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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS **Board Agenda Memo**

MEETING DATE: January 11, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer

SUBJECT: Resolution establishing the policy of the County of Nevada to facilitate and promote the development, access, and equitable usage of broadband infrastructure throughout Nevada County to provide residents with critical services, economic opportunities, and higher standard of living and to encourage and facilitate upgrades to existing broadband infrastructure ensuring sufficient broadband speed to support new and evolving uses over time.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve resolution

FUNDING: There is no direct impact to the General Fund associated with the adoption of this resolution. Instead, the resolution will direct staff to come back to the Board of Supervisors as needed in its implementation.

BACKGROUND: Broadband is a major priority objective for the County as reflected in Resolution 21-049, adopted on February 23, 2021, directing the County of Nevada to, “[e]quitably expand broadband to support economic development, distance learning, telework, telemedicine, and general quality of life for all residents by championing the implementation of Nevada County Broadband Strategy Plan policies and last-mile infrastructure projects.” Moreover, the Board of Supervisors approved the Nevada County Broadband Strategy Plan in October 2019 that identified five goals in support of broadband expansion in the County including integrating broadband planning into Nevada County plans and policies through the adoption of a broadband policy.

In receiving this direction and leveraging the Nevada County Broadband Strategy

Plan, staff established the Nevada County Broadband Workgroup that includes the chief information officer, and representatives from the County Executive Office, Community Development Agency, Board of Supervisors' Office, and Sierra Business Council (SBC) with the goal and strategy of securing funding for our community to make our county as friendly and attractive as possible to broadband providers, and to facilitate local broadband projects becoming as "shovel ready" as possible. The workgroup helped set in motion several initiatives including the 2021 Nevada County Last-Mile Grant Program administered by SBC, worked with California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) to develop a countywide Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to accelerate deployment of broadband infrastructure in Nevada County, and provide advocacy and input to the state on deployment of middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure. In addition to these efforts, District I Supervisor Heidi Hall participated in the California State Association of Counties' (CSAC) Broadband Committee, which played a lead role in advocating for approximately \$6B in funding to bring high-speed broadband to unserved and underserved populations in California. At the recent CSAC Annual Conference, Nevada County participated in a panel workshop and was recognized as a leading rural county in broadband initiatives.

In an effort to further the County's efforts in the promotion of broadband infrastructure development, the attached Resolution establishes a county broadband policy as identified as a goal and action step in the Nevada County Broadband Strategy Plan. The policy directs County departments to evaluate, make recommendations and implement policies that support, and promote and incorporate findings and declarations into the General Plan and all relevant elements, area-specific plans, and community sustainability plans and adopt such policies, where applicable.

There is no direct impact to the General Fund associated with the adoption of this Resolution. Instead, the Resolution will direct staff to come back to your board, as needed, in its implementation. Therefore, Staff recommends the board of supervisors adopt the attached Resolution.

Item Initiated by: Jeffrey Thorsby, Senior Management Analyst

Approved by: Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer