



**To:** Members of the GSFA Executive Committee  
**From:** Barbara Hayes, Chief Economic Development Officer  
**Date:** November 2, 2021  
**Re:** Broadband Program Update

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### **SUMMARY**

To advance the investment and delivery of robust broadband to rural California the Board of Directors has approved a plan of work that is divided into three levels. An update on the GSFA broadband program of work will include:

#### **Level One: Foundational Readiness**

Level One is designed to assist member counties in achieving “foundational readiness” relative to accessing and inviting broadband investment into counties in a strategic manner that ultimately delivers broadband for all residents and businesses. This level of work includes arming all member counties who do not currently have a Broadband Strategic Plan, with the opportunity for development of such a plan. Broadband Strategic Plans are required to access many federal sources of funding for broadband deployment. Additionally, Broadband Strategic Plans will allow local governments to be informed and deliberate when directing and permitting investment by incumbent service providers.

- Grant application submitted to US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration on September 3, 2021. Currently under review.

#### **Level Two: Information and Resources About Innovative**

Level Two is directed to all RCRC member counties and includes information-sharing and capacity-building that will result in increased awareness and involvement of local governments in broadband investment and access for their residents and businesses. Information on best practices and unique approaches employed by member counties and municipal broadband providers across the US will be shared via webinars and documents.

- Member of Fiber Broadband Association and member of the Association’s Public Officials Working Group.
- At direction of Broadband Steering Committee, a concise, dynamic resource document that illustrates sources of broadband funding (and associated dollars,

deadlines, and eligibility), organizations involved, and glossary of terms will be developed.

- Current landing page for Golden State Connect Authority ([www.goldenstateconnect.org](http://www.goldenstateconnect.org)) will be expanded with development of complete website – anticipated launch December 2021.
- ESRI has been engaged for purpose of utilizing GIS mapping tool for broadband program of work.

### Level Three: Demonstration Project(s)

Level Three involves the launching of Demonstration Project(s) modeled on an open-access, public-benefit, municipal model. The Demonstration Project area(s) would be selected based on business modeling that includes, among many components: address density, geology/geography, demographics, existing service being provided, broadband infrastructure partners, and local government support.

The Demonstration Project(s) would require the establishment of a new entity that would be comprised of and led by county governments. The new entity would bring resources and partnerships that would be unique to broadband deployment in California.

- RCRC Board approved the formation of Golden State Connect Authority, a Joint Powers Authority under which will fall broadband-related work - August 18, 2021
- Invitation to join Golden State Connect Authority extended to all RCRC member counties – September 7, 2021. (Requested to review and return executed JPA documents by October 15, 2021.)
- Continued evaluation of Demonstration Project areas
- Continued conversations with potential broadband partners
- Staff invited to serve on key advisory boards