



California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, news@cpuc.ca.gov

Docket #s: Res T-17850 and T-17852

Keeping the Momentum Going: CPUC Awards \$41 Million in Grants for Broadband Projects Across California

Total amount in broadband grants recommended and awarded rises to \$804 million for projects in 33 counties

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 17, 2024 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today approved \$41 million in the seventh round of grants for last mile broadband projects as part of the \$2 billion [Last Mile Federal Funding Account grant program](#), which expands broadband internet access for underserved and unserved communities across California. This continues a rolling process of awards and recommendations, highlighting the state’s commitment to bridging the digital divide through [Broadband For All](#).

Continuing to invest where it matters most

Many Last Mile Federal Funding Account grant awardees are creating new networks, connecting the next generation to education, improving access to healthcare, and empowering rural communities for economic development and emergency connectivity. Combined, these proposed projects will serve predominantly disadvantaged and low-income communities across the state.

Currently, the total amount in grants recommended and awarded is \$804 million for projects in 33 counties. For a full list of recommendations and awards to date, visit the CPUC’s [Federal Funding Account Recommendations and Awards](#) webpage.

Last Mile Federal Funding Account grants awarded today include:

- \$41 million for nine Last Mile Federal Funding Account broadband infrastructure grant projects in Madera, Napa, and San Luis Obispo counties.

“Projects funded by these grants will bring high-speed internet to more than 30,000 unserved and underserved locations in Madera, Napa, and San Luis Obispo counties. Each new Federal Funding Account grant approved by the CPUC is a step forward in closing the digital divide,” said Commissioner Darcie L. Houck. “I am also pleased to see that some of the grants are going to areas that received [Local Agency Technical Assistance](#) grants, such as the Cities of Paso Robles and Atascadero. I look forward to seeing the benefits these projects bring to communities across the state.”

Last Mile Federal Funding Account grant recipients empower their communities – What they are saying

- **San Luis Obispo**
 - “This grant funding will help address digital equity in the City of San Luis Obispo by providing nearly 500 more households here with access to affordable high-speed internet that they would not otherwise have. The city appreciates this opportunity to bridge the local digital divide and lay the groundwork for a more connected and equitable future for our community. With this grant funding, the CPUC is allowing the city to ensure that all residents have access to high-speed internet for education, work, healthcare, and everyday activities.” - Deputy City Manager, Greg Hermann
- **Comcast:**
 - “The CPUC’s decision to award Comcast the Madera County Federal Funding Account grant builds on our continued efforts in working tirelessly to close the digital divide across the Central Valley. This expansion will support our ongoing network expansion efforts in the Central Valley, in cities such as Biola, Planada, Caruthers, Le Grand, and Gustine. We thank the CPUC for this public-private partnership as we continue to work together to increase digital equity within

unserved communities and connect people and businesses to what matters most.”
– Comcast Regional Senior Vice President, David Tashjian

- **Surfnet (5 Awards):**

- “Surfnet is proud to continue providing high-speed fiber internet to the communities that need it to thrive and grow. In partnership with the California Broadband Alliance, this grant from the CPUC will enable Surfnet to bring fiber to residents, families, and businesses in rural San Luis Obispo County. The fiber network we’re building there will help level the playing field for the residents in remote communities by enhancing education, healthcare, and economic potential for communities along California’s Central Coast.” – Surfnet Communications Chief Operating Officer, Kenneth Nye

Awarding grants throughout California

Today’s approval is part of a process to award last mile broadband grants to projects in every region in the state to established internet service providers, small providers, local governments, tribes, and special districts. Draft Resolutions with award recommendations will be released through early fall, each open for public comment. These recommendations will be considered and must be approved by vote at a public CPUC [Voting Meeting](#).

For more information, including the Last Mile Federal Funding Account grants approved today, please visit the CPUC’s [Federal Funding Account Recommendations and Awards webpage](#).

For more information on the allocation of Federal Funding Account grants across California, please visit the [CPUC’s Broadband Federal Funding Account awards map](#).

Future application windows will be announced as funds are appropriated.

Fueling economic growth statewide

Established under Senate Bill 156 (2021), the CPUC’s Last Mile Federal Funding Account is fueling economic growth across rural, tribal, and urban communities statewide.

Since the initial round of applications closed in September 2023, the CPUC has received and reviewed 484 grant applications from every county in the state, totaling more than \$4.6 billion in requests. This overwhelming response highlights the urgent need for and the opportunity to expand internet access across California.

In addition to the Last Mile Federal Funding Account, the CPUC is investing in a suite of programs in the state's efforts in connecting millions of Californians with reliable, affordable high-speed internet, including the [California Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\) Program](#) and the [California Advanced Services Fund \(CASF\)](#).

More Information

- [Proposal approved](#) for Last Mile Federal Funding Account broadband infrastructure grants in Madera and Napa Counties
- [Proposal approved](#) for Last Mile Federal Funding Account broadband infrastructure grants in San Luis Obispo County

###

About the California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. Visit www.cpuc.ca.gov for more information.