

2 **RESOLUTION NO. 2020-262**

3 **SUPPORTING INCREASED BROADBAND ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES**
4 **THROUGHOUT RIVERSIDE COUNTY AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

5 **WHEREAS**, closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community benefits that
6 include the ability to fully engage in the digital economy, access existing and emerging services, expand
7 economic opportunities and bridge the economic divide; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for available, reliable and affordable
9 broadband services in all communities; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused schools to shift to distance learning; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the digital divide within low-income and rural
12 communities more apparent; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the County of Riverside recognizes that cost and low household income are the
14 primary barriers to broadband access; and

15 **WHEREAS**, high speed broadband service is important to all residents, businesses and institutions
16 and is desirable where residents and visitors work, live, learn and play; and

17 **WHEREAS**, high speed broadband enables working from home and remote workers, enhances
18 business efficiencies, drives job creation throughout the region, and connects customers and partners
19 worldwide to goods and services; and

20 **WHEREAS**, high speed broadband is a “green technology” that can reduce impacts on the
21 environment and shrinks our regional carbon footprint, offsetting vehicle trips and use of resources; and

22 **WHEREAS**, high speed broadband greatly expands the ability of residents to access medical,
23 behavioral, and oral health services and the capacity of public health officials to monitor and respond to
24 health threats such as COVID-19 and other diseases; and

25 **WHEREAS**, high speed broadband enables greater civic participation and brings communities
26 together, helps improve public safety and makes our transportation systems more resilient and efficient; and

27 **WHEREAS**, effective emergency services require using high speed broadband to integrate data in
28 real time from all available sources, so decision makers have access to the information necessary for the

FOR APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL
BY: *Melissa R. Cushman* 12/3/2020
MELISSA R. CUSHMAN DATE

1 protection of lives and property;

2 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, FOUND, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED** by
3 the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside in regular session assembled on December 8, 2020,
4 that the Board:

- 5 1. Supports many of the goals of the United States Federal Communications Commission’s and
6 the California Public Utilities Commission’s rules and regulations, and supports their
7 programs and funding opportunities that support broadband deployment opportunities to
8 bridge the digital divide; and
- 9 2. Supports Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-73-20 signed August 14, 2020, which
10 seeks to accelerate work towards closing gaps in access to reliable broadband networks
11 throughout California; and
- 12 3. Supports collaboration with Los Angeles, Orange, Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino, San
13 Diego and Ventura Counties, broadband providers, school districts (K-12), community
14 college districts, universities, community and business stakeholders, Regional Broadband
15 Consortiums, California Emerging Technology Fund, the State of California and other
16 federal and regional organizations that have similar goals to increase broadband access
17 throughout Southern California; and
- 18 4. Determines that closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community
19 benefits; and
- 20 5. Supports requesting grant funding from the State and Federal government for a regional
21 program that provides funding for free internet access for qualifying residents that bridges
22 the economic digital divide; and
- 23 6. Supports the goal of a minimum broadband speed capability of 100 megabits per second
24 today and 1 gigabit per second by 2030 for all residential and business customers within the
25 urban, suburban and rural communities of our region; and
- 26 7. Supports working with collaborating jurisdictions to affect the deployment decisions of
27 broadband providers by ensuring permitting fees are set at a reasonable level; reducing the
28 cost of entry and operation of broadband systems in our communities; reducing the risks of

1 delays during the planning, permitting and construction phases; providing opportunities for
2 increasing revenue and creating new avenues for competitive entry; and

3 8. Supports working with collaborating jurisdictions to identify broadband opportunity zones
4 in underserved communities; and

5 9. Upon identifying broadband opportunity zones, supports working towards the creation of a
6 regional effort that would allow local jurisdictions to develop specific rules to expedite low
7 cost broadband deployment by internet service providers, potentially including such features
8 as: waivers for microprojects, deployment of broadband infrastructure in underserved
9 communities and implementation of fixed wireless or other broadband technologies in rural
10 communities; and

11 10. Supports consistent expedited broadband permitting processes throughout participating
12 jurisdictions; and

13 11. Supports the concept of “Dig Once” whereby conduit is installed for future or immediate
14 use for wireless towers, fiber optic or other comparable broadband network installation,
15 whenever underground construction occurs in a roadway.

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