



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ 0269

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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KATHLEEN MOLLOY PREVISICH, PLANNING DIRECTOR

March 4, 2014

AGENDA DATE: March 18, 2014

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

SUBJECT: Update on Efforts to Revise County Regulations, Establish a Broadband Master Plan and Discuss Economic Development with Providers

Members of the Board:

On January 28, 2014, your Board directed staff to return on today's agenda with an update regarding (1) efforts to revise County regulations to streamline the review of broadband-related infrastructure and remove certain land use permitting requirements for broadband-related infrastructure in the public right-of-way, (2) efforts to establish a Broadband Master Plan, and (3) meetings conducted with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to discuss economic vitality and development opportunities. This report discusses Planning Department work and efforts to date.

The Planning Department continues to work towards completion of revised regulations intended to provide increased access to broadband infrastructure for Santa Cruz County residents, workers and visitors in areas that have been underserved or that experience service gaps. County Code Sections 13.10.660-668 comprise the County's Wireless Communication Facilities (WCF) Ordinance, which specifies the various types of wireless communication facilities that are subject to County review. Our work is focused on:

- Updating the types of wireless facilities that are exempted from development review and use permit requirements, including newer technology such as Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS) and other utility pole-mounted microcells that would be no longer subject to land use permit approval if installed in public rights-of-way;
- Identifying wireless technology that should be reviewed in a manner consistent with the review of utilities in the public right-of-way;
- Updating WCF Ordinance definitions to reflect new technology and revised terminology, as well as new State and federal law; and
- Clarifying the current provisions regarding WCF height.

The Planning Department is also assisting the Department of Public Works in developing noticing requirements to ensure public awareness concerning encroachment permit applications related to broadband infrastructure in the public right-of-way. Other minor clarifying definitions and text are proposed throughout County Code Sections 13.10.660-668 for purposes of streamlining and updating the County's regulations.

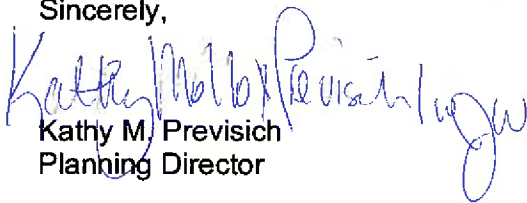
Economic Development staff continues to track the grant application by Sunesys for funding from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to build a 91.18 mile fiber network from Santa Cruz to Soledad through several of the County's key employment areas, including the Medical District, Upper 41st Avenue and Aptos. In a letter received from the CPUC, the Sunesys project will receive funding for 60%, or \$7,352,164, of the total project cost of \$12,253,606. A Resolution to fund the project will be heard by the CPUC at its meeting on March 13, 2014. Supervisor Friend's office submitted a letter of support for the project.

Staff is currently working on the Economic Vitality Strategy and plans to present the draft to the Board of Supervisors on April 15, 2014. Developing a Broadband Master Plan is one of the strategies within this Strategy. In February, Economic Development staff met with local ISP Cruzio to discuss economic vitality and development opportunities. Cruzio is excited that the Sunesys project is expected to receive CASF funding and is eager to work with the County to meet the broadband needs of new and existing commercial customers. Staff reached out to other ISPs in the area but has not received responses, and staff will continue this outreach as the Broadband Master Plan is developed.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board take the following actions:

1. Accept and file this report providing an update on Planning's broadband efforts.
2. Direct Planning staff to continue work on ordinance amendments for consideration by the Planning Commission in May to implement the revisions discussed in this report.
3. Direct Economic Development staff to provide an update on or before June 24, 2014 regarding work to complete a Broadband Master Plan.

Sincerely,


Kathy M. Previsich
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED:


SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
County Administrative Officer

cc: County Counsel
Coastal Commission
Department of Public Works