



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**19-4999

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**Agenda Item Number:** 2.

**Agenda Date:** 6/27/2019

**In Control:** Innovation and Technology Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Innovation

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Brian Dillard, Chief Innovation Officer

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City-Wide

**SUBJECT:** SmartSA Digital Divide Assessment

### SUMMARY:

The purpose of this item is to provide the Innovation and Technology Committee with an update on the SmartSA framework for the Digital Divide Assessment and upcoming steps with UTSA.

### BACKGROUND:

SmartSA is a partnership between the City of San Antonio, CPS Energy, San Antonio Water System, San Antonio River Authority, Edwards Aquifer Authority, Bexar Appraisal District, San Antonio Housing Authority, and VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority. The SmartSA vision is to build a connected, inclusive, and resilient community supporting a high quality of life. The goal of the City of San Antonio is to continue to provide quality services to our residents. In order to achieve this goal, we must effectively work together with our SmartSA partners to utilize resources and knowledge to address our City's biggest challenges.

SmartSA has three distinct areas of focus. These areas include Access to Services, Mobility, and Sustainability. Within each area of focus there are a number of challenges that have been identified through community input, as well as input from the SmartSA partners. One of those challenges is the Digital Divide within San Antonio.

A 2017 report of Worst Connected Cities by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) found San Antonio ranks 35<sup>th</sup> worst connected out of 191 cities with 17.5% (81,601) of households lacking any internet access at home.

**ISSUE:**

Through the national MetroLab Network (cities and universities partnering on research, development, and deployment (RD&D) projects to address challenges facing urban areas) the City of San Antonio, in collaboration with UTSA, has created a framework to assess the digital divide in San Antonio. The framework includes implementing a scientific study that will capture infrastructure, connectivity, access to devices, and digital literacy skills throughout San Antonio.

This study, and the data collected from it, will provide the following:

- A city-wide baseline of the digital divide
- District profiles to include in conversations around digital equity
- A foundation for digital inclusion efforts in partnership with local organizations and SmartSA partners to diminish the digital divide

The framework is currently being used to determine partners, budget, and timeline.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.