

Advanced Communications Testing and Mapping Initiative

Bringing fiber-optic connectivity to Pomona

Fiber-Up My Neighborhood – Pomona

Updated: 10/20/2021

Summary:

The Advanced Communications Testing and Mapping Initiative will provide a system that works to accurately populate statewide broadband maps that serve to justify fiber deployment needs in Pomona CA. Training and job creation functions will serve to build a pool of advanced communications workers who will help collect data, synthesize, plan and build-out fiber in Pomona's disadvantaged communities.

Background:

There are a series of initiatives that commit large sums of money for fiber build-out: [SB-156](#), [Governor Newsom's middle mile initiative](#) and the [Biden's Administration's infrastructure package](#) – representing unprecedented funding in the billions of dollars. All this in the name of closing the digital divide once and for all.

In an effort to show sufficient capacity and need in the disadvantaged communities of Pomona, CA, it is necessary to have accurate data and a plan. Through the leadership of Larry Ortega, a team of dedicated leaders convened to further the vision of fiber optic build-out in Pomona.

On October 1, 2021 a cohort of leaders convened to discuss a project that would capitalize on the billions of dollars (currently in play or soon to be in play) designated to bring high speed, fiber-optic wiring to a proposed target region in Pomona. See Exhibit A below for the target region map. Here are those leaders:

- Stan Santos, CWA (Communication Workers of America)
- Ernie Pacheco, CWA
- Laura Santos, Mt. SAC Trustee
- Robert Lazo, Consultant
- Tami Pearson, Mt. SAC Dean Continuing Education
- Larry Ortega, President, Community Union, Inc.
- Jose Perez, Assistant Director, WDACS L.A. County

The Problem:

California is in the midst of a digital divide crisis. Millions of Californians cannot connect to a multitude of on-line resources that have the potential of improving quality of life for everyone. From online training courses to tele-health and telemedicine, millions of Californians are without basic access to these rich resources. This picture was made clear when the pandemic struck last year and forced millions of children to the sidelines of learning as they were unable to connect just to attend school.

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The reason: a mix of corporate greed, captured regulatory agencies, and elected officials (assembly/senate) who simply lack the knowledge and understanding of what is needed to close the digital divide. Proposals from both the senate and the assembly have made their way to the Governor's desk. Some the Governor has signed and some the Governor vetoed.

However, these proposals are incomplete – as they miss a very important first step relating to the deployment of a world class telecommunication infrastructure – fiber optics to the home. We need to know what is in the ground now? Where is the fiber now? How fast is service? Who are the providers?

It is shocking and almost unbelievable that such a critical first step has been missed, but as previously stated there are a convoluted set of interests that has landed us here. For this reason, commonsense leadership must prevail if we are truly to address this digital divide crisis.

Solution:

Phase I: Initiate prototype pilot program: Train the Trainer program with Stan on date TBD. In collaboration with Mt. SAC Continuing Education, Pomona based NPO (non-profit organization) and parent groups from Pomona, launch Testing and Mapping training at site in Pomona for cohort of 6 parents and 6 community college students. These parents/college students will be trained to administer the survey to collect critical data on speed and provider access: # of devices, types of devices, service provider, speed, connection type; and run speed tests updating broadband maps in CA with accurate data.

Phase II: Work to introduce Testing and Mapping curriculum into Mt. SAC existing programming. Deliver training courses for Mt. SAC students. Deploy these trained students into the neighborhoods of Pomona to commence the Testing and Mapping portion of Initiative. Produce comprehensive Mapping report of speeds and access.

Job Titles:

IT – Telecommunication Engineer

Social Worker/Teacher/Trainer

Engineer/Technician

Phase III: Commence proposal writing to funding agencies: Workforce Development, CPUC_CASF, Governor's Broadband Initiative, and Biden's Infrastructure Plan. Auto-CAD opportunities for student interns relating to drawings needed for the proposal. This Phase will deal specifically with drawing the plans for the fiber network so as to secure funding needed to complete the deployment of fiber project in Pomona.

Phase IV: Commence Fiber deployment in target region. This Phase represents the actual stringing of fiber optics over existing wires to the poles, poles to home, infrastructure.

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Phase V: Competitive bid process: who's going to be Pomona's provider (Frontier, muni-broadband post-fiber deployment) of Internet Services? Setup checks and balances, citizens oversight committee to ensure quality of services and fair pricing.

Goals:

Execute Advanced Communications Testing and Mapping pilot program in Pomona in preparation for full-scale implementation.

- **Collect granular service availability data from wired, fixed wireless, and satellite broadband providers with assurances that it is accurate.**
- **Consider coverage data from consumers, local/tribal governments, and other entities which might challenge existing government data maps and create a process for speedy resolution.**
- **Strengthen enforcement against providers that knowingly or recklessly submit materially inaccurate broadband data.**
- **Establish a crowdsourcing process for data collection that will allow for public participation:**
 - **That will require partnerships with local governments, community-based organizations, and technology experts to add a crowdsourcing process to support the existing testing program.**
 - **These trusted advocates in disadvantaged communities, should use all proven methodologies for real time speed and reliability tests.**
 - **The data can be merged with the California Interactive Broadband Map and any other databases that can increase the accuracy and granularity of the analysis.**
- **Pomona in the region of where TCC (Pomona ACTS) grant has been identified to serve, see map for TCC grant, below. *Fiber-Up My Neighborhood* is proposed to effect same target region and the plan is to receive 100% fiber optic connectivity - a service which may be owned and operated by the City of Pomona, under contracting with outside agency specializing in managing muni-broadband networks. The term muni-broadband means the City of Pomona will own and operate the network and will compete directly with other Internet service providers.**

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EXHIBIT A

Target region to be tested and mapped for the purposes of identifying most expedient deployment of fiber-optic connectivity

