



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego's 'SD Access 4 All' Program Wins Award from Taxpayer Watchdog

CITY PARTNERED WITH COX COMMUNICATIONS AND AT&T TO HELP CLOSE DIGITAL DIVIDE, EXPAND PUBLIC WI-FI

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego's SD Access 4 All initiative to expand public Wi-Fi to over 300 locations citywide won the Public-Private Partnership Watchdog Award this past week at the San Diego County Taxpayers Association's 26th Annual Golden Watchdog and Fleece Awards.

The City partnered with AT&T, Cox Communications, the San Diego Parks Foundation and the San Diego Public Library Foundation to help close the digital divide that has left an estimated 53,000 San Diego households without internet access. More than 200,000 unique users have used the expanded public Wi-Fi and logged on over 1.4 million times in the first year of the initiative.

"We launched SD Access 4 All with the goal of creating more opportunities for San Diegans to access the internet and it's been hugely successful," said Mayor Todd Gloria. "Closing the digital divide is difficult work and we are grateful to our many partners who helped us expand public Wi-Fi and provide new tools at libraries – from laptops to mobile hotspots – to help residents get connected. This award belongs to the many hardworking City employees across several departments who worked collaboratively to get the job done for the public we proudly serve."

Launched in April 2021 with a \$500,000 annual budget, the [SD Access 4 All initiative](#) is a collaboration between the private sector and several City departments, including Economic Development, Human Resources, Information Technology, Library and Parks and Recreation.

In addition to the public Wi-Fi expansion, the City also purchased hundreds of new laptops and 2,000 new mobile hotspots that patrons can check out from libraries. Mobile hotspots are easy to use and provide free at-home internet service.

SD Access 4 All benefited from several community partners to provide this public service. The [San Diego Parks Foundation](#) helped support public Wi-Fi at two dozen parks locations while the [San Diego Public Library Foundation](#) supported the Library's 10 outdoor community computer labs and laptop expansion.

In addition, the City reached an agreement with Cox Communications on neighborhood Wi-Fi hotspots and with AT&T on the mobile hotspots – with both companies providing discounts on each service.

For more than two decades, the [San Diego County Taxpayers Association](#) (SDCTA) has annually recognized the best and worst in local government with the Golden Watchdog and Fleece Awards, also known as "[The Golden.](#)" The 2022 awards ceremony was held on Thursday, April 28.

The SDCTA is a nonpartisan association of individuals, businesses and organizations that promotes effective and efficient government on behalf of all San Diego County taxpayers. The association engages civic leadership as well as the public to develop and promote well-researched policy solutions.

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