North Central Texas Economic Development District (NCTEDD)
Virtual Zoom Webinar Meeting
February 7, 2022, | 10:00 AM

MEETING MINUTES

1.) **Welcome and Introductions**
Marty Wieder, NCTEDD Board Chair, opened the meeting at 10:03 and welcomed Board members and guests. He explained that Board members would be able to unmute their devices to speak, ask questions, and conduct the meeting. Marty said that the meeting is expected to be well attended and guests can use the Chat feature to ask questions. NCTEDD staff would monitor and read the questions posted in the Chat.

Lucille Johnson, NCTCOG staff member, took Board member attendance.

2.) **Introduction of New Board Members**
Marty introduced and welcomed three NCTEDD Board Members appointed since the last meeting: Doug McDonald, Managing Director of Innovation and Placemaking Initiatives for the City of Richardson, who is filling a seat in the cities 50,000-100,00 population category, was appointed in September 2021; Chris Coffman, City Manager for the City of Granbury, who is filling a seat in the cities less than 25,000 population category, was appointed in November 2021; and Donna Simmons, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator for Kaufman County, who was appointed to fill a County category in January of this year. Marty explained that each of them is serving a three-year term.

3.) **Approval of the August 30, 2021, NCTEDD Board Meeting Minutes**
Marty asked the Board for any questions or changes to the August 30, 2021, NCTEDD Board meeting minutes. Hearing no questions or changes, he called for a motion and second to approve the minutes. Upon a motion made by John Smith, seconded by Jeff Sandford, the minutes were unanimously approved.

4.) **Guest Speakers – National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Presentation**
Marty introduced NTIA guest speakers, Scott Woods, Director of the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth and the Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives, and Katherine Bates, Manager of Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth. He also introduced Greg Conte, Director of the newly formed Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) and said that Greg will talk about the State's broadband program.

Katherine Bates provided an overview of the NTIA-BroadbandUSA funding programs created under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) or the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Katherine explained that IIJA dedicated $65 billion in funding towards broadband, with approximately $48 billion of those dollars allocated to the NTIA. She said that the remaining dollars were allocated to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Private Activity Bonds. She explained that NTIA created four programs - Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD), Digital Equity Act (DEA), Tribal Broadband Connectivity Technical Amendment, and Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure - to address broadband needs with the dollars they were allocated.

1. Katherine said that the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) is where the bulk of the NTIA funding dollars went, with $42.45 billion reserved for it. She explained that BEAD is a state and territory formula program that aims to increase access to affordable, reliable, and high-speed broadband. The funds will go directly to states. Katherine also explained that the program includes three priorities: (1) unserved locations, (2) underserved locations, and (3) community anchor institutions. Each state must write a 5-year broadband plan and describe how each priority will be met in their plan. She legislation requires that states coordinate with local governments to gain an understanding of local broadband needs and seek input from communities. She explained that every state will receive at least a

$100 million under BEAD. She further explained that the FCC is currently working on broadband mapping to identify unserved and underserved areas across the country. States will receive additional funding based on the data from that mapping. Katherine said states will receive 5% of the $100 million right away to write state broadband plans. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the BEAD program will be released in mid-May.

2. Scott Woods provided an overview of the NTIA's Digital Equity Act (DEA) program which includes three sequence programs that aim to promote digital inclusion. He said that $2.75 billion has been allocated to the DEA program. He provided a brief overview of the three programs under DEA. (1) The State Digital Equity Planning Grant helps ensure states have the capacity and appropriate plans to achieve digital equity and support digital inclusion across the state. A total of $60 million has been allocated to this program. Scott explained that state governors must appoint an administrating entity to be eligible for this grant. That entity will develop the staged (planning, pre-planning) digital equity plan and will make subgrants available to any eligible entities to assist in the development of the State Digital Equity Plan. (2) The State Digital Equity Capacity Grant supports the implementation of State Digital Equity Plans and digital inclusion activities for states. A total of $1.44 billion has been allocated to this program. Scott said, and stressed, that states must have completed the Planning Grant program in order to compete for this Capacity Grant program. (3) Once the State Digital Equity Planning Grant and the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant have been completed, the Digital Equity Act (DEA) moves into the third sequence of its program. Scott explained that the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program is the final program under the DEA. A total of $1.25 billion has been allocated to this program to support efforts to promote digital inclusion, achieve digital equity & improve adoption of broadband in local communities. Scott said the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program provides opportunities for local governments, councils of governments, and other community organizations to compete for program funding. Scott provided an overview of the eligible activities under this program. He further explained the program priorities include veterans, individuals living in households earning at or below 150% of the poverty line, aging individuals, incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, individuals with a language barrier, individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals who primarily reside in a rural communities. Scott said NTIA staff will be available to answer questions and provide further guidance once the Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) are released. Katherine said it is very important for states and local governments to work together on broadband.

3. Katherine provided a brief overview of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Technical Amendment program to which $2 billion was allocated. She explained that these are additional funds that have been added to the existing Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. A total $3 billion have been allocated to this program. Katherine said local tribes can apply for funding directly to the NTIA.

4. Katherine provided an overview of the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure program which has been funded at $1 billion. She explained that this is a competitive grant program that encourages the expansion and extension of middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas and, additionally, promotes broadband connection resiliency. She explained applicants for this program must meet two of the program priorities that include (1) adopt fiscally sustainable middle mile strategies, (2) commit to offering non-discriminatory interconnect, (3) identify specific, documented and sustainable demand for middle mile interconnect, (4) identify conditions/resources to speed up project, and (5) demonstrate benefits to national security interests. Katherine said this program will be highly competitive and very important to communities. She further explained that this program is an opportunity for local governments, tech companies, nonprofits, and other community organizations to compete for program funding. She said eligible organizations can

partner with each other in their application to this program. Middle Mile grants can be used for the construction, improvement, or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure.

Katherine then explained that she would like to share NTIA broadband planning resources with the meeting attendees. She said she knows Greg Conte with the Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) through the State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN), which NTIA has built over the last 5 years. Katherine explained that this group shares resources and helpful information across states to support each other in their broadband work. She said the NTIA maintains a contact list for every state on their website and that the NTIA also manages a Digital Equity Leaders Network (DELN). She said that in Texas, both Austin and San Antonio have representation on the network and both of those communities are considered leaders in the country on digital equity. Scott said that Katherine runs the SBL network and has built it up over the years. He explained that the network includes representatives from all states and several of the territories. Scott encouraged people to join these networks.

Scott then spoke about additional broadband resources that can be found on the NTIA website, including a broadband funding search tool. He then provided an overview of the National Broadband Availability Map (NBAM) which includes data from state mapping efforts. He explained this resource is available to the state broadband offices but is not available to the public. He further explained that this tool provides a place for federal and state broadband offices to share broadband data layers. He said this tool is separate from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) maps that will be used to fund Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) broadband funds. Scott then shared his screen with the attendees to show them the NTIA's Broadband Need Map. He provide an overview of some the available local data on the map. He explained the map and data are publicly available and it is the first interactive broadband map for the country.

Scott said that he realizes there is a lot of broadband information to digest, but he and Katherine are available to answer questions. Scott then opened up the discussion to questions. Greg Conte, with the Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO), introduced himself and provided some background on the Texas BDO. He said the Office is located in the Texas Comptroller's Office. He explained the BDO will be hiring a consultant to write the state broadband plan which is due in June of 2022. Greg explained that the consultants will conduct a 12 stops broadband listening tour due to the size of the state. He further explained that the state broadband plan will be stakeholder driven. He said the BDO will also establish their grant plan and provide details on the grant components to local communities. He explained that they hope to have the grant plan completed around September 2022. He further explained that the BDO is also working on a broadband availability map which needs to be completed by January 2023. He said this will help the Texas BDO better understand where internet is lacking. He said the map will drill down to the address level to determine broadband needs. He explained that the BDO will be working to identify what the barriers to broadband are, as well as what the broadband access need might be across the state. He said this will help guide use of federal broadband dollars. Greg shared his contact information in the Chat and said he is open to answering questions. He recommended that local communities should start a broadband feasibility study and identify a leader for local broadband. He said the BDO is developing a broadband tool kit for Texas communities to help guide them on broadband.

There were a few questions on the upcoming NTIA broadband funding. Both Katherine and Scott said that until the Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) are released, they are unable to answer specific questions. They recommended staying in touch with the Texas BDO. Scott said that the NTIA will be hosting broadband funding virtual listening sessions. He encouraged everyone to attend these sessions to learn more about the programs and broadband. He explained that the NTIA is also working with internet service providers (ISP) to partner on broadband. Marty Wieder said that it would be beneficial for the NCTCOG region to have a broadband leader similar to Austin and San Antonio. Greg Conte responded to Marty's comment by stressing the importance of

the five metro areas across Texas to work together on broadband. Greg said there is already a network of local leaders from the five metro area sharing data and information on broadband. Greg explained that if the NCTCOG region does not have representation on this network, it would be important to find someone who will champion the broadband mission for the region.

Marty reminded everyone that the NTIA presentation will be shared with attendees after the meeting. He thanked Scott, Katherine and Greg for their presentation and for sharing valuable broadband information. Scott reminded everyone that the NTIA maps are not final versions of the map.

5.) **New Business**
Marty reminded everyone that the next NCTEDD Board meeting will be held virtually on Monday, May 2nd. Lucille Johnson explained that the NCTEDD was selected, as one of six Districts from across the country, to participate in an equity and inclusion initiative related to economic development. She said NCTEDD staff has been meeting with New Growth Innovation Network (NGIN) on this work. She explained that NGIN will be making a presentation to the NCTEDD Board at the May meeting on equity and inclusion. Lucille provided an update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). She explained that the updated CEDS is almost complete, and she expects to submit it to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) this month, February. Lucille also introduced Connor Sadro to the NCTEDD Board. She explained that Connor has been interning with the NCTCOG Economic Development division since last October. She said that Connor has been working on the analytics and data needed to update the CEDS and that it was Connor who proposed the idea of creating an NCTEDD LinkedIn page as another avenue to share information and resources. She said that the LinkedIn page is live and has been a success for the District. Lucille also thanked Prit Patel for working to connect and coordinate with NTIA to bring today's presentation to the District.

6.) **Adjournment**
With no further discussions or new business, Board Chair, Marty Wieder adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

NCTEDD BOARD ATTENDEES:	Doug McDonald, Managing Director of Innovation and Placemaking Initiatives, City of Richardson	Leah Clark, Executive Director, Bridgeport Economic Development Corporation
Alexis Jackson, Economic Development Director, City of Celina	Erica Sullivan, Economic Development Analyst, City of Denton	Leslie D'Agostino, VP/Business Development & Loan Officer, Community National Bank & Trust of Texas
Ben Magill, Associate Vice Chancellor of Economic Opportunity, Dallas College	Fred Schmidt, Director Community & Industry Education Program Development, Tarrant County College District	Lisa McMillan, Assistant County Administrator, Tarrant County
Bruce Payne, Economic Development Director, City of Arlington	Dr. James Quick, Associate Vice President, Research & Dean of Graduate Studies at Southern Methodist University	Luis Tamayo, Director of Economic Development, Dallas County
Bryan Haywood, Economic Development Project Manager, City of Irving	Jeff Sandford, Executive Director, Stephenville Economic Development Authority	Dr. Maria Martinez-Cosio, Interim Dean, College of Architecture, Planning/Public Affairs, University of Texas at Arlington

Chris Coffman, City Manager, City of Granbury	**Jennette Espinosa**, Executive Director, Little Elm Economic Development Cooperation	**Marty Wieder**, Economic Development Director, City of Grand Prairie
Chris Dyser, Community Development Director, City of Balch Springs	**Jim Wehmeier**, Director of Economic Development, City of Ennis	**Mary Ann Moon**, Executive Director of Prosper Economic Development Corporation
Chris Fuller, Deputy City Manager, City of Cleburne	**John Boswell**, Economic Development Director, Navarro County and City of Corsicana	**Michael Grace**, City of Duncanville Resident
Craig Hulse, Director of Economic Development, City of North Richland Hills	**John Smith**, Town Administrator, Town of Hickory Creek	**Mickey Hillock**, President, Hillock Foods, Inc.
David Bristol, Chairman of the Board of Employee Solutions, LP	**Judy McDonald**, Executive Director, Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County	**Pamela Mundo**, Founder and President of Mundo and Associates Consulting Firm
David Schleg, Economic Development Manager, City of Dallas	**Kassandra Carroll**, Economic Development Coordinator, City of Waxahachie	**Ray Dunlap**, President, Texas Economic Development Corporation
Donna Simmons, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator, Kaufman County	**Kevin Shatley**, Director of Economic Development, Dallas Regional Chamber	
GUEST SPEAKERS:	**Katherine Bates**, Manager, Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, National Telecommunications and Information Administration	**Scott Woods**, Director, Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth and Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives, National Telecommunications and Information Administration
NCTCOG STAFF:	**Lucille Johnson**, Economic Development/Executive Director's Office, NCTCOG	**Prit Patel**, Economic Development/Executive Director's Office, NCTCOG
Jerri Watson, Economic Development/Executive Director's Office, NCTCOG	**Rick Norman**, RIS Department, NCTCOG	**Connor Sadro**, Economic Development/Executive Director's Office, NCTCOG

I hereby certify that these minutes were approved by the North Central Texas Economic Development Board on May 2, 2022.

[signature: Kassandra Carroll]

Kassandra Carroll, CECD
Secretary-Treasurer, North Central Texas Economic Development District Board
Economic Development Coordinator, City of Waxahachie