



## **SOUTHERN BORDER BROADBAND CONSORTIUM CETF PREFERRED SCENARIO FOR 98% DEPLOYMENT OF BROADBAND IN SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES**

**Date**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

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**Introduction:** The Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC) formed the Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC) utilizing an initiative from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) along with representatives from all economic sectors to help improve the availability and adoption of affordable broadband technology among “disconnected” citizens located in unserved and underserved areas of Imperial and San Diego counties. The SBBC assesses the needs for broadband internet, and facilitates sharing the data with telecom companies to fulfill those needs.

**Mission:** Southern Border Broadband Consortium’s goal is to identify broadband connectivity issues in the unserved and underserved communities of Imperial and San Diego Counties.

SBBC facilitates opportunity, efficiency, affordability, innovation, and accessibility of high-speed broadband access to these communities. Faster and more affordable broadband connectivity provides residents access to:

- Advanced healthcare services
- Online banking
- Distance learning
- Employment opportunities
- Access to capital
- Business resources, and more

A connected community is one with access to critical online services and an enhanced quality of life.

**Program Overview:** The California Emerging Technology Fund created the Preferred Scenario for regional consortia to develop strategic plans for the achieving a goal of 98% broadband deployment in each region. SBBC has worked to identify areas in need of broadband connectivity or improvement throughout the Imperial and San Diego County region. Once identified, SBBC has worked with the cities, countywide organizations, utilities and regional ISPs to put together a report of local infrastructure needs, existing assets in the region and proposed projects to address these needs. The development of this Preferred Scenario and the proposed project list serves to effectively target priority areas for funding and outline a feasible path to achieving 98% deployment of broadband in the region. Through collaboration with the Internet Service Providers, SBBC aims to encourage and support successful applications for funding in the region.

#### **About the Region:**

SBBC serves the San Diego and Imperial Counties, which cover the Southern California region from the coast to the Arizona border.



### Regional Demographics:

Imperial County has a population of 181,216 (2018).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 84.7% of households in Imperial County have a computer and 73.9% of households have a broadband internet subscription, indicating over a quarter of Imperial County population is without broadband.

#### Population by Age:

- Under 9: 16%
- 10 to 17: 13%
- 18 to 34: 25%
- 35 to 54: 23%
- 55 and over: 22%

#### By Ethnicity:

- White: 10.9%
- Black or African American: 2.6%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1%
- Asian: 1.5%
- Pacific Islander: .2%
- Hispanic or Latino: 83.8%

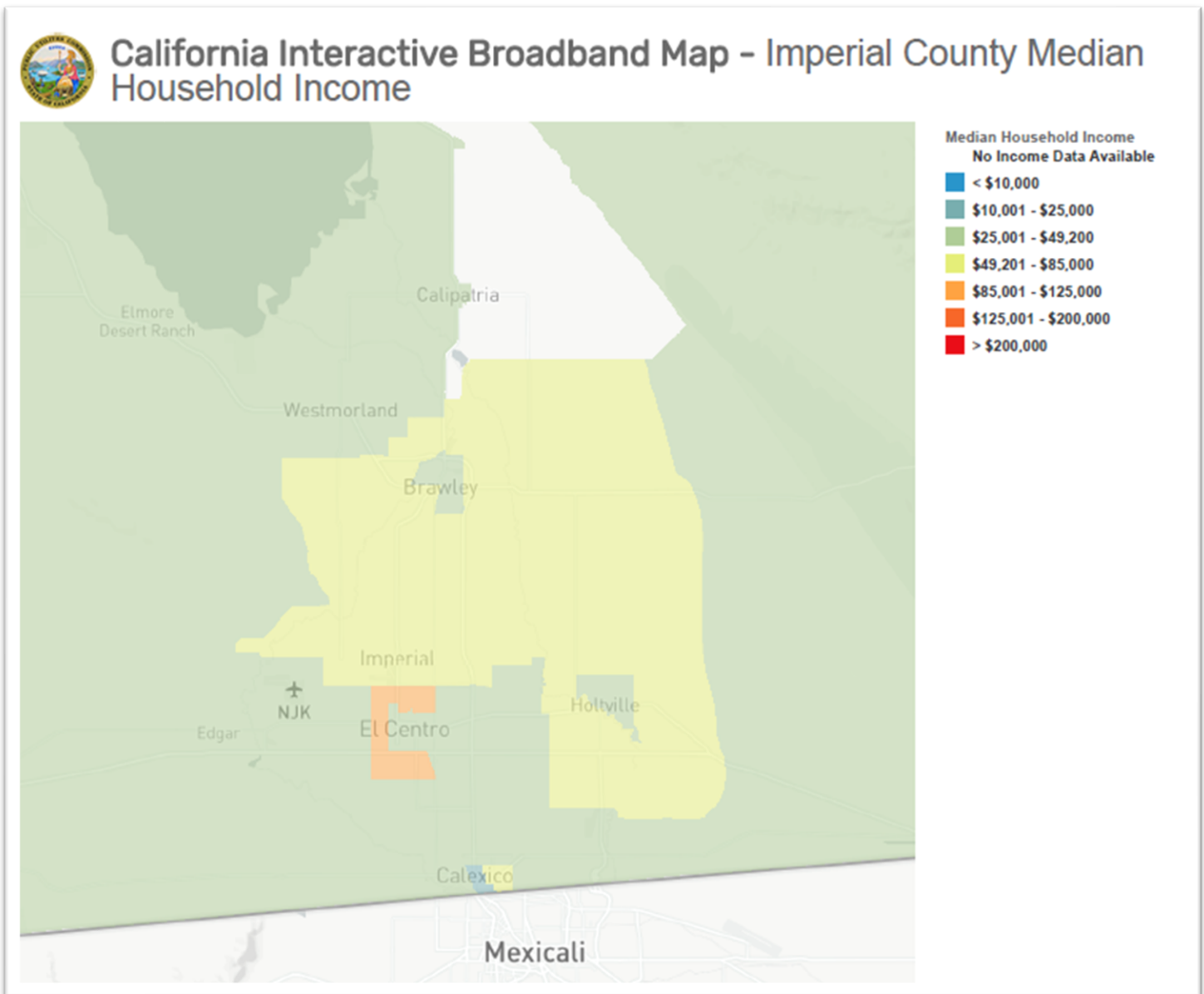
Imperial County is a rural community that has chronically suffered from high unemployment and poverty levels and is largely dependent on seasonal agriculture. Median Household Income is \$45,834.

#### Household Income (2018):

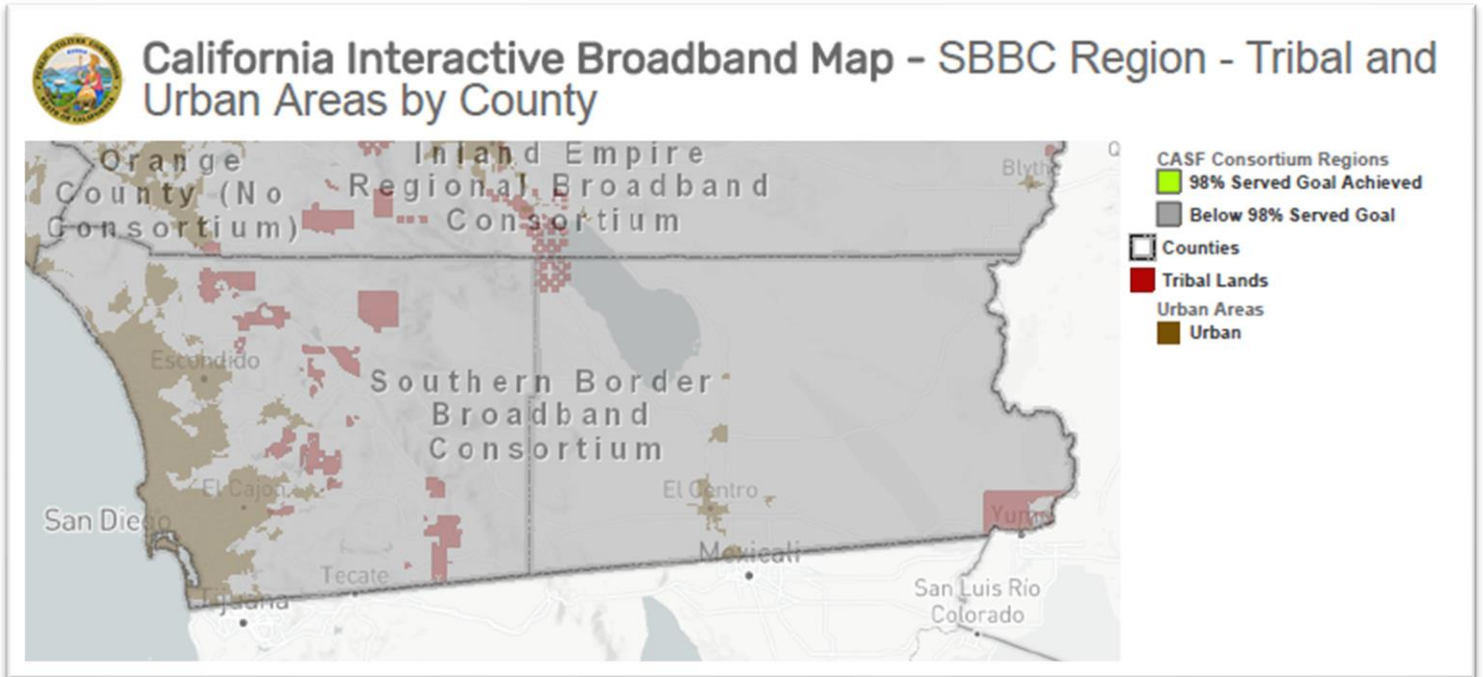
- Less than \$10,000: 8.2% or 3,622 Households
- \$10,000 to \$24,000: 22.6% or 9,972 Households

- \$25,000 to \$49,000: 22.4% or 9,942 Households
- \$50,000 to \$74,000: 16% or 7,086 Households
- \$75,000 to \$99,000: 11.6% or 5,127 Households
- \$100,000 to \$149,000: 12% or 5,278 Households
- \$150,000 to \$199,000: 3.9% or 1,709 Households
- \$200,000 or more: 3% or 1,321 Households

The map below showcases pocket areas of low income households throughout Imperial County:



The map below showcases tribal, rural and urban areas:





## B. STEP BY STEP PLAN FOR 98% DEPLOYMENT

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Southern Border Broadband Consortium has developed a preferred scenario after completing steps 1-8 below. A 98% adoption and deployment of the recommendations outlined by this scenario will depend greatly on the willingness of ISPs and local governance to contribute assets, resources and their commitment to build necessary infrastructure utilizing funding available. These issues are addressed in section D, Internet Service Providers.

1. Identify Need for Broadband Connectivity
2. Consult Local Governance
3. Identify Local Assets Willing to be Contributed
4. Identify Priority Areas
5. Identify Known Infrastructure
6. Identify Need for Last Mile Infrastructure
7. Identify Need for Middle Mile Infrastructure
8. Identify Existing Infrastructure Assets
9. Notify ISPs of Regional Infrastructure and Service Needs
10. Gauge Willingness of ISPs to Contribute
11. Identify Funding Available
12. Assist ISPs Apply for Funding

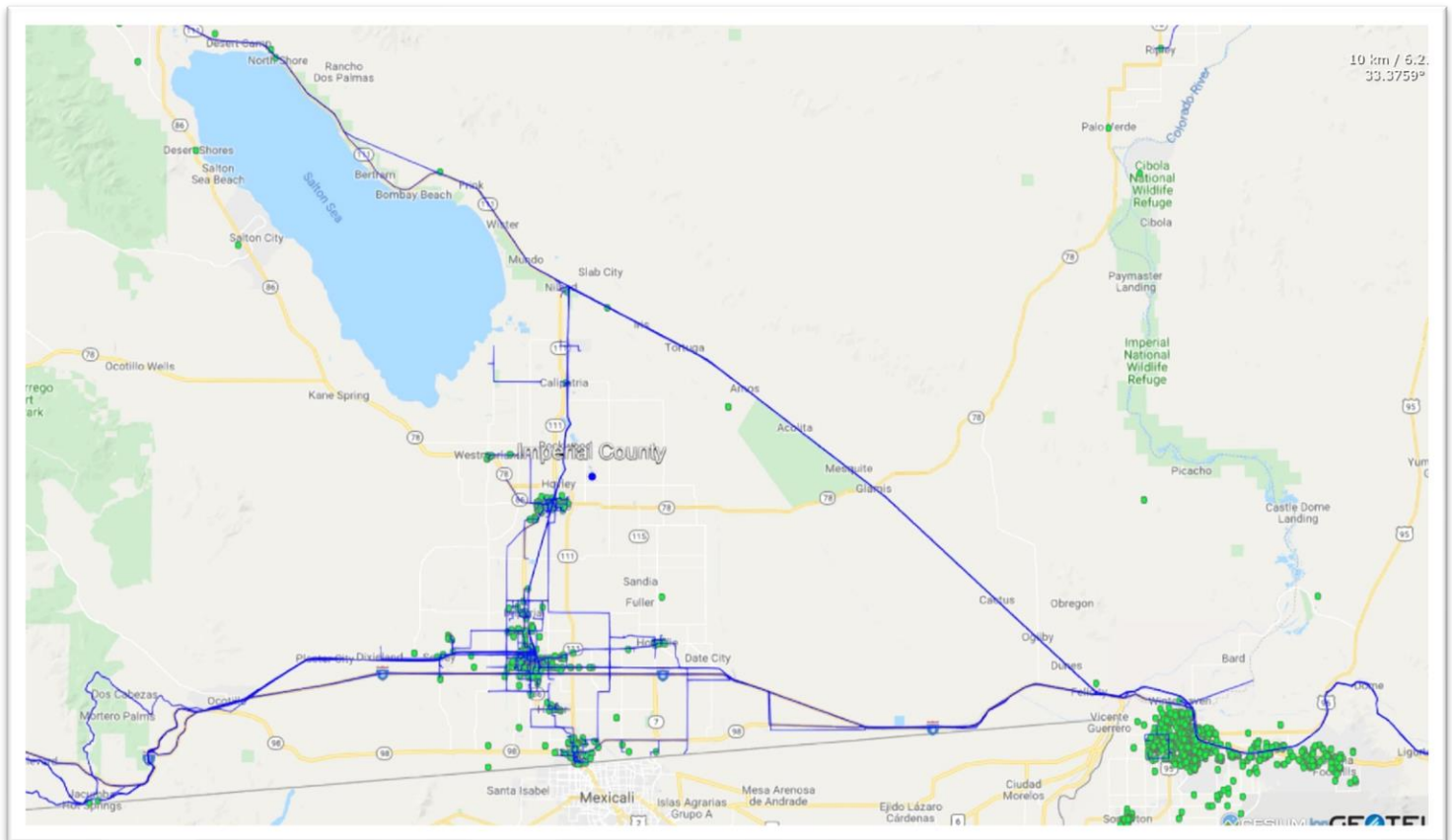
## C. DEVELOPING A PREFERRED SCENARIO

### 1. Understanding Need

SBBC utilizes data collected by:

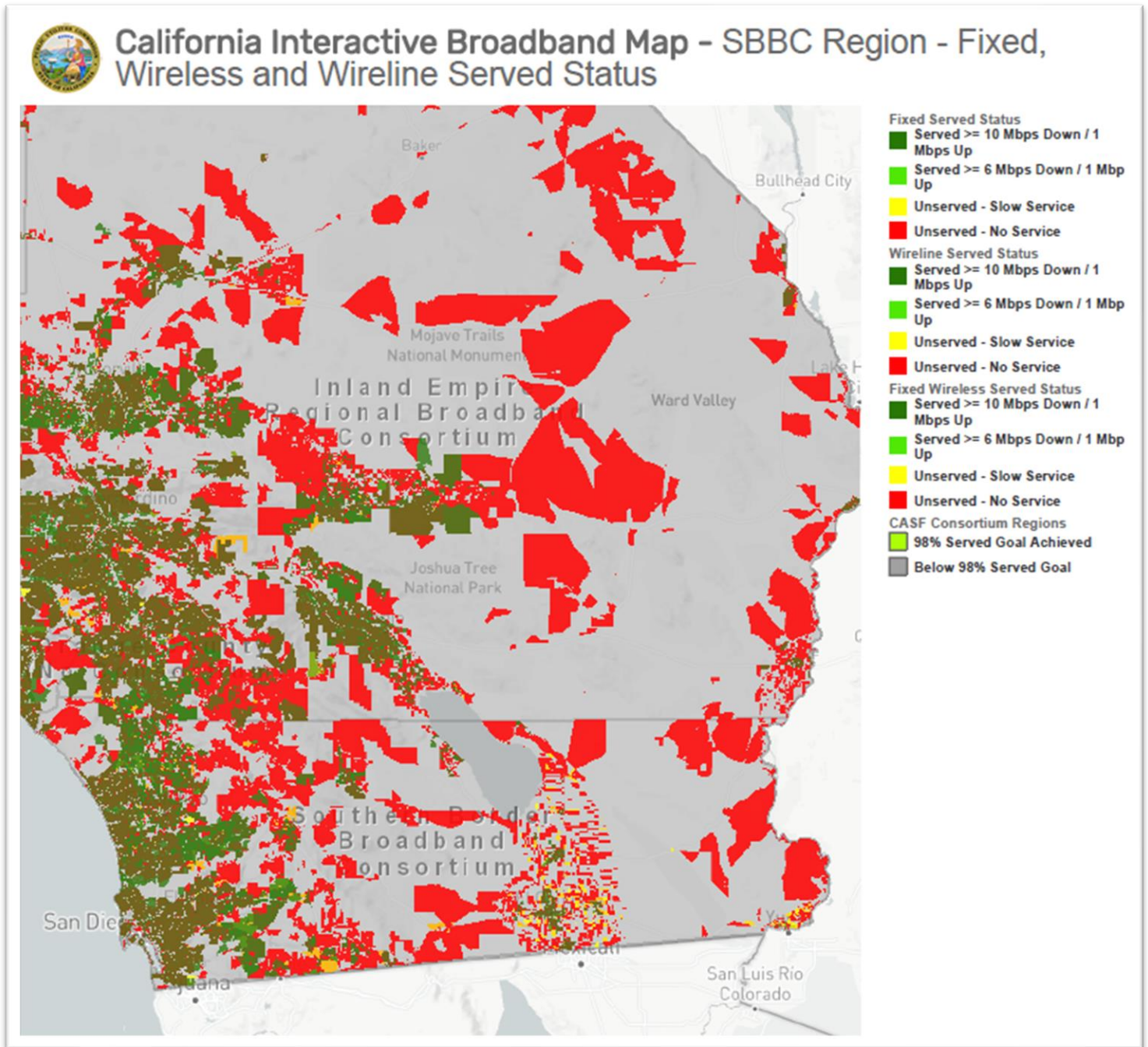
- the consortium through questionnaires from 2017-2020
- CalSPEED app
- CPUC database and annual reports
- Education Superhighway

Utilizing these resources, SBBC has identified areas and households in need of broadband connectivity throughout the region. The following map showcase overall fiber existing in Imperial County. Fiber-lit buildings are indicated in green. Existing fiber lines are indicated in purple.





The following map showcases unserved and underserved households:

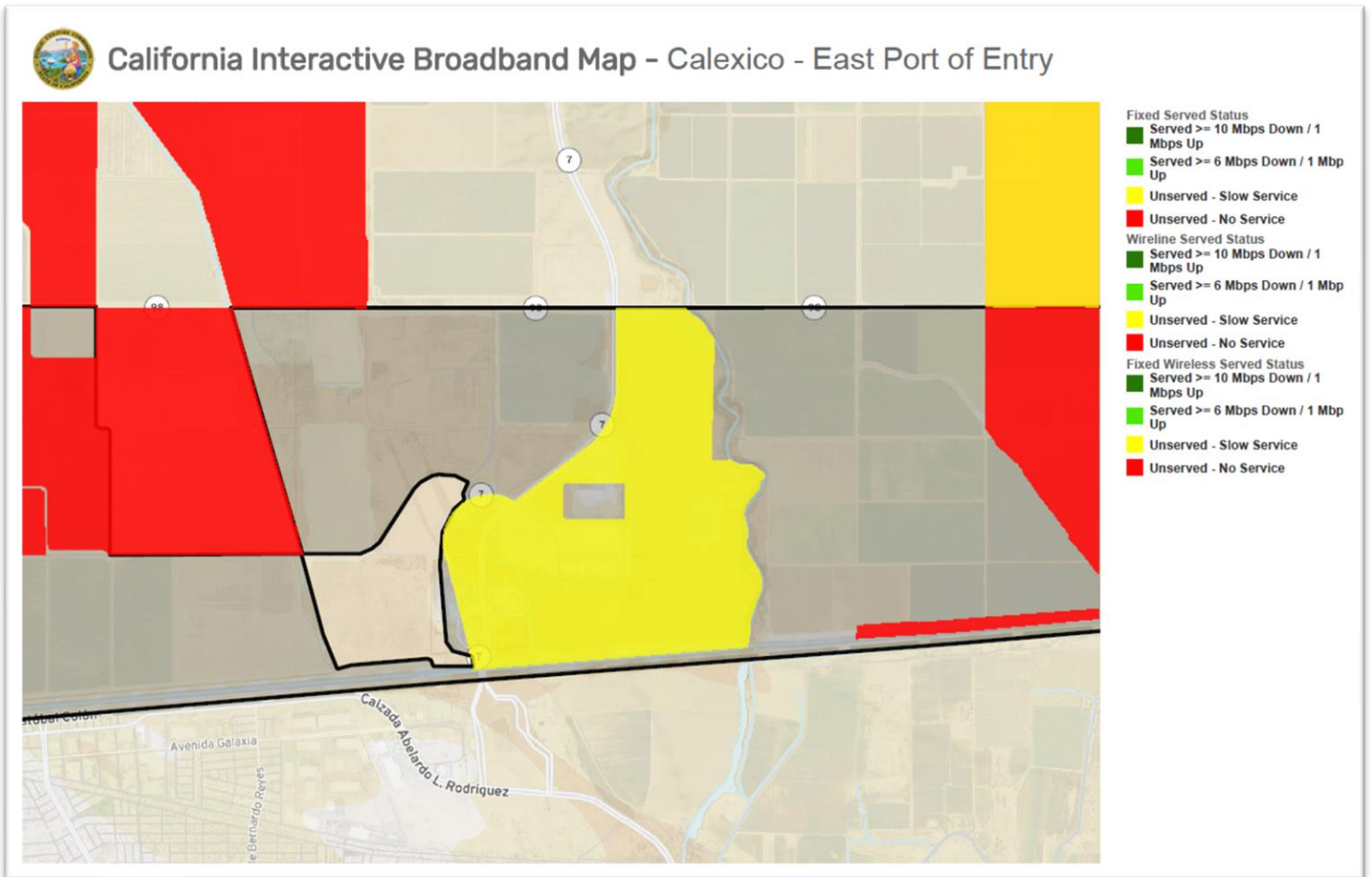


SBBC worked in partnership with the cities and local governance to pinpoint areas in serious need of connectivity, such as dead zones and areas lacking necessary infrastructure.

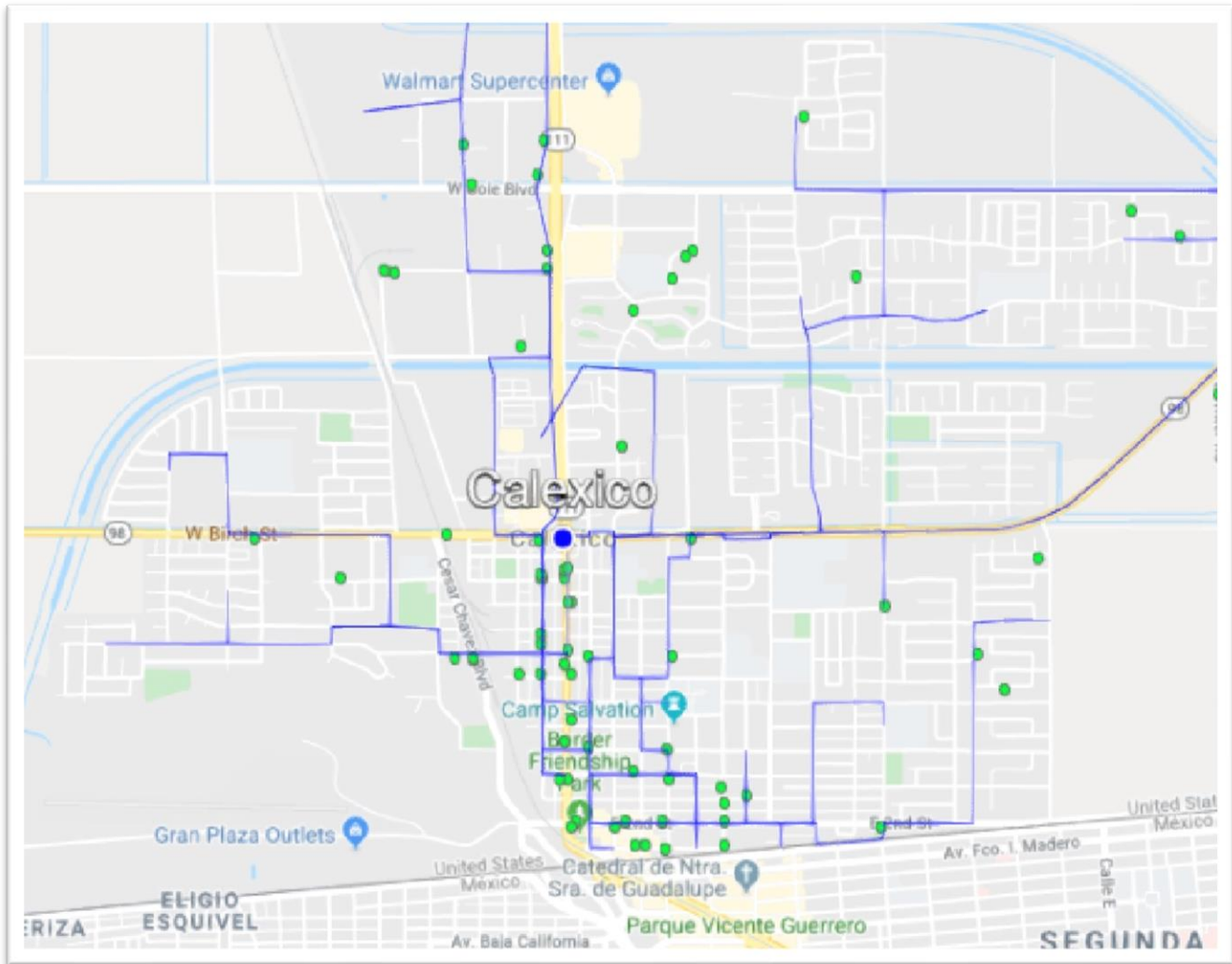
## 2. Priority Areas in Imperial County

Below is a list of target areas in need of connectivity identified by communication with the cities:

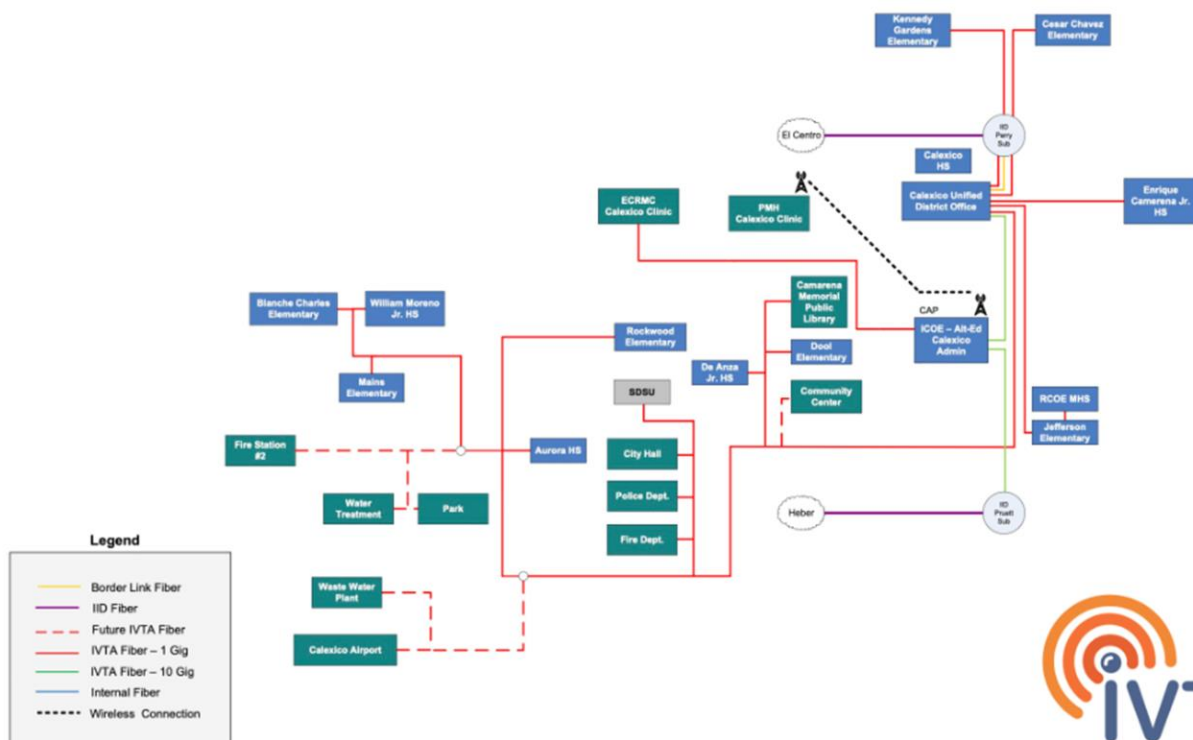
### City of Calexico:





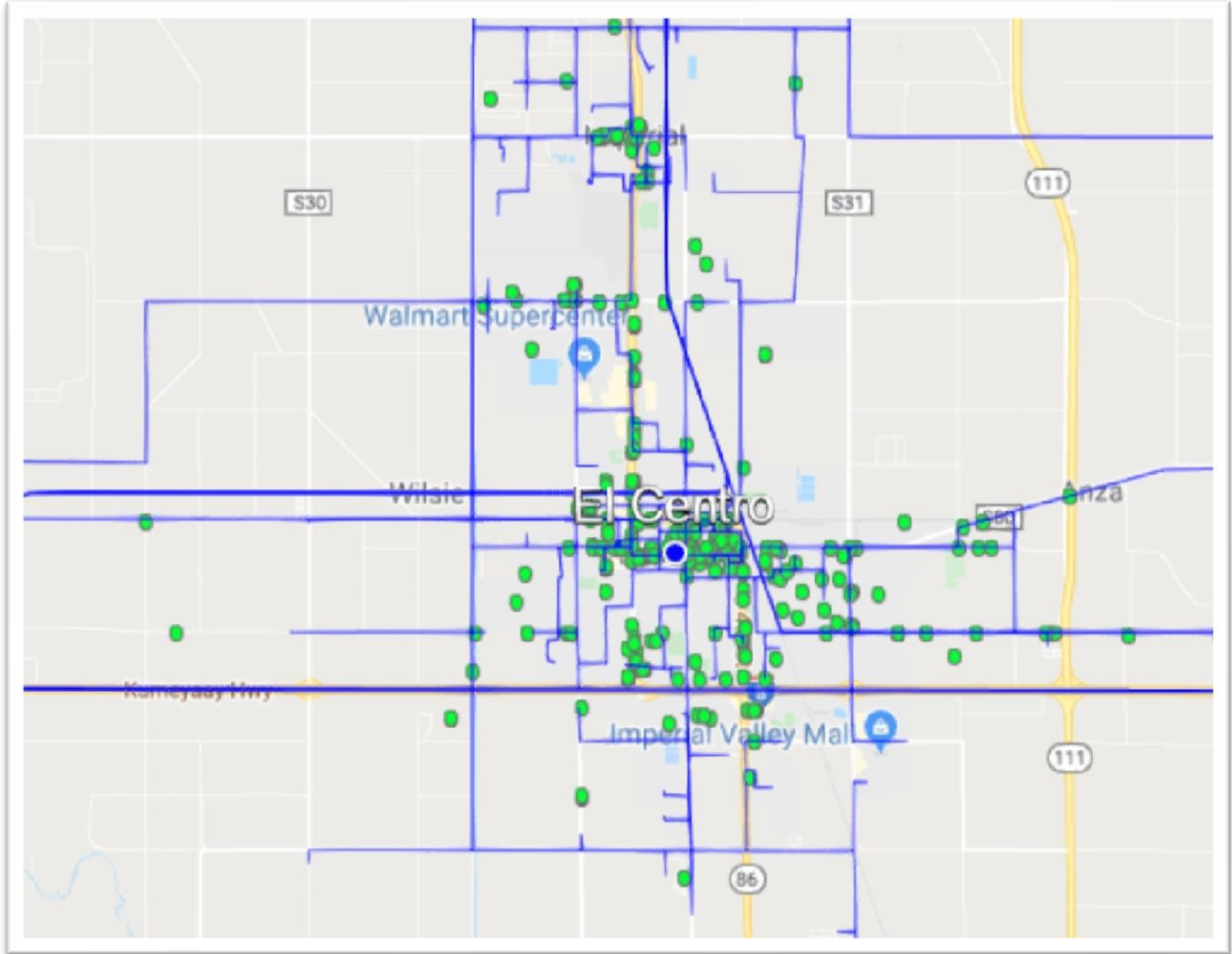


# Calexico IVTA Network Map



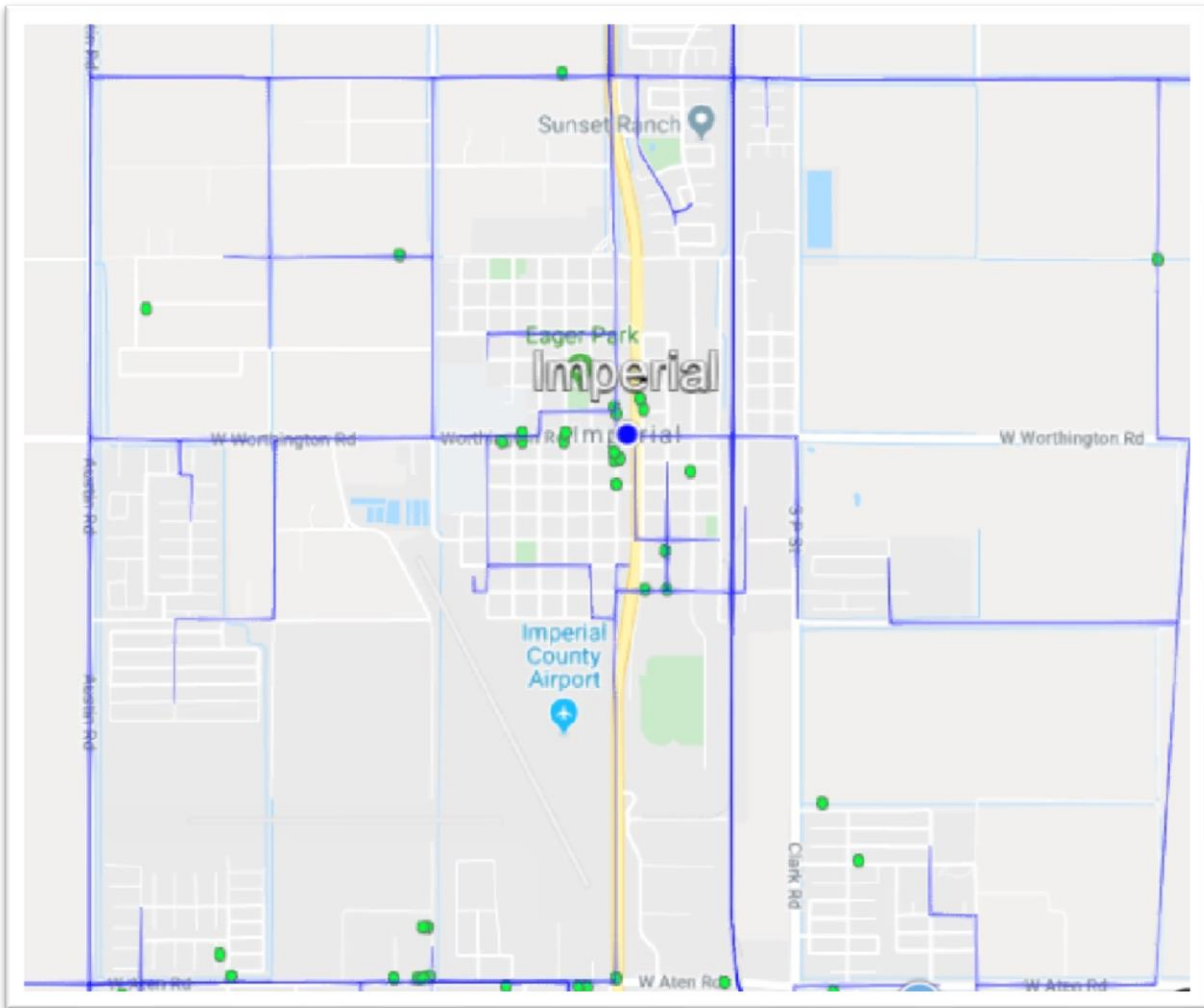
**City of El Centro:**

Below is a map depicting existing fiber within El Centro.



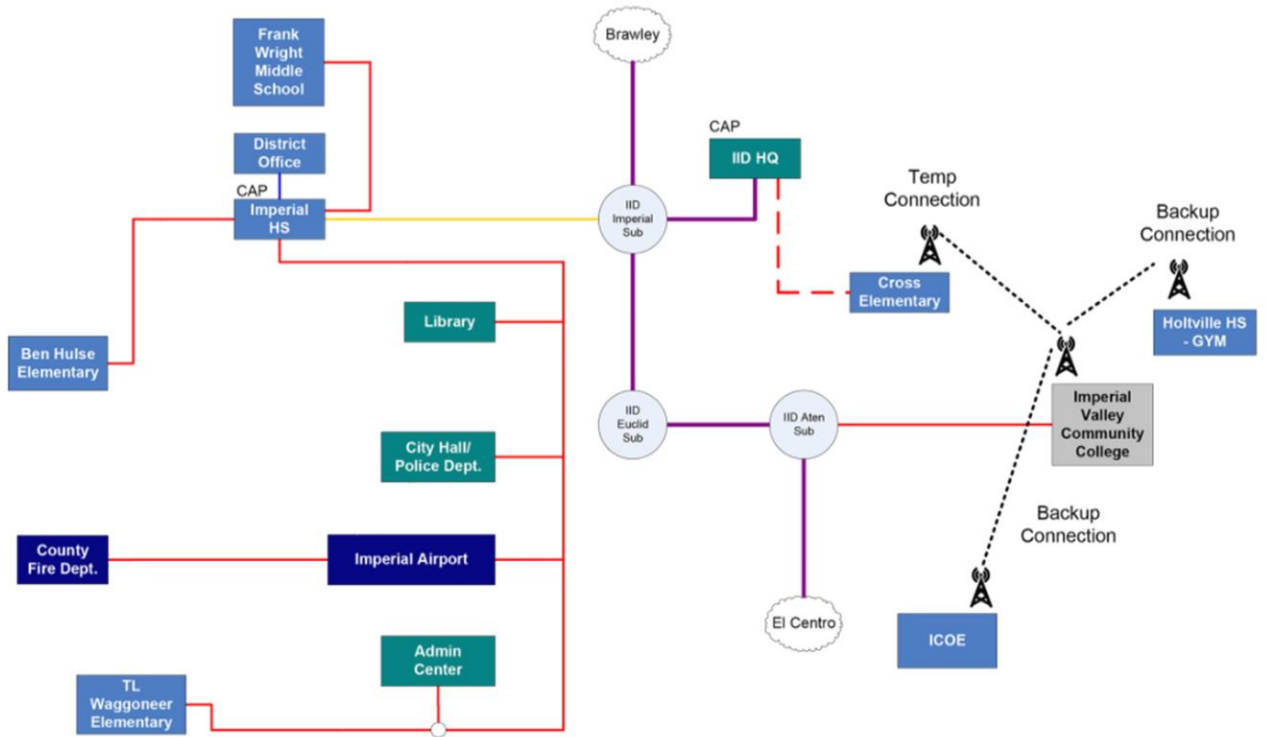


**City of Imperial:**





# Imperial IVTA Network Map



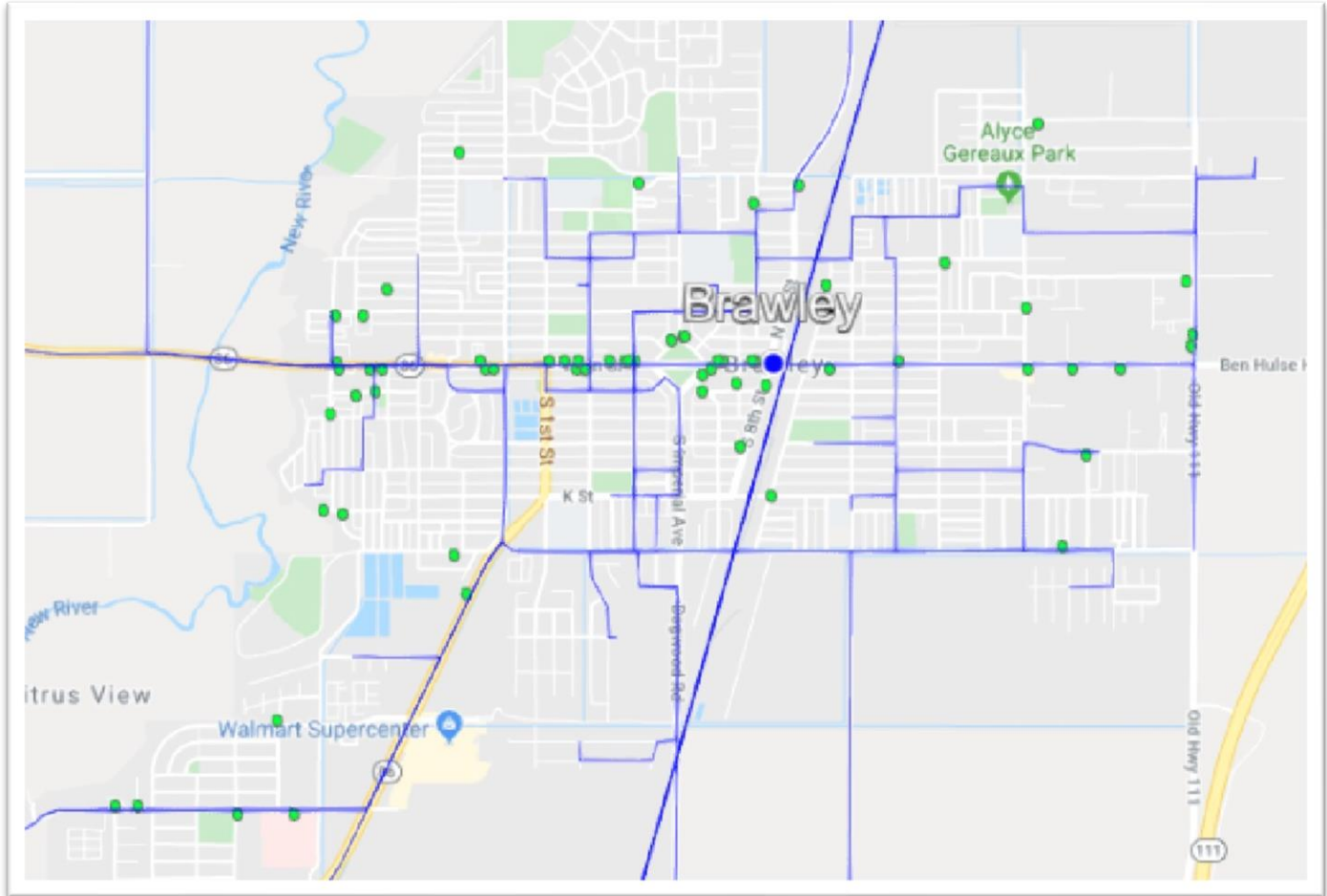
**Legend**

- Border Link Fiber
- IID Fiber
- Future IVTA Fiber
- IVTA Fiber – 1 Gig
- IVTA Fiber – 10 Gig
- Internal Fiber
- - - - Wireless Connection

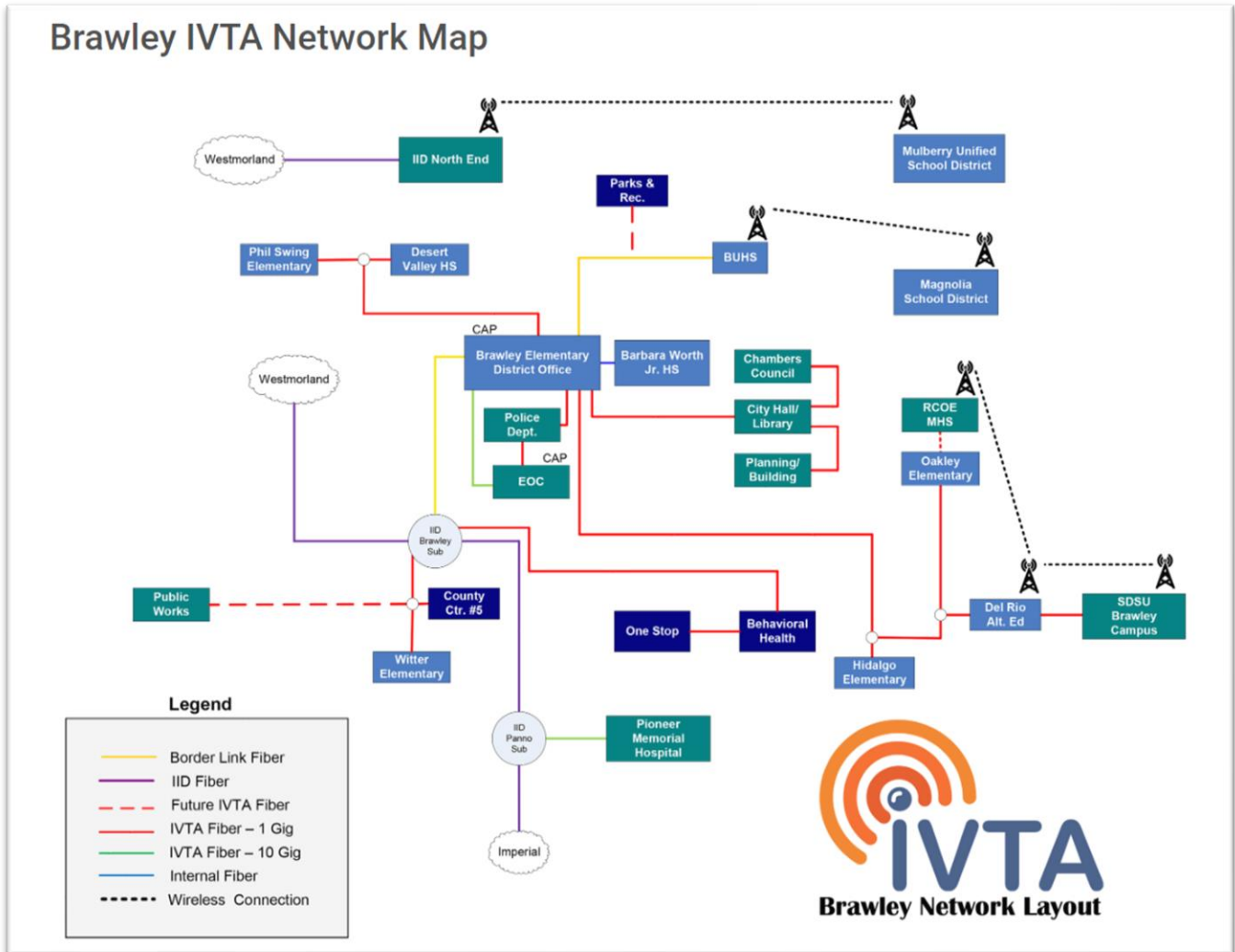


**City of Brawley:**

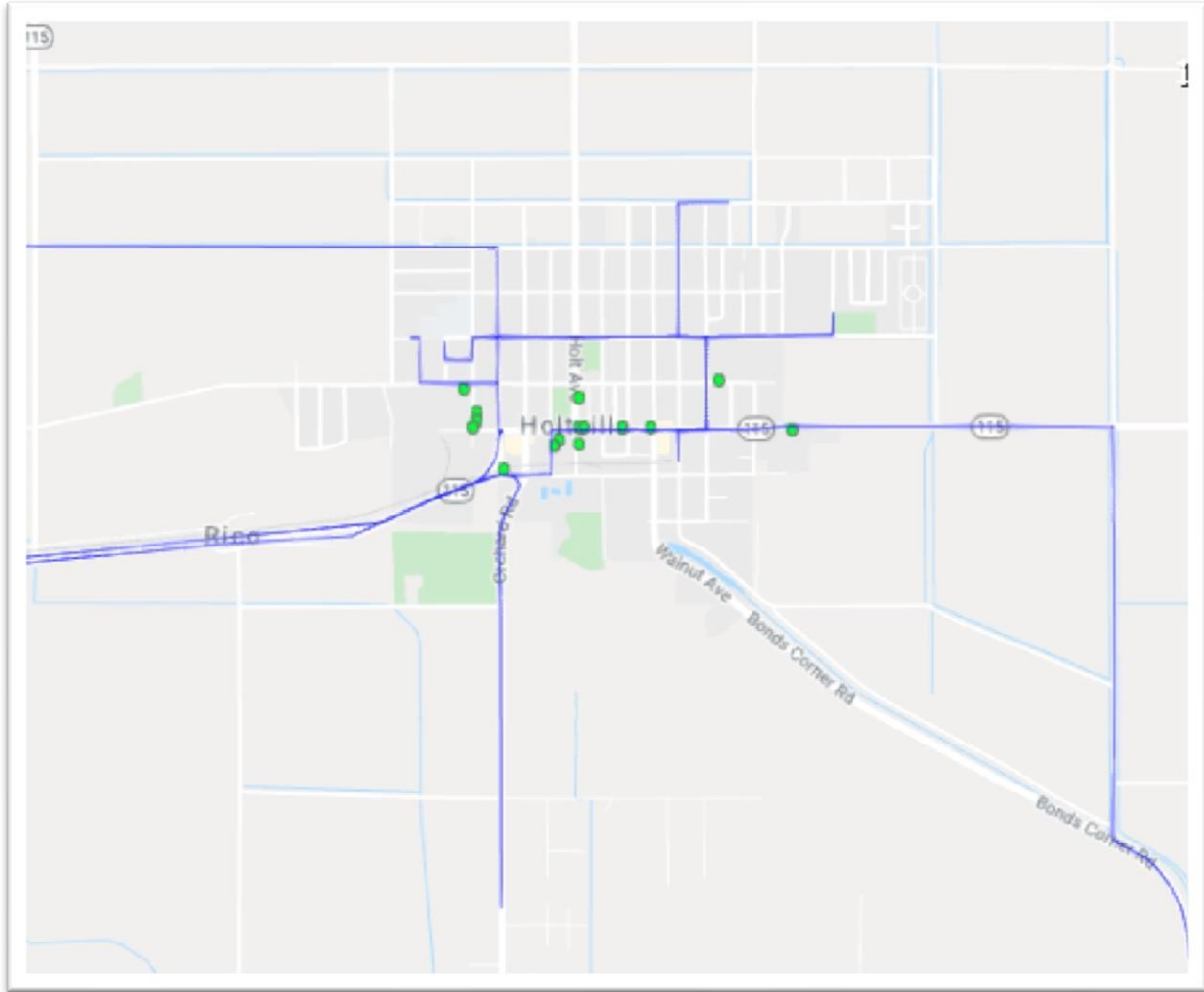
**Education Superhighway Fiber Map:**



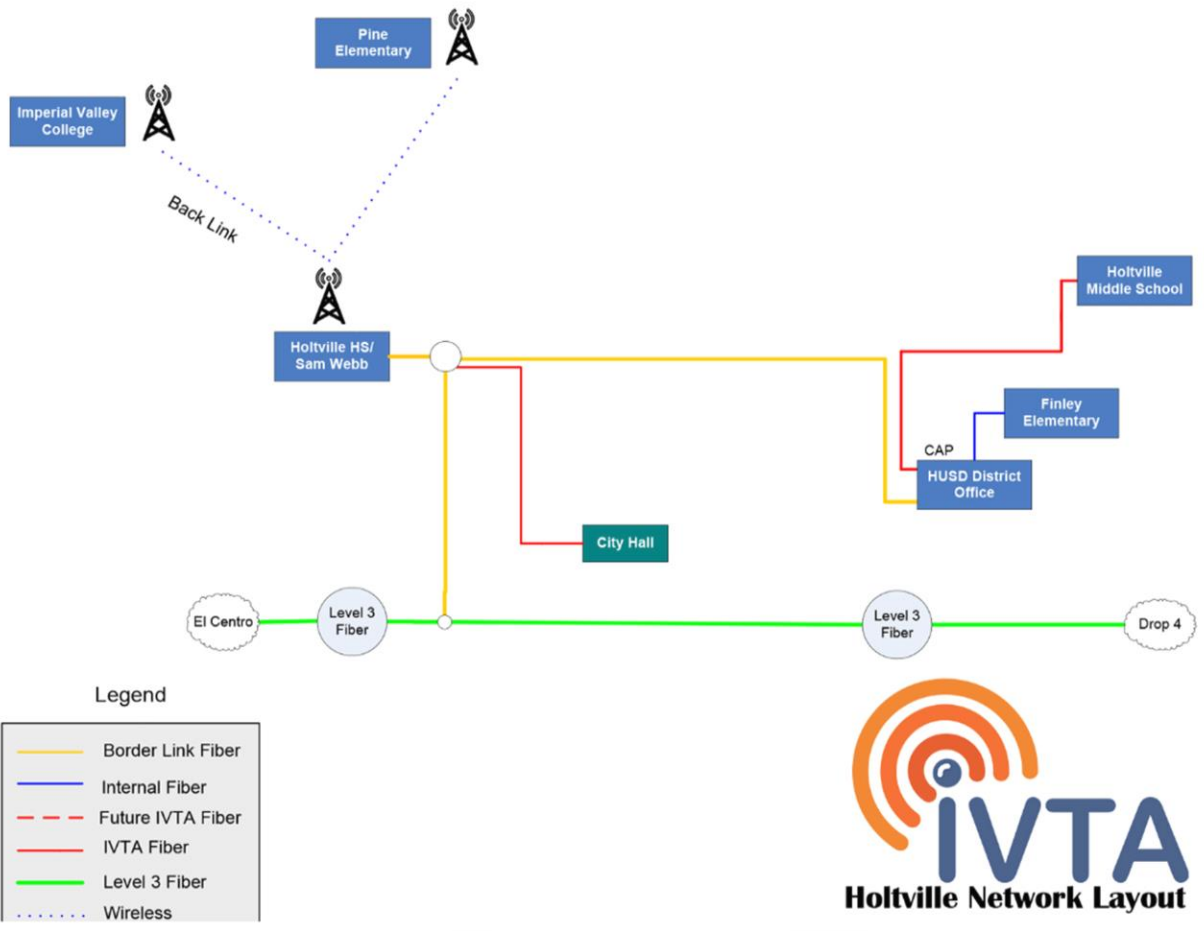
IVTA Fiber Map:



**City of Holtville:**

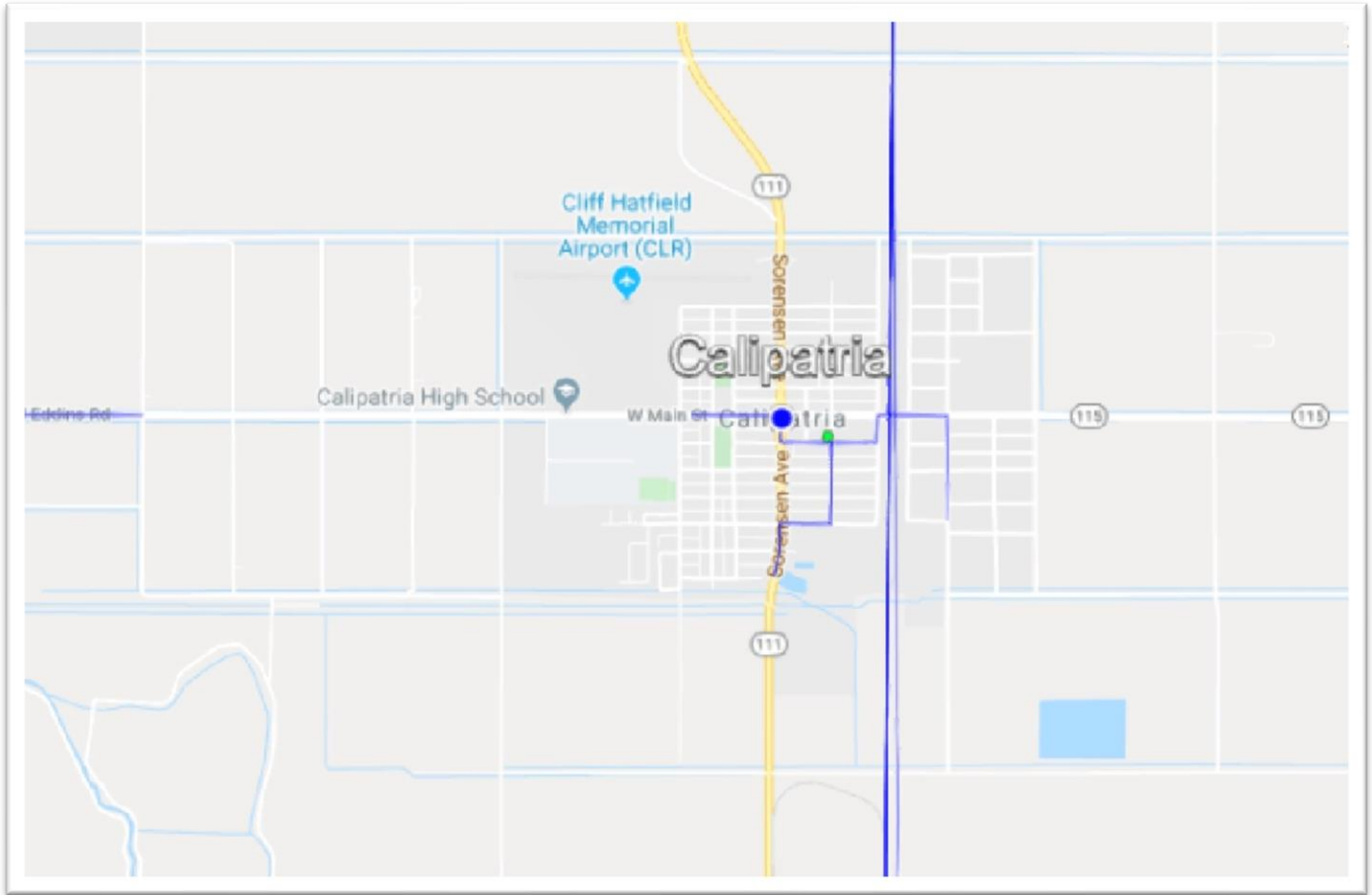


### Holtville IVTA Network Map

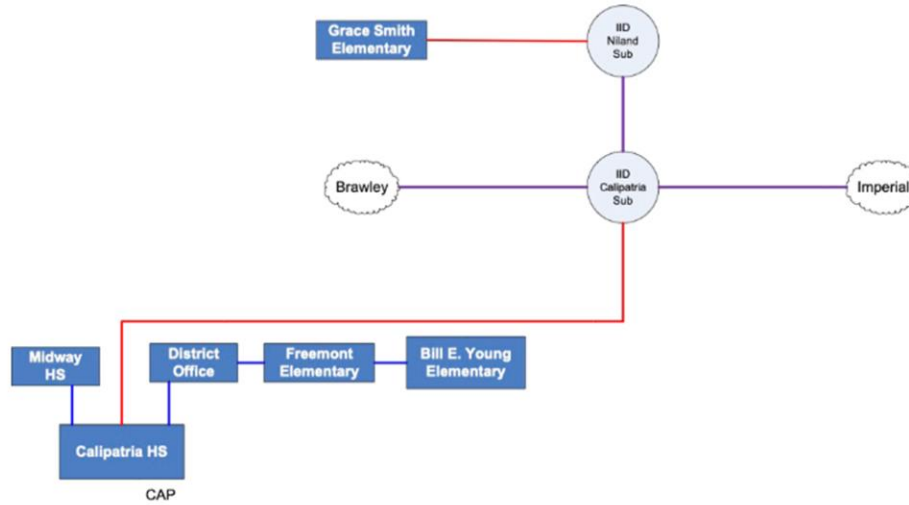









**City of Calipatria:**



## Calipatria IVTA Network Map



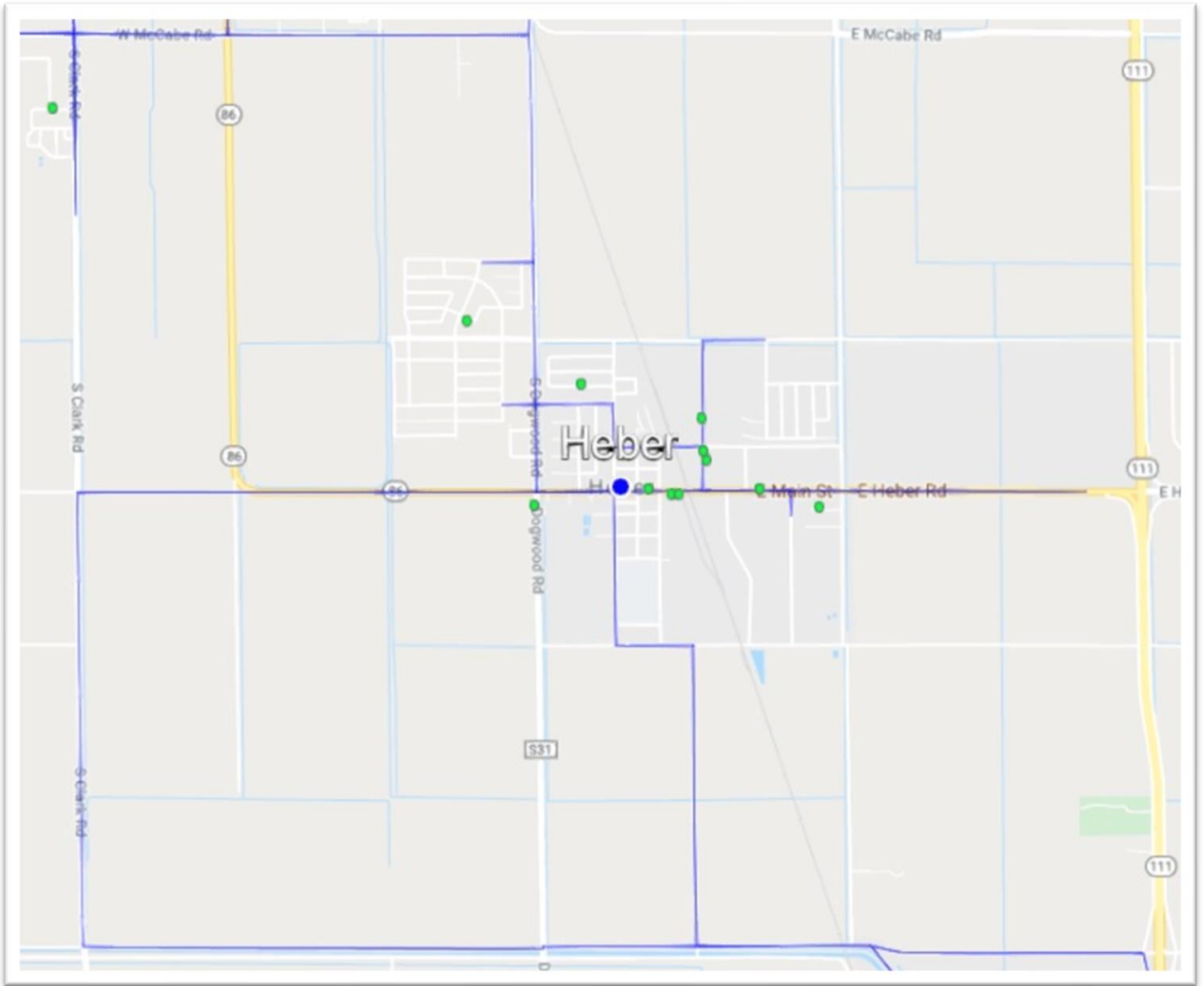
### Legend

	Border Link Fiber
	IID Fiber
	Future IVTA Fiber
	IVTA Fiber
	Internal Fiber

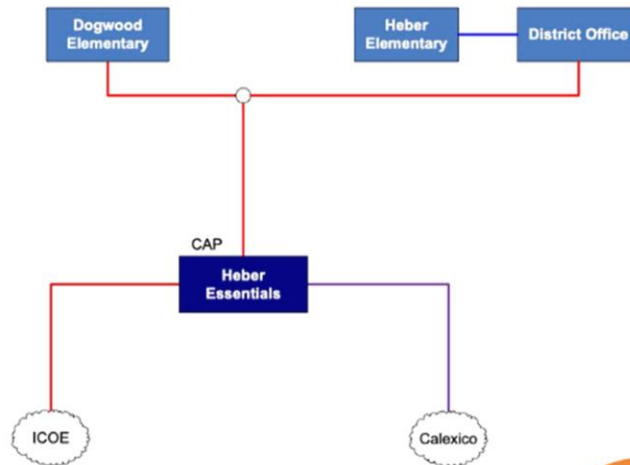


### 3. Priority Areas in the Outlying Communities






Heber:



## Heber IVTA Network Map

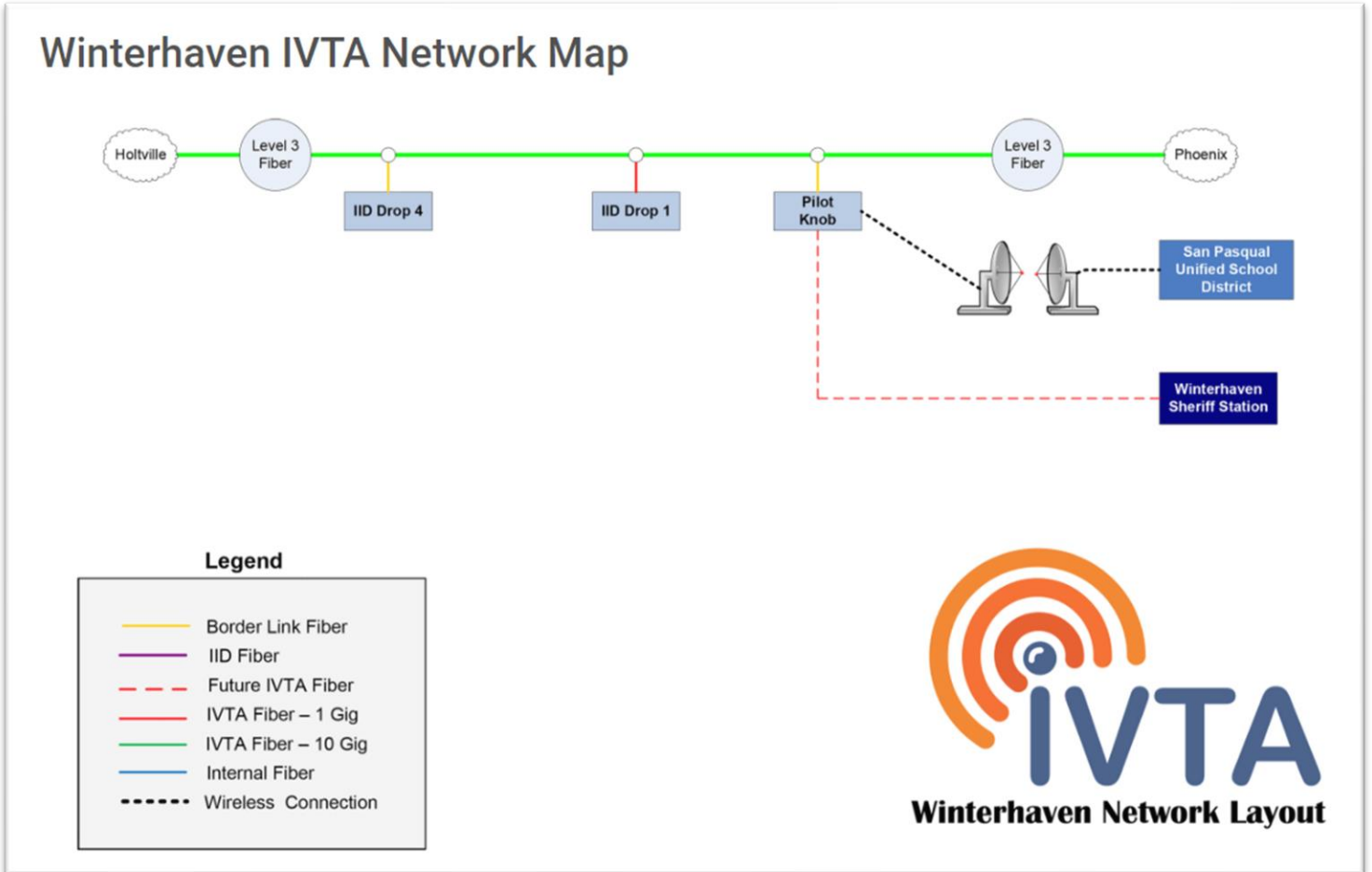


### Legend

	Border Link Fiber
	IID Fiber
	Future IVTA Fiber
	IVTA Fiber
	Internal Fiber



Winterhaven:

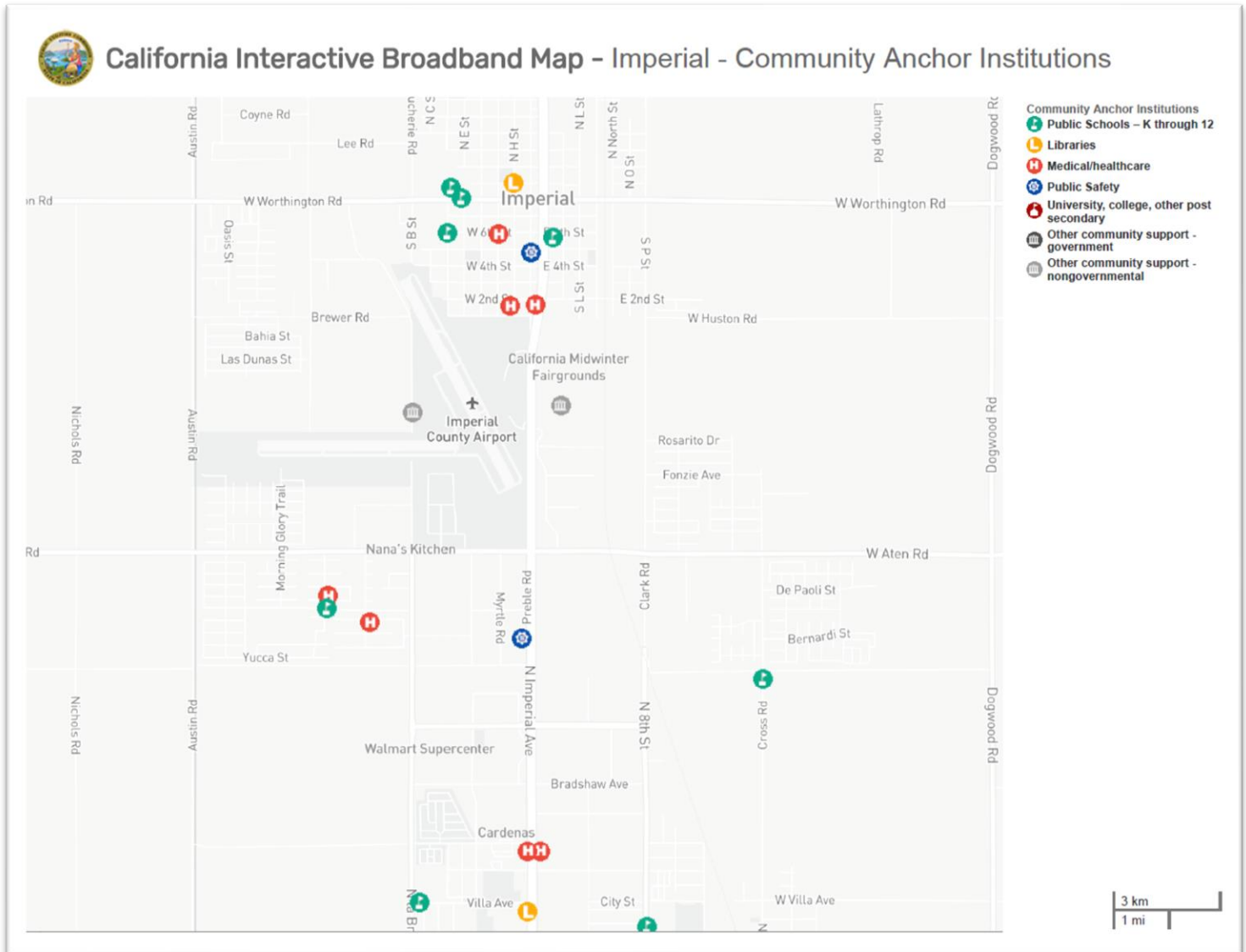


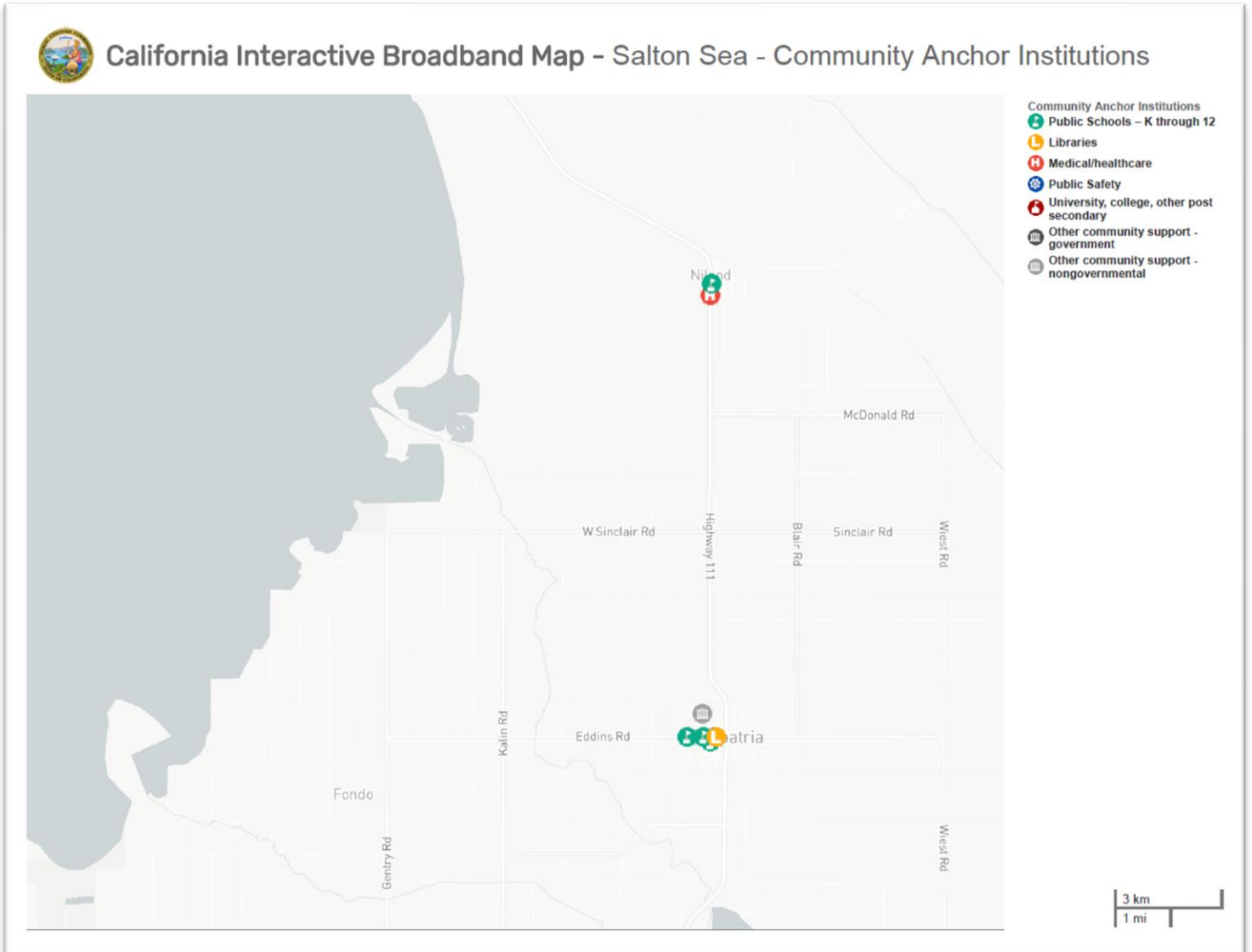




#### 4. Known Middle Mile Back Haul Facilities

The map below shows major public access locations, public-purpose networks, and community anchors institutions that currently exist in Imperial.





## 5. New Last Mile and Middle Mile Infrastructure Needed

SBBC has identified major project areas in Imperial County that are of highest priority due to underserved status, location, population to be served, and public interest factors to be addressed below.

Middle-Mile to Last-Mile Priority Projects:

- **Project Area: Salton Sea** – SBBC has identified a lack of infrastructure and opportunity for residents and businesses north of Brawley in Westmorland, Calipatria, Salton City and Bombay Beach areas. We are proposing a project that would effectively service this entire area, providing



stronger network connection for the large geothermal projects north of Calipatria and rural residents.

- **Project Area: Imperial Valley Fairgrounds** – located in central Imperial.
- **Project Area: Public Service/Education Park** near Imperial/El Centro Border



## 6. Policy Changes to Achieve 98% Deployment

After meeting with cities and officials throughout Imperial County, SBBC has been able to identify basic steps required to address these issues and collectively fulfill the region's needs. Over the course of conducting outreach, research and meetings with each of the cities, County of Imperial, educational institutions, IVTA, IID and outlying areas of Imperial County, SBBC identified major overarching issues countywide that should be addressed across the board.

First, it is our recommendation that the first step toward achieving 98% deployment is the adoption of a "Dig Once Policy" throughout the region.

A policy such as this would facilitate resourceful and coordinated infrastructure planning and development, saving public agencies, utilities and local government both time and money. These policies are best known for solving coordination issues that otherwise result in disruptive and continued construction in public areas.

In order to have a successful policy, cities, County and IID will need to create an agreement that implements a fully adopted public partnership. Although the State of California has adopted a Dig Once Policy, Imperial County has yet to do so. The partnership should at minimum include:

- Agreement to conduct communications infrastructure improvements during any government-funded construction project when feasible
- Requires all new construction to connect to existing fiber network

Second, we recommend that a countywide adoption of a collaboration and communication plan be put in place between all entities and Imperial Irrigation District. Given that IID holds infrastructure assets including public rights-of-way, it is vital to have an effective collaborative system and effort in place that promotes optimal utilization of regional assets for broadband infrastructure.

Coordination and communication agreements between the cities, IID and ISPs must be in place in order to effectively coordinate construction projects of public rights-of-way and achieve action of a Dig Once Policy.



## D. INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

### Willingness of ISPs to contribute to 98% deployment:

After conducting the necessary research to identify unserved areas in Imperial County and determine priority areas for building infrastructure, we began talks with the Internet Service Providers that covered territories within each of the project areas about opportunities to apply for California Advanced Services Fund Broadband Infrastructure Grant funds and later the Federal Communications Commission’s Rural Digital Opportunity Fund to fulfill these project needs.

Below is a summary of our proposed area projects, communication efforts, overall challenges and current status for the proposed projects:

### Imperial County Broadband Infrastructure Project List:

*Project 1: Existing & Developing Industrial Facilities and Underserved Residential*

*Project 2: Existing & Developing Commercial Facilities and Underserved Residential*

*Project 3: County Wide Emergency Operations Center and Underserved Residential*

*Project 4: Emergency Responders & BLM Support the Off-Road Recreation Area and Underserved Residential*

Project	Business	Address	City/Zip
Project 1:	Energy Source	409 W. McDonald Rd.	Calipatria, CA 92233
	Synthetic Genomics	250 W. Schrimpf Rd.	Calipatria, CA 92233
	Earthrise Nutritionals	113 E Hooper Rd.	Calipatria, CA 92233
	CalEnergy Leathers Facility	342 W Sinclair Rd.	Calipatria, CA 92233
	Southern California Inland Port	<a href="#">Location Link</a>	Calipatria, CA 92233
	Controlled Thermal Resources	<a href="#">Location Link</a>	Calipatria, CA 92233
Project 2:	University of Phoenix	3095 N. Imperial Ave.	El Centro, CA 92243
	Social Security Administration	3007 N. Imperial Ave.	El Centro, CA 92243
	Broken Yolk Café	3049 N. Imperial Ave.	El Centro, CA 92243
	H&R Block	3051 N. Imperial Ave., Ste. 101	El Centro, CA 92243
	State Farm Insurance	3051 N. Imperial Ave., Ste. 102	El Centro, CA 92243
Project 3:	Imperial Valley Fair Grounds	200 East 2nd Street	Imperial, CA 92251
	Marshall Industrial Area	<a href="#">Location Link</a>	Imperial, CA 92251
Project 4:	Glamis Sand Dunes	5775 CA-78	Brawley, CA 92227
	Palo Verde	<a href="#">Location Link</a>	Palo Verde, CA 92266

### Status:

Each of the proposed projects lies in either AT&T or Charter Communications territories of Imperial County, and we understand that these ISPs have first right of refusal to the aforementioned proposed projects.

SBBC has submitted this proposed list of projects and discussed federal and state opportunities for funding with AT&T and Charter Communications. We have also provided follow-up information and data regarding specific project needs,





including industry opportunities, existing business needs, priorities outlined by the cities and County, and takeaways from residential and community needs assessments.

We are currently waiting to hear back from AT&T and Charter Communications of their plans to apply for funding for these proposed projects or others.