



Executive Committee Meeting

**Wednesday
November 6, 2024
10:00 A.M.**

**1215 K Street, Suite 1650
Sacramento, California 95814**

**Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA)
Executive Committee Meeting
November 6, 2024 - 10:00 a.m.
1215 K Street, Suite 1650
Sacramento, CA 95814**

Executive Committee Members:

Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County
Supervisor David Griffith, Alpine County
Supervisor Chris Lopez, Monterey County
Supervisor Geri Byrne, Modoc County
Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County
Supervisor Doug Teeter, Butte County

Supervisor Rex Bohn, Humboldt County
Supervisor Lori Parlin, El Dorado County
Supervisor EJ Crandell, Lake County
Supervisor Bob Nelson, Santa Barbara County

**Additional Teleconference Locations are Listed on the
Last Page of this Agenda**

(All Teleconference Locations are Accessible to the Public)

This meeting will also be livestreamed for public access. Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting using one of the following methods:

1. Join the Zoom meeting application on your computer, tablet or smartphone:
Go to: <https://rcrcnet.zoom.us/j/81818239561>
Enter Password: 574998

2. Call-in and listen to the meeting:
Dial +1 (669) 444-9171
Enter meeting ID: 818 1823 9561
Enter password: 574998

PUBLIC COMMENT USING ZOOM: Members of the public who join the Zoom meeting, either through the Zoom app or by calling in, will be able to provide live public comment at specific points throughout the meeting.

EMAIL PUBLIC COMMENT: One may also email public comment to mchui@rcrcnet.org before or during the meeting. All emailed public comments will be forwarded to all GSCA Executive Committee members.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

*Chair, Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County
Vice Chair, Supervisor David Griffith, Alpine County*

2. Public Comment

At this time any member of the public may address the Board. Speakers are asked to state their name for the record but are not required to do so. Comments are usually limited to no more than 3 minutes per speaker.

3. Consent Agenda – ACTION

a. June 19, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Page 1

- 4. **GSCA Financial Reports** (Discussion and possible action relative to)
Milena De Melo, RCRC Finance Director
 - a. **Budget v. Actual Report (Period Ended September 30, 2024)** **Page 3**

- 5. **Business and Administrative Matters** (Discussion and possible action relative to)
Milena De Melo
 - a. **GSCA 2025 Proposed Budget – ACTION** **Page 7**

- 6. **Advocacy Updates**
Tracy Rhine, RCRC Senior Policy Advocate
 - a. **Legislative and Regulatory Update** **Page 13**

- 7. **Program Updates**
Barbara Hayes, RCRC Chief Economic Development Officer
 - a. **GSCA Program Update** **Page 15**

- 8. **Adjournment**

Agenda items will be taken as close as possible to the schedule indicated. Any member of the general public may comment on agenda items at the time of discussion. In order to facilitate public comment, please let staff know if you would like to speak on a specific agenda item. The agenda for this regular meeting of the GSCA Executive Committee was duly posted at its offices, 1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, California, 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Any written materials related to an open session item on this agenda that are submitted to the GSCA Executive Committee than 72 hours prior to the meeting, and that are not exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, will promptly be made available for public inspection at GSCA's principal office, 1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 447-4806, during normal business hours, and on the GSCA website, <https://www.goldenstateconnect.org>

Additional Teleconference Location(s)

Santa Barbara County 511 E Lakeside Parkway, Suite 47 Santa Maria, CA 93455	
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**Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA)
Executive Committee Meeting
June 19, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.
1215 K Street, Suite 1650
Sacramento, CA 95814**

Executive Committee Members:

Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County
Supervisor David Griffith, Alpine County
Supervisor Chris Lopez, Monterey County
Supervisor Geri Byrne, Modoc County
Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County
Supervisor Doug Teeter, Butte County

Supervisor Rex Bohn, Humboldt County
Supervisor Lori Parlin, El Dorado County
Supervisor EJ Crandell, Lake County
Supervisor Bob Nelson, Santa Barbara County

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

GSCA Chair, Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County, presided. Present were Executive Director Patrick Blacklock, General Counsel Arthur J. Wylene, and RCRC Director for Board Operations Maggie Chui, clerk. GSCA Chair Garamendi called the meeting to order at 12:54 p.m. A quorum was determined at that time. Those members present:

<u>Supervisor</u>	<u>County</u>
Jack Garamendi	Calaveras
David Griffith	Alpine
Geri Byrne	Modoc
Miles Menetrey	Mariposa
Doug Teeter	Butte
Rex Bohn	Humboldt
Lori Parlin	El Dorado
EJ Crandell	Lake
Bob Nelson*	Santa Barbara

Absent

Chris Lopez Monterey

*Attendance via Zoom

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

- a. April 24, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- b. GSCA Financial Reports
 - i. Budget v. Actual Report (Period Ended April 30, 2024)

GSCA Chair, Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County, called for approval of the above-listed consent agenda item.

Supervisor Rex Bohn, Humboldt County, motioned to approve the consent agenda. Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County seconded the motion. Motion passed with all Supervisors present voting “Aye,” except:

Not Voting: Santa Barbara County

Legislative and Regulatory Update

Tracy Rhine, RCRC Senior Policy Advocate, provided a brief legislative and regulatory advocacy update. On the regulatory front, Ms. Rhine highlighted developments in the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, along with the Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) proceeding. On the legislative front, Ms. Rhine provided an update on the 2024-25 State Budget Package and its impact on legislative initiatives concerning COLR obligations for providers, and the Loan Loss Reserve (LLR) Program.

*GSCA Chair, Supervisor Jack Garamendi, Calaveras County, departed the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

GSCA Program Update

Barbara Hayes, RCRC Chief Economic Development Officer, presented an update on GSCA's priorities, including the Local Agency Technical Assistance Program, the Federal Funding Account (FFA)/Last Mile Program, LLR Program, and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

Ms. Hayes highlighted the inclusion of Imperial County's Broadband Network project among those recommended for funding by the California Public Utilities Commission's FFA Last Mile Program.

Craig Ferguson, RCRC Senior Vice President, discussed ongoing efforts to secure additional funding to support GSCA's program of work.

Adjournment

GSCA Vice Chair, Supervisor David Griffith, Alpine County, adjourned the meeting of the GSCA Executive Committee at 1:19 p.m.



To: Members of the GSCA Executive Committee
From: Milena De Melo, RCRC Finance Director
Date: October 29, 2024
Re: Budget v. Actual Report (Period Ended September 30, 2024)

Summary

The Statement of Revenues and Expenses for GSCA provides a budget to actual comparison for the period ended September 30, 2024.

GSCA's expenditures exceeded revenues by \$970,280 thousand resulting in a \$970.3 thousand unfavorable variance from the September 2024 year-to-date budget. Items of significance include:

- An unfavorable variance of \$8.5 million from LATA grant revenues driven by the timing of LATA work. This variance is offset by the favorable \$7.4 million variance for consulting expenditures related to this work.
- An unfavorable variance of approximately \$2.0 thousand for payroll and payroll taxes. In August 2024 GSCA hired a Procurement and Contracting Specialist to work with the project team to ensure that deployment of broadband infrastructure across project areas within GSCA's member counties is done within the parameters of applicable laws and regulations, best practices, and as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Attachment

- Statement of Revenues and Expenses, Budget vs. Actual, for the Period Ended September 30, 2024

GOLDEN STATE CONNECT AUTHORITY
Statement of Revenues and Expenses - Budget v Actual
For the period ended September 30, 2024

	2024 Annual Budget	Period ended September 30, 2024 Budget	Period ended September 30, 2024 Actual	Variance favorable / (unfavorable)	Percent favorable / (unfavorable)
Revenue:					
Contribution from RCRC	\$ 1,231,050	\$ 923,288	\$ 936,802	\$ 13,515	1.5%
Grant - Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA)	15,324,760	11,493,570	3,055,084	(8,438,486)	-73.4%
Total Revenue	\$ 16,555,810	\$ 12,416,858	\$ 3,991,887	\$ (8,424,971)	-67.9%
Expenditures:					
Accounting and auditing	\$ 11,550	\$ 8,663	\$ 11,000	\$ (2,338)	-27.0%
Computer maintenance and support	3,000	2,250	(1,500)	3,750	166.7%
Conferences attended by staff	5,000	3,750	-	3,750	100.0%
Consultants	100,000	75,000	-	75,000	100.0%
Consultants - LATA	14,835,860	11,126,895	3,754,500	7,372,395	66.3%
Contract support service fee	1,540,500	1,155,375	1,155,375	-	0.0%
Dues, fees & subscriptions	7,500	5,625	465	5,160	91.7%
Insurance	1,900	1,425	2,162	(737)	-51.7%
Legal fees	-	-	25,032	(25,032)	-100.0%
Payroll and payroll taxes	-	-	1,956	(1,956)	-100.0%
Printing and publications	-	-	501	(501)	-100.0%
Rent	15,500	11,625	11,631	(6)	-0.1%
Travel	35,000	26,250	-	26,250	100.0%
Travel - board member reimbursements	-	-	1,046	(1,046)	-100.0%
Total Expenditures	\$ 16,555,810	\$ 12,416,858	\$ 4,962,167	\$ 7,454,690	60.0%
Net Revenues over Expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (970,280)	\$ (970,280)	-100.0%



To: Members of the GSCA Executive Committee
From: Patrick Blacklock, Executive Director
Milena De Melo, RCRC Finance Director
Date: October 29, 2024
Re: GSCA 2025 Proposed Budget - **ACTION**

The proposed Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA) 2025 Operating Budget supports the continued launch of GSCA and its efforts to aid our member counties in broadband deployment. The budget includes projected grant revenues and expenditures associated with the Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) and Federal Funding Account (FFA) Last Mile Program grants. As additional grants, and associated financing strategies, are received and developed throughout the remainder of 2024 and 2025, this budget may need to be amended.

Summary

To better understand the budget, it is necessary to understand the inter-relationship between GSCA and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC). GSCA and RCRC are two separate legal entities, each with their own bylaws and Board of Directors. GSCA does not employ staff. Instead, it contracts with RCRC to provide management, technical, and administrative services as directed by the GSCA Board of Directors. This contract is subject to annual review and follows the budget on today's agenda. Member counties joining GSCA do so via official action taken by their respective Boards of Supervisors. There are no dues or contributions required to join GSCA, hence no such revenues are included within this budget. While the LATA and FFA grant revenues provide programmatic expense reimbursement, significant RCRC contributions are included in the proposed budget to continue advancing this broadband initiative.

Proposed GSCA Budget Summary

The proposed GSCA 2025 Operating Budget (Attachment A) includes total revenues of \$18,448,817 and proposed expenditures of \$58,981,404. The following sections describe in more detail the highlights of the attached proposed 2025 Budget.

2025 Proposed Revenue Highlights

GSCA's revenues consists of a contribution from RCRC and projected grant receipts from LATA and FFA. The proposed 2025 RCRC Operating Revenue Budget totals \$18,448,817. Specific revenue items include:

- **Contribution from RCRC** – GSCA is budgeting for a \$1,666,300 contribution from RCRC. RCRC's contribution is necessary to fund GSCA's activities not otherwise reimbursable through grants and reflects its commitment to GSCA as it continues

to develop into a fully functioning and self-sustaining entity. This contribution from RCRC will be presented for approval to RCRC's Board of Directors as well.

- **Grant revenue – Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA)** – GSCA anticipates having grant revenues, estimated at \$7,959,179 during 2025 for reimbursement of expenses associated with consulting services for execution of member county LATA grant awards. Of the \$7,959,179, all but \$254,534 will pass through GSCA as Consultants expense. \$254,534, will remain with GSCA for contract management and grant administration work that GSCA provides to member county LATA awardees.
- **Grant revenue – Federal Funding Account (FFA)** – GSCA anticipates having revenues, presently estimated at \$8,823,338 during 2025 for reimbursement of expenses associated pre-development costs for FFA last mile funding for projects in Imperial, Alpine, Mono and Amador counties, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Mono). It is important to note that while the total grant awards are much higher, in fact the total awards for these five jurisdictions is over \$88.2 million, revenue contemplated in the 2025 budget is based on program rules and guidelines on request for payment and thus GSCAs recognition of revenue. Of the \$8,823,338, all but \$534,326 will pass through GSCA for pre-development expenses, including permitting and materials to build the last-mile network within awardees jurisdictions. \$534,326, will remain with GSCA for contract management and grant administration.

2025 Proposed Expenditure Highlights

The proposed 2025 GSCA Expenditure Budget totals \$58,981,404. Specific expenditure items include:

- **Pre-development – FFA Last Mile Program** – The most significant expenditure incurred will be for pre-development costs for last-mile broadband infrastructure projects, in the amount of \$49,306,009, including permitting and materials necessary for the deployment of last mile network. The majority of these initial costs are expected to be funded from the issuance of debt further described in section “Budgeted Net Revenue and Bond Issuance” below.
- **Consultants – LATA** – The proposed 2025 budget includes consulting services in the amount of \$7,704,645 paid for network design and engineering costs related to LATA grants. These consulting expenditures are budgeted to be fully reimbursed and paid for by the grant proceeds. The budget contemplates completion of the scope of work under this grant during 2025.
- **Contract support service fee** – The proposed 2025 budget includes a contract support service fee in accordance with the GSCA/RCRC Agreement. As noted above, GSCA staffing and other allocated direct and indirect expenditures are reflected in the \$1,648,800 contract fee to RCRC. This number represents support services provided by RCRC for GSCA's initiatives, including the resources needed to administer LATA and FFA grants.

- **Payroll and payroll taxes** – The proposed 2025 budget includes \$133,350 for payroll and related payroll taxes for 0.35 full time equivalent (FTE) position for a Procurement and Contracting Specialist to work with the project team to ensure that deployment of broadband infrastructure across project areas within GSCA's member counties is done within the parameters of applicable laws and regulations, best practices, and as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- **Consultants** – The proposed 2025 budget includes \$50,000 for consulting fees related to further expansion of broadband related initiatives, beyond those within the scope of LATA and FFA programs.
- **Legal fees** – The proposed 2025 budget includes \$25,000 for legal expenses associated with administration of the LATA and FFA programs.
- **Travel** – The proposed 2025 budget includes \$30,000 for staff travel.
- Other significant expenditures include GSCA's share of rent, accounting and auditing, and insurance costs totaling \$59,600, which includes the estimated costs of single audit for FFA funds received.

Budgeted Net Revenue and Bond Issuance

The proposed budget for 2025 will result in net expenditures over revenue, or a net deficit of \$40,532,587. To address the deficit, the budget further assumes GSCA will issue bonds as a key financing strategy. Total anticipated bond issuance is budgeted at \$59,995,510. By selling these bonds to outside investors, GSCA will be able to raise the necessary funds to cover the immediate cash flow needs and provide seed money to start the project before any grant funding is received. Requests for payment thresholds outlined within the FFA Program Rules and Guidelines will not be met as projected and contemplated in the 2025 Budget, thus this bridge financing is a key part of 2025 budget. The FFA guidelines for payments are as follows:

“Requests for payments may be submitted as the project is progressively deployed. The prerequisite for first payment is the submittal of a progress report to the Commission showing that at least 10 percent of the project has been completed. Subsequent payments are made at the following deadlines: 35 percent completion, 60 percent completion, 85 percent completion and 100 percent completion. The final 15 percent payment request (from 85 to 100 percent) will not be paid without an approved completion report. Payments are based on submitted receipts, invoices and other supporting documentation showing expenditures incurred for the project in accordance with the approved FFA funding budget included in the FFA grantee's application.”

The proceeds from the bond sales will be allocated toward bridging the gap in the budget, allowing for initial investment in necessary permitting and equipment purchase. Additionally, the bond issuance will create an asset in the form of cash (bond proceeds) and an offsetting liability (bond payable) to be paid over thirty (30) years. In future years,

GSCA's budgets will need to allocate resources for this debt service, which will include interest payments and eventual repayment of the principal.

Other Related Matters and Information

On December 7, 2022, GSCA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Golden State Finance Authority (GSFA), an affiliated entity, whereby GSFA is to provide an advance of up to \$2,000,000 to GSCA, to be used by GSCA to pay for the costs of network design and engineering services associated with the LATA grant program. On March 8, 2023, both the Board of Directors of GSFA and GSCA approved a proposed increase in the GSCA advance from \$2.0 million to \$7.0 million. No interest will accrue or be owed by GSCA to GSFA under this MOU. All funds will be reimbursed by the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) LATA awardees which are also GSCA member counties, and several cities therein, from approved CPUC grants. To date, a total of \$5.75 million has been drawn on this line and we anticipate continuation of this support into 2025.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the GSCA Executive Committee approve the following recommendations and direct the Executive Director and RCRC Finance Director to make the same recommendations to the GSCA Board of Directors.

1. Approve the attached proposed 2025 GSCA Operating Budget (Attachment A).
2. Consider and approve the contract service fee to RCRC in the amount of \$1,648,800 which includes a prorated amount of the salaries for RCRC personnel who provide services to GSCA through the contract for services with RCRC, including those of the RCRC President/CEO, RCRC Finance Director and RCRC Senior Vice President as well as a contribution from RCRC in the amount of \$1,666,300.

Attachment

- GSCA 2025 Operating Budget (Attachment A)

GOLDEN STATE CONNECT AUTHORITY
Operating Budget
For the year ended December 31, 2025

	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	Change Increase / (Decrease)
Revenue:			
Contribution from RCRC	\$ 1,666,300	\$ 1,231,050	\$ 435,250
Grant revenue - Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA)	7,959,179	15,324,760	(7,365,581)
Grant revenue - Federal Funding Account (FFA) Last-Mile Program	8,823,338	-	8,823,338
Total Revenue	\$ 18,448,817	\$ 16,555,810	\$ 1,893,007
Expenditures:			
Accounting and auditing	\$ 40,000	\$ 11,550	\$ 28,450
Computer maintenance and support	3,000	3,000	-
Conferences attended by staff	10,000	5,000	5,000
Consultants	50,000	100,000	(50,000)
Consultants - LATA	7,704,645	14,835,860	(7,131,215)
Contract support service fee	1,648,800	1,540,500	108,300
Dues, fees and subscriptions	5,000	7,500	(2,500)
Insurance	2,100	1,900	200
Legal fees	25,000	-	25,000
Miscellaneous	1,000	-	1,000
Payroll and payroll taxes	133,350	-	133,350
Pre-development - FFA Last-Mile Program	49,306,009	-	49,306,009
Rent	17,500	15,500	2,000
Travel - Board member reimbursement	5,000	-	5,000
Travel	30,000	35,000	(5,000)
Total Expenditures	\$ 58,981,404	\$ 16,555,810	\$ 42,425,594
Net Revenue over Expenditures	\$ (40,532,587)	\$ -	\$ (40,532,587)



To: Members of the GSCA Executive Committee
From: Tracy Rhine, RCRC Senior Policy Advocate
Date: October 29, 2024
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

Summary

This memo provides an update on legislative and regulatory activities related to telecommunication policy.

Regulatory Activity

RCRC is engaged in broadband implementation activities at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the California Department of Technology (CDT).

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Proceeding

California will receive \$1.8 billion in BEAD funding, estimated to be available for award mid-2025. The BEAD program directs the state to first prioritize projects to service unserved locations determined by FCC National Broadband maps, then underserved locations, and then projects connecting eligible community anchor institutions that lack access to gigabit-level broadband service, such as schools, libraries, and healthcare facilities. Through this proceeding, the CPUC is seeking input to develop rules where they have the discretion to do so, such as criteria to ultimately select subgrantees.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) approved California's Initial Proposal for BEAD implementation on October 4, 2024. One year from initial proposal approval, states must submit a Final Proposal that details, among other things, the outcome of the subgrantee selection process and how the state will ensure universal coverage. Application release by the CPUC is expected in the first-half of 2025.



To: Members of the GSCA Executive Committee
From: Barbara Hayes, RCRC Chief Economic Development Officer
Craig Ferguson, RCRC Senior Vice President
Date: October 29, 2024
Re: GSCA Program Update

SUMMARY

An overview of the GSCA's broadband infrastructure and digital equity programs of work will be presented.

BACKGROUND

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) Program

All thirty-seven LATA grants that GSCA is managing for our thirty member counties and seven cities therein, are progressing through the final Work Product under their awarded grants. The final packages will include low-level, construction-ready network designs together with identified permit packages by permitting agency for each approximate 40-mile project area included in the grant scope. An extension of the term of all GSCA-partner grants was requested and approved by CPUC LATA program staff. It is anticipated that all work under GSCA partner LATA awards will be complete before January 31, 2025, the newly approved, extended term of the awards.

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Federal Fund Account (FFA) Last Mile Program

On September 27, 2023, GSCA submitted thirty-seven applications to the CPUC FFA Last Mile Program requesting grant funds to deploy open access, last mile, fiber networks in thirty member counties and seven cities/towns within member counties. CPUC FFA Last Mile program staff are currently reviewing and rating the 486 applications that were received. GSCA continues to answer clarifying questions on various applications as CPUC program staff proceed through the review process.

As of October 24, 2024, 69 projects have been approved by the CPUC across thirty of California's 58 counties, totaling approximately \$650 million. Additionally, there are eight projects in three counties, totaling approximately \$157 million, that have been recommended and will be voted upon by the CPUC at the Commission's November 7, 2024, Voting Meeting.

To date, GSCA has received and accepted four FFA Last Mile awards, totaling \$31,053,075 in FFA Last Mile funding for projects in Imperial, Alpine, and Mono counties, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Mono). On October 4, 2024, CPUC FFA Last Mile

program staff recommended approval of GSCA's Amador County FFA Last Mile application, totaling \$57,180,300. This recommendation will be voted upon at the Commission's November 7, 2024, Voting Meeting. If awarded, this will bring GSCA's total FFA Last Mile awards to \$88,233,375.

Each round of project announcements come in the form of staff recommendations that have been issued for public comment as Draft Resolutions. The Public Utilities Commission will act upon the Draft Resolutions at scheduled voting meetings over the coming months. An application not recommended for award in one Resolution with other awards in the same county may be recommended for award in a later Resolution, although this has not yet occurred. Award recommendations will continue to be announced 30 days before each Public Utilities Commission Voting Meeting where review and action on that award will take place. Following the award recommendation there is a Comment and Reply period. Comments and replies received become a matter of public record.

Remaining CPUC Voting Meetings in 2024:

November 7, 2024
December 5, 2024
December 19, 2024

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Loan Loss Reserve (LLR) Program

On April 5, 2024, GSCA submitted thirty-seven applications to the CPUC LLR Program, one to complement each of the thirty-seven FFA Last Mile Program applications. In addition to the thirty-seven GSCA applications, one additional application was submitted by another party. The LLR program, originally funded with \$750 million, was established under Senate Bill 156 and is intended to provide securitization for debt instruments (bonds, loans) assumed by local governments, tribes, and non-profit organizations for the deployment of broadband infrastructure.

Due to the diligent work of RCRC staff and Board members, the Loan Loss Reserve "Pilot" Program, funded at \$50 million, was included in the budget the Governor signed in late June 2024, following elimination of the program earlier in the budget process.

GSCA is now working with CPUC LLR program staff to leverage the reduced amount to maximize its benefit. Through a series of three CPUC Loan Loss Reserve staff recommendations in the form of Draft Resolutions and subsequent Commission action on these Resolutions, Loan Loss Reserve funding will be awarded to GSCA for those GSCA-awarded FFA Last Mile projects.

The first LLR recommendation/Draft Resolution has been approved and aligned the CPUC Loan Loss Reserve Program with the applicable components of Budget Bill SB 164. The second LLR recommendation/Draft Resolution awards \$50 million in Loan Loss Reserve to the single, qualifying applicant of the LLR Program, i.e., GSCA. This recommendation/Draft Resolution has been released and will be acted upon by the CPUC at the Commission's November 7, 2024, Voting Meeting. The third (final) recommendation/Draft Resolution will be issued following the final announcement of FFA Last Mile awards and will include specific GSCA LLR project applications that will be

awarded LLR funding. This recommendation/Draft Resolution is expected to be issued in January/February 2025.

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) – Broadband

NTIA, located within the US Department of Commerce, is the Executive Branch agency that is principally responsible by law for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues, focusing on expanding broadband internet access and adoption in America. The Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program was established within NTIA.

The BEAD program was created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and endowed with \$42.5 billion to build out high-speed internet infrastructure in every US state and territory. By formula, each state will receive an allocation of the total, after submitting a required State Broadband Plan and having it reviewed and accepted by NTIA.

California’s plan has been submitted and accepted, and California is due to receive \$1.86 billion for execution of broadband infrastructure. The calendar for the entire process that will determine BEAD eligible locations in California is as follows:

July 8 – August 6	Challenge Phase – Local and Tribal governments, non-profits, and broadband service providers are eligible to file challenges.
August 7 - August 20	Evidentiary Review - CPUC review of challenges.
August 21 – Sept. 19	Rebuttal Phase – Challenged service providers may provide counterevidence.
Sept. 20 – October 19	Final Determination – Review and determination process for disputed challenges
November 4	Submit Results to NTIA
December 18	NTIA Approval – NTIA reviews challenges and decides whether to approve or reverse CPUC determinations.

DIGITAL EQUITY

Digital Equity Competitive Grant

On September 23, 2024, GSCA submitted a Digital Equity Competitive Grant application to NTIA. The NTIA Digital Equity Competitive grant program made \$1 billion available nationwide for digital equity projects ranging from \$5 million to \$12 million each.

GSCA submitted an application requesting \$12 million for equipment (hardware and software) that will be placed in locations across member counties where members of the public can access and use the equipment to advance digital literacy and encourage digital adoption. The grant also included a request for funding to support a tablet gift program across GSCA member counties, specifically focused on low-income households without

computing devices (smart phones not included), where at least one member of the household has successfully completed a digital literacy module. If GSCA is awarded the grant, consultation with each member county will occur to determine location and management of the equipment locally. GSCA will provide grant administration.

NTIA will make award announcements on a rolling basis between November 2024 and April 2025.

Digital Equity Capacity Grant

The Digital Equity Capacity Grant is also a program of NTIA, but the program funds are being distributed to individual states and territories for implementation of each state's Digital Equity Plan. In the case of California, the Department of Technology (CDT) will manage the Digital Equity Capacity grant program – both the portion of the state award that will remain with CDT for statewide program implementation, and the portion that will be awarded via Request for Proposals to sub-recipients for local implementation of the state's Digital Equity Plan.

Comments on draft program Guidelines were due to CDT by October 29, 2024. RCRC did provide formal Comments on the Guidelines. It is anticipated that the Request for Proposals will be released December 6, 2024, with the application period closing on February 6, 2025, and formal notice of awards being posted by May 15, 2025.

GSCA anticipates applying for the California Digital Equity Capacity Program on behalf of those member counties that opt-in to the grant opportunity with GSCA. The final focus of GSCA's grant application will be determined once the final Guidelines are issued. This will be communicated to GSCA member counties at that time for determination of interest to opt-in to the GSCA Digital Equity Capacity grant.

ATTACHMENT

- FFA Last Mile Awards in GSCA Member Counties (as of October 24, 2024)

FFA Last Mile Awards In GSCA Member Counties
As of October 24, 2024

Member Counties	CPUC Resolution	Staff Recommend.	Commission Meeting	Awardee	Award	Balance Remaining
Imperial County	T-17826	7-Jun	11-Jul	GSCA	\$ 13,834,949	\$ 118,202
Lassen	T-17826	7-Jun	11-Jul	PST	\$ 14,567,629	\$ 10,339,170
Plumas	T-17826	7-Jun	11-Jul	PST	\$ 15,722,087	
Sierra	Ministerial	7-Jun	11-Jul	PST	\$ 16,748,652	\$ 9,811,828
	T-17829	7-Jun	11-Jul	PST	\$ 12,315,278	\$ 191,097
Alpine County	T-17833	28-Jun	22-Aug	GSCA	\$ 6,985,978	\$ 3,076
Modoc	T-17833	28-Jun	22-Aug	Tribe	\$ 23,900,190	\$ 31,051
Santa Barbara	T-17833	28-Jun	22-Aug	Tribe	\$ 4,707,693	\$ 11,163,053
Tulare	T-17833	28-Jun	22-Aug	Varcomm	\$ 10,055,847	
	T-17833	28-Jun	22-Aug	Comcast	\$ 26,577,050	\$ 8,495,528
Town of Mammoth Lakes	T-17835	22-Jul	22-Aug	GSCA	\$ 4,158,014	
Mono County	T-17835	22-Jul	22-Aug	GSCA	\$ 6,074,134	\$ 366,470
Nevada	T-17835	22-Jul	22-Aug	PST	\$ 8,061,025	
	T-17835	22-Jul	22-Aug	Banner Mt	\$ 6,679,247	\$ 60,125,926
Placer	T-17835	22-Jul	22-Aug	Foothills	\$ 23,752,674	\$ 6,504,136
Mendocino	T-17839	8-Aug	12-Sep	Tribe	\$ 35,172,662	
	T-17839	8-Aug	12-Sep	Ft. Bragg	\$ 10,300,000	
	T-17839	8-Aug	12-Sep	Ukiah	\$ 5,587,154	\$ 6,370,996
San Benito	T-17839	8-Aug	12-Sep	Hankins	\$ 10,436,024	\$ -
Sutter	T-17839	8-Aug	12-Sep	Comcast	\$ 13,804,241	\$ 6,593,313
Del Norte	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	Tribe	\$ 4,799,149	\$ -
Humboldt	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	Tribe	\$ 27,445,463	
	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	Vero	\$ 4,396,296	
	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	ATT	\$ 2,156,000	
	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	ATT	\$ 775,000	
	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	ATT	\$ 531,021	\$ 10,123,827

Siskiyou	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	Sisk. Tele.	\$ 11,730,137	\$ 34,059,018
Multiple Counties (DN & Humboldt)	T-17846	22-Aug	26-Sep	Tribe	\$ 19,602,036	\$ -
El Dorado	T-17845	22-Aug	26-Sep	Placerville	\$ 20,198,943	
	T-17845	22-Aug	26-Sep	County	\$ 4,692,838	
	T-17845	22-Aug	26-Sep	County	\$ 25,227,011	
	T-17845	22-Aug	26-Sep	County	\$ 30,766,152	
	T-17845	22-Aug	26-Sep	County	\$ 5,636,823	\$ 25,334,330
Madera	T-17850	12-Sep	17-Oct	Comcast	\$ 16,987,890	\$ 49,591,486
Napa	T-17850	12-Sep	17-Oct	ATT	\$ 6,048,405	\$ 4,656,809
San Luis Obispo	T-17852	12-Sep	17-Oct	Astound	\$ 6,794,215	
				Surfnet	\$ 2,093,539	
				Surfnet	\$ 1,280,937	
				Surfnet	\$ 1,550,572	
				City of SLO	\$ 4,863,799	
				Surfnet	\$ 722,821	
				Surfnet	\$ 705,378	\$ 4,335,675
<i>Amador County</i>	<i>T-17853</i>	<i>4-Oct</i>	<i>7-Nov</i>	<i>GSCA</i>	<i>\$ 57,180,300</i>	<i>\$ 22,882</i>
<i>Solano</i>	<i>T-17853</i>	<i>4-Oct</i>	<i>7-Nov</i>	<i>Vallejo</i>	<i>\$ 3,806,104</i>	<i>\$ 13,201,420</i>

GSCA Awards

Recommendation Pending Commission Action

Italics
PST - Plumas Sierra Telecomm