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# *Digital Inclusion and Civic Engagement*

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This Briefing Paper provides a synopsis of Chapter 14 and 15 of the National Broadband Plan<sup>1</sup>. Chapter 14 covers Government. Chapter 15 covers Civic Engagement. This paper also provides excerpts from:

- Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission's Communications Needs Ascertainment, April 2010<sup>2</sup>
- Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities Demonstration Community Projects<sup>3</sup>

Americans can check their bank accounts, communicate with customer service representatives and do their shopping anytime, anywhere by using applications enabled by broadband. Americans now expect this level of service from their government and are often disappointed with what they find. While some bright spots exist around filing taxes and paying parking tickets, these are the exception, not the rule. Government has fallen behind the private sector in using broadband to deliver services, and it is time to catch up.

## IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY THROUGH GOVERNMENT ACTION

The federal government spends billions of dollars annually on broadband connections for its office buildings and facilities throughout the United States and provides billions more in funding for programs that have a broadband communications component. The government does not, however, leverage that spending in a coordinated way to improve broadband connectivity and access within local communities. In many cases, doing so would have a nominal incremental cost, but the impact on communities, especially those that are unserved or underserved, could be transformative. Government can help in the deployment of broadband by serving as an anchor tenant in unserved and underserved communities, by leveraging the purchasing power of the federal government to provide lower prices for broadband communications services for state and local governments and by coordinating federal grants with a broadband connectivity requirement.

**Recommendation 14.1:** Federal government agencies and departments should serve as broadband anchor tenants for unserved and underserved communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.broadband.gov/download-plan/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.mhcr.org/docs/MHCRC\\_Communications\\_Technology\\_Needs\\_Ascert\\_Report%2804-21-10%29FINAL.pdf](http://www.mhcr.org/docs/MHCRC_Communications_Technology_Needs_Ascert_Report%2804-21-10%29FINAL.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.blandinfoundation.org/\\_uls/resources/DC\\_Project\\_Matrix\\_Nov\\_2013.pdf](http://www.blandinfoundation.org/_uls/resources/DC_Project_Matrix_Nov_2013.pdf)

State and local governments have expressed a strong desire to share broadband communications infrastructure deployed by the federal government to extend broadband connectivity to state and local agencies as well as unserved and underserved communities. In response to Section 414 of the Transportation, Treasury, Independent Agencies, and General Government Appropriations Act of 2005, the President directed federal departments and agencies to deploy redundant communications links for all facilities. Implementation efforts did not account for the potential spillover benefits to people and businesses in unserved or underserved communities that are allowed to tap into the high-speed connection to the Internet that the government secured for its facilities. In the future, when deploying redundant links, the federal government should consult with local communities and use those links to extend broadband access to the unserved and underserved.

Does your community have any potential “anchor tenants”?

**Recommendation 14.2: When feasible, Congress should consider allowing state and local governments to get lower service prices by participating in federal contracts for communications services.**

The federal government is one of the largest buyers of products and services in the country, especially when it comes to information technology (IT). Since passage of the E-Government Act of 2002, state and local government entities have been authorized to leverage the bulk purchasing power of the federal government to purchase a wide variety of information technology hardware, software and services. Use of that authority has increased every year, and state and local governments have saved millions of dollars. Purchasing authority is, however, restricted to items found on the General Services Administration (GSA) IT Schedule70. In 2007, GSA negotiated a 10-year, \$68 billion telecommunications and network services contract to provide voice, IP, wireless, satellite and IP-centric services to 135 federal agencies operating out of 191 countries, at rates that are 10-40% lower than in previous contracts. This contract, called Networkx, includes a provision that allows state and local governments to utilize the contract if federal law is changed to allow the practice. Congress should consider allowing state and local governments to take advantage of Networkx and other communications contracts to enable cost savings and encourage broadband deployment.

Would using GSA schedules to purchase ITC help your local government save money? Should we study this question?

**Recommendation 14.3: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB ) should review and coordinate federal grants that have a broadband connectivity requirement. Federal government grant funding should not limit or permit limitations on the use of federally funded facilities or services for broadband deployment, except when technology solutions cannot ensure privacy or security of data.**

In certain cases, well-intentioned grant programs require that money be spent on broadband connections even though a review of other projects would show that spending to be redundant. Sometimes, a broadband connection already exists. In other cases, multiple grants may be used to build multiple connections. For example, grants for primary and secondary education networks and grants for rural health care networks often call for the development of independent networks, even though one would suffice. Coordination at the OMB level would greatly reduce inefficiencies in federally-financed broadband rollouts.

**Recommendation 14.4: The Executive Branch and Congress should consider using federal funding to encourage cities and counties to gather information on initiatives enabled by broadband in ways that allow for rigorous evaluation and lead to an understanding of best practices.**

Examples abound of potentially powerful initiatives including IBM's Smart Cities, Cisco's Connected Communities and Google's proposed 1 Gbps fiber-to-the-home "broadband testbed." These initiatives use broadband connections to try to solve some of today's most challenging public policy problems in areas such as transportation, health care, education, public safety and government services. Dubuque, Iowa, is reducing water and electricity use by deploying sensors connected via broadband. Alameda County, California, has implemented an integrated data warehouse for social services that saves \$11 million a year by reducing duplicative work and improving detection of fraud. Unfortunately, information on projects like these is not collected systematically. **Federal broadband grant programs** can fill the gap by including reporting requirements for recipients. Gathering the information will not only help the federal government set priorities when issuing grants but also will assist local governments in identifying best practices across the nation. Executive Branch agencies should run these initiatives like pilot programs and evaluate their success against pre-established benchmarks. This would help inform the next set of Congressional actions to promote widespread adoption of the techniques that prove successful with the pilots.

### Improving Government Performance

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Innovative applications of broadband have transformed the private sector, creating countless new ways of collaborating with partners and interacting with customers. Government, however, has not kept pace. A poll of U.S. citizens by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press found that in 2007, 62% agreed that government is usually inefficient and wasteful, up from 53% in 2002. This gap may be widening in part because the private sector has raised expectations that government has not met. While customers increasingly can go online to interact with private companies, the public still mostly deal with government via mail or in person, standing in line. While companies have made it easy for customers to find what they want, the government has been slow to adopt technological efficiencies to speed citizen service and eliminate its siloed structure. Smarter use of broadband can facilitate a vast change in government. Like private companies, government can make its services available 24 hours a day, seven

**How can the local government improve the online interaction experience with government for citizens?**

days a week, 365 days a year. Broadband-enabled online services can create paths across government's bureaucratic silos so that someone wanting to access unemployment benefits can deal with the local government and the federal government at the same time. Broadband holds the potential to move all government forms online, eliminating paperwork. Broadband allows for online tutorials for simple government services, which can help free government employees to focus on the most complicated cases. And broadband can increase efficiency by increasing the speed and depth of cooperation across departments and across different levels of government.

### Enhance Internal Government Efficiency

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In government, historically siloed institutions have bred siloed systems that are inefficient. Through strategic use of broadband-enabled technologies, the federal government has the opportunity to become a model of efficiency and performance.

**Recommendation 14.5: OMB should develop a vision and strategy to guide agencies on cloud computing.** Cloud computing has the potential to at least slow the growth in government spending while increasing efficiency. A study by Booz Allen Hamilton estimates that an agency that migrates its infrastructure to a public or private cloud can achieve savings of 50-67%. For example, the District of

**Should local government develop a strategy for using cloud computing strategically? Could communities save millions?**

Columbia recently moved toward using a commercial cloud computing solution for its mail, calendar, instant messaging, word processing and spreadsheet needs. The cost was only \$50 per user per year; the District's previous solution for enterprise e-mail alone cost \$96 per user per year. The federal government has already launched a number of limited cloud computing initiatives, with positive results. Electronic payroll systems have been consolidated from 26 systems to four shared-service provider centers; this will result in estimated savings of more than \$1 billion during the next 10 years. Apps.gov has allowed agencies to nimbly procure software and information

technology services from GSA's Schedule 70 and deploy these solutions in the cloud. Agencies such as the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Central Intelligence Agency are also moving forward on internal cloud solutions for sensitive data. The Rapid Access Computing Environment functions as an internal cloud for DoD, allowing for certification of applications that meet proper security standards within 40 days, half the time of the non-cloud-based method. Despite these successes, federal government IT executives harbor concerns about security and privacy. These concerns have some merit, but the risks can be mitigated through technology and policy solutions.

**Recommendation 14.8: The Federal CIO Council should accelerate agency adoption of social media technologies for internal use.**

Social media technologies provide the federal government another platform to spur innovation and collaboration. For example, the National Academy of Public Administration uses a wiki to synthesize interview data. This simple collaborative tool has reduced data analysis time by nearly 15%. The private sector has come to recognize the efficiency gains and other benefits of social media within the workplace.

**Are there more ways that your local government could be using social media and web 2.0 applications?**

**Recommendation 14.13: The FCC should work with Internet service providers (ISPs) to build robust cybersecurity protection and defenses into networks offered to businesses and individuals without access to cybersecurity resources. ISPs that participate in this program should receive technical assistance from the federal government in securing their networks.**

Protecting computers and other devices from new and evolving threats found on the Internet is a full-time activity that occurs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Most Fortune 500 companies spend millions of dollars annually on specialized staff and technology supporting cybersecurity efforts to protect their corporate computers and networks. Smaller businesses and individuals, however, may have limited or even no cybersecurity protection.

## Improve Service Delivery

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Americans can have a high-performance government that delivers many services online. But to realize this vision, technical and structural barriers must be addressed, including finding secure ways to establish identity and share information across agencies. In addition to removing these barriers, the government can improve service delivery by leveraging broadband-based tools to support the improvement, integration and modernization of federal government processes. Low-income Americans accessing government benefits and services must navigate a fragmented world. They deal with multiple agencies and a host of forms. They typically must make in-person visits. A U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that a family seeking to apply for the 11 largest means-tested benefits programs—including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, Medicaid and school meals— would have to complete six to eight applications and visit as many as six government offices. The process often requires many unpaid hours away from work and lengthy commutes. A government employee on the other side of the desk spends hours per day entering data into antiquated systems that do not allow the kind of data sharing that could save money, improve productivity, reduce error rates and improve outcomes.

**Recommendation 14.15:** OMB and the Federal CIO Council should develop a single, secure enterprise-wide authentication protocol that enables online service delivery.

**Recommendation 14.16:** The Executive Branch should establish MyPersonalData.gov as a mechanism that allows citizens to request their personal data held by government agencies.

The government holds data on many of its citizens, and the Privacy Act contains provisions for giving people access to it and letting them correct it. As currently implemented, this is a manual and costly process, and it is not easy for citizens to get access to their information online. Were citizens able to securely authenticate their identity online, they could easily verify the information (and correct any errors), thereby increasing its value.

**Recommendation 14.20:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP ) should develop a five year strategic plan for online service delivery.

It is clear that Americans want the opportunity to conduct simple transactions with the government online. OSTP should develop a strategic plan, updated every two years, that addresses issues such as accessibility (including issues raised in the Attorney General’s biennial report on Section 508 compliance), benefits administration, alternative platforms, and **state and local government partnerships on initiatives** to utilize broadband and online service delivery to improve the administration of benefits programs. Although many best practices are being developed, these efforts are occurring independently of each other. To address this gap, OMB should convene a summit in 2010.

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## Civic Engagement

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Excerpted from Chapter 15 of the National Broadband Plan

### *Background*

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Civic Engagement is the lifeblood of any democracy and the bedrock of its legitimacy. Broadband holds the potential to strengthen our democracy by dramatically increasing the public’s access to

information and by providing new tools for Americans to engage with this information, their government and one another. Increasingly our national conversation, our sources for news and information and our knowledge of each other will depend upon broadband. The transition to new information technologies and services can open new doors to enhance America’s media environment, but with traditional sources of news and information journalism under severe stress in the current media and economic environments, we confront serious challenges to ensure that broadband is put to work to strengthen our democracy.

Civic engagement starts with an informed public, and broadband can help by strengthening the reach and relevance of mediated and unmediated information. Broadband can enable government to share unmediated information more easily with the American people. Providing more information and data to the public about the processes and results of government can strengthen the citizenry and its government. Broadband can also empower citizens to engage their government through new broadband-enabled tools. Broadband has already increased access to information and revolutionized the way citizens interact with each other. Companies such as YouTube enable the distribution of “user-generated content” over the Internet; YouTube now supports monthly more than 120 million viewers watching more than 10 billion videos. More than 80% of U.S. adults who are online use social media at least once per month, and half of them participate in social networks such as Facebook. Today, out of the 36% of Americans involved in a civic or political group, more than half of them (56%) use digital tools to communicate with other group members. Government must take advantage of these trends and adopt broadband-enabled tools to encourage citizens to communicate with government officials more often and in richer ways—and to hold these officials more accountable.

### *Creating an Open and Transparent Government*

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Open and transparent governance is central to democratic values. In order for government to be accountable to the public, it must share the results of its policies with the public as well as the processes by which those results are achieved. Ultimately, democracy rests on the ability of the people to evaluate the performance of their government in order to make informed electoral decisions.

#### **Recommendation 15.1: The primary legal documents of the federal government should be free and accessible to the public on digital platforms.**

- For the Executive Branch and independent agencies, this should apply to all executive orders and other public legal documents.
- For Congress, this should apply to all votes, as well as proposed and enacted legislation.
- For the Judicial Branch, this should apply to all judicial opinions.

**Should local government post all public legal documents and orders on the Internet?**

#### **Recommendation 15.2: Government should make its processes more transparent and conducive to participation by the American people.**

- For the Executive Branch, independent agencies, Congress and state and local government, all government meetings, public hearings and town hall meetings should be broadcast online.
- Congress should consider allowing the American public to track and comment on proposed legislation online.



In addition to Recommendation 15.1 to make final documents open and transparent to the public, government processes should also be made open and transparent. As a guiding principle, the Knight Commission has declared, “the public’s business should be done in public.” Public hearings and town hall meetings are among the most direct and frequent opportunities for the public to engage in their democracy. Video streaming of government meetings expands access to the government by eliminating geographic limitations and allowing for “time shifting,” so that a person who is unable to watch a meeting in real time (because they are at work, for example) can still watch the proceedings and provide feedback. **That is why federal, state and local governments should require that all public agency meetings and hearings be streamed over the Internet.** Additionally, these events should offer closed-captioning services to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities and, to the extent practical, enable individuals to ask questions online.

**Recommendation 15.3: All data and information that the government treats as public should be available and easy to locate online in a machine-readable and otherwise accessible format in a timely manner. For data that are actionable or time-sensitive in nature, the Executive Branch should provide individuals a single Web interface to manage email alerts and other electronic communications from the federal government.**

### Expanding Civic Engagement through Social Media

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Government must also improve the quality and number of points at which the American people can contact their government by implementing social media tools, providing opportunities for outside experts to increase innovation within government, and empowering citizens to engage in the democratic process in a digital age.

Government should adopt a variety of new media tools across many areas—from those primarily used to communicate to those that enable more intensive participation. While adoption of these tools has been uneven, there are many success stories. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) utilizes social media platforms to provide access to credible, science-based health information. Between April 22, 2009, and Dec. 6, 2009, the CDC had more than 2.6 million views of H1N1 podcasts, more than three million views of H1N1-related YouTube videos, and more than 37 million views of H1N1-related media feeds. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has also achieved success with social media, launching a blog in 2008 to give travelers the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. TSA’s blog has had more than one million hits and has resulted in improvements like educating screeners about certain computers and translating regulations into easy-to-understand language. The FCC has also made extensive use of social media tools, regularly communicating with its more than 330,000 Twitter followers (the third most of any federal agency) and actively engaging the public. So far, individuals have submitted more than 450 ideas to the FCC, which have generated more than 7,500 comments and over 37,000 votes, all online. The FCC has also posted more than 175 entries on its 4 blogs, which have generated more than 11,000 comments. Government can use social media in innovative ways to engage individuals on a state and local level as well. Spartanburg County, S.C., and the town of Cary, N.C., have used social networking to engage residents, soliciting ideas and feedback.

**What agencies or departments could benefit from engaging citizens through social media?**

## Increasing Innovation in Government

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Beyond transparency, government should leverage broadband to experiment with new ideas and technologies to extend opportunities for engagement.

**Recommendation 15.11: The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) should create an Open Platforms Initiative that uses digital platforms to engage and draw on the expertise of citizens and the private sector.**

- This initiative should create open expert and peer review platforms to bring outside expertise to government.
- This initiative should create open problem-solving platforms, including competitions, to bring innovative solutions to government.

**Recommendation 15.12: The Executive Branch and independent agencies should expand opportunities for Americans with expertise in technological innovation to serve in the federal government.**

Because many of the best ideas come from outside government, OSTP and the FCC should create an Innovation Corps to ensure that new ideas continue to flow to the federal government. These would place leading private sector experts and innovators throughout the federal government for one year.

## Excerpted from the Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission's Communications Needs Ascertainment, April 2010

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### Digital Inclusion

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The difference between those with no or very limited access to communications technology and those in the higher access categories is often described as the “digital divide”. Attempting to create an environment to counteract the divide is often known as “digital inclusion”.

**Finding: Promoting digital inclusion requires an understanding of the gradations in the digital divide in Multnomah County and developing a variety of effective responses** - A recent FCC study finds when it comes to overcoming barriers to Internet adoption and broadband and creating an environment of digital inclusion, the data suggests that the non-adopter (35% of the general population) has one of four philosophical dispositions about information and access to communications technologies. Arguably, all four groups would need to be addressed as part of any digital inclusion effort in Multnomah County.

The first group, which the FCC says make up 10% of the general population are the *digitally distant*. These typically include population segments like those over 65 who report a lack of internet relevance or digital literacy. This group often reports “not needing” or “not wanting” the internet.

The second group is the digital hopefuls. This group makes up 8% of the general population that is not online in the United States. This group would be online if they had the adequate financial resources, and



consequently cite cost as the primary barrier to adoption. They also typically report some digital literacy issues.

The third group is called the *digitally uncomfortable* and make up 7% of the general population. This group does not have internet access, even though they have the means to pay for computers and internet. This group reports a variety of barriers—primarily lack of availability and low relevant content. These issues also lead to other adoption barriers such as low digital literacy.

The FCC also finds a fourth group called *near converts* that make up 10% of the population. They have similar characteristics to those that have already adopted broadband. More than half are still on dial-up (roughly 60% of the group) and cite cost as the key barrier to broadband adoption. Multiple communities discussed ways in which they are continuing to work to resolve equity issues discussed earlier in this report and promote digital inclusion.

**Finding: Local government should continue its critical role in working to overcome inequities in access to communications technology** – Multiple communities indicated the need for local government to continue its current central role in providing public access to communications technology and the internet, such as through the Public Library. Without this type of access, many in the community would have no, or much more limited, access. Companion actions needed include:

- Enhancements to backbone systems that support organizations like the Public Library.
- Providing more public access by expanding publicly-sponsored wireless infrastructure.

**Finding: Educational entities need to expand their role in helping resolve equity issues** – For example, School District representatives in focus groups indicated that they continue to push for equity in access, and can provide access to high speed internet while students are at school (although there are limitations in available equipment). However, many students, especially in lower socioeconomic households do not have such access at home. These students then utilize public libraries or friends, relatives or neighbors that do have access.

- Portland Public Schools representatives indicated that there should be a push to keep schools open into the evening in order to provide an environment where students could continue to have access and continue learning beyond the regular school day.
- Students, district staff and teachers also expressed the desire to allow students to bring personal computers and other devices to use for educational purposes at school but the inability of schools to provide equitable access for those students without the technology creates a barrier for classroom integration of such technology.

**Finding: Community groups and non-profits also need to continue to work for digital inclusion, but need increased support to fulfill that role** – For example, representatives of immigrant and refugee organizations talked about the value of public access at government locations like libraries. They also indicated, though, that the assistance of governmental entities in supporting the public access that their organization provides is very valuable, because the populations that they serve felt more comfortable in an environment that was more focused on facilitating their culture. These groups also need to have greater support to increase literacy skills in underserved populations to use equipment and the internet effectively for essential services, such as education, employment, civic engagement, cultural participation and healthcare. Additional support is needed for immigrant and refugee and multicultural organizations to enhance the provision of communications technology access that would not only include the technology, but support for staff and increased bandwidth.

**Finding: Lack of perceived relevancy is the second largest factor contributing to non-adoption of communications technology in Multnomah County** – Just over 1 in four Multnomah County residents indicated that they do not have internet access at home. After cost, the next most frequent reason was don't need or want. Relevancy, though, is defined differently by various populations, which means that specific strategies to boost relevant content for particular segments of the population are needed. For example, the development of relevant content in the Spanish language would be one way to address significantly low levels of internet adoption by Hispanic populations in Multnomah County. Additionally, relevant on-line content for older populations would also help increase their relatively low level of internet adoption.

**Finding: Access to content operates along a continuum of users and technologies** – Because of the broad spectrum of levels of communications technology usage and adoption, content providers in Multnomah County must be prepared to provide everything from traditional and basic services and content to content in formats and over platforms that appeal to high-end, ground-breaking users. This enables the content provider to remain technologically relevant and facilitates meeting the needs and interests of all types of content recipients.

**Finding: Cloud computing will be increasingly utilized to access content in the future** – By making software and applications a centralized resource, they can be provided more efficiently and accessed by those that can't otherwise afford them on an individual basis. It will also expand the reach of variety of computing resources.

**Finding: Local community media channels need to be displayed and be able to be accessed on the cable system through the on-screen menu system** – This will enable subscribers to easily access the channel programming information and the channels' content. The majority of residents indicated that the digital on-screen menu guide along with their remote is the preferred way that they utilize to find out when a show is on and to be able to access it.

**Finding: PCM and MetroEast provide the facilities, training and assistance needed to successfully create content** – The vast majority of individual community media producers are either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with MetroEast's and PCM's operations, including the training and education and facilitation assistance that they have received. In order to continue to fulfill this critical content creation assistance role, PCM and MetroEast and other community media providers will need a significant investment in capital equipment and advanced technologies.

### *Civic/Community Engagement*

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Increased and enhanced civic and community engagement is an outgrowth of increased access and use of communications technology. In this category, civic participation, open government, community building and sustainability were explored as they pertained to communications technology.

**Finding: Communications technologies and systems are increasingly used by local government to engage the community and encourage civic participation** – This includes everything from web-based services to video to assistive technologies such as closed captioning, language translation and texting.

### *Regulation in the Public Interest*

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Governmental regulation, policy making and initiatives, especially at the local level, play key roles in various aspects of communications technologies, services and infrastructure.

Findings here were centered on: the role of local government; the value of a local franchise; consumer protection and neighborhood aesthetics.

**Finding: The public believes that local government has a critical role in consumer protection** –This includes everything from cable customer service standards to protections against the sale or sharing of personal information.

**Finding: Local government has a local planning role in order to meet the community's communications technology needs** - More than ¾ of public on-line survey respondents indicated that the local government should help plan for the local community's communications technology future.

**Finding: There is a level of concern about the visual impact of communications technology infrastructure** – A little over 40% of on-line survey respondents indicated that they were concerned about the visual impact of communications technology infrastructure in local neighborhoods.

### **Excerpted from Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities Demonstration Community Projects<sup>4</sup>**

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Two years ago the Blandin Foundation received nearly \$5 million in federal stimulus money to get more Minnesotans to make use of the Internet. The foundation picked 11 communities and worked intensely with leaders in those places to come up with a number of community broadband projects. Project goals range from getting more businesses online to workforce development to helping students take fuller advantage of technology to getting better access for tribal members who live in remote areas of reservations. Below are a just a sample of the scores of projects that have been implemented. For a complete list, click [here](#).

Community	Project Name	Project Description
Benton County	"Enriching Lives"	Enriching Lives will broaden the opportunities seniors have to communicate with family and friends, and explore new horizons available via web-based education, entertainment and daily life enrichment.
Benton County	"Knowledge Community" website	A new website will market training opportunities, market Benton County as a "Knowledge Community", and post information regarding broadband access in the County.
Benton County	"What's Up in Foley" Website	The new "What's up in Foley" community website will increase exposure to community events, information and opportunities. The website will also be used as a platform

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.blandinfoundation.org/\\_uls/resources/DC\\_Project\\_Matrix\\_Nov\\_2013.pdf](http://www.blandinfoundation.org/_uls/resources/DC_Project_Matrix_Nov_2013.pdf)

		for other projects, specifically non-profit organizations, to communicate information at no charge, such as directory listings, program details, website links, events listing and more.
<b>Cook County</b>	Training for Broadband	Cook County Higher Education will create and equip a lab facility that can be used to host events that tout the benefits of broadband and educate the community about how to use its tools. Digital inclusion issues will be addressed along with the training needs for future knowledge workers.
<b>Grand Rapids / Itasca County</b>	Public Meeting Streaming	Public Meeting Streaming will provide improved community access to government and community information, with hardware improvements that will allow for seamless delivery of video to online viewers, particularly those in rural parts of Itasca County, whom are not served by cable access.
<b>Grand Rapids / Itasca County</b>	Low-income Computer and Internet Connect	Low-income Computer and Internet Connect will provide a computer and a one-year broadband Internet subscription to a minimum of 20 low-income households in Itasca County. KOOTASCA will provide the maximum number of reliable units possible to households selected from a pool of applicants that meet income guidelines (below 150% of the federal poverty guideline for a family of four). KOOTASCA will establish a selection process that provides a preference for providing the units to households that both meet the income qualifications and also assist students, parents with students and/or job seekers. KOOTASCA will be encouraged to obtain reliable computers from PCs for People for use in this project. GREDA will provide KOOTASCA the first 25 computers at no cost through the Federal Grant Award by PCs for People. KOOTASCA will also conduct quarterly follow-up interviews with recipients to measure the effectiveness of the program for the term of this agreement.
<b>Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe</b>	Digital Literacy Project	The LLBO Temporary Employment Program will create computer labs in four community centers and provide computer and Internet training to LLBO members, focusing on those band members who participate in the Temporary Employment Program. These computers will be made available to tribal members for public access.
<b>Upper Minnesota Valley Region</b>	Public Internet Access Project	The Public Internet Access Project will provide online access to government information and resources including forms, county highway project status, and GIS information. Online access will increase awareness, options and citizen control in how they interact with county government.

<b>Upper Minnesota Valley Region</b>	Community Broadband Strategies	Community Broadband Strategies will increase Internet usage by 1) giving businesses an understanding of the uses and benefits access provides, 2) exposing community members to the information that they can obtain, 3) encouraging a viable economic community and a school system that uses technology, and 4) involving youth in the community's development, thereby encouraging them to return as adults.
<b>Willmar/Kandiyohi County</b>	Computers for Low-income	PCs for People and KandiComp will provide low-cost computers and digital instruction to broadband disadvantaged persons to improve their quality of life and lessen their digital inclusion through Internet accessibility. KandiComp will become a satellite location under PCs for People to receive donated computers, "wipe" existing data from the hard drive, completely refurbish the machine and install new software. The computer will be sold to a guidelines-qualified person or family. Education will be provided. Future repairs will be provided for the PCs for People computers at a low, set price.