—quickly saw the potential of the idea.

**“ We thought [Wi-Fi] would promote new and expanded businesses and help people visiting or working in the area. And it would give us a chance to do something different in Troup.”**

Suzanne Loudamy, Executive Director, Troup CDC

- Troup, Texas, also known as “The Good Neighbor Town,” is a small East Texas town of 2,000 known for its popular annual events.
- Verizon partner, RCN Technologies, provided public Wi-Fi to downtown using an all-in-one fixed wireless access solution.
- 12 Cradlepoint IBR900 ruggedized Wi-Fi routers with built-in Verizon LTE connectivity were used to provide public Wi-Fi.
- Troup has seen a broad use of the Wi-Fi by visitors, businesses and residents.



## Bringing free Wi-Fi to downtown

After the city council narrowly approved the plan, the free Wi-Fi project quickly moved from vision to reality. Working closely with the town, Verizon partner RCN Technologies determined that a fixed wireless access (FWA) solution would meet Troup's needs. To ensure the broadest availability, it surveyed Troup's downtown, looking for zones where people tended to congregate. And it identified potential router installation sites that would reach the most people, while keeping the technology invisible.

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## Enabling public Wi-Fi with a Verizon FWA solution

In the fall of 2021, RCN Technologies installed its new community connectivity solution, Nergy. The hardware consisted of a dozen Cradlepoint IBR900 ruggedized Wi-Fi routers powered by NetCloud Manager mounted in carefully selected out-of-sightline locations on downtown rooftops and poles. The result? A large Wi-Fi zone that covered most of Troup's commercial district.

For wireless connectivity, the Cradlepoint routers included built-in Verizon LTE nodes, with 5G upgradability. When bringing connectivity to Troup, the choice was clear, since Verizon was already well-known in the region for delivering broad coverage and exceptional reliability to an area of Texas that many consider a digital desert.

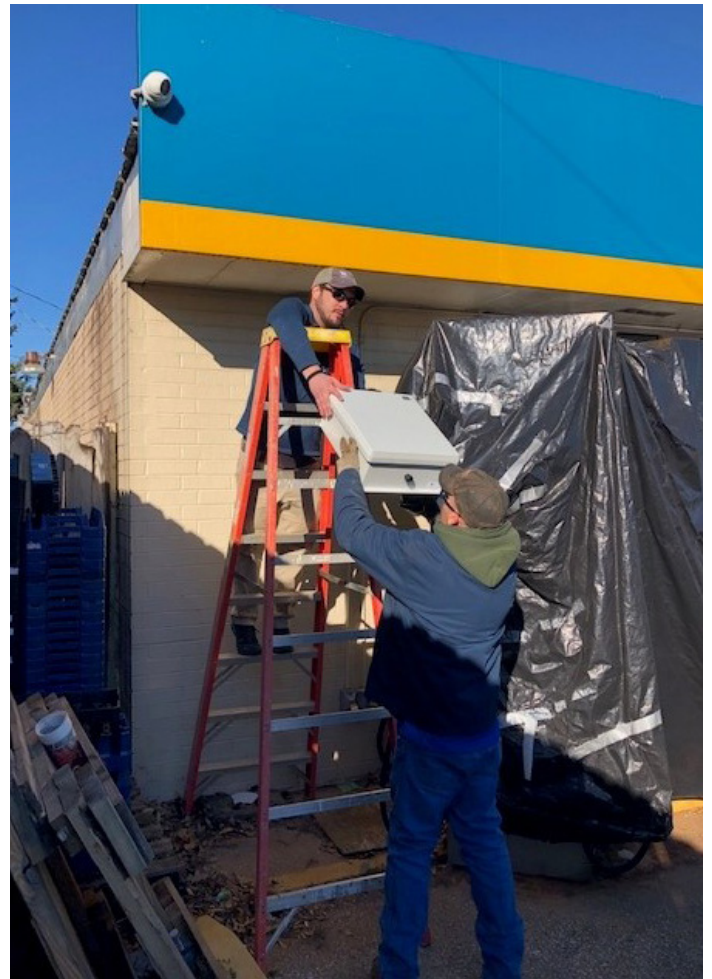
**“Verizon has really stepped up to make great wireless connectivity available to Troup. And it has supported our surrounding community as well.”**

**Suzanne Loudamy, Executive Director, Troup CDC**

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## Keeping it simple for the town

Throughout the project, RCN Technologies made the process as quick and simple as possible for town personnel. Once the solution was installed, tested and fine-tuned, RCN Technologies provided remote, cloud-based management and ongoing support through its Network Operations Center (NOC). The solution has operated with little or no attention since the beginning, freeing town leaders to move on to other projects.



“We had an idea, but Verizon and RCN were able to run with it and make it happen, without requiring a lot of our time,” says Loudamy. “They took the lead but at the same time they listened to us and answered every one of our questions. In the end, the project came out even better than we originally envisioned.”

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## Generating results that went beyond expectations

Signs in store windows advertised free public Wi-Fi, and the local news media covered the project extensively, since it was an unusual move for a small town. “When a TV station came to do a story about our town and businesses, well, we couldn't pay for better advertising than that,” Loudamy recalls. Despite the attention, it took a while for visitors and residents to know about the free Wi-Fi downtown. But once they turned on their cellphones, they quickly figured it out.

During last year, there were an impressive 14,000+ individual Wi-Fi users, according to RCN—all in a town with a population of around 2,000.



## A benefit for visitors and residents alike

Visitors to town events and weekend shoppers were clearly taking advantage of the free Wi-Fi. But the easy-to-use, CIPA-compliant solution also enabled local students—from elementary schoolers to college students—to work remotely during the pandemic. “Like many towns, our kids came home for spring break and didn’t go back to the classroom,” Loudamy says. “If they didn’t have good wireless service where they lived, they were able to come downtown to the library, or the Splash Pad for that matter, and use the free Wi-Fi. We’re very happy to be able to help our folks who live here, as well as our visitors and businesses.”



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## Exceeding expectations, overcoming doubts

The benefits of Troup’s FWA solution are evident. Visitors get the convenience of free Wi-Fi. Local businesses get new attention and customers. Reliable, secure Wi-Fi streamlines sales at events, such as holiday craft fairs. Troup residents, including students, get widely available access to Wi-Fi. And the town gets a reputation as a forward-thinking innovator. Did these results prove the value of the project to the city council members who were initially a little hesitant?

**“ Even if they didn’t think so in the first place, now they’re realizing that offering free Wi-Fi is a tangible benefit of economic development funds. And it certainly has shown me that the project was the right choice, thanks to all of the benefits and attention our town’s been getting—and all the opportunities that public Wi-Fi is going to keep bringing to downtown Troup in the future.”**

Suzanne Loudamy, Executive Director, Troup CDC

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## Learn more

To learn more about how your community can benefit from fixed wireless solutions, visit us at:

[verizon.com/publicsector](https://www.verizon.com/publicsector)

Network: Troup Free Public WiFi

FREE Downtown Area Use

Project of Troup Community Development Corporation

