



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: DECEMBER 5, 2023
DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
FROM: LISA BRINTON, DIRECTOR
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TITLE: BROADBAND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No action required; this item is for informational purposes only.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City Council has identified the development of an open-access broadband network to serve the needs of its residents and businesses as one of its priorities. To support the development of network infrastructure, the Council has taken several actions, including establishing a Dig-Once Ordinance, adopting policies regarding the leasing of City-owned facilities and the deployment of small-cell antennas within the right-of-way, and approving the construction of City-owned fiber-optic cable and conduit connecting City Hall and the Police Service building to the Crown Castle middle-mile fiber network. This report provides an update on the License Agreement with Underline to construct and operate an open access fiber network and the development of the Salinas Broadband Master Plan and Alisal Neighborhood Broadband Fiber Network Design.

BACKGROUND:

In December 2021, the City Council entered into a License Agreement with Underline Monterey, LLC (“Underline”) to construct and operate an open-access fiber network. Underline is to implement a “Groundwork Program” which is intended to offer discounted rates to lower income households as well as performing outreach to connect residents with resources and programs to assist them in obtaining access to broadband and significantly improve broadband access throughout the City. The City has also approved a Master Service Agreement with Underline that would allow the City to potentially obtain broadband services that would include public areas such as parks within the City for a lower cost.

In November 2022, the City of Salinas was awarded the Local Agency Technical Assistance Grant (LATA) in the total amount of \$470,304 to develop the Salinas Broadband Master Plan and Alisal Neighborhood Broadband Fiber Network Design in partnership with Kimley Horn and Associates Inc. The Broadband Master will provide and implementation strategy and cost estimations for budgeting

and planning purposes. The grant will fund network design services that will include engineering drawings and standard specifications for a constructible, shovel-ready fiberoptic network design that prioritizes unserved/underserved area within the City. The following is the detailed scope of work that will be carried out to obtain a final Broadband Master Plan and the Alisal Neighborhood Fiber Network Design.

Salinas Broadband Master Plan Scope of Work and Deliverables

- Data Collection – Existing City facilities (traffic signal, buildings, utilities)
- Conceptual Design - City-wide fiber network
- Preliminary Broadband Network Project List and costs
- Citywide Broadband Network Implementation Plan
 - Operations and Maintenance Plan - Draft
 - Governance Model Alternatives Analysis – Draft
 - Funding Opportunities
 - Potential Partnership Opportunities
- Broadband Master Plan – DRAFT and FINAL

Alisal Neighborhood Broadband Fiber Network Design

- Field Review of City facilities (Alisal Neighborhood)
- Needs Assessment Summary
- Construction Documents (Plans, Specifications and Estimate)
- Alisal Neighborhood Public WiFi Feasibility Study
 - Wireless Network Conceptual Design and Cost Estimates
 - Potential Partnerships
 - Implementation requirements

The Salinas Broadband Master Plan is following the schedule outlined in the LATA funding request. Kimley-Horn has performed field work to confirm available spacing at future broadband hubs within the Alisal Neighborhood. Additionally, Kimley-Horn has met with City staff to confirm needs related to broadband deployment within the Alisal neighborhood and citywide. A conceptual layout of a citywide fiber network has been laid out and Kimley-Horn is currently preparing construction plans for the first section of the broadband network in the Alisal neighborhood. It is anticipated that the Final Broadband Master Plan will be completed by June 30, 2024.

The City has recently made the strategic decision to foster collaboration between Underline and Kimley Horn, recognizing their shared objective of advancing broadband development. With a common goal in mind, the City has facilitated a connection between the two entities, encouraging the exchange of ideas. The initial focus of this collaboration is the development of a broadband design, with the Alisal neighborhood identified as the starting point. By bringing together the expertise of Underline and Kimley Horn, the City aims to create an innovative and robust network design tailored to the unique needs of the Alisal community. In the long term, this partnership envisions that Underline will leverage the insights gained from the Alisal Neighborhood Network Design to initiate the broader implementation of the broadband infrastructure. Kimley-Horn will also prepare permit plans for installation of Underline fiber-optic cables and conduit in the Alisal Neighborhood as the first section of the Salinas Broadband Network. The permit plans will conform to City construction standards and practice.

Discussions pertaining to fees, policies, and regulations remain ongoing between City Staff and Underline with a focus on more technical aspects before commencing groundwork. This continued dialogue is aimed at ensuring a thorough understanding of the finer details and requirements, which must be addressed before any concrete construction or implementation can commence. Underline is collaborating with Kimley Horn to develop a comprehensive fiber network design for the entire City of Salinas, with the aim of presenting a finalized plan to its partners for financing purposes.

Underline will continue to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including internet service providers, city departments, and the public, to gather input and make informed decisions on the topics discussed above and will keep the City Council updated as these discussions progress and decisions are reached.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

No action required; this item is for informational purposes only. This update on the Salinas Broadband Master Plan and Alisal Neighborhood Broadband Fiber Network Design is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from Broadband Master Plan and Alisal Neighborhood Broadband Fiber Network Design will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Salinas Broadband Network supports the City Council's Goals of "Economic Development" and "Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability" by implementing the Alisal Vibrancy Plan goals of improving internet capabilities and expanding free WIFI zones throughout the City of Salinas.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Community Development Department's Economic Development Division continues to coordinate broadband planning and design with the Advanced Planning and Project Implementation division, the Public Works Department, and the City Attorney's Office. In addition, City staff has coordinated with the County of Monterey to prevent redundancy in their broadband planning efforts, ensuring no duplication of work, particularly with both entities receiving LATA grants for similar projects.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There is no cost associated with this action.

ATTACHMENTS:

Broadband Timeline of Events

Underline Network Deployment and Service Agreement

Underline License Agreement for Wireless Installation on Public Structures

Kimley Horn Agreement Broadband Master Plan and Alisal Neighborhood Fiber Network Design

Agreement for Professional Services and Scope, Budget, and Schedule

PowerPoint Presentation