MEMORANDUM

Date: April 22, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lesher
County Administrator

Re: Quarterly Report-Pima County Strategic Planning Taskforce for Digital Access Inclusion and Adoption

The Taskforce for Digital Access continues to work toward achieving the identified goals, including the deployment of multiple technologies for the improvement of broadband infrastructure, identification of gaps in digital literacy programs and device access, and engagement of community partners to remove barriers to adoption and increase access to affordable internet access for Pima County homes and businesses.

Attached is the Strategic Planning Taskforce’s report for the third quarter of 2022. During this quarter, the Taskforce established four (4) sub-committees – Broadband Infrastructure and Policy Recommendation, Digital Inclusion and Equity, Digital Access, and Grants, Funding, and Procurement – to address the goals and objectives of the strategic plan introduced to the Board in October 2021. The subcommittees consist of stakeholders from state and local municipalities, community organizations, school districts, and technology service providers.

The recently approved Hotspots around Town project, providing 130 WiFi hotspots in community gathering places, is a direct result of Taskforce efforts and an outstanding example of the Board of Supervisors’ commitment to equitable internet access for all County residents. We anticipate rolling out communications to assist community with this valuable asset.

JKL/dym

Attachment

c: Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer, Health and Community Services
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Amber Mathewson, Director, Library District
Date: April 22, 2022

To: Jan Lesher  
Acting County Administrator  
Francisco Garcia, M.D., M.P.H.  
Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer, Health and Community Services

From: Dan Hunt  
Director Information Technology  
Michelle Simon  
Deputy Director Support Services, PCPL

Re: Report: Strategic Planning Taskforce for Digital Access, Inclusion and Adoption in Pima County

Overview

While enhancing broadband connectivity has been a congressional interest for some time, the shift to remote work and business, education, health, and socialization activities caused by the pandemic revealed deep inequities in broadband access. This national spotlight created the perfect timing to address the ever-expanding digital divide. Pima County’s Strategic Planning Taskforce, created in August 2021, addresses issues of digital inequity in our community. The strategic plan (Attachment A) and objectives (Attachment B) are included for reference. The work of the Taskforce is driven by four subcommittees - Broadband Infrastructure and Policy Recommendation, Digital Inclusion and Equity, Digital Access, and Grants, Funding, and Procurement (Table 1). Each group is comprised of Pima County staff and individuals from local municipalities, community service organizations, and Internet service and technology providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcommittee Name</th>
<th>Co-Chairs</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadband Infrastructure and Policy</td>
<td>Dan Hunt, CIO</td>
<td>Pima County Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michelle Simon, Deputy Director</td>
<td>Pima County Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Inclusion and Equity</td>
<td>Andrew Bevington, Director of Business and Education Partnerships</td>
<td>Pima County School Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amber Wells, Director of Digital Engagement</td>
<td>Pima County Workforce Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cindy Hogan, AmeriCorps</td>
<td>Literacy Connects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Access</td>
<td>Mandy Armenta, Admin. Support Services Manager</td>
<td>Pima County Finance and Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Malick, Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Pima County Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants, Funding and Procurement</td>
<td>Katherine Hahn, Program Manager</td>
<td>Pima County Grants Management and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ana Wilber, Division Manager</td>
<td>Pima County Procurement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Sub-Committee Names and Co-Chairs
Goals of the Taskforce

The taskforce established short-, mid-, and long-term goals tailored to move Pima County toward our vision, “All Pima County community members will have equitable access to affordable and reliable high speed broadband internet to successfully participate in our democratic society.” The strategic plan includes the deployment of publicly accessible wireless hotspots, identification of gaps in digital literacy initiatives and device/tools access, engagement of community partners to increase affordable internet access to homes and businesses, removal of barriers to broadband adoption, and identification of policies to support the implementation of sustainable broadband infrastructure. All the pieces work together to move our County toward a future where all community members can participate fully in workforce development, healthcare, and education.

Best Practices and Comprehensive Data

The strategic plan and the work of the Taskforce are guided by nationwide research, data, and best practices for the provision of broadband in urban and rural areas, focusing on a comprehensive approach to removing barriers to access, encouraging infrastructure investment, and increasing user skills. The National Association of Counties (NACo) Broadband Taskforce created an essential road map for counties to use as they work toward the provision of high-speed internet in their communities.¹ Identified best practices include defining minimum standards, testing and deploying various infrastructure technologies, implementing smart “dig once” policies and practices, focusing on local community engagement, tackling the digital divide/homework gap, establishing sustainable funding, and committing to world-leading broadband data and mapping analytics.

Mapping analytics are necessary for understanding the gaps in broadband infrastructure as well as the overall rates of broadband adoption by our community members. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) created an interactive broadband data-mapping platform to help communities determine next steps for the deployment of infrastructure and the targeted implementation of digital literacy initiatives.² Additionally, NACo created the TestIT App utilizing a Network Diagnostics Tool (NDT) designed by MLabs.³ According to NACo, connectivity data provided to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is often inaccurate and inflated. The TestIT App provides supporting data for use with the NTIA interactive broadband map. The combined data highlights the areas of greatest need in both unincorporated Pima County and the metro-Tucson area. Their findings concluded that 65% of counties nationwide fell below the 2015 FCC definition of minimum standard broadband (25Mbps download/3Mbps upload).⁴

Why is this important? Implementation of initiatives and deployment of infrastructure to meet the minimum standard puts us behind given the significant future changes to technology. Focus on a more sustainable model of broadband infrastructure, use of multiple modalities, and connectivity speeds of 100Mbps download/100Mbps upload, will move us toward the end goal—equitable access to the internet for all Pima County residents.

The data gathered from these tools shows large swaths of Pima County and metro-Tucson with broadband speed rates below the FCC minimum standard. Additionally, PCITD coordinated with the library’s data analyst to create maps, identifying areas of greatest need throughout Pima County.⁵ The shaded purple areas found on the

¹ NACo-Broadband-Taskforce-report.pdf
² Indicators of Broadband Need (arcgis.com)
³ Understanding-the-True-State-of-Connectivity-in-America.pdf (naco.org)
⁴ Broadband Speed Guide | Federal Communications Commission (fcc.gov)
⁵ Digital Access Example (arcgis.com)
maps in **Images 1 and 2** are representative of households without internet connectivity. The dark purple correlates to more than 22% of the households without internet connectivity in the identified area. Western Pima County (Districts 3 and 5) and certain metro-Tucson and South Tucson areas (85705, 85706, 85711-85714, 85716, and 85746) have the highest concentration of dark purple areas. It is important to note, all Board of Supervisors districts are impacted by low percentages of households without internet connectivity.

*Image 1: Pima and Santa Cruz County, internet connectivity*
Broadband Infrastructure and Policy Recommendations Subcommittee Update

The Taskforce (subcommittee) requested approval to implement the **Hotspots around Town** project, in coordination with Cox Communications and monies from the Emergency Connectivity Fund,\(^6\) to meet our short-term goal in the development of broadband infrastructure. Additionally, the Taskforce, Pima County, and Pima County Public Library (PCPL) are partners on an Arizona Commerce Authority grant application for $12.5 million dollars. If awarded, the project will provide middle-mile and final-mile broadband infrastructure to more than 1,300 homes in the Three Points (Altar Valley) and Sycamore Springs (Corona de Tucson) neighborhoods.

The subcommittee of fifteen (15) members meets monthly with stakeholders from the City of Tucson, community organizations, local municipalities, and Internet Service Providers. Discussions include efforts we believe will allow us to create infrastructure, encourage competition among service providers, increase engagement of community organizations to help people access federal subsidies through the Affordable Connectivity Program,\(^7\) and invite conversations with local municipalities and school districts on coordinated efforts for the installation of fiber and usage of data centers. The co-chairs of the subcommittee meet twice monthly with representatives from the City of Tucson, who were appointed by the Tucson City Manager, to identify priority projects to further the goals of the Taskforce. Our Taskforce meeting on April 15, 2022 included

---

\(^6\) Home - Emergency Connectivity Fund - [USAC.ORG](https://www.usac.org)

\(^7\) Home - ACP - [Universal Service Administrative Company (acpbenefit.org)](https://www.acpbenefit.org)
Internet Service Providers, small and large, to discuss the goals of the Taskforce and demonstrate how we can all accomplish more by working closely together.

Conversations are occurring with local datacenters that provide connectivity into and out of the County. Pima County is fortunate to have multiple major providers that want to provide the best service to our community members at the lowest prices possible. They understand they cannot provide services to everyone alone. Those participating in our discussions agree we need to come together with a common vision, which can be driven by having all providers within a single point of presence. One local datacenter is partnering with an organization to provide 10 GB, 40 GB, and 100 GB connection speeds for transporting data to and from Pima County and Tucson. Currently, all but two or three of the major providers have a presence within that datacenter. Pima County is working with those providers to bring their connectivity into that single point of presence. This will allow many more service options for all households within our County. This type of infrastructure effort is complex and requires a significant time commitment.

The taskforce co-chairs, along with the representatives appointed by the City of Tucson, reviewed procurement opportunities undertaken by other municipalities and government entities from across the country. This work helped us identify best practices for the formulation of a Request for Information (RFI) to submit to Pima County Procurement. The RFI process allows us to gather detailed information to better inform decision-making about broadband infrastructure, including available technologies and vendors. We know we have vendors willing to work in the community, but we have no information about what broadband infrastructure gaps are hindering our ability to provide connectivity to the community.

Gaining this information, and leveraging our partnerships with providers, will allow us to jointly dedicate funding to middle mile fiber infrastructure projects that will provide greater connectivity options, driving competition amongst providers to provide cost effective broadband services in all areas of the county. Additionally, the information can be used to determine the best way for Pima County to support broadband infrastructure projects that may be too costly for service providers to do on their own.

**Digital Inclusion and Equity Subcommittee Update**

The Digital Inclusion and Equity Subcommittee held its first meeting December 21, 2021. Our first meeting had twelve (12) attendees. Our group has grown to forty-five (45) members and includes organizations supporting workforce development, community college and adult education, older adults, small business, and entrepreneurs, as well as libraries (rural and metro). We have a rich mix of experience contributing to the work of the subcommittee.

The initial meeting included an overview of the mission, vision, and goals of the strategic plan and our subcommittee. This was followed with a “Digital Inclusion 101” overview to set the stage for the work in front of us. Attendees were asked to describe their organization’s digital inclusion goals for the people they serve on a day-to-day basis. This subcommittee has a very good cross-section of the community represented and all members were asked to invite others to participate.

Subsequent meetings focused on understanding the general level of digital literacy of the individuals our group members serve daily and the availability of digital literacy initiatives in the community. Additionally, we wanted to understand how much time and effort is spent on questions relating to the technology being used in the business setting vs. the provision of services. It appears that not only are people missing vital digital skills, but
many have only a phone as an internet-ready device. Our members reported most of their clients have no home internet subscription.

The group provided detailed information about the digital literacy programs their organizations have created to meet the varied needs of community members. It is important to include all digital literacy programs in the community and input the information into our database for future use. This work is ongoing and includes standardized definitions for an optimal digital literacy program and required facilities for serving the target population. The definitions include device types, curriculum, staffing and best practices for trainers, venue requirements, information technology and networking needs, and the need for outreach/marketing to promote programs.

The group also identified existing gaps in digital literacy programs in Pima County, not including geographical gaps. The gaps – barriers to people being able or willing to participate in digital skill training or digital access at all – are varied and many. This was a very useful exercise as these gaps will be the focus of our work to make digital literacy initiatives successful:

- Fear of computers and the internet,
- Language and learning barriers,
- Transportation, lack of childcare,
- Messaging against being online,
- Lack of public messaging about the benefits of being online,
- Stigma associated with not being digitally literate,
- Fear of the unknown, scams, and fraud,
- Lack of time to take classes and learn skills,
- Lack of awareness of existing resources, fear of costs for digital skills training,
- Long-term dependence on others with computer skills to help them accomplish tasks, and
- A mistrust of all things digital.

The final portion of our gap analysis will be a community survey created in conjunction with the other subcommittees and implementing town halls to listen to the concerns of community members throughout Pima County.

Digital Access Subcommittee Update

The Digital Access Subcommittee convened for its first meeting December 21, 2021. The members reviewed Pima County’s Strategic Plan for Digital Access, Inclusion, and Adoption, taking note of the vision, mission, and goals. The priority for the group was to identify tasks for the objectives under the short-term goals. The subcommittee met monthly in January, February, and March, continuing to add tasks, identify stakeholders, and assign members to action items.

The subcommittee is motivated, knowing the world literally relies on digital access to fully interact and integrate with others for schooling, work, health care, business, ordering products or supplies, locating services, receiving services, billings, banking, and many other digital needs. The group’s motivation is derived from knowing our over-arching goal is to provide equitable access to devices, tools, and necessary software, such as security/virus protection, and Microsoft Office Products to underserved populations in Pima County, so community members can fully participate in our digital society. Our discussions touched on what we (individuals with no barriers to access) can accomplish with devices and connectivity, whether at home or at work. As a group, we can only
imagine the struggles those without devices or connectivity have in today’s world. For this reason, we have engaged stakeholders who work with these populations.

Underserved populations in Pima County include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lower income households without devices or the monies to obtain connectivity or devices at an affordable price,
- Geographical obstacles (rural areas without connectivity or slow or intermittent connectivity),
- Aging population on fixed or limited incomes without devices or connectivity,
- Those with physical or intellectual disabilities,
- Small businesses, especially in rural areas or smaller communities,
- Schools without devices for all students, whether hotspots, laptops, or tablets, and
- Tribal communities within Pima County.

The work of this subcommittee overlaps with the work of the Digital Inclusion and Equity Subcommittee significantly. We have prioritized consistent communication, and at times joint efforts, especially in the areas of digital literacy and infrastructure.

We have team members willing to take on the tasks of not only identifying our target populations, but being assigned to specific groups to identify the best stakeholders inside and outside of Pima County for membership to the subcommittee. We currently have seven (7) members on the committee who are Pima County employees, and four (4) outside members; two (2) from a private sector vendor with access to affordable devices through their company, and two (2) from the community who work with citizens found within our target populations. We are in the process of adding more members, including Pima Council on Aging (PCOA), and a potential commitment from Special Olympics Arizona. Members continue to reach out to community stakeholders for their participation in the group.

In focusing on the short-term goal of performing a community needs assessment and conducting a gap analysis by the second quarter of FY22/23, we have prepared survey questions specifically for the schools, and will use many of those questions, with modifications, for the other targeted populations, focusing on the best practices/methods for distributing these surveys and collecting the data.

**Grants, Funding, and Procurement Subcommittee Update**

The Grants, Procurement and Funding Subcommittee held its first meeting on January 20, 2021. The original meeting had seven (7) members and now stands at eleven (11) members. The group includes several members from organizations such as Literacy Connects, Arizona Telecommunications & Information Council (ATIC), and independent broadband consultants and advocates. Though small, the team has significant experience with grants management and procurement—and a passion to learn more about future grants, procurement, and funding.

Our first meeting in January was principally geared to allowing members the opportunity to get to know one another and identify the role this subcommittee should play with respect to the strategic plan and the work of the other subcommittees. Committee members were encouraged to invite others to participate with the group. An important point for this subcommittee is that it serves as a support group for the other subcommittees and the overall Strategic Plan. As such, its ability—and work plan—will derive from the outputs created by the other subcommittees.
A major topic of discussion was Pima County’s partnership in a grant to support the expansion of high-speed broadband services in the Three Points (Altar Valley) and Sycamore Springs (Corona de Tucson) communities, two growing but underserved areas of the county. The $12.5 million ($5 million can be awarded) grant application was submitted to the Arizona Commerce Authority, as part of its Arizona Broadband Development Grant (ABDG) initiative. This grant program was developed from federal funds the State of Arizona received from the American Rescue Plan Act (Capital Projects Fund). The ABDG dedicated $100 million to expand broadband deployment in Arizona in support of urban and rural projects. Rural project requests could not exceed $10 million; urban project requests could not exceed $5 million. Pima County was defined in the notice as an urban entity, notwithstanding its proposed projects might be in rural parts of the county. As of the date of this report, the grant application is still pending.

Based on the preliminary and subsequent conversations, this subcommittee has three broad objectives:

1. Develop a grants plan that supports the achievement of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan and all its subcommittees—to support deployment of broadband infrastructure, digital inclusion, and equity, and to increase access to tools and devices.
2. Identify/leverage existing research, project resources and/or contracts that provide a basis or support for the strategic plan activities (e.g., are there telecommunications agreements in place that could be leveraged to fulfill the goals/objectives of the broadband infrastructure, digital literacy and access to devices and tools subcommittees?).
3. Ensure policies, procedures, and agreement templates are adequate to add partners and capacity to enable Pima County to competitively position itself to pursue grant and other funding opportunities.

The subsequent meetings of this subcommittee were held on February 17, 2022, and March 18, 2022, respectively. At these meetings, potential grant opportunities (traditional and non-traditional) were discussed, to help familiarize committee members with potential resources.

This work provided us with the “big picture” of the turbocharged congressional interest in trying to make programs and funding available to stimulate greater deployment and access. Since December 2020, there have been three major efforts to stimulate broadband deployment, adding to existing programs. Table 2 summarizes the major congressional efforts to support broadband, summarizing relevant programs created, authorized, or significantly enhanced since December 2020 (not a complete listing of programs created). Many of the programs will be annual renewal programs, such as the USDA ReConnect program. Others, particularly those created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), may be one-time funding opportunities.

---

8 [Grant Opportunities (azcommerce.com)]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative Effort</th>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>New, Existing, or Enhanced</th>
<th>Type of Grant; Program Status</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021</td>
<td>Broadband Infrastructure—predominantly rural grants</td>
<td>Existing—partnerships between governments and fixed BB providers</td>
<td>Competitive; May reopen May 2022</td>
<td>$288 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting Minority Communities Pilot</td>
<td>New—HBCUs, Minority Serving Institutions</td>
<td>Competitive; unclear whether will reopen</td>
<td>$285 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency Broadband Benefit Program</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Consumer subsidy; transitioned into Affordable Connectivity program 12/31/2021</td>
<td>$3.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Rescue Plan Act (2021)</td>
<td>Capital Projects Fund—deploy infrastructure lacking reliable wireline speeds; digital literacy training; community anchor institutions to enable public wi-fi</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Block grants to states</td>
<td>$10 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Formula allocation to states and counties</td>
<td>$350 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency Connectivity Fund</td>
<td>New—eligible schools and libraries</td>
<td>Competitive; third window to open 3/28/2022, closing 5/13/2022</td>
<td>$7.170 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Title I formula; all funds awarded as of 9/30/2021</td>
<td>$122.7 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act</td>
<td>Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Formula grants to states; may be subgranted. Expected NOFO May, 2022</td>
<td>$42.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Digital Equity Capacity Grants</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Formula allocation—Part 1 planning; Part 2 deployment; may be subgranted</td>
<td>$1.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Equity</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>$250 million/year for 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle Mile Grants</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>$1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordable Connectivity Program</td>
<td>Reformulation of existing program</td>
<td>Consumer subsidy</td>
<td>$14.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>ReConnect Grant</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Competitive—support rural deployment. FY 22 just closed</td>
<td>$1.150 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Effort</td>
<td>Program Name</td>
<td>New, Existing, or Enhanced</td>
<td>Type of Grant; Program Status</td>
<td>Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Jobs Challenge</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Competitive—program just closed</td>
<td>$500 million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other EDA programs</td>
<td>New-Build Back Better Regional Challenge; Existing: Economic Adjustment</td>
<td>Competitive. BBB competitive. Pima County not selected to advance. EAA rolling availability until expended</td>
<td>$1.5 billion collectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Consumer subsidy</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other projects</td>
<td>Other projects, such as the RAISE infrastructure grant and congressionally directed spending offer other potential opportunities for funding</td>
<td>Competitive and uncertain</td>
<td>Depends on program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Federal Funding Opportunities*
Next Steps

The work of the Taskforce has gained local and national attention. Recently, Green Valley News, Arizona Daily Star, and Government Technology reported on Pima County’s dedication to equitable access and the efforts undertaken thus far, including the County/City collaboration. The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) interviewed the Taskforce about our processes to build a local coalition, asking us to share our group efforts. Pima County Public Library is a current member of NDIA.

The Taskforce is working with Pima County Communications, Pima County Information Technology Department (PCITD), and Pima County Public Library’s Communications & Systems Office to create a web presence. The website will include information about the strategic plan, goals and objectives, committee members, resources for low cost internet/devices, and stories about how our efforts made a difference in the lives of Pima County residents.

Efforts to implement the Hotspots around Town project are underway. PCPL and PCITD teams are working with Cox Communications to establish the free network login information, configure the federally required filtering (Children’s Internet Protection Act⁹), and create a splash page to gain user acceptance of the Wi-Fi use agreement. Additionally, signage will be created (English and Spanish) to prominently display login information near the hotspots throughout the community. The same information will be available on the County and PCPL websites. The 130 hotspots will be activated in phases starting in May 2022.

Taskforce subcommittees are finalizing community surveys for distribution. The information gathered from the surveys will inform the types of town hall listening sessions to be implemented in fall 2022. A subsequent update report will be provided after the close of this fiscal year.

The Taskforce will continue to gather data, work with state and federal entities to update infrastructure mapping, and identify the best funding opportunities for our community. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law¹⁰, signed by President Biden in November 2021, outlines the investment of federal dollars in infrastructure across our nation. The White House released Building a Better America¹¹, a roadmap to the funding available under the new law, to help states and other municipalities understand how much funding is available at the program level, eligibility requirements, and the agencies responsible for the disbursement of funds. The Taskforce will use the data and information gathered to provide comprehensive broadband infrastructure recommendations – projects and policies - to County Administration and the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

CC: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Mark Napier, Assistant County Administrator
Amber Mathewson, Library Director

---

⁹ Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) | Federal Communications Commission (fcc.gov)
¹⁰ President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law | The White House
VISION  All Pima County community members will have equitable access to affordable and reliable high speed broadband internet to successfully participate in our democratic society.

MISSION  Guide the development of broadband infrastructure, implementation of digital literacy initiatives, and increase access to devices and tools for connectivity throughout Pima County.

**Short-term Goal**  Increase the number of publicly accessible wireless hotspots by a minimum of 10 sites in each Pima County Board of Supervisors District by the second quarter of FY22/23.

**Mid-term Goal**  Increase the number of households served by affordable broadband by 10% in each Pima County Board of Supervisors District by the first quarter of FY24/25.

**Long-term Goal**  Implement joint trench policies for all critical infrastructure projects managed by DOTs, DOE, utilities, and Public Safety agencies by the fourth quarter of FY25/26.

**Development of broadband infrastructure**

**Short-term Goal**  Create a plan to address gaps in digital literacy initiatives and resources by the second quarter of FY22/23.

**Mid-term Goal**  Engage at least five community partners to implement digital literacy initiatives and provide resources as identified by the gap analysis by the first quarter of FY23/24.

**Long-term Goal**  Increase technology adoption rates by 5% through the implementation of relevant digital literacy initiatives by the fourth quarter of FY24/25.

**Implementation of digital literacy initiatives**

**Short-term Goal**  Perform a community needs assessment and conduct a gap analysis by the second quarter of FY22/23.

**Mid-term Goal**  Increase access to devices and tools by 20% for households identified in the gap analysis by the second quarter of FY23/24.

**Long-term Goal**  Implement policies for sustainable funding for the provision of devices and tools as identified by the needs assessment by the fourth quarter of FY25/26.

**Increase access to devices and tools**
Development of broadband infrastructure

Short-term Goal: Increase the number of publicly accessible wireless hotspots by a minimum of 10 sites in each Pima County Board of Supervisors District by the first quarter of FY22/23.

Objective 1: Identify internet service provider(s) in each BOS district by the second quarter of FY21/22.

Objective 2: Request proposals for the implementation of publicly accessible wireless hotspots in each BOS district by the second quarter of FY21/22.

Objective 3: Accept and implement proposal(s) by leveraging monies available to the Pima County Public Library through Emergency Connectivity Funding by the third quarter of FY21/22.

Mid-term Goal: Increase the number of households served by affordable broadband by 10% in each Pima County Board of Supervisors District by the first quarter of FY24/25.

Objective 1: Conduct an assessment of available affordable broadband programs and adoption rates in Pima County by the second quarter of FY22/23.

Objective 2: Partner with internet service providers (ISPs) to implement sustainable affordable broadband programs by the second quarter of FY22/23.

Objective 3: Engage community stakeholders to identify households who are facing barriers to accessing affordable broadband programs by the first quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 4: Remove barriers to access and pilot an affordable broadband program involving all internet service provider partners in Pima County by the fourth quarter of FY23/24.

Long-term Goal: Implement joint trench policies for all critical infrastructure construction projects managed by DOTs, DOE, utilities, and Public Safety agencies by the fourth quarter of FY25/26.

Objective 1: Engage State of Arizona, Pima County, and local government officials in reviewing current policy, sharing project mapping, and identifying best practices for the implementation of joint trench requirements associated with construction projects by the second quarter of FY24/25.

Objective 2: Engage Pima County departments and Administration to revise and/or create new joint trench policies for recommendation to the Pima County Board of Supervisors by the first quarter of FY25/26.
Implementation of digital literacy initiatives

Short-term Goal: Create a plan to address gaps in digital literacy initiatives and resources by the second quarter of FY22/23.

Objective 1: Identify existing digital literacy initiatives by the second quarter of FY21/22.

Objective 2: Conduct a gap analysis by the fourth quarter of FY21/22.

Objective 3: Engage community stakeholders to gather input about specific population needs by the third quarter of FY21/22.

Mid-term Goal: Engage at least five community partners to implement digital literacy initiatives and provide resources as identified by the gap analysis by the fourth quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 1: Establish scope of work and agreement for funding for each identified community partner by the first quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 2: Engage community partners to develop multiple training options for different age groups by the second quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 3: Engage community partners to develop multiple training options for different languages by the second quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 4: Conduct a marketing campaign to promote digital literacy initiatives to the community and potentially engage more partners by the third quarter of FY23/24.

Long-term Goal: Increase technology adoption rates by 5% through the implementation of relevant digital literacy initiatives by the fourth quarter of FY24/25.

Objective 1: Conduct qualitative research to understand and remove barriers to technology adoption by the third quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 2: Engage community partners to connect families to identified digital literacy initiatives by the fourth quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 3: Connect XX families to relevant resources and training to address technology adoption hesitancy by the second quarter of FY24/25.
Increase access to devices and tools

Short-term Goal: Perform a community needs assessment and conduct a gap analysis by the second quarter of FY22/23.

Objective 1: Engage community stakeholders to gather input about specific population needs by the third quarter of FY21/22.

Objective 2: Create a pilot program for the provision of devices to include identified best practices by the first quarter of FY22/23.

Mid-term Goal: Increase access to devices and tools by 20% for households identified in the gap analysis by the fourth quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 1: Establish scope of work and agreement for funding for each identified partner for the implementation of the pilot program by the first quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 2: Conduct a targeted marketing campaign to engage community members for the pilot program by the second quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 3: Prioritize community members identified in the needs assessment as participants in the pilot program by the second quarter of FY23/24.

Objective 4: Change County policies and procedures on disposal of IT related equipment by the third quarter of FY23/24.

Long-term Goal: Implement policies for sustainable funding for the provision of devices, equipment, and tools as identified by the needs assessment by the fourth quarter of FY25/26.

Objective 1: Engage Pima County Finance, Procurement, and Grants Management in the development of a comprehensive funding plan for the provision of devices, equipment and tools by the fourth quarter of FY24/25.

Objective 2: Prioritize the seeking of grant funding available for tools and equipment identified in our needs assessment by the first quarter of FY25/26.