

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-199

SETTING FORTH SUPPORT TO INCREASE BROADBAND ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY)

On Tuesday November 17, 2020, on motion of Supervisor Lovingood, duly seconded by Supervisor Gonzales and carried, the following resolution is adopted by the Board of Supervisors of San Bernardino County, State of California.

WHEREAS, the digital divide is defined as the lack of access to communication technologies, such as basic or high-speed internet, for underserved communities;

WHEREAS, closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community benefits that include the ability to fully engage in the digital economy, access existing and emerging services, expands economic opportunities and bridges the economic divide; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has expanded and perpetuated the digital divide within low-income and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, reliable and affordable internet connectivity has become a fundamental necessity as work, education and social engagement have all moved online; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that cost and household income is a significant barrier to broadband access; and

WHEREAS, all residents, businesses and institutions are greatly benefited by having access to high speed broadband services where they work, live, learn and play; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband enables Work from Home and remote workers, enhances business efficiencies, drives job creation throughout the region, and connects customers and partners worldwide to goods and services; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband is a “green technology” that reduces our impact on the environment, shrinks our regional carbon footprint, offsetting vehicle trips and use of resources; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband greatly expands the ability of residents to access medical, behavioral, oral health services and the capacity of public health officials to monitor and respond to health threats and other diseases; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband enables greater civic participation and brings communities together, improves public safety, and makes our transportation systems resilient and efficient; and

WHEREAS, effective emergency services require using high speed broadband to integrate data in real time from all available sources to coordinate emergency services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors:

1. Supports United States Federal Communications Commission and California Public Utilities Commission rules, regulations, programs and funding opportunities that support broadband deployment opportunities to close the digital divide.
2. Supports Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-73-20 signed August 14, 2020, which is attached as Exhibit A, that seeks to accelerate work towards closing gaps in access to reliable broadband networks throughout California; and

3. Supports collaboration with local agencies and governments [such as, Los Angeles, Orange, Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura Counties], broadband providers, school districts (K-12), community college districts, universities, community and business stakeholders, Regional Broadband Consortiums, the California Emerging Technology Fund, the State of California and other federal and regional organizations that have similar goals to increase broadband access throughout Southern California; and
4. Determines that closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community benefits; and
5. Supports the request for grant funding from the State and/or Federal government for a regional program that provides funding for free internet access for qualifying residents that bridges the economic digital divide; and
6. Supports the provision of high-speed broadband for all residential and business customers within the urban, suburban and rural communities of our County; and
7. Supports working with collaborating jurisdictions to affect the deployment decisions of broadband providers; and
8. Upon identifying broadband opportunity zones, supports the adoption of an ordinance which would allow local jurisdictions to develop specific rules to responsibly expedite low cost broadband deployment; and
9. Supports the adoption of consistent fees and broadband permitting processes within collaborating jurisdictions; and
10. Supports the concept of "Dig Once" whenever feasible whereby conduit is installed for future or immediate use for wireless towers, fiber optic or other comparable broadband network installation, whenever underground construction occurs in a roadway.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino, State of California, by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS: Robert A. Lovingood, Janice Rutherford, Dawn Rowe,
Curt Hagman, Josie Gonzales.

NOES: SUPERVISORS: None

ABSENT: SUPERVISORS: None

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
)
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO) ss.

I, **LYNNA MONELL**, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino, State of California, hereby certify the foregoing to be a full, true and correct copy of the record of the action taken by the Board of Supervisors, by vote of the members present, as the same appears in the Official Minutes of said Board at its meeting of November 17, 2020. Item #4, CCM.

LYNNA MONELL
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By _____
Deputy