



THE HONORABLE SHENG THAO • MAYOR OF OAKLAND

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August 10, 2023

Director Liana Bailey-Crimmins
Director, California Department of Technology
707 3rd Street, 2nd Floor North
West Sacramento, CA 95605

RE: Prioritize Equity by Reinstating I-580 Middle-Mile Segments to Phase 1

Dear Director Bailey-Crimmins,

I am writing to express my deep concern for the State's planned divestment of approximately \$7.1 million in middle-mile broadband infrastructure funding from Oakland, a city that has been bypassed for public and private broadband investment for decades.

This once-in-a-generation state and federal investment is an opportunity to achieve Broadband for ALL and ensure that affordable, high-speed internet access is a reality for everyone. Absent urgent intervention, demonstrably inaccurate and inequitable State Broadband Maps threaten to exacerbate the existing disparities that this funding is intended to solve.

Therefore, I formally request that the California Department of Technology ("CDT") take the following actions:

- 1. Reform the demonstrably inaccurate State Broadband Maps to reflect on-the-ground truth in Oakland:** On July 26, #OaklandUndivided [provided testimony](#) at the California Broadband Council Meeting that the State Broadband Maps are demonstrably inaccurate. These maps woefully understate the connectivity issues that I know to be true in my city and the challenge process is not designed to remediate inaccuracies at this scale. An estimated 94,000 (21.7 percent) Oakland residents lack internet access. [With 80% of Oakland's housing stock built before 1980](#), many residents in Oakland lack access to the technology that enables high-speed internet, a necessity in the 21st century. Furthermore, the [California Public Utilities Commission report](#) concluded that, for decades, internet service providers have persistently divested in historically redlined communities while overinvesting in wealthy communities. These business decisions, informed by short-term profit motives, have created [disparate impacts](#) for communities of color and individuals with disabilities. The planned divestment in Oakland's Flatlands will continue to widen the digital divide and perpetuate systemic barriers to opportunity.
- 2. Reinstate the I-580 middle-mile segments to MMBI Network - Phase 1:** While only 17% of the statewide broadband network will be cut due to inflation, the State is proposing cuts of nearly 57% in Oakland (See Appendix A). This totals a \$7.1 million divestment in public dollars from one of the least connected areas in the state. Relegating this essential infrastructure to Phase 2 is akin to eliminating it altogether as Phase 2 currently has no funding and urban areas are the State's lowest priority. Including the I-580 in phase 1 fulfills the commitment made by the Governor's Office in November of 2021, honoring the two years of ongoing community time, feedback, and support to actualize the original plans. This is also a logistically feasible request with conduit and fiber currently present along the I-580.

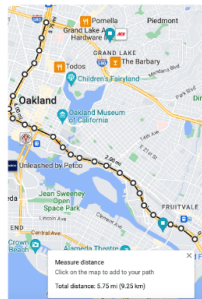
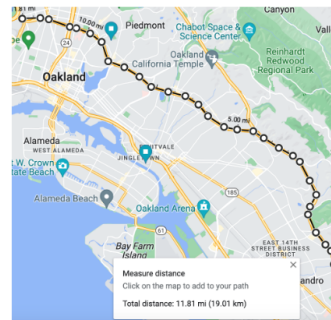
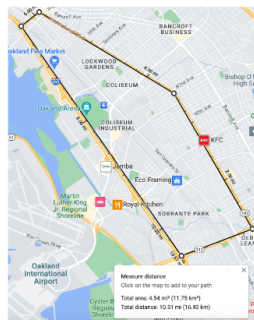
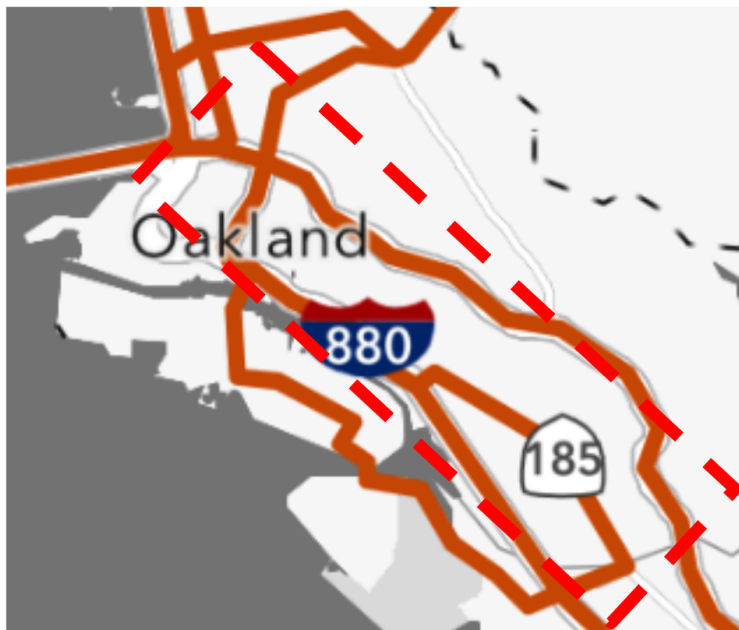
Constituents have alerted me that leases on the middle-mile network could be signed within the next few weeks, so an urgent reply is requested. **Please respond to this letter by Wednesday, August 16 on plans to fund the I-580 middle mile segment.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheng Thao". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sheng Thao
Mayor, City of Oakland

Before "Optimization" - 28.07 miles (\$12.8M)

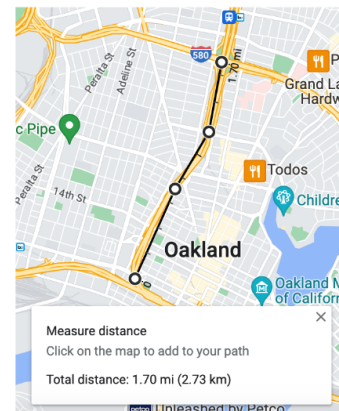
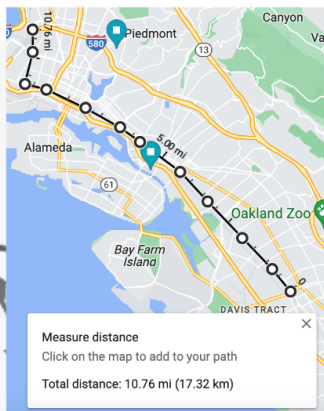
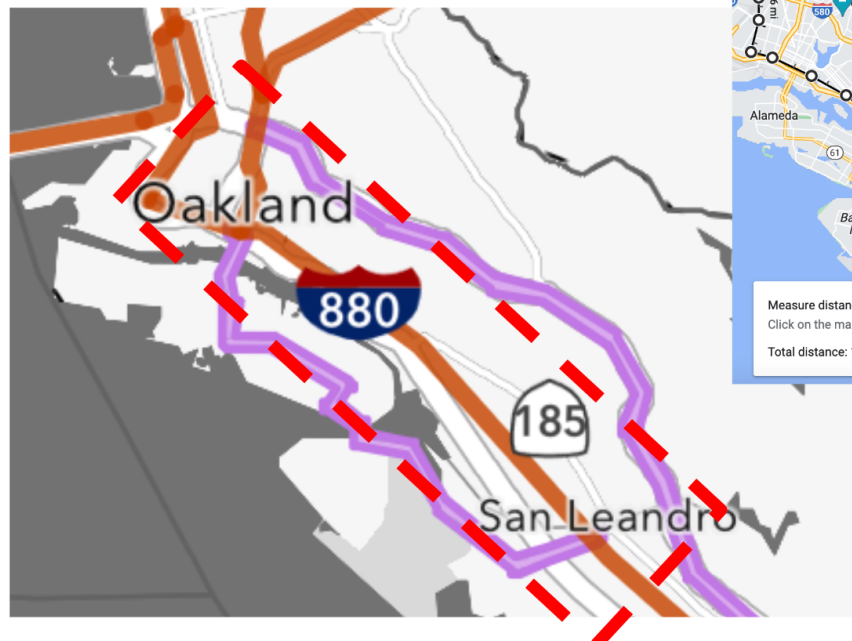


PROJECT SCOPE
Initial MMBI Project Assumptions

- ✓ **Broadband Needs**
Initial estimated scope of 8,100 miles
- ✓ **Budget Model**
Standalone Caltrans construction estimate: \$455,000/mile

**7/21/23 Presentation (slide 5)

After "Optimization" - 12.46 miles (\$5.7M)



PROJECT SCOPE
Initial MMBI Project Assumptions

- ✓ **Broadband Needs**
Initial estimated scope of 8,100 miles
- ✓ **Budget Model**
Standalone Caltrans construction estimate: \$455,000/mile

**7/21/23 Presentation (slide 5)