

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**Communications Division  
Broadband, Video and Market Branch**

**RESOLUTION T- 17778  
January 12, 2023**

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**RESOLUTION T-17778:** Approves the Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia grant applications for the Broadband Consortium of the Pacific Coast, Central Coast Broadband Consortium, Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium, Central Sierra Economic Development District/Broadband Utility, Gold Country Broadband Consortium, Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium, Inyo-Mono Broadband Consortium, Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League Consortium, North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium, Northeastern California Connect Consortium, Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium, San Joaquin Valley Regional Broadband Consortium, Southern Border Broadband Consortium, Tahoe Basin Project, and Upstate California Connect Consortium in the amount of \$10,333,173.

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**I. SUMMARY**

This Resolution approves grant funding in the amount of \$10,333,173 from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account (Consortia Account) for the grant applications of Broadband Consortium of Pacific Coast (BCPC), Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC), Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium (CCABC), Central Sierra Economic Development District/Broadband Utility (CSBUZ), Gold Country Broadband Consortium (GCBC), Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium (IERBC), Inyo-Mono Broadband Consortium (IMBC), Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League Consortium (LA-DEAL), North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC), Northeastern California Connect Consortium (NECCC), Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCCBC), San Joaquin Valley Regional Broadband Consortium (SJVRBC), Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC), Tahoe Basin Project (TBP), and Upstate California Connect Consortium (UCCC). These fifteen projects will facilitate the deployment of broadband services by assisting CASF infrastructure grant

applicants in the project development or grant application process or assisting broadband deployment projects related to programs created under Senate Bill (SB) 156 and Assembly Bill (AB) 164.

## II. BACKGROUND

On October 15, 2017, Governor Brown signed AB 1665 (Garcia, Chapter 851, Statutes of 2017) into law,<sup>1</sup> which among other things, established continuation of the Consortia Account with an additional \$10 million in available funds.<sup>2</sup>

On May 19, 2022, the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) adopted Decision (D.) 22-05-029, modifying the CASF program per SB 156 and AB 164 and implementing programmatic changes to the Consortia Account including expansion of allowable Consortia activities, increasing annual maximum funding cap, and clarifying Consortia regional boundary requirements; and allocated an additional \$10.71 million in available funding for fiscal year 2022-2023. CASF Consortia Account grant funds are available to facilitate the deployment of broadband services by assisting CASF infrastructure grant applicants in the project development or grant application process or assisting broadband deployment projects related to programs created under SB 156 and AB 164.<sup>3</sup>

Pursuant to the CASF rules adopted in D.22-05-029, Consortia activities that achieve the following objectives may be eligible for funding:

- Objective 1: Collaborating with the Commission to engage regional Consortia, local officials, internet service providers (ISPs), stakeholders, and consumers regarding priority areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve the broadband access goal.
- Objective 2: Identifying potential CASF infrastructure projects or potential broadband deployment projects related to new programs created under SB 156 and AB 164, along with other opportunities, where providers can expand and improve their infrastructure and service offerings to achieve the goal of reaching 98% broadband deployment in each consortia region.
- Objective 3: Assisting potential CASF infrastructure applicants or potential applicants for broadband deployment projects related to the new programs created under SB 156 and AB 164 in the project development or grant application process.

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<sup>1</sup> AB 1665 is codified at Public Utilities Code, § 281.

<sup>2</sup> AB 1665 supplements \$15 million already authorized for the Consortia Grants with an additional \$10 million.

<sup>3</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 2.

- Objective 4: Conducting activities that will lead to or that can be reasonably expected to lead to CASF infrastructure projects or broadband deployment projects related to new programs created under SB 156 and AB 164 including but not limited to the following examples of allowable activities:
  - Supporting project permitting activities.
  - Engaging local government officials and communities to better understand and explain regional broadband needs and solutions and providing technical assistance to such entities.
  - Conducting an inventory of public assets (e.g., rights-of-ways, publicly owned towers, public utility poles, equipment housing, publicly owned property) and aggregate demand, including speed tests and the identification and updates of priority areas.
- Objective 5: Assisting the Commission in publicizing requests for wireline testing volunteers in areas, as needed.
- Objective 6: Assisting the Commission in promoting broadband deployment in California, related to the Federal Funding Account and other programs including Middle-Mile, Broadband Loan Loss Reserve, and Local Agency Technical Assistance created under SB 156 and AB 164.

The most recent three rounds of solicitation for Consortia grant applications on March 29, 2019, April 23, 2020, and December 18, 2020, respectively.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, the Commission approved a total of thirteen Consortia grants in the following Resolutions: Resolution T-17669 (9 grants) on October 24, 2019, Resolution -T-17708 (2 grants) on October 22, 2020, Resolution T-17726 (1 grant) on April 15, 2021, and Resolution T-17738 (1 project) on August 19, 2021. These thirteen total Consortia grants are expected to end by October 31, 2022, or December 31, 2002, respectively. Consortia grants awarded in this Resolution are expected to start on February 1, 2023.

On June 1, 2022, the Commission opened the fourth round of solicitation for Consortia grant applications. Prospective applicants were invited to submit new proposals by July 15, 2022.

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<sup>4</sup>The three rounds stated are applicable to each consortium in this resolution that have either ended or will sunset later this year. There were other rounds of solicitation for Consortia grant applications prior to 2019.

#### **IV. APPLICANT REQUESTS AND NOTICE**

Fifteen applicants, including BCPC, CCBC, CCABC, CSBUZ, GCBC, IERBC, IMBC, LA-DEAL, NBNBCB, NECCC, RCCBC, SJVRBC, SBBC, TBP, and UCCC (Grantees) submitted applications for CASF Consortia grant funding by the deadline. On July 25, 2022, Communications Division (CD) staff (Staff) posted applications received on the Commissions' CASF Consortia Account webpage.<sup>5</sup>

#### **V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

Staff reviewed all applications according to the guidelines, requirements, and evaluation criteria adopted in D.22-05-029, as follows:

1. Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements;
2. Regional Consortium / Members' Experience;
3. Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan; and
4. Budget.

Applications from previously funded regional Consortia were also considered in the context of past performance in implementing their Action Plan and Work Plan.

Detailed Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan for each Consortium are available at the CASF Consortia Account webpage.<sup>6</sup>

Staff's review and evaluation of applications are summarized below.

##### **A. Broadband Consortium of the Pacific Coast (BCPC)**

###### *Applicant*

BCPC is a regional collaborative organization conducted by the Economic Development Collaborative comprised of government, economic development, education, health, business, and other not-for-profit organizations collaborating to facilitate measures that aims to achieve the deployment of broadband. Formed in 2014, the BCPC represents the Pacific Coast Tri-County Area of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/consortia/main-consortia-page/2022-updates/2022-cycle-consortia-applications-received.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/communications-division/documents/casf-adoption-and-access/consortia/main-consortia-page/t17778-consortia-wp--pmp-15-grants-2022.pdf>

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counties. BCPC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$300,000 in June 2014 (Resolution T-17445), \$251,500 in January 2017 (Resolution T-17550), and \$450,000 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for BCPC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Performance*

BCPC's past accomplishments include: working with local and state decision makers resulting in broadband policies, resolving priority areas, and implementation of Dig Once policies; coordinating with the Commission in the receipt of Geographic Information System (GIS) data of priority areas and creating a new layer identifying municipal maps and boundaries; participating in developing broadband infrastructure applications; conducting regional stakeholder meetings in Ventura County and Northern Santa Barbara County, serving as a catalyst for strategic dialogue between municipalities and broadband providers; and creating draft agreements for the partnership and development of a regional network consisting of middle mile connection of community networks.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

BCPC representation includes economic development organizations of the three counties representing the business sector, and local county governments representing the public sector. The governing board structure utilizes an executive steering committee and a tri-county board of advisors. BCPC received a total of forty-four endorsements from city governments, a tribal entity, local businesses, anchor institutions, economic development agencies, an Assembly District, a non-profit charitable organization, and ISPs.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

BCPC's members have direct experience with broadband deployment and adoption efforts. As government officials, educators, business owners/developers, they have direct experience working with its regional communities.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

BCPC proposes to continue its commitment to fostering civic engagement and entrepreneurship needed to ensure the region's economic growth through the development and support of broadband infrastructure projects while concurrently achieving the CPUC threshold of 98% adoption in their region. Specifically, the BCPC proposes to plan region middle mile networks; draft policy for regional and local levels promoting deployment; develop proposals for priority projects; create maps of fiber assets and community networks to interconnect anchor institutions; provide guidance and advice for build out of middle and last mile projects; and create digital equity

coalitions. BCPC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.<sup>7</sup>

### *Budget*

BCPC requests \$600,000 for a three-year grant. Of its total budget, BCPC allocates approximately 19% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 58% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 19% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 4% to grant administration. BCPC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

## **B. Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC)**

### *Applicant*

CCBC is a broadband development organization with over a twenty-year history in Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties. CCBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in December 2011 (Resolution T- 17349), \$274,500 in August 2016 (Resolution T-17529), and \$450,000 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for CCBC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

### *Past CASF Project Performance*

CCBC's past accomplishments include publication and promulgation of broadband deployment policies, conducting primary research in the tri-county region to understand broadband services offered and needs for residences and businesses, producing GIS and other analytical tools to document broadband infrastructure and service gaps throughout its region, and providing resources to deployment CASF-funded projects in the region that are in various stages of development. Along with its public outreach and coordination, the GIS web-platform technical resources have been used to support and expedite infrastructure planning and development. Since CCBC began its work, twelve CASF broadband infrastructure proposals were approved.

### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

CCBC representation comprises of local city and county agencies, educational institutions, industry and economic development interests, and community-based organizations. CCBC received a total of twelve endorsements from local government

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<sup>7</sup> In D.22-05-029, the Commission established the Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan should include specific work activities, verifiable work deliverables, quantitative performance measures, the method for performance tracking and measuring, and responsible party(ies), with acceptable timelines for completion.

entities and businesses, a community-based organization, an academic institution, and local ISPs.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

CCBC's members have demonstrated experience and success with assisting community groups to achieve broadband deployment in their region. The consortia members have strong experience in assisting infrastructure projects, including CASF infrastructure grant proposals, federal broadband infrastructure grants, as well as municipal broadband initiatives. Additionally, members have also had success in building regional, collaborative broadband-related efforts. Members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites.

#### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

CCBC's proposal focuses on developing and supporting broadband projects funded by the CASF Infrastructure Account and broadband deployment projects related to programs created under SB 156 and AB 164. The consortium's goals consist of developing and supporting broadband projects funded by the CASF Infrastructure Grant Account on deployment of open access middle mile facilities, construction of new and upgraded last mile infrastructure. CCBC will continue to develop GIS resources and web platform functionality, work directly with ISPs and local agencies to identify business opportunities, and create fundable business plans for broadband deployment, provide direct project-specific mapping data analysis and community support assistance to ISPs and local agencies as they develop and implement infrastructure projects, and directly support the development and submittal of CASF infrastructure applications. CCBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

CCBC requests \$1,000,000 for a five-year grant.<sup>8</sup> The requested grant amount will allocate approximately 48% to market analysis and outreach to identify potential infrastructure projects and encourage deployment (Objectives 1 and 2), 17% will be for direct assistance to ISPs and local agencies during the grant application process (Objective 3), 14% will be used for sourcing other funding opportunities and publicizing their availability (Objective 4), and the remaining 21% will be split between publicizing requests for wireline testing volunteers, GIS support and fiscal/management oversight

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<sup>8</sup> The requested number of funding years is at the historical average level and within the range of funding years awarded in the past for the Consortia Account.

(Objective 5). CCBC's budget is consistent with the budgetary requirements stated in D.22-05-029.

### **C. Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium (CCABC)**

#### *Applicant*

CCABC represents four counties, including Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. CCABC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$448,301 in February 2012 (Resolution T-17355), \$298,750 in November 2016 (Resolution T-17538), and \$438,560 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for CCABC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on December 31, 2022.

#### *Past CASF Project Performance*

CCABC's accomplishments include: the compilation of an inventory of adoption and digital literacy assets in the region and development of a prioritized list of infrastructure development opportunities; creation of broadband resource documents for education and outreach in Yuba, Sutter, and Sacramento counties; assisting in the planning and facilitation of the Yolo Broadband Strategic Plan; partnering with Sacramento County Public Library and City of Sacramento on Digital Inclusion Initiative; and sharing information on served and unserved areas in the region through outreach meetings and forums; CCABC defined CASF eligible areas to cultivate champions and solicit providers; assisted the Commission in publicizing requests for wireline testing volunteers; researched and designated projects, based on data and eligibility; and provide technical assistance for ISPs pursuing projects.

#### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

CCABC representation includes economic development organizations, anchor institutions, local educational agencies, higher education institutions, a library, health organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and accessibility advocates, utilizing a steering committee consisting of geographic representation and key stakeholders. CCABC received a total of forty endorsements consisting of city and county government entities, an academic institution, ISPs, and public and nonprofit organizations.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

CCABC's membership includes representatives of jurisdictions, anchor institutions, civic leadership organizations, ranging from both urban and rural areas of the region. This wide array of members have experience with access and adoption efforts, broadband deployment, and policy development.



*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

CCABC proposes to maintain goals of fostering and assisting project development and grant application preparation, facilitating broadband infrastructure deployment, and strengthening partnerships with ISPs to actively pursue projects. Areas of focus will be targeted on research intended to designate priority projects based on data and eligibility to cultivate champions and solicit providers. Furthermore, CCABC intends to heighten the importance of broadband by promoting education and networking with local governments, educational institutions, community advocates, and other key stakeholders. CCABC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

CCABC requests \$800,000 for a four-year grant.<sup>9</sup> Of its total budget, CCABC allocates approximately 21% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 64% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 4% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 11% to grant administration. CCABC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**D. Central Sierra Economic Development District/Broadband Utility Zone (CSBUZ)**

*Applicant*

CSBUZ's CASF Consortia Account project is the Central Sierra Broadband Utility Zone, and its fiscal agent is the Tuolumne County Auditor's Office. CSBUZ represents Tuolumne, Calaveras, Amador, Mariposa, and Alpine counties.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

This is CSBUZ's first CASF Consortia Account project proposal submission.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

CSBUZ representation includes local city and regional government, public safety, K-12 education, health care, libraries, higher education, community-based organizations, tourism, parks and recreation, agricultural, and business. CSBUZ received sixteen endorsements from local governments, ISPs, educational institutions, Board of Supervisors, and non-profit organizations.

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<sup>9</sup> The requested number of funding years is at the historical average level and within the range of funding years awarded in the past for the Consortia Account.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

CSBUZ's members have experience and success in achieving broadband deployment, communication strategy, product marketing and development, transportation sector, public and private sectors, anchor institutions, technology industry, and educational institutions.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

CSBUZ proposes to focus on creating regional capacity to collaborate with CPUC, local government, ISPs, stakeholders, and consumers to achieve broadband connectivity success; directly assisting ISPs with obtaining last mile CASF grant funds; and developing enhanced GIS mapping tools to detail unserved and underserved households & businesses and provide data for mapping deficiencies. CSBUZ's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

CSBUZ requests \$595,650 for a three-year grant, including a \$141,723 start-up budget.<sup>10</sup> Of its total budget, CSBUZ allocates approximately 31% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 58% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 7% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 4% to grant administration. CSBUZ's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**E. Gold County Broadband Consortium (GCBC)**

*Applicant*

GCBC represents Sierra, Nevada, Placer, and El Dorado counties. GCBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in February 2012 (Resolution T-17355), \$300,000 in November 2016 (Resolution T-17538), and \$423,010 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for GCBC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

GCBC's past accomplishments include: identifying priority areas in their region to assist driving connectivity to unserved and underserved communities, collaborating with the

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<sup>10</sup> The start-up budget, 23.79% of the total funding budget, pertains to the following Work Plan objectives: conducting marketing/outreach and develop strategies, identifying potential CASF infrastructure projects, developing CASF infrastructure applications, and publicizing wireline testing requests.

Commission for data and mapping, assisting ISPs with infrastructure grant applications, providing municipalities and counties with project management support, aligning priorities with economically disadvantaged communities to stimulate business and job growth, and conducting stakeholder engagement with routine working group meetings.

#### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

GCBC representation includes member organizations from local cities and counties, and local ISPs who work on issues of regional importance. Elected officials, public agency staff, as well as local ISPs, act as the current Consortium oversight committee. GCBC received a total of twenty-four endorsements from local government agencies, chambers of commerce, business representatives, local business owners and residents, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and ISPs.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

GCBC's members have experience with community groups and have had past success in helping to achieve broadband deployment in the region. They have also had success in building regional, collaborative broadband-related efforts. The Consortia members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites.

#### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

GCBC proposes to continue assisting with CASF infrastructure grant applicants to develop projects and working with internet service providers to determine unserved and underserved areas for connection. GCBC will focus on data and mapping collaborations with the Commission; assist ISPs with infrastructure grant applicants; assist the Commission wireline testing; conducting internet service surveys via counties and municipalities; and maintain a regional stakeholder list to implement innovative broadband solutions. GCBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

GCBC requests \$565,582 for a three-year grant, including a \$137,070 start-up budget.<sup>11</sup> Staff recommends disallowing the start-up budget costs because GCBC is an existing consortium. Of its total budget, GCBC allocates approximately 17% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 77% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 2% to assist in publicizing

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<sup>11</sup> The start-up budget, 24.06% of the total funding budget, pertains to the following Work Plan objectives: conducting marketing/outreach and develop strategies, identifying potential CASF infrastructure projects, developing CASF infrastructure applications, and publicizing wireline testing requests.

wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 4% to grant administration. GCBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

## **F. Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium (IERBC)**

### *Applicant*

IERBC represents Riverside and San Bernardino counties. IERBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in February 2012 (Resolution T-17355), \$300,000 in November 2016 (Resolution T-17538), and \$450,000 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for IERBC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

### *Past CASF Project Performance*

IERBC's past accomplishments include initiating and performing outreach pertaining to the digital divide and the need for more broadband in its region; supporting numerous CASF grant applications, including approved projects that will serve unserved households in the region; establishment of a "Priority List of Actions" for broadband advocacy efforts related to education, job growth, healthcare, and community-based organizations. IERBC also developed policies for broadband implementation to address in all projects, whether public or private in San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

IERBC representation includes members from city and county government agencies, regional rural and economic development interests, public safety, education, healthcare providers, libraries, community-based organizations, technology providers, engineering, utilities, businesses, and ISPs. IERBC received a total of twenty-eight endorsements from local governments, a tribal entity, community-based organizations, academic institutions, engineering and consulting firms, and ISPs.

### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

IERBC members have direct experience with broadband deployment and adoption efforts. They have experience in assisting with CASF infrastructure grants. Its members also had success in building regional, collaborative broadband-related efforts. Furthermore, members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites.

### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

IERBC proposes to continue its focus on assisting the expansion of broadband deployment through CASF and leveraging other broadband infrastructure grant

opportunities and address strategic broadband planning and deployment for unserved areas. Specifically, IERBC will utilize the Commission's California Interactive Broadband Map to identify unserved households in Riverside and San Bernardino counties; study demographics and characteristics of the areas; identify and prioritize unserved areas in the Inland Empire Broadband Infrastructure and Access Plan and share information with ISPs, regional leaders, and the Commission; and encourage and assist ISPs in applying for CASF infrastructure grants to serve unserved households. IERBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

IERBC requests \$600,000 for a three-year grant, including a \$150,000 start-up budget.<sup>12</sup> Staff recommends disallowing the start-up budget costs because IERBC is an existing consortium. Of its total budget, IERBC allocates approximately 22% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 73% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), and 5% to grant administration. IERBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

### **G. Inyo-Mono Broadband Consortium (IMBC)**

#### *Applicant*

IMBC represents Inyo and Mono counties. In October 2016, IMBC received a Consortia Account grant in the amount of \$105,216 (Resolution T-17537). Funding granted for IMBC in Resolution T-17537, concluded on June 30, 2019.

#### *Past CASF Project Performance*

IMBC's past accomplishments include<sup>13</sup>: creating an advisory council to inform its Board of Directors on last mile development strategies, public outreach, and potential regional investments; successfully worked with local providers to improve new and existing networks; facilitated CASF infrastructure grant applications; defined unserved and underserved priority communities; assisted a local agency in establishing public

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<sup>12</sup> The start-up budget, 25% of the total funding budget, pertains to the following Work Plan objectives: conducting marketing/outreach and develop strategies, identifying potential CASF infrastructure projects, developing CASF infrastructure applications, and publicizing wireline testing requests.

<sup>13</sup> IMBC representing Inyo and Mono Counties, was once apart of Eastern Sierra Connect Regional Broadband Consortium (ESC), ESC now only contains eastern Kern County; past CASF project performances include ESC accomplishments.

Wi-Fi in the town of Bishop, promoted broadband adoption, and met with public agency and commercial broadband stakeholders.

#### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

IMBC representation includes local city and counties who have formed a Joint Powers Agreement to work on issues of regional importance. Two elected officials from each of Inyo and Mono Counties, the City of Bishop, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes serve as Consortium members. IMBC received four endorsements from local governments.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

IMBC and its members have experience with community groups and have demonstrated success in helping to achieve broadband deployment in the region. They have also had success in building regional, collaborative broadband related efforts. Members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites.

#### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

IMBC proposes to support the development of new broadband networks by focusing on the five Objectives provided by the CPUC, including identifying potential CASF infrastructure projects or potential broadband deployment projects related to new programs created under SB 156 and AB 164. Specifically, IMBC will work with participating agencies to accurately map and document gaps to refine priority areas for broadband expansion; conduct public outreach and engagement to improve broadband expansion efforts and ensure adequate customer needs and expectations are met; coordinate efforts with ISPs and local agencies to develop projects and grant applications; and work with local public members to conduct regular wireline and wireless speed tests across markets to improve understanding of network adequacy and performance. IMBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

IMBC requests \$600,000 for a three-year grant. Of its total budget, IMBC allocates approximately 26% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 64% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 5% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 5% to grant administration. IERBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

### **H. Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League Consortium (LA-DEAL)**

*Applicant*

The LA-DEAL Consortium represents Los Angeles County, consisting of the following five subregions: San Fernando Valley/Santa Clarita, Antelope Valley, San Gabriel Valley, South Bay/Gateway Cities, and Central/West Los Angeles. LA-DEAL was approved for a \$300,000 Consortia Account grant in August 2021 (Resolution T-17738). Funding granted for LA-DEAL in Resolution T-17738, concluded on December 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

The LA-DEAL Consortium was created by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and UNITE-LA in 2021 to facilitate greater broadband deployment to unserved and underserved areas in Los Angeles County to promote economic growth, job creation, and social benefits of advanced information and technologies. LA-DEAL past accomplishments include engaging cross-sector stakeholders through forums to identify community needs; creating awareness of digital area equity; serving as a liaison between Los Angeles leadership and state agencies; and pursuing funding for the development of broadband infrastructure.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

The LA-DEAL Consortium's representation includes Los Angeles County government, non-profit organizations, education, economic development, and business. Additionally, the LA-DEAL Consortium partners with ISPs and its existing networks of community stakeholders from health, housing, education, workforce, government, and the private sector to participate in the sub-regional committees and inform the Consortium's agenda through a community-led and equity-driven process. The LA-DEAL Consortium received fifty-four endorsement support letters from local counties and cities government, economic development corporations and workforce development boards, local educational agencies and institutions of higher education, government officials, ISPs, and community-based and nonprofit organizations.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

The LA-DEAL Consortium's members have direct experience with broadband access, adoption, GIS mapping, and infrastructure project facilitation. The LA-DEAL Consortium proposes to have a broadband infrastructure workgroup composed of stakeholders from each sector (i.e., municipal, education, healthcare, business, tech, ISP, and nonprofit). The LA-DEAL Consortium's members have prior broadband deployment experience in advising public agencies with the strategic planning and development of large-scale public infrastructure and public-private partnership, including public fiber and telecommunications infrastructure.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>These projects were not funded by CASF.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

The LA-DEAL Consortium proposes to continue to serve as a liaison between communities, municipalities, and ISPs; audit existing fiber optic networks; conduct an inventory of publicly available data on municipal assets and aggregate demand, including speed tests and the identification and updates of priority areas; provide support to the development of a regional GIS platform for managing regional fiber assets; identify and mobilize state, city, and private sector resources and initiatives to invest in and leverage towards new broadband infrastructure; and support CASF infrastructure applications in the project development or grant application process. Specifically, the LA-DEAL Consortium proposes to assist with identifying and writing CASF infrastructure applications; provide technical assistance for submitting grant applications; and coordinate between ISPs and community stakeholders around infrastructure project development and grant application submission. The LA-DEAL Consortium's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

The LA-DEAL Consortium requests a total project budget of \$600,000 for a three-year grant. Of its total budget, the LA-DEAL Consortium allocates approximately 23% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 74% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 2% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and less than 1% to grant administration. The LA-DEAL Consortium's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**I. North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC)**

*Applicant*

NBNCBC represents Marin, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties. NBNCBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$250,000 in June 2014 (Resolution T- 17445), \$260,000 in December 2016 (Resolution T-17544), \$450,00 and in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for NBNCBC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

NBNCBC's past accomplishments include: engaging residents, businesses, public agencies, and policymakers regarding the value of broadband infrastructure; carrying wireline speed testing of existing internet service in priority areas and establishing two



Countywide Strategic Broadband Plans; assisting with CASF infrastructure grant proposals, as well as feasibility study for new middle mile segments.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

NBNCBC representation includes an oversight committee made up of four county supervisors and a consortium management team. Each county has its committee or task force that interacts with the respective local decision makers and the community to develop and facilitating the implementation of county broadband strategy projects. NBNCBC received a total of twenty-six endorsements from governments officials, public agencies, community organizations, anchor institutions, and business associations.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

NBNCBC's members have experience with community groups and have demonstrated success in helping to extend broadband networks to public agencies, and to secure funds for broadband deployment in the region. Its members have experience in assisting CASF-funded infrastructure projects and other infrastructure projects. They have also had success in building regional, collaborative broadband-related efforts. Furthermore, NBNCBC members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

NBNCBC proposal is centered on ensuring fast, affordable, reliable, and universal broadband infrastructure to its four counties. NBNCBC's main area of focus is to bring broadband services to unserved and underserved areas in its regions. NBNCBC will focus on regional collaboration with member counties' broadband initiatives to create planning strategies for infrastructure, policy, and advocacy. The Consortium will also implement regional activities with management teams from each county with the intent of cross-jurisdictional collaboration to successfully achieve its mission. NBNCBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

NBNCBC requests \$600,000 for a three-year grant. Of its total budget, NBNCBC allocates approximately 95% to conducting activities that will to the deployment of programs created under SB 156 and AB 164 (Objective 4) and 5% allocated for grant management. In addition, NBNCBC proposes to perform the activities required for Objectives 1,2,3, and 5 using its county budget funds. NBNCBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

## **J. Northeastern California Connect Consortium (NECCC)**

### *Applicant*

NECCC represents Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Plumas, and Tehama counties. NECCC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$449,991 in December 2011 (Resolution T-17349), \$296,518 in January 2017 (Resolution T-17550), and \$355,390 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for NECCC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on December 31, 2022.

### *Past CASF Project Performance*

NECCC's past accomplishments include: mapping and validating broadband coverage, establishment of a framework to position local partners to apply for funding to expand existing or develop new digital literacy programs and curriculums throughout the region; identifying gaps in digital literacy services and conducting outreach to county leaders for potential partnerships; completion of planning activities that identified key opportunities for expanding broadband infrastructure in the region, developing network backbone conceptual designs and reviewing them with stakeholders to produce priority areas for expansion, and assisting development of CASF infrastructure grant applications.

### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

NECCC representation includes local city and county government, anchor institutions, Chico Research Foundation, non-government organizations, and ISPs. NECCC received a total of seven endorsements from non-profit organizations, city and county government entities, a Congressional District, and ISPs.

### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

NECCC's members have experience with community development and have had past success in helping to achieve broadband deployment in the region. Members also have experience in assisting CASF-funded infrastructure projects; economic and geographic data collection; building regional, collaborative broadband-related efforts.

### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

NECCC proposes to focus on achieving 98% broadband service available in its region. To achieve NECCC's goal, the Consortia will facilitate the deployment of broadband services by assisting CASF infrastructure grant applicants in the project development or grant application process, collaborate with the Commission to engage with ISPs and stakeholders on broadband deployment, identify potential CASF infrastructure projects, assist infrastructure applicants, support project permitting activities, and assist the

Commission in publicizing requests for wireline testing volunteers. NECCC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

NECCC requests \$999,971 for a five-year grant.<sup>15</sup> Of its total budget, NECC allocates approximately 16% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 75% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 5% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 4% to grant administration. NECC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**K. Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCCBC)**

*Applicant*

RCCBC represents Del Norte, Humboldt, and Trinity counties. RCCBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in December 2011 (Resolution T-17349), \$208,000 in October 2016 (Resolution T-17537), and \$416,025 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for RCCBC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on October 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

RCCBC's past accomplishments include: secured funding plans for middle mile and last mile deployment projects; providing support with permitting, right of way, and environmental issues to CASF infrastructure project grantees; extending upload and download speeds to the underserved a community; holding quarterly meetings attended by representatives of the region to share policy and deployment activities; hosting annual broadband forums; and assisting in the preparation and submission of CASF infrastructure grant applications.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

RCCBC representation includes county agencies, regional rural and economic development interests, tribal governments, and public entities. RCCBC received a total of five endorsements from local governments, an economic development organization, and an academic institution.

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<sup>15</sup> The requested number of funding years is at the historical average level and within the range of funding years awarded in the past for the Consortia Account.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

RCCBC operates as a network for member organizations consisting of representatives from each county, along with regional representatives. All member organizations are public entities that have a diverse group of stakeholders with a long history of working on broadband issues. RCCBC has experience in assisting successful infrastructure grants and continues to be active in broadband issues in the region.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

RCCBC's goal is to develop and facilitate the implementation of broadband infrastructure that will provide an integrated and robust middle mile and last mile that will improve the quality of life, health access, education, and economic development in its region. To execute this, RCCBC proposes to create written deployment project proposals using the Commission's mapping tool and contact possible ISPs about community needs and CASF grant opportunities; prepare CASF applications in partnership with ISPs and help gather letters of support; work with ISPs on environmental, local permitting, and right of way issues; and keep the community informed of CASF infrastructure grant implementation progress and host meetings with the community members, anchors, regulators, and other stakeholders. RCCBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

RCCBC requests \$572,000 for a three-year grant. Of its total budget, RCCBC allocates approximately 7% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 79% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 7% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 7% to grant administration. RCCBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**L. San Joaquin Valley Regional Broadband Consortium (SJVRBC)**

*Applicant*

SJVRBC was established by the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) and is administered by the Office of Community and Economic Development at Fresno State (OCED). SJVRBC represents San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and Kern counties. SJVRBC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in December 2011 (Resolution T-17349), \$180,000 in October 2016 (Resolution T-17537), and \$450,000 in October 2020 (Resolution

T-17708). Funding granted for SJVRBC in Resolution T-17708, concluded on December 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

SJVRBC's past accomplishments include: supporting the Central Valley Next Generation Broadband Infrastructure Project; establishing a bilingual call center at Fresno State to guide internet subscribers through the service activation process; identifying the Shafter Municipal Fiber Network as a model to other communities considering a public broadband infrastructure project; development of final strategies connecting health clinics with medical centers in the regions; creating the Fresno State Parent University, which provides classes in digital literacy, parenting skills, and English language comprehension; expediting the provision of broadband access in all areas of the San Joaquin Valley; accelerating deployment of broadband infrastructure through telemedicine and telehealth technology; working with neighboring regional consortia to ensure the development of a cohesive infrastructure; and collaborating with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to ensure high-speed, wireless public safety broadband network from a rural and San Joaquin Valley perspective is included in the State's FirstNet strategy; and engaging San Joaquin Valley local officials, ISPs, stakeholders, regional partners, and consumers to prioritize areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve broadband access goals.

*Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

SJVRBC representation includes public and private sectors, including government, telecommunications providers and industry associations, economic development corporations and business development centers, local educational agencies, and institutions of higher education; health delivery organizations, community-based and nonprofit organizations; and accessibility advocates. SJVRBC received endorsements from state and local governments, community groups, and anchor institutions.

*Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

SJVRBC's members have experience with broadband deployment and adoption efforts. They held scheduled and noticed meetings regularly to discuss infrastructure project proposals and provided guidance and direction to the six Infrastructure Work Groups (e.g., advanced communications, economic development, health and telehealth, housing, air quality, and education/workforce) to further regional deployment, accessibility, and adoption of broadband services.

*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

SJVRBC proposes to collaborate with the Commission to engage San Joaquin Valley regional partners, local officials, ISPs, stakeholders, and consumers regarding priority

areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve the broadband access goal in the San Joaquin Valley. Specifically, SJVRBC will identify broadband priorities or gaps within regional public health, education, economic, land use, transportation, emergency response, and workforce development plans; inventory and map broadband infrastructure assets in the San Joaquin Valley, including fiber routes, nodes, and wireless sites or assets that could support wireless infrastructure; identify priority areas, (i.e., communities, census tracts) for broadband infrastructure improvement based on gaps/assets assessments; identify CASF infrastructure projects and other opportunities (i.e., leverage funding, collaborating with other stakeholders); develop and implement cost-effective strategies for broadband deployment based on available infrastructure and geographic barriers; work with ISPs to develop projects and grant applications; assist in identifying match funding; engage stakeholders to better understand and explain regional broadband needs and solutions; publicize wireline testing volunteer requests, and collect and analyze wireline testing data. SJVRBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

SJVRBC requests a total project budget of \$600,000 for three years. Of its total budget, SJVRBC allocates approximately 23% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 45% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 18% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 14% to grant administration. SJVRBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

### **M. Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC)**

#### *Applicant*

SBBC represents San Diego and Imperial counties. SBBC received approval for two Consortia Account grants: \$450,000 in April 2016 (Resolution T-17561) and \$450,000 in October 2020 (Resolution T-17708). Funding granted for SBBC in Resolution T-17708, concluded on December 31, 2022.

#### *Past CASF Project Performance*

SBBC's past accomplishments included: establishing an executive board from local economic sectors to create common specifications, policies, and practices that encourage and facilitate broadband deployment in its region; surveying communities to identify deployment and adoption needs and identifying geographic regions where broadband is unavailable and needs exist; working with community stakeholders and ISPs resulting in a needs assessment and product availability to fill gaps; identifying

communities where broadband is available but adoption is low, and working directly with community partners to expand adoption; continuing partnerships with regional stakeholders to expand broadband adoption programs; and publishing the plan to expand awareness of needs and recommended solutions to ISPs, policymakers, and regional stakeholders.

#### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

SBBC's representation includes non-profit organizations, local government agencies, local business owners, and financial institutions. SBBC received fourteen endorsement letters from local governments, chambers of commerce, non-profit organizations, an Assembly member, and a Federally recognized Native American tribe.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

SBBC's members have experience with broadband deployment, adoption efforts, and economic development plans. SBBC's members have been involved in projects to seek connectivity solutions for schools with geographic, technological, and fiscal constraints. In addition, SBBC's members have implemented a demonstration program to provide internet access to long distance fixed routes, leading strategic partnerships, and business development efforts. As government officials, emergency service workers, educators, etc., they have direct experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

#### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

SBBC's goal is to support broadband deployment to prioritize underserved areas. To achieve this goal SBBC will continue to collect and update information regarding broadband infrastructure, assets and availability, demographics, economic and broadband market statistics, and other data relevant to broadband infrastructure and access development. SBBC will identify unserved and underserved areas of Imperial and San Diego counties, and identify potential ISPs interested in expanding access to broadband to these areas. SBBC will also work with ISPs and community/business stakeholders to better understand current digital divide issues and work collaboratively with these parties to increase deployment to then elicit support from local governments and governmental agencies throughout the region to establish and implement policies to promote broadband deployment. SBBC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

SBBC requests a total project budget of \$600,000 for three years. Of its total budget, SBBC allocates approximately 16.7% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop

strategies (Objective 1), 51% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 17% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 15% to grant administration. SBBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

## **N. Tahoe Basin Project (TBP)**

### *Applicant*

TBP represents the Tahoe Basin area in El Dorado and Placer counties. TBP previously received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$167,000 in May 2014 (Resolution T-17440), \$200,000 in August 2016, (Resolution T-17529), and \$237,555 in April 2021 (Resolution T-17726). Funding granted for TBP in Resolution T-17726, concluded on December 31, 2022.

### *Past CASF Project Performance*

TBP's past accomplishments include coordinating with a broadband consultant and Kingswood Estates to conduct a neighborhood wide speed test, and devise alternative funding mechanisms to deploy broadband infrastructure; developing a funding mechanism based on Charter Communications cost estimate; developing working relationships with regional stakeholders, incumbent and independent broadband service providers, the local jurisdictions, public agencies, anchor institutions, and key businesses; and developing relationships with local Homeowners Associations and community leaders in identified neighborhoods and facilitated dialogue with local ISPs. TBP continues to strengthen and expand inadequate middle mile infrastructure in its region.

### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

TBP's representation includes key stakeholders (i.e., "Partnership" work group leads) from various public and private sectors, committed to furthering regional deployment, accessibility, and adoption of broadband services in the Tahoe Basin. TBP received eighteen endorsements from ISPs, government, telecommunications providers, transportation districts and local educational agencies and institutions of higher education, and health care organizations.

### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

TBP's members have direct experience with broadband deployment and adoption efforts. Its members have successfully worked with culturally and linguistically diverse communities; building regional, multi-party collaborative efforts; and had prior success in achieving broadband deployment and access. TBP's members have also been involved with past submitted CASF Infrastructure applications.



*Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

TBP proposes to continue promoting broadband deployment in unserved and underserved communities and strengthen and expand the inadequate middle mile infrastructure through an open access fiber ring around the Basin. TBP's activities are designed to promote regionally appropriate and cost-effective broadband deployment as a foundation for economic prosperity and safe, sustainable, healthy communities Basin-wide. Specifically, the TBP is focused on the following goals: that residents have equitable access to high-speed, affordable internet service; an increased broadband access for the Health and Human Services sectors to strengthen their work in Tahoe's rural environment through coordinated, connected, cost-effective services for patients, including newly expanded tele-health capabilities; and maintaining reliable high-speed internet access for educational institutions. TBP's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

*Budget*

TBP requests a total project budget of \$600,000 for three years. Of its total budget, TBP allocates approximately 41% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 43% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 11% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 5% to grant administration. SBBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

**O. Upstate California Connect Consortium (UCCC)**

*Applicant*

UCCC represents Glenn, Colusa, and Lake counties. UCCC received approval for three Consortia Account grants: \$448,184 in December 2011 (Resolution T-17349), \$274,680 in January 2017 (Resolution T-17550), and \$318,530 in October 2019 (Resolution T-17669). Funding granted for UCCC in Resolution T-17669, concluded on December 31, 2022.

*Past CASF Project Performance*

UCCC's past accomplishments include: developing a conceptual design for a broadband infrastructure plan, assessing the existing infrastructure capabilities in the region, developing online mapping applications to communicate the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund program and additional resources to drive higher participation, updating the status of access in each of the three counties and assessing the status of training and adoption programs available across the three counties, working with local partners to validate reported broadband coverage and speeds using CPUC tools, and

collaborating with the other regional Consortia to make sure its conceptual design fits into an overall Northern California Broadband Plan.

#### *Regional Consortium Representation and Endorsements*

UCCC representation includes local city and county government, the CSU, Chico Research Foundation, non-government organizations, businesses, anchor institutions, and ISPs. UCCC received a total of seven endorsements from non-profit organizations, city and county government entities, and ISPs.

#### *Regional Consortium Members' Experience*

UCCC's members have experience with community groups and have had past success in helping to achieve broadband deployment in the region. They have experience in assisting CASF-funded infrastructure projects, GIS analysis, economic and community development, and stewardship. They have also had success in building regional collaborative broadband-related efforts. Members have direct experience with managing broadband services at worksites. Members have worked with a culturally and linguistically diverse community.

#### *Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan*

UCCC's objective is to support the CASF Program achieve 98% broadband service availability in each of its regions. In order to do so, UCCC will concentrate efforts on facilitating the deployment of broadband services by assisting CASF infrastructure grant applicants in the project development or grant application process. The Consortia's scope of work will include collaborating with the Commission to engage with ISPs and stakeholders, identify potential CASF infrastructure projects, assist infrastructure applicants, support project permitting activities, and assist the Commission in publicizing requests for wireline testing volunteers. UCCC's Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan are directly related to SB 156 and AB 164 goals and objectives, and consistent with program requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

#### *Budget*

UCCC requests a total project budget of \$999,970 for five years.<sup>16</sup> Of its total budget, UCCC allocates approximately 16% to conduct marketing/outreach and develop strategies (Objective 1), 75% to assist in developing CASF infrastructure applications (Objectives 2, 3, and 4), 5% to assist in publicizing wireline testing requests (Objective 5), and 4% to grant administration. SBBC's budget is cost-effective and consistent with budget requirements defined in D.22-05-029.

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<sup>16</sup> The requested number of funding years is at the historical average level and within the range of funding years awarded in the past for the Consortia Account.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING**

Staff has determined that the fifteen applications qualify for funding. These applications scored at least 70 of 100 points with clear and detailed proposals and meets the minimum criteria established in D.22-05-029. Therefore, staff recommends approval for these fifteen proposals.

## **VII. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Grantees are required to comply with all the guidelines, requirements, and conditions associated with the CASF Consortia grant funding as specified in D.22-05-029 and this Resolution. Such compliance includes, but is not limited to, the following:

### **A. Execution and Performance**

The expected start date is February 1, 2023. By receiving a CASF grant from the Commission, grantees agree to comply with the terms, conditions, and requirements of the grant as set forth in this Resolution, and thus submit to the jurisdiction of the Commission with regard to disbursement and administration of the grant.

Grantees may not assign the project in whole or in part except as expressly provided by the Commission's approval.

If the grantees fail to commence work at the agreed upon time, the Commission may terminate the award upon ten business days written notice to the Consortia grantee. The Commission may also impose penalties.

Should the grantees fail to complete the project in accordance with the terms of the Commission's approval as set forth in this Resolution, grantees must reimburse some or all of the CASF funding it has received

If the grantees fail to perform in good faith, or in accordance with the expectations set forth in its Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan, as affirmed in the affidavit, the Commission may withhold subsequent grant disbursement, suspend, reduce or terminate the Consortium grant, as warranted.

Any changes to the substantive terms and conditions underlying the Commission approval of the Consortium grant (e.g., changes to Work Plan, budget or designated Fiscal Agent, etc.) must be communicated in writing to the CD Director at least 30 days

before the anticipated change and may be subject to approval by either the CD Director or by Commission resolution before becoming effective.

B. Public Workshop Requirement

Public Utilities Code section 281 directs the Commission to consult with regional Consortia, stakeholders, local governments, existing facility-based broadband providers, and consumers regarding unserved areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve the broadband access goal, through public workshops at least annually no later than April 30 of each year.<sup>17</sup> All Consortia receiving CASF grants are required to attend at least one of the annual public workshop to be conducted by staff, and allocates up to \$10,000 per consortium for each public workshop attendance.<sup>18</sup>

C. Fiscal Agent

D.22-05-029 requires:

Each regional Consortium must retain at least one Fiscal Agent with lead responsibility and legal authority to represent the Consortium for purposes of sponsoring the application, administering fiscal activities between the Consortium and the Commission, receiving and dispersing Consortium grant funds, and ensuring Consortium compliance with the grant. The Fiscal Agent must affirmatively agree on behalf of the Consortium, to comply with the Commission's directives and conditions relating to the review, approval, and administration of any Consortia application grants. The Fiscal Agent must provide assurance that Consortium members or contractors retained by the Consortium are capable and committed to fulfilling the commitments.<sup>19</sup>

Staff reviewed applications submitted by these applicants and determined that these applications meet this requirement.

Each Fiscal Agent shall comply with all rules and requirements set forth in D.22-05-029, including, but not limited to, ensuring implementation of the approved Work Plan within the allocated budget (in conjunction with the consortium program manager), and shall be responsible for notifying CD staff of any proposed changes to Work Plan

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<sup>17</sup> Public Utilities Code, § 281(f)(2).

<sup>18</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 7. The Fiscal Agent must submit a letter stating its commitment to act as a Fiscal Agent for the Consortium.

and Performance Metrics Plan, budget, or designated Fiscal Agent during the course of the grant cycle.

D. Distinguishing CASF from other Financial Resources

D.22-05-029 requires that the consortium take steps to ensure that the CASF grant budget does not duplicate funding from other non-Consortia Account funding.<sup>20</sup>

Grantees must ensure that only CASF-approved activities will be billed to the Consortia Account, and activities obligated to other funding resources will not be billed to the CASF Consortia Account.

Prior to the initiation of Work Plan activities, the Fiscal Agents for each grantee must communicate to staff how they will ensure that billing to discrete funding sources does not overlap.

E. Annual Audit

Public Utilities Code section 281, subsection (g)(2) requires each consortium to conduct an annual audit of its expenditures for grant programs funded and submit to the Commission an annual report. Grantees are required to submit annual reports to the Commission that includes: a description of activities completed during the prior year, how each activity promotes the deployment of broadband services, and the cost associated with each activity; and the number of project applications assisted.

F. Reporting

Grantees are required to submit bi-annual progress reports. Any progress payment requests shall be submitted along with bi-annual reports. The bi-annual progress report is required every six months. These reports must be submitted by no later than three months after every six months for the grant period. In these reports, recipients will report on the status of bi-annual milestones per the Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan, as well as request payment for relevant expenses to date.<sup>21</sup>

A start-up period report is required if the grantee requests an initial start-up cost payment and must be submitted no later than three months after the completion of the

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<sup>20</sup> Any proposed consortium budget must expressly exclude any costs for activities or programs within the Consortia region that are separately funded from any other sources in order to ensure that California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) grants do not duplicate funding from any other sources (D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 7).

<sup>21</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p 11.

start-up activities. In this report, recipients will report on the completion of start-up activities per the Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan, as well as milestones met. Grantees must submit a completion report at the end of the grant cycle no later than three months after completion of the project.

#### G. Payments

D.22-05-029 requires that submission of invoices from and payments to the grantees shall be made at bi-annual intervals.

The disbursement of funds at any time is subject to Commission discretion, including a review-and-approval process of each grantee through regular site visits, progress reports on a bi-annual basis, and supporting invoices and receipts. All requests for progress payments and reimbursements must be supported by documentation, e.g., receipts, invoices, quotes, etc.

The Consortia grantee may request reimbursement of start-up costs equivalent to a maximum of 25% of the total award. Such payment requests must be supported by documentation, e.g., receipts, invoices, quotes, etc. Start-up costs include administrative expenses, e.g., rental of building, hiring of personnel, purchase of office supplies, etc. Subsequent disbursements are on a bi-annual progress report review basis. In order to receive a progress payment, the Consortium must first submit the Progress Report to the Communications Division, together with all requests for payment and reimbursement supported by relevant invoices receipts, etc.

Furthermore, documentation should substantiate each grantees progress in following their proposed Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan, with the approved budget. Billing should only be for activities related to facilitating the deployment of broadband services by assisting infrastructure applicants in the project development or grant application process.

All activities specified under the terms of the award shall be completed on or before the termination date of the award.<sup>22</sup> A project completion report is required prior to full payment showing that all activities on the approved Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan have been accomplished. Each grantee's final payment report, including all documentation and receipts, should be submitted no later than three months after project completion.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 13.

No payments will be made for any payment requests received three months after relevant reports are due (i.e., bi-annual progress reports and/or completion reports.)

#### H. Oversight of Consortia Activities

Staff has the authority to initiate and any necessary audit, verification, and discovery of consortium members relating to grant funding activities to ensure that the CASF fund is spent in accordance with the Commission adopted rules and standards.<sup>24</sup>

Grantee invoices and other relevant records will be subject to a financial audit by the Commission or its designee at any time within five years after each Consortium incurred the expense being audited.

Grantees must notify the Communications Division as soon as they become aware that they may not be able to meet performance metrics set forth in the Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan.

#### I. Lobbying and Advocacy Efforts

Grantees are free to advocate on any legislation of their choosing. However, no work on proposed legislation including meetings, travel, or lobbying may be billed to or reimbursed by the CASF Consortia grant program.

### IX. COMMENTS

In compliance with Public Utilities Code, § 311(g)(1), a Notice of Availability was e-mailed on December 9, 2022, informing all parties on the CASF Distribution List of the availability of the draft of this Resolution for public comments at the Commission's website at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/>. This letter also served to inform parties that the final conformed Resolution the Commission adopts will be posted and available on this same website. The Commission received no public comments.

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<sup>24</sup> D.22-05-029, Appendix 3, p. 12; see also Public Utilities Code, § 270.

## **IX. FINDINGS**

1. In July 2021, Governor Newsom signed legislation SB 156 and AB 164 that affected program administration of the CASF through the creation of new CASF subaccounts and through increase or extension of total program funding.
2. Fifteen prospective applicants submitted applications by the July 15, 2022, deadline. Staff posted each applicant's name, contact information, and coverage area by county on the Commission Consortia Account webpage on July 25, 2022.
3. Staff reviewed each application according to the guidelines, requirements, and evaluation criteria adopted in D.22-05-029, which include regional consortium representation and endorsements, regional consortium members' experience, Work Plan and Performance Metrics Plan, and budget. Staff also evaluated the applications based on the merits of each proposal, including achievements, fiscal responsibility, and cost-effectiveness.
4. Based on the review, staff determined that each grantee's proposal meet eligibility requirements. Staff further determined that these proposed projects qualify for funding under D.22-05-029 and recommends approval.
5. Staff recommends CASF Consortia grant approval of total funding of \$10,333,173 for the fifteen Consortia.
6. Grantees are required to comply with all guidelines, requirements, and conditions associated with the granting of CASF funds as specified in D.22-05-029 and this Resolution, including, but not limited to, only billing for activities related to the activities in approved Work Plans.
7. Grantees are required to expressly exclude any costs for activities or programs from the proposed consortium budget that are separately funded from any other sources in order to ensure that CASF grants do not duplicate funding from any other sources.
8. D.22-05-029 directs CD to consult with regional Consortia, stakeholders, local governments, existing facility-based broadband providers, and consumers regarding priority areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve the broadband access goal, through public workshops conducted at least annually no later than April 30 of each



year, and authorizes \$2,000 per person for up to five delegates annually for each approved consortium.

9. A notice was emailed on December 9, 2022, informing the parties on the CASF Distribution List of the availability of the draft of this Resolution for public comments at the Commission's website <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/documents/>. This letter also informed parties that the final conformed Resolution adopted by the Commission will be posted and available on this same website. The Commission received no public comments.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

1. The Commission shall award \$600,000 to the Broadband Consortium of Pacific Coast (BCPC), \$1,000,000 to the Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC), \$800,000 to the Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium (CCABC), \$595,650 to the Central Sierra Economic Development District/Broadband Utility (CSBUZ), \$565,582 to the Gold Country Broadband Consortium (GCBC), \$600,000 to the Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium (IERBC), \$600,000 to the Inyo-Mono Broadband Consortium (IMBC), \$600,000 to the Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League Consortium (LA-DEAL), \$600,000 to the North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC), \$999,971 to the Northeastern California Connect Consortium (NCCC), \$572,000 to the Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCCBC), \$600,000 to the San Joaquin Valley Regional Broadband Consortium (SJVRBC), \$600,000 to the Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC), \$600,000 to the Tahoe Basin Project (TBP), and \$999,970 to the Upstate California Connect Consortium (UCCC). All awards are based on the description of the project as described herein. The Work Plan is available at the Commission's website.
2. Payments to the CASF grantees shall be in accordance with guidelines adopted in D.22-05-029 and in accordance with the process defined in the "Payments" section of this Resolution.
3. Each grantee must retain at least one Fiscal Agent with lead responsibility and legal authority to represent the Consortium for purposes of sponsoring the application and administration of Consortium activities, including receipt and disbursement of Consortium grant funds.

4. Each Fiscal Agent must affirmatively agree, on behalf of the grantee, to comply with the Commission's directives and conditions relating to the review, approval, and administration of any Consortia application grants.
5. Prior to commencement of each grantees' projects, Consortium's Fiscal Agent must provide CD staff with the method chosen to distinguish funding sources and billing practices, to ensure that CASF payments are not duplicated by other sources, and that only CASF-approved activities are billed to the Consortia Account.
6. The disbursement of funds shall be subject to the requirements set forth in D.22-05-029 including the submission of bi-annual progress reports and supporting documentation for payment reimbursement, yearly status reports for informing the legislature and a Completion Report to be submitted before the final payment reimbursement will be made.
7. By receiving a CASF grant from the Commission, grantees agree to comply with the terms, conditions, and requirements of the grant and thus submit to the jurisdiction of the Commission with regard to disbursement and administration of the grant.
8. Grantees shall complete activities in accordance with and within the performance period set forth in the Commission-approved Work Plans.
9. Grantees must use the grant funding solely for the approved projects/activities as described in the Consortia Commission-approved Work Plan and Budget Plan, (or approved revisions to such Plans and budgets).
10. Each Consortia grantee shall make records available to the Commission upon request and shall agree that these records are subject to a financial audit by the Commission at any time within five years after the grantee incurred the expense being audited. A Consortia grantee shall provide access to the Commission upon 24-hour notice to evaluate work completed or being performed pursuant to the grant.
11. Grantees shall comply with all guidelines, requirements, and conditions associated with the CASF grant award as specified in D.22-05-029 and this Resolution.
12. The Commission may withhold, reduce, or terminate grant payments to grantees if the consortium does not comply with any of the requirements set forth in D.22-05-029 and this Resolution.

13. In the event that grantees fail to complete the project/activities in accordance with the terms of approval granted by the Commission and this Resolution, the consortium, represented by the Fiscal Agent, will be required to reimburse some or all of the CASF fund that it has received.
14. The commencement of the grant will be February 1, 2023.
15. Any changes to the substantive terms and conditions underlying Commission approval of the grant (e.g., changes to Work Plan, budget or designated Fiscal Agent, etc.) must be communicated in writing to CD Director at least 30 days before the anticipated change, and may be subject to approval by either the CD Director or by Commission resolution before becoming effective.
16. Grantees must each complete and execute the consent form (to be sent to the grantee after this Resolution is adopted) agreeing to the conditions set forth in this Resolution and email it to [CASF Consortia Grant Administrator@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:CASF_Consortia_Grant_Administrator@cpuc.ca.gov) within 30 calendar days from the date of the adoption of this Resolution. Failure to submit the consent form within 30 calendar days from the adoption date of this Resolution will deem the grant null and void.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on January 12, 2023. The following Commissioners approved it:

/s/ RACHEL PETERSON

Rachel Peterson  
Executive Director

ALICE REYNOLDS  
President  
GENEVIEVE SHIROMA  
DARCIE L. HOUCK  
JOHN REYNOLDS  
Commissioners