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## Next Century Cities: Connecting Communities

Next Century Cities supports community leaders across the country as they seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable Internet.

Across the country, innovative municipalities are already recognizing the importance of leveraging gigabit level Internet to attract new businesses and create jobs, improve health care and education, and connect residents to new opportunities. Next Century Cities is committed to celebrating these successes, demonstrating their value, and helping other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband.

### Our Principles

Next Century Cities believes that there is no single pathway to a smart, effective approach to next-generation broadband. What matters is meaningful choice, dedicated leadership, and smart collaboration. Our participating leaders and communities are committed to the following principles:

- **High-Speed Internet Is Necessary Infrastructure:** fast, reliable, and affordable Internet – at globally competitive speeds – is no longer optional. Residents, schools, libraries, and businesses require next-generation connectivity to succeed.
- **The Internet Is Nonpartisan:** because the Internet is an essential resource for residents and businesses in all communities, the provision of fast, reliable, and affordable Internet transcends partisanship. This collaboration welcomes leaders of all affiliations and beliefs who believe fast, reliable, and affordable high-speed Internet access is essential to secure America's Internet future.
- **Communities Must Enjoy Self-Determination:** broadband solutions must align with community needs—there is no perfect model that is universally appropriate. Towns and cities should have the right to consider all options – whether public, nonprofit, corporate, or some other hybrid – free from interference.
- **High-Speed Internet Is a Community-Wide Endeavor:** building effective next-generation networks requires cooperation across communities. It is critical to involve and include multiple stakeholders and perspectives to succeed, including businesses, community organizations, residents, anchor institutions, and others. Everyone in a community should be able to access the Internet on reasonable terms.
- **Meaningful Competition Drives Progress:** a vibrant, diverse marketplace, with transparency in offerings, pricings, and policies will spur innovation, increase investment, and lower prices. Communities, residents, and businesses should have a meaningful choice in providers.
- **Collaboration Benefits All:** innovative approaches to broadband deployment present diverse challenges and opportunities to communities and regions. Working together, cities can learn from the experiences of others, lower costs, and make the best use of next-generation networks.

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## A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership

We invite cities to join Next Century Cities and strengthen the ability of communities nationwide to prosper and compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Next Century Cities supports 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.

- **Elevating the Conversation:** cities that have or would like to develop truly next-generation networks are visionary cities, and their leaders recognize what it takes to be competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Next Century Cities will work with these leaders and their cities to make the case nationally and within communities that next-generation Internet is essential infrastructure that can deliver transformative benefits to communities today.
- **Supporting Cities:** communities stepping into the 21<sup>st</sup> century through next-generation networks face myriad challenges. It is essential to provide crucial support to facilitate these innovative projects. Next Century Cities and its partners will work to assist each other in overcoming obstacles to success.
- **Providing Tools for Success:** developing a next-generation network is a daunting task for a city of any size. It is important that communities have access to resources, advice, and tools to develop effective broadband Internet networks. Next Century Cities is committed to developing and aggregating resources to guide incipient projects, as well as tools to help those already equipped with this infrastructure better leverage their networks to yield community benefits.

We are excited to begin this initiative, and we look forward to working with diverse towns and cities across the country to lead a new conversation on what it will take to compete and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

For more information, contact Deb Socia at [Deb@NextCenturyCities.org](mailto:Deb@NextCenturyCities.org).