



**CALTRANS SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES GRANT TO
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SCAG)**

**INLAND EMPIRE REGIONAL BROADBAND CONSORTIUM (IERBC)
RIVERSIDE AND SAN BERNARDINO COUNTIES**

FOCUS GROUP

AT-A-GLANCE REPORT

In January 2022, IERBC conducted 24 Focus Group phone surveys interviewing residents within disadvantaged communities in Riverside and San Bernardino County to determine the potential for low-income residents, who are the majority of unconnected and under-connected households in the region, to reduce vehicle trips and therefore decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, if they had access to high-speed internet infrastructure and were digitally proficient.

- **THE PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED A TOTAL OF 83 VEHICLE TRIPS COULD BE AVOIDED BY USING THE INTERNET AT HOME.**
- **SHOPPING, PAYING BILLS, BANKING, SCHOOL AND EDUCATION, WORK, AND MEDICAL RANKED THE HIGHEST FOR POTENTIAL TO REDUCE VEHICLE TRIPS.**
- **10 PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS “ESSENTIAL WORKERS”**
- **THE AVERAGE HOME INTERNET BILL WAS \$86 PER MONTH.
(ONLY 1 RESPONDENTS HAD INTERNET SERVICE UNDER \$25 PER MONTH)**
- **ALL PARTICIPANTS HAVE INTERNET AT HOME, BUT ONLY A FEW KNEW ABOUT ANY DISCOUNTED PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS, AND THOSE WHO DID KNOW, MOSTLY REFERENCED THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT (EBB) PROGRAM AND WERE UNAWARE ABOUT ITS SUCCESSOR PROGRAM NOW CALLED THE “AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP).”**
- **12 LISTED A SMART PHONE AS THE ONLY DEVICE THEY USE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET.**
- **THE AVERAGE SATISFACTION RATING FOR THE FOCUS GROUPS EXISTING INTERNET SERVICE WAS ABOUT 3.5 IN A RATING FROM 1 TO 5.**



FOCUS GROUP A: RIVERSIDE COUNTY

ESTIMATED VEHICLE TRIPS SAVED IF CONNECTED TO FAST, AFFORDABLE, AND RELIABLE INTERNET: 46 VEHICLE TRIPS SAVED	
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 11 AFRICAN-AMERICAN: 4 ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDER: 2 LATINX: 4 NATIVE AMERICAN: 0 WHITE: 1 FEMALE: 10 MALE: 1 AGE GROUPS: 21-35: 6 35-50: 2 50-65: 3 OVER 65: 0	TOP RANKED TRIPS SAVED: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WORK 2. PAYING BILLS 3. SCHOOL OR EDUCATION 4. BANKING 5. OTHER SHOPPING 6. POST OFFICE 7. APPLYING FOR JOBS 8. GROCERY SHOPPING 9. HEALTH AND MEDICAL (DOCTOR VISITS) 10. PHARMACY 11. GETTING BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC AGENCY
ESSENTIAL WORKERS: 4 WORKING: 7 NOT WORKING OR RETIRED: 4	ALL SAID THEY HAVE INTERNET AT HOME Majority used smart phone and laptop to Access the internet at home
TARGETED ZIP CODES/AREAS: 9 (Within a Disadvantaged Community)	2 LISTED A SMART PHONE AS THE ONLY DEVICE THEY USE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET.
OTHER ZIP CODES/AREAS: 1 (½ Mile of Disadvantaged Community)	AVERAGE HOME INTERNET BILL: \$88/MO. (1 had Home Internet Cost of \$25 or below)
7 HAD HEARD OF DISCOUNTED INTERNET PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES	AVERAGE RATING FOR EXISTING INTERNET SERVICE WAS "4" ON A SCALE OF 1 – 5. (Sporadic Service was reason for lower scores.)
TOP RESPONSES OF WHAT WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET AT HOME: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BETTER INTERNET ACCESS AT MY HOME • MORE AFFORDABLE HOME INTERNET SERVICE 	
FOCUS GROUP A - RIVERSIDE COUNTY PARTICIPANT COMMENTS: <i>"We use online services b/c it saves gas. At least 2 road trips are saved per person."</i> <i>"I use the internet already to pay my bills. It saves me 4 trips per month."</i> <i>"Since I am disabled, having faster internet at an affordable price would help a lot."</i> <i>"I plan to use the internet more. It's getting difficult to get things done without it."</i> <i>"I pay a high price b/c internet service is essential. Low cost offers= low speeds."</i> <i>"Often there isn't a connection or its often interrupted."</i> <i>"ISP needs to fix the boxes outside and invest in better equipment."</i>	



FOCUS GROUP B: SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

ESTIMATED VEHICLE TRIPS SAVED IF CONNECTED TO FAST, AFFORDABLE, AND RELIABLE INTERNET: 37 VEHICLE TRIPS SAVED	
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 13 AFRICAN-AMERICAN: 11 ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDER: 0 LATINX: 2 NATIVE AMERICAN: 0 WHITE: 0 FEMALE: 8 MALE: 5 AGE GROUPS: 21-35: 6 35-50: 1 50-65: 4 OVER 65: 2	TOP RANKED TRIPS SAVED: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OTHER SHOPPING 2. PHARMACY 3. BANKING 4. SCHOOL OR EDUCATION 5. APPLYING FOR A JOB 6. HEALTH AND MEDICAL (DOCTOR VISITS) 7. GETTING BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC AGENCY 8. LIBRARY 9. POST OFFICE 10. GROCERY SHOPPING 11. WORK
ESSENTIAL WORKERS: 6 WORKING: 10 NOT WORKING OR RETIRED: 3	<u>ALL</u> SAID THEY HAVE INTERNET AT HOME Majority used smart phone and laptop to Access the internet at home
TARGETED ZIP CODES/AREAS: 13 (Within a Disadvantaged Community)	<u>10</u> LISTED A SMART PHONE AS THE ONLY DEVICE THEY USE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET.
OTHER ZIP CODES/AREAS: 0 (½ Mile of Disadvantaged Community)	AVERAGE HOME INTERNET BILL: \$85/MO. (None had Home Internet Cost of \$25 or below)
<u>3</u> HAD HEARD OF DISCOUNTED INTERNET PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES	AVERAGE RATING FOR EXISTING INTERNET SERVICE WAS "3" ON A SCALE OF 1 – 5. (Sporadic Service was reason for lower scores.)
TOP RESPONSES OF WHAT WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET AT HOME: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BETTER INTERNET ACCESS AT MY HOME • MORE AFFORDABLE HOME INTERNET SERVICE 	
FOCUS GROUP B – SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY PARTICIPANT COMMENTS: <i>"I'm a foster parent; almost everything has to be completed online now-days."</i> <i>"The Fort Irwin Base only has so many resources and requires several trips to Barstow."</i> <i>"High-speed internet is important to gamers. It's also an economic tool for me."</i> <i>"Internet Service Providers (ISP's) should encourage older people to participate online."</i> <i>"There should be more than one ISP in the area. No options to choose from."</i> <i>"Plenty of outages." "Slow and too expensive for what you get."</i>	