



March 31, 2021

The Small Cell Committee
City of Medford
85 George P Hassett Dr.
Medford, MA 02155

Dear Small Cell Committee Members:

We, at Tech Goes Home, are an organization that fights for digital equity daily. We empower communities to use digital tools to overcome barriers and improve lives. To that end, we supply computers - a new Chromebook or iPad, internet, and 15 hours of digital literacy training. In practice, we meet a trifecta: students with remote-learning; parents with job security; and seniors with telehealth. Like for many, 2020 was unique and challenging, but it created the opportunity for TGH to shift from traditional, in-person instruction to a full-time distance-learning model while maintaining a higher than 90% graduation rate. Tech Goes Home was able to invest in 150+ community sites, serving more than 3,000 people.

Digital access and inclusion are paramount for our learners to have digitally-fit lives. Thus, we come before this committee to support the approval of Verizon's proposal to install its small-cell network throughout Medford. 5G internet services will improve access and coverage for Medford residents.

The FCC reports that more than 80% of Fortune 500 companies require online job applications. This includes major employers such as Walmart, Target, CVS, Costco, and countless other companies offering employment in the neighborhoods we serve. Applying for, advancing in, and accessing higher-paying jobs increasingly [requires a range of digital skill sets](#); [71% of jobs](#) require at least mid-level digital skills, and middle-skill jobs requiring digital skills are [growing 2.5 times faster](#) than those that don't. Connectivity is also invaluable in today's digital world of distance learning, yet an estimated [16 million public school students](#) across the U.S. lack access to either an internet connection or device for learning at home. Without reliable internet access, digital inequity will plague residents in the education, telehealth, and workforce development space for years to come. As a partner, Verizon worked to decrease the gap by awarding TGH \$25,000 in 2020 to help fund our Digital Inclusion programs.

We are pleased to hear that Verizon plans to expand its service area for 5G cells soon throughout the entire City of Medford. We believe that Verizon Wireless's small cell network will greatly enhance service capacity, provide in-building service in hard-to-reach areas, boost voice quality, reliability, and data speed for residents, businesses, first responders, and visitors with the most aesthetically discrete technology available today. TGH has expanded its efforts with families who live and work in Medford and who can truly benefit from greater access. Last year, in the pandemic, we offered four courses in Medford in collaboration with our community partner BEST Hospitality, educating 61 learners.

We believe that greater access to affordable, high-quality internet access will bring much-needed resources to the families and residents of Medford that we serve. We are excited that Verizon is looking to expand its footprint to the entire Medford community, and hope that you, the Small Cell Committee, will approve its application to begin.

If you would like any greater details, free to contact me at marvin@techgoeshome.org. Thank you for being attentive and considering our thoughts on this matter.

Submitted by:



Marvin Venay

Director of Advocacy of Tech Goes Home