



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0208, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Economic Development Board
Staff Name and Phone Number: Ethan Brown (707) 565-7589
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Economic Development Board Broadband Analyst

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Resolution amending the Department Allocation list of the Economic Development Board, effective April 5, 2022

Executive Summary:

As part of its ongoing programming intended to strengthen broadband access countywide, and efforts to develop options for the Board of Supervisors to consider to bridge the digital divide through enhanced access to broadband infrastructure, the Economic Development department seeks to convert an existing 1.0 FTE, time-limited Department Analyst position, currently scheduled to expire on June 30, 2022, to a 1.0 FTE full-time permanent position.

This position is currently funded in part through the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) through a grant from the United States Economic Development Administration, which requires a portion of the work be devoted to management of the SMEDD. To devote full-time resources to Broadband initiatives immediately, the Department proposes to cover the remaining fiscal year 2021-22 costs with salary savings and cover ongoing costs by shifting a portion of funds allocated during the annual budget process from services and supplies to salaries and benefits.

Discussion:

For roughly ten years, the Economic Development department has pursued initiatives to create and support digital access in areas of the county considered unserved and/or under-served. This has resulted in the creation of Access Sonoma Broadband, and a regional consortium of public and private broadband champions.

During the 2019-20 fiscal year budget hearings, the Board of Supervisors approved the creation of a 1.0 FTE Time-Limited Department Analyst, partially financed by the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District, with federal grant funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). Since that time, the department has created the Access Sonoma Broadband Action Plan (accepted by the Board on June 8, 2021). The Department is midway through the process of developing options and a recommendation for the Board of Supervisors to consider governance structures and financial models for broadband infrastructure development.

Due to the importance of this generational project, as well as the potential economic and social benefits related to broader reach of digital access, department staff are recommending this action to maintain this needed staff position.

Strategic Plan:

This request directly supports the Resilient Infrastructure pillar, Goal 4, Objectives 1 and 2 of the County's Strategic Plan.

This investment provides dedicated staff resources in the form of a position responsible for creating/executing plans, researching grant opportunities, engaging stakeholders, and helping to support state and federal broadband policies in coordination with the County Administrator's Office.

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Resilient Infrastructure

Goal: Goal 4: Implement countywide technological solutions to promote resiliency and expand community access.

Objective: Objective 1: Leverage funding and seek grants to expand communications infrastructure within the community to improve equitable access to broadband, wireless, and cell phone services.

Prior Board Actions:

6/8/2021 - Accept Access Sonoma Broadband Action Plan and direct staff to evaluate options for the Board of Supervisors to consider to enhance access to broadband

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		\$156,000	\$160,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures		\$156,000	\$160,000
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other		\$156,000	\$160,000
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources		\$156,000	\$160,000

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The 3-year time-limited Broadband Analyst position was partially funded with approximately \$45,000 from the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District through a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. To redirect work full time to the broadband project, the department proposes using salary

savings in FY 21-22. For ongoing costs, the department recommends utilizing funds from its Fiscal Year 2022-23 recommended budget to cover the ongoing costs of the Broadband Analyst position. No additional funding is being requested for this position

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Department Analyst (On-going)	\$6,084 - \$7,397	1.0	
Department Analyst - Time-Limited	\$6,084 - \$7,397		(1.0)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

This position will replace a time-limited position that expires on June 30, 2022, to continue the support of the Access Sonoma Broadband Action Plan.

Attachments:

1. Resolution amending Department Allocation List

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None.