

Steuben fiber network receives grant support

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ANGOLA — The Dekko Foundation has announced it will award Indiana Metropolitan Area Network with a \$1 for \$1 matching grant for up to \$50,000 for its fiber optics project work.

Several new funding opportunities have recently been awarded to iMAN, the community-owned fiber optic infrastructure in Steuben County. Bill Geiger, iMAN CEO and project manager says that the past few months have been “quite fruitful” and “the iMAN board and I are really pleased with our current progress.”

In April, the Town of Ashley approved a disbursement of \$15,000. In June, a local industry that wanted to remain anonymous gave \$30,000.

The Dekko match is for gifts from qualifying business and industry.

“Your success in securing local support helped our board gain a much stronger confidence about investing in your work,” said Sharon Smith, Dekko program director.

After having been appropriated \$2 million from Steuben County Major Moves in October, iMAN has since had the task of raising the final \$562,000 needed to complete the county-wide construction plan.

“We knew all along that this would need to be a public-private undertaking, and that all parts of the county would need to be engaged. If our funding continues at this pace, the target date for completion will remain fall of 2012,” Geiger said.

Sara Tubergen, iMAN board chairwoman, said she believes these announcements show great public support in this infrastructure.

“I would like to thank the Dekko Foundation and all the funders for helping us move forward with the iMAN project,” Tubergen said. “This technology will have a profound impact on our county for years to come.”

Other grant and private requests totaling \$357,000 are pending, an iMAN news release said. The completion of the iMAN project is one of the eight priorities of the Steuben County Economic Development Corp.’s strategic plan.