

**From:** Parisa Vinzant  
**To:** [CA Broadband Council](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on CA State Broadband Action Plan  
**Date:** Friday, November 20, 2020 11:59:53 AM

---

Good morning,

I am sharing the following feedback that I was not able to provide at the 10/29 CA State Broadband Action plan listening session since I had to leave early due to a work emergency. This feedback is based on the version of the draft action plan that was circulated prior to the 10/29 listening session. I'd also recommend extending the public comment period until the end of this month to allow for more robust public engagement.

In case helpful, I'm restating now a verbal comment I made during the listening session, but especially urge consideration of *burdens and benefits lens* of all decisions made for this plan: If we are focused on action today, then I strongly suggest that we apply an equity lens to considered action items, including considering the 7 basic questions using an equity lens, see page 8 of the City of Long Beach Equity

Toolkit: <http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/health/media-library/documents/healthy-living/office-of-equity/city-of-long-beach-office-of-equity-toolkit>.

What I was unable to share due to the work emergency:

**1. Is the overall flow of the Broadband Action Plan moving in the right direction? What areas are critical, what is missing?**

1. Yes, but a more explicit equity lens needs to be applied, particularly to evaluate and guide all decisions and/or recommended actions
  1. Language matters when referring to CA residents that are affected by the digital divide. An example, the impact of the digital divide is too narrowly focused on "struggling family" (pg. 3) or "poorer families," (pg. 7) but it is also important that we be explicit that lack of digital inclusion and equity disproportionately impact communities of color. An example of this from City of Long Beach of communities without internet access by race: 11.1% Latinos; 10.7% Black/African Americans; 10.0% Asians/Pacific Islanders; and 4.9% Whites. <http://www.longbeach.gov/ti/digital-inclusion/current-inequities-and-root-causes/>
  2. Root causes of current digital inequities is important to include in this action plan, e.g., redlining legacy, see outstanding work by City of Long Beach: <http://www.longbeach.gov/ti/digital-inclusion/current-inequities-and-root-causes/>.
2. Strongly advise that CA treat broadband as a "right" to change the frame towards actions to obligations. Pre-COVID-19, I heard from people most affected by the digital divide consistently that they believe that the Internet should be viewed and treated as a "human right." Now with our most vulnerable and marginalized communities contending with COVID-19, CA needs to lead on shifting the frame on Internet as a "right" and not a

"commodity." To make this shift, we need to also make the shift from "digital inclusion" to "digital equity."

**6. What are some successful use cases you have regarding digital inclusion?**

1. City of Long Beach's digital inclusion initiative (generally) and specifically its response to COVID by forming a COVID-19 Digital Inclusion Response Working Group. The best local contact is Economic and Digital Inclusion Program Manager Rebecca Kauma

[REDACTED]

Please note, while I am joined the listening session and sending this email in my capacity as technology and innovation commissioner for the City of Long Beach and as part of the city's COVID-19 Digital Inclusion Response Working Group, the views or ideas I share via email and during this meeting are my *mine alone*.

Wishing you all my best,  
Parisa

**Parisa Vinzant, MPA**

Strategist; Equity & Consultant | Vinzant Group

*Pronouns: She, Her, Hers*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]