



BROADBANDUSA

CONNECTING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES

Recipient Toolkit: Community Outreach Tools and Tips

Version 1.0



Prepared for:

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230



Introduction

Overview

Your Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) project is a significant opportunity to serve your community. Broadband access and adoption open the door to services that can improve people's lives – through education and training, health care, jobs, and public safety, to name a few of the benefits and services that high speed Internet service enables. Therefore, engaging with your community, and remaining aware of their concerns and interests are important components of your BTOP project.

Community outreach involves organizations, individuals, neighborhoods, decision-makers, businesses, and others with an interest in or impacted by your project. Effective outreach helps establish:

- **Involvement**—Your project is ultimately about the people it serves. Involve them early in the process, and they will better contribute to your progress.
- **Two-way communications**—Open a dialogue with your community so you can ask for and understand feedback, and respond as needed.
- **Transparency**—Your community wants to know that you are a responsible steward of grant monies and that you are accomplishing what you set out to do.

Using This Toolkit

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) encourages recipients to implement community outreach activities and build relationships. Ultimately, the outreach that you conduct will depend on your project and the people you serve. We hope the planning tips, examples, and ideas included in this Toolkit will spur your thinking and get you started.

Please keep in mind that you are not required to implement any of the activities or approaches included in this Toolkit.

The Toolkit provides:

- Insights into effective outreach planning.
- Worksheets to help you tailor outreach activities to your local situation.
- Ideas for outreach activities that can fit your goals, stakeholders, and messages.

- Tips you can tailor to your project category, whether it is infrastructure (last mile, middle mile, Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI)), Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA), or Public Computer Center (PCC).

Toolkit Organization

The Toolkit is organized into the following sections:

- ▶ **Setting Goals**
Easy tips and tools to focus your outreach activities.
- ▶ **Identifying Outreach Activities**
Ideas that you can implement in your community.
- ▶ **Community Organizations**
How to reach your community through organizations.
- ▶ **State, Tribal, and Local Officials**
How to involve government stakeholders in your project.
- ▶ **Other Community Stakeholders**
How to communicate with other key groups and individuals impacted by your project.





Setting Goals

What Are You Trying to Accomplish?

Your goals for community outreach should grow out of your project goals based on a clear understanding of what you need to communicate and what you hope to achieve with your outreach activities. Think about the following questions to begin setting goals:

- **What does the community need to know about your project?** Your goal could be as simple as keeping the community informed.
- **What should I report about my progress and any challenges or delays?** Consistent and open reporting helps gain the community's trust.
- **Who will benefit from the improved services my project will deliver?** Help the community understand how to use these services.
- **Do I need more project partners?** Community outreach can build the number of anchor institutions or other partners participating in your project.
- **Have groups or individuals expressed concerns or offered ideas about your project?** Outreach could engage them in a dialogue to address their issues, questions and suggestions.

As you define your goals, it is important that you make them measurable and reportable. Keep records of the number of organizations you meet with, people who attend presentations or workshops, visitors to your website, and materials you distribute. Then, include these details when you report results to your Federal Program Officer, as well as government officials, project partners, and the media.

With Whom Should You Communicate?

Stakeholders are individuals and groups involved in, impacted by, and holding a vested interest in your project. Use the stakeholder map in Worksheet A and consider the following key stakeholder categories:

- **Government**—State, Tribal, and local officials can become your most valuable partners if they understand your plans and milestones. For additional ideas, refer to the section on “State, Tribal, and Local Officials” on page 18 of this toolkit.

- **Residents**—People who live and work in the areas where construction and other project activities will occur need to know about your objectives. See the section on “Other Community Stakeholders” on page 19 for additional ideas.
- **Service users**—The end users of planned services may need education on how broadband can improve their lives.
- **Business community**—Business owners and developers may be able to use broadband services to increase employment and training. Keep them informed so they can plan for the future.

What Are You Trying to Say?

Outreach is about engaging the community, explaining the future impact of your project, and making them part of your success. First and foremost, you are spending taxpayer dollars to provide services and your focus should remain on the steps you take to remain responsible and responsive.

As you develop your messages, here are a few helpful tips to remember:

- **Tailor your message to your audience**—A technical presentation may work for government officials, but may not be appropriate for the general public.
- **Match the communications tool to the stakeholder**—Local reporters may use a news release, but a newsletter will work better for residents. For additional information on tools, see “Identifying Outreach Activities” on page 6.
- **Timing is everything**—Communicate early and often. Explain the services and technologies that you will offer from the beginning.

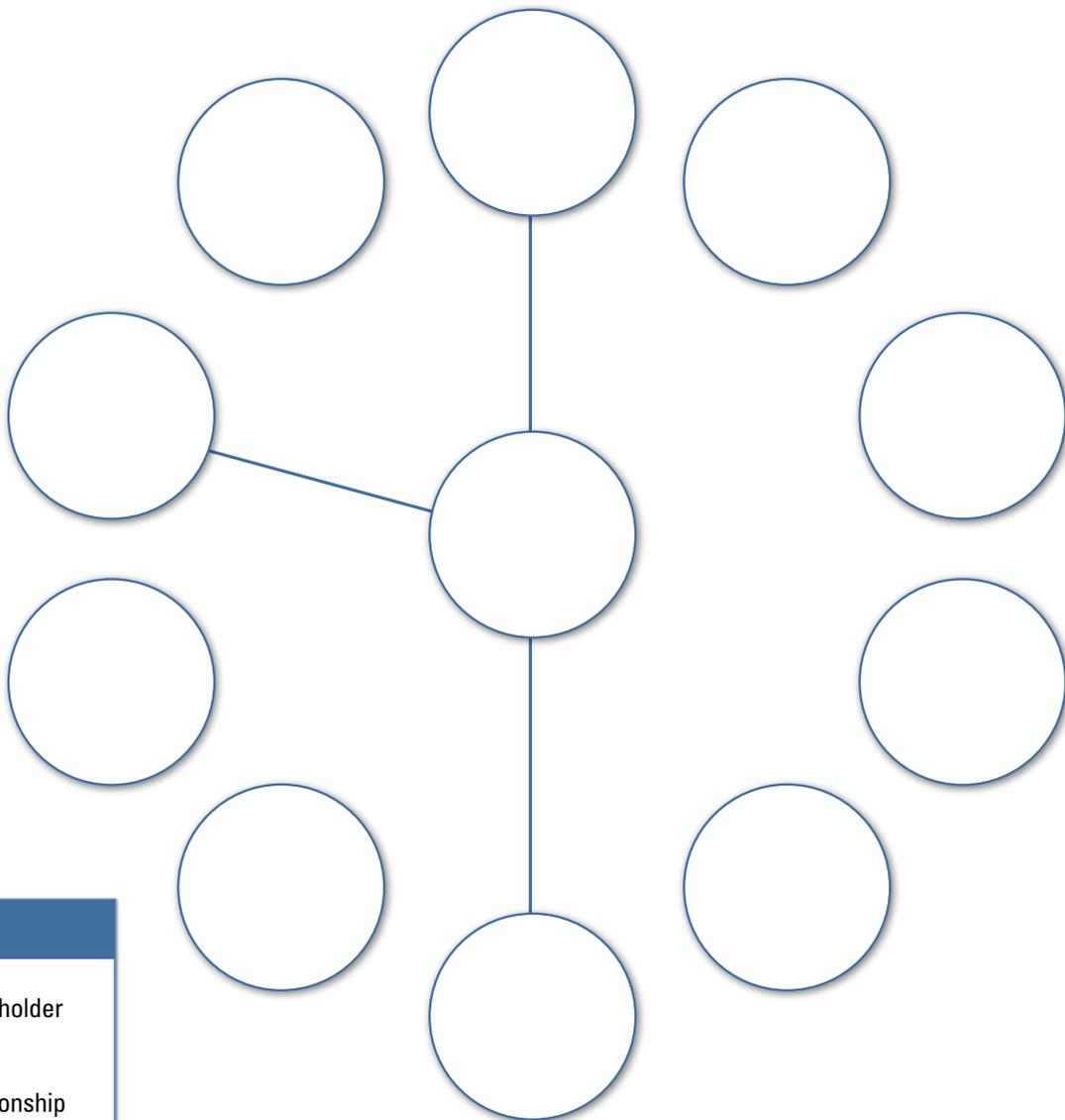




Worksheet A: Stakeholder Map

Instructions

Use the stakeholder map shown below to identify the groups and individuals that you need to include in community outreach activities. Show how stakeholders relate to you and others by drawing lines between the map's circles. You may want to create separate maps for each of your community outreach goals, since they may require relationships with different stakeholders. Later, you can transfer these stakeholders to Worksheet B on page 8 and identify the specific activities that you will use to reach each group.





Outreach Activity Options and Ideas

Type	Description	Ideas
Information Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and electronic materials that deliver project information, updates, and news to stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)—Prepare questions and answers about your project for use as handouts or with the media. Fact Sheet—Use one-page handouts summarizing details about your project for meetings, interviews, and events. See Tool Template C on page 14. Newsletter—Distribute a print or e-mail newsletter to tell key stakeholders about project updates, status, and news
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities to mark milestones with special activities, sponsored by recipients and/or partners. Exhibit at community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open House—Invite residents, local officials, students, healthcare professionals, and others to visit your site and view demonstrations. Groundbreaking/Grand Opening Ceremonies—Invite stakeholders, including government officials, to celebrate major project milestones. Job Fairs/Health Fairs—Expand variety of stakeholders and reinforce your connection to the community.
Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet-based tools that serve as a destination for stakeholders, e.g., websites, and/or deliver outbound communications vehicles, e.g., visitors electing to receive e-newsletters and updates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website—Build a separate site or a special section on your current site where you can focus on project accomplishments, and invite public comment. Social Networking—Establish a presence on a social networking site, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or Flickr, and update your profile regularly with pictures or news about your project. Online Media/Newsroom—Set aside a section of your website to post news releases, media advisories, progress reports, etc.
Print, Broadcast, and Online Media Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with print, broadcast, and online media to deliver information to stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> News Releases—Issue a news release or media advisory to announce events and project milestones, and report on results. See Tool Template A on page 10. Paid Advertising—Place an advertisement in a local paper to invite stakeholders to test your service offering. Public Service Announcements—Provide a short video to a news station regarding your project's impact on the community.
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speeches and briefings delivered at events sponsored by partners or civic or other organizations, and attended by your stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speeches—Prepare speeches for local community organizations to explain your project's benefit and availability to their members. Town Halls—Host a town hall meeting to engage in a discussion with a local community about how to deliver the best services given their needs. Slide Presentations—Create a standard slide presentation that gives a high-level overview of your project to deliver at events. See Tool Template B on page 11.





Tool Template A: News Release

Instructions

News releases are commonly used to announce events and information to print, broadcast and online media. The following template will help you build a release that tells your story in a form that reporters understand. Fill in the blanks with your project's background details and news, and distribute by e-mail or in hardcopy during interviews or events. Emphasize how your project will contribute to enhanced educational, economic development, health care, energy, transportation, and employment opportunities. This template is also available for download at www.ntia.doc.gov/grantsmanagement. You can tailor the release template with your project or organization's logo and name, and include names of community anchor institutions and other partners.

Headline—Capture your news in an attention-grabbing title.

Lead Paragraph—Include the who, what, where, when, and why behind the news.

Quote—A quote from your organization's leader can focus on the value your project will bring to the community and is tailored to the news. If you are announcing results and progress, stress messages related to good stewardship and value to the community. Subsequent paragraphs can include quotes from your partners, community anchor institutions, government officials, or civic leaders.

Support Paragraphs—Include news detail—what will be built on a construction site, services to be offered, progress on timelines, when services will become available.

Closing Paragraph—Feature background on the award recipient, partnerships, past experience with grants.



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For Immediate Release: July 13, 2010

Contact: Suzie Smith, 555-555-1212 and suzies@broadbandinc.com

Broadband Inc. Breaks Ground on \$19M Project to Bring Internet to Underserved

SUNDER - Joe Day, CEO of Broadband Inc., and Mayor Timothy North broke ground today on a \$19 million broadband infrastructure project that will bring affordable Internet access to the underserved populations of Sunder. The entire city council as well as the local police and fire chiefs attended and took part in the ceremonial first shoveling.

"This is a great day for Sunder," said Mayor North. "Access to the Internet is increasingly important in today's world. Whether you own a small business, need to take an online course, or stay connected to family and friends, Internet access is the key to community advancement in the 21st century."

Broadband Inc. received a \$5 million grant to build the broadband infrastructure for Internet access from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). "We knew when we applied that we had a great project," noted Day. "We're proud of our involvement in connecting the people of Sunder to the Internet."

Broadband Inc. will lay 50 miles of fiber-optic cable throughout Sunder and the surrounding communities. When complete, 500 homes and more than 3,500 residents will have access to the Internet. Sunder's main library as well as the police and fire stations will also benefit from the project. "We hope to complete the construction and cable laying portion of the project by August 2011. Residents of Sunder will be able to use their new Internet access to talk to their families and friends during the 2011 holiday season," said Day.

Broadband Inc. is a privately-owned telecommunications company located in Sunder. Joe Day, a Sunder native, and the company have been working to provide Internet access to the community for the past 10 years. Several of Broadband Inc.'s executives executed a grant under NTIA's previous Technology Opportunities Program (TOP), laying the first broadband cable in Sunder.

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Tool Template B: Slide Presentation

Instructions

Use the template on the following pages to create presentations for meetings, events, and other outreach activities. The text in these slides will guide you in writing content based on your project's goals and progress. You can add additional content slides to this template as appropriate. This PowerPoint template is available for download at www.ntia.doc.gov/grantsmanagement.



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DRAFT 0

Organization and Introduction

- Organization Introduction
 - Provide a brief summary on the history of the organization.
 - Explain the organization's role in providing broadband services to the community.
- About the Award and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
 - Recipients should explain why they applied to BTOP by addressing the following:
 - Demonstrate the broadband adoption or access problem/need within the community.
 - Identify how the proposed project plans to address the community problem/need.
 - Explain the award addresses the community problem/need.
- Project Key Partners
 - Identify key partners and their roles on the project.
- Award Date and BTOP Financial Information.
 - Provide the award date and federal funding amount.
 - Provide recipient match amount.



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DRAFT 1

Awarded Project Overview

- Project Overview
 - The recipient should provide a high level overview of their project. The recipient can highlight key information from the "Executive Summary" and "Project Purpose" sections of their BTOP application. The high level overview should address the following:
 - Identify the areas to be served by the project.
 - Demonstrate how the project will address the broadband adoption or access needs within the community.
 - Propose the number of jobs to be created within the community by the project.
 - Indicate how the project will be sustained beyond the funding period.







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DRAFT

2

Awarded Project Timeline and Milestones

- All BTOP projects are expected to be substantially complete no later than two years and fully completed no later than three years following the date of issuance of the award. Identify each of the project milestones (goals) and provide a projected timeline.

Proposed Project Goals	Year One (2010)	Year Two (2011)	Year Three (2012)
Identify a proposed project goal			
Identify a proposed project goal			
Identify a proposed project goal			
Identify a proposed project goal			
Identify a proposed project goal			
Identify a proposed project goal			



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DRAFT

3

Awarded Project Community Benefits

- The recipient should demonstrate how the awarded project will impact and benefit the community.
 - All project types should identify the following:
 - Indicate the number of anchor institutions served by the project. List and identify each anchor institution.
 - Identify how the proposed project will serve minority serving institutions.
 - Demonstrate how the project will engage and service vulnerable population groups.
 - Applicable benefits outlined below:

Public Computer Center (PCC) Projects	Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) Projects	Infrastructure/ICI Projects
▪ Accessibility – Demonstrate the ways in which the PCC will be accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities.	▪ Accessibility – Demonstrate how adoption rates in your community compare to national averages (why your project is needed).	▪ Project Impact – Demonstrate how the project will indirectly or directly meet the broadband needs of the community.
▪ Equipment – Describe the types of personal computing peripherals and broadband equipment available for each station.	▪ Adoption Metrics – Indicate the total number of new home, household accounts, and new business subscribers the project is projected to generate.	▪ System Design – Provide a description of the system design that will be used to deliver the broadband service.
▪ Training & Education – Describe the training and education programs and how they will respond to the needs of the community.	▪ Broadband Training Programs – Identify the hours of training each participant in an SBA program will receive. Also identify the number of individuals the training programs will reach.	▪ Broadband Solutions – Describe the infrastructure of the broadband system. Identify the type of broadband equipment that will be deployed in the infrastructure project.
▪ Multilingual Efforts – Describe the multilingual training and outreach programs available.	▪ Equipment Affordability Programs – Identify equipment costs for typical customer and compare with recycled, loaned and other low-cost computers.	
▪ PCC Users – Project the number of total users expected to be generated by a BTOP Public Computer Center.	▪ Broadband Awareness Programs – Explain the awareness campaigns and how many people they will reach.	





Tool Template C: Fact Sheet

Instructions

Fact sheets are commonly used to provide an overview of your project. The following template will help you create a one page fact sheet that you can make available on your website, and share with your stakeholders, media, and partner organizations. The text in the template will guide you in writing content for your project fact sheet, and is also available for download at www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

Use this BroadbandUSA template or your organization's letterhead.

You can use this fact sheet as a general introduction to your project. Make copies available when you make presentations, e-mail them to reporters, and use as fliers at displays. Update the information throughout your project's life cycle.

This is your opportunity to focus on the services your project will deliver to the community. Include detail on when these activities and services will become available.

Provide background that establishes your organization as a responsible member of the community and award recipient.

A list of your partners illustrates community involvement. You can also include a list of sub-recipients and small disabled businesses involved in the process.



Fact Sheet: Our Community Our Broadband

About The Project

The "Our Community, Our Broadband" project will serve vulnerable populations with broadband adoption programs in three states—Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The project will engage, train, and support new broadband users, ultimately empowering more than 100,000 individuals from vulnerable groups to access and use broadband. "Our Community, Our Broadband" will increase broadband adoption by almost 15,000 households, provide training to 27,000 people, and implement broadband adoption awareness campaigns reaching 425,000 low-income and minority individuals.

"Our Community, Our Broadband" will also:

- Recruit 120 broadband experts to provide broadband training, education, and assistance to low income and minority individuals.
- Establish an online community for literacy education and collaboration to teach community residents.
- Install computers and technology at 14 libraries, schools, economic development agencies, and halfway houses to assist with training efforts.
- Provide employment programs in key economically disadvantaged communities.
- Work with Internet providers to offer affordable access, subsidize broadband connections, and provide affordable equipment.

Organization's History

Established in 2002, Broadband Northwest is a non-profit organization aimed at bringing greater broadband awareness to the Northwest region of the United States. The organization provides education, computer literacy training, job training, small business development, and broadband awareness campaigns. Broadband Northwest also offers free web page development seminars for community institutions, and small and economically disadvantaged businesses to encourage outreach and collaboration. Many local community organizations support the Our Community, Our Broadband project execution with the hopes that the vulnerable populations of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho will benefit from Internet access and learn how it can change their lives for the better.

Project Partners

- Northwest Economic Council
- Minority Tech-Literacy Group (Washington, Oregon and Idaho Chapters)
- Dare to Dream
- Young Technology Association
- Reach Cable
- New Education Society





Community Organizations

Reaching each stakeholder individually is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Reaching stakeholders through the organizations they respect and participate in, on the other hand, is an effective way to deliver your messages and build relationships.

A few tips on working with community organizations include:

- Identify potential organizations based on the types of services you will provide. Contact medical societies or nurses' associations to discuss health care. Locate business organizations interested in building the local economy.
- Do your employees or those at your partner, sub-recipient, or vendor organizations belong to local groups? Sometimes working through a member is the best way to get a foot in the door.
- Find local chapters, affiliates, and members by visiting the organization's national or state websites. Many sites include lists of local groups with contact information.

Tips: Reaching Stakeholders Through Organizations

- ✓ **Reach the parents and young people of your community.** Youth organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, Junior Achievement, and 4H are eager to work with local businesses and offer educational experiences for their members. Students are a good way to reach parents particularly in low-income communities. Consider working with schools to provide broadband literacy programs for parents and students.
- ✓ **Contact retailer associations in your service area.** Business owners will be interested in how broadband can advance the community and expand the market for their goods and services.
- ✓ **Support a vendor fair sponsored by your state or city's small business association.** Focus on identifying small disadvantaged businesses qualified to participate in your project, and provide products and services by participating in such fairs.
- ✓ **Build partnerships.** Join forces with community anchor institutions already participating in your project to enlist additional anchors. Representatives of participating anchors may be more effective than you are in communicating reasons to join your project.
- ✓ **Spotlight public safety.** Sponsor a display table or booth at the annual sheriff's association in your state with information on and demonstrations of broadband services.

Notes





Worksheet D: Reaching Stakeholders Through Organizations

Instructions

The following table provides space for matching organizations to community outreach activities. Ideas provided in the first rows will help you get started. The website addresses provided here lead to online search engines so you can locate local chapters and affiliates.

Organization	Goal	Activity
National Congress of American Indians http://www.ncai.org/Tribal-Directory.3.0.html	Showcase the benefits of broadband to Tribal organizations.	Sponsor a booth at an annual Tribal gathering to introduce reservation residents to broadband services.
National Urban League http://www.nul.org/in-your-area/affiliate-map	Expand use of broadband in underserved urban communities.	Sponsor workshops at local Urban League offices on college readiness for high school students, focusing on the use of the Internet for finding scholarships, applying to schools, and exploring potential careers.
AARP http://www.aarp.org/states/	Show seniors that using broadband services is easy.	At a local store, help seniors e-mail photos to their relatives and friends.
Kiwanis http://sites.kiwanis.org/Kiwanis/en/MembershipInterest/FindAClub.aspx	Engage civic and business leaders in broadband outreach.	Work with Kiwanis in your area to offer broadband training to adults with disabilities.
National PTA http://pta.org/jp_find_your_pta.html	Work with parents and teachers to build community use of broadband.	Work with the local PTA organization to sponsor a Career and Job Fair, and demonstrate broadband services.





Other Community Stakeholders

Reaching Unserved and Underserved Groups

Broadband service providers, as well as PCCs and broadband adoption organizations, face two key challenges when communicating with unserved and underserved communities:

- Identifying an outreach approach that effectively reaches diverse groups.
- Overcoming negative perceptions of broadband.

You need to carefully evaluate your Stakeholder Map to make sure stakeholder preferences are included in your planning. Unserved and underserved communities often use neighborhood-based communications and information sources to form opinions and make decisions, instead of turning to the Internet and mass media. Late adopters of technology products and services may rely on word-of-mouth recommendations to choose a brand or service provider. These communities are more likely to rely on neighborhood newspapers or discussions at local gathering places, such as the barbershop or the grocery store, to access news about a local project or training opportunity.

Cost of broadband services and lack of digital literacy are common barriers in unserved and underserved communities. You will need to integrate messages that address these stakeholder concerns into outreach tactics. Outreach activities in these areas could focus on removing these barriers and contributing to broadband use and acceptance.

Communicating with Future Users

Additional considerations for outreach to communities include:

- If you are implementing an infrastructure or PCC project that requires construction, make sure you check into local regulations about communicating in the community. Some projects are required to advertise in local media to announce construction before it begins.
- Consider establishing non-Internet based vehicles such as toll-free numbers that allow stakeholders to ask questions, especially about construction projects. This could reduce frustrations due to digging, creation of new buildings, or traffic restrictions.

Tips: More Neighborhood Outreach Ideas

- ✓ **Sponsor small business workshops on entrepreneurship.** Include sessions on how the Internet can help small businesses build sales.
- ✓ **Submit articles to neighborhood newsletters.** Many housing developments or condominium communities distribute monthly or quarterly newsletters to residents. Include news about future services and project progress.
- ✓ **Sponsor digital literacy workshops at your community college.** Schedule evening or Saturday demonstrations of how residents can use broadband. Set up computer labs and teach job seeking skills, demonstrate how to use the Internet to expand homework opportunities, *etc.* Include guidelines on safe use of the Internet and how to supervise children when they are online.
- ✓ **Use cross-generational activities to reach the elderly.** Work with high school volunteers to demonstrate Internet use at senior centers.
- ✓ **Initiate activities with local schools.** Sponsor essay writing contests, science projects, spelling bees, and other fun educational projects that can be completed online.
- ✓ **Leverage partners, service providers, and others to extend messages.** For example, if a hospital sends a health newsletter to the community, place an article about the new or expanded services broadband will deliver.





Appendix A: Project Activity Checklist

NTIA invites BTOP award recipients to submit examples of community outreach and related activities implemented at the local level. The BTOP communications team is collecting information about activities that reach key stakeholders, with a focus on events, milestones, and announcements. We will post highlights on the BTOP website, www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

Think about the following as you submit information and materials from your local activities.

- What announcements will you make about your project before the end of December 2010?** Examples include announcing quarterly results or the addition of new partners. Provide the announcement topics and tentative dates. If you have already made specific announcements, provide information on how the announcements were made, *e.g.*, through news releases. What were the results of your announcements?
- What stakeholder events are you sponsoring before the end of December 2010?** Examples include a groundbreaking or open house. Provide details on your event plans and tentative dates. If you have already sponsored an event, provide information on how many people attended and related highlights. What were the results of your events?
- Identify any key milestones of interest to stakeholders that will occur before the end of December 2010.** For example, you may plan to distribute a total of 100 refurbished computers as part of your SBA project. What were the results of meeting your milestones?
- Send any activity-related materials to NTIA.** NTIA can use photos, video, handouts, news releases and other examples of how the activity was implemented. Be sure to include copies of newspaper articles and local broadcast coverage.

Please send all information to your assigned Federal Program Officer.





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