2022

BIPARTISAN
TECH 2022
#NEXTISNOW

MARCH 29, 2022

YEAR IN REVIEW

COMMITTED TO COMMUNITY

Next
Century
Cities

LOOKING BACK ON
2022

Reflecting On 2022

FRANCELLA OCHILLO

Executive Director

I am constantly amazed by what we have created at Next Century Cities. Our work ensures that local leaders who are changing broadband outcomes have a platform to share ideas and best practices. We respond to calls for help, nurture relationships that elevate community-level perspectives into state and federal proceedings, and advocate for broadband policies that meet current and future connectivity needs nationwide.

We are thought leaders. We do our homework. We lead with compassion. When 2022 became the year of broadband, we were ready.

Local leaders felt our embrace in various ways. We hosted workshops with them in their neighborhoods and supported local officials at conferences. Our letters, agency filings, and presentations memorialized words, concerns, and frustrations from under-resourced communities. Every webinar, letter, and social media campaign centered local perspectives that rarely reach the hallways of Congress or agencies in Washington, D.C.

Looking back on 2022, NCC made an impact that dwarfed its size. Our full-time staff includes five luminaries – Brian, Brittany-Rae, Corian, Ryan, and Roxy – working tirelessly to ensure this broadband moment is transformative.

Thinking of what is in store for 2023, Toni Morrison's words come to mind, "If you have power, then your job is to empower somebody else." That is how I think about our work. Our charge is to ensure that the benefits of broadband and advances in technology are shared universally.

Thank you for your ongoing support and helping to animate our work.

Francella

BRIAN DONOGHUE
Deputy Director

MEETING MEMBERS WHERE THEY ARE

After starting 2022 as a local official working on community broadband solutions, opportunities to support my former colleagues have been among the highlights of my first nine months with Next Century Cities. Whether through creating nationwide virtual platforms for local leaders to share their stories, facilitating large gatherings like the Broadband Access Summit in Cleveland, or coordinating more intimate community discussions, it has been an incredible experience to amplify local perspectives.

As federal and state broadband funding continues to roll out in 2023, the need for community conversations and technical support will only grow. I look forward to working with my NCC colleagues and organizational partners to meet the needs of community leaders, regardless of where they are in their broadband journey.

PROGRAMMING

It has been a pleasure to serve and learn more about our member municipalities this past year. We focused on campaigns and programs that kept members informed. This included monthly calls that highlighted local impact of state and federal broadband programs and events and resources that deconstructed issues like FCC maps, Consumer Broadband Nutrition Label Rules, and the Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity. Additionally, members had access to informational webinars and guided content on issues surrounding **cybersecurity awareness** and **preparing for natural disasters and emergencies at the municipal level.** During this new year, I look forward to working with our team to create new resources and collaboration opportunities that help local leaders better serve their communities.

ROXY BARBOZA
Programs Director

COMMUNICATIONS

At the end of 2021, we set a goal to increase communication with members in order to amplify their voices and address their unique community-level needs. As a result, we delivered on that promise,

Our **monthly newsletters** provide in-depth coverage of relevant issues and resources. We also began distributing a monthly news bulletin to highlight media coverage of access and adoption successes and challenges in member municipalities and states. Both have helped foster relationships among communities with similar goals and experiences.

Throughout the year we have continually reassessed the best ways to reach leaders at the municipal level. To increase one-on-one engagement with local leaders, we expanded our social media footprint on all platforms including **Twitter**, **LinkedIn**, **Facebook**, and **YouTube**.

BRITTANY-RAE GREGORY
Communications Director

FEDERAL POLICY

RYAN JOHNSTON

Senior Policy Counsel,
Federal Affairs

2022 was a landmark year for broadband at the Federal level. With the passage of the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act in November of 2021, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") and National Telecommunications and Information Administration ("NTIA") were tasked with distributing an unprecedented amount of resources for broadband connectivity.

The NTIA stood up the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program, the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program, Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, and several digital equity programs established by the Digital Equity Act. While the money will be disbursed in phases over time, the NTIA has been working hard to increase staff capacity to address the challenges that states and localities will have in applying for federal funds through state offices.

Discussing comments and other challenges and concerns with the NTIA staff this year has been incredibly heartening. The agency is committed to putting new funding to good use. While there's still a long way to go and a lot more information that needs to be released, I'm hopeful that the NTIA will listen carefully to local feedback. Community input is critical for making the BEAD program and other programs a success.

The FCC has also been incredibly busy, and NCC has been active in its proceedings. This year, we've tackled issues related to the Consumer Broadband Nutrition Label, the Affordable Connectivity Program transition, and the release of the new broadband availability maps. NCC's filings document local perspectives that are too often overlooked in federal proceedings.

While the new broadband availability maps are not perfect, they are a start to accurately mapping where broadband is and is not across the country. I'm hopeful that the iterative process the agency set in motion ensures that broadband service availability, or the lack thereof, is accurately reflected on federal maps.

One of NCC's biggest highlights this year was our work on the broadband nutrition labels. Working with the Consumer Advisory Committee and other allied organizations to get the labels across the finish line was a fantastic experience. NCC had a leadership role in advocating for a label that reflects the information consumers need in understandable ways.

Finally, we've been focused on how to get more low-income households signed up for the ACP. I'm hopeful that Congress and the FCC will continue to see its usefulness as we head into the next year. The ACP Outreach Grant program will help support community-based enrollment efforts, and I'm excited to see the creative solutions that local leaders develop to promote awareness about the program.

ADVOCACY AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS

CORIAN ZACHER

Senior Policy Counsel,
State and Local Affairs

This year, the Next Century Cities team returned to communities across the US- including **South Bend, Indiana**; **Houston, Texas**; **Cleveland, Ohio**; **Topeka, Kansas**; **Kansas City, Missouri**; and **Boulder, Colorado**, to name a few. Resuming NCC's presence at local regional convenings has invited new opportunities to connect state broadband leaders with community advocates alongside elected and appointed officials.

More upcoming federal funding is available for broadband than we could have imagined in years past. Still, local coordination will remain key to ensuring that every dollar invested in broadband meaningfully reaches the communities that need it.

Next Century Cities raised this point with governors across the US in a **series of letters** to state executive officials in February 2022. Local broadband leaders are making strides like never before, and there is so much good work worth celebrating.

NCC member communities like **Tucson, Arizona**; **Detroit, Michigan**; **Baltimore, Maryland**; and **Fresno, California** are **making headlines** for improving broadband adoption among residents living in poverty. The faces behind those efforts have also lent their voices to research and policymaking, enabling Next Century Cities to communicate the dire need for ubiquitous broadband and the challenges facing those seeking to ensure it.

As we head into 2023, there has never been a more fitting time to pair up with public and private sector partners to find new pathways to connectivity.

CHANGE *Makers*

At Next Century Cities, we believe that centering community perspectives is the key to addressing local broadband access and adoption challenges. The local leaders highlighted below use their knowledge and resources to help bring their fellow residents online. As 2022 Change Makers, their efforts affect change and make a difference, bringing residents up to speed with the technologies that are needed to navigate a digitally-focused society.

COMMISSIONER ADRIAN GARCIA

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Commissioner Garcia is passionate about addressing the digital divide while improving county responsiveness and resiliency. Harris County is the third most populous in the nation, and the precinct overseen by Commissioner Garcia has 32% of households (around 60,000) with no Internet access. Commissioner Garcia authored the resolution to create the Harris County Office of Broadband. Since December 2020, Harris County has invested over $50+ million to deploy upwards of 130 public broadband locations and access to more than 300,000 mobile devices to students and their families.

INA P. MONTGOMERY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, URBAN TEC

Technical skills are more important than ever for employment. Millions of students across the US living without a home broadband subscription face barriers to learning about new technology not faced by their digitally connected peers. Following a successful career in computer science, Ms. Montgomery returned to her hometown to launch the nonprofit Urban TEC, which aims to help students in Kansas City area schools build the digital skills they will need to thrive in the workforce. Urban TEC's after school programs provide students with hands-on learning opportunities to build STEM skills. In July 2022, NCC staff met with **Ina and discussed her work in the Kansas City community**.

CHANGE *Makers*

RICKY SANTIAGO

DIGITAL INCLUSION MANAGER, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY METRO GOVERNMENT

Santiago's work highlights and seeks to address the systemic issues that have led to disconnectedness in Louisville. Ricky works closely with Louisville partner organizations, such as the Metro Housing Authority, to ensure that each home has access to a device that can help them get online and reduce e-waste. He is not just concerned with the wires in the ground and putting devices in people's hands. He also works to bring digital skills training to underserved communities. Ricky is doing great work in Louisville, and he is also working to ensure connectivity reaches communities nationwide. Born in Puerto Rico, Santiago has been and continues to be a tireless advocate for the people on the island and the importance that connectivity plays for its residents.

WILLIAM WELLS, JR.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASTEAM VILLAGE

William Wells, Jr., is founder and Executive Director of aSTEAM Village, which inspires students and families to pursue education and career pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), through community-based project learning and innovative programming. Under Wells' leadership, aSTEAM Village was recognized as the 2019-2020 NSBE Jr. Pre-College Initiative National Chapter of the Year. Digital KC NOW, an initiative under aSTEAM Village that brings broadband Internet access and the educational support needed to the community of Kansas City while building a community of knowledge youth workers. This project hires, trains, and mentors a youth workforce from the 3rd District to deploy and operate the network. William is committed to supporting today's youth, the leaders of tomorrow.

NCC IN YOUR
Community

For the first time in nearly two years, Next Century Cities staff hit the road to convene with local leaders and advocates in municipalities across the country. NCC team members hosted events and attended conferences in cities, towns, counties, and municipalities near you.

In February, NCC's Executive Director **hosted a panel** during the 2022 Net Inclusion Conference with local officials from Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

In March, NCC headed to **South Bend, Indiana,** to **co-host our first hybrid event with the City of South Bend and Pew Charitable Trusts**. State and local leaders and broadband advocates from across Indiana joined virtually and in-person to discuss connectivity barriers and strategies to improve broadband access and adoption. Mayor James Mueller and Denise Riedl, Chief Innovation Officer for the City of South Bend, discussed city WiFi expansion and COVID relief efforts that connected over 4000 students, enabling them to learn safely from home.

Tom Bliss, Executive Director of the Southeast Nebraska Development District, shared success stories about regional collaborative efforts that started with collected broadband data. Earnie Holtrey, Program Manager for the Director of the Indiana Broadband Office, reiterated the ongoing need for relationships between local and state officials.

Bloomington CIO and Director of Information Technology, Rick Dietz, joined American Connection Corps Fellows Reneisha Rudder, Emma Woods, Gary Thompson, Iris O'Donnell Bellisario, and Cory Knipp in a conversation about digital inclusion efforts across the state.

Andy Berke, Special Representative for Broadband at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and former mayor of Chattanooga, Tennessee, closed out the event with a call for equitable broadband deployment across the United States.

NCC IN YOUR
Community

In May NCC's Brian Donoghue and Corian Zacher **attended the annual Broadband Communities Summit** in Houston, Texas. The conference focused on making the most of upcoming grant funding opportunities, highlighting successful partnership strategies, and showcasing models for broadband deployment.

While in Texas, Brian and Corian **hosted a hybrid listening session** to discuss the digital divide in Texas. Participants included local and regional leaders and nonprofit partners from Texas, Maryland, Kansas, Missouri, and D.C., including Pew Charitable Trusts' Jake Varn, who shared state policy insights from across the country.

In June, Brian elevated local perspectives at the **Metrolab Annual Summit in Chicago**. The convening brought together leading government practitioners and academics from across the civic ecosystem who are leveraging technology, analytics, and innovation to work toward digital equity.

Former **Chattanooga** Mayor and current NTIA Special Representative for Broadband, Andy Berke, delivered a keynote address. His remarks included advice for local leaders preparing for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act broadband funding programs.

The week of June 20th, NCC co-hosted the **Broadband Access Summit** with Pew Charitable Trusts in **Cleveland, Ohio**. In light of our commitment to support local leadership, NCC sponsored a delegation of **17 local officials and community leaders** to attend. Local leaders had unique opportunities to interface and learn from federal and state leaders who are responsible for broadband program development.

On day two of the conference, NCC's Executive Director, Francella Ochillo, moderated a panel on building partnerships with outcomes in mind. The local officials and broadband experts shared their thoughts on what Tribal, state, and local leaders need to consider as they build partnerships.

NCC IN YOUR
Community

In July, NCC team members **visited Kansas City, Topeka, and Johnson County** to meet with local leaders and hear their perspectives on the broadband funding opportunities developing through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The team also shared broadband data and research as part of a legislative listening session on broadband access and digital equity, convened by Aaron Deacon and KC Digital Drive.

Throughout the course of the summer, NCC team members attended and presented at conferences, including the **League of California Cities Annual Conference and Expo** in Long Beach, California and the **State Broadband Leadership Network Summit** in Colorado. Program Director Roxy Barboza attended California's convening where she met with local leaders. Brian Donoghue participated on a panel hosted by NTIA where he local perspectives on working with state broadband leaders as they prepare applications for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act broadband funding programs.

NCC IN YOUR
Community

The week of September 19th, NCC's Deputy Director, Brian Donoghue; Program Director, Roxy Barboza; and Senior Policy Counsels, Ryan Johnston and Corian Zacher, attended the TechForward Conference in Denver, Colorado. While there, Zacher presented on the role that nonprofits could play in helping connect local communities. **NCC also hosted a Broadband Lunch & Learn** in Boulder, Colorado.

Digital Inclusion Week is devoted to building awareness, expanding recognition, and celebration connectivity success stories nationwide. Organizations and individuals join the forces to promote digital equity and inclusion in their communities. On October 5th through 7th, 2022, NCC's Program Director, Roxy Barboza, and Senior Policy Counsel, Corian Zacher, **led the NCC team's member engagement in the greater Washington, DC area to celebrate Digital Inclusion Week**.

Next Century Cities Executive Director, Francella Ochillo, was invited to **provide keynote remarks at Connect 313's inaugural Academic Research Symposium**. Her keynote highlighted direct links between digital inequities and income inequality. She also explained the collective costs that low connectivity rates impose on local budgets, state revenue, and federal productivity.

As part of Digital Inclusion week in Philadelphia, **Next Century Cities partnered with the Technology Learning Collaborative as a sponsor for their annual conference**.

Later in the month, Brian Donoghue **attended the Annual Michigan Broadband Summit** in **Holland, Michigan** and Corian Zacher represented NCC at the **Schools, Health, and Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition's annual conferenc**e held in **Arlington, Virginia.**

NCC IN YOUR
Community

On December 7, 2022, Next Century Cities **partnered with the City of Albuquerque to host *Build Broadband Together***, a digital equity workshop at the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

The event was designed to allow local leaders to learn about best practices being implemented in New Mexico communities. The speakers included local officials and concerned citizens who are taking ownership of persistent digital divides. Next Century Cities staff also highlighted tools for addressing local connectivity challenges that are available on the National Broadband Resource Hub. Speakers included the following:

- **Catherine Nicolaou,** Broadband Program Manager, City of Albuquerque
- **Jennifer Nevarez**, Director and Lead Educator, CommUNITY Learning Network
- **Kimball Sekaquaptewa**, Chief Technology Officer, Santa Fe Indian School
- **Roxanna Barboza**, Program Director, Next Century Cities

Catherine Nicolaou detailed efforts by the City of Albuquerque to increase community awareness of the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program. Kimball Sekaquaptewa discussed the important work happening within tribal communities to help connect Pueblo schools and libraries to each other and the world. Roxanna Barboza wrapped up the discussion by introducing the National Broadband Resource Hub, a free online community for government leaders and nonprofits working to expand broadband access and affordability to build a strong digital future. View the event recording **here**.

VIRTUALLY
Connected

During the height of the global pandemic, NCC, like other organizations held virtual events as a necessity. As many operations resumed in person, we realized that maintaining a virtual roster of member-centered programming was a great way to engage our municipalities across the country. NCC's continued online presence connects members with advocates and thought leaders whose work could inform their desired municipal connectivity goals.

When the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA") was signed into law, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration ("NTIA") was tasked with distributing 48 billion dollars to expand broadband availability nationwide.

In February, NCC **hosted a listening session** with NTIA officials and local and state leaders representing 24 municipalities and three states in attendance. NTIA's Broadband Program Specialist Julia Pulidindi explained each program's objectives and highlighted the nuances of particular interest to state and local officials.

BIPARTISAN TECH 2022

On March 29th, local officials and community leaders from across the country joined Next Century Cities' 2022 Bipartisan Tech conference. Speakers discussed the many ways in which technology enables residents to build community, access local government services, and participate in critically important remote proceedings.

Learn more about each of the panels here:
- What Broadband Equity Means for Judicial and Civic Participation
- Reaching the People We Serve
- Democracy and Civic Participation

Review conference moments **here**.

VIRTUALLY
Connected

Through virtual programming, Next Century Cities prioritizes connecting local leaders with representatives from federal agencies who can provide needed insight for implementing national policies and procedures at the community level. Roxanna Barboza has been key to facilitating some of these programs — such as a **fireside chat with NTIA's Evan Feinman** about the BEAD program and an **informative webinar** with Larry Clutts from the Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency about natural disaster preparedness.

Webinars allowed for NCC to connect directly with member municipalities, their local leaders, and advocates working to address the unique needs of their residents access, adoption, and connectivity stories. In June, the NCC team hosted a webinar called "**Baltimore's Broadband Movement**." During the gathering, the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation highlighted philanthropy's role in expanding community-based digital infrastructure. Baltimore's Director of Broadband and Digital Equity also provided background on the systemic issues that City officials are working to address.

The conversation with Baltimore continued this fall with a celebration of the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation's **Digital Equity Leadership Lab** (DELL) graduates. During the virtual gathering, NCC's Francella Ochillo provided opening remarks.

BROADBAND
Advocacy Work

Elevating local concerns to a national stage is the root of of NCC's work. Each year the team visits House and Senate offices on Capitol Hill to ensure that members of Congress are aware of local challenges. These annual visits complement NCC's efforts to draft comments to the Federal Communications Commission, coordinate with NTIA officials, and reach out to state broadband leaders. Combined, those actions help ensure that broadband access and adoption issues remain a local, state, and federal priority.

Click the hyperlinks below to learn more about what NCC has authored, joint filings with allies, and places we visited in 2022.

- Connecting with America's Governors on Broadband Programs That Could Transform Local Communities
- NCC and Allies Emphasize the Immediate Need for a Seamless Transition from the Emergency Broadband Benefit to the Affordable Connectivity Program
- Next Century Cities and Allies Urge the FCC to Bolster the Universal Service Fund
- Next Century Cities Connects Local Officials with the NTIA
- Next Century Cities Joins a Letter Urging NTIA to Prioritize Multi-Dwelling Units
- NCC Joins Allies in Support of the FCC's Decision to Open the 5.9 GHz Band for Public Use
- NCC Elevates Local Input on FCC Broadband Nutrition Labels
- Next Century Cities Joins Public Interest Allies in Opposing Unwarranted Delays in Compliance With ACP Rules
- NCC Urges Federal Communications Commission to Take an Equitable Approach to Addressing Digital Discrimination
- NCC Joins NATOA and Allies in Outlining Public Interest Pole Attachment Principles for Policymakers
- Next Century Cities and Center for Democracy and Technology Raise Concerns About Monitoring Students at Home via School-Issued Devices
- NCC Joins Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Former Mayor Andy Berke, and Philanthropist Eric Schmidt to Discuss Local Strategies for Improving Broadband Access
- Next Century Cities and Allies Meet With the Broadband Data Task Force to Clarify Challenge Process Details
- Next Century Cities Provides Keynote Remarks on the Power and Promise of Community-Based Coalitions That Are Improving Broadband Access in Arizona

Local Infrastructure Hub

Closing the Digital Divide:
Broadband Expansion and Middle Mile

Tuesday, August 16, 2022
2 p.m. EST

Mike Bloomberg
Founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Former Mayor of New York City

Andy Berke
Special Advisor for Broadband, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Francella Ochillo
Executive Director, Next Century Cities

John Giles
Mayor of Mesa, Arizona

BROADBAND IS A
Global Concern
A KEY TAKEAWAY FROM A TRANSATLANTIC JOURNEY TO LONDON, BRUSSELS, AND BERLIN:

The American Workforce is Unprepared for the Digital Revolution That We Started

By Francella Ochillo

In October 2022, I had the good fortune of traveling to London, Brussels, and Berlin with an all-female Congressional delegation of senior legislative staffers and tech policy experts sponsored by the Progressive Policy Institute. This trip was a rare opportunity for me to learn from — and exchange ideas with — elected and appointed officials that represent constituencies in the United Kingdom (UK), European Union (EU), and Germany.

We started with a tour of the Palace of Westminster in London, England, and learned about how the British Parliament and its Executive structures function. Accompanied by U.S. Rep. Connor Lamb (PA - 17), we dined with Members of Parliament including John Spellar, Catherine West, Khalid Mahmood, Yvonne Fovargue, and Diana Johnson. I was seated next to Lord Dave Watts, former Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Parliamentary Caucus. Our conversation revealed striking similarities related to socioeconomic divides in both England and the U.S.

Members of the European Parliament shared insights on transatlantic relations and global governance. Discussing competition policy with the Deputy Director General for Competition, Linsey McCallum, was a master's class in antitrust. She described a European approach to privacy regulation, which appears to be exacting and unafraid. We also discussed innovation policy.

A highlight of the week was being invited to speak at the Progressive Governance Summit in Berlin, Germany. I have moderated broadband discussions in states nationwide, but doing so in Germany was a first. Tech experts from the U.S., France, Germany, and other countries joined a discussion called, "Cracking the Ceiling: Driving Equal Participation in Tech and the Economy." It was illuminating to learn about digital inequities in other countries that were incredibly similar to key findings in my **May 2022 report on the Economic Consequences and Generational Impact of the Digital Divide**.

Walking the streets of Berlin, the unforgettable Stolpersteine (or "stumbling stones") serve as a constant reminder of the dark side of German history which, to this day, informs public service. Germany's parliamentary headquarters is built with a tunnel of mirrors through the center of the building, symbolizing transparency and the need for constituents to hold their government accountable.

The week concluded with a tour of the Bundestag, similar to the U.S. House of Representatives, and a meeting with Member Metin Hakverdi. Our delegation also met with Diplomat Charles Reynolds at the U.S. Embassy in Berlin. Still, one of the most remarkable sessions of the week was with the Division Director of Digitisation and Industrie 4.0 at the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate.

Germany's plans for digitizing various industries – and its workforce – are based on a decade-long strategy that solicits the best ideas from public and private stakeholders.
There is no equivalent in the U.S.

Looking back, there were so many moments on this trip in which I simultaneously appreciated the promise of domestic broadband policy and what it could be. Simply, if we wanted every U.S. resident to have access to broadband, they would. Estonia provides a great example of how ubiquitous connectivity provides advantages for residents and cost-savings for governments.

Even though technology was not invented on U.S. soil, the applications that change everything about how we work, live, and interact were. The digital revolution that was born here is now being perfected in countries around the world. That turn of events will have economic, cybersecurity, and geopolitical ramifications for years to come.

Finally, each country is grappling with how the digital divide coupled with rising income inequalities cripples their workforce in unambiguous ways. A notable difference is that while the U.S. makes plans for Americans to have access to moderately-skilled jobs, other countries are developing strategies to reimagine manufacturing and workforce development in forward-thinking and sustainable ways. We can do more. Even if we do not, other governments will.

2022 ORIGINAL
Research

WHAT COMES NEXT?

What Comes Next? A Community-Centered Approach to Legacy Network Retirement advocates for the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") to revisit consumer-protection safeguards to guide legacy telecommunications network retirement. The report also highlights direct connections between rural electrification in the early 20th century and our modern broadband Internet marketplace.
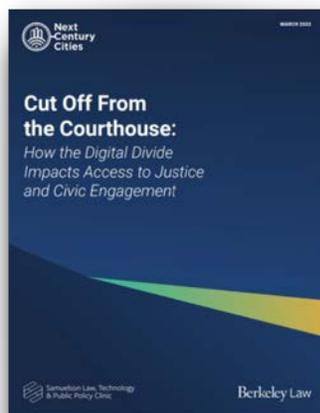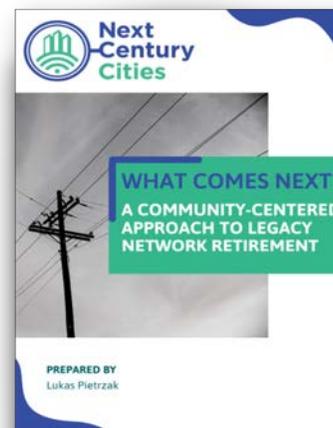
CUT OFF FROM THE COURTHOUSE

Following a year-long partnership, the Samuelson Law, Technology & Public Policy Clinic at the University of California, Berkeley, and Next Century Cities released **Cut Off From the Courthouse: How the Digital Divide Impacts Access to Justice and Civic Engagement**.

CHANGING OUR [VIRTUAL] REALITY

Changing Our (Virtual) Reality: Telehealth and the United States Maternal Health Crisis examines the history of telehealth, the high morbidity and mortality rates associated with giving birth, and the potential for telehealth to serve as a critical point of intervention in the fight against the national maternal health crisis.
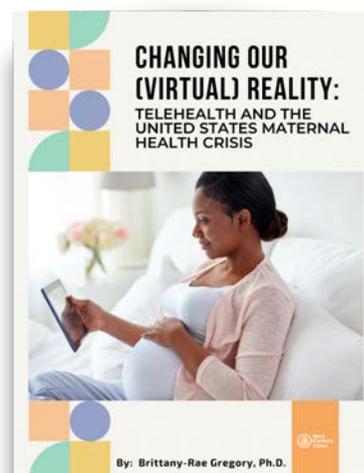
2022 ORIGINAL *Research*

RESOUNDING SILENCE

Resounding Silence: The Need For Local Insights In Federal Policymaking examines the Federal Communications Commission's Rulemaking procedure and how communities have historically responded to calls for comment and had their concerns overlooked or discarded. Highlighting specifically the Small Cell and Multi-tenant Environment proceedings provides clear examples of municipalities participating in the Commission's processes.
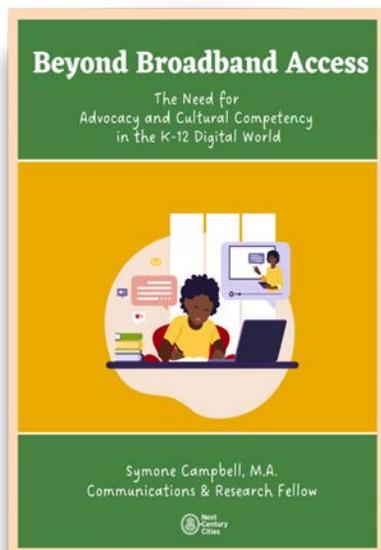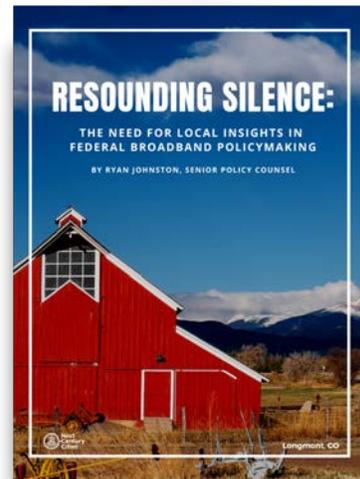
BEYOND BROADBAND ACCESS

Authored by Symone Campbell, NCC's Research and Communications Fellow, **Beyond Broadband, Access, and Adoption: The Need for Advocacy and Cultural Competency in the K-12 Digital World** chronicles the educational access challenges faced by low-income students of color. These challenges illustrate how lack of broadband access and adoption in low-income communities of color have contributed to poor education outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic.
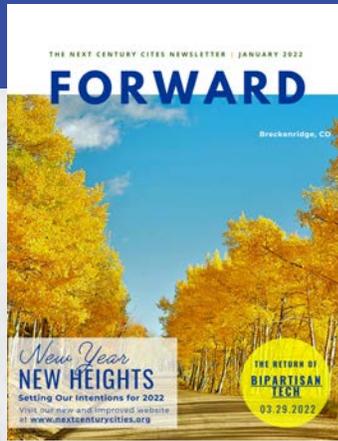
LESSONS FROM THE LONE STAR STATE

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.
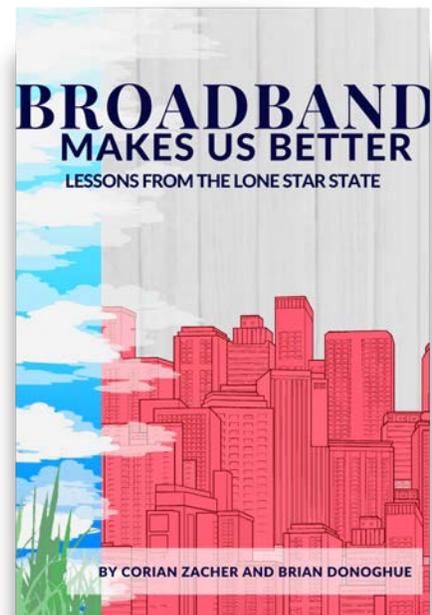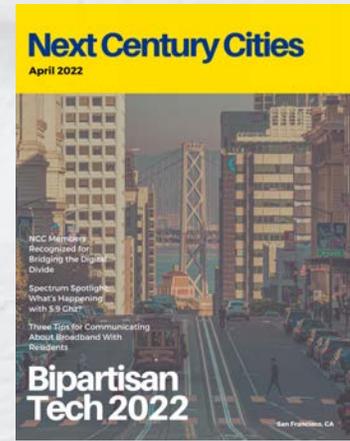
2022
Newsletters

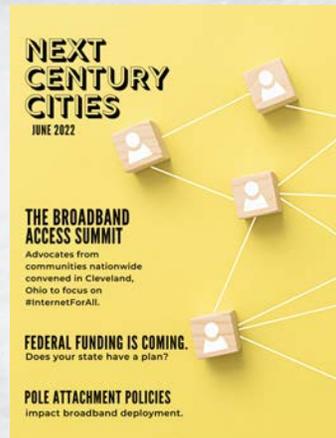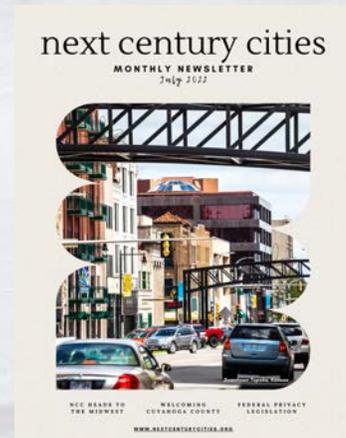(Click each cover to revisit 2022 highlights.)

January
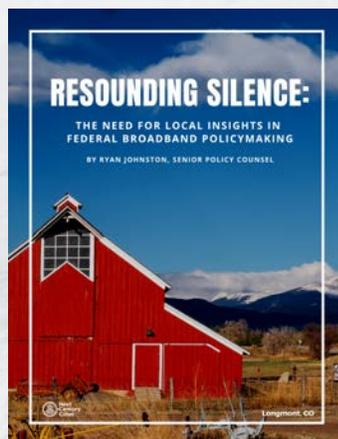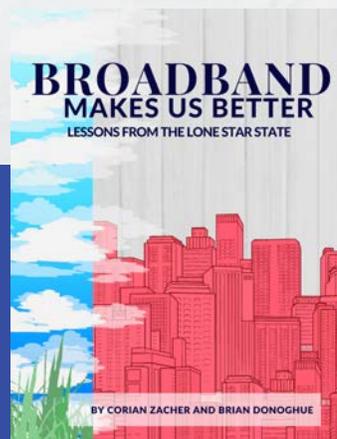
February

April

May

June

July

October

November

REFLECTING ON
A Great Year

The Next Century Cities team closed out 2022 with a training retreat in Washington, D.C. It was an opportunity to reconnect with intention, reflect on what we were able to accomplish as a team over the last calendar year, and set goals for increasing local engagement and outreach in 2023.

During the retreat, we also convened with the other partners of the National Broadband Resource Hub to strategize ways to ensure that the Broadband Resource Hub is beneficial for users.

Pictured to the left: Stacey Baxter, NCC's Policy Fellow, presented on social media strategies to boost engagement with local leaders and organizational allies.

#NCCSERVES

On the last day of our annual retreat, team members worked together for our latest #NCCServes project supporting Enchanted Makers' Capes for Kids. Enchanted Makers is a program and patch project which empowers children in shelters through volunteer-made capes and name patches for their clothes.

LOOKING AHEAD TO
2023

2023 will be a year full of opportunity. From broadband mapping challenges to funding applications, it has never been more important for local leaders to build partnerships. Plans made now will guide the next decade of broadband investments. Keeping records of programs' progress and their impacts will provide the opportunity to look back on 2023 as a benchmark year. I look forward to celebrating and showcasing the stories behind local broadband efforts that will set the stage for years to come.

Corian Zacher

As we kick off 2023, network safety should be a top priority for municipalities nationwide. Cybersecurity is a critical aspect of a successful broadband project. Local leaders can learn more about network safety via the **Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Cyber Essentials Toolkits** and **CISA's Emergency Communications Coordination Program**.

Roxy Barboza

2023 will be an incredibly exciting year for broadband access and adoption. I'm especially looking forward to the **Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program pilots**. Having successfully advocated for outreach and community engagement funding at the local and federal levels in my previous role, it is exciting to know that under-resourced community-based outreach programs will get a boost from federal dollars.

Brian Donoghue

In the coming year, I'm looking forward to working on the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on digital discrimination. This rulemaking couldn't come at a more important time. As the states are gearing up to apply for the BEAD and Digital Equity Act programs, we need clear rules of the road on what digital discrimination is and how a provider will be held accountable if they engage in it. These policies, if written correctly, could have a massive impact on historically disconnected communities. They could finally bring about the equitable deployment of infrastructure we have all wanted to see for years.

Ryan Johnston

NEXT CENTURY CITIES' 2022
Publication Highlights

JANUARY

NCC and Allies Emphasize the Immediate Need for a Seamless Transition from the Emergency Broadband Benefit to the Affordable Connectivity Program

#NCCServeWhereYouAre | Broadband's Role in Feeding Our Neighbors

#NCCServeWhereYouAre | Volunteering Online

FEBRUARY

A Community-Centered Approach to Legacy Network Retirement

Next Century Cities and Allies Urge the FCC to Bolster the Universal Service Fund

Connecting with America's Governors on Broadband Programs That Could Transform Local Communities

NCC Hosts Panel Discussion with Local Government Officials at the 2022 Net Inclusion Conference

Welcoming Deputy Director Brian Donoghue

Next Century Cities Connects Local Officials with the NTIA

Next Century Cities Hosts a Listening Session with Digital Literacy Advocates in Pennsylvania

MARCH

Next Century Cities Co-hosts a Regional Convening with the City of South Bend and Pew Charitable Trusts

Next Century Cities Joins a Letter Urging NTIA to Prioritize Multi-Dwelling Units

Samuelson Law, Technology & Public Policy Clinic and Next Century Cities Release Report Detailing the Impact of Digital Inequities on Remote Court and Government Proceedings

APRIL

NCC Joins Allies in Support of the FCC's Decision to Open the 5.9 GHz Band for Public Use

Next Century Cities Convenes Local Leaders and Broadband Advocates for 2022 Virtual Bipartisan Tech Conference

What Broadband Equity Means for Judicial and Civic Participation

Next Century Cities Hosts Panel on Connectivity Barriers to Participation in Democracy and Civic Processes

Local Leaders from NCC Member Communities Honored as Government Technology's Top 25 Doers, Dreamers & Drivers

Spectrum Spotlight: What's Happening With 5.9 GHz?

APRIL CON'T.

Three Tips for Communicating About Broadband With Residents

Partnering with Academic Institutions Can Boost Community Broadband Outcomes

NCC Elevates Local Input on FCC Broadband Nutrition Labels

Next Century Cities Joins Public Interest Allies in Opposing Unwarranted Delays in Compliance With ACP Rules

MAY

NCC Meets With Local Officials and Nonprofit Allies in Houston, Texas

Report Summary: The National Consumer Law Center Releases a Report on the Consumer Protections in Affordable Connectivity Program.

Local Officials Share Advice and Learn About Innovative Connectivity Strategies at Annual Broadband Communities Summit

How Local Governments Are Making the Affordable Connectivity Program Stronger

Broadband Communities Summit: Connecting the People Who Connect Our Communities

MAY CON'T

University of Pittsburgh Hosts 2022 Pennsylvania Broadband Symposium

NCC Urges Federal Communications Commission to Take an Equitable Approach to Addressing Digital Discrimination

JUNE

Metrolab Annual Summit in Chicago Highlights Important Policy Considerations for Local Broadband Planning

NCC Joins NATOA and Allies in Outlining Public Interest Pole Attachment Principles for Policymakers

Local Control over Pole Attachment Costs Is Essential for Expediting Broadband Deployment

Broadband Access Summit in Cleveland Highlights the Partnerships and Possibilities of #InternetForAll

JULY

California's Ambitious Affordable Broadband Goals Could Help Its Communities Address One of the Biggest Barriers to Adoption

Welcoming Roxanna "Roxy" Barboza (she/her)

Inspiration, innovation, ingenuity: TSC Get Digital is empowering Topeka residents to improve their quality of life through community-centered connectivity tools

Next Century Cities visits Kansas and Missouri to highlight local digital equity efforts

NCC Hosts Webinar With Local Government, Community Leaders, and Academic Partners Who Are Building a Movement in Baltimore

Federal Privacy Legislation & Broadband: What's in the American Data Privacy and Protection Act?

AUGUST

Next Century Cities Joins Broadband Access Ohio in Preparing Communities for Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Next Century Cities Supports the Next Generation of Broadband Leaders During American Connection Corps Development Panel

Next Century Cities and Center for Democracy and Technology Raise Concerns About Monitoring Students at Home via School-Issued Devices

Next Century Cities Joins NTIA Panel Discussion at the State Broadband Leadership Network Summit in Colorado

NCC Joins Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Former Mayor Andy Berke, and Philanthropist Eric Schmidt to Discuss Local Strategies for Improving Broadband Access

SEPTEMBER

Next Century Cities and Allies Meet With the Broadband Data Task Force to Clarify Challenge Process Details

Local Leadership Took Center Stage at League of California Cities 2022 Annual Conference and Expo

Changing Our (Virtual) Reality: Telehealth and the United States Maternal Health Crisis

NCC Hosts a Lunch and Learn for Community Leaders and Presents at TechForward Conference in Colorado

NEXT CENTURY CITIES' 2022
Publication Highlights

OCTOBER

Next Century Cities Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month 2022

Next Century Cities Joins Connect Humanity and Allies to Recommend Changes to the Community Reinvestment Act

Next Century Cities Releases a Report Highlighting Pain Points in the FCC's Community Outreach and Recommendations to Boost Engagement

CISA Joins NCC for National Preparedness Month

NTIA's Evan Feinman Joins NCC to Discuss BEAD Program Details for Local Leaders

NCC Celebrates Digital Inclusion Week With Local Leaders and Organizational Allies in the DMV

NCC Provides Keynote Remarks at Connect 313's Inaugural Academic Research Symposium

Next Century Cities Provides Keynote Remarks on the Power and Promise of Community-Based Coalitions That Are Improving Broadband Access in Arizona

NCC Discusses How IIJA Funding, Robust Competition, Sound Data, and Social Infrastructure Supports Universal Broadband Goals

NCC Sponsors Philadelphia's Technology Learning Collaborative Conference, "This is Our Moment: Moving the Needle on Digital Equity"

'NCC Elevates Local Voices During Anchornets Pole Attachment Panel "On Opposite Poles: Finding Common Ground"

Helping Residents Stay Safe in a Digital World: Cybersecurity Resources for Local Government and Their Communities

OCTOBER CON'T

Next Century Cities Supports the Broadband Connects America Coalition's Call for the FCC to incorporate Speed-Test Data Into the New Broadband Availability Challenge Process

NOVEMBER

Next Century Cities Joins With Allies to Promote Clear, Transparent, and Informative Broadband Nutrition Labels

Next Century Cities Highlights Local Connectivity Challenges During Biannual Day on the Hill

Ready, Go! NCC Participates in Annual Michigan Broadband Summit

NCC Celebrates DELL Program Graduates Who Are Operationalizing Digital Equity in Baltimore Neighborhoods

NCC's Communications and Research Fellow Releases a Report on Why Broadband Strategies Must Promote Advocacy and Cultural Competency for Marginalized Students

Broadband Makes US Better: Lessons from the Lone Star State

Next Century Cities Submits Comments Urging the Federal Trade Commission to Enact Clear and Transparent Surveillance and Data Collection Policies

DECEMBER

NCC Partners with the City of Albuquerque and Hosts the Build Broadband Together Workshop
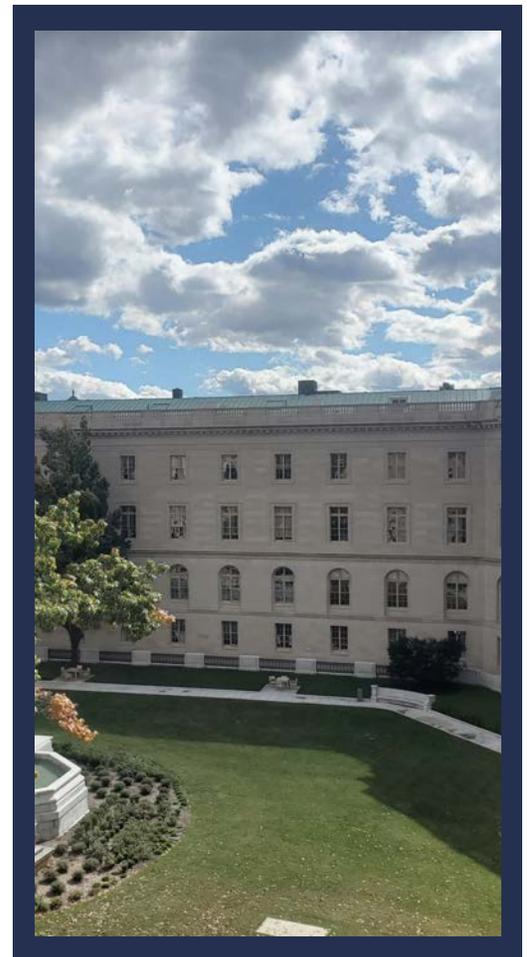
2022
YEARBOOK

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