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Next Century Cities Files Comments on Updates to the FCC's Broadband Data Collection

Washington D.C. – On **September 24, 2019**, Next Century Cities, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, Access Humboldt, the Center for Rural Strategies, Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association, and X-Lab submitted comments to the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission") regarding the establishment of the Digital Opportunity Data Collection and modernization of the Form 477 data collection program.

The FCC's maps have long told a different story of broadband access than what Americans across the country actually experience. Next Century Cities applauds the FCC for taking steps to improve its broadband data collection process. The Digital Opportunity Data Collection will help the Commission and others who rely on its data to direct resources to areas with the greatest need while reducing overstatement errors.

Next Century Cities would also like to stress that these changes are not a complete or permanent solution. Collecting information on latency and pricing, as well as adopting more nuanced methods to determine service availability and validate data submitted by providers, would also help improve the accuracy and efficacy of its broadband maps. The Commission could also benefit from the insights of local governments that have had to develop their own broadband data collection methods, independently collecting data as part of local digital inclusion strategies. Several Next Century Cities' members, including **Louisville, Kentucky; San Jose, California; and Seattle, Washington**, have valuable expertise to share.

"Too many policy decisions have been made using inaccurate data while unserved and underserved communities miss out on resources they so desperately need," says Francella Ochillo, Next Century Cities' Executive Director. "This is the first of several steps to ensure that the most disconnected communities are represented in the Commissions' data collections and a priority in its decision making."

[Find Next Century Cities' full comments to the FCC here.](#)

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Next Century Cities is a non-profit membership organization of over 200 communities, founded to support communities and their elected leaders, including mayors and other officials, as they

seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable internet access. Next Century Cities celebrates broadband successes in communities, demonstrates their value, and helps other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband. For more information, visit www.nextcenturycities.org.