NEXT CENTURY CITIES RELEASES REPORT SPOTLIGHTING LOCAL BROADBAND EFFORTS IN TEXAS

Washington, D.C. (November 21, 2022) – Local leaders in communities across the US are working relentlessly to ensure that all residents have reliable, affordable, high-quality Internet access. Numerous examples in each state showcase the importance of local governments as trusted ambassadors for broadband program development and implementation. With a specific focus on communities in Texas, Broadband Makes US Better: Lessons From the Lone Star State examines a few stories that capture the important role that local leaders play in mobilizing residents to work toward ubiquitous broadband connectivity.

Corian Zacher, Senior Policy Counsel at Next Century Cities and report co-author, offered the following remarks:

“In the 20th century, experts recognized education, healthcare, employment, and social networks as important factors in improving economic mobility and quality of life. In the 21st, high-quality home broadband connections have become key to unlocking opportunities across sectors, bringing countless resources within reach for residents. The second largest state in the US has no shortage of diverse examples that help illustrate this point. The way that local, county, and state officials are working alongside residents and nonprofit organizations show that everyone has a role to play in cultivating community-wide connectivity.”

Brian Donoghue, Deputy Director at Next Century Cities and report co-author, stated:

“Communities across the country are stepping up to ensure their residents have reliable, affordable, high-quality Internet access. While local leaders across Texas vary widely in their approaches, each strategy is tailored to the assets and needs of their unique and diverse communities. The innovative efforts of the Texas Broadband Development Office will be essential in empowering local efforts to connect communities.”

Rondella Hawkins, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs Officer for the City of Austin, is responsible for implementing its Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan. She added:

“Our city has a commitment to make investments in community-driven programs that improve equity and inclusion and provide opportunities to those who need it the most. In Austin, we know that access to fast, reliable Internet is an affordability and equity issue.”
Our City is more connected than ever before – but we still have a lot of work to do to fill the gaps. Digital access in the form of connectivity and devices and digital skills are essential for gaining access to government services, education, work, help with social isolation, and participation in telehealth programs.”

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