

SANDAG Regional Digital Divide Taskforce

Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2022 | 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Zoom recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMnlij-t_9Q

Members in Attendance:

Abu-Bakr Al-Jafri (Caltrans), Adrian Salas (Crown Castle), AJ Bartleet (City of Oceanside), Albert Velasquez (Cox Communications), Alessandra Muse (Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation), Ana María Ardón (National Latino Research Center, CSUSM), Angelica Santiago (National Latino Research Center, CSUSM), Anna Fox (City of San Diego, Promise Zone), Ashley Salas (The Utility Reform Network), Bill Valle (City of Chula Vista), Brian Thomas (City of Oceanside), Chris Schmidt (Caltrans), Christine Moore (AT&T), Dave Simpson (Cox Communications), Dennis Gakunga (City of Chula Vista), Derrick Robinson, PhD (Center on Policy Initiatives), Dominique L. Cano-Stacco (Verizon Wireless), Gary Knight (JK Technology Consulting), Gladys Palpallatoc (California Emerging Technology Fund), Gretchen Newsom (IBEW 569), Irina Prokhorova (San Diego Futures Foundation), Jonathan Behnke (City of San Diego), Katherine Lee (Nutter Consulting, Consultant for City of Oceanside), Kelsey Baird (City of San Diego), Kent Tran (City of San Diego, Promise Zone), Lucero Chavez Parent (Parent Institute for Quality Education), Matthew Rantanen (Golden State Net), Melanie Nutter (Nutter Consulting, Consultant for City of Oceanside), Melina Pereira (Caltrans), Michael Hadland (Charter Communications), Mina Nguyen (San Diego for Every Child), Nerea Urtasun (County of San Diego), Nicole Ambrose (County of San Diego), Patty Chavez (Parent Institute for Quality Education), Ramesh Rao (UC San Diego), Raul Armenta (City of El Cajon), Robert Winslow (County of San Diego), Robb Baer (Cisco), Sam Amen (Caltrans), Shahriar Afshar (Verizon Wireless), Stan Santos (Communication Workers of America), Teresa Acosta (Acosta + Partners), Terry Loftus (San Diego County Office of Education), Xiomalys Crespo (City of San Diego, Promise Zone)

Annabel Grealish, Antoinette Meier, Chip Finch, Jackie Tovar, Krystal Ayala, Lindsey Hansen, Sanjiv Nanda (SANDAG)

1. Updates on Digital Equity Strategy – Early Actions Underway

Krystal Ayala, Senior Partnerships Strategist, SANDAG, shared that the [Regional Digital Equity Strategy and Action Plan](#) was unanimously approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors on December 17, 2021. Krystal also provided an overview of early actions that are currently underway to expand broadband access and adoption within the San Diego region:

- SANDAG and SCAG are conducting a joint Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Prospective Broadband Partnerships, which will create a

bench of broadband partners in advance of forthcoming state and federal broadband funding. Expressions of interest are due February 9, 2022. To learn more or receive updates, please visit SANDAG's web-based vendor portal: www.bidnetdirect.com/SANDAG

- SANDAG will be convening a Digital Infrastructure Work Group to develop regional permitting standards to streamline broadband deployment in areas of greatest need. This was identified as a near-term action in the [Regional Digital Equity Strategy and Action Plan](#). The Taskforce will be composed of staff from local jurisdictions. The first meeting will occur in late February 2022.
- Krystal also highlighted the recent state and federal rulemakings and deadline for comments.
 - [CPUC Broadband Rulemakings:](#)
 - [California Advanced Services Fund](#) (Rulemaking 20-08-021)
 - [Broadband Infrastructure Deployment](#) (Rulemaking 20-09-001)
 - [NTIA Broadband Programs Request for Comments](#)
 - [FCC Affordable Connectivity Program Rulemaking](#)

Chris Schmidt, Deputy District Director of Right of Way, Caltrans, provided an overview on state directives to construct a \$3.25 billion statewide open-access middle-mile network (SB 156, Chapter 112, Statutes of 2021). Chris shared that the California Department of Technology announced 18 initial middle-mile segments that are moving forward; four corridors are in the San Diego region (SR 67, 76, 78 79).

2. County of San Diego Comprehensive Broadband Plan

Robert Winslow, Group Information Technology Manager, and Nicole Boghossian Ambrose, Group Program Manager, County of San Diego, shared an overview of the County of San Diego's Comprehensive Broadband Plan. The Plan will inventory existing broadband infrastructure and services and develop a strategy for expanding broadband in unincorporated areas in the region. The plan is anticipated to be completed by June 2022.

3. 'Get Connected' Outreach and Education Campaign

Lindsey Hansen, Associate Public Communications Officer, SANDAG, shared an overview of SANDAG's "Get Connected" campaign. The education campaign will encourage broadband adoption and raise awareness of digital equity resources in the region. The campaign will roll out in early Spring 2022 in partnership with community-based organizations, 211, and the City of San Diego. The Taskforce is encouraged to help spread the word and partner with SANDAG. Please reach out to lindsey.hansen@sandag.org to learn more.