

For Immediate Release

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**NEXT CENTURY CITIES RELEASES CASE STUDY
EXAMINING OHIO'S DIGITAL DIVIDE**

Washington, D.C. (August 5, 2021) – Today Next Century Cities released [The Ohio Case Study](#), a report that documents broadband initiatives at the county and city levels in areas statewide. It also highlights specific broadband access and adoption programs launched in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Corian Zacher, Next Century Cities' Policy Counsel for State and Local Initiatives and lead researcher, described why studying Ohio's work on digital access, adoption, and equity is important and the potential impact of the state initiatives:

"Ohio is well-known for innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Across the state, community leaders have stepped up to make sure that those attributes are present in efforts to bridge the digital divide.

"By centering community voices in broadband solutions, the State of Ohio will be able to provide more robust support for cities, counties, towns, and regional authorities with varying connectivity needs. They are envisioning new pathways to connect residents today and for decades into the future. A collaborative spirit will help to improve the effectiveness of statewide strategies to get everyone online."

The City of Fairlawn's broadband expansion efforts are also highlighted in the report. Its **Public Services Director, Ernie Staten**, added:

"There's no limit to what we're accomplishing here. If the state were to open up and realize what's going on in these communities, embrace that, and allow for funding for communities, we could change digital outcomes across the entire state of Ohio."

Next Century Cities has been working closely with local officials and community leaders in Ohio to address its digital divide. Read more about letters submitted to [Governor Mike DeWine](#), the [Ohio House Finance Committee](#), and the [Ohio Senate Finance Committee](#) on June 14, 2021, regarding proposed prohibitions on municipal networks.

Review *The Ohio Case Study* report [here](#). Read the blog post by Corian Zacher [here](#).

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