

Broadband

December 2023

Team Members

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Infrastructure & Deployment

Federal Funding Account Objections and Letter of Support:

- The Federal Funding Account Last Mile Funding Opportunity (FFA) closed for applications on September 29, 2023. After the conclusion of the application window, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) opened up a period in which entities could object to the accuracy of FFA applications. The Broadband team conducted an analysis of applications in Sonoma County and determined that there were five applications from AT&T that warranted an objection, based on the overestimated number of unserved households they claimed their project would connect, if awarded.
- To compliment the data objections submitted to the CPUC, the EDB Broadband Team prepared a letter of support on behalf of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to the California Public Utilities Commission. The letter outlines the Board of Supervisor's support for Golden State Connect Authority's Sonoma County FFA applications for various reasons, including alignment with state legislation and policy, leveraging the state middle mile infrastructure, promoting competition among internet providers, and promoting equity and inclusion. The letter is scheduled to be considered and approved by the Board of Supervisors on the December 12, 2023, consent agenda.

North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium Memorandum of Understanding Renewal:

- The North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC) consisting of Marin, Napa, Mendocino, and Sonoma counties, was formed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2014 to oversee and manage broadband planning activities in the four-county region. The term of the current MOU expires December 31, 2023. The MOU renewal will allow for, among other things, continued use of approved funding from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) and California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) to implement the 2023-2025 NBNCBC CASF grant work plan and digital equity planning, respectively. The renewal of the MOU is scheduled to be considered by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on the December 12, 2023, consent agenda.

Advanced Adoption

- Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
 1. Approximately 38% (71,600) of all households (189,374) in Sonoma County are eligible for the ACP program. Currently 18% (12,640) of eligible households are enrolled in ACP, as of September 2023.
 - The most significant enrollment progress has been made in the Santa Rosa area, with zip code enrollment rates as high as 46%.
 2. Upcoming Opportunities
 - Tabling for ACP enrollment at Human Services' South County Office in Petaluma will begin December 11th. Enrollment events will take place on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, from 1-5pm.
 - Beginning early 2024, we will also host enrollment events at library branches throughout Sonoma County..
 - Active advertising campaigns include radio, digital, and social media. Upcoming advertising campaigns include direct mail and printed community advertising, such as in public transportation.
- CA Emerging Technology Fund Regional Broadband Consortia Leadership Grant

1. We are conducting outreach to over 100 schools across the four counties, where all families are eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program based on school participation in the Community Eligibility Provision program.
 2. We are preparing outreach to over 500 individuals and organizations throughout the region to encourage promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program.
 3. Each county has engaged with permitting departments to explore options for streamlining broadband permitting processes.
- California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) Adoption Account
 - We are evaluating eligible uses of CASF Adoption Account grant funding and developing an application for funding to complete an analysis of broadband access and adoption for Multiple Dwelling Units and Mobile Home Parks. Research and local knowledge indicate low rates of broadband adoption in MDU's and MHP's. This analysis would identify the barriers to connecting these communities to reliable broadband.