



**DAVID CHIU**  
邱信福  
市參事會主席

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 20, 2014

Contact: Judson True  
judson.true@sfgov.org  
(415)554-7451

## **Board of Supervisors President David Chiu Calls for “Dig Once” to Help Improve Internet Connectivity and Close Digital Divide in San Francisco**

*Ordinance up for a vote on Tuesday will help City expand its fiber network when streets are already being dug up for other projects*

**San Francisco, CA** – Board of Supervisors President David Chiu today joined Supervisor Scott Wiener, City partners and community advocates to support the “Dig Once” ordinance, which will be voted on at the Board of Supervisors meeting on October 21. Dig Once requires that the Department of Technology have the opportunity to have conduit, the pipe that contains the fiber-optic cable that is essential to Internet connectivity, installed where streets are already opened up for other public or private excavation projects.

“Dig Once will help us expand our fiber network, improve Internet connectivity, and close the digital divide,” said Board President Chiu. “Quality broadband Internet service is no longer an optional luxury. It is a necessity for our residents to fully participate in our economy and our educational system. In the 21st century, cities need access to affordable, high-speed broadband to compete economically, just as access to water, roads and electricity were critical to economic growth and social mobility in the 20th century.”

Under the ordinance, a public or private entity must notify the Department of Technology (DT) at least 14 days in advance of filing a permit with the Department of Public Works to excavate 900 feet or more in the public right-of-way. DT then has 7 days to evaluate whether to have fiber conduit installed and to respond to the entity applying for the permit. If DT decides in the affirmative, the applicant will install the conduit, and DT will pay the incremental costs, including labor and materials. DT would not pay to dig the trench in the street or to restore the pavement after the project’s completion. One engineering estimate found that Dig Once could save DT between 25 and 75 percent on conduit installations.

“This is simply a smart, efficient way coordinate the work under our streets and help San Francisco prepare for a future that we know will require faster, cheaper Internet connections than we have today,” said Supervisor Scott Wiener, a co-sponsor of the legislation. “Dig Once will ensure that we are getting more benefit for the people of San Francisco out of all the road construction work we see all across our city.”

In recent years, San Francisco has installed 140 miles of fiber to serve the connectivity needs of City government and to provide improve Internet access across the digital divide. City Hall and hundreds of other City facilities have replaced high-speed data service leased from private companies with cheaper City fiber. Through the federally-funded Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, DT and the Department of Aging and Adult Services utilized the City's fiber to connect 30 small computer labs in senior centers. The fiber network enables the free WiFi on Market Street, in public housing, and in 32 parks. Through an initiative that could be significantly expanded, DT also leases a limited amount of unused fiber capacity (called dark fiber) to the private sector, generating about \$279,000 in revenue.

"As a hub for technology innovation, San Francisco will increasingly rely on ultra-high speed data connectivity," said Acting Chief Information Officer Miguel Gamiño. "The Dig Once ordinance puts the City in a position to deliver these services more efficiently when needed. The ordinance will empower the City to place communications conduit during street construction for other utilities. Once in place, pulling fiber optic cable through existing conduit will reduce the cost and time for deploying WiFi and high speed data services."

The need to improve digital inclusion is acute. The latest data from the 2013 City Survey found that 82 percent of San Franciscans had broadband internet access. Building out the City's fiber network through strategies like Dig Once can help more San Franciscans get hi-speed access to the Internet.

"Accessing healthcare, education and job readiness services are increasingly dependent on having fast and reliable internet available for everyone seeking these services," said Tessie Guillermo, President & CEO of ZeroDivide, a nonprofit foundation that works around the country to close the digital divide. "By investing in fiber systems today, San Francisco will be providing an important foundation for the health and well-being of its residents now and for the future."

###