

# City of Sacramento

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2019-01317, **Version:** 1

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**Title:**

**Preliminary Report of the Sacramento Coalition for Digital Inclusion**

File ID: 2019-01317

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:**

Receive and file.

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**Presenter:** None

**Attachments:**

1-Description/Analysis

2-Preliminary Report of the Sacramento Coalition for Digital Inclusion

**Description/Analysis**

**Issue Detail:** The Sacramento Coalition for Digital Inclusion (SCDI) consists of more than 40 organizations and is led by a steering committee comprising the Sacramento Public Library, Valley Vision, Social Venture Partners of Sacramento, and the City's Office of Innovation and Economic Development. The Coalition is focused on creating more opportunities for digital equity in the Greater Sacramento Region.

SCDI facilitated four community workshops in Sacramento County to collect community feedback and direct service provider insights on digital equity needs within the County. The workshops were held between July and August 2019 at the following locations:

1. Martin Luther King Jr. Library, 7340 24th St. Bypass, Sacramento, CA 95822 (District 8)
2. North Sacramento - Hagginwood Library, 2109 Del Paso Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95815 (District 2)

3. Walnut Grove Library, 14177 Market St., Walnut Grove, CA 95690 (Sacramento County)
4. Oak Park Community Center, 3425 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Sacramento CA 95817 (District 5)

Approximately 30 community partners and members participated in the workshops, representing varying organizations and communities. The emerging themes that translated throughout all of the workshops included:

1. Digital inequity disrupts one's social, economic, and democratic life;
2. There are digital equity deserts in Sacramento County;
3. Digital skills are critical thinking skills;
4. Handheld devices are limited resources for meaningful access; and,
5. The highest priority in rural areas is access to the internet.

Combining community input from the workshops, local data, and national best practices, SCDI published the attached report to provide an overview of the issues surrounding digital inclusion, the data to inform the findings, and recommendations as treatments for the issues. SCDI's concluding recommendations to local and regional policymakers in the report are:

1. Increase the availability of digital skills training focused specifically on K-12 youth across a full spectrum of skills development;
2. Increase the availability of free and low-cost computing devices through surplus refurbishing and discounted new device programs;
3. Increase access to public computing labs and adoption of affordable home broadband subscription plans; and,
4. Invest in organizational infrastructure and capacity to coordinate, track, and measure progress toward regional digital equity goals.

In all sectors of the economy, digital technologies are creating a dramatic shift in the way we learn, work, and communicate. As civic, economic, and cultural institutions move forward with the productivity gains and increased outputs that digital technologies bring to their day-to-day work, all populations must be able to share in those gains in a meaningful way. Through a variety of historic, financial and technical factors, there are significant sectors of our region's populations that are being left behind.

**Policy Considerations:** On July 31, 2018, Council unanimously approving Resolution 2018-0312 adopting a policy to take intentional, comprehensive actions to increase and diversify Sacramento's economic growth in an inclusive and equitable manner. On October 2, 2018, Council adopted a framework for Inclusive Economic and Community Development (Resolution 2018-0392) and directed staff "to engage and work with the community in the development of an Inclusive Economic and Development Strategy." The SCDI Report is intended to inform the development of

that Strategy, as it relates to digital equity and digital skills.

**Economic Impacts:** None

**Environmental Considerations:** None

**Sustainability:** Not Applicable

**Commission/Committee Action:** None

**Rationale for Recommendation:** According to a report by The Brookings Institution, *Charting a Course to the Sacramento Region's Future Economic Prosperity*, a digital skills workforce is critical to the future of Sacramento's economy. Specifically, 72 percent of jobs, including 82 percent of middle-skill jobs that pay above the national living wage but don't require a bachelor's degree, require medium or high digital skills. However, the share of people of color in these jobs in Sacramento is lower than the national average.

Exclusion from the digital world usually results from three different barriers. Individuals either do not have sufficiently powerful enough hardware to accomplish their digital task, sufficient internet connection opportunities to engage in the online world, or sufficient skills to meet their digital needs. These barriers - hardware, internet access and skills - must all be removed in concert for any digital inclusion activity to create meaningful change in a person's life. Moreover, removing these barriers is critical to creating an inclusive economy.

Those without access to a barrier-free digital experiences often are left behind in today's on-line society. They face challenges related to their civic, economic and cultural lives. Communicating with distant relatives, looking for a job, searching for housing, accessing health information and telehealth services, utilizing civic services, completing school assignments -- all of these are tasks that, in the modern world, are near impossible without adequate connectivity, computing hardware and digital skills.

**Financial Considerations:** None

**Local Business Enterprise (LBE):** Not Applicable