Middle-Mile Advisory Committee Meeting
October 20, 2023
Minutes and Transcript

The Middle-Mile Advisory Committee met on Friday, October, 2023, at 10:00am PST via virtual conference and in-person.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

CIO & Directorate Bailey-Crimmins welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Directorate Bailey-Crimmins welcomed and thanked all MMAC members, designees, presenters and attendees.

A quorum for the meeting was established.

Member		Designee	Present	Absent
California Department of Technology	Director Bailey-Crimmins		X	
California Public Utilities Commission	President Reynolds	Designees was Commissioner Darcie Houck	X	
Department of Finance	Chief Deputy Director Miller		X	
Government Operations Agency	Secretary Tong		X	
Department of Transportation	Director Tavares	Designees was Chief Deputy Director Keever	X	
State Senate	Senator Gonzalez	(Ex-Officio Member)		X
State Senate	Senator McGuire	(Ex-Officio Member)		X
State Assembly	Assembly Member Tasha Boerner	(Ex-Officio Member)	X	
State Assembly	Assembly Member Wood	(Ex-Officio Member)		X
County of Monterey, District 1	Supervisor Alejo	Local Government Representatives	X	

County of Del Norte, District 2	Valerie Starkey	Local Government Representatives	X	

Agenda Item 2: Executive Report Out

Mark Monroe provided the executive report out, focusing on closing the digital divide within the 10,000 miles of network. Thus far, MMBI's engagement strategy has made over 50,000 touchpoints. The first round of the RFI[2] yielded many opportunities and the second round will soon to be released. CPUC is reviewing all last mile applications with proposed connections to all middle mile segments.

Agenda Item 3: Project Updates

- **Mark Monroe** provided the California Department of Technology's (CDT's) update on the collaboration of the 10,000 miles:
  - 83% of the miles are currently under contract via IRU/lease (47%), construction (35%), joint build (14%) or purchase (5%).
  - A public service video was shared: MMBI Leasing IRU/ Information
  - Updated project timeline was shared.
    - Highlights: Construction beginning this year and network activation beginning in 2025
  - Solutions for communities are ahead of schedule by utilizing an equitable approach for unserved and underserved communities.
  - Joint build partnerships have also been made with the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe
- **Janice Benton** provided a California Department of Transportation update focused on project delivery:
  - Preconstruction progress (environmental, permitting and design)
    - 36% completed tasks and 64% tasks in progress
  - Construction progress – anticipated to start on 450 miles of the MMBN within the next 6 months
    - 225 miles in Region 1; 85 miles in Region 2; 30 miles in Region 3; 75 miles in Region 4; 55 miles in Region 5
  - Project momentum: see construction ready areas in State Route 190 in Inyo County; State Route 20 in Mendocino County; and State Route 67 in San Diego County
- **Erik Hungsinger** is the new President & COO of GoldenStateNet. He provided the Third-Party Administrator update focusing the dark fiber IRU. A diagram showed and example of the connections of the huts via the vaults to the last mile network.
- **Michael Minkus** provided a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) update focused on:
  - Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) - timeline
  - Broadband Investment Last Mile Initiative (snapshot)
  - Federal Funding Account (FFA) applications4
    - $2 Billion for last mile infrastructure projects to deliver broadband to unserved communities

- Loan Loss Reserve Program
  - Proposed decision issued
- CA Advanced Services Fund (CASF) Grants
  - Adoption, Infrastructure, Public Housing & Low-income Communities

- **Mark Monroe** reiterated the eagerness for public engagement and partnerships. The newsletter QR code was shared to receive MMBI updates. The 2024 dates for MMAC were shared:
  - January 19, 2024
  - April 19, 2024
  - July 19, 2024
  - October 18, 2024
- Scott Adams gave quick update on Broadband for All engagement.

Agenda Item 4: Public Comment

Public comments were made by:

- Tim Holden, Sierra Nevada Networks
- Ben Hulet, Sierra Nevada Networks
- Georgia Savage, Oakland Undivided
- Patrick Messac, Oakland Undivided
- Larry Ortega
- Michael Kaplan
- Sarah McCormick, City of Fort Bragg
- Rinaldo Brutoco
- Maddie Ribble
- FSCMC
- Hector Delatore (Gateway Cities)
- Shawn Trento
- Bill Schweitzer
- Carl
- Lindsey Skolnik
- Shayna Englin
- Ray Lopez-Chang
- Lance Wier
- Jorge Rivera
- Josh Butler
- Arturo Juarez
- Erika Cervantes
- Kareem Weaver
- Priscilla Nichols

Members Final Comments

Chief Deputy Director Keever: Expressed appreciation for the public comments and input in order to move this project forward.

Commissioner Houck: Appreciate the comments, time and attention from the public in addressing their concerns. CPUC are open to working with applicants and any questions or concerns they have.

Secretary Tong: The public comments were a true reflection of how the community feels and we appreciate them. I will defer to the Chair on how we can make improvements and continue transparency of which the public is asking for. Now that the confidential negotiations have finished we may be able to share more updates. This applies also to the FFA grants; we know the CPUC is willing to work with applicants regarding the updated map and answering their questions. Perhaps the Committee could address in the future the frequency of the MMAC meetings based on public input. I encourage CDT to promote our openness via the newsletter.

Supervisor Alejo: I want to acknowledge all of the public comments. I encourage the public to share the maps that were shared during public comments with the Committee. Would like CDT staff to make sure to follow through on addressing concerns within minority communities in regards to the public comments. These comments help us amplify your concerns to the legislation.

Director Bailey-Crimmins: We appreciate the public comments and are always looking for ways to engage and will look into more ways to have open dialogue, transparency and communication in between MMAC meetings.

Closing Remarks

The MMBI email was shared (MiddleMile@state.ca.gov) Directorate Bailey-Crimmins thanked Committee members, staff, partners, and attendees and confirmed that the next MMAC meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 12:22pm PST.

Transcript

The Chair: All right, good morning and welcome. Well, we are calling the October 20th, 2023, Middle Mile Advisory Committee to order. The first order of business is roll call. Miss Alvarado.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you, Director Bailey Crimmins. Housekeeping rules attendees, please note there is time allocated at the end of the meeting for public comments either in person, via Zoom, phone, or email. Presenters, please cue Sam to advance your slides. Committee members, please raise your hands to speak and ex officio's, please use the raise your hand feature on zoom to cue Director Bailey Crimmins to call you to speak. Now, committee member roll call. State CIO and Director Bailey Crimmins.

The Chair: Here.

Alicia Alvarado: President Reynolds

Darcie Houck: Commissioner Hauck, here on behalf of President Reynolds today.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Chief Deputy Director Miller. Director Tavares.

Michael Keever: Michael Keever, Chief Deputy Director for Director Tavares Caltrans.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Secretary Tong.

Amy Tong: Here.

Alicia Alvarado: Senator Gonzalez. Senator McGuire. Assemblymember Boerner. Assembly member Wood. Supervisor Alejo.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Present on Zoom thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Supervisor Starkey.

Supervisor Valerie Starkey: Hello! Present on Zoom.

Alicia Alvarado: Director Bailey Crimmins, I turn it back over to you.

The Chair: Thank you. Well, first of all, I want to thank everyone for attending today's Middle Mile Advisory Committee. I also want to really
put a special thanks and appreciation to the stakeholders' feedback that we've received since the July Middle Mile Advisory Committee. Today, you're going to hear from the Department of Technology, Caltrans, Golden State Net, and the California Public Utilities Commission on their progress towards the Governor and the Legislature's goal of broadband for all. We're also going to ensure that there is an invitation to the community and to the Telco's to continue partnering with us as we continue to build out the 10,000 mile network and to emphasize communications moving forward. Are there any committee members who would like to provide brief comments before we hear from each of the panel members? All right, I don't see any. So, at this time I'd like to have Mark Monroe provide an executive report out.

Mark Monroe: Yes sir, can you hear me? Yes. Good morning members. As you know, the MMBI continues to be a really important part of the Administration's broadband for all commitment. We continue to see a future where Californians have access to quality broadband services throughout the state. And to really level the playing field and just for everyone to no matter where they live, what they look like, and what their income is, to be able to have access. You may remember that we've talked a lot about the stakeholder outreach we've done in the past. Scott Adams has provided reports in the past where we have more than 50,000 touch points that we've used, and we're going to continue to use those touch points through the newsletters and such. We'll provide a little more information on that a little later today. But we're really committed to continuing that stakeholder outreach. One thing that has been made clear to us from our stakeholders though, is that we made a mistake in how we talked about the construction and development plans and left some communities thinking that the middle mile network in some areas was being put

on hold. And that's just not accurate. Today, I want to restate the goals of our broadband for all action plan for all Californians to have a high-performance broadband availability at home schools, libraries, and businesses to have access to affordable broadband and the devices necessary to access the Internet. And to have access to the training and support and to enable this digital inclusion. We also want to reaffirm what you've already heard that we are committed to working with stakeholders in a more transparent way across the MMBI and all feeder programs that are essential for truly achieving broadband for all across the state. With that I want to clarify that the phased approach that was discussed last time is no longer part of the plan. We're moving forward with the full network and the governor is committed to moving forward with the entire network. And so, Caltrans has always continued their preconstruction work, and they're continuing their preconstruction work and as any given segment is ready to move to construction, it will move to construction. So we want to make sure everybody understands that, and then to that end if people visit our website, you'll see that the map now reflects the full 10,000 miles and has a new layer that reflects the delivery types. You can see where we are leasing, where we're doing the joint builds, and where there are purchases. That helps everybody understand the various architecture that we were able to achieve using what we've called the RFI^2. The RFI^2 is something we'll talk a little more about today. We can go to the next slide here. It's a request for innovative ideas, that's the actual wording for it. And it looks at any other alternative to just stand-alone Caltrans construction. You know, there's I think members that have talked in the past about the value of using any existing infrastructure to help speed up delivery of service. And so, we'll be talking a little more but as we talked about last time, two-thirds of the network we've been able to generate using this important tool and because of that some stakeholders we've heard from have acknowledged that there's existing infrastructure that could again be utilized. And so, at that suggestion we're going to go out with another one of these solicitations, these requests for innovative ideas by the end of the month. And we really encourage anybody who feels like that there is an opportunity using existing infrastructure with existing providers to encourage participation in that RFI^2 solicitation. And then later today, the last thing I'll mention here is that the Public Utilities Commission will be providing an update on their responses to their FFA grant solicitation program. That really hinges largely upon the fact that there will be this middle mile network to connect to. So with that, that ends my executive report out.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Monroe. Do any committee members have comments that they'd like to make regarding the executive opening before we go to each of the program areas?

Alicia Alvarado: Assembly member Cortez. I'm going to ask to unmute.
Assembly member Cortez. Okay.

The Chair: Alejo, you mean?

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Yes, thank you, good morning. First of all, I want to just applaud the commitment by the governor to fully fund the full 10,000 miles in having phase two. We know that expenses as this project folded out were much greater than anticipated with the budget was originally allocated. So this is tremendous good news to report to our communities today. And that way all those communities that were in phase two don't feel like they were left out. I think that's important for local governments, local communities, to

apply that commitment by the governor. So Mark, just in terms of process for our residents locally, how do we expect that amount of funding or that commitment if you could just explain the process. The governor releases his proposed budget in January, there's a May revise, and then the Legislature approves his proposals in the budget in negotiations with the Legislature in June. So, if you could just maybe explain when will see that announcement Or those numbers next in terms of that additional commitment.

Mark Monroe: Yes, thank you. I spent 20 years in finance and that was a great summary of what finance and the administration will be doing over the next 6 months in terms of developing this. In terms of the remaining funding that will be something that has to go through that budget development process. We're continuing to target a December 2026 completion of the network. And so, as we move forward with preconstruction and Caltrans moves forward with preconstruction, and we finalize where we need to build then that's going to have to be developed as part of that budget. So, when the January 10 budget comes out that will identify as we anticipate what the costs are for the full network, and kind of how that's going to be built into subsequent budgets. That, as you noted, does need to go through the legislature before it makes it into final budget acts.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Great. And I think when the phase one and phase two maps were released that there were concerns from communities across California, from South LA to Oakland to some Central Valley communities. I think this is a reassurance from our state leaders that no, we're not going to delay project scenarios. We're going to move with all deliberate speed to ensure. We provide broadband for all at the earliest possible time. So for me that's leadership, and I want to really thank our governor and our legislative leaders who are committed. I look forward to being part of that process and supporting those efforts to make sure that we could fully fund the commitment that we made to the people of California. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Supervisor Alejo. Appreciate the question. Are there any other committee members that have questions? Supervisor Starkey.

Supervisor Valerie Starkey: I want to echo Supervisor Alejos comment. And say that I really do appreciate the reconsideration for us to have now one phase. My question might be a little off topic, but I think it's relative. Is that once the middle mile is down, who owns that and what's that infrastructure? How is the sustainability on keeping that in place? We're talking, funding so once that infrastructure is laid down, who is actually owning that infrastructure?

Mark Monroe: So broadly speaking the state will, the CDT will. When you look at any of the construction, any of the constructed segments we'll own those, for the joint bills, we will end up owning those and then for the least segments we have effectively 20 to 40 years of ownership on those. In some cases we have 120 years of ownership. So broadly speaking, the CDT will have ownership of the full network and be able to operate it.

Supervisor Valerie Starkey: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Supervisor Starkey. Oh, yes, Miss Miller, you have a comment that you'd like to make. Miss Gayle Miller from the Department of Finance.

Gayle Miller: Thank you so much.

Gayle Miller: Chair, and I just want to reiterate, thank you Supervisor Alejo and Supervisor Starkey. I think the only piece I just really like to emphasize is that the commitment has never changed it's been to the 10,000 miles. I do think that the important part here, as we all know, is just what Mr. Monroe was saying about partnerships. So, to the chair, what I think we'll look for a lot in the coming weeks and months is collaboration with local governments that CDT has been doing but you'll see much more active engagement from us and the Governor's office and others. And from the cable companies and the telecommunication companies when we've always talked about doing another RfI[2]. What we heard from communities is just this desire to be really involved in that. And the collaboration and the partnership are by far the most important components. The network is a state-owned network. It's not. It is a shared privilege for all of us, just like our streets and roads, and just super important that we work together to deliver this service. And so it will be just like every other piece of significant infrastructure we do in the State its not done by a single entity. It's done by all of us. So I just really want to thank CDT I know that this has been a lot over the last few months. I think you've shown remarkable leadership, and we are really grateful. And then just really, really appreciate the supervisors getting on being here on behalf of your communities and letting us know how we can collaborate. Obviously, this is a public meeting but what we do but going forward together is just so incredibly vital. And you being here today just proves what this partnership is and will continue to be. So, I really wanted to reiterate that, and I apologize I'm not there in person, but I would love to even have that opportunity to get to meet with both of you in person and talk together. Thank you again very much, Madam Chair really appreciate all you've done. And to Mr. Monroe, too.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Miller. Are there any other comments? Secretary Tong.

Amy Tong: In fact, actually just in the interest of moving I'll save my comment towards the end but I'll just flag it that after the presentation I'd like to see something too.
The Chair: Okay, thank you, Secretary. All right, we're going to go ahead and move to the next agenda item, which is the department of technologies project update Mr. Monroe again.

Mark Monroe: Yes, thank you. Thank you for Miss Miller's comments there, we're going to show a short video that we put together here really highlighting the partnerships that Ms. Miller is talking about and what we've been able to achieve with the leases. So, with that, I'm going to go ahead and ask the team to run the video.

MMAC Video Audio/Video: High speed Internet has become an essential part of our daily lives. However, many communities still find themselves underserved or completely without connectivity. In fact, nearly 5 million Californians are digitally unserved or underserved. California is leading the charge to build the largest statewide broadband network in the country, bringing high speed Internet to those who need it most. Considering California's vast geography and population, this monumental undertaking also carries a monumental price tag. That's why network designers are thinking outside the box to seize opportunities that expand coverage as far as possible, and as quickly as possible. One way we are doing that is, with a leasing option called indefeasible rights of use or IRUs. IRUs unlock long-term access to existing fiber optic infrastructure, IRUs grant the State exclusive rights to lease for 20 years with extension opportunities for additional years. By securing exclusive rights, we gain control over the network's capacity, reliability, and scalability. There are

many reasons why IRUs are a good option. IRUs provide us sole access to existing fiber optic infrastructure. This means we can tap into the fiber already in place accelerating the delivery of high-speed Internet access while avoiding disruptive construction and add new fiber as needed. That means we can optimize the existing infrastructure to meet the same high quality 288 fiber count specifications by using newly constructed fiber and numerous access faults tailoring the network to ensure reliability, accessibility, and high-performance connectivity. Construction is the most expensive part of a network, sometimes as much as twice the cost of leasing. IRUs can offer an affordable alternative for providing the same high quality 288 fiber count as new construction builds, delivering affordable and reliable connectivity to more communities that need it. IRUs enabled faster deployment of broadband services to underserved areas by leveraging existing infrastructure. We can bridge the digital divide more quickly and help ensure equitable access to high-speed Internet for all communities across the State. Every community deserves the opportunity to thrive in the digital age with the benefits and possibilities IRUs offer, we can build a resilient and inclusive broadband network that caters to the needs of our communities. Let's come together and unlock the power of IRUs, a tool that connects communities and empowers individuals. Let's unlock the power of leasing.

Mark Monroe: All right. Very good. Yes. So again, we're within the program within CDT we're very excited and how we've been able to use this RfI^2 process. And the partnerships that have been mentioned to solve already for two thirds of the network. We can move to the next slide here. We'll quickly run through again, this is you can kind of see the overall architecture of the 10,000 plus miles. That this is what we consist of what we presented last time. We're looking at more than 65% of the network being under contract. Just with these specific deals and if you go into the, if anybody, the public goes onto our website, you'll be able to see on the map layers that kind of show where we're where we have these IRUs leases, where we plan to do stand-alone construction, where the joint build agreements are, and where the purchase segments are. So really excited about that. And this mix again is, you know, it's a central theme, is that it provides faster delivery on a lot of cases, even in the joint builds, where we have partners that have been working towards construction for a number of years. So that helps us and still allows us to join them in jump starting some of that construction. But really, what we want to highlight with the leases is that we expect those to be able to start providing service in the latter half of 2025. So that's more than a year ahead of schedule for the rest of the network and just really want to stress the value of those. We can go to the next slide here. Just very briefly here. So at the end of August, you know, we mentioned the partnerships these joint build partnerships one of them was with the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Hoopa Valley Public Utilities district. It's for construction of a 23 mile segment that goes through the sovereign tribal lands. This includes very challenging areas when we went up there for this event. We were able to actually drive through and see the cliff areas, and some of the challenging areas that this had. So, it's really a great opportunity, a great way to share the construction costs for this. And we really want to give credit to the tribal leadership because they've been working on this and their last mile components of this for several years. They have got more than 60 million dollars in Federal grants. And they're developing a network there that will serve the more than 3,000 residents of the tribal lands there. And in doing this and doing this partnership is going to provide some crucial workforce development and training so that the network that's being developed can be maintained and operated by the tribal residents. I can jump to the next slide here. I won't spend a lot of time in this one that we're usually used to seeing this, and it's a good tracking mechanism for showing from the time 2021 where SB 156 was signed in 2021 to our Federal 2026 deadline. But it kind of gets all

mushed together there. So, if you can go to the next one, we've got a zoomed in slide and just want to be able to point out here that you know what I talked about 65% of the network being under contract. In addition to that, we have another more than 1,800 miles under construction contracts through Caltrans, that's 83% of the network that is already under contract in one way or the other. So just some tremendous progress. And again, the deadline we're measuring against was a 2024 deadline. So more than a year ahead of schedule on that front. We mentioned earlier, the RFI², and so as we go out with one of these again, we're again going to be looking for where can we lease. Where is there any existing infrastructure or any projects that are planned where we can partner on these. So, keep an eye out for that. And we really want to encourage and please contact us if there's any questions. We really want to encourage participation on those, because anything we can do there is going to save the state funding and really be able to just use that existing infrastructure to get service faster. I'll note that this talks about construction beginning in November, on a segment up in Mendocino that the Caltrans will be talking about and then just noting again that in 2025, the network activation can begin on a lot of the least segments. Going to jump to the next slide here. This here is a few points we want to highlight here that were always in developing for the network. It focused on corridors. And so the natural go to was the State highway system. For a lot of these IRU leases and joint build projects we've been able to find parallel routes. They still serve the same corridors and the same communities. But rather than following a specific freeway they might be, you know, several miles off to the right or left, if the route alternative drove that. And so we also want to point out that there will continue to be a need. There's always kind of been an understanding that there will be a need for essential middle mile. And this is where any of the communities will need to build back to the States network. And so that's going to continue to be the case, and depending on where some of these leases are that might be longer or shorter in some cases. And similarly, when we go out with the new RFI², if we find other alternatives there that may also be something that we'll have to address there as well. But we're still serving all the corridors. And really, these leases provide a great opportunity to provide resiliency. When you look at a lot of the specifics and you're able to go into our map and kind of zoom in, you'll see that we provide these are developing rings. And so when you look at constructed segments, both for the state or for locals, you need to have something to connect back to, and these are going to really provide. You can see the blue segments throughout the State there provide a really great backbone that's going to be ready much sooner to be able to connect to. Next slide. So this slide here. I think this is the first time we've tried to show this information in a long time. What we see here is the green segments are the unserved and underserved communities, and you can see there the States Middle Mile network, and how it tracks to that. And this is just a really good illustration of how the network is providing that backbone for those last mile communities to connect to and really supports any of the last mile projects, whether they're privately funded or whether they're coming from the CPU C programs. And again providing that resiliency, so that it's a reliable network throughout the state.

And then next slide. Last slide here is we want to just identify that we've talked a bit about the Hoopa partnership. We have some others that were in process on with Whittell. We've signed a letter of intent recently for a 52 mile project that would cross a segment of Yurok tribal land. It's great partnership, great opportunity there. And similarly, we're working with a number of the 3 or 4 cities who have last mile projects that overlap with the States middle mile. And again, the concept is still the same, we share the construction costs. It's better for both of us. And so really want to encourage anybody, any cities that are looking at the Network to reach out to us, and let's see if there's any opportunities for us to share

costs and and help go to construction sooner. And with that, that's the end of my presentation.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Monroe. Do any of the committee members have questions or comments of Mr. Monroe's department of technology update?

Amy Tong: I do have two probably comments or questions if I could ask Mr. Monroe. One is thank you, Mr. Monroe for the presentation. Very thorough in terms of where the lease versus join bill versus construction. By the diagram that you had on the timeline the zoom in version mentioned the Network Activation day of 2025, which is good to hear that it's a you know, really ahead of the schedule for those that are already under a contract. But the clarifying question is that even though the network activation happens on the middle mile network, which really counts as the backbone. It still takes the last mile to be completed in order for the household to feel the actual connectivity. Can you just make sure.

Mark Monroe: Yes, no, thank you very much for mentioning that. That's exactly correct. We're building a middle mile, it's a backbone throughout the State but you need that last mile, and that's why the programs that are being funded by the Public Utilities Commission and others are really important. That's where all of us are using last mile connections for this meeting, for this call, for our calls. So that's really an important point to note that it's that last mile, those last mile projects, that's what gets connectivity to the homes.

Amy Tong: Right. Thank you. That's why I want to acknowledge the partnership that I have seen between department of technology and CPUC to making sure when we talk about implementing the vision of broadband for all, it's really a combination of last mile and middle mile working hand in hand. And therefore, when it comes to the second map that you have displayed, that's showing where the unserved communities that is really, we use the word as more of the community where that there isn't a good physical access. And therefore, when you're looking at where the last mile backbone is being laid out, that is the information that you use to make those decisions. Correct, yes. And related to that maybe this is more of a question/comment as well. Looking at the design of this middle mile network. You mentioned the work resiliency, and reliability, which is very important right? In addition, to make sure that physical lines are being brought into communities that does not have a physical connection. You also need to be making sure that from the engineering aspect that these lines have, you know, I call it the close loop right, the looped over the loop, so that each of these segment can stand on its own. And that's the resiliency we're talking about, because that's where the design, the complexity of the designs come in. And I don't know if you can elaborate a little bit more on those engineering design thoughts behind the network.

Mark Monroe: Yes, no, thank you. It's a very important point. When people look at the map you will see largely throughout the network the rings that the secretary is talking about. And so, the concept is the same thing that applies to other telecommunications where basically, you know, if there's a line break, You want to avoid having a vulnerability of there's a line break in one spot, therefore nobody has connection. And so, throughout the rings you, you know, you kind of look at it as when you connect to the network and go right or you can go left, and something on the right gets broken. Then you have something on the left, and so that was an important part early on in developing the architecture for

the network, and a really important purpose that the leases serve as well, where we're able to lease entire loops, rings there to provide that level of resiliency.

Amy Tong: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Secretary Tong. Commissioner Houck.
Darcie Houck: Yeah, I just wanted to thank you for that comment, and it really has been a partnership, and I appreciate all of the work that we've done with CDT and commend you for the progress on the middle mile. This is really a historic effort. And just also, want to recognize the input we've received from local officials and community based organizations who know their communities best and just the responsiveness that CDTs had and working with the public and with the CPUC. And just am really excited to see this effort move forward. It is moving very quickly, even though I know it doesn't seem like it to the folks that need the broadband. But I am very inspired by the presentation today. So, thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Commissioner. Any other comments? Oh, Assembly Member Boerner!

Assemblymember Boerner: Hello! Sorry I am going from place to place, so I am happy to join you. Thank you for that presentation. I do have a number of comments, and I have some concerns, and so maybe it'll be answered now, or maybe in in later presentation, I want to commend the application applicants and the CPUC staff that are working to get historic amounts of application submitted, which is over 4 billion dollars for the last mile funding. And while this is a positive development, it also raises challenges and questions. For example, we need to know how many of these applications are proposing to connect the States middle mile. How many of those local FFA last mile dollars will actually be going and being taken out of the pot of last mile dollars to help fund that middle mile in those joint public private partnerships. Secondly, the public also needs to understand what the budget plan is in terms of funding all these projects. As we know there's currently a funding gap and last mile funding was deferred to help balance the budget. So, what are we doing about that? Another question that we have is like, while I saw the video on the IRUs, that's fine, but people didn't build in historically disadvantaged neighborhood. They didn't build dark fiber in historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. So we shouldn't expect that there should be IRUs for those. And it's really important that we correct the wrongs of the past, and maybe what the market would bare and ensure that we are doing what we used to call phase 2 of that last mile. So I think hopefully, sometime today we'll see a map where we have only one phase which is phase 1. You'll discuss how we're doing and dealing with the funding gap for that. I think what I requested in the last middle mile Advisory Council Commission meeting was doing a map, which ones are IRUs, which ones are direct builds, which ones are public/private partnerships. How are we categorizing those? So we see what's going on? It makes sense to me that we want to have people get connected faster. But those last mile applications will also take time. So until the last mile's there, it doesn't really matter if the middle mile is faster or not if the last mile is longer. So I just want to point that out. And there's also major questions about the county-by-county allocations, rural urban split, and how the budget referrals are impacting both of these funding divisions. So, if any of the agencies now, or as we go through the presentations could provide more information about these items, coordination between last mile and middle mile, the budget overview, the map of the different types of proposed builds, and especially what's happening in some of our urban areas where traditionally, we would

have seen IRUs traditionally, we wouldn't have seen the historic investment, which is what we're trying to compensate. I think we all are on the same page. That's what we're trying to compensate with now. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you Assemblymember Boerner. I know that CPUC will be talking more about the FFA and last mile during the presentation, so we'll definitely make sure we answer your questions. And if we could maybe just bring up that map that showed the different colors. And Mark, you could just explain because not everyone when we go onto the map, understands how to turn the filters on. It's not always intuitive. How can individuals understand what has been purchased as assembly member Boerner mentioned, if you could just walk us through. I know that's small on the right-hand side, but maybe just walk us through if people are interested in knowing more about their specific areas, how can they interpret what they're seeing here?

Mark Monroe: Sure. So as noted previously. This, is the map. Now that these are the map with the layers that we now have on our website, and so when we go into the website and we look at the legend, there's kind of a layers tab and I'm happy if anybody wants to reach out. We kind of talk through how to do that. I'll do it in real time and kind of walk people through it and maybe at the next MMAC we cant ry to do something interactive like that. But what we're looking at here is you'll see the orange. That is where at this point we anticipate Caltrans building. You'll see, I believe it's a blue color, that is the leases. And this is almost 4,700 miles. But again, this map here is a Pdf, when we go to our website. It is interactive, so you can really zoom into your area and I think to your point to be able to see how each segment is being delivered. Here, you'll also see pink, some pink segments, these are the joint builds approximately 1,400 miles of the network that we're sharing construction costs with. And so that's again, you will be able to see that layer on our map. And then there is I want to say it's green, a segment going up to what has been traditionally called Digital 395 in the Central, Southern, Eastern, and Southeastern part of the State that we're purchasing. And so all of those layers are there now and again I'm happy to either on a one on one basis walk people through how to do that or try to do that at the next MMAC as well.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Monroe. Are there any other questions from Members? Supervisor Starkey.

Supervisor Valerie Starkey: Hi, thank you so much. I do have a quick question with regard to the joint bill and whoever is selected to construct those projects. How are they going to be held accountable to the deadline, and what are the alternate plans for those contracts that fail to meet the deadline?

Mark Monroe: So all of the contracts have in them the need to complete the project by December of 2026. But I think the clearest answer to your question is, we don't have authority to pay them after December of 2026. So it's in everybody's best interest to be done on time.

The Chair: Thank you. Supervisor Starkey. Are there any other member questions? Supervisor, Alejo.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Madam Chair, I wanted to commend the staff for doing a little extra to explain to the public and to the press. I know not everybody follows these meetings. But

I think at every step of the process, it's always good to try to just explain what the steps are and why we're doing them. And then on the IRUs, for example, it's 47% of the 10,000 mile project. And so, the video set hubs explain what are the benefits of that and helping us also to complete this work under the required timelines. Certainly, I wanted to really applaud that and the map. The new map that has the green layer of communities really shows that the fiber is going to those communities where they are under served or underserved. And I think that's important to better explain to the public as well through these images that make it a little bit easier to understand. The question I wanted to bring up, which I know it's an area that we could expand upon is on the tribal projects. And I want to thank the team for doing the first of its kind agreement with the Yurok tribe for the 52 miles. And now, more recently, with the Hoopa tribe for the 23 miles. So the question I had was just for staff was, what are their opportunities for the other tribal governments that might want to achieve what the Hoopa and Yurok tribe have achieved on their tribal lands.

Mark Monroe: Sure. The first thing we would do that we've started this last year is we have done a number of tribal outreach events to try to you know, explain the project and explain the State's overall broadband for all efforts, and specifically how the MMBI project relates to those.
and try to foster these sorts of opportunities. And so certainly any of the tribes that have projects in the works please reach out to us. Let's talk about alternatives and see what we can do. As noted we have a timeframe that we have to work within relative to the Arpa funding, and I think one of the reasons that the Hoopa tribe and the Yurok tribe were so successful is that they have you know already began a process, and we reached out and responded to the interaction that we've had and identify these opportunities so certainly my advice would be to reach out to CDT. We're happy to talk about any alternatives to see what is out there and happy to partner.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Supervisor Starkey. Ms. Miller.

Gayle Miller: Thank you. Just 2 questions from Miss assembly member Vayner, I think one, this is the full map so there's nothing about this map it just shows the different types of builds that includes existing, how much is under contract currently with in defeasible rights abuse.
And then the building and the join building. So I think it's a really important point that there is a single map for the entire state. So what the map just goes into detail about the types of build. I think, just given your experience. I know you will appreciate how we've tried to really be specific about how we're doing each part of it. And then for the question of where the dark fiber is and isn't in the state. Obviously, that's not public. Gayle Miller: And our partners at the PUC can obviously have some of that data which the industry is not required to make that public. And that is why we are employing folks to partner with us. You'll see that some of the success of this is the 83% that's currently under contract. And the State does stand committed to build. We're doing all the preconstructions. But I'm just loath to talk about whether or not there's dark fiber when there's actually no third party to verify that because of the private construction throughout the State. What we do know is where service wasn't provided in the past, and that's why this has always been. And I sound like a broken record, but always been this opportunity for partnership. So I think it's

an important point to note that we don't know where the dark fiber is, but we also don't know that there is no dark fiber and ability to help us connect. So just hope that's helpful.

Mark Monroe: Thank you. Ms. Miller, and I'll just add, in some of our conversations with stakeholders to that point. You know there's like a reassertion right? If you live in a certain place, you know where what service providers provide service there. So I think that's where there is an opportunity, for while the information is not public per se, there's an opportunity for communities to work with some of those local providers and try to identify some efficiencies here, and some potential partnerships, and hopefully drive some of that engagement.

The Chair: Thank you. I have a question. I know we've talked about service providers and great progress we've been partnering on the with the tribes, you mentioned that there was 5 or 6, a handful of local government opportunities, people coming and talking to us, maybe. How do they route, you know, connect with you? Just so that local leaders know that there's definitely opportunities to leverage what they're doing potentially in their middle mile efforts. So if you would please just explain that to the team is, did they reach out to you? Did you reach out to them? Kind of how did that engagement happen?

Mark Monroe: Yeah, so they reached out to us, but I will say, you know I mentioned earlier the stakeholder outreach we do have a lot. We have had a lot of engagement, and so it can be two ways. And so certainly whether it's through MMACs or in any way that you want to reach out to us. We're happy to engage, and there are other opportunities. But what I would say is, go to our website. Our website has contact information. Give us a call, send us an email, and we'll be happy to engage on that as noted as we've looked at we've had some early partners that have been wanting to build last mile projects for a long time and are perhaps didn't have middle mile to connect to. Or it wasn't affordable so they've reached out to first of all look at, how can we connect? When can we connect. And then, as they develop their network, that's where they say, well, we need to in these given communities we actually need to put fiber in the ground, and the same kind of overlapping as the States network. And so let's talk about those opportunities. So I would just say, largely, reach out to us. Let's talk about it. We'll see what you have planned and what we have planned and if there's any opportunities.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Monroe. Any other member comments, questions? All right, we're going to go ahead and go to Caltrans. Janice Benton, update on what's going on in your department.

Janice Benton: Alright, good morning! Shared Bailey Crimmins committee members and others from the public. Thank you for having us here. I will be providing the Caltrans update on the progress being made for the Caltrans portion of the Middle Mile network. Excuse me. So next slide. My update will focus on the Department's progress since July for both preconstruction work and putting work into the hands of contractors. I do want to underscore our commitment to completing construction on the Caltrans build segments of the Middle Mile network by 2026. So next slide. So we remain steadfast in getting the work underway and shovels in the ground, as decisions are being made on the alternative, delivery method being leveraged through the RFI2, Caltrans has continued with the preconstruction work. Thank you. Can everybody hear me? As shared at previous MMAC meetings this slide shows the progress being made on the preconstruction work for the Caltrans build for the new members of the committee. This indicates the work we need to

do to complete the design and secure necessary environmental and right-of-way permits and approvals. For the task associated with the pre-construction work. Caltrans has completed 36% of those tasks with the remaining 64% of the tasks in progress. So next slide. The result of these preconstruction tasks is handing work over to contractors and construction getting underway over the next 6 months from now, through March 2024, we anticipate starting construction in each region, across the State, and more than 450 miles of the Caltrans build. This expands the construction already underway on several projects, including State route one in Sonoma County, State route three in Siskiyou County and State Route 67 in San Diego County. Janice Benton: And last month we issued the first JOC work order for 10 miles along State Route 20 in Mendocino County, with work commencing this month. Next slide. In fact, the middle photo on this slide is work underway on State Route 20 in Mendocino County. This builds on the construction we've been doing, such as the last photo, which is the fiber being pulled along State Route 67 in San Diego County. And in looking ahead, the photo on the left is of State Route 190 Inyo County, which is also in Death Valley National Park, where we are working with the National Park Service to incorporate some of the middle mile broadband components into the emergency work being done to repair the recent highway, slip out. Looking forward to the January MMAC meeting, we will share mapping that breaks down the Caltrans build by region indicating when construction will commence over the course of 2024. So this concludes, my Caltrans update.

The Chair: Thank you, Miss Benton. Do any of the committee members have questions for this button and Caltrans?

Amy Tong: Right? I'm being looked at I'll just jump in probably. Thank you, Miss Benton, for that presentation, and I think it's important for our audience to also hear the fact that you know the construction work takes time. The fact that the progress that you show that the progress is being made, despite the fact that you know that the earlier conversation of different phases. So I just maybe if we can elaborate on that a little bit, just to making sure that all of these prep work, that has been continued to, you know, moving forward.

Janice Benton: Yeah, just and to reiterate that. So thank you Secretary Tong, so Caltrans has continued on the preconstruction work on those miles. So as information and decisions are being made regarding the alternative delivery method. Whether it's a lease, a joint build, or a purchase we'll stop on those miles, but we don't stop until those decisions have been made. And we're notified. So again, the pre-construction work continues on all of those miles, on all the miles that are that are remaining. Excellent, thank you so much for that.

The Chair: Thank you, Secretary. Any other questions from members? All right, I see none. So we're going to go ahead and go to Mister Erik Hunsinger from our third party administrator, Golden State Net.

Erik Hunsinger: Thank you. Director Bailey Crimmins and committee members appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today and members of the public. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge contributions of my predecessor. We've had a change in leadership. Erik Hunsinger: Thank you. We've had a change in leadership at Golden State. Tony Naughton, my predecessor, worked very hard to put in place the Golden State net organization and the collaboration with the Department of Technologies, and also Caltrans, and so very appreciative of the groundwork that he's done with the organization.

But as we pivot from development of the network to operating the network, we felt it was appropriate to change and shift in our focus at Golden State. Next slide, please. Thank you. So this is a truncated view of the network. What you see here is a diagram of how the network can be used by every community along the 10,000 miles. So about every 50 miles we'll have huts which are represented by these faded Colo facilities here in in the diagram and along the 10,000 miles every half mile will have vaults with slack in them. And those are typically used for repairs and restoration in case of an emergency. But the State of California is leveraging changes in cable technologies that have happened in the last 10 years that allow for improved interconnection and applications along the entire path. So quite literally, there's going to be 20,000 points of connection available to the public for last mile. And what that ultimately does, it reduces the cost of construction of the last mile, instead of having to build to a brick-and-mortar location, you build directly to the network will create an interconnection point at that meet me spot we will install, meet me, vault or shadow vaults, so that the last mile entity can interconnect directly into the fiber that runs along their neighborhood. I think that answer some of the questions that were asked earlier about where, if the fibers there, why isn't it used in communities is because typically commercial carriers are only interested in going from A to Z. However, the State of California is leveraging the current cable technology to create flexibility of Erik Hunsinger: access anywhere along the 10,000 miles. It's really super important to be able to have that flexibility. So we can meet the demands of the digital divide and erase those boundaries. I'd like to also point out that this is an application that is possible along any of the construction types, whether it's joint build, raw construction, or IRU, we have this capability in the network in the entire 10,000 miles. So it's not exclusive to any particular portion of the network, but it's available. The entire network in the 10,000 miles is a Greenfield build with a 288 count cable dedicated to the State. So there will be access available to every community along the path And then, in addition to that, extensions deeper into communities that are not immediately on the network we can facilitate those connections more cheaply because of this this approach. And with that I'll conclude my short presentation.

The Chair: Appreciate your time. Thank you, Mr. Hunsinger, and I really appreciate your comments there, because sometimes the engineering technology, some of us that didn't take electrical engineering, for our major may not understand that it does allow that flexibility. So thank you for pointing that out.I'd like to see if there are any committee members that have questions. Anybody? Oh, Miss Miller.

Gayle Miller: Thank you. Mr. Hunsinger, that was super helpful. I would like just to get a little bit more. Obviously, we have a lot to learn from you on this point on the IRUs, but I have two questions, and I hope I'm asking them correctly, because I'm not sure I fully understand it. But obviously, how IRUs reduced costs, I do think, is an important point, as you build the network, I also think just in terms of what our team is really trying to explain which is this wheel and spoke approach to building a network. So what we need in terms of the ring that this initial IRU, which you've helped us secure what that does, even though it's going through areas that clearly have, you know, superior service and wealthy areas. How that's actually helping us build this network that connects all the other communities. So cost, benefit, wheel and spoke approach and then also if you could just talk a little bit about why you would encourage other folks to really contribute to some of these conversations as we go through the RFI[2].

Erik Hunsinger: Sure. So the first thing on the IRU piece is that one of the most expensive parts of building a network is the right of way, and actually procuring right away, and then the boring, entrenching of the network. So in an IRU all that's been done as noted. So it's already in place. What we're doing in our partnerships with these commercial entities is we've created a contractual vehicle in which they're putting new fiber cable in an existing infrastructure. So it's similar to a green build in the fact that we have a brand new cable and brand new technology and it's dedicated to us. So the major cost savings is in not having do the construction from the very beginning. So it's just the cable portion that's put in. So that's a savings. In addition to that the partnership with the carriers on the IRUs creates a self interested opportunity to repair in case there's a break. So it's much faster time to repair. It's a less onerous for the State in deploying resources to fix those things. So we have a partnership commercial partnership which will last decades to ensure the viability of that network in the long term so I'm not sure hub and spoke I believe the network's going to have rings and resilient topology, as you can see in the map. If you want to take a look at the website again, you'll see that there's large rings in the design of the network across the State where we're able to connect communities together, and as the last mile ties into those networks, they'll have an opportunity to do so, not just in one single place, but they can do it in multiple places. And what that does is, as Mr. Monroe pointed out, if one portion of the ring breaks, they can use the other half to get to wherever they need the Internet or any other carrier hotels that we will interconnect with for services. So because of that approach they'll have resiliency and redundancy built into the middle mile and connectivity for their network. Of course they'll have the opportunity in the last mile to develop that same resiliency according to their network plans in their communities as well. I'm not sure that quite gets to the answer that you were looking for Miss Miller. But hopefully, that helps.

Gayle Miller: Yeah, it definitely helps. I don't know if someone on the panel can explain. I think it's super helpful. And again, kind of a call for partnership. I think the question that is just really important, that we explain both in my layman's terms and in engineering terms is just that in order to build a strong network, it takes more than a single piece of backbone. My way of describing it is you know, is a tire, so we have to have the hole, the wheel and the spokes, and I just think that the more we can talk about the strength of a network the better. And then the other piece that I just think is really important is that fiber exists in more places than any of us currently understand so super helpful. But I don't know Madam Chair, if you could ask a better question than I. But I do think that's helpful information. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. So we? I guess my question just for the public. We are focused a lot, obviously, on building now, but the network is going to last many, many generations, probably beyond my lifetime. So Erik once we go into operations, and communities are relying on this, you know, maybe explaining why that hub and spoke, or the resiliency, because all that still sounds like engineering terms. But in the day, it's a face, is it as a family that is accessing this and when their job, their health, their ability to connect. We all know, because we've lived through the pandemic. We rely on these services. And so how that network design actually equates to what it means to a family, and how you're designing is in the way that it increases self healing. I think it's just important that people are like, well, why is it going through this way or that way? It is in order to make sure that you have a ring. So if you could maybe explain that.

Erik Hunsinger: Sure. So networks really are only affected if they're interconnected and layered together. So the ring topology is really just the physical piece. So that's the first layer is the fiber optic rings that we're developing and then overlaying, that is, going to be an electronic system, a DWDM system lighting this fiber. So it only works if it's lit. And then, in addition to that, there's another layer that's the Internet, right? And so all of that is going to be meshed together on the network providing the resiliency to the communities that need access to that. And so as any one portion of those 3 layers might be impacted routing the communications in either left or right, as Mr. Monroe described it, or north and south, or east and west. The topology of the network will be available on a constant basis. Some people call it 5 nines in engineering terms, but it's always up. It's essentially always up as soon as you have two different connections. Now, some communities have brightly pointed out that they have lots of cuts all the time. But we are committed to getting repairs done in a timely manner, so that you know, the network will have sustainability and reliability day to day. For all citizens in California. Any family that needs connectivity will have access via the last mile, and that's really going to be the bottleneck. Right? It's the last mile topology and the design that the communities get from the network, whether it's a commercial provider or community oriented network, that's going to be the bottleneck to their connectivity. And so it's going to be really important for those spokes, as Miss Miller described them, to have diversity and flexibility in their design as well. So, to add on to Ms. Miller's other question. We are also
working with communities. We've gotten numerous calls about the potential construction in their area and how we might leverage dig smart opportunities with those communities. And we would welcome more conversations. I know CDT has had a few of those that they've included Golden State on. We want to keep track of those, so that as communities get their funding, we can help optimize their awards and their grant dollars as well.

The Chair: Great thank you, Mr. Hunsinger, any other questions from any committee members?

Amy Tong: Chair, if I may. Secretary, I know we've been spending a few minutes on this one, but it's very important. So if I may also trying to see if I understand this correctly, and then this is to both Mr. Monroe as well as Mr. Hunsinger if you guys want to you know, chime in if to correct anything that I stated incorrectly. Just to maybe bring it up to the level at the in the end of the day. The middle miles really provide that resiliency, reliable backbone to serve the community that based on the current information that is available that does not have a physical connection, and to the degree possible, Mr. Hunsinger, to your point where existing infrastructure can be leveraged. That is a goal, so that to minimize the disruption that is needed through the construction also, knowing the most expensive part of the construction is the right of way and everything else that you have described. You know even the fact that Caltrans you know, continue to do the pre-construction work. I think that flexibility, openness in the collaboration is there to see leverage what you can, whether it's dig ones, or is it an existing infrastructure, then only when there's no existing that you built. And when leveraging existing infrastructure this comes into I used a word loop when I asked a question earlier. But ring is a more elegant, you know, engineering term. And I think that's what Ms. Miller was trying to point out that all of those rings that's available out there is what you're leveraging. Not necessarily, you know, because there are certain portions of the rings or serving area that might already have infrastructure. But it's really an architecture and engineering design that you want to leverage those rings. And then with those rings there, you continue to put in additional smaller rings. We call it a spoke so that the resiliency is being built in.

Erik Hunsinger: Yes, that's correct, that's correct. And one thing about a network is it never really is static. It's always growing and reaching and expanding. And so, even though we will be done with construction of the 10,000 miles in 2026. I anticipate that after that we'll have need an opportunity to expand the middle mile where funds become available, as we're, you know self-sustaining model

Amy Tong: And we, we can grow the network according to the needs of the communities. And maybe on that note, I'll just wrap up my comment. And I mean, this is jumping on, you know the echoing the call for partnership from locals, right? That the network is network based on the needs today, even though it is already being built for decades to come from a resiliency, reliability, and capacity perspective. But the need is going to continue to evolve, and as also opportunity to leverage is going to continue to evolve. And that requires a lot of conversation partnership with locals to identify those opportunities and be very flexible to say, how do you leverage those, so that at the end of the day, regardless how it is being delivered, the end is the fastest and then most reasonable, most reliable way to get connectivity to the household with a partnership the last mile. So I just wanted to make sure that my understanding of what you all trying to do from multiple angles right is being summarized from the fact that even though there are some, I'll call it communication or messaging misstep in describing the face. But at the end of the day what you're really trying to do is really a merry, methodical approach, step by step on how to complete this commitment, never change commitment of 10,000 Middle Mile Network.

Erik Hunsinger: Yes, I would like to add that to Director Bailey Crimmins point of multiple generations. The design of this network is going to be there when communities are ready either today or 10 years from now or 20 years from now the flexibility to interconnect will be available when
their needs changed, as you noted, because things change over time, the network will be there and available for use. Thank you.

Mark Monroe: May I just add a comment. I think Ms. Miller had, you know, talked about kind of this idea of the wheel and the spokes. And so the way I would want most people to understand it is that when you look at the leases, the large leases we have where you have these big rings, everybody inside that ring is now has something to connect to, and I think some of the initial conversations that you know people have said but why are you leasing that before you build over here? And if I build over here we have nothing to connect to without that. So I think that's really important. We talk about a network. It goes from the house through the last mile to the middle mile, but has to get back to the Internet. So I think the point that Ms. Miller is making about creating those large rings where everybody in there now has something to connect to is a really important one.

The Chair: Thank you. Right. Do any committee members have any additional comments? All right, we're going to go ahead and go to the next agenda item, Michael Minkus, from the California Public Utilities Commission.

Michael Minkus: Good morning. I'm the newly appointed manager of the group implementing a number of the last mile broadband programs. Here at the California Public Utilities Commission, the CPUC. I'll provide a brief update on the Senate Bill 156 last mile programs and related efforts. Next slide, please. Here is an update on the broadband equity access and deployment program referred to as BEAD, stablished and funded by

the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. This is the joint Federal and State program that will help us achieve our goals for Broadband For all. In June the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, NTIA announced a 1.86 billion allocation for the BEAD program in California. The primary goal of BEAD is to deploy reliable last mile service to all unserved locations in California. The CPUC implementing the BEAD program in California is establishing program rules through our public deliberative process and the BEAD program benefits from feedback and input from the extensive months long California Department of Technology and CPUC engagement throughout the State. The input from across the State will inform BEAD and the California Digital equity plan. This slide includes more background and information on the BEAD page linked at the bottom and subscriptions for program updates. Now, I'll talk about the timeline and some near term activities and opportunities for engagement related to BEAD. Next slide, please. This summarizes the Multi Year Program implementation for BEAD I want to highlight a number of upcoming items in October and November.
First, the CPUC will hold a public technical workshop for parties in the proceeding on October 20 sixth in Sacramento. It will be a joint hybrid in person and virtual workshop. Coming up after that will be two virtual public forums held in early November set for November eighth. An all party meeting in Southern California set for the end of November, and a comment proposal to inform the State's initial proposal under BEAD is planned for early November. Next slide, please. This is a snapshot of the suite of last mile programs at the CPUC that are part of the State's Multi year broadband investment. I will talk about these programs in more detail on the following slides. Next slide, please. For the last mile Federal funding account, the goal of which is to provide a broadband Internet connection to unserved locations and end users. The first application window closed at the end of September. We are excited and gratified to see that more than 480 applications were filed for more than 60 entities, and for a total dollar amount of more than 4.6 billion. A key next step in the process is the start of the objection period on Monday 10/26. Next slide, please. The Loan Loss Reserve program provides financial support to public entities and affiliated non profits to issue broadband bonds. Proposed rules were issued for comment in September. Reply comments are due next week. The earliest the Commission might adopt the rules is November, and there's a wealth of background information, fact sheets, and other information on the program that are linked to on the side of this slide and on the Loan Lost Reserve Fund web page. Next slide, please. Here is an overview of a number of the California Advanced Services Fund or CASF Accounts that continue to serve as an important tool in supporting digital equity and the goals of broadband for all. This slide summarizes the awards for the adoption and digital equity
and the public housing in low income communities accounts for applications filed in January of this year and the applications before the Commission for the infrastructure account, more than 70 applications are being analyzed to make recommendations to the Commission. Beyond this program slide in August 1.8 million CASF line extension grant was awarded to a San Benito County Provider to connect nearly a thousand residents of a labor camp migrant housing center and the South Side Mobile Park
and the Digital Divide Grant program awarded nearly 1 million dollars to 4 community-based organizations to provide digital literacy training, take home devices and other services in 9 schools in Inyo, Kern, Murdoch and San Diego counties. This concludes the CPUC update.

The Chair: Thank you, Mister Minkus. Do any committee members have questions or comments for Mister Minkus? Supervisor Alejo. Oh, Supervisor Alejo!

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Yes, thank you for that update and showing that the communities have really come forward to try to draw down as much funding as possible for their communities with those 483 grant applications 4.6 billion in total. So I just wanted to just talk about question on a particular aspect of the BEAD program. And that was the digital equity. If you could expand how is the CPUC developing that policy? And also how is it engaging stakeholders in developing that policy?

Michael Minkus: Yeah. Glad to speak to that briefly. And as you'll see from my response that the California Department of Technology might have more to add now or in the future. So the high level overview is that the California Department of Technology and Public Utilities Commission had engagements throughout the State over 20, including with California tribes in person and virtual to solicit feedback, input, and comment. And this is what has guided and informed the more formal rulemaking for the broadband equity access and deployment program at the CPUC. And the California Department of Technology's Development of the California Digital Equity Plan, which will also be incorporated in the BEAD rules.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Minkus. Supervisor Alejo, we do have, I believe, Mr. Scott Adams, who is the office of digital broadband literacy and you know he's been very involved with the Digital Equity plan. And are you available, Scott, to speak to this?

Scott Adams: Yes, I could do that briefly Supervisor Alejo. And good to see you and the commissioners and the public. So Supervisor Alejo as Mr. Minkus said CDT developed and has been developing and conducting the engagement process on the digital equity planning concert with PUC and we actually did a 5 prong process that included 22 state entity Statewide planning group that meets next Wednesday for the fourth time this year we had established 6 virtual working groups. That have met until 24 times over the last several months. We developed 3 digital equity surveys. One was a phone survey that random digit dial sampled 3,200 State residents, an online survey that captured the input of 40,000 plus Californians. And then, as Mr. Minkus said, there were the regional planning workshops that were 17 every economic region in the State. In addition, there were 3 group travel consultations and one virtual consultation. That was all of which have been done in concert with the PUC. Lastly, we have over the last year conducted about 380 plus individual meetings, presentations and listening sessions to solicit stakeholder feedback and input and we are in the process of drafting well, actually completing the first draft of the digital equity plan, and we'll post it sometime in the coming weeks.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Oh, following up to that. So there's a meeting next week. Will anything be released on the Digital Equity plan at that point, or?

Scott Adams: We'll be providing an update on the on the digital equity planning process and the status of the digital plan next Wednesday.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Okay. And then, so when will the first draft come out and be published just in terms of more or less the timeline

Scott Adams: It will be published in the coming weeks.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Okay, thank you.

Scott Adams: Yep.

The Chair: Thank you, Supervisor. And just for the public it is the California Broadband Council correct, Scott? Which there's information out on the website. If people are interested as a public

Scott Adams: proceeding as well. So if maybe if you want to just highlight that quickly. Yes, absolutely. Thank you. Director Bailey Crimmins, we are developing the digital equity planning consultation with the California Broadband Council Assembly to build 2750, and that meeting is next Wednesday from 9 30 to 11. It's both in person and hybrid. And then the Statewide Digital Equity planning group is on the same day. There's about a 45 min gap and will have a more expanding conversation at the Digital Equity Planning group.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Adams. Are there additional questions from committee members? Alright. Thank you, Mr. Minkus, and that adjourns our formal process. We're going to go ahead and go to public comment. Miss Alvarado. Oh, I'm sorry. There's a couple more slides that we're added. So, Mr. Monroe, you have a kind of an ending to today's presentation. So you have a few slides that you'd like to cover.

Mark Monroe: Sure, the folks may recognize this slide from the beginning. Just want to highlight again. The commitment, the Administration's commitment to the full network. And make sure that you know, the message is out there to really encourage participation in the new solicitation, the new RFI squared process that we'll be going out with at the end of this month. Looking for a lot of opportunities there and then we can go to the next slide. I think, more broadly. We want to just note that while we work to create a more transparent process. One established way for stakeholders to get the latest information. Just to sign up for CDTs broadband for all newsletter, this shares a project and program updates across all feeder programs. So this will be posted online. But we want to encourage that participation is another way to get information.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Monroe.

Alicia Alvarado: We have one more.

Mark Monroe: Is there another slide? I don't believe so. Oh, yes, I'm sorry. Yes, we'll just note here that this is the last Quarterly MMAC meeting for the year. And up here and again we'll post these on our website, for the next year for January, April, July, and October, we'll continue to provide updates on the network, and both the middle mile as well as the last mile updates provided by CPUC next year.

The Chair: Thank you. Alright. Now, I'm going to go to the committee members any last minute comments before we go to public comment? Alright, I see none. So, Miss Alvarado, if you please, go ahead and provide the guidelines for public comment. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: To ensure everyone who wishes to make public comment has the opportunity to do so. There will be one person per entity and two minutes per person. The order of public comment will be; in-person comments, zoom and phone comments, and emailed comments submitted prior to the meeting. For in-person comments, please form a line at the podium. For zoom, please use the raise hand feature in the lower toolbar. For

phone, please press star nine to raise your hand. Emailed comments received prior to the meeting will be read at the end. We will start with the first person in line at the podium. Your two minutes will begin now.

Tim Holden: Well, good morning, Tim Holden from Sierra Nevada Communications representing over 6,000 rural residents in Tuolumne County. And we look forward to the middle mile being built out, the seriousness of the issues there is that even though we service two fire departments up there still not enough bandwidth with the wireless connections that we do have presently. So we are looking forward to the middle mile beyond it being built out. The difficulty that we have is the lack of information concerning where the middle mile will be able to contact with us, because, as we build out. We don't want to have to rebuild out again to these locations. So there's been a real lack of response from the different agencies that we've contacted to find out where these points of contact will be. The other piece of it is that we also have to build along some of these same right of ways in order to connect communities, and we'd rather be building it once instead of digging it twice. That type of thing. So the other piece of information, too, is, who do we contact to be able to find out what our costs will be? So that we can plan appropriately for the future. Yeah. And other than that, that's it. For right now.

The Chair: Thank you. And we will be reaching out to you and make sure you have contact information.

Alicia Alvarado: Hello! Next speaker. Your 2 min will begin now.

Patrick Messac: Hi! My name is Patrick Messac here, representing the city of Oakland. Absent this Council's urgent intervention CDT plans to push forward with the plan to use a first come first serve approach that will yet again prioritize California's wealthiest, most connected communities for the remaining 2 billion dollars of secured funding for this once in a generation Middle mile infrastructure, investment. Let us be clear to do nothing constitutes injustice by omission. The broadband map being used to justify overbuilding in demonstrably serve wealthy communities is not just flawed. It's discriminatory. And I'll show you now. Similar to every place across California the digital divide is not evenly distributed, in Alameda County it's focused in 3 areas, West Oakland, Fruit Vale and deep East Oakland, where communities have as much as 30% of residents without home Internet access. So when you look at the state broadband map, you would expect to see dense clusters of unserved in locations where almost half of the housing stock was built around 1940, where the CPUC's own network exam shows that incumbent ISPS divest in these communities, where income is incredibly low. Yet, looking at this map, there is not a single cluster of more than 3 unserved locations adjacent to one another. This data is deeply flawed. In just 3 weeks of running speed tests on student laptops we've identified thousands of more addresses that are unserved in this part of Alameda County. But the State is using this data so it's no surprise that they entirely eliminated SR 185, and have moved I5 80 up to a time when we do not have secured funding for it yet. So at least everyone's in the same boat right? Unfortunately, that's not the case. You go to the broadband map for the 2 wealthiest communities in Alameda County, Pleasanton and Livermore, and you see a preponderance of dense clusters that are demonstrably served.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you, Mr. Messac.

Patrick Messac: I'm just going to end here. The impact of this decision in Alameda County is that the vast majority of broadband funding is going to the wealthiest, most connected areas in our county. We have to prioritize the communities that this legislation was intended to serve. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado/Georgia Savage: Thank you. Speaker. Next Speaker.

Georgia Savage: Great, thank you representing Oakland Undivided. Our coalition, was very encouraged by the Governor's promise to pursue additional funding to complete the second phase of the network, and we urge the Governor to issue a clear statement outlining this plan. However realistically, California has many competing budget priorities and completing the network could require upwards of 2 billion additional dollars. If equity is a driving principle, we must ask ourselves which communities should receive this secured remaining funding. The solution is clear. First, we must uncouple funding from this demonstrably inaccurate map. Prioritizing investment in communities that lack access to Internet is the right idea. But the State's broadband map is demonstrably inaccurate in determining Internet need, and therefore cannot be trusted for such an important task. The State's process takes an already flawed national map and makes it worse by fabricating need in our country's wealthiest communities. According to the Cal matter article published yesterday, the State has already spent 1.8 of the 3.8 billion dollars on segments, including Beverly Hills. It is vital that we are intentional with the remaining 2 billion dollars. Being intentional requires prioritizing the most disconnected, highest poverty communities first. Low-income communities get the oldest, most poorly maintained infrastructure, if any at all, they pay higher rates for slower, less reliable speeds, and many can't get broadband Internet. Their bypass for investment by private companies and have been for decades, commonsense and basic decency says, we must start here. These communities cannot afford to wait another year while tens of thousands lack access to this 20 first century necessity. In short, the State must prioritize the community's farthest from opportunity to actualize the purpose of the legislation. And these dollars. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker from Zoom will be Rinaldo Brutoco. Please unmute.

Rinaldo Brutoco: Can you hear me?

Alicia Alvarado Yes.

Rinaldo Brutoco: Thank you. My name is Ronaldo Brutoco. I'm the founder and CEO of H2 Clipper including our wholly owned subsidiary, which is H2C Safety pipe. Wednesday afternoon I spoke at the CTC meeting regarding the topic of the clean freight order initiative, and yesterday morning my colleague spoke regarding the topic of the middle Mile Broadband initiative following excellent update provided by Mr. Adams. The State of California is blessed by an abundance of opportunities to make incredible strides in advancing digital literacy as well as addressing climate change, advancing the energy transition. As you know, timing is critical, since opportunities have a way, unless they timely are acted upon to pass by. We are hopeful the Advisory Committee will seriously consider the opportunity for key portions of the trench that will be done as part of the middle mile broadband initiative to be employed for installing a hydrogen pipeline along critical routes, such as the I 710 and I 5 quarters. Some people refer to the I 710 freeway as cancer corridor, due to the amount of Diesel ship produced from the traffic as well as a nitrox

emissions. The same is true with the Inland Empire. The State is unique opportunity to address this health and social justice issue through 0 emissions trucking, as proposed by the Governor, by the port of Long Beach, and mandated by the State legislature. The committee has an opportunity to resolve this crisis. I would like to call your attention to a video called dig once benefit twice, which lays out the possibility of putting that hydrogen pipe in the same exact trench, with additional funding weekend supply to make it big enough to hold a hydrogen pipeline that would then fuel truck stops that would allow the trucks to fill up as they enter and exit the long beach area. Articulating this in front of people at that April thirteenth meeting which was held at the regional headquarters of CAR. We were able to have the key people in politics, local government, and Caltrans all focus along with Tyson, Eckerley, Angelina, and other notables on how to get this done, the funding exists, the will exist, and we are willing to help. Just let us know how, if we could be in touch with Mr. Monroe or others, that might be the best way to advance supplemental funding. Thank you for your time.

The Chair: Thank you, Mister Brutoco. Thank you, Ms. Alvarado is there a way to take down the clock? I'd like to see the faces of everyone. I did not realize that the clock was going to take up the entire screen. Can we maybe take that down and do it, so we can see people that are actually, thank you. It'll just take a minute. And if we could just bring up the zoom, so that when people are speaking and promoted, we can see them.

Nick Beard: I have video on some of these so can't share the video. It's just audio for those things.

The Chair: Okay. So it sounds like, there's people that are only audio but for the zoom ones that, can we at least bring up the zoom screen.

Alicia Alvarado: Our next speaker is Larry O. Please unmute yourself.

Larry Ortega: Hi! Larry Ortega, with fiber up my neighborhood in Southern California. We do and have been doing technology training throughout the State since 1994 lots of experience in digital divide areas. My question is with regard to the middle mile, and who are the decision makers that are you know, blocking and changing the plans of funding middle mile efforts in Oakland as well as in San Gabriel Valley. What we were told is that there's partnerships and relationships that are now being built in lieu of an actual build. I don't quite understand that. And I'm wondering, is it possible to maybe identify who these decision makers are in terms of setting up these partnerships what the status is, and how do we follow along and perhaps facilitate and participate in this process? Because the middle mile is absolutely essential. And we, you know, we got to have it. We cannot not have it. And if there's relationships that are now being set up in lieu of the actual build, community and leaders in this region need to be aware of, you know, how do we communicate with these individuals? Who are they, and etc.?

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker comes from FSCMC. Not hearing FSCMC.

Michael Kaplan: Can you hear me now?

Alicia Alvarado: Yes.

Michael Kaplan: I'm sorry I didn't see the option to mute or unmute until just now. Yes, so I'm calling to ask, or joining to ask how it is that the Big Sur Coast was left off the build map and to report that the, my name is Michael Kaplan by the way, for the record now that I can see who it says is calling. So I'm joining to ask that the Big Sur coast be added to the build map. I'm curious how it got left off the build map looking at the slides that were shown earlier. There the slide with the green areas they showed underserved areas. The Big Sur Coast had no green areas that I could see. And yet, there is essentially no broadband Internet along the big Sur coast. The Public Utility Commission's map is wrong. It shows that for example, that we have 26 megabits per second available from AT&T. We gave up on AT&T when they were offering us 750 kilobits per second, which was very much like dial up and unusable. We now use Starlink Internet. Our neighbors don't have Internet access at the kind of speeds that broadband for all is supposed to be bringing everywhere. I would ask that when you think of the term broadband for all that you think broadband for all except for Big Sur because we are not even on the build map. And our Congressman has written to the Public Utilities Commission about the inaccuracies of it's availability for Internet and cell service in our area. Our fire stations, our fire departments have no access to broadband Internet. They have problems when they go on calls. Millions of visitors drive the Big Sur coast people have died for lack of connectivity. So how do we get the Public Utilities Commission to acknowledge that there is no effective broadband or even a low speed internet, relatively low speed Internet available for almost the entire Big Sur coast. You show nothing on your map from Monterey down to the San Luis Obispo County line. So, how do we get on the map and bring broadband for all to Big Sur?

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you, Mr. Kaplan. Our next speaker will be Maddie Ribble. Please unmute.

Maddie Ribble: Hello! Good morning. My name is Maddie Ribble. I represent the children's partnership, a statewide organization working to advance health equity and racial justice for children and families across California. Especially the families of color who are disproportionately lacking access to reliable, affordable Internet. We are appreciated by many of the sentiments offered at this morning's meeting. However, we have been, and we continue to be, deeply concerned about the lack of equity, community and accountability in the MMBI process and the problematic outcomes that this flaw process has delivered. In recent weeks the Middle Mile map has undergone multiple rounds of changes. Some of them major without notice to or consultation with affected communities. Segments in historically marginalized communities where affordable and reliable Internet has remained elusive, particularly those communities where the digital divide is most dire. Were pushed to the back of the line to currently unfunded phases of work. And while we appreciate the stated commitment this morning to fully fund one network. The reality is that the future funding needed to complete the entire network is far from guaranteed, and the projects in practice will proceed in phases. Since early August multiple changes have been made to the maps with no more documentation than an updated date at the very bottom. The changes to the maps were decided without public consultation, with no explanation or updated analysis, and were published quietly, with no announcement. The most recent was this morning. But it is still up to communities to scour the maps, trying to figure out what the changes were. The current map, with one phase does not include information about which segments are contracted and which are intended continuing to obscure the impacting communities. Considering the unprecedented taxpayer investment in the MMBI and that it is a once in a generation opportunity to close the digital divide once and for all. This lack of equity, community and

accountability is unconscionable. The connectivity needs of the least connected and most disadvantaged communities must be prioritized as existing resources are allocated. And communities must be included in this process and not continue to be cut out, as we've seen in recent months. We stand together in solidarity with our partners at Oakland Undivided, Kade, Digital Equity LA, and advocate across the State and calling for you to take urgent action to fix this broken process and it's problematic outcomes. Thank you very much.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Ms. Ribble. Joel Arevalos will speak next.

Hector Delatore: Yes, this is Hector Delatore. Joel Alrevalos is the one who set up our system, so his name comes up. I am the executive Director of the Gateway cities Council of Governments, and a former State Assembly member representing the samecommunity in Southeast LA. County. Gateway cities has a disproportionate amount of California's most severely impacted, disadvantaged community neighborhoods socioeconomic measures. Gateway cities has a 5% of the Statewide population, but 10% of disadvantaged community census tracks. In fact, we have 23% of the statewide top 5 percentile disadvantaged community census tracks and 36% of the top 10 percentile disadvantaged community tracks. So clearly low income underserved by any measure. What the Administration has done by reducing the overall plan of the Golden State network by 13% in your MMBI routes, translated into 62% of the routes being eliminated in funding for our section of MMBI. We went from a 118 miles of MMBI routes to 45 miles of MMBI routes from 26 cities to 8, and none of the 6 that were highlighted in the Governor's press release announcement of this initiative 2 years ago we call these 6 cities the skipped over 6. We did not highlight them. The Administration did not to mention that Beverly Hills and Malibu remain. You can give us all kinds of dancing around loops and technology. But this is exactly why we have a digital divide in the first place. So if it was easy, it would have been done a long time ago. Clearly it is not, and clearly we are being left behind again. So what we've been offered is that the governor will put our part of the proposal into the January budget. If that commitment is so ironclad, we request that the original southeast Los Angeles Broadband roots be reinstated immediately, and the administration swap out an equivalent segment with high existing connectivity and a lower socioenvironmental vulnerability index. That seems like a fair compromise to get us connected and to close the digital divide in these very low income communities. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you, sir. Our next speaker will be Shawn Trento. Shawn.

Shawn Trento: Thank you very much. Yeah. Sorry. I just unmuted. I just wanted to highlight and reiterate the enthusiasm for the project from
community broadband efforts. We're an electric cooperative that for the last decade has been building fiber to the home in our very rural and isolated communities, and this is going to be a game changer for us in terms of connectivity resiliency, and reliability. We've already built the last mile, but our backhaul is extremely limited and extremely expensive. So this is perfect for us and I just wanted to be a cheerleader for the program and thank you all for your efforts. That's all.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Bill Schweitzer. Please unmute.

Bill Schweitzer: I'm here.

Alicia Alvarado: Okay.

Bill Schweitzer: Good afternoon, or it's almost afternoon. I want to give a little bit of a success story. So during the presentation Ms. Benton showed a picture of the fiber being set, sent on a highway 67 in San Diego County. Due to a partnership of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors with Caltrans. And recently I have, with the help of Scott Adams and Ben Polsky and Eric Hunsinger, we've made contact with them. I run a wireless Internet service provider in rural San Diego County and the Middle Mile fiber, which is already being laid on State Route 67 will be a great help to us, and that process is already started. So we're going to be the first people to try some of these processes. But I think it might just work out just fine, so thank you all for your help.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you, Mr. Schweitzer. Our next speaker will be Carl.

Carl: Good morning, and Madam Chair. Thank you for allowing us to be seen, and to see you as we speak and to all of you for your work in this regard. I'm joining you this morning as vice chair of the California Transportation Commission, on which I've had the pleasure of serving 5 terms 17 years but I always like to be fully transparent. My day job is with Toronto Wireless, a California founded and headquartered next generation, fixed wireless access technology company. I want to start by thanking Scott Adams for virtually participating in day 2 of our California Transportation Commission, hearing just yesterday in Madera and providing us with an update on the Middle Mile Broadband initiative as well as the digital equity plan. These all go hand in hand. And he did a great job representing this group and our State. And it was appropriate that we were in the Central Valley City and county of Madera, where there are so many unserved and underserved Californians who in that region also are overwhelmingly people of color that we need to make sure that we serve both with our middle mile broadband initiative. But then the last mile, and I want to thank you all for how well you articulated today the link between the middle mile and the last mile. I would just stress as the gentleman from Oakland did, that this is once in a lifetime funding, and that finances, as we all know, are finite, and we have to leverage limited dollars, and I'd be appreciated to be placed in touch with that gentleman representing the city of Oakland. I also just want to stress again that time deployments matter, and I'm encouraged that your work, of course, is to finish the 10,000 Middle Mile network by December of 2026. We have to continue to work with our State and Federal funds on the last mile to meet the appropriate deadlines for both the BEAD program and the BEAD NOFO of 2028 as well, so that we do not lose another generation of Californians permanently on the wrong side of the digital divide. My last point I would just make is that we have to remember, in addition to finances being finite and leveraging limited dollars, that we need to recognize as you have Secretary Tong, so ably and articulately that technology advances And we have to ensure that we keep high standards for reliability and speed and meet and exceed the FCC's standards of 100 megabits per second download, 20 megabits per second upload. That should be the floor. We can do much better as we scale to meet the needs of all Californians. Please know that the CTC as you know, is mentioned in the executive order as a partner. We want to take that as seriously, and be put to work with you to solve these challenges for our State, and know that we are available to you both as Commissioners, myself as Vice chair, and our staff. Thank you again.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next Speaker will be Lindsay Skolnik.

Lindsey Skolnik: Good morning members of the committee. Can you hear me?

Alicia Alvarado: Yes.

Lindsey Skolnik: Great. My name is Lindsay Skolnik, and I represent the California Alliance for digital equity. I am here to uplift the Alliance's deep concerns in regards to the opaque MMBI decision making process that resulted in the release of an updated network map. Over the summer, CDT released a new map that completely restructured the MMBI, deprioritizing broadband infrastructure, build out in disconnected and historically disenfranchised communities. This was the first change to the MMBI map in nearly a year and a half, and the map was published without any explanation or paired data which is shocking when you consider the unprecedented level of investment in the MMBI. Since muse broke, our partners have requested more details about the map from various State stakeholders but have received very little information. After months of back and forth conversations, we were hoping to at least learn what segments of the map have been contracted to build or lease. Up until yesterday there was no publicly available information about the funding allocations for contracts. Rather than hearing from State stakeholders we learned from Account Matters article that the State had already spent 1.8 billion on various lease, purchase and joint build agreements. And of that 1.2 billion went to leases for existing infrastructure in areas like Beverly hills and West LA. This is astounding, not only due to the continued lack of transparency, but also because this approach doubles down on infrastructure, and some of the State's most connected communities. Should the State move forward with the updated MMBI map, we worry a once in a generation broadband infrastructure investment could become a wasted opportunity to finally close the digital divide. We urge you to reprioritize, bringing broadband infrastructure to California's least connected communities. Further, in an effort to increase transparency and accountability we urge the MMAC to return to monthly meetings and release more details on how the MMBI is moving forward. Thank you.

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Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker is Sarah McCormick.

Sarah McCormick, City of Fort Bragg: Hello, Madam Chair and committee members. My name is Sarah McCormick, and I work for a small jurisdiction of 7,000 on the Mendocino coast. We are considered a low income community and an example of a rural community that doesn't have access to reliable, affordable digital infrastructure. Our city leadership is committed to providing this infrastructure publicly, and we developed a high level design for a fiber to the premise network that has been now brought to construction level designs through LATA funding. This probably sounds super familiar because I had the opportunity to speak with you last month or provide public comment last month. Most of my comments at that time were fearful, because the success of all of this work that we've been doing is dependent on connecting to the State's Middle Mile network. If you recall, I brought up that the time last year when the AT&T back hall was severed and we had to close down all of our schools because there was no connectivity. I'm here now to say that we are very pleased to be working with the team at the Department of Technology and a joint build agreement to ensure connectivity to the middle mile network. Ben, Shannon, Mr. Payne all of them have been extremely helpful and we have regular meetings that we've set up to discuss how this will unfold. Just want to also say thank you to the leadership of this committee. And basically everybody that we've been working with behind the scenes has been really helpful. And at the same time, when I applied all the advocacy that's

happening to prioritize existing secured funding to connect disadvantaged communities like ours. This is a huge investment. It's really exciting and just want to thank you as the committee for your leadership, and thanks again for letting me have a time to talk to you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker is Shayna Englin.

Shayna Englin: Hi. My name is Shayna Englin. I represent digital equity LA. across sectoral coalition of more than 50 organizations serving communities across LA. County and the State. I'm here to express our dismay at the disconnect between the MMBI and the last mile projects it is intended to enable and the ongoing lack of transparency in its implementation. In early August, again in September, and throughout October, MMBI maps have been updated to remove, proposed build out and historically disenfranchised communities, that currently lack of affordable, reliable Internet. Some revisions were made on September 29 the day applications were due for the Federal Funding Grant program. The most recent update was this morning. These updates are made without any notice or communication with the impacted communities, nor any apparent consideration of the impacts on Last Mile project planning underway.
Worse, they're made with no change log or similar documentation about what was changed in the update. So applicants or advocates are left to compare screenshots to try to figure it out. These abrupt changes have been incredibly costly for localities, local agencies and community organizations that have spent the better part of 2 years building extensive plans based on the MMBIs publicly released information.
Some communities saw no alternative but to drop or substantially reduce the proposed projects in high need areas.

This is no way to implement a nearly 4 billion dollar program, and it further imperils the effectiveness of another 4 billion dollar and public dollar for last mile connectivity. It is not too late to change course. Moving forward, we urge the committee to prioritize increased transparency, coordination, and communication in regards to the MMBI and last mile projects. You can start with these meetings, return to monthly meetings, make them less performative and include more public input and engagement. On all of this we stand with Oakland Undivided, Kade, and myriad others and asking for your urgent action. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker is Ray Lopez-Chang.

Ray López-Chang: Good morning, state leaders. Thank you all for your presentation today and for your detailed comments. My name is Ray Lopez Chang with GPSN, we are an organization focused on improving public education through our group of over 70 LA based cross sector organizations, and we are also a member and Co. Convenor of the digital equity LA coalition. We are here to express concern about the State's implementation of community engagement and share an opportunity to redefine our partnership moving forward. We appreciate that the CPUC has made an effort to solicit input and engage communities on various proceedings. Including over the last 2 years on this middle mile Broadband initiative but the reason our organization is here today is because to interact with this body you need access to quality, high speed Internet or if you don't live in Sacramento several $100 to book a flight which means you likely don't hear from the underserved communities that we represent. So when you hear from us and other community based organizations across the State behind our voice during this public comment is the weight of hundreds of thousands of Californians who are being shown that

broadband access is a luxury or that quality broadband infrastructure is more important in areas who live in luxury. You know, online, the CPUC post it's 5 core values accountability, excellence,
integrity, open communication, and stewardship. And at times these values have been exercised but more recently with inconsistent developments on middle mile these values have been ignored. And so we know the State says it wants to hear from communities especially given the CPUC opened a Grant application to increase community engagement but recently trust has deteriorated significantly. And our collective goal to serve Californians equitably unfortunately, no longer feels like a shared goal. And so, like any healthy relationship we are communicating to you what we know to be our reality based on the actions presented to us, and those actions include selective transparency and not so open communication. And so I'd like to emphasize that we have a tremendous volume of work together ahead of us, and our intention to serve as an amplifier of people's voices remains strong, and we hope your intention to find public solutions is stronger. And so, folks, we are holding on to the aspiration that decision makers and staff of this body, and the responsible State agencies will reflect on your individual capacity to influence conversations, repair harm, and live by the values you've set forth to the public. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Lance W.

Lance Ware: Hello, and good morning. I'm Lance Ware from AVX networks. We are very aggressively trying to pursue a submarine cable middle mile to Catalina Island. We've had a fair amount of engagement with Erik and others in the middle mile and always appreciate their input and feedback.
At the moment we're pursuing the FFA Grant to try to enable connectivity and bridge the digital divide for this island. One of the biggest things that some of the other speakers have referred to is middle mile throughput and connectivity and we're having a huge issue with scale to support the 4,000 residents of this island and the 1 million plus tourists. So we would ask for the PUC support in in helping us bridge this literally digital island and get better connectivity over for the folks. We have a fair amount of stakeholder support and some may not know that the students of Avalon's K through 12 school are entitled to the Long Beach promise including free tuition if they're qualified for the first 2 years. There's a huge issue, with cost for both Housing and Long Beach, as well as commuting to Long Beach so connectivity is really one of the best and only solutions for this. And so we just asked that the Commission and others keep an open eye on this, and guide us on how we might participate in building out what ostensibly highest cost is the middle mile portion and then funding the last mile here as well with fiber optics, but really solidifying that the middle mile piece. Thank you all for your time and patience on this.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Jorge Rivera.

Jorge Rivera (he/him): Hello! Can you hear me?

Alicia Alvarado: Yes.

Jorge Rivera (he/him): Okay, great. Hi, everybody. My name is Jorge Rivera. I represent the Healing and Justice Center. We're a community based nonprofit advocating for low income people of color in the San Gabriel Valley within Los Angeles County. We just want to echo what some of the other previous people had shared around the flawed MMBI process to date, and how this is going to result in wasted an opportunity to finally close the

digital divide. It was already mentioned that in the in the summer the MMBI maps were completely restructured deprioritizing broadband infrastructure buildout and historically disenfranchised communities that lack affordable reliable Internet. The last publicly available data or the explanation the MMBI released was in March 2022, and since then there's been no public log of any changes that have been made, decisions about how and where to spend the nearly 4 million dollars in public funds have been made in secret behind closed doors and have been extremely limited with community engagement. So these decisions that have been made without any publicly available data, analysis or explanation is intended to collect innovative ideas for solutions that have all remained secret. The extent to which CDT has executed all these secret decisions about the public spending has been hidden from public view. There is no publicly available information regarding what segments of the map have been contracted to build or lease or are currently being negotiated for these purchase or co-build. Considering the historic level of public investment in the MMBI and the States early commitments to include community input in its planning process. The total lack of transparency here is inexcusable. Without transparency, we can't have any accountability. So we are here today in support of Oakland undivided, K., Digital equity LA, and the many residents that we represent here in San Juan Valley to urge the MMAC to return to monthly rather than quarterly meetings. Urgently release the information driving MMBI and make publicly immediately and in an ongoing way, the details of where and how this project is moving forward. Further, we urge you to reprioritize bringing broadband infrastructure to California's least connected communities. Thank you so very much.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Josh Butler.

Josh Butler: Good afternoon. My name is Josh Butler, and I represent Human IT. We are a social enterprise that refurbishes used technology and gets it into the hands of people on the wrong side of the digital divide.
We stand with equity advocates across the State and urging the committee to address this systematically and deeply flawed data that may be driving the MMBI rollout. I say may, because, as others have noted, there is no transparency around having MMBI eyes being rolled out, or what's driving it. Myriad organizations and advocates have presented copious evidence of the flaws. Extremely wealthy enclaves of mansions are marked in the maps as unserved or even priority unserved, even as incumbent ISPs publicly advertised gigabyte service at affordable prices to those same enclaves.
High poverty neighborhoods are marked as served even as attempts to get service from ISPs that are literally serve them. Surface quote no service available messages or offers of service that are slow and expensive.
Apartment buildings, housing, dozens of families are marked as single unit dwellings are marked as served when only a leasing office can get access. Housing and farm worker communities and other rural communities is undercounted, resulting in understatement of unserved households.
The recent La Times editorial state said that the agencies have acknowledged the maps have problems but proceeded. Anyway, it's irresponsible to base 1 billion dollar once in a generation funding decisions on bad data end quote. It's not only irresponsible, but the reliance on bad data for the MMBI threatens the effectiveness of billions of dollars in once in a generation, broadband infrastructure investments, and may perpetuate the same divestment practices of industry stakeholders that have bypassed high poverty, urban, rural, and tribal communities for decades. This approach could double down on the digital divide, not solve it. It's not too late to change course. We urge the committee to act with

urgency and decisiveness, to address these demonstrably inaccurate maps to ensure that MMBI can meet its stated equity objectives. Thank you.

Alivia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Erika Cervantes.

Erika Cervantes (she/hers/ella) | ABC: Good afternoon. My name is Erika Cervantes, and I represent Alliance for better community. We serve Latinos across La county on issues impacting education, health, economic prosperity, and civic engagement. We want to acknowledge and first thank Senator Gonzalez for her unwavering support and dedication to legislation that advances digital equity. We along her serve the Southeast LA. Neighborhoods which include some of the State's least connected highest poverty most vulnerable in the State. The region is predominantly Latino, low income, and monolingual Spanish speaking. In November 2021, we were thrilled when these communities were included in the initial MMBI projects announced, and later reaffirmed in analysis and data released in March 2022. Our local leaders immediately got to work, spending the last almost 2 years to leverage the middle mile to finally bring equitable access to fast, reliable Internet to these communities. So we were dismayed and frankly furious when, with no announcement, consultation, or opportunity to collaborate, to find alternative solutions the State yet again disinvested from our communities by moving the project to a future unfunded phase of the work. MMBI leaders made these changes within just weeks of deadlines for last mile funding applications. The preference projects connecting to the middle mile, and their response to our communities was simply to hide the information. This has left our communities feeling unheard, disregarded. And it's imperative that we address the situation to ensure fair and equitable access to the resources that were initially promised to this region, and that there is transparency and accountability moving forward. As mentioned previously, we appreciate the State's commitment this morning to fully funding what network, however, the real reality is that the future funding needed to complete the entire network is far from guaranteed, and thus it will proceed in phases. As we recently learned in a Cal matter's article that the State has spent 1.2 billion to lease for existing infrastructure, and that includes leases for infrastructure in Beverly Hills and parts of West LA. Some of the wealthiest and best connected communities in LA. County, and back to State. In solidarity with Oakland united Kade, and advocates across the state, we join in asking MMAC to take action on this. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Arturo Juarez.

Arturo Juarez: Thank you. Good afternoon my name is Arturo Juarez, and I represent Nextgen Policy. Nextgen policy is a California based nonprofit organization, dedicated to supporting and advocating for progressive policy, legislative and programmatic issues for all California's. We're also a founding member of Kate and a member of the digital Equity LA coalition. We want to acknowledge and thank Senator Gonzales and Assembly Member Wood, for their unwavering support and dedication to legislation that advances digital equity, including critical mapping legislation just signed into law weeks ago. As already mentioned by other digital equity advocates the existing maps in use by the State, favor affluent and serve communities that often enjoy multiple options for affordable high speed Internet. Meanwhile, the imperative for ensuring accurate maps and middle mile investments in underserved communities becomes even more pressing as the upcoming Federal funding account grants, awards and other imminent State and Federal broadband funding is deployed. Real change begins with collaborating with community leaders in the areas we know are the least connected, including historically redlined urban

areas, tribal areas and farm worker communities. We thank you and commit to continuing to stand with you and other esteemed MMAC members to make the prioritization of unconnected and undercounted communities a central focus moving forward. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Kareem Weaver.

Kareem Weaver -Oakland NAACP: Hello! My name is Kareem Weaver. With the Oakland NAACP. And I'm calling in today to emphasize the importance of prioritizing broadband investment in the communities that need it most. Specifically, historically red line black and brown communities like East and West Oakland, that have been bypassed from public infrastructure investments for generations. I've heard several people call in and talk about redlining, but we have seen it play out in transportation, environment and educational funding throughout the community in Oakland for generations. We're encouraged, the Governor partnering with the Congressional black caucus, and has committed to fully funding the entire 10,000 miles of broadband infrastructure throughout the State. And now we implore the State to prioritize the highest needs communities first. Justice delayed is justice denied, and we should not ask historically marginalized communities to wait another day of promised funding for the future. We welcome ongoing collaboration and thank you for your time.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Priscilla Nichols.

Priscilla Nichols: Good morning. Can you hear me? Okay, okay. I wanted to first of all, show my appreciation for all the work you're doing to provide Internet access for everyone in California as a person who's 73 limited income. My first question is, with the vast resources this State has, some countries have free Internet for every part of their country. Is this a possibility in the future for the state of California? Internet is so important for healthcare education. And that would be my desire to see free Internet throughout the whole State of California. Thank you.

Alicia Alvarado: Thank you. We have one caller. Would you like to speak?
Looks as though. Thank you. There were not any emails received prior to MMAC. If any emails are received after or during, we will respond.
Thank you. That brings us to the end. No additional callers, no one from the audience. Okay, I turn back over to you.

The Chair: Appreciate it. I would like to open it up to any committee members that like to make a comment before we close up today and adjourn today's meeting. Are there any comments? Mr. Keever?

Michael Keever: Thank you. I just want to express appreciation for everybody on the public comment period. It is important that we hear from you and all of the input that we receive is important in helping us to take this program forward. This is an important program it is a once-in-a-lifetime investment. At the same time, this will be an ongoing investment into the State going forward. So thank you very much for your input.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr. Keefer. Sounds like a commissioner. Commissioner Houck.

Darci Houck: I just wanted to echo that appreciate everyone's comments and just the concerns and the connection between the last mile and the middle mile, and how this is

working, and I know our staff have been available to help applicants and answer questions and be available and just again appreciate the time and attention that the public has had in reaching out, and the partnership that we've had with CDT on working through these issues. So.

The Chair: Thank you Commissioner. Secretary Tong.

Amy Tong: Yes, I want to, you know, really, really appreciate I know some of the comments were hard to hear, but it's a true reflection of how the community feels, and that is most important. So wanted to acknowledge that. And at the same time not to make any excuses or anything but I do also have the privilege of you know the front row seat watching some of the events unfold, especially with the department of Technology you know in my portfolio of departments. And I'll defer to the chair, you know, to how to continue to make improvements on communication and transparency, that the public's asking for. But also do acknowledge the fact that the contract that was signed it was in response to open procurement, competitive procurement. The department has gone through, and perhaps some of the lack of communication that took place before that, you know, was frustrating to the community that we heard today was due to the fact that you all are going through a confidential negotiation process. And now that those negotiations are completed, the contracts become available, I do urge the departments probably do more of sharing and communicating, and so to, you know, really respond to the community ask of how those lending's were being spent. Having the map being showed that different delivery method was also coincide with my understanding of the completion of those negotiations. So that's I think it's again not to make any excuses but I think it's important context for folks to be aware of. Another comment to the timing of the CPUCs FFA, I understand that also, you know, from hearing a lot of these community feedback did cause a disruption to folks after seeing the map of changes and Commissioner Houck correct me if I'm wrong, my understanding the CPUC is also very committed

Amy Tong: to continue to work with the applicants without having to update the application and reflection of the map, but through the iterative process to work through that so maybe on that, if you can just comment on that.

Darci Houck: Yes, our staff are committed to working with the applicants and talking through with them of how to address any issues that may have caused and ensure that those applications will be able to address those issues. And I know each application is different and we have dedicated staff that can respond and if there's also concerns again. I know that the program and what we're doing is very important to both President Reynolds and to myself. And I've also been going out and talking with communities about the applications as well. So we are absolutely dedicated to continuing those discussions with applicants.

Amy Tong: Yeah, thank you. And then, just to wrap up the last point, I do want to say again, really, really do appreciate the continued conversation that's taking place. And hear you loud and clear that while some have expressed depreciation, you know that they're ongoing meetings with the Department, not everyone felt the same way, they had the access and that's a reflection perhaps you know, the MMAC meeting could be revisited in term of the frequency when it was first started the monthly it does provide a much more open access to folks and the quarterly, you know if that doesn't achieve that I

would encourage maybe the chair and the committee to discuss revisiting the frequency knowing that you know a lot more important work continue to take place. Two, in between these meetings, that my understanding the staff it's also being, you know, very much opened available to continue to have the conversation, as you heard from the public comment today. Some definitely have expressed they felt that, and some unfortunately, you know, didn't experience that, and that is something I would also continue to encourage the Department various departments to continue to promote that openness. And I know there's an earlier QR Code about the newsletter about all of the information being released, you can receive it there, even if you don't attend the MMAC meeting. I myself have signed up to that newsletter as well. So I guess at the end of the day I do echo the concern that communication transparency do go hand in hand. It does go a long way to build that trust, and I know that is the every intention for every one of us here to do that, and I know that was the intention for the department. But improvement can always be made to really, really being explicit about it.

The Chair: Thank you. Secretary Tong. Are there other members that like to comment? Supervisor Alejo. Supervisor Alejo.

Supervisor Luis Alejo: Thank you, Madam Chair, as one of the local government representatives on this advisory committee I'm all about amplifying local voices in this process. And so I want to just also acknowledge all the public comments we as people have pointed out, we only meet once a quarter, so I'm glad that our policy is to not limit the time for public comments, and that we listen to everyone out as these meetings advance. I do want to encourage the public to submit those maps that were shared earlier during the meeting. If they could be emailed to all the advisory committee members, and that the staff forward that to us, so we could take a closer look at it. And certainly, any public comments that get emailed to us as well. I would certainly like to read it. And just in response to the public comments, I would just encourage staff to really look closely at these areas of concern, impacting disadvantaged communities, communities of color that have been raised here in Oakland and in Los Angeles. I want to make sure that staff you know follow through on, on some of the concerns that are being raised, because I think these public speakers know their communities better than we could ever know it. And so they are looking at their own communities with the microscope on how best to carry out this project in their areas and neighborhoods. So I want to make sure that we're acknowledging that and just taking a closer look in response to the concerns that continue to rise. Last point, I want to make is, yes, that I'm really glad the governor made his commitment. We're going to see what that commitment is when in terms of a number to fully fund on the full 10,000 miles come January. But as Hector, and I know it's a legislative process, it's politics there's budget deficits. So we want to make sure that these voices help us raise the concern, that is needed to make sure that the legislature and the governor do the right thing when it comes to the budget and it's final approval in June. So I think these concerns being raised, really help us amplify the concern to make sure that they are fully funded, and that the funding won't be an issue to not get this work done right in California. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Supervisor. All right. I just also would like to reiterate how important the public comment period is for all of us to hear, as you also heard, that we need to do better when it comes to communication and transparency. We are privileged. We now, at least within department technology, now have a communication deputy director and stakeholder engagement that just was appointed by Governor Newsom. So we are lucky

to have Monica Hernandez that joined us, you can't all see her in the poll, but she's raising her hand in the auditorium. But yeah, we are looking for ways to engage and have these open dialogues, so that we can make sure that your voices are heard. With that we are also going to, as Secretary Tong and I were passing notes we are going to talk to the committee about how that additional transparency, if frequency would make more sense for everyone to ensure that as we are making progress, that you're not waiting for quarterly, or having to wait and look at a map or newsletter to find out what's going on. So all of that said, we are promising everyone we are going to do better. So thank you for presenters, attendees, and committee members. Our next meeting is Friday, January 19th, 2024, from 10aam to 11:30am and with that we will adjourn this meeting. Thank you.