



Bexar County and SA Digital Connects Partner to Allocate \$25 Million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Broadband Internet Expansion in Bexar County

SAN ANTONIO (August 9, 2022) – Today, Bexar County Commissioners Court approved a \$25 million allocation request for broadband internet expansion made by [SA Digital Connects](#), a local nonprofit that developed the San Antonio and Greater Bexar County Digital Equity Plan and built a public-private-community collaboration to bridge the digital divide. The funds will be used to leverage additional investment by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to build out broadband internet infrastructure needed in un/underserved parts of South, West, and East Bexar County.

Earlier this year SA Digital Connects worked with Bexar County, and the City of San Antonio on a [Digital Connectivity RFP](#) made available to ISPs this summer. It allows ISPs to share their plans for expansion, broadband assets, and their vision for partnerships with the County and City as funding becomes available. The RFP is due in October 2022 and will give the County information to activate initial projects using ARPA funding that can be brought back to the Court for approval.

“With today’s \$25 million ARPA allocation we can begin tackling the infrastructure projects needed to bring connectivity to those without. A connected County is imperative to our economic competitiveness at the state and national level,” said Nelson Wolff, Bexar County Judge. “My colleagues and I have been working closely with SA Digital Connects on a plan to ensure all Bexar County residents have high-speed internet to their home.”

Bexar County modeled its ARPA funding framework around the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) that are greatly impacted by the digital divide. SDOH are conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life risks and outcomes, such as access to telemedicine, public services, or applying for jobs. This allocation aligns with Bexar County’s overall plan to revitalize and build resilience by assuring households have high quality internet that can give residents access to economic mobility.

“I had already been talking about the digital divide and how Precinct 1 has the greatest need, but COVID exposed this reality to the rest of the County. Appropriating 25 million dollars to begin to tackle this issue is vital to ensure that all residents have reliable and affordable internet

to do basic tasks others take for granted,” said Rebeca Clay-Flores, Bexar County Commissioner Precinct 1. “I will continue to advocate to ensure that Precinct 1 constituents are no longer left behind.”

“This work isn’t easy, and we are extremely honored to partner with Judge Wolff and the County Commissioners on this allocation of \$25 million ARPA funds,” said Marina Alderete Gavito, SA Digital Connects Executive Director. “There’s more work to be done so that all households in our community have reliable, fast, and affordable internet. Name a problem, and it’s made worse by a lack of internet access; name an opportunity, and it’s harder to grasp without reliable, fast, and affordable internet. We must start activating now.”

SA Digital Connects launched in the fall of 2021 and is committed to acting with an equity-first mindset, focusing initially on the areas with the greatest need. SA Digital Connects prioritizes that every household must have 1) affordable, reliable access to the internet at speeds of 100/100 Mbps, 2) access to high-quality connected devices, and 3) digital literacy, giving people the ability to feel smart, safe, and secure online.

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SA Digital Connects:

SA Digital Connects is a public/private/community investment and unincorporated nonprofit dedicated to the implementation of the San Antonio and Greater Bexar County Community Digital Equity Plan and Roadmap that will lead to future action steps; including timelines, milestones, key stakeholder roles, and required investment for execution. With this roadmap, our community is “shovel ready” to make effective use of local, state and federal funding for key digital access and equity initiatives impacting households, students, older adults, veterans, people living with disabilities, workforce, telemedicine, and the justice system. For more information, visit www.sadigitalconnects.com.