

COUNTY OF NEVADA
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: June 26, 2018

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: **Supervisor Ed Scofield**

SUBJECT: Resolution to Support and Promote Local Broadband Expansion,
Access and Usage in Nevada County.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: Broadband is a major component to the County's economic development strategy, which includes public and private partnerships. Much in the same way as a water system is an infrastructure bedrock to economic development, so too is Broadband in the era of emerging technology sectors. To help bolster broadband infrastructure development, the California Legislature authorized the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to administer the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to promote universal service in unserved and underserved areas of in the state by funding certified applicants with grants and loan for development. In December of 2015, the CPUC awarded Bright Fiber, Inc., also referred to as Spiral Internet, with a CASF grant of \$16,156,323 and a loan of \$500,000 to construct the Bright Fiber Project that includes approximately 118 miles of broadband fiber optic cable in locations that include southeast of Grass Valley, Cedar Ridge, and La Barr Meadows, as well as the underserved outskirts of Grass Valley itself. The total project cost was estimated at \$27,232,418 with much of it being oriented along State Route 174. With any major project that includes public grant funds, obtaining matching grant funds can present a challenge – especially in rural areas. And while a number of hurdles and challenges have delayed the Bright Fiber Project, the project remains in good standing with the CPUC with progress being made to ensure it moves forward and breaks ground.

Moreover, the Sierra Business Council (SBC) is working to further the development of Broadband as the acting manager and fiscal agent of the Gold Country Broadband Consortium (GCBC)\, formerly managed by SEDCorp. The GCBC includes Nevada County, Sierra County, Placer County, El Dorado County and Alpine County. On March 22, 2018 the Nevada County Economic Resource Council (ERC) and SBC held a meeting with public and private community stakeholders that included representatives from the City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City and Nevada County to hear and discuss updates on Broadband development and activities in western Nevada County. Subsequently, representatives from both Cities and the County have acknowledged that the expansion, access and usage of Broadband is vital to the economic interest and health of the community and have all agreed to adopt resolutions in June 2018 expressing support for such cause.

Therefore, I respectfully request the Board of Supervisors to adopt the attached resolution to support and promote local broadband expansion, access and usage in Nevada County.

Sincerely,

Ed Scofield
Board of Supervisors, Chair