1. **The plan.**

The City of San Diego launched the "SD Access 4 All" program – a series of initiatives to help close the digital divide – in April 2021 with the expansion of open public Wi-Fi to over 300 locations citywide. Public Wi-Fi is now available at nearly every library and recreation center in the city as well as over 255 neighborhood locations with a major focus on bolstering internet access in the San Diego Promise Zone, which includes the city's most disadvantaged and underserved communities. In the first year of the program, more than 200,000 unique users have used the public Wi-Fi for over 1.4 million sessions.

The "SD Access 4 All" program also created expanded opportunities for low-income San Diegans to get connected to the internet amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Those new opportunities include:
- The purchase of 2,000 Chromebooks that library patrons can check out for up to two hours at a time with 2,000 more planned for Fiscal Year 2023 (begins July 1, 2022).
- The purchase of 4,000 mobile hotspots that library patrons can check out and take home for up to 90 days – essentially giving them free at-home internet access. Mobile hotspots are easy-to-use and allow users to connect their laptop, tablet or other web-enabled devices to the internet.
- Outdoor community labs with free Wi-Fi, tables and chairs at 10 libraries.
- Hiring a local community outreach organization – Pillars of the Community – to help eligible households take advantage of a new federal benefits to lower the cost of broadband internet service during the pandemic. Conducted outreached to 5,000 households. The City of San Diego had the second highest enrollment totals in the state of California with more than 48,000 households enrolled as of May 2022, according to FCC data.
- Partnering with San Diego Regional Association of Governments (SANDAG) on a Get Connected outreach campaign to inform local residents about the Affordable Connectivity Program:
- The "Access 4 All Tech Express," a partnership with the San Diego Futures Foundation, is a mobile digital literacy program offering free in-person classes for any San Diegan who wants to learn how to use a computer and better navigate the internet. The "Tech Express" – which provides laptops for use – visits libraries, recreation centers, community centers and senior-living facilities to conduct classes. Courses – which include "How to Use Zoom," "Mouse & Typing Skills," "Internet Safety," and "How to Use a

Smartphone/Laptop" – are open to people of all skill levels. The program can serve up to 110 residents weekly.

- Digital navigator services available via a 50-hour-per-week toll-free helpline and in person at neighborhood branch libraries, recreation centers, and community partner sites. There are currently 12 Digital Navigators fluent in 10 languages which operate in partnership with local digital literacy non-profit, San Diego Futures Foundation. The program was co-designed by seven local organizations to meet the unique needs of San Diego communities.
- A partnership with <u>Computers 2 Kids</u> to refurbish end-of-life computers and provide 2,000 computers to low-income families over two years.
- A new <u>"SD Access 4 All" website</u> – <u>sandiego.gov/sdaccess</u> – that includes information on all the programs as well as an interactive map so users can find the nearest public Wi-Fi location.

In addition, the San Diego City Council recently allocated $500,000 in Fiscal Year 2023 for the creation of a Broadband Master Plan with the primary goal of bringing long-term, high quality affordable internet to low-income households, local businesses and community-serving organizations. A Broadband Master Plan will enable the City to effectively understand the needs of stakeholders and make informed decisions around infrastructure investment and deployment. The City, led by the Department of Information Technology, is in the process of developing a request for proposals to hire a consultant to develop the plan with a projected completion date in 2024. Attached is a report (see page 6) from the City's Independent Budget Analyst recommend the City Council add $500,000 to the budget for Broadband Master Plan.

2. Documentation for planning process.

The City of San Diego created a monthly Digital Equity Working Group with various stakeholders to help shape the "SD Access 4 All" program over a year. The group still meets on a monthly basis. Attached are copies of meeting minutes:
- City of San Diego_DEWG Meeting Minutes_ Feb 2022
- CIty of San Diego_DEWG_Meeting Minutes_March 2022

The City also actively participated in the development of a Digital Equity Strategy and Action Plan for the San Diego region. The plan identifies a set of strategies

acted on by the City of San Diego:
https://www.sandag.org/uploads/projectid/projectid_614_31273.pdf