

COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
CHULA VISTA ACCEPTING EMERGENCY
CONNECTIVITY FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$480,00
AND ALLOCATING \$144,000 IN PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL
AND GOVERNMENT (PEG) FUNDS, FOR A TOTAL OF
\$624,000, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO
RENEW THE AGREEMENT WITH T-MOBILE USA TO
CONTINUE TO PROVIDE WIFI HOTSPOT SERVICE TO
DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES

WHEREAS, the immediate move toward distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the disparities in digital access within segments of our communities; and

WHEREAS, with approximately 69,500 students throughout Chula Vista and the shift toward accessing educational tools and curriculum online, students impacted by the digital divide are at an increasing disadvantage as access becomes the central barrier to success for school-aged children; and

WHEREAS, those without access to devices at home must rely on public institutions, libraries, schools, or community centers for Internet access; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, these resources are not available, making it essential that the City and education partners pursue other opportunities to support the community; and

WHEREAS, in May 2020, the city adopted the Digital Equity and Inclusion Plan, and one of the initiatives cited is the need to improve access to Internet connectivity in the home and access to functioning devices for students to complete course work; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to support digital inclusion and address the digital divide, staff recommends the renewal of service for 2,000 WIFI hotspot devices that would be funded from the available balance of the Public, Education and Government (PEG) Fund and A \$480,000 grant from the Federal Communication Commission's Emergency Connectivity Funding; and

WHEREAS, these devices would be circulated by the Chula Vista Public Library to the community, with the priority being for students in grades K-6, and would be also offer the community the ability to have access to unlimited data at 150 Mbps speeds with filtering compliance to the Children's Internet Protection Act; and

WHEREAS, these devices would circulate for a two-month period (to support families and students), with an option for renewal and would address immediate need for families and students within the Chula Vista community; and

WHEREAS, one WIFI hotspot device would provide students access to the Internet without time restrictions and allow connections for up to six devices at a time; and

WHEREAS, by providing more hotspot devices for the public to access, the City would significantly improve access to the Internet and support digital inclusion while addressing the educational gap that is created by the digital divide; and

WHEREAS, staff is recommending that funding for this project come from the PEG access fee provided to the City as a result of the franchises with Cox Cable and AT&T and a grant from the FCC Emergency Connectivity Fund; and

WHEREAS, PEG funds can be used for capital purchases of facilities, equipment and services that promote the publication of government information, and have been used by local governments to provide citizens with access to “other electronic information” about the services they provide and issues they face, providing information to citizens of an educational nature, and providing public meeting coverage and, under the terms of federal and state oversight of cable television franchises, funding for public access to the cable network is available for specific purposes including installation of infrastructure supportive of Public, Education and Government access; and

WHEREAS, the FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund is a \$7.17 billion program that will help schools and libraries provide the tools and services their communities need for remote learning during the COVID-19 emergency period. ECF will help provide relief to millions of students, school staff, and library patrons and will help close the Homework Gap for students who currently lack necessary Internet access or the devices they need to connect to classrooms.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Chula Vista that it accepts \$480,000 from Emergency Connectivity Funding and allocates \$144,000 from existing PEG funding, for a total of \$624,000, increasing the Fiscal Year 2021/22 PEG budget by up to \$650,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Chula Vista that it authorizes the City Manager to renew an agreement with T-Mobile USA, with such changes as may be authorized or required by the City Attorney, to continue to provide WIFI hotspot services to disadvantaged families.

Presented by

Approved as to form by

Tracy Lamb
Director of Community Services

Glen R. Googins
City Attorney