Health, Equity, and the Digital Divide
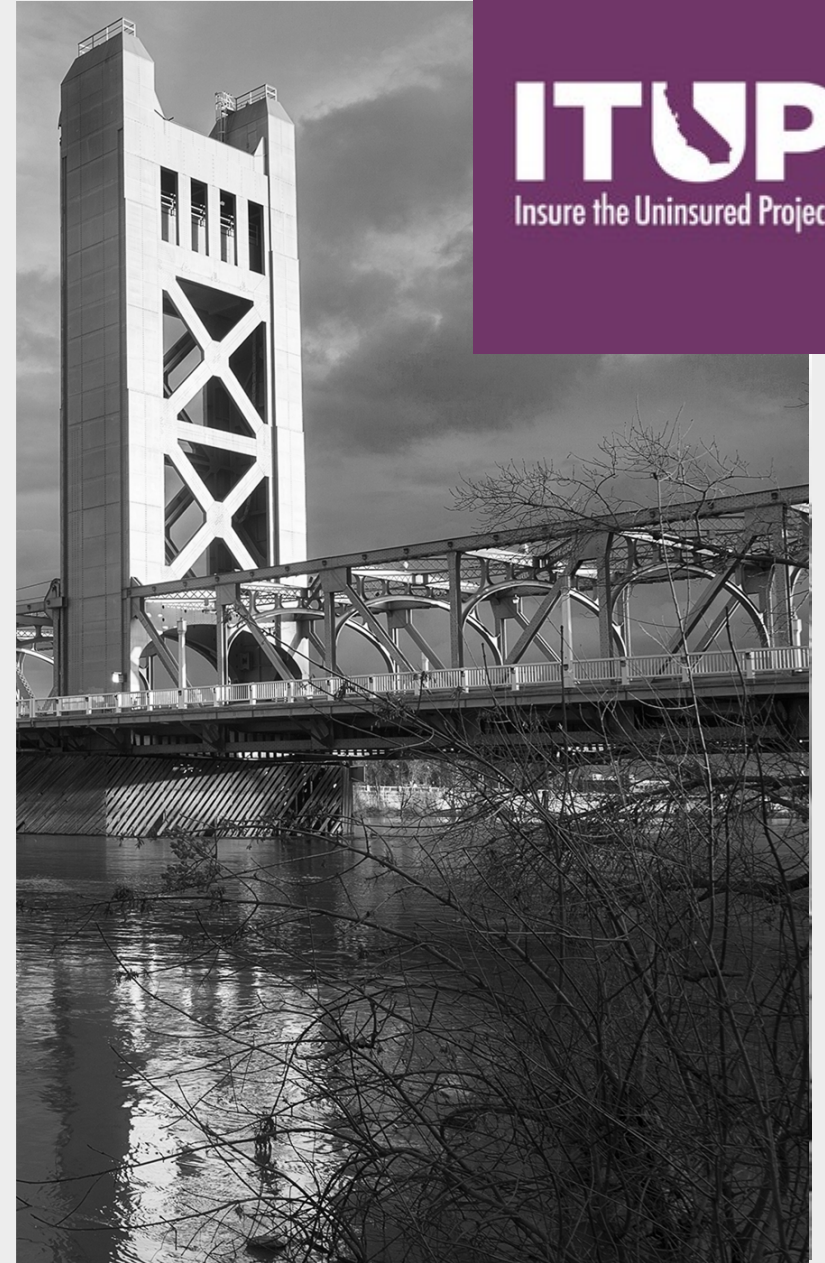
Katie Heidorn, MPA

Executive Director, Insure the Uninsured Project (ITUP)

Introductions

- Name
- Organization
- Why do you want to engage more on broadband? How does broadband impact your work?

ITUP Mission & Vision

Mission

ITUP's **mission** is to promote innovative and workable policy solutions that expand health care access and improve the health of all Californians. ITUP implements its mission through policy-focused research and broad-based stakeholder engagement.

Vision

ITUP **believes** that all Californians should have a fair opportunity to live their healthiest lives.
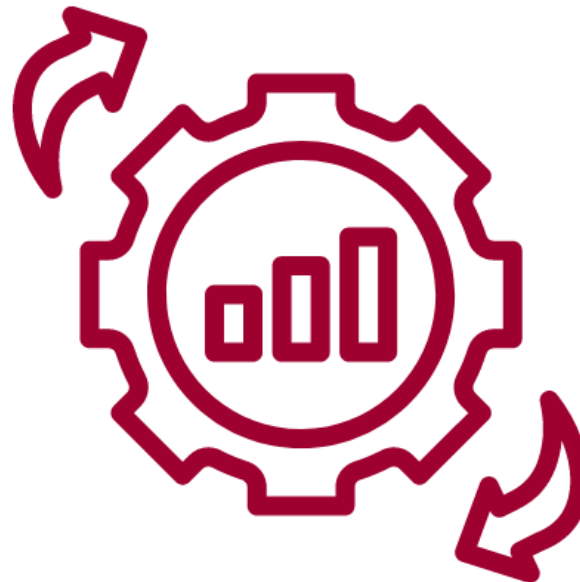
Values

ITUP seeks a **health system** that is: universal, equitable, accessible, effective, and affordable.

The Future of Health: Policy Priority Areas

Coverage and Access

Delivery System Transformation

Technology and Data

ITUP Broadband Convening Goals

Inform
- Bridge the Knowledge Gap: Health Care and Broadband
- Connectivity + Virtual Care = Better Health Outcomes

Identify
- Health Sector Engagement Opportunities
- State, Local, National Levels

Activate
- Engage in Local, State, and National Stakeholder Processes/Meetings
- Apply for and Receive Funding

Why Focus on Broadband?

The future of health care and health care innovation is grounded in technology and connectivity.

Our Goal: To Achieve the Potential of Telehealth/Virtual Care, Data Exchange, Health Access, Equity

Connectivity

Equity and Affordability

Devices

Digital Literacy
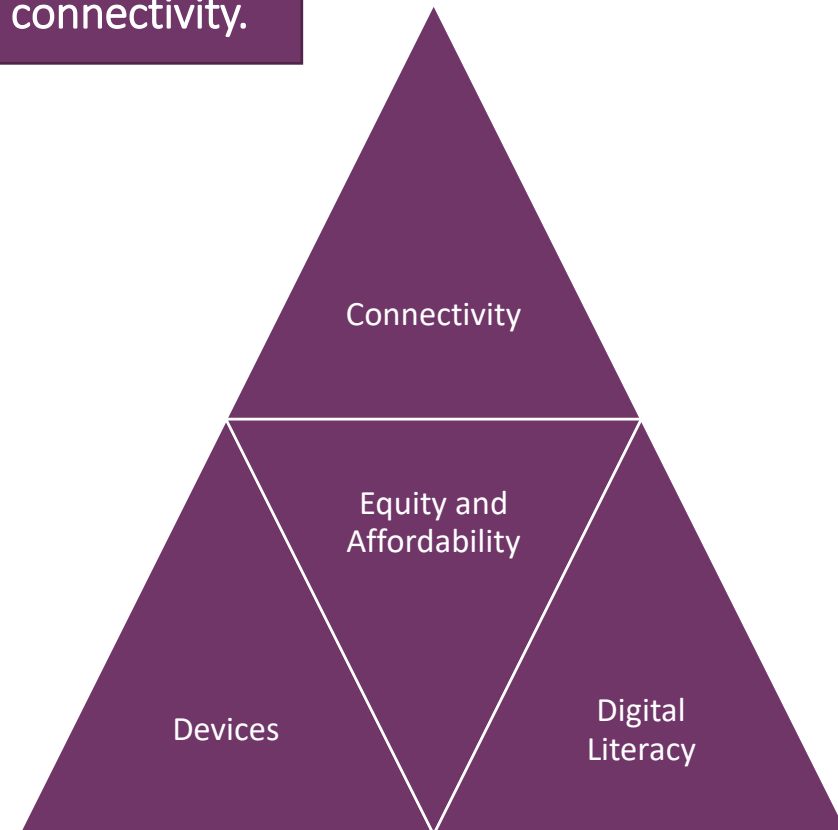
What is Broadband?

→ **Backbone/Long Haul** - *massive networks with national and major regional reach. The networks run to buildings that act as exchange points, where data is passed between and across regional and local networks and providers. These are typically located in the larger metropolitan areas, including One Wilshire in downtown Los Angeles.*

→ **Middle Mile** - *high-capacity fiber-optic cables that traverse long distances (e.g., 10s-100s of miles) to connect communities to the Internet backbone. These high-capacity lines are analogous to transmission lines for electric utilities, or aqueducts and rivers for water utilities.*

→ **Last Mile** - *cables or wireless bandwidth that connect individual addresses to the nearest utility poles or towers which connect communities to the middle mile.*

BACKBONE / LONG HAUL
NEW YORK
SAN FRANCISCO
ASHBURN, VA
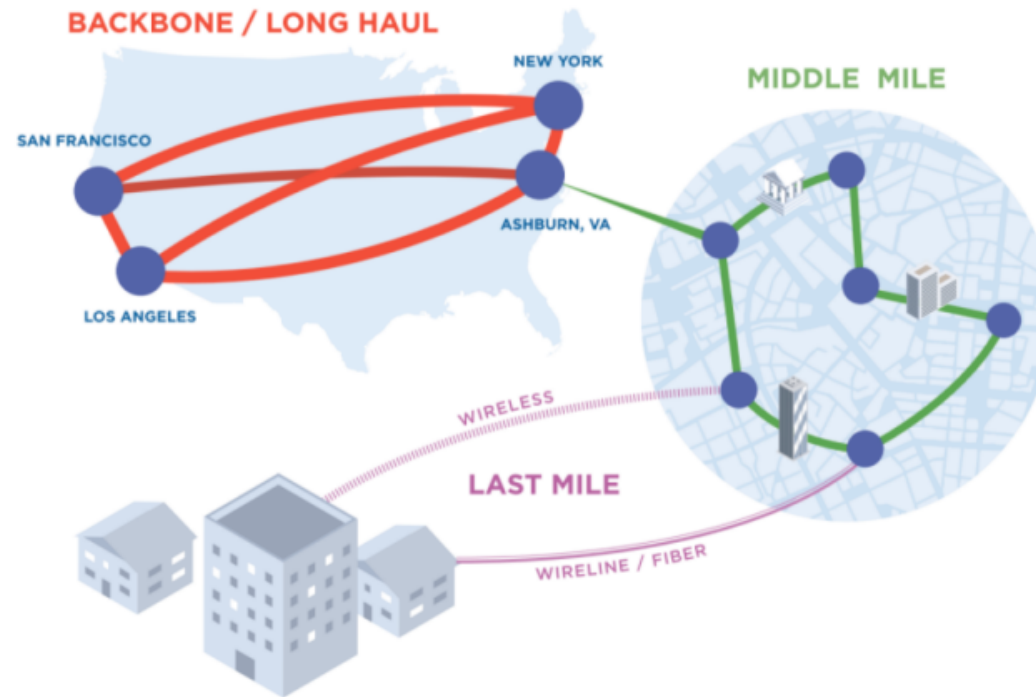LOS ANGELES
MIDDLE MILE
WIRELESS
LAST MILE
WIRELINE / FIBER

Illustration source: If We Build It, Will They Come? Lessons from Open-Access, Middle-Mile Networks
https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/OAMM_networks.pdf

How much broadband speed do residents need?

	LIGHT	MEDIUM	HEAVY
1 device	8 Mbps	8 Mbps	25 Mbps
2 devices	8 Mbps	25 Mbps	25 Mbps
3 devices	25 Mbps	25 Mbps	50+ Mbps
4 devices	25 Mbps	50+ Mbps	50+ Mbps

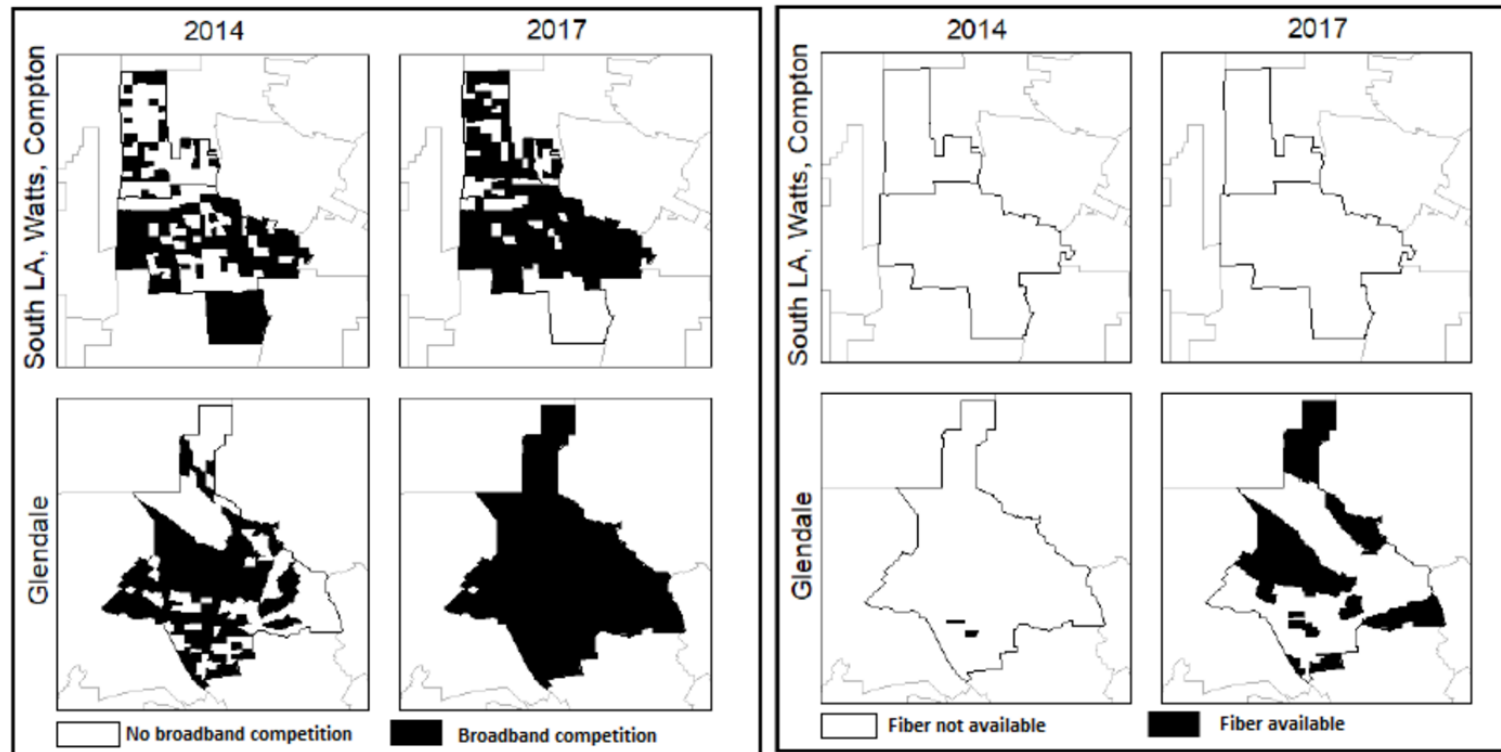* Download speeds only.

Source: FCC

Broadband Infrastructure in Communities
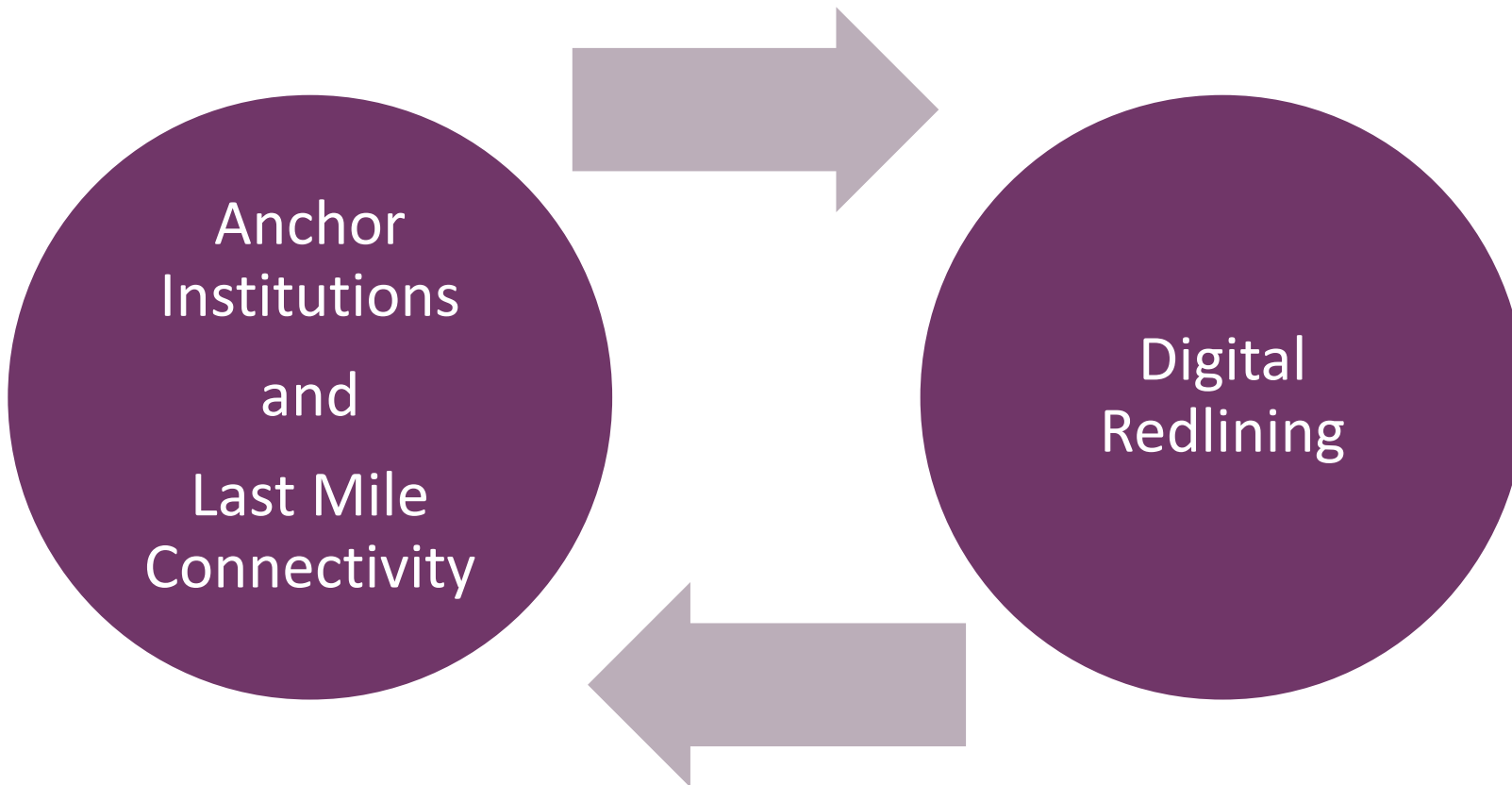
Example of Digital Redlining From Los Angeles County

Figure 7: Broadband competition and fiber availability in South Los Angeles vs. Glendale (2014 and 2017).

Source: Who Gets Access to Fast Broadband? Evidence from Los Angeles County 2014-17, http://arnicusc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Policy-Brief-4-final.pdf

Closing the Digital Divide: Investments

- CA Commitment to Continuing PHE Telehealth Flexibilities
  - CA Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
  - Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
  - CA Department of Aging (CDA)
- CA's "Broadband for All" Initiative and $6.5 Billion
  - Government Operations Agency (GovOps Agency)
  - CA Department of Technology (CDT)
  - CA Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
- Federal Broadband $45 Billion Dollars in the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA)
  - Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
  - National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

Roles for the Health Organizations

- Local, State, and National Opportunities for Health
  - Infrastructure
    - Local Builds and Engagement with Consortia
    - Become an "Anchor Institution" in the Community
    - State Engagement in Middle Mile and Last Mile Policy and Planning
    - National Coalitions
      - Schools, Libraries, and Health Broadband Coalition (SHLB)
      - National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)
  - Outreach and Education About Programs and Services Available to Communities:
    - **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** Outreach and Enrollment
    - Getting Appropriate, Useful **Devices** to Individuals and Families
    - Connecting Individuals to **Digital Literacy** Training and Services

State-Level Broadband Engagement

- California Public Utilities Commission
  - Regional Broadband Consortia
  - Funding Opportunities
    - Broadband Adoption Account
    - California Teleconnect Fund
    - Broadband Public Housing Account (Implementation Rulemaking Underway)
- California Department of Technology, Broadband for All Initiative
  - Middle-Mile Advisory Committee
  - California Broadband Council
  - State Digital Equity Plan (forthcoming)
- Legislature
- Budget

ITUP's Partners in Digital Equity

- Institute for Self-Reliance (ILSR)
- California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF)
- California Department of Aging
- Connect Humanity
- Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP) Telehealth Policy Coalition
- Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)
- California Advancing Digital Equity (CADE)
- Human-I-T
- California Community Foundation (CCF) Digital Equity Initiative

Discussion

What efforts do you want to engage in?

What tools, education, relationships do you need to successfully engage?

Where will your organization engage?

Are there additional broadband engagement strategies you have been considering?

Who else in your networks would want to meaningfully engage?

ITUP
Insure the Uninsured Project

Call to Action

What's Next for Elevating Health Voices in Broadband Efforts:

- Second ITUP-Led Convening: July 19, 2022
- Give Public Comment at the Next Middle Mile Advisory Committee Meeting: July 22, 2022, 10 – 11:30am
- Give Public Comment at the Next CA Broadband Council Meeting: July 29, 2022, 9:30 – 11:30am
- Plug Into Your Local Infrastructure Conversations—ITUP Can Connect
- Engage in ACP Outreach—ITUP Can Help

ITUP
Insure the Uninsured Project

Learn More

ITUP Broadband for Health Basics Fact Sheet:
https://www.itup.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Broadband-and-Health-Basics-FINAL-V1.pdf

Anchor Institutions Fact Sheet:
https://www.shlb.org/uploads/Policy/Infrastructure/SHLB_ToAndThrough_Overview.pdf

ITUP LA Health Collaborative: Addressing Broadband as a Social Driver of Health:
https://www.itup.org/events/la-health-collaborative-may-5-2022/'

CCF Broadband 101 Fact Sheet:
https://www.calfund.org/wp-content/uploads/CCF-Digital-Equity-Initiative-Glossary-of-Terms-FINAL-2.3.22.pdf

ILSR Digital Equity Fact Sheets:
https://ilsr.org/exploring-digital-equity-fact-sheets/

California Community Foundation Digital Equity Initiative Resources:
https://www.calfund.org/digital-equity-initiative/#resources

Thank you!

Contact: Katie Heidorn
katie@itup.org
www.itup.org

Follow ITUP on Social Media!

@itup

@InsuretheUninsuredProject

@InsuretheUninsuredProject

www.itup.org

Key Definitions for Health

Anchor Institutions: Anchor institutions are flagship community institutions that are sometimes connected to fiber even when fiber services are not commercially available to the broader community. Because of this, they can act as a connection to the Internet backbone. Health care facilities, schools, and libraries are examples of anchor institutions.

Digital Equity: The state of all members of a community having equal access and sufficient digital literacy to use communication technologies.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): An entity that provides broadband services to subscribers/consumers.

Unserved Household: The California Public Utilities Code defines an unserved household as a household for which no facility-based broadband service at speeds of at least 6Mbps downstream and 1Mbps upstream.

Key Definitions for Health

Last Mile: The portion of the internet which connects ISPs' shared infrastructure to end users, such as homes or businesses. For example, in a cellular wireless network, the last mile is the wireless connection between a base station and an individual mobile device. Sometimes this is also called the "first mile."

Middle Mile: This is a term most often referring to the network connection between the region and/or local network to the core network, or, the greater internet. For instance, in a rural area, the middle mile would likely connect the town's network to a larger metropolitan area where it interconnects with major ISPs.

Municipal Network: A broadband network owned by a local government, or "municipality". These networks take many forms, from modest networks serving a few businesses to networks that are available at every address across a community. Some are run by the municipality and others are managed by an ISP under contract.

Other Definitions

Bandwidth: The speed of transmitting information across a network. Generally, higher bandwidth is desirable, especially the more individuals and devices use the same source of broadband. The amount of bandwidth available to you can determine whether you download a photo in 2 seconds or 2 minutes.

Broadband Speed: Typically, there are two different types of speeds the average consumer uses: download speed and upload speed.

- **Download Speed:** Also referred to as downstream internet connection, download speed refers to the rate at which the user's device can receive data from the internet.

- **Upload Speeds:** Also referred to as upstream internet connection, upload speed refers to the rate at which the user's computer can send data to the Internet. Often times, DSL and cable internet only offer upload speeds at 1/10 of download speeds, which make them insufficient for modern day internet needs, like live video calls or virtual conference presentations. Fiber-optic internet networks more readily have robust connections for both upload and download needs.

Other Definitions

California Public Utilities Commission: The California regulatory agency that regulates privately-owned public utilities that includes telecommunications, or broadband.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC): The federal agency with the authority in promoting competition, innovation, and investment in broadband services. The FCC defines broadband and determines the metrics for determining whether a household or business has access to sufficient broadband internet. **The current metric was set in 2015 as 25 Mbps download speeds and 3 Mbps upload speeds**.

Fixed Wireless: A connectivity model that uses stationary wireless technology to bridge the "last mile" between the Internet backbone and the subscriber/consumer.[v] This can be contrasted with **Mobile Wireless** which is transmitted from a stationary source to a moving cellphone, tablet, or laptop (cellular data, for example).