



Snohomish County Council

Committee: Finance, Budget, & Administration

Analyst: Jim Martin

ECAF: 2023-0852

Proposal: Mot. 23-309

Date: August 3, 2023

Consideration:

Approval of broadband spending plan through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Background

Snohomish County Council appropriated \$10 million of the County's ARPA CLFR funds to expand broadband access throughout the County. Also included in the 2023 Adopted Budget was Budget Condition #3, conditioning \$5 million of these dollars on the receipt and approval of a spending plan. The Broadband Task Force, consisting of Council and Executive staff, was formed to develop a proposal to address these needs, and has submitted the included memo outlining the spending plan for Council consideration.

Current Proposal

If adopted, the proposed motion would approve the 2023-2026 Broadband Spending Plan in the amount of \$10,000,000.

Proposed ARPA programming is outlined as follows:

Broadband Enhancement Study - \$300,000: This work was started earlier this year and will be completed in early 2024, to provide a detailed analysis of current broadband service across the County. A second phase of the study will include detailed integration of broadband capabilities and opportunities.

Digital Equity Programs - \$1,500,000: The Broadband Task Force recommends a proposal from Sno-Isle Libraries to expand the capacity of their loanable computer hot spots by 750 devices. Also recommended is expanding the digital navigator program, which helps library patrons connect to the internet, troubleshoot tech issues, learn about online safety, and get signed up for the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Broadband Access Programs - \$8,200,000: The taskforce recommends that the remainder of the funding be utilized to broadband access projects throughout Snohomish County, including the necessary staffing, monitoring, and professional services for the projects to be successful within the period of performance.

2023 Budget:

Is this in the current year budget: Yes

Future Budget Impacts: Total appropriation of \$10,000,000, the balance of which would be re-appropriated in each budget cycle.

Handling: Normal.

Approved-as-to-form: N/A.

Risk Management: N/A.

Executive Recommendation: APPROVE.

Attachments: Refer to the submitted ECAF that includes the following attachments:

- (1) Proposed Motion.
- (2) Proposed Spending Plan

Amendments: NONE.

Request: Move to GLS on August 16th for consideration.