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Equitable Broadband & Technology Access Implementation Plan

Prepared for the City of San Diego

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1 Introduction

The City of San Diego's Broadband Master Plan evaluated the current state of broadband access and digital equity in the City and recommended strategies for closing the digital divide through initiatives to increase broadband adoption and affordability, promote device distribution, increase skills training, and potentially seek and incentivize new network construction.

This Implementation Plan provides recommendations on steps to carry out each major recommendation and includes a discussion of funding opportunities, if applicable. This plan is based on the data from the broadband master plan.

1.1 Digital equity priority areas

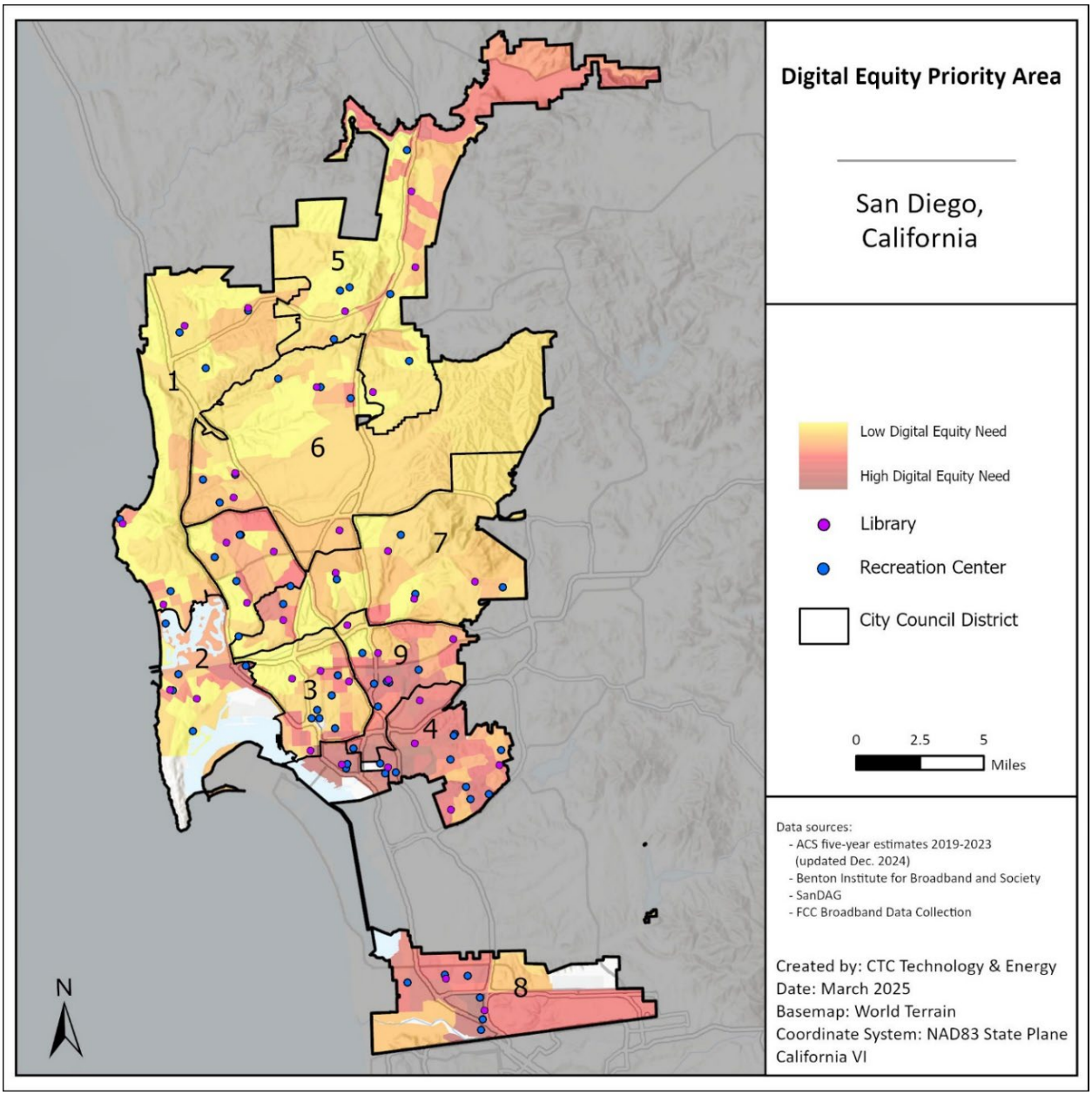
In coordination with the City and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), CTC developed a scoring system to define Digital Equity Priority Areas. The inputs to the scoring process included the following data from surveys, federal datasets, and CBO feedback. The Broadband Master Plan provides a full description of the methodology and rubric. Key inputs included:

- Level of wireline broadband adoption
- Eligibility for the now-defunct Affordable Connectivity Program
- Reliance on mobile data plans instead of home subscriptions
- Computer ownership
- Average household income
- Defined areas of high need (as determined by CBOs)
- Absence of high-speed broadband competition

The resulting areas are depicted below in Figure 1 with a gradient of shades, in which deeper reds show the higher-scoring areas. These cover parts of San Ysidro, the San Diego Promise Zone, Otay Mesa, and City Heights. The black boundaries are City Council districts. Boundaries between different shadings are census tract boundaries. The figure also notes the locations of City recreation centers and library sites because these are (or can be) locations providing connectivity and/or services.

This map should be taken as a high-level resource to guide where to implement efforts, particularly those involving efforts to connect residents to available affordable services, devices, and skills training. San Diegans living outside these zones may also need support. In particular, residents of San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) affordable housing units, regardless of location, tend to have lower incomes and face greater affordability, device, and skills challenges, making SDHC sites a logical focus of programmatic efforts.

Figure 1: Digital Equity Priority Area according to the scoring rubric developed by CTC and the City



2 Implementation of recommendations

This section contains implementation strategies for key recommendations in the Broadband Master Plan. These include—where applicable—steps and action items for up to five years, roles and responsibilities, recommended budgets and, if available, funding opportunities (see Appendix A for a discussion of the funding landscape as of the time this plan was completed in February of 2026).

The recommendations are ordered in a way that allows later activities to potentially benefit from earlier ones. For example:

- Establishing a digital equity coalition makes sense to do at an early point because the coalition members can begin coordinating among themselves—and aid the City in obtaining stakeholder input to refine and operationalize later recommendations, such as establishing a City grant program. The coalition could also work with the City to explore ways to potentially seek California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) funding for programs through the Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC) that could have a focus on the City of San Diego. Incenting the formation of a coalition would require little financial commitment by the City.
- Procuring new targeted infrastructure buildouts makes more sense to consider at a later point once more information is available. The extra time will be beneficial to the City for the following reasons.
    - The City will learn what improvements in high-speed competitive broadband competition have occurred in San Diego without any City intervention, aided partly by new federal Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding which includes two AT&T fiber buildout projects.
    - The City will have had a chance to understand what impacts have resulted from earlier and less costly recommended interventions, such as efforts to enroll low-income residents in low-cost broadband subscription programs and expanding public Wi-Fi access.
    - The City will be able to review the outcomes of infrastructure projects in other jurisdictions. In particular, the City may wish to study the total per-household construction and operating costs—and level of uptake by target populations—of targeted buildouts planned or occurring in Oakland, CA, and Los Angeles County.
    - The City (and potential respondents) will have a better sense of where, within the priority areas, any new network construction would make the most sense.

Table 1 lists the recommendations as presented in this implementation plan.

Table 1: Summary matrix of recommendations

Recommendation	Cost/Resource Considerations	Stakeholders
Establish a digital equity coalition	Initially $10,000 for overhead and incidentals. In first year, work through the SBBC to explore the potential for CPUC funding.	DoIT; community-based organizations (CBOs); other stakeholders; regional broadband organizations
Start a San Diego digital equity fund and explore funding sources, including philanthropic support	$200,000 if funds are available; staff time for administering, Philanthropies could also potentially support local nonprofits without City involvement.	DoIT; Digital Equity Coalition; CBOs
Centralize and coordinate wireless siting processes	Likely only staff time; the effort could include evaluating whether permit fees are fully covering City costs	DoIT; DSD TUD; asset-owning departments; service providers
Consider policy measures to promote broadband expansion	None beyond staff time	DoIT; City attorney; Mayor's Office and City Council
Expand public Wi-Fi infrastructure and use	An indicative budget could be $100,000 per year to expand number of Wi-Fi sites and bandwidth at existing sites	DoIT; Cox and Lokket (and any other vendors); SD MTS
Consider hiring more digital navigators	Reference existing budgetary lines. Hire more positions to the extent budgets allow. Philanthropic support, if available, could supplement City funds.	DoIT; Library; Parks and Recreation; CBOs; SDHC
Issue mayoral call to action to increase regional device donation	No costs required except staff time necessary to develop communications materials and online pledge forms for donors as well as initial coordination efforts to connect donors with device refurbishers.	Mayor's Office; City Council Offices; Comms D; DoIT; local device refurbishers
Explore establishing more computer labs in SDHC and recreation facilities	An indicative budget could be $18,000 to outfit an existing room with four workstations plus $7,000 per year for operations and maintenance. Any required construction and staffing would be additional.	SDHC; DoIT; Parks and Recreation; potential state or philanthropic funding
Consider issuing an RFP for bulk-buy solutions for SDHC affordable housing properties	The RFP is only viable if funds are found to support subscriptions and if potential bulk-buy solutions are deemed to be the most appropriate, cost-effective option. Total cost is a function of monthly subscription cost proposed, number of units using the service, and years of coverage.	SDHC; DoIT; service providers

Recommendation	Cost/Resource Considerations	Stakeholders
Issue an RFP for broadband infrastructure in priority areas	The RFP draft provided in this document assumes no City or grant funding is available. If successful, the cost would be a function of City facilitation or fee waivers.	DoIT; service providers
Track the digital equity KPIs recommended in the master plan	None	DoIT

2.1 Establish a Digital Equity Coalition

Goal: By the end of 2026, assist in standing up a citywide Digital Equity Coalition that meets, at a minimum, quarterly.

The basic role of the coalition is as follows.

- It serves to bring together organizations that might not otherwise convene; this simple act facilitates information-sharing, problem solving and coordination of services—perhaps without a City role in many cases—across entities that might include healthcare providers, nonprofit community groups, and social service agencies, in addition to City departments and SDHC.
- The coalition can provide advisory feedback to the City and SDHC on the City's current and future programs, including on the design of grant programs (see next recommendation).
- The coalition and City can explore how working through the state-defined regional broadband consortium, called the Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC)—which covers all of San Diego County and Imperial County—could allow the City access to potential CPUC funding.

The initial role of the City can be to assist in establishing a coalition that can maintain its focus on the City itself, facilitate communication across entities, provide nonbinding guidance, and operate independently.

Resources needed: Initially, the City may only need to help convene entities and perhaps cover incidentals for meetings and cover time of City staff member(s) from the Department of Information Technology and appropriate City departments to attend meetings.

Budget: Initially, only a nominal contribution from the City is needed for space, staff time, fliers, and incidentals, including meals. To encourage community members to devote unpaid time away from their regular jobs to convene, it makes sense to host quarterly luncheon meetings and absorb the cost of those refreshments. An indicative annual budget for all of the above purposes could be $10,000 plus five hours of staff time per month.

During the first year, it is recommended that the coalition explore how working with the SBBC could benefit coalition activities and potentially unlock state funding, as has occurred in other parts of the state.

Funding mechanism: The CPUC CASF Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account provides a potential avenue for funding.[1] But broadband consortia funded by the CPUC cover much larger geographic regions rather than individual cities. Los Angeles County's Digital Equity Action League (DEAL)—the Digital Equity Coalition for Los Angeles County—received $900,000 in such funding in recent years. [2]

In the Sacramento region, the digital equity coalition decided to expand from focusing on the City to encompassing the broader Capital Region, aligning with regional workforce development funding to support digital equity initiatives. The same backbone organization, Valley Vision, manages both the Digital Equity Coalition and the official broadband consortium funded by the CPUC for the Capital Region.[3]

As noted above, the CPUC-defined broadband consortium covering the City of San Diego is the SBBC, which encompasses both San Diego County and Imperial County and is run by the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation. The SBBC is the only entity able to receive funds through the CASF Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Accounts for the region. As such, the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation and other regional stakeholders are logical entities to include in the initial convenings. It makes sense for all parties to explore feasibility of leveraging the SBBC to seek CPUC funding to benefit the City.

Roles and responsibilities: The Department of Information Technology could consider collaborating with the Library to convene potential members. Potential invitees could include SDHC, SANDAG, the San Diego Workforce Partnership, the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation, San Diego Futures Foundation, Computers 2 Kids, Oasis, Casa Familiar, Urban Collaborative Project, Black Chamber of Commerce, Sherman Heights Community Center, City Heights Community Center, Somali Family Services of San Diego, the San Diego Promise Zone Working Group, internet service providers, economic or workforce development groups, nonprofit organizations serving underserved populations (which could include soup kitchens, homeless shelters, or other organizations), healthcare organizations, and representatives from universities, adult education, or academic groups, including the San Diego College of Continuing Education, San Diego Community College District, and the Qualcomm Institute.

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[1] These broadband consortia are organized by regional applicants and are formally recognized by the CPUC in its awards, with only one consortium allowed per region (see casf-broadband-consortia-region-map.pdf). Consortia have the purpose of bringing stakeholders together to champion and support broadband expansion. They are eligible for the CASF Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account, which can fund a maximum of $200,000 per year per consortium.

[2] LA DEAL has received funds from CASF Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account, including $300,000 in 2021 and $600,000 in 2023. See https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/consortia/t17778-documents/t17778.pdf. LA DEAL also receives support from the California Community Foundation (CCF), the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), and philanthropy. See https://ladeal.org/partners/.

[3] Capital Region Coalition for Digital Inclusion - Valley Vision - Sacramento; https://www.valleyvision.org/events/broadband-and-digital-equity-webinar/

The City could also leverage the list of CBOs that responded to the previous (but canceled) RFP for CBO partners in early 2025. As with the structure of the previous RFP, grantees of the City's digital equity program could be coalition participants.

Potential challenges: With minimal funding initially, founding coalition members will need to take responsibility for attending meetings and helping establish the coalition's structure. It will require buy-in from a group of committed organizations to ensure the coalition solves problems and endures as a new entity that adds value to the City, even if the regional approach does not bear fruit.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: Success can look like the following:

- The coalition and City determine that working through the SBBC can meet City needs and then applies for, and obtains, CPUC funding.
- The City finds that the coalition is providing productive ideas for a grant program and/or other initiatives and is offering constructive help in making these efforts successful.
- Coalition members find ways to collaborate with each other to address needs of City residents with minimal or no City involvement.
- Members describe how the coalition amplifies impact and outcomes—information that could be collected in a year-end meeting or survey of members.
- Establishment of an action plan within the first year and execution against that plan in subsequent years.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Leverage existing City partners, relationships, and known organizations to identify members for the coalition • Hold coalition kickoff meeting(s) of founding members. The members can begin communicating with one another and consider establishing initial goals and organizational details • The City works within the coalition to explore how working through the SBBC could benefit the City and whether this could effectively provide the City with access to CPUC funds.
2027	• Hold quarterly meetings to facilitate information sharing and problem-solving across entities engaged in digital equity programming • The coalition may consider producing a guiding document (for example, an action plan or similar document) • If the City launches a grant program, the coalition could advise on its design • The coalition may consider producing an annual report that, among other things, contains data on outcomes from coalition activities

Year	Activities
	• The coalition may consider establishing interorganizational goals and objectives that feed into activities
2028 onward	• Continue to hold regular meetings to facilitate information sharing and problem solving across entities in the region. • Implement interorganizational goals and objectives identified in the prior year • Continue to advise City at the City's request on matters such as a grant program or promoting City initiatives. • Produce annual reports

2.2 Identify public and private funding sources to support programming and start a City digital equity grant fund

Goal: Identify funding sources—whether City, state, or philanthropic—and establish a yearly City digital equity grant fund to support local community-based organizations (CBO) and nonprofits in San Diego. Initially, this grant fund could be conducted by leveraging and updating the previous RFP issued to CBOs in association with the City's application for the now-cancelled CalDEP program.

Grant funds could support digital literacy classes including those supporting workforce development, device distribution programs, enrollment support for low-cost internet plans, or consumer education on internet plans and subscriptions. A Digital Equity Coalition, if founded, could potentially help advise the City on the design of the grant program.

Resources needed: Funds (from the City or from other public or private sources), staff time to run the grant program, and community input from the coalition. If the California Digital Equity Program (CalDEP) is revived following a successful outcome of the National Digital Inclusion Alliance's (NDIA) lawsuit challenging the federal government's cancellation of Digital Equity Act grants, state funds would again be available.

Budget: Start with $200,000 if funds are available. In the grant application for the now-cancelled CalDEP, the City, in partnership with the County, proposed funding an average of $35,000 to $50,000 a year per organization. A similar average amount could be anticipated for this grant program.

Funding mechanism: The Department of Information Technology should explore the City's interest in funding such a program on a recurring basis. The City could also seek state budget appropriations or explore existing philanthropy and partnerships such as the Friends of the San Diego Public Library. Finally—and with the Library Foundation and Parks Foundation as models—the City could explore the feasibility of starting a digital equity fund.

Roles and responsibilities: The Department of Information Technology would manage the program, with collaboration from the SDHC and other relevant City departments, including evaluation of applications and management of grantees. Local CBOs and nonprofits would participate as applicants and grantees.

Potential challenges: The City should ensure grants meet procurement rules and laws, and it should also actively monitor grantees' performance and document results from the grants issued. Designing, awarding, and monitoring these grants will also take considerable staff time, which should be considered in any budget requests for these efforts.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: The City can measure results of grant awards through project outcome metrics such as the number of laptops distributed, utilization of services such as classes and facilities, or numbers of low-cost broadband subscription enrollments achieved, depending on the proposed project. Grantees should also be required to report their program recipients' demographic data to track equity outcomes.

Information on progress can emerge from the following sources over time.

- CBOs could also provide reports on the results of the grant-funded interventions, using KPIs provided in the master plan and potentially other information sought by the City or offered by the recipients.
- Citywide levels of residential broadband subscription level/s and computer ownership show up in ACS survey data.
- CBOs and a citywide coalition can provide subjective views on the changing levels of need and how well those needs are met.
- Citywide measures of skill levels and other topics could be determined if the City conducted regular surveys—with identical questions and rigorous methodologies to achieve random sampling.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Contact existing philanthropies to determine willingness to fund digital equity programming through the City or directly; review next steps with relevant City departments and counsel. • Related to the above, evaluate the feasibility of creating a digital equity fund similar to the Library Foundation and Parks Foundation to establish a new funding path for potential donors. • Leverage the City's Government Affairs office and existing lobbying relationships at the state level to advocate for earmarks in state appropriations for digital equity programs. • Monitor NDIA lawsuit progress in the event it results in the restoration of federal Digital Equity Act funds, which are granted through the state. • Determine to what extent the City can fund a grant program with the sources identified in previous steps and/or contributions from the City budget • Work with the City Purchasing & Contracting Department to align the planned grant fund with City procurement rules.

Year	Activities
2027	• With respect to philanthropic funding, implement the most viable option or options identified in 2026. • With knowledge of the total funds available, use the previous CalDEP RFP and planned grant program to develop an updated RFP and set of grant rules. • Advertise the grant opportunity to any relevant CBOs and nonprofits in the digital equity space. • Develop program guidelines, publish the RFP, use the City's RFP process to evaluate and select the best candidates, and make awards per the design of the program
2028	• Support and monitor the first round of grantees and collect metrics on results of grant-funded activities • Adjust grant program as needed based on the data and with ongoing input from the coalition with respect to local needs and priorities. • Publish the second year RFP, including any updates if needed, and issue second round of grants.
2029 and onward	• Repeat above steps

2.3 Centralize and coordinate wireless siting processes on City assets

Goal: The goal is to streamline wireless facilities siting processes that involve City property or assets. This can be achieved by designating a central coordinating entity, establishing clear processes, and providing clarity to applicants on sites that are available. Evaluation and adoption of the draft updates to council policy 600-43 could be a key part of meeting this goal. The draft updated policy would establish new shot clocks for asset-owning departments and streamline the review process.

Proposed improvements provided in the master plan include:

1. Designate a central coordinating entity for all wireless facilities siting on City property

As discussed in the master plan, the Telecom & Utilities Division (TUD) within DSD already manages utility coordination, ROW permitting, and telecom-related infrastructure reviews. This team has the technical expertise, permitting infrastructure, and regulatory familiarity to manage both ministerial and discretionary telecom review processes. Extending this scope to include City-owned asset siting is a logical evolution but should be subject to City departmental stakeholder review and input, and the adoption of an updated Policy 600-43 and any other relevant policies. A mayoral directive could implement this centralized coordination and perhaps create a working group to determine how powers will be designated across City departments so as to facilitate coordination most effectively.

2. Establish Internal "Shot Clocks" for Key Milestones

To ensure timely and accountable processing, the City should establish internal service-level targets for each stage of the review process. These would serve as internal benchmarks to improve interdepartmental coordination. Policy 600-43 would formalize specific shot-clock goals. The draft policy outlines shot clocks of 30 days for controlling departments' application reviews and five days for application comments after the site walk. The centralized entity could potentially track performance across departments and publish quarterly internal metrics for review by executive leadership.

3. Develop a GIS Layer that clearly identifies opportunities

Following a collaborative process across City departments, create a GIS layer for city-owned assets that are eligible telecom leasing opportunities. The process would also help determine which sites and assets the City does not want to make available for wireless facilities siting. The next step is to socialize this database with telecom companies to incorporate these in their future design plans. This GIS layer will provide clarity to all interested providers on what City sites are and are not available.

4. Track ISP feedback regarding the City's Street Preservation Ordinance

The City should continue its practice of tracking data related to Street Preservation Ordinance compliance, enforcement, waivers, and outcomes. When providers have comments or feedback on the ordinance, this data can be used to compare feedback to actual implementation and outcomes.

Resources needed: Refer to resources mentioned in the draft policy 600-43. If the City requires additional help coordinating its wireless siting processes, it may consider procuring outside services.

Roles and responsibilities: The Development Services Department has drafted and received initial feedback from some stakeholders. Asset-owning departments (including Parks and Recreation, Public Utilities, and Transportation) and Economic Development will be involved in providing feedback about the policy and in its implementation. At the time this implementation plan was submitted, the updated CP-600-43 was under review by the City Attorney Office

Potential challenges: Challenges could include timely acceptance by all city departments and managing opposition to wireless siting by community groups and abutters.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: This recommendation will be successful if it decreases times of processing for wireless siting on City assets, meets with community acceptance, and results in improved mobile and fixed wireless broadband coverage in San Diego. Another measure of success could be increased revenue to the City from wireless facilities permitting.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Evaluate and, if supported, adopt the draft updates to council policy 600-43, establishing centralized coordination of wireless siting permitting, including on City assets. • Engage in interdepartmental meetings to establish a GIS layer of City assets that are available for wireless facilities siting, noting which sites are excluded. • If deemed needed by the City, engage in cross-department training and implementation of the new shot-clock timelines and review processes.
2027	• Assuming new policies, centralized coordination and the GIS layer are created in 2026, collect data on wireless siting outcomes, particularly department response times and overall time to approval and deployment. • Monitor fixed wireless broadband coverage improvements that may result from increasing buildouts (FCC data).
2028-onward	• Continue to collect data on wireless siting outcomes, particularly department response times and overall times to approval and deployment. • Evaluate implementation of the updates to council policy 600-43 based on the data collected, including feedback from asset owning departments. • Continue to monitor fixed wireless broadband coverage improvements that may result from increasing buildouts (FCC data).

2.4 Consider measures to promote broadband competition and infrastructure

Goal: The City of San Diego should consider implementing strategies that promote broadband competition and infrastructure developed by private entities.

Other jurisdictions have implemented the following general strategies:

- The housing authority establishes wiring standards for its properties that promote competition by requiring duplicate sets of conduit and infrastructure to units[4].
- The municipality itself develops requirements for new developments (and applicable renovations) to build conduit from the ROW to the building as part of every construction project in the municipality[5].

[4] San Francisco, CA, has implemented this strategy into its public housing wiring standards; see Communications Systems Standards, https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/MOHCD%20Communications%20Systems%20Standards.pdf.

[5] A variety of examples are cited in the Broadband Master Plan, including Brentwood, CA; Santa Cruz, CA; and Sandy, OR. The City of Brentwood requires developers to install two conduits—one with fiber dedicated for City use and one empty—in new developments (City of Brentwood, CA Land Development Procedure

- The municipality consults with qualified counsel on how to protect residents' rights to select their own broadband provider in rented properties and how to make use of the provisions in the new state law (AB 1414) which passed in late 2025[6].
- The municipality considers granting requests, if made by ISPs, for fee waivers and expedited permitting to reduce deployment costs, especially in priority areas defined by the municipality.

To pursue the above strategies, the City should conduct a legal analysis of example policies and evaluate their potential implementation in the San Diego context. These example policies are identified in the footnotes of this section.

Resources needed: The City may wish to seek a legal opinion for new policies. Otherwise, these matters can be handled by staff.

Roles and responsibilities: Various City departments have roles in drafting and implementing policies. The City departments should collaborate with a City attorney, the Mayor's Office, and City Council. For the wiring standards for public housing, the City should work closely with SDHC to determine willingness and feasibility.

Potential challenges: Some stakeholders, potentially including developers, landlords, or incumbent telecommunication providers, may object to new requirements. Stakeholder feedback will be key to determining the feasibility of these policies.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: Percentage of City addresses that are served by two high-speed providers, per FCC data as it is updated over time.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Review FCC data to establish updated baseline data on presence of high-speed broadband competition in San Diego. • Engage with ISPs to understand their buildout plans and facilitation needs. • Conduct legal analysis and receive stakeholder feedback on the potential strategies • Conduct legal analysis on AB 1414 to determine application and enforcement in San Diego context

(Section 16.120.120), https://ecode360.com/43617277?highlight=conduit,conduits&searchId=20558374052567793#43617277). The County of Santa Cruz requires excavators to include provisions for telecommunications cable, conduit, and related equipment (Santa Cruz County Dig Once Ordinance, https://www.tellusventure.com/downloads/bank/santa_cruz_county_dig_once_ordinance_2015.pdf). The City of Sandy, Oregon, requires all subdivisions, partitions, or replats to be provided with fiber at no expense to the City (CHAPTER 17.100 - LAND DIVISION | Code of Ordinances | Sandy, OR | Municode Library).

[6] https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB1414/id/3174503

Year	Activities
2027	• If legal analysis and feedback recommend the policies, draft versions of policies (wiring standards for housing; conduit requirements for new developments) for San Diego • Conduct standard process for evaluation and adoption of policies, including relevant internal and external stakeholders and City council—and adopt policies that result from these processes. • Continue to monitor progress of high-speed broadband competition in San Diego.
2028 - onward	• Continue implementation and data collection to document progress and determine if adjustments are needed • Continue to monitor progress of high-speed broadband competition in San Diego as a measure of the success of facilitation efforts.

2.5 Expand public Wi-Fi infrastructure

Goal: To increase public Wi-Fi and usage, establish new free Wi-Fi infrastructure at high-traffic sites, including evaluating the highest-traffic transit sites, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Highest-traffic City transit sites according to the MTS

Highest-traffic transit sites	Average weekday ridership
San Ysidro Transit Center	27,659
12th & Imperial Transit Center	26,380
Old Town Transit Center	21,540
City College Station	17,208
Iris Avenue Transit Center	10,759
Euclid Avenue Station	9,153
Fifth Avenue Station	7,670
UCSD Central Campus Station	7,162
SDSU Transit Center	6,964
Fashion Valley Transit Center	6,734
12th & Imperial Station (Bayside)	6,129
UTC Transit Center	5,886
Santa Fe Depot	5,155
Gilman Dr & Mandeville Ln Station	5,024
America Plaza Station	4,979

In addition, conduct promotion campaigns to maximize use of existing public Wi-Fi at low-use sites, which are listed below in Table 3.

Table 3: Low-use Wi-Fi sites

Lowest-use Wi-Fi sites	Distinct devices monthly	Provider
675 1/4, B St, San Diego, CA 92101 (near the San Diego Symphony)	1	Cox
Willie Henderson Sport Complex (which had a power issue and construction during the time period measured)	2	Lokket
2222 1/4, San Diego Ave, San Diego, CA 92110 (in Mission Hills near the 5)	22	Cox
2724 1/4, Truxtun Rd, San Diego, CA 92106 (in Loma Portal)	23	Cox
Lopez Ridge Recreation Center	27	Lokket
Scripps Ranch Community Center	28	Lokket
Vista Terrace Pool	29	Lokket
Serra Mesa Recreation Center	29	Lokket
5425 1/4, Hewlett Dr, San Diego, CA 92115 (near San Diego State University fields)	31	Cox
528 1/2, Denby St, San Diego, CA 92102 (between the 805 and Greenwood Memorial Park)	31	Cox
420 1/2, 68th St, San Diego, CA 92114 (by Marie Widman Memorial Park in Skyline)	32	Cox
2829 1/4, Historic Decatur Rd, San Diego, CA 92106 (by Liberty Station shops)	34	Cox
2468 1/4, Historic Decatur Rd, San Diego, CA 92106 (by Liberty Station shops)	35	Cox
FAIR @ 44 International Market	35	Lokket
2640 1/4, Historic Decatur Rd, San Diego, CA 92106 (by Liberty Station shops)	37	Cox
The Spot at 6443 Imperial Ave	37	Lokket

As a supplemental activity, the City could evaluate other sites at its discretion, including recreation centers (particularly, those highlighted in the Broadband Master Plan as candidates for upgrades) or the Wayfinder Kiosk pilot program in Downtown San Diego. The kiosk's advertising model also generates revenue for business districts.

Resources needed: Engagement with the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (SDMTS)—about feasibility and any available funding—is important for any plan that would involve SDMTS stations. Increasing the number of public Wi-Fi sites also may require more funding for SD Access 4 All's public Wi-Fi program. To promote public Wi-Fi at lower-use sites, relatively low amounts of funding would be required to design, print, and maintain signage at the sites. These promotional materials/campaigns should also be multilingual and culturally responsive.

Budget: To implement the Wi-Fi related recommendations in the master plan, a preliminary annual budget to expand public Wi-Fi is $100,000. The first year for a new site would likely cost between $8,000 and $22,000, with operating costs in following years likely costing between $6,000 and

$12,000 (costs vary based on facility technology and need).[7] With a yearly allocation of an additional $100,000 to SD Access 4 All, the City could likely establish between five and ten new public Wi-Fi sites per year.

Funding mechanism: The funds would come from the City, consistent with the existing public Wi-Fi funding process, or otherwise if implemented differently in new partnerships (such as with the SDMTS) as needed.

Roles and responsibilities: The Department of Information Technology currently oversees the program, and it would engage with existing partners Lokket and Cox to support new sites. The San Diego Department of Information Technology could collaborate with SDMTS with respect to transit sites. SDMTS has already coordinated with the City in identifying the highest-use transit sites. This data should be submitted to City leadership for review and consideration with their input used to determine which sites should be studied for feasibility and selected.

Potential challenges: New public Wi-Fi sites would require ongoing funding and coordination across entities mentioned above. City staff have reported that signs advertising public Wi-Fi have sometimes been taken down or destroyed.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: The number of new Wi-Fi sites is a direct measure of success. In addition, consistent with current monitoring and reporting, the Department of Information Technology receives monthly or quarterly usage statistics of the existing public Wi-Fi sites. These usage statistics can be used to measure the success of the promotion of lower-use sites and the new transit site locations if they are established.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Coordinate with SDMTS to confirm Wi-Fi status at its sites and to determine which of the high-traffic sites are logical starting points for new Wi-Fi sites. Use the DEPA map alongside the traffic data when determining which sites to prioritize. • Continue to evaluate feedback from stakeholders on the adequacy of public Wi-Fi and the need for new Wi-Fi locations • Gather data on potential sites and submit to City leadership and elected officials for selection • Engage with potential partners including Lokket and/or Cox, who provide the existing public Wi-Fi services

[7] According to data made available by the Department of Information Technology, monthly recurring costs per site vary depending on facility technology and need, but many are between $500 and $900, with some over $1,000 or under $200. Installation costs range widely but are most often in the range of $2,000 to $10,000, based on data available.

Year	Activities
	• Conduct site surveys for cost and feasibility of new sites as well as effectiveness of existing sites; engage local communities as needed • To the extent that sites needing Wi-Fi are inside MTS facilities, establish the lead agency for facilitate establishing the new service • For the low-use sites, design and place signage advising potential users that public Wi-Fi is already available
2027	• Coordinate awareness campaign to businesses, residents, and community centers near Public Wi-Fi locations • Continue coordinating with SDMTS and public Wi-Fi partners to establish the recommended Wi-Fi sites and roles for implementation • Evaluate usage rates of new sites and previously low-use sites • If low-use sites continue to lack users, consider removing them in favor of new sites in higher-use areas
2028	• Repeat above steps
2029 and onward	• Continue cycle of evaluation, promotion, and establishment of new sites and potentially discontinue low-use sites

2.6 Consider hiring additional Digital Navigators to expand digital equity programming

Goal: To meet community demand the City should hire more full-time Digital Navigators to better support the following activities:

- Educating consumers about low-cost internet plans including the State of California's LifeLine Home Broadband pilot and assisting in enrollment
    - If implemented by ISPs in San Diego, the CPUC's LifeLine Home Broadband program presents a potentially significant opportunity, as it plans to offer a $20 subsidy for broadband for qualifying households. However, the program is in pilot phase and requires providers to opt in.[8]
- Supporting the hotspot program, including:
    - Transitioning patrons who repeatedly borrow hotspots to more permanent broadband solutions,

[8] See https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/lifeline; https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M578/K668/578668809.PDF

    - Staffing hotspot lending resource events with CBOs representing communities that would benefit most from hotspots, and
    - Collecting data on hotspot usage (as permissible) to evaluate the program and continuing to manage operations for the hotspot program; these data could support an evaluation of whether the program is reaching the communities that need hotspots the most and potential recommendations to refocus the program on critical needs of unconnected San Diegans

- Educating residents on how to use digital devices and navigate an online environment including available government services, and housing assistance
- Potentially expanding to locations in SDHC affordable housing properties, including any new computer labs at SDHC offices
- Connecting residents to critical resources such as workforce development classes and low-cost computers
- Encouraging donation of computers to device programs (such as those run by SDFF and C2K), in alignment with a potential mayoral call to action on device donation
- Continuing existing activities, such as one-on-one digital literacy instruction, job readiness skills, training, and technical support

Resources needed: Funds would be needed to hire more digital navigators and expand digital literacy programming. A mayoral call to action on device donation and further promotion through existing digital navigators may be of help and would not require funding. Cultural competency training is also recommended for all existing and future navigators.

Budget: Refer to existing City costs for active digital navigator positions.

Funding mechanism: The City could fund digital navigators by the same means that support existing staff. State Employment and Training Pathways Program (ETPP) funds, or CASF Adoption Account, could potentially support hiring digital navigators to develop digital literacy workforce development classes but would likely not align with digital navigators offering one-time walk-in or call-in digital navigation.

ETPP funds are designed for highly specific uses and thus will be difficult to use for digital navigators. Using these funds would require that the classes focus on highly specific target populations (as the grant language puts it: English language learners, justice involved individuals, opportunity young adults, or veterans) and have an employer partner collaborating on curricula, apprenticeships, advisory roles, or resource contributions. ETPP funds could potentially be used to expand digital literacy and Tech-on-the-Go classes in languages other than English if an employer partner can also be identified to collaborate on the classes.

Roles and responsibilities: The Department of Information Technology could be responsible for hiring, training, and managing additional digital navigators, coordinating with the Library, Parks and Recreation and CBOs for placement of the navigators at host locations and supporting the hotspot program.

Potential challenges: Funding is a challenge in the current budget environment. In addition, any data collection on hotspots or other programs will need to follow standard data privacy policies for the City.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: Quantitative measures of success would include number of people assisted with digital navigation and number of hours of support provided (along with further breakdowns on what kind of help was provided such as enrollment support, digital skills training, and assistance with device repair or support).

2.7 Increase Regional Awareness of Device Recycling/Refurbishing Services through Mayoral Call-to-Action

Goal: During the Broadband Master Plan's development, City staff indicated willingness to develop and participate in an outreach campaign spearheaded by the Mayor's Office and any other interested elected officials. This effort would further expand residents' access to affordable devices by increasing regional awareness to residents and businesses who may be looking to donate old devices. This campaign would be most effective being spearheaded by the Mayor and any other willing Councilmembers.

Resources Needed: This effort would require minimal overhead costs, other than City staff time to develop marketing materials and press release language, as it is primarily intended to bring local business awareness to existing programs in which the City has no direct involvement. The development of a simple pledge form to collect data on interested businesses would allow the City to connect them with the appropriate device refurbisher.

Roles and Responsibilities: Communication liaisons within the City and any elected officials' offices would be responsible for publicly disseminating these announcements. The Department of IT would assist in the coordination between these local refurbishers and the communication liaisons.

Progress Monitoring and Success Criteria: Program success could be measured by the number of pledges received and devices donated.

Year	Activities
2026	• Develop public announcement language and any associated "pledge" pages for businesses to enter their relevant information • Utilize Digital Inclusion Month (October) to either make the announcement or to draw attention to the program
2027 and onward	• Repeat the prior year's steps and make any modifications to the public call-to-action as needed

2.8 Explore establishing more computer labs in SDHC affordable housing community rooms and City recreation centers

Goal: Establish computer labs in SDHC affordable housing community rooms and City recreation centers where they do not exist. There are a small number of computer labs at several recreation centers as part of a program under SD Access 4 All and the expansion of these labs would allow for the expansion of additional digital equity programming. Public Wi-Fi would need to be available in concert with the other resources available in the computer labs. The list of SDHC community rooms with no current computer labs is below, based on data provided by SDHC. A list of City recreation centers would need to be developed, with priority given to those in Digital Equity Priority Areas.

Table 4: SDHC affordable housing facilities with community rooms and no computer lab

Address	Number of units
10101 – 10191 Maya Linda Road (Maya Linda)	132
5330 Orange Ave (Park Crest)	71
1865 Hotel Circle South (Valley Vista)	192
7705 – 7795 Belden Street (Existing Lab)	243
605 – 695 Picador Boulevard (Otay Villas)	78
325-415 South 33rd Street (Vista Verde)	40

Resources needed: A funding source or partner to provide computers, software, and other equipment, and buy-in from City and SDHC leadership on the space and implementation for the computer labs, would be required. Management, upkeep, and maintenance of the labs would also need to be considered. It is also recommended to expand digital equity programming to these sites as funding and staffing allows.

Budget: Exact costs will be site specific and depend on the desired capacity of the room and on maintenance and security costs. A preliminary equipment budget for a basic computer lab—purchasing and installing four computers, displays, software, desks, chairs, printers, and other supplies is $18,000, plus $5,000 per year for utility payments and software and computer maintenance agreements, and $2,000 per year to create a reserve fund for future equipment replacement costs and other contingencies. This assumes a room is available at no cost. Any required site-specific physical construction or utility construction would be at an additional cost. Additional budget would be required to support Digital Navigators or—if deemed necessary by SDHC—for security.

Funding mechanism: Several funding sources are potentially available for computer labs. AT&T sometimes funds computer labs through its foundation (grants of up to $50,000 available) and has a separate program called Connected Learning Centers to fund computer labs. In addition, the CASF Adoption account can support computing centers and digital navigation staff for the center, funding up to 85% of eligible costs for broadband access centers (reimbursement for computing devices is capped at $11,250 per project and limited to $750 per device). More information about the CASF Adoption account is detailed in section 5.2.2.

Roles and responsibilities: The City could partner with SDHC and assist with CASF applications or engagement with AT&T on funding, but SDHC would need to identify the site and approve the implementation. For the expansion of any recreation center computer labs, cross-collaborations would be required between Parks & Recreation and Information Technology.

Potential challenges: Support from AT&T or CASF is not guaranteed. The City and SDHC will need to assess their capacity and budgetary needs to support maintenance and security and to address any technical issues when residents are using the lab.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: The number of computers available in SDHC computer labs and City recreation centers, number of monthly users of the computer labs, and any resident feedback about these added resources will be measures of success for any computer lab implementation.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• The City Department of Information Technology should meet with SDHC to discuss the ideal implementation of computer labs in existing community rooms. • The Department of Information Technology should meet with the Parks & Recreation Department to determine a model for current and future computer labs including required hardware and software, along with a determination of roles and responsibilities. • Develop a list of eligible City recreation centers for computer labs. • Procure additional security software and replace aging equipment at active recreation center computer labs • Reach out to AT&T and/or apply for a CASF Adoption account grant to support the project (for CASF, the grant could also support some time for a digital navigator in the space)
2027	• If funding is secured, implement the project according to SDHC's and Parks and Recreation's guidance and the rules or guidelines associated with the funding. • Conduct site assessments across all recreation center sites for need and feasibility of computer labs. • Establish a means to document usage of the new lab or labs. • Ensure funding is available to support security, other operating expenses, and equipment refresh over longer time scales.

Year	Activities
2028	• If a lab has been established, collect data on use and computer lab effectiveness (such as number of monthly users and qualitative resident feedback). • If funding is secured, expand computer labs at additional recreation centers according to highest need as determined by previous site assessments.
2029 and onward	• Evaluate data on computer labs to determine if any adjustments are needed to better serve the SDHC community and users of recreation centers, and implement feasible recommendations. • Continue ensuring that funding is available to support security, operating expenses, and equipment refresh over longer time scales.

2.9 Consider issuing an RFP for bulk-buy solutions for SDHC affordable housing residents

A draft bulk-buy solutions RFP and a discussion of the associated process is provided in Section 5.

Goal: If funds are identified to support subscriptions and if potential bulk-buy solutions are deemed to be the most appropriate, cost-effective option amid existing programs providing low-cost internet service, an RFP could be issued to procure this solution.

If an RFP were pursued as a viable, fully funded option, it is recommended that the City first encourage SDHC to focus on a bulk-buy broadband procurement for all SDHC affordable housing units, where proposers would be asked to provide service and all needed equipment and customer support at the least possible monthly cost per housing unit that seeks the service—and, importantly, that they not require SDHC to handle any customer requests. This is a targeted strategy to address residents with high need, given their low income and the Broadband Master Plan's finding that many low-income residents do not subscribe to available services. Notably, more than 104,000 low-income San Diegans used the $30 Affordable Connectivity Plan (ACP) broadband subsidy when it was available. This benefit ended in early 2024.

The bulk-buy RFP would request proposals for solutions to provide broadband service of at least 100/100 Mbps to SDHC units, with the monthly cost to be paid by SDHC—if a viable funding source can be identified. However, because not all cable locations can provide 100 Mbps upload at present, maintaining eligibility for proposers to provide 100/20 service would allow more competition and could also open the door to some high-speed fixed wireless providers to participate in the RFP. This would potentially increase the level of desirable competition in the procurement.

Providers could, in theory, propose building new infrastructure to respond to the RFP. But providers already serving SDHC locations could respond without having to deploy new infrastructure.

Respondents would not be required to serve all SDHC sites, which would allow providers of all sizes to propose solutions that align with their service areas. The procurement would simply seek the solution that entails the lowest per-monthly cost per apartment and minimizes the administrative burden on SDHC.

Resources needed: Funds would be required to support ongoing free service to tenants who want it. In addition, SDHC would need to facilitate a monthly bulk payment for the service, which would require some level of SDHC administrative time commitment, with the exact level of effort to be determined. The RFP will require respondents to take care of all billing, customer service, and placement and removal of in-unit customer equipment.

Budget: The RFP would request that providers detail a monthly per-unit cost for bulk purchase of internet services to SDHC affordable housing sites. Response scoring would largely be about cost but also would consider respondent qualifications and acceptance of other terms of the RFP.

If the cost per unit were $10 per month, the total annual cost to provide service to 1,000 units would be $120,000. At $20, the annual cost for 1,000 units would be $240,000. Overhead costs at SDHC should be studied, but the RFP is designed to keep such costs to a minimum.

Funding mechanism: The Department of Information Technology should approach City decision-makers about willingness to fund such an effort. The City's willingness to fund a bulk buy for SDHC would need to be confirmed before pursuing the RFP. The City could also explore philanthropic sources or earmarks in state budget appropriations with the understanding that reliable funding is needed for multiple years to avoid potential service disruptions for residents due to funding constraints in future years. Finally, the City and SDHC could consider whether some or all of the low-cost service could be added to the monthly rent of tenants taking service.

While the CASF Public Housing account supports infrastructure deployment, it does not support operating costs. The City could encourage SDHC to potentially consider partnering with a willing provider on CASF funding, so long as the provider could assume managerial roles and responsibilities.

Roles and responsibilities: If reliable funding is identified and a decision is made to issue an RFP, SDHC would be responsible for managing the RFP process. Initial communications with tenants about the program could be handled by digital navigators or by SDHC through whatever communications channels it already uses to contact tenants.

Potential challenges: A lack of funding will make this effort infeasible. Respondents may be concerned about retaining existing SDHC customers or may want a guaranteed base of apartments to serve. If so, they can write proposals accordingly, and SDHC can evaluate whether or not to proceed based on the potential financial exposure to SDHC within each respondent's proposal.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: The bulk buy RFP will be measured on its success based on the number and quality of responses to the RFP. Once partners are selected, success will be measured based on the number of households subscribing to the service at no cost to them, especially those who previously had no internet subscription.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Evaluate whether a bulk-buy RFP is the most appropriate, cost-effective option. • If a decision is made to issue an RFP, confirm funding availability and finalize the bulk-buy RFP draft (see Section 5). • Work closely with SDHC to work through details and administration of RFP, including roles and responsibilities. • Work with the City Purchasing & Contracting Department to align the planned RFP with City legal procurement rules.
2027	• If it is not done in 2026, issue the RFP and evaluate responses. • Evaluate the responses received and, if appropriate within the RFP's criteria and anticipated funding obligations, select one or more partners. • Begin implementation with the selected partners. • Promote the offering to SDHC affordable housing residents and document the number taking the service.
2028 onward	• Continue the program for as long as funding allows. • Document the number of residents receiving the free service.

2.10 Consider issuing an RFP for broadband infrastructure solutions in Digital Equity Priority Areas

The draft broadband infrastructure RFP and a discussion of the associated process is provided in Section 5.

Goal: The goal of the RFP is to provide an affordable service option for residents of digital equity priority areas, including a low-cost option for qualifying households. It is important to note that affordable service can also be provided by a bulk-buy solution. The costs of any new infrastructure – capital expense, operating expense, and service costs over an extended period of time – should be weighed against the bulk-buy option.

The City will seek proposals from qualified companies to design, build, operate, and maintain a fiber and/or fixed wireless network and other network assets to provide broadband internet service of at least 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload to one or more digital equity priority areas, with a low-cost or free option for low-income residents including student families eligible for the National School Lunch Program. The City would offer to consider providing access to City assets or land if requested by the proposer, as well as permit streamlining and construction facilitation if requested.

Resources needed: The City would need to offer funding, assets, or other facilitation to incent providers to participate and build the network in alignment with City goals for affordability and addressing priority areas. (These could be presented in alignment with the 3D map of City assets if such a map is created.) Any assets or facilitation would be provided on a case-by-case basis if requested by the provider.

Budget: The RFP is designed to minimize the budget cost to the City, with "no or lowest cost to City" designated as a selection criterion. Staff time to run the RFP and monitor performance would be required.

Funding mechanism: To incentivize participation in the RFP, the City could potentially offer to facilitate projects through waived fees, expedited processes, and asset sharing—and potentially a subsidy if City budgets or grant funding allows. (The City has expressed that it is undergoing fiscal challenges, but that this could change in the future.)

Some census blocks in digital equity priority areas are eligible for the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF). The RFP could encourage respondents to review whether they could receive CASF funding for certain census blocks of the project and offer City partnership or cooperation in assisting the entity in applying for CASF funding.

Roles and responsibilities: The Department of Information Technology would lead development and management of the RFP. Asset-owning departments, Development Services, and Economic Development would be included in review and approval if applicants indicated a desire to use City assets or streamlined permitting processes.

Potential challenges: If the City does not have funds available to offer providers, it could be a challenge to attract proposals. The City's market sounding indicated several providers are interested in a potential RFP to build infrastructure, although they said that it would depend on the terms and what was offered.

Progress monitoring and success criteria: The City can measure success based on the number and quality of responses to the RFP; once partners are selected, the City should measure the number of subscribers, number of qualifying subscribers to the low-cost service option, and the partners' compliance with the grant requirements. Importantly, the City should calculate the total per-user cost of such an effort and consider this against other approaches to providing low-cost or free service to low-income residents.

Timeline:

Year	Activities
2026	• Monitor BEAD grant outcomes and progress of competitive high-speed broadband buildouts in San Diego by fiber and fixed wireless providers. • Monitor outcomes and per-household costs from infrastructure programs in Oakland and Los Angeles County to understand total costs that San Diego might face.

Year	Activities
2027	• Monitor outcomes of the bulk buy procurement (if pursued) and use those numbers as a frame of reference for understanding future proposed per-household costs of new network deployments • Develop data on the impacts of other City interventions, including efforts to enroll residents in low-cost broadband programs • Continue monitoring outcomes and per-household costs from infrastructure programs in Oakland and Los Angeles County
2028	• Based on all of the data inputs examined in the previous two years, make a go/no-go decision on issuing this RFP and finalize goals and potential geographic area for the RFP • Conduct market sounding with potential providers to gauge interest and potentially incorporate feedback into the RFP • Confirm City willingness to provide assets, waived fees, streamlined permitting, or subsidy • Based on the results of the above efforts, revise, update, and finalize the draft RFP (see Section 5). • Issue the RFP in late 2028, seeking broadband partners to serve parts of all of Digital Equity Priority Areas
2029	• Evaluate responses, select partners, and negotiate terms (if City assets, subsidies, or other City role is involved) • Proceed with deployment under the negotiated terms • Facilitate the buildout • Develop data on outcomes and usage statistics if the buildout is completed this year.
2030	• Develop data on number of households using the new network • Calculate the monthly per-household cost of the effort considering all factors – capital costs, operating costs, and service costs projected over an extended period • Depending on the data developed on costs—and on the impacts and costs of other City initiatives—evaluate whether it is worthwhile to repeat the infrastructure RFP process to cover additional areas

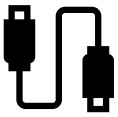
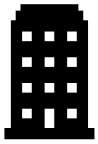
2.11 Develop digital equity key performance indicators to track progress

The following are performance indicators that City can use to track outcomes of the recommendations in this workplan and to document how money was spent.

To implement this, the City could require recipients of grant funding or managers of City programs to report this data to DoIT (if such reports are not being made already).

DoIT at its discretion could then post the information online or in an annual report.

Table 5: Key performance indicators for digital equity activities

	Changes in utilization of public Wi-Fi access points (increased use suggests benefits to residents)
	Numbers of households connected through any future bulk purchase program or infrastructure created following a City RFP or RFPs;
	Numbers of SDHC/HDP households, specifically, connected through the above RFP efforts;
	Number of hotspot loans made, and information about whether borrowers were offered help in enrolling in low-cost residential broadband plans
	Numbers of computers distributed to low-income households;
	Numbers of attendees at training sessions (distinguishing between new and returning patrons);
	Numbers of residents assisted with low-cost broadband program enrollment;

	Demographic information about those assisted through the above efforts (if such data can be collected) to understand more clearly who received the benefits

Additional sources of information on progress can emerge from the following sources over time.

- Citywide levels of residential broadband subscription level/s and computer ownership show up in ACS survey data.
- CBOs and a citywide coalition can provide subjective views on the changing levels of need and how well those needs are met.
- Citywide measures of skill levels and other topics could be determined if the City conducted regular surveys—with identical questions and rigorous methodologies to achieve random sampling.

3 Sample documents for implementation of recommendations

3.1 Digital equity coalition case studies and related information

The following are examples of other digital equity coalitions. For more information, the City may wish to reach out to the entities themselves to research the latest activities, plans, and outcomes. This discussion is focused on the establishment and (where applicable) funding of each coalition, to provide context for the initial stages of San Diego's potential effort.

3.1.1 Portland, Oregon: Coalition of Digital Equity

In Portland, Oregon, the current Coalition of Digital Equity developed organically and gradually from a group of committed and interested community leaders to a formal standalone coalition over a period of several years.

In 2016, the coalition began as an email list and informal meetings with community leaders from Portland State University, local nonprofits, and the City. It evolved gradually to include more formal meetings and trainings in later years. The City and library hosted meetings and set the agendas.

In 2022, the City funded a project to restructure the coalition.[9] It first contracted with a consultant to develop recommendations on what the coalition should look like,[10] and then issued an RFP for a one-time grant of $76,600 to fund a backbone organization who would hire a coalition manager.[11] It identified a local CBO, Free Geek, to serve that function under the one-time grant. FreeGeek continues to provide a venue for the coalition meetings.

As of 2025, the coalition met for an hour and a half every month in meetings that are available virtually and in person at Free Geek's office in Portland.[12]

3.1.2 Los Angeles: Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League

The Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League (LA DEAL) was founded in 2021 as the primary digital equity coalition in Los Angeles. It also functions as the Los Angeles County regional broadband consortium and is co-sponsored and convened by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and UNITE-LA,[13] an education and workforce development nonprofit co-founded by the City of Los Angeles, LA Unified School District, and the LA Community College District.

LA DEAL partners with public agencies, community organizations, private companies, and philanthropies to support broadband infrastructure expansion, digital literacy, and device distribution. It convenes stakeholders, brings partners together, and advocates for and publicizes

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[9] Coalition of Digital Equity (CODE) | Portland.gov

[10] 22.0729 ASCETA-City of Portland OCT Reimagining DIN Project - Final Report and Recommendations https://www.portland.gov/bps/com-tech/digital-equity/code

[11] The funds were earmarked for: $60,000 for the Staff Position, $5,000 for the Leadership Team, $5,000 for incidentals, and $6,600 for ADA print and digital communications. FY 2023-24 Digital Inclusion Coalition Grant Contract#

[12] https://www.freegeek.org/digitalequity

[13] https://ladeal.org/about-us/

digital equity efforts and infrastructure opportunities.[14] It also assists entities pursuing funding for broadband infrastructure and digital inclusion grants.[15] Its primary activities are generally not oriented around regular meetings of all LA DEAL partners; it instead acts as a liaison, partner, and advocate on a variety of initiatives involving digital equity and broadband infrastructure.

The coalition is funded by the CPUC Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account[16] ($300,000 in 2021 and $600,000 in 2023[17]) with support from various foundations and corporate sponsors.

3.1.3 Sacramento, California: Capital Region Coalition for Digital Inclusion

The Capital Region Coalition for Digital Inclusion (formerly the Sacramento Coalition for Digital Inclusion) was originally formed in 2019. The coalition's Steering Committee includes the City of Sacramento, the Sacramento Public Library, Los Rios Community College District, California State University at Sacramento, Capital Region Workforce Boards, Clear Strategies, and Valley Vision.[18] After its founding, the Coalition later expanded from the City of Sacramento to the broader Capital region, including nine counties in the region. It is managed by Valley Vision, a regional nonprofit that also manages the regional broadband consortium.

The SCDI is supported through philanthropic contributions, including from the Morgan Family Foundation and Union Bank, along with public support from the region's four Workforce Development Boards: Golden Sierra Job Training Agency, North Central Counties Consortium, Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA), and Yolo County Workforce Innovation Board.[19]

3.1.4 Lake County, Illinois: Lake County Digital Equity Coalition

The Lake County Digital Equity Coalition, serving a county north of Chicago (and including Waukegan, IL), convenes government, private, community, and nonprofit organizations interested in closing the digital divide and is led by County staff.

Coalition meetings include discussions of active digital equity projects, collaborations to implement plans, and presentations on the progress of different working groups within the coalition. The coalition is a part of the Lake County Digital Growth Initiative, which encompasses various digital

[14] https://ladeal.org/highlights/
[15] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/consortia/t17778-documents/t17778.pdf; https://www.unitela.com/la_deal_secures_200000_for_la_county
[16] This funding account is available for the Southern Border Broadband Consortium, the regional broadband consortium that includes the City of San Diego (as well as San Diego County and Imperial County). The coalition would need to consider, after it is well established in the City, whether it would like to expand to encompass a greater area and potentially leverage these regional stakeholders and sources of funding.
[17] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/consortia/t17778-documents/t17778.pdf
[18] Capital Region Coalition for Digital Inclusion - Valley Vision - Sacramento
[19] Sacramento-Coalition-for-Digital-Inclusion_Final-Action-Plan-5.4.2021.pdf

equity initiatives run by the County and was initially funded by the federal State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds grant in 2021.[20]

3.1.4.1 Sample coalition meeting agenda

Not all coalitions post agendas for meetings. The following is an example of a coalition meeting agenda, in this case from the Lake County coalition in Illinois. It provides a sample of the kinds of activities that may be undertaken by a coalition.

1. **Welcome** (5 minutes)
2. **Housekeeping** (5 minutes)
    a. Going over virtual meeting and accessibility settings
    b. Introductions over chat
3. **Ground rules** (5 minutes)
    a. How to participate in a discussion in a virtual meeting
    b. Group norms to guide participation
4. **Recap of recent digital equity events and goals in progress** (15 minutes)
    a. Recent programs, events, or initiatives that have happened in the last month
    b. Checking in on yearly or other goals
    c. Checking in on progress on longer term plans or goals for the group
5. **Definitions and principles** (15 minutes)
    a. Review principles of digital equity
    b. Review organization and charter of coalition
6. **Coalition committees (or working groups)** (10 minutes)
    a. Summarize each committee or working group's mission and members
    b. Request updates from working group on any ongoing tasks or initiatives
7. **Upcoming and recent awareness campaigns** (10 minutes)
    a. Summarize focuses for the past month and coming month (e.g., Disability Pride Month, Black History Month.)
    b. Discuss of how organizations can incorporate those focuses in the relevant time period
8. **Collaborative group activity** (15 minutes)
    a. Conduct group discussion that is relevant to recent or upcoming focuses of the coalition

[20] https://www.lakecountyil.gov/5115/Digital-Equity-Coalition

i. For example, it could involve discussions of the interaction between mental health and the digital divide in organizations' work if it is Mental Health Awareness month

b. Other group activities could include planning for an upcoming collaborative event or giving feedback on a City initiative

9. **Next steps** (5 mins)

a. Preview upcoming meeting and events

b. Remind coalition members of important action items

3.2 Goals and mission statements for digital equity coalition

This section provides examples of other coalitions' goals and mission statements that may be helpful to reference as the City considers how it may wish to proceed.

3.2.1 City of Portland

The City of Portland's draft coalition framework[21] contains the following framing statements and goals:

2022 - 2025 COALITION FRAMEWORK - work in progress as of 7/27/22
collectively created areas of alignment to build on

Our Problem. DIGITAL DIVIDE

The gap between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage with technology and those who do not. As technology constantly evolves, the digital divide prevents equal participation and opportunity in all parts of life

- **Technology can be expensive** and requires regular updates & maintenance.
- **Technology changes quickly** requiring re-familiarizing and constant learning.
- **Technology can be inaccessible** requiring Universal Design to support all abilities.

Our Purpose. DIGITAL EQUITY

Digital equity is when all individuals and communities have high quality tools and knowledge needed for full participation in our society, government, and economy all the time. Digital equity is necessary for civic, cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, access to essential services, and fun.

WHO WE ARE

An intersectional coalition led by those with lived experiences of digital exclusion, dedicated to bridging the Digital Divide and achieving Digital Equity throughout Multnomah County

WHAT WE DO

Collaborate. To connect and work together on a systemic solution to the digital divide

Collectively Voice. To speak as a collective on policy issues or state matters

Multiply Capacity. To share costs and pursue new resources together, and not duplicate efforts, and to share resources, talents and best practices

Learn and Adapt. To learn new ideas and approaches

WHO WE CENTER

Priority Populations

- Black
- People with low income
- Indigenous peoples
- People of color
- People with disabilities
- People with language barriers (immigrants, refugees, ESL)
- Seniors
- Houseless or facing housing insecurity
- Youth, particularly foster and special needs children and their families
- Survivors of domestic violence
- People in rural areas
- People impacted by incarceration
- Adult learners
- Intersectionalities of the above

WHAT WE SEEK

Digital Adoption

Affordable access and daily use of the internet at a speed, quality, and capacity necessary for accomplishing common tasks, supported by:

- A personal device and relevant equipment
- A safe, secure and convenient network
- The digital skills necessary to participate online
- Culturally relevant services and support, and
- Community connection

[21] 22.0729 ASCETA-City of Portland OCT Reimagining DIN Project - Final Report and Recommendations

3.2.2 City of Sacramento

The City of Sacramento established the following vision and mission for its Capital Region Coalition for Digital Equity:[22]

- **Vision: "**Every resident and household in the Greater Sacramento Region has access to the Internet, the equipment needed to use it, and the skills necessary to utilize it"
- **Mission:** "To facilitate collaboration among organizations and initiatives working to bridge the Digital Divide in order to maximize the resources for the greatest impact."

It also established goals for its three working groups, which represent the three areas of its Action Plan:

- **Broadband Access and Adoption: "**Support and promote access and adoption to high-speed and high-quality broadband Internet services in the Greater Sacramento Region"
- **Hardware Devices:** "Ensure a suitable device for each individual by 2025" (the Action Plan was adopted in 2021)
- **Digital Literacy and Skills:** "Develop standards to grow our regional digital literacy and align to our workforce needs"

3.3 Example promotional sign for low-utilization public Wi-Fi sites and list of candidate sites for expansion and promotion

In Brant County, Ontario, Canada, permanent signs displaying a Wi-Fi icon make it clear that free Wi-Fi is offered provide a QR code to facilitate easy connection. San Diego representatives stated that signage is often removed or destroyed, so a more robust sign, while more expensive, could be a viable long-term solution.

Figure 2: Signage promoting free Wi-Fi in Brant County, Ontario[23]

[22] https://www.valleyvision.org/wp-content/uploads/Sacramento-Coalition-for-Digital-Inclusion_Final-Action-Plan-5.4.2021.pdf

[23] "County of Brant offering free public Wi-Fi at local parks," *Brant Beacon*, July 4, 2023, https://www.brantbeacon.ca/county-of-brant-offering-free-public-wi-fi-at-local-parks/.

3.4 Two case studies for targeted broadband infrastructure efforts pursued by local governments in California

3.4.1 Los Angeles County

Los Angeles County created a public-private partnership with fixed wireless provider WeLink Communications to bring service to East LA, Boyle Heights, and South LA, an area of 68 square miles.[24] As part of the agreement, WeLink will offer low-cost plans for qualified households at $25 per month for 500/500 Mbps, and a plan available for the same speeds to other households at $65 per month. Upgrades are also available for higher speeds (e.g., 1/1 Gbps, 2/2 Gbps) at low-cost rates for qualifying households. Pricing cannot increase until 2027. [25]

The County identified areas where over 20 percent of households did not subscribe to home internet as areas for Community Broadband Networks and selected WeLink as a partner for the first group of service areas announced. [26] The County indicated that it received $56 million in ARPA funds to support the Community Broadband Network projects and $320,000 in Local Agency Technical Assistance Grants for pre-construction technical support.[27]

The outcomes and final costs (capital, operating, maintenance, and service provision) of this project should be monitored, per the discussion earlier in this plan.

3.4.2 City of Oakland

In May 2025, the City of Oakland announced a Broadband Master Plan[28] whose centerpiece is the construction of a $15.6 million City fiber network to connect up to 2,500 households, many of them in Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) buildings, as well as to connect other institutions and support Wi-Fi.

If the City of San Diego is interested in considering some form of limited residential network construction in the future, Oakland could be a frame of reference as information develops on the project, including the operating and maintenance costs, whether there is a cost to residents to use the service, and how many residents adopt the new service.

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[24] "Los Angeles County and WeLink sign historic public-private partnership to bring high-speed, low-cost internet options to areas greatly impacted by the Digital Divide," County Of Los Angeles news release, May 7, 2024, https://lacounty.gov/2024/05/07/los-angeles-county-and-welink-sign-historic-public-private-partnership-to-bring-high-speed-low-cost-internet-options-to-areas-greatly-impacted-by-the-digital-divide/.
[25] Quarterly Progress Reports – Investments to Accelerate Digital Equity, County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department, https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/163724.pdf.
[26] "Los Angeles County and WeLink sign historic public-private partnership to bring high-speed, low-cost internet options to areas greatly impacted by the Digital Divide," County Of Los Angeles news release.
[27] Quarterly Progress Reports – Investments to Accelerate Digital Equity, County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department, November 2022, https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1133042_ISDQuarterlyUpdate-InvestmentstoAccelerateDigitalEquity_November2022_.pdf; Quarterly Progress Reports – Investments to Accelerate Digital Equity, County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department, May 2023, https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1141816_ISDQuarterlyUpdate-InvestmentstoAccelerateDigitalEquity_May2023_.pdf.
[28] cao-94612.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/documents/CityofOaklandBMP2025_FINAL.pdf

As noted in the Broadband Master Plan, key distinctions between the San Diego and Oakland contexts, and additional perspectives on the Oakland proposal, include the following.

- The bulk of Oakland's proposed network cost ($14 million) is covered by the CPUC's Federal Funding Account (FFA), a funding source that is no longer available.
- Complete information on operating and maintenance costs and revenue projections are not yet clear, and the take-rate (that is, the portion of households that sign up for or use the new service) will not be known until the project is complete. Once these details are available, this will allow calculation of the total cost (capital and operating and service provision) of the Oakland project on a per-household basis.

4 Funding opportunities

In Section 2 of this Workplan, each recommendation contains a description of potential funding opportunities tied to the specific recommended activity it could support. This section contains further details on those funding programs, as well as any other funding programs that may be relevant to broadband and digital equity in the City of San Diego.

Significant public funding was allocated in recent years to expand broadband infrastructure and to promote digital equity throughout the United States. However, as of the publication of this report, most federal programs have been concluded and Digital Equity Act funding was canceled (though a pending lawsuit seeks restoration of grants under this act).

Unless Digital Equity Act funding is restored, this leaves state and local resources the best current option for digital equity or infrastructure funding. In California, the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) provides accounts designated for broadband infrastructure, broadband adoption (including digital literacy and broadband access), and public housing. The CASF Adoption account likely provides the best match for the City. It could fund computer labs, digital literacy classes, or public outreach programs to promote broadband adoption.

City funding, as well as potential foundation and corporate support—including from a benefit agreement related to the Cox-Charter merger—represent other potential sources of funding. Examples of foundations that might have some overlap with digital equity topics include the Parks Foundation and Friends of the San Diego Public Library, and other foundation or corporate sponsorships may be available.[29]

4.1 Federal funding

The following are current or former federal funding sources.

4.1.1 Digital Equity Act

The funding programs associated with the Digital Equity Act have been cancelled, but the City should monitor the progress of a recent lawsuit challenging its cancellation.[30]

The Digital Equity Act of 2021 established four federal grant programs providing $2.75 billion for digital equity and inclusion purposes.

- State Digital Equity Planning Grant
- Digital Equity Capacity Grant
- Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program
- State Digital Equity Capacity Grant for Native Entities

[29] https://www.sandiego.gov/corporatepartnership/existing

[30] National Digital Inclusion Alliance Files Lawsuit Seeking Reinstatement of Bipartisan Digital Equity Act's Competitive Grant Program - National Digital Inclusion Alliance

The California Department of Technology (CDT) developed the state Digital Equity Plan and published the final version in April 2024.[31] The Digital Equity Capacity Grant and Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program are described below, which for the City of San Diego represented state-level and national-level opportunities for digital equity grant funds.

The Digital Equity Act programs the City of San Diego qualified to participate in were canceled in May 2025.[32] However, the City should monitor the National Digital Inclusion Alliance's (NDIA) recent lawsuit challenging the cancelation of the Competitive Grant Program,[33] in the event that this litigation results in a reactivation of some parts of the program. See next section.

4.1.1.1 Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program

The Digital Equity Capacity Grant program was part of the Digital Equity Act and has been cancelled, but as noted above, the City should monitor the recent lawsuit challenging its cancellation.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this program was released on March 29, 2024. NTIA allocated $1.44 billion for states to apply for implementation funds for their accepted digital equity plans under the State Digital Equity Grant Program. The funding for this program was designated for local organizations to help develop their digital equity plans, provide digital navigation services, provide digital literacy training, and support device distribution and digital workforce development programs.[125]

CDT published the guidelines for its use of the Capacity Grant funds in the form of a State Digital Equity Subgrant Program on October 29, 2024, for public comment.[126] The state allocated $45.3 million for this competitive subgrant fund to support implementation of the Digital Equity Plan.

CDT's subgrant program for this effort was called the California Digital Equity Program (CalDEP). For the subgrant program, eligible entities must be located and operate in the State of California and must be a local political subdivision or agency, a Tribe, a non-profit, a community anchor institution, a local educational agency, a workforce development organization, or a partnership of multiple such entities.

The CalDEP application opened in early 2025. There were two funding tracks for this program: 1) regional and local ecosystems and 2) targeted statewide ecosystems.

The City of San Diego was planning on applying for this program when NTIA announced its cancellation in May 2025.[34] The City had issued an RFP to community organizations to identify one to serve as a backbone organization and others that could serve as implementation partners. The City could not complete its planning and application process once the program was canceled.

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[31] https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2024/04/California-State-Digital-Equity-Plan-04.04.2024-Remediated-Version.pdf
[32] https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2025/05/06-31-DS077_CA-Dept-of-Tech.pdf
[33] https://www.digitalinclusion.org/blog/national-digital-inclusion-alliance-files-lawsuit-seeking-reinstatement-of-bipartisan-digital-equity-acts-competitive-grant-program/
[34] https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2025/05/06-31-DS077_CA-Dept-of-Tech.pdf

4.1.1.2 Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

The Digital Equity Competitive Grant was part of the Digital Equity Act and has been cancelled, but as noted above, the City should monitor the recent lawsuit challenging its cancellation.

The Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program was a national competitive grant program for digital equity projects. The NOFO for the first opportunity was released on July 24, 2024, and was due on September 23, 2024, for $1.25 billion of the funds. Eligible entities were the same as for the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program unless the entity is serving as the administering entity for the state.

The City, in conjunction with other regional partners, applied for this funding. The San Diego application was not included in these rounds of awards.

4.1.1.3 Federal cancellation and lawsuit

In May of 2025, the federal government notified states that the Digital Equity Planning and Capacity Grant had been canceled; in October of 2025 the National Digital Inclusion Alliance announced it filed a lawsuit challenging the cancellations and seeking restoration of the grants.[35] Although the City was not one of the 65 initial awardees announced in January 2025, it should monitor the progress of the lawsuit for potential updates related to all aspects of the Digital Equity Act.

4.1.2 Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program

The City of San Diego should monitor the progress of results and awards for the BEAD Program, which are currently in "preliminary award" status and awaiting NTIA review and approval. The awards, once finalized, will likely indicate where providers are expanding within the City of San Diego.

The federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program has concluded its second Benefit of the Bargain round and the CPUC has internally approved its Final Proposal, which contains preliminary awards subject to review and approval of NTIA.

The BEAD program in California received $1.86 billion to build last-mile infrastructure to eligible locations with under 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. An extremely limited number of locations in San Diego were eligible for BEAD funds, but it is possible that local providers applied for and will receive funds for those select locations and could engage in wider deployments in addition to reaching those locations. As of December 2025, formal BEAD subgrants had not been made.

The CPUC published a public-facing map displaying where grants were made. The map shows some areas with terrestrial infrastructure projects in the City of San Diego, including AT&T fiber projects in Otay Mesa and near Mira Mesa and Sorrento Valley.[36]

4.2 State funding

The State of California has several ongoing grant programs for infrastructure and digital equity, all of which are overseen by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Most grant programs fall

[35] The filing is available here: https://www.digitalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/NDIA-v.-Trump-Complaint.pdf

[36] See the public-facing map published by the CPUC: https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=8c43d72db37349089dc9d49b5f77896d

under the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) umbrella, which contains accounts for infrastructure, adoption, and public housing projects.

4.2.1 CASF Infrastructure Fund

Recent buildout and BEAD awards likely mean that any previously CASF-eligible areas now have plans for buildouts that will provide broadband. As discussed elsewhere, as of this report, BEAD awards have not yet been finalized. CASF-eligible areas are defined as those that cannot receive greater than 25/3 Mbps service.

The California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) provides funding for broadband adoption, infrastructure, service to public housing, consortia operations, line extensions, and technical assistance for California Tribes.[37] The Legislature allocates funding collected through surcharges on residential customer bills to each of the CASF grant fund accounts. Between 2021 and 2032, the CPUC is authorized to collect up to $150 million per year to fund all CASF programs.[38]

For Fiscal Year 2025-2026, the CPUC allocated $60.5 million of the CASF budget for infrastructure grant funding.[39] The CPUC accepts applications for the Broadband Infrastructure Grant Account program once a year (generally on April 1, although this was extended to October 31 for 2025) and the total amount of grant funding distributed to projects varies each year depending on the mix of applications received.

The CPUC relies on its own data collection and mapping analysis to determine eligible locations for CASF infrastructure funding.[40] Projects are eligible for funding between 60 percent and 100 percent of the costs of construction, and funded projects must deploy infrastructure in unserved areas with current speeds of no greater than 25/3 Mbps. The CPUC prioritizes projects in areas with 10/1 Mbps service or lower. Projects must commit to increasing speeds for residential users to at least 100/20 Mbps using either fiber, cable, or fixed wireless technologies. Projects must also commit to offer an "affordable" service offering for low-income customers at $15 or less per month. The census blocks eligible for CASF funding are shown in Sections 2.2.1 and 3.5.

As of early December 2025, there were no awarded CASF projects currently being constructed in San Diego. The City should monitor the CASF website for updates on the yearly program.[41]

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[37] "California Advanced Services Fund," CPUC, https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/california-advanced-services-fund.

[38] California Public Utilities Code §281(d)(4); See, also, Broadband Infrastructure Grant Account Program Requirements, Guidelines and Application Materials, https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-infrastructure-and-market-analysis/broadband-infrastructure-grant-account---landing-page/decision-docs/d2211023attachment-1casf-guidelinesw-coverheader053123.pdf.

[39] https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M571/K989/571989999.PDF

[40] California Interactive Broadband Map, http://www.broadbandmap.ca.gov/.

[41] "CASF Approved Infrastructure Projects," CPUC, https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/california-advanced-services-fund/casf-infrastructure-grant/casf-infrastructure-approved-projects.

4.2.2 CASF Adoption Account

The City should pursue the CASF Adoption Account as an opportunity for funding digital equity programming, specifically for computer labs and digital literacy classes, as outlined in Sections 2.6 and 2.7.

The CASF Adoption Account aims to increase publicly available broadband access and digital inclusion, including computing centers, free internet centers, digital literacy training, public education on broadband. The account can cover two types of adoption projects: digital literacy and broadband access.[42] The account was allocated $30 million for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.[43]

The CPUC holds two rounds of open application windows per year, with deadlines of July 1 and January 1.

The account may fund up to 85 percent of the eligible program costs for digital literacy or broadband access projects. Reimbursement for administrative costs is limited to 15 percent or less of the overall proposed budget. Eligible costs include:

- Education and outreach efforts and materials
- Computing devices (not including smartphones), including in-classroom or (for digital literacy projects only) take-home computing devices
- Software
- Printers
- Routers, switches, modems, and cabling for the purpose of establishing a broadband access space that connects to an existing in-building broadband network
- Mobile hotspots for a broadband access space (only when no inside network is available)
- Technical support for computing devices subsidized by the program
- Desks and chairs for a broadband access or digital literacy space
- For digital literacy projects, costs of digital literacy curriculum preparation and distribution
- Staff including digital literacy instructors, staff to monitor the space, or staff for call centers (if applicable)

Rent, utilities, internet service costs, food, lodging, marketing incentives for participation, and other classroom supplies and accessories are not eligible costs. Reimbursement for computing devices is capped at $11,250 per project and limited to $750 per device. Reimbursement for mobile hotspots used in training rooms or other public spaces is limited to a cap of $300 per device and $20,000 per project.[44] Projects must be started within six months of accepting the grant and must be completed within 24 months.

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[42] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/california-advanced-services-fund/casf-adoption-account

[43] https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M571/K989/571989999.PDF

[44] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/adoption_account/information/adoption-account-guidelines-may-2022.pdf

4.2.2.1 Digital literacy

The CPUC says digital inclusion projects may include digital literacy training programs and public education to communities with limited broadband adoption, including low-income communities, senior citizen communities, and communities facing socioeconomic barriers to broadband adoption.

Digital literacy project applicants must commit to providing at least 8 hours of digital literacy training to each participant through digital literacy classes, one on one tutoring or self-paced instruction.

An example of a digital literacy project could be a digital skills class totaling at least 8 hours of instruction hosted by the library, SDHC, or SD Access 4 All.

4.2.2.2 Broadband access

The CPUC says broadband access projects may include free broadband access in community training rooms or other public spaces, such as local government centers, senior citizen centers, schools, public libraries, nonprofit organizations, and community-based organizations. It may also include funding community outreach, such as analysis, comparison of Internet plans with the community, and call centers that will increase broadband access and adoption.

An example of a broadband access project could be to fund a community room with internet and computers in a City facility; to provide hotspots in a community room at a public space or City facility that is not currently connected to the internet; to outfit a computer lab and staff in a community room of a senior or low-income housing development; or to conduct a community outreach initiative to promote and educate community members about Internet plans within the community.

4.2.3 CPUC Digital Divide Grant Program

The City should monitor the CPUC Digital Divide Grant Program for school eligibility as the program continues. City schools are not currently listed as eligible on the CPUC website.

The Digital Divide Grant Program is a $200,000 yearly program for grants to reduce the digital divide in schools and communities in low-income areas. The projects center around digital literacy training, take-home devices, and broadband connections. In December 2024, the program became a permanent program for eligible schools and projects.

One grant for up to $100,000 is available annually for projects for low-income rural and urban schools (with a free and reduced-price meal participation rate of at least 50%), and up to two $50,000 awards are available annually for projects for community-based organizations partnering with an eligible school.[45]

[45] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/california-teleconnect-fund/ddgp/ddgp_2024flyer_updated.pdf

Community-based organization Outside the Lens received a grant to serve three schools in San Diego through the pilot Digital Divide Grant Program in 2023. It used the grant to provide devices and a combined arts and technology curriculum.[46]

Some schools on the CPUC's list of potentially eligible schools are in San Diego county (for example, Jamul-Dulzura Union Elementary, Julian Union Elementary, Julian Union High, Lakeside Union), but none are in the City of San Diego (previously awarded schools under the pilot program are not eligible).[47] The City of San Diego should continue to monitor this program for school eligibility and identify if it has any schools that should be eligible or could be in the future based on participation rates in free and reduced-price meal programs.

4.2.4 CASF Public Housing Account

The CASF Public Housing Account does not support operating costs and therefore may not be an ideal source of funding for SDHC, as mentioned in Section 2.8. However, this could be used as part of an infrastructure RFP effort, as referenced in the RFP draft in section 5.3.

The CASF Broadband Public Housing Account is designated for grants and loans to low-income communities, specifically to connect broadband networks that offer free broadband service that meets state standards. Publicly supported housing developments qualify as eligible applicants, as well as other housing developments and mobile home parks.[48] The allocated funding for the fiscal year 2025-2026 is $30.1 million.

The grant can finance up to 100 percent of the costs to install last mile infrastructure, inside wiring and broadband network equipment, but does not finance operations or maintenance costs. [49] This lack of funding for operations or maintenance makes this option less preferable for the SDHC.

The grant does not support adoption or digital literacy projects in public housing; only the CASF Adoption Account funds such projects on a state level.

4.2.5 Employment and Training Pathways Program

The Employment and Training Pathways Program does not align well with the City's existing digital navigation programming, as it has requirements for the population served and for a partnership with employers. As described in Section 2.6, the fund could be used to expand digital literacy and Tech-on-the-Go classes in languages other than English if an employer partner can also be identified to collaborate on the classes.

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[46] These schools were under the "Urban small school district" category: Monarch School, San Pasqual Academy, and San Diego Court School.
https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M548/K573/548573359.PDF

[47] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/california-teleconnect-fund/digital-divide-grant-program

[48] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/california-advanced-services-fund/casf-public-housing-account

[49] https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/bpha/bpha-faqs-2025.pdf

The City should develop means to support and promote this program across all of its existing and potential vendors along with its corporate sponsors and any other relevant local businesses willing to participate.

The California Employment Development Department awards grants for the Employment and Training Pathways Program (ETPP) for projects that train and provide paths to employment for disadvantaged communities.[50]

Target populations include English language learners, justice involved individuals, young adults who are not in school or employed, and veterans. The programs must align with targeted employer partners with clearly designed roles, integrated into all phases of the project, which assist in the employment pathway.

Awards are anticipated to range from $500,000 to $2 million, with $16.3 million in total funding available. Applicants must fund a minimum of 20 percent of their budget with funds or services from other services.

4.2.6 Broadband Loan Loss Reserve Fund

The Loan Loss Reserve Fund program finished in 2024. It is no longer relevant to the City and is included here as a reference.

SB156 established the California Broadband Loan Loss Reserve (BLLR) Fund to help local governments, tribes, and nonprofits finance municipal network capital expenses. The BLLR fund offers a credit enhancement for localities in financing local broadband infrastructure. The collateral provided by the BLLR can enable more favorable borrowing rates and terms for bonds.

However, while the original BLLR Fund was planned for $750 million over multiple years and rounds from 2023 to 2026, Senate Bill 109 revised previous appropriations in 2024, setting the fund's budget at $50 million and requiring awards to be issued by the end of 2024. The CPUC started accepting applications for this program beginning in March 2024 and awarded projects in November 2024. The state grant is funded by a federal grant from the Department of Labor to the State of California and is not anticipated to be an annual recurring grant.

4.3 Foundations, philanthropy, and corporate partnerships

The City should explore sources of funding beyond state and federal programs; foundations, philanthropy, and corporate partnerships pose potential opportunities for funding digital equity programs in a challenging budget environment.

Some City departments use foundations, philanthropy, or corporate partnerships to fund critical department activities. For example, the Parks Foundation secures funds from private and public donors to fund projects and maintain parks, and some departments use corporate partners to fund or sponsor activities and events.

[50] Employment and Training Pathways program (ETPP) Program Year 2025-26 (PY 25-26) - California Grants Portal

4.3.1 Potential benefit agreement related to the Cox-Charter merger

There is the potential that agreements related to the proposed Cox/Charter merger[51] will provide a new source of funds. In February of 2026, the City was exploring how the merger process might result in an agreement on benefits to the state and City. A settlement announced in Connecticut that month included a pledge from Charter to contribute $3 million to digital access and literacy programs.[52]

4.3.2 Foundations and philanthropy

In its five years of activity in the City, the Parks Foundation has raised $4 million.[53] DoIT could seek a similar strategy for raising funds for digital equity initiatives, particularly in the current budget environment. City staff expressed interest in a foundation specifically devoted to digital equity. Typically, a foundation is established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, governed independently by a volunteer Board of Directors, and led by a CEO or executive director.[54] Rather than try to start a new foundation, it may be more feasible to work through existing foundations or philanthropic funds working with the same populations. The Friends of the San Diego Public Library may be one example, but there could be others.

A model of a City-related foundation that provides support for digital equity activities is the City of Baltimore's Civic Fund. The Civic Fund is not a digital equity-specific foundation—instead, it funds programs across many City goals and departments, allowing city agencies to receive philanthropic resources. It managed the distribution of funds and serves as the grant program administrator in partnership with the City's Office of Broadband and Digital Equity.[55] A Civic Fund could be a broader solution for San Diego—rather than a digital equity-focused foundation, it could serve as a fundraising mechanism across multiple departments and City needs.

If a designated foundation poses a challenge for the City to implement, it could explore collaborating with the existing Friends of the San Diego Public Library nonprofit, Parks Foundation, or other philanthropies to raise funds and/or create a digital equity-focused fundraising program under the larger organization.

4.3.3 Corporate partnerships

The City of San Diego engages in several corporate partnerships to benefit taxpayers and strengthen the City's General Fund.[56] New corporate partnerships could be explored to provide a donation for a

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[51] "Charter Communications and Cox Communications Announce Definitive Agreement to Combine Companies," Charter Communications, May 16, 2025, https://corporate.charter.com/newsroom/charter-communications-and-cox-communications-announce-definitive-agreement-to-combine-companies.
[52] "Attorney General Tong and Consumer Counsel Coleman Secure Consumer Protection Commitments in Proposed Charter/Cox Merger Settlement," Office of the Attorney General of Connecticut, January 28, 2026, https://portal.ct.gov/ag/press-releases/2026-press-releases/consumer-protection-commitments-in-proposed-charter-cox-merger-settlement.
[53] https://www.sandiegoparksfoundation.org/whoweare
[54] https://www.sandiegoparksfoundation.org/our-financials; Leadership - Los Angeles Parks Foundation; Staff and Board — Portland Parks Foundation
[55] https://mayor.baltimorecity.gov/news/press-releases/2023-04-12-mayor-scott-announces-new-digital-equity-fund; https://www.baltimorecivicfund.org/digital-equity-fund
[56] https://www.sandiego.gov/corporatepartnership/about

digital equity need in the City as a municipal marketing partnership opportunity. One example of such a corporate partnership is the partnership with IKE Smart City and Downtown San Diego Partnership Inc., which collaborated with the City to provide wayfinding digital kiosks in Downtown San Diego.

Large corporations in San Diego, particularly those in the technology or telecommunications space, could be sources of partnerships or donations. For example, Qualcomm or its founder, Irwin Jacobs, has a history of supporting digital equity and other initiatives in Jacobs' hometown of New Bedford, Mass.

In addition, in the process of developing the report, the City engaged with some ISPs that have charitable foundations or digital equity initiatives, including AT&T, which has mechanisms for funding computer labs and other efforts. Other ISPs partner with nonprofits to fund digital equity and digital literacy.

5 RFP Process and RFP Drafts

5.1 Process

CTC is providing the City of San Diego with two draft RFPs in the following sections based on the work done for the Broadband Master Plan. One is a proposed RFP for SDHC's consideration of potential bulk-buy solutions for SDHC affordable housing sites. If SDHC decides to issue an RFP, its process will need to comply with SDHC's Housing Authority-approved procurement policy. The second is for targeted infrastructure solutions in digital equity priority areas.

To implement these draft RFP documents following the completion of this engagement, the following processes are recommended.

5.1.1 Confirm goals and funding sources

Confirm the policy goals for the RFPs, review to what extent the City may be willing to support the efforts through a capital or other contribution and update the documents as may be needed. With respect to the bulk purchase RFP, follow SDHC procurement processes and policies.

5.1.2 Outreach to potential respondents

Ultimately, it is in the best interest of the City (or SDHC, as the case may be) to attract as many qualified respondents as possible. Outreach to potential respondents prior to finalizing the RFPs can help. The goal of these conversations, sometimes called market soundings, is to enable respondents to understand the potential opportunity and the underlying policy goals.

The City (or SDHC, as the case may be) will, in turn, potentially gain valuable feedback from potential respondents to inform refinements to the RFPs to make it more likely to attract responses. Making the RFP overly demanding or restrictive can sometimes work against the public interest. The purpose of an RFP is to bring in proposals. Proposals are followed by a negotiation process and the City (or SDHC) always has discretion to reject proposals.

5.1.3 Finalize the draft RFPs

Following outreach to potential respondents, the RFP documents can be finalized as may be needed. The final RFP will present the potential partnership opportunity in simple business terms, recite goals, and provide a scoring rubric for evaluating responses. The RFPs will then be formatted with respect to required procurement and legal language.

5.1.4 Respond to bidder questions and perform initial assessment

Between the RFP release and due dates, the City (or SDHC) will need to be prepared to respond to questions, if any, from potential respondents.

5.1.5 Review and Evaluation

Once proposals are received, they can be reviewed and evaluated according to a general scoring rubric, and a matrix can be developed describing to what extent each proposal is responsive and meets the goals of the RFP and assessing the capacity of the respondents. The City (or SDHC) will then determine whether to enter into an agreement with one or more respondents.

5.1.6 Draft and finalize term sheet, and render into a contract

The last step is to draft the technical and business elements of a term sheet (one that will form the basis of the eventual contract) that formalizes the respondents' commitments. A negotiation may be required. With help from counsel, the final term sheet will then be rendered into a contract.

5.2 Draft RFP for a Bulk Buy Solution at SDHC Housing sites

The following is a draft of an RFP for SDHC's consideration for potential issuance to procure bulk-buy solutions in SDHC affordable housing. Prior to issuance, the proposed draft RFP would be subject to City and SDHC reviews, and updated accordingly, per the steps mentioned above in Section 5.1 and in accordance with SDHC's procurement policy.

Some sentences are highlighted in yellow to indicate the need for timely updates prior to the RFP issuance.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

BULK PURCHASE OF INTERNET SERVICES

SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION

ISSUE DATE:

Section 1: Introduction

This procurement reflects a local digital equity investment intended to increase access, adoption, and usage of the internet for lower-income residents of the City of San Diego. Through this procurement, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), using funding from [[the City of San Diego or/ philanthropic entity or grant,]] seeks to procure in-unit residential internet data service for residents living in SDHC housing at the lowest possible monthly cost per unit, where the SDHC pays in bulk for all tenants taking such service.

It is anticipated that the respondents to this proposal will be internet service providers (ISPs) who already have network infrastructure in place in the housing units at SDHC housing or who plan to deploy or improve such infrastructure. This RFP does not require construction of new network infrastructure but also does not preclude proposals from entities who would construct new infrastructure to then provide in-unit broadband service sought in this procurement. If the proposer wishes for the SDHC to seek construction funds from the CASF Broadband Public Housing Account, the SDHC will consider the proposal only so long as the provider also covers all maintenance and operation costs and meets all other requirements of that grant program.

The SDHC seeks to make available services of at least 100 Mbps download, 100 Mbps upload – but will consider all proposals so long as they provide at least 100/20 service—to housing units in the developments listed in Appendix A. To ensure the funds being made available for this purpose are used efficiently, the services procured through this RFP shall only be provided to tenants who request such service. Tenants may always choose to take no service or to utilize other options.

The objective of this RFP is to provide in-unit residential broadband service for housing residents that currently do not have it because they cannot afford it.

The procurement will seek the solution that entails the lowest per-monthly cost per housing unit (or free in the case of any project that uses CASF Broadband Public Housing Account funds, per CASF rules) and requires no administrative burden on the SDHC other than facilitating a monthly bulk payment. Services provided may be for fewer than the total number of units and the total number of units served may change over time, subject to tenants' interest in acquiring the free service. The [[City or philanthropic entity or grantor]] will be the single payer of the monthly service price for all units taking the service. This project is supported with a [[$XX initial budget over XX years,]] It is anticipated that if successful, the funding will be renewed.

Section 2: Background

Low-income San Diegans tend to have lower rates of home broadband subscriptions than do higher-income counterparts and often cite price as a concern. More than 104,000 San Diegans used the $30 Affordable Connectivity Plan (ACP) broadband subsidy when it was available, but this benefit ended in early 2024. Based on a survey conducted for the City, most San Diegans pay more than $80 for unbundled internet service. American Community Survey data show that while only two percent of San Diego households earning more than $75,000 per year do not have a wireline internet subscription at home, 20 percent of households earning less than $20,000 per year do not have a wireline subscription.

Lack of subscription is higher in digital equity priority areas such as San Ysidro and the San Diego Promise Zone, where lack of subscription rates reaches between 30 and 40 percent. Based on this data and the number of SDHC units, the number of households that lack subscription could range between 700 and 1,400. This procurement seeks to address those households. The SDHC and City of San Diego, as a key stakeholder, believe the residents of the SDHC facilities mentioned in Appendix A are among those San Diegans having the greatest need.

The SDHC seeks to ensure that as many low-income households as possible have high-speed internet access. The SDHC provides federal assistance for approximately 17,000 low-income households annually and leads collaborative efforts to address homelessness, including the Community Action Plan on Homelessness for the City of San Diego. The SDHC has participated in the creation or preservation of more than 25,000 affordable housing units currently in service in the City of San Diego.

Section 3: Scope of services

The SDHC is seeking proposals to provide affordable high speed broadband service in select buildings, listed in Appendix A of this RFP. The SDHC welcomes proposals that serve all these addresses, or to a portion of these sites. The SDHC will not disadvantage any proposals that only cover a portion of the sites that the proposer is able to serve through this procurement feasibly and affordably.

Section 4: Proposal requirements

Proposers must state:

- the addresses and number of units for which the proposer is able to provide service under a single-payer bulk purchase program with the SDHC

- the download and upload service speeds and, if not 100/100 initially, the timeframe for plans, if any, to reach 100/100 if not provided initially.
- the monthly rate per unit served
- the number of years for which this pricing will be guaranteed
- that if the provider plans to ask the SDHC to seek CASF Public Housing Account funds, the provider will pay for all operations and maintain the infrastructure, and follow all CASF grant requirements, including the service to applicable units in order for those connections to be free for tenants.

Proposers must also agree that

- the number of units served will fluctuate and be subject to tenant interest in the program.
- pricing includes installation, at no charge, of any customer premises equipment (CPE) required to facilitate services, with no SDHC involvement.
- the proposer will manage all needed repairs, replacement, upgrading or removal of CPE when tenants initiate or cancel service or when a tenant moves out.
- when the SDHC notifies the Provider that a tenant has moved out, the SDHC is no longer responsible for payment of services to that unit.
- The proposer will directly handle of all customer service questions and calls, providing tenants with contact information, without any involvement of the SDHC.
- The proposer will provide the SDHC with a monthly report of apartments receiving service, highlighting apartments deleted from or added to the service that month.

Section 5: Submission requirements

Proposers must provide a cover letter that references this RFP and confirms that all elements have been reviewed and understood. The cover letter should be on company letterhead and be executed by an individual of the firm/company with authority to submit proposals.

The proposal should include:

- Contact people on this initiative for the company along with their phone number and email address.
- Number of years in business.
- Identify networks your firm has built and operated including the levels of broadband speed and technology type. Include a brief overview of the company's experience providing service to public housing developments.
- Provide an explanation of, and data to demonstrate, your financial capacity and capability to provide this service. Audited financial statements, bank statements, or SEC filings may be provided.

- Describe sites to be covered by this proposal, the download and upload speeds to be provided, technology to be used, and monthly pricing.
- Affirmation that the Proposer will meet requirements stated above in Section 4.
- Describe your plan for administering this program with the SDHC, resulting in monthly invoice payments from the SDHC.

Section 6: Selection criteria

Proposals will be evaluated as follows. Scoring will be based on the relative merits of all proposals received.

List of Criteria	Points
Monthly cost per apartment	50
Proposer has adequate financial, technical, and managerial credentials in the view of the SDHC	25
Meets requirements of the RFP	25

The SDHC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions thereof if, in the SDHC's sole and absolute discretion, such action would be to the best advantage of the SDHC. The SDHC reserves the right to waive technical defects in the bids and to accept the bid, which in the judgment of the SDHC, is in its best interest.

All Proposals submitted to the SDHC become the property of the SDHC. Proposer grants the SDHC an irrevocable license to use the information in the proposal, save for any information which the Proposer explicitly states is a trade secret or confidential. The Proposer must bear all expenses for preparing and submitting proposals.

Section 7: Timeline and deadlines

The following is the schedule for responding to this RFP. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the SDHC. All interested Proposers are to email correspondence related to this RFP to ADD CONTACT.

Milestone	Date
RFP Released	DATE TO BE ADDED
Deadline for Submitting Questions	Timeline TBD
SDHC to Post Responses to Questions	Timeline TBD
Deadline to Send Letter of Intent to Respond to RFP	Timeline TBD
Deadline for Final Submission of Responses to this RFP	Timeline TBD

Milestone	Date
Bid Opening	Timeline TBD
Interviews with proposers (if needed)	Timeline TBD
Selection and contract award	Timeline TBD

QUESTIONS & SUBMISSION:

Questions regarding the proposal should be sent via email to ____.

Submission of proposal should be sent to ___ by ____ time/date.

Appendix A: SDHC sites and number of units

Street number	No. units
3010 39th St	2
3051 54th St	7
3350 - 3356 1/2 Grim Ave	8
3081 - 3083 Hawthorn St	4
3125 Ivy St	5
10101 - 10191 Maya Linda Rd	132
4180 - 4182 Poplar St	9
2325 Rachael Ave	3
5359 - 5389 Santa Margarita St	32
7410 - 7412 Cuvier St (La Jolla Marine)	8
7105 - 7120 Eastman St	36
12643 - 12687 El Camino Real	45
2701 - 2711 Figueroa Blvd	6
7526 - 7580 Fulton Street	31
8637 - 8643 Glenhaven St	4
8649 - 8655 Glenhaven St	4
8661 - 8667 Glenhaven St	4
8701 - 8707 Glenhaven St	4
2045 - 2049 Grand Ave	6
2644 Hornblend St	5
7085 - 7095 Levant St	14
5071 - 5077 1/2 Muir Ave	8
6511 - 6517 Tait St	4
1122 Broadway	
281 - 289 Sycamore Rd (N)	24
391 - 417 Sycamore Rd (W)	41
3501 1st Ave	22
2932 30th St	5
3012 30th St	5
3030 30th St	5
3217 30th St	5
4729 32nd St	5
4541 33rd St	8
4632 33rd St	5
4720 - 4722 34th St	3
4756 - 4758 35th St	4
4254 36th St	5
4343 38th St	5
4575 - 4579 38th St	8
4080 Arizona St	4
3974 - 3984 Bancroft St	14

Street number	No. units
4054 - 4060 1/2 Cherokee Ave	8
4450 - 4456 1/2 Georgia St	8
4637 - 4643 1/2 Hamilton St	8
4381 - 4387 Louisiana St	8
3755 - 3757 Swift Ave	4
4043 Wilson Ave	5
4123 Arey Dr	1
4276 Layla Ct	1
4256 Layla Way	1
4269 Layla Way	1
4274 Layla Way	1
4339 Marcia Ct	1
4074 Marcwade Dr	1
4150 Marcwade Dr	1
4186 Marcwade Dr	1
4293 Marcwade Dr	1
4331 Marge Way	1
4314 Darwin Way	1
4334 Marge Way	1
4239 Marge Way	1
1152 Nevin St	1
4034 Peterlynn Ct	1
1327 Peterlynn Dr	1
1405 Peterlynn Dr	1
1530 Peterlynn Dr	1
4024 Peterlynn Way	1
1128 Ransom St	1
1145 Ransom St	1
4334 Ebersole Dr	1
1169 Ransom St	1
1317 Twining Ave	1
4181 Enero Street	1
1170 Ilexey Ave	1
1366 Ilexey Ave	1
4230 Kimsue Way	1
1255 Kostner Dr	1
4259 Layla Ct	1
2628 - 2630 44th St	8
2716 - 2718 44th St	4
2734 - 2736 44th St	4
4225 44th St	6
4262 - 4268 44th St	4
4261 45th St	6
4078 47th St	4

Street number	No. units
4286 - 4292 48th St	4
4566 51st St	5
4164 Altadena Ave	6
4207 - 4209 Altadena Ave	2
2955 Boston Ave	5
4147 - 4157 Chamoune Ave	6
4395 El Cajon Blvd	33
2477 - 2477 1/2 2479 - 2481 Fairmount Ave	4
7891 - 7899 Golfcrest Dr	9
4273 - 4283 Juniper St	24
4205 Juniper St	20
4390 Maple St	6
5316 Meade Ave	30
8792 Mira Mesa Blvd	5
8816 Mira Mesa Blvd	5
8505 Noeline Ave	1
4050 - 4056 Oakcrest Dr	4
5974 Old Memory Lane	1
5330 Orange Ave	71
5326 - 5328 Rex Ave	4
5330 - 5332 1/2 Rex Ave	4
7281 - 7289 Saranac St	7
5955 #1 - 4 Streamview Dr	4
7705 - 7795 Belden St	243
2326 - 2332 E. Jewett St	4
8714 - 8720 Hurlbut St	4
8726 - 8732 Hurlbut St	4
4131 Maryland St	24
4890 Naples St	4
4055 - 4083 Pulitzer Pl	50
2055 - 2095 Via Las Cumbres (SDHC Developments)	36
2052-2090, 2075, 2079, 2085 Via Las Cumbres	84
1041 Twining Ave	1
2005 - 2065 Alaquinas Dr	66
121-125 Averil Rd	14
178 - 190 Calle Primera	71
2381 - 2389 Grove Ave	41
1351 - 1359 Hollister St	20
402 - 412 Sycamore Rd	24
1301 5th Ave	130
4751 33rd St	8

Street number	No. units
4164 37th ST	8
3617 - 3619 42nd St	4
3280 A St	2
3755 - 3761 Alabama St	8
4479 - 4481 Altadena Ave	8
4560 Altadena Ave	8
3850 Cherokee Ave	5
4360 Cherokee Ave	5
4081 - 4087 1/2 Florida St	8
4416 Highland Ave	8
4451 - 4459 Market St	20
2727 - 2745 Meade Ave	6
4352 #1 - 8 Oregon St	8
3630 - 3632 Van Dyke Ave	4
3754 5th Ave	47
5400 Kearny Mesa Rd	144
1865 Hotel Circle S	192
2766 Cardinal Rd	2
2883 Boston Ave	5
2615 - 2665 Genesee Ave	11

5.3 Draft RFP for targeted infrastructure in Digital Equity Priority Areas

The document below contains the technical and business elements of a draft RFP for targeted broadband deployments in areas of San Diego defined as Digital Equity Priority Areas (DEPAs). Some terms are highlighted in yellow to indicate the need for timely updates.

CTC recommends that the City, when reviewing and considering acting on this RFP in the future, first obtain and consider relevant timely and updated information including:

- The results of any bulk-buy procurement and other programmatic efforts the City may undertake—such as enrollment support in low-cost broadband programs— to understand the impacts and per-household costs of those efforts and to potentially further define the geographic scope of this RFP.
- The final cost (per household served) of network proposals or implementation efforts undertaken in Los Angeles County and in Oakland, CA, including all long-term capital, operating, maintenance, and service costs (whether borne by households or others), so as to get a sense of the potential costs of such an effort in San Diego;
- Updated information about the current competitive landscape in San Diego given that AT&T and others are actively building out and creating competition in more areas, creating a dynamic that has the potential to create value for consumers and new opportunities for low-cost program enrollment;

- Information about the City's willingness to provide land, roof access, or other assets, and/or to facilitate the process through fee waivers or expedited permitting;
- Whether the City can obtain funding—or is willing to make a City budget appropriation—to subsidize construction and operation of a new network and to assist in covering some or all of the service costs over that network;
- The need to include any requirements or goals not already provided herein; and
- The need to add City-specific procurement language and dates.

San Diego, CA
Request for Proposals (RFP)

for

Private Provider(s) to Design, Build, Operate, and Provide Services Over a Broadband Internet Network with the Goal of Providing at Least 100 Mbps Symmetrical Service and Reaching Priority Locations

Issued:

DATE

Section 1: Introduction

This Request for Proposals (RFP) reflects the commitment of the City of San Diego (City) to ensure that affordable high-speed broadband options are available to low-income residents of San Diego and, to this end, seeks creative proposals from qualified companies (Proposer) to design, build, operate, and maintain fiber and/or fixed wireless networks and other network assets (Network) to provide broadband internet service to populations in priority areas of the City as defined within this RFP.

The City recognizes that the business feasibility of constructing and operating new broadband networks in a competitive market like San Diego is challenging, and that some form of assistance by the City may be necessary to ensure new projects are viable, especially if service costs to end users is to be kept as low as possible. Although the City is unable to provide a capital contribution, the City is willing to consider providing access to City assets or land if requested by the proposer. The City is also willing to consider waiving permit fees and engaging in other construction facilitation steps that may be requested by the Proposer for projects that meet City goals.

The City is also open to supporting grant applications if grant funding (such as from the CASF Public Housing Account) is contemplated. But neither the City nor the San Diego Housing Commission is in a position to provide any funding for construction, operations, maintenance, or service provision. If a proposer wishes to seek such funding it must be prepared to absorb all costs while following all grant requirements.

The City welcomes the responses of incumbent internet service providers (ISPs), municipal providers, non-profit institutions, cooperatives, and entities that are not traditional ISPs, which are interested in responding to this RFP. The City encourages collaboration among Proposers as necessary to meet the goals of this RFP. This RFP is intended to ensure delivery of robust broadband internet data services. The City does not require Proposers to provide video or telephony service. While the selected Provider(s) may choose to offer such services, these are not a requirement of this RFP.

Following receipt of proposals, the City anticipates reviewing and preliminarily scoring proposals according to criteria set forth in this RFP. After the scoring is completed, the City may request interviews and/or ask additional clarifying questions of the Proposers. After conducting interviews and/or receiving answers to questions, the City anticipates finalizing the scoring and then entering a negotiation process with the highest-scoring Proposer.

Section 2: Scope of services and City goals

San Diego has ubiquitous cable service, partial fiber service, and partial fixed-wireless services, leaving competition incomplete (see Appendix A: Broadband Master Plan). The City's goals are for the Proposer to establish a new fiber optic or fixed wireless Internet service—or other innovative approach—providing at least 100 Mbps download, 100 Mbps upload service that will, within three years of contract signing, be accessible to premises in parts of or all the areas defined as priorities.

The City's goals are as follows:

- The service is at least 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload, with the understanding that for some technologies, the federal definition of 100/20 may be all that is reasonably achievable.
- The service is delivered by a fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) or fixed wireless network. In the event of competing proposals, FTTP will be preferred by the City.
    - The service has a reduced-cost option[57] for low-income residents who meet the criteria that once applied to the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), or similar requirements.
- The provider promotes the resulting service to the populations with the service territory covered by the proposal and handles all customer service.

In all cases, the provider shall comply with all applicable codes, City ordinances, and pole owner requirements and adhere to industry standards

Section 3: Priority areas

The City has developed a rubric for defining priority areas and seeks proposals that cover all, or portions of these areas. A variety of datapoints were used, as indicated in the table below. Most are based on data at the census tract level, with the exception of the data point for former Affordable Connectivity Program data, which was tracked at the zip code level.

Rubric for scoring census tracts as priority areas for infrastructure

	Weight	Points
Wireline broadband adoption by census tract*	20%	
Below San Diego average (83.4%)		10
At or above San Diego average		0
ACP eligibility levels by zip code†	20%	
At or below San Diego average of 38.4% eligibility		0
>38.4% but <=60%		7
>60%		10
Reliance on mobile data only by census tract*	20%	
At or below San Diego average of 8.8%		0
>8.8% but <20%		7
>20%		10
Device ownership (laptop or desktop)	10%	
At or below San Diego average of 88.4% owning a desktop or laptop		10
Above San Diego average of 88.4%		0

[57] Existing low-cost programs offered by ISPs in San Diego are as low as $9.95 per month in the case of Cox's Connect2Compete program for student families who meet certain eligibility criteria.

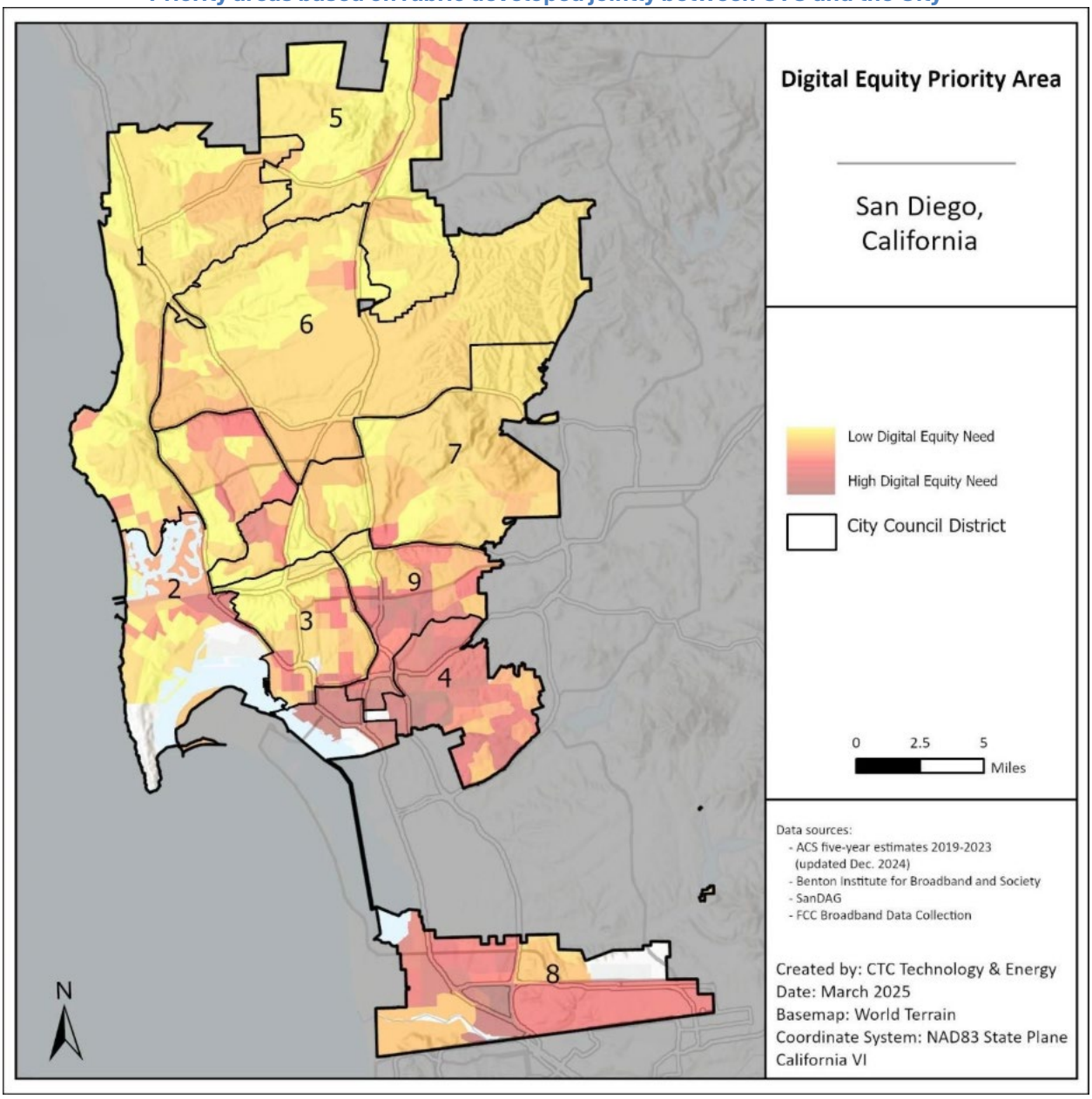
	Weight	Points
Average HH income by census tract*	10%	
<$25,000 per year		10
$25,000-$49,999		8
$50,000-$74,999		6
$75,000-$99,999		2
$100,000 or higher		0
Area of high need? By census tract (based on CBO feedback) ‡	10%	
Yes		10
No		0
Absence of competition by census tract**	10%	
Yes		10
No		0

Sources: * = ACS data, † = ACP tracker, ‡= Assessments by community-based organizations, **= FCC data, defined as census tracts where 50 percent or more of households are dependent on one provider.

Based on the rubric above, each census tract was evaluated based on the criteria and given a weighted score based on a 10-point scale (the higher the score, the greater the need). The one exception was the ACP data, which was available only on a ZIP code basis. The City was then mapped to show priority need areas, with darker areas showing higher need and lighter areas showing lower need.

The map below highlights areas of need in San Ysidro and the Promise Zone in particular.

Priority areas based on rubric developed jointly between CTC and the City



Section 4: Availability of City assets

The City of San Diego is willing to entertain requests that it provide access to tall structures or land or other facilities owned by the City for the purposes of facilitating a fixed wireless or fiber buildout.

Information about City assets and infrastructure is available at the following locations:

- **City-Owned Property** map (City Owned Property) documents City-owned land and associated metadata, including the managing department, the area in acres, site restrictions, and the site's resolution ordinance number and date

- **DSD PRIME** (DSD-P.R.I.M.E) is a GIS resource of engineering right-of-way permits for street assets, City poles and their use status, capital improvement projects, storm drains, streets, sewer and water utilities, and zoning
- **City of San Diego Street Paving** (streets.sandiego.gov) is a public-facing resource displaying current, upcoming, and planned paving projects
- **Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Project Viewer** (CIP Project Map Viewer) displays capital projects in a map format, including layers for CIP projects, streets, and transportation group jobs. The CIP Project List is searchable by project and phase, and Project Information | City of San Diego Official Website contains a link to a frequently-updated PDF documenting upcoming street resurfacing activities.

The City will entertain requests on a case-by-case basis. Any provision of such access will be subject to a legal review by the City.

Section 5: Proposal requirements

Proposers must include the following information and order of sections:

Letter of Interest

The proposal must include the name, title, address, telephone number, and email address of one or more individuals who will serve as Proposer's contact for purposes of the RFP. The Proposer shall fully disclose details regarding its legal identity, such as corporation, partnership, limited liability company, sole proprietorship or other.

Proposer Qualifications

The Proposer must describe its financial capability, qualifications, and experience in providing the work described in the RFP. Experience should include examples of performing similar or related projects building, operating, and providing service over networks in other jurisdictions. The Proposer should indicate that it has all appropriate licenses, certifications, qualifications, or other required items to perform said work in the state of California. Explain how your firm is a suitable provider for this project.

Among other things, please address the following:

1. Identify other networks your firm (or the management team you propose here) has operated, as well as any network design and build experience; include the levels of broadband speed, technology type, availability, and adoption among distinct categories of end-users, and unique capabilities or attributes.

2. Discuss relationships with other service providers, government, or non-profit entities you have undertaken.

3. Discuss your capabilities regarding engineering and design of broadband systems

4. Discuss your capabilities regarding operation and maintenance of the proposed broadband technology. Because overall operation including routine and emergency maintenance of the

network will be crucial to its success, please demonstrate through experience your ability to operate and maintain all aspects of the network.

5. Provide an explanation of, and data to demonstrate, your financial capacity and capability to undertake this project. Among other documents, audited financial statements, bank statements, or SEC filings may be provided.

Technical and Business Proposal

The Proposer shall provide a technical and business proposal with the following information and assurances.

A: State what assets or facilitation, if any, the Proposer seeks from the City to assist with the project.

B: Describe the technical attributes of the proposed network and other network assets that will provide service.

C: Describe the service speeds and pricing that will be offered, and the length of time for which these prices will be guaranteed

D: Provide a spreadsheet listing the addresses within the Priority Areas that will be served. Provide GIS shapefiles of all covered addresses.

E: Describe the proposed cost, if any, to customers for fiber drops or other installation costs.

F: Describe project timeline

G: Affirm that the Proposer will provide a low-cost option to eligible low-income households, with eligibility requirements that match or are similar to those of FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program. Describe the pricing and speeds of this low-cost program and the length of time for which these prices will be guaranteed.

Section 6: Selection criteria

Proposals will be evaluated as follows. Scoring will be based on the relative merits of all proposals received.

List of Criteria	Points
Demonstrates financial, technical, and managerial credentials adequate to the project including demonstrated success providing similar services in other jurisdictions	30
Meets RFP requirements, with consideration for the City's preference for FTTP and at least 100/100 service speeds	25
Lowest request for fee relief or facilitation from the City relative to other proposals and indexed to the number of addresses covered	15
Least total cost to end users	15

List of Criteria	Points
Largest number of sites covered in Digital Equity Priority Areas, relative to other proposals	15

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions thereof if, in the City's sole and absolute discretion, such action would be to the best advantage of the City. The City further reserves the right to waive technical defects in the bids and to accept the bid, which in the judgment of the City, is in its best interest.

All Proposals submitted to the City become the property of the City and Proposer grants the City an irrevocable license to use the information in the proposal, save for any information which the Proposer explicitly states is a trade secret or confidential. The Proposer must bear all expenses for preparing and submitting proposals.

Section 7: Timeline and deadlines

The following is the schedule for responding to this RFP. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the City. All interested Proposers are to email correspondence related to this RFP—including a Letter of Intent—to ADD CITY CONTACT.

The City anticipates that it will enter into negotiations with one or more selected Proposers following receipt of the responses to this RFP to determine the detailed terms of contracts with the selected Proposer(s) based on the responses to the RFP. These contracts will include a contract with the terms of any funding arrangement and associated commitments.

Milestone	Date
RFP Released	DATE TO BE ADDED
Deadline for Submitting Questions	Timeline TBD
City to Post Responses to Questions	Timeline TBD
Deadline to Send Letter of Intent to Respond to RFP	Timeline TBD
Deadline for Final Submission of Responses to this RFP	Timeline TBD
Bid Opening	Timeline TBD
Interviews with proposers	Timeline TBD
Selection and contract award	Timeline TBD

It is the City's goal to select a Provider and enter contract by DATE.

All Proposals must be submitted ADD CITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTALS HERE

The City thanks you in advance for your response and your interest in collaborating to meet the broadband needs of its residents.