



Legislation Text

File #: 21-1459, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office recommending the Board consider the following:

- 1) Approve joining Golden State Connect Authority Joint Exercise of Powers (JPA) for the purpose of deploying last-mile fiber;
- 2) Adopt and authorize the Chair to sign Resolution **125-2021** approving and authorizing the Chairperson to execute the Golden State Connect Authority Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement; and
- 3) Appoint two (2) Board Members to serve as a Delegate and Alternate on the JPA Board.

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

In response to the Governor signing SB 156, which set aside \$6 billion for broadband infrastructure, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) Board of Directors voted unanimously to approve the formation of the Joint Powers Authority (JPA), Golden State Connect Authority to assist in deploying open access last-mile fiber in rural communities

The JPA will leverage collective efforts on behalf of rural counties to assist in identifying pathways for development of broadband infrastructure in their communities, including technical assistance and the construction of municipal owned and/or operated broadband systems.

The advancement of establishing broadband infrastructure in rural counties will occur in three phases:

1. **Foundational Readiness:** Ensure all member counties have broadband strategic plans - RCRC is serving as the collective applicant on a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to fund the development of broadband strategic plans in 26 RCRC member counties that do not current have one.

El Dorado County has a Broadband Strategic Plan in place. This phase will be completed by March 2023.

2. **Capacity Building:** Equip rural counties with information and resources about innovative models and approaches to broadband deployment - Golden State Connect Authority will conduct workshops to inform rural counties of the innovative models and approached for delivery of reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband and to showcase successful municipal broadband projects from across the U.S.

This phase is slated to begin December 2021 and will continue while there is demand.

3. **Demonstration Projects:** Implement open-access municipal broadband projects - Golden State Connect Authority will install broadband fiber in an open-access, public-benefit, municipal model beginning with two locations and then expanding to additional project locations.

This phase is slated to begin September 2022 and will take approximately 2+ years to complete.

The primary goals for the project structure are:

- To ensure that elected County Supervisors retain control of the program, with day-to-day administration provided by RCRC staff,
- To allow for partnership agreements between like-government entities for the operation and advancement of the program of work, and,
- To attract public and private investment in the program, as necessary and appropriate.

Activities within the Golden State Connect Authority will focus exclusively on broadband. Golden State Connect Authority will be governed by delegate Supervisors from each member county and day-to-day operations will be administered by RCRC staff.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to join the Golden State Connect Authority JPA.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

None

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

County Counsel

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with joining the JPA, and no obligation for individual member counties to provide funds, absent a separate agreement to participate in one (or more) of the specific programs.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Forward executed resolution and JPA agreement to CAO office for processing.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Economic Development - Invest in infrastructure needs to improve and maintain competitiveness
Good Governance - Infrastructure

CONTACT

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