

Subject: Digital Equity Funding Status/Update
Related Department: CPHD

FY 2026 Proposed Budget
Budget Work Session Follow-up

3/21/2025

The following information is provided in response to a request made by Mr. de Ferranti at the work session on February 27, 2025, regarding the following question:

Please provide how much of the digital equity funding has been spent, and what has the funding been spent on?

The approved FY 2025 funding for the [Digital Equity Initiative](#) is \$537K of the \$2.8M out of the original \$3.5M from the JBG dark fiber funding. Should any funding remain at the end of Fiscal Year 2025, it is intended to be requested for carryover to continue work that will cross into Fiscal Year 2026. Additional information may be [found here](#) when the County Board approved the agreement in 2021 with JBG Smith.

To date, there have been no expenses related to the digital equity initiative in FY 2025, though plans are in place for the funds including the following:

- Release \$500,000 in an external Notice of Funding Availability for nonprofit organizations. Tentatively planning to publish in Spring 2025. Grant agreements will be executed after Board approval. Agreements are tentatively planned to be executed with grantees in Fall 2025.
- Coordinator will attend the [National Digital Inclusion Conference](#) in May 2025. The event will fully exhaust the FY 2025 planned training budget.
- Events budget will be utilized for light refreshments during the Coalition meetings. Further events/outreach are not planned at this time, but more events may be planned as the Coalition continues to organize and during Digital Inclusion Week (October 2025).
- The \$25,000 planning funds are anticipated to support a potential application to the State for additional planning/research work. The State grant is reimbursable for up to \$25,000. These funds will support any necessary spending while awaiting the potential State grant or to expand the scope. CPHD is currently investigating opportunities and may submit an application to the State this Spring (deadline May 31, 2025).

The breakdown of the County Board approved FY 2025 budget and five-year program projection utilizing the JBG dark fiber funding is below:

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County Funding Needed for Digital Inclusion Initiative, 5-year Projection							
Budget Item	FY 2025 Year 1	FY 2026 Year 2	FY 2027 Year 3	FY 2028 Year 4	FY 2029 Year 5	5-Year Total	Notes
Digital Inclusion Programming	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$2,500,000	Year 1 allocation could be used for multiple program years dependent upon proposals and number of grantees. These funds would be restricted to skill-building, digital navigation, or device access. Assumes funding 1-2 larger grantees and 4-6 smaller grantees. Long-term funding level to be assessed for subsequent years at conclusion of first cycle.
Planning/ Research	25,000*		275,000			275,000	\$25k in Year 1 is reimbursable from a potential State grant and is not included in the 5 year total. In year 3 or 4, pursue update to Broadband Study/Digital Equity Action Plan.
Events Budget	10,000	10,300	10,609	10,927	11,255	53,091	Convenings, tabling, focus groups, community events. Funds for marketing, translation, food, and potentially incentives. The Digital Equity Coalition could help refine the types of events and overall needs. 3% annual escalator applied to projection.
Training/ Membership	2,100	2,163	2,228	2,295	2,364	11,150	Conferences, local events, and memberships. 3% annual escalator applied to projection.
Total	\$537,100	\$512,463	\$787,837	\$513,222	\$513,619	\$2,839,241	