
PROPOSITION J

It is the policy of the People of the City and County of San Francisco that:

(1) The City should provide a wireless broadband Internet access network ("Wi-Fi Network") serving all parts of San Francisco equally;

(2) The Wi-Fi Network should provide free Internet access for all of the City's residents, businesses, institutions, and visitors;

(3) The Wi-Fi Network's free service should operate at a high speed that fully supports typical home, educational and civic uses of the Internet;

(4) The City should initially provide the Wi-Fi Network through a public-private partnership that utilizes expertise of the high technology sector and minimizes financial risk to the City;

(5) The City should ensure that any private entities with which it contracts to provide Wi-Fi service adhere to privacy policies that offer strong safeguards against the unauthorized sharing of personal information with third parties and against the unnecessary retention of information about Wi-Fi users' locations; and

(6) The City should approve all agreements necessary for providing a City-wide Wi-Fi Network and should implement such agreements as quickly as possible consistent with applicable law.

(7) Private entities negotiating with the City and County should consider in good faith adopting the strongest privacy safeguards against the unauthorized sharing of personal information with third parties and against the unnecessary retention of information about Wi-Fi users' locations, adopting clear service standards for Wi-Fi users prior to finalization of a contract with the City and County, and adopting a reasonable term of contract that avoids a franchise relationship between private entity and the City and County and is beneficial to both parties.

The following factors support the need for a citywide free Wi-Fi Network in San Francisco:

- As technology and telecommunications have advanced, the Internet has become a key tool that individuals use to communicate, access information, and improve their standard of living and quality of life. Broadband Internet access provides individuals efficient access to this life-changing technology.
- Since 2001, the United States has fallen from fourth to fifteenth in the world in the number of broadband subscribers per 100 inhabitants.
- Highly skilled jobs have been exported to countries that have exploited advances in technology and telecommunications.
- These trends, if allowed to continue, will inevitably lead to higher unemployment, loss of competitiveness, and less consumer choice for City residents.
- According to a recent survey conducted by the City Controller, approximately twenty percent of San Francisco residents lack any Internet and computer access at home, resulting in a "Digital Divide" between households with Internet access and those without such access. San Francisco's non-white population is substantially less likely to have home computers and Internet access than the City's white population. Studies further show that limited English-speaking and disabled populations are much less likely to use the Internet and own home computers.

- Lack of computer access, knowledge and skills create a roadblock to obtaining a good education, a better paying job, and a higher standard of living. Free Wi-Fi service can play a significant role in erasing the Digital Divide and fostering Digital inclusion.
- Increasing broadband Internet access will foster community development, economic development, and government efficiency, and will better equip San Franciscans to compete in the global economy.
- The City can further foster Digital Inclusion through Wi-Fi access combined with expanding programs that offer free or low-cost computers, training, and specialized content for those now lacking Internet access.
- A City-wide Wi-Fi Network will ensure that all parts of San Francisco are equally served, not just the scattered "hot spots" that now offer Wi-Fi Service.