



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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\$500,000 GRANT TO DEVELOP BROADBAND MASTER PLAN

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce a \$500,000 grant from the California Public Utilities Commission's Local Area Technical Assistance grant program. The grant will support the development of a comprehensive countywide broadband master plan, aimed at increasing access to high-speed internet for all residents and businesses.

The broadband master plan will outline a strategic framework for short-, medium-, and long-term broadband infrastructure deployment, with the goal of ensuring that every resident has access to reliable and fast internet services. The public is encouraged to participate in the planning process by taking a broadband speed survey, available at <https://speedsurveyapp.com/surveys/co-santa-cruz/>.

"This grant is a critical step towards bridging the digital divide in Santa Cruz County," County Board Chair Zach Friend said. "Broadband access is a necessity for our residents and businesses, and this funding will help us to ensure that everyone in our community has access to high-speed internet."

The broadband master plan will include a comprehensive analysis of current broadband infrastructure, an assessment of the broadband needs of residents and businesses, and a roadmap for the deployment of new broadband infrastructure in the county. The plan will also include policy and regulatory recommendations necessary to support the deployment of broadband in Santa Cruz County.

The plan will allow the County to access State and federal broadband funding it would otherwise be ineligible to access. These funds can then be used to implement new local broadband infrastructure to create more connected communities and promote economic development.

The County is committed to working with local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and government agencies, to ensure that the broadband master plan reflects the needs and priorities of all sectors of the community.