

For Immediate Release
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NEXT CENTURY CITIES DEFENDS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY OVER BROADBAND EXPANSION STRATEGIES

Washington, D.C. (October 8, 2021) – Yesterday, Next Century Cities submitted [comments](#) before the Federal Communications Commission (“Commission”) [in response to a Petition for Declaratory Ruling](#) filed pursuant to Section 253 of the Communications Act. The incumbent provider in the City of West Des Moines, Iowa, has asked the Commission to prohibit a local government’s public-private partnership agreement that is designed to increase competition and expand broadband service options for residents.

Ryan Johnston, Policy Counsel for Federal Programs, at Next Century Cities offered the following remarks:

“Ensuring that municipalities can retain control over how broadband is deployed in their communities is essential. We urge the Commission to avoid creating a negative precedent that could disincentivize municipalities, including the City of West Des Moines, from forming new public-private partnerships aimed at closing the digital divide.

“Municipalities have the clearest view of what their communities need. The Commission should not introduce additional restrictions on the limited tools and strategies available to local governments when they are working to connect their residents.”

Next Century Cities extends sincere thanks to the local officials who incorporated their voices into our filing. Policy Counsel for State & Local Initiatives, Corian Zacher, added:

“Local officials nationwide are exploring opportunities to bring high-quality, affordable broadband within reach for residents and businesses. These initiatives are often necessary, innovative, and community-driven, yet face numerous obstacles.

“Federal interference could erect another barrier that would forestall existing broadband plans while curtailing local governments’ ability to seek meaningful redress. Instead, the Commission should preserve local authority over broadband infrastructure planning, equipping community leaders with the flexibility to problem-solve and harness the billions of dollars in new funding to advance ubiquitous connectivity goals.”

Read Next Century Cities' October 7th filing [here](#).

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