



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 18-0077, **Version:** 1

---

Ad Hoc Broadband Technical Advisory Committee, in coordination with the Chief Administrative Office, recommending the Board receive and file a presentation by NeoConnect focusing on Broadband planning efforts and the related Broadband Feasibility Study currently being conducted in El Dorado County; and

Chief Administrative Office recommending that the Board consider creating a new Ad Hoc Committee to focus solely on the Feasibility Study, and appoint/reappoint two members of the Board to serve as the Broadband Feasibility Study Ad Hoc Committee, to work with the technical advisory group of community members currently gathered for the purposes of providing technical expertise and advice during the Broadband planning effort. (Est. Time: 2 Hr.)

**FUNDING:** 50% Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant, 50% General Fund.

### **DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION**

Ad Hoc Broadband Technical Advisory Committee, in coordination with the Chief Administrative Office, recommending the Board receive and file a presentation by NeoConnect focusing on Broadband planning efforts and the related Broadband Feasibility Study currently being conducted in El Dorado County; and

Chief Administrative Office recommending that the Board consider creating a new Ad Hoc Committee to focus solely on the Feasibility Study, and appoint/reappoint two members of the Board to serve as the Broadband Feasibility Study Ad Hoc Committee, to work with the technical advisory group of community members currently gathered for the purposes of providing technical expertise and advice during the Broadband planning effort. (Est. Time: 2.0 hrs.)

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

On September 1, 2015, following a presentation on the state of Broadband infrastructure in the County, the Board established a Broadband Technical Advisory Committee to work on broadband issues and appointed two Board members to that Ad Hoc Committee (Legistar 15-1020).

On January 12, 2016, the Board adopted Resolution 013-2016, approving the submittal of an application for an Economic Development Agency (EDA) Planning Program and Local Technical Assistance Program Grant for the purposes of completing a Broadband feasibility study (Legistar 16-0006).

On September 27, 2016 the Board authorized acceptance of a \$75,000 grant award from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Planning Program and Local Technical Assistance Program for the purpose of conducting a Broadband feasibility study in El Dorado County, and committed \$75,000 for the purpose of the 50% County match required by the grant. The resolution states that improved Broadband service fits strongly within the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan and that building Broadband capacity in El Dorado County is "a way to create and retain jobs, educate and retain students, and position the County in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy."

A technical advisory group has also been assembled to assist with technical expertise in the area of Broadband policy and infrastructure. This group includes members from non-profit organizations with special interests in Broadband technology and stakeholder community members.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Broadband Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study was launched and subsequently awarded on April 25, 2017 to NeoConnect, a Colorado-based consulting firm specializing in Broadband planning and analysis (Legistar 17-0442). A subgroup of the technical advisory group and the Ad Hoc Committee participated in the RFP evaluation process. A contract was negotiated and executed with NeoConnect, with an effective date in late September of 2017.

Since September of 2017, NeoConnect has initiated regular bi-weekly meetings with members of the Ad Hoc Committee and technology advisory group to discuss the status of Broadband in the community, both in the Lake Tahoe basin and on the west slope. The first priority item is the approval of policy revisions that will better prepare the County for Broadband development. Policy initiatives include a "dig once" policy that would allow for the installation of fiber conduit when a trench is open for streets, developments, and other construction projects. NeoConnect has been working with City of South Lake Tahoe and City of Placerville staff and community members who participate with the advisory group to assess current policies and Broadband needs.

During the week of January 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> NeoConnect will meet with several stakeholder community groups as part of the outreach component of the Feasibility Study project. These groups include El Dorado County residents and professionals from various community stakeholder groups including education and libraries, public safety, healthcare, and business.

The Broadband Feasibility Study project is estimated to be completed by late Spring of 2018, with NeoConnect presenting the final findings and analysis to the Board.

Because the Broadband infrastructure effort has progressed to the Feasibility Study phase, and because this study is the primary focus at this time, it is recommended that in the Board consider dissolving the current Ad Hoc Committee, create a new Ad Hoc Committee to focus solely on the Feasibility Study, and appoint or reappoint two "new" members of the Board to serve as the new Ad Hoc Committee.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

N/A

## **OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

N/A

## **CAO RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board receive and file this presentation.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

A \$150,000 budget (\$75,000 EDA grant, \$75,000 General Fund/Economic Development budget) has been established for the Broadband Feasibility Study effort, with \$126,000 of that budget dedicated to the contract with Neoconnect.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

N/A

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Economic Development-Infrastructure to improve and maintain competitiveness

Good Governance-Infrastructure

**CONTACT**

Shawne Corley, Assistant CAO

Mollie Purcell, Principal Administrative Analyst