

San Bernardino Closing the Digital Divide

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In an effort to help encourage citizens of the City of San Bernardino to narrow the “Digital Divide,” referring to the gap between individuals at different socio-economic levels and their opportunity to utilize high speed internet access and other technology, City Council announced its partnership, “Get Connected!”, with the California Emerging Technology Fund (“CETF”).



“Last night we kicked off the “Get Connected!” program during the council meeting by unveiling free highspeed wireless access in our Council Chambers and other public access points within City Hall. While you are visiting City Hall, we want to help you become more efficient by offering you this wireless Internet service for use with your portable devices. While attending our City Council meetings, we want citizens, businesses, the press, and others to stay connected so they are more inclined to attend our meetings and get involved with the business of our City,” said Charles McNeely, City Manager.

Lea Deesing, Director of Information Technology of the City of San Bernardino, stated that “Citizens who don’t have access to the Internet are missing out on new online services that the City offers.” San Bernardino’s new website offers services such as the ability to search various public records, make service requests to the City via SB Access online and through your Smartphone, pay false alarm fees, renew business license online, pay parking citations, pay water bills, subscribe to SB Connect email based news, apply for a job, get online permits, interactive mapping, find a pet to adopt, register for various city classes, search the Library catalog, and receive City news through Facebook and Twitter. “Many citizens are driving to City Hall, consuming their time and gasoline unnecessarily,” said Ms. Deesing.

As part of the “Get Connected!” program, the City will offer public educational workshops to be held at the Feldheim Library which will educate the public on the benefits of internet connection.

The City of San Bernardino hopes to expand high speed wireless access throughout the City as funding becomes available. The City’s Economic Development Department is currently working to form a regional consortium to position Inland Empire cities to obtain broadband grant funding in the future. “We want to get the message out to the Citizens of San Bernardino that getting online can save them money and time” said Mayor Patrick Morris.

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