

## **12Q4\_Supplemental Answers\_Texas**

**Connected Nation, Inc**

**Grant Number 48-50-M09064**

**Reporting Period End Date 12-31-12**

### **Data Collection Attachment**

#### **2. Describe any additional project milestones that have been accomplished over this reporting period (Ex. Updates to state broadband maps and websites, map outreach activities)**

Connected Texas (CTX) continues to maintain the interactive mapping web application, called My ConnectView. The application is housed in a highly available, monitored, and managed environment. New feedback features allow consumers to send comments directly to program Geographic Information Systems (GIS) staff; a screenshot of the user's current interactive map view is also attached to the feedback to provide additional details.

Consumer feedback in the form of broadband inquiries is also collected. These inquiries represent any type of communications received from the public regarding broadband service. Once broadband inquiries are received across the state, this information is overlaid with the broadband availability information which was collected through the State Broadband Initiative (SBI) program. This allows for a real-world comparison of the broadband landscape to the information received from broadband inquiries. Broadband inquiries are able to provide three types of information: 1) residents who do not have broadband but want it; 2) residents who have broadband but want a different provider; and 3) residents who do not have broadband, but the broadband inventory maps indicate that they do. If residents within a region state that they are without broadband, but the broadband inventory maps show otherwise, this allows Connected Nation to approach the providers within that area in an effort to trim down their coverage to more accurately represent real-world availability on the ground.

My ConnectView is publicly available on the Connected Texas website (<http://www.connectedtx.org/interactive-map>). There were a total of 816 visits to My ConnectView between October 1, 2012, and December 31, 2012.

During this quarter, the project received a total of 6 broadband inquiries. Additional information received through e-mail from consumers that can also be used for verification purposes totaled 2 for this quarter.

For this reporting period, 207 field verification tests were conducted. In some cases, field validation tests were completed on "then current" viable, qualifying providers that were subsequently acquired by another company or tests were completed on a viable, qualifying company that has since gone out of business. Accordingly, the following text will reflect certain deletions, additions and mergers that have occurred during this

reporting period. Following this section, any activity that has been identified under a merger and acquisition category will be called out independently.

To date, program staff have conducted on-site validation tests in Texas on the following providers: Aledo Broadband; Alenco Communications, Inc.; Allegiance Communications; Alpheus (d.b.a. Aspen Communications); AMATechTel; Anvil Communications; AT&T, Inc.; AwesomeNet, Inc.; Baja Broadband; Basin 2 Way Radio, Inc.; Basin Broadband, Inc.; Bee Creek; Big Bend Telephone Company, Inc.; Blossom Telephone; Border to Border Communications, Inc.; Brazoria Telephone Company (d.b.a. Coastal Link); Broadband Data Services of Texas LLC; Broadcomm.US; Broadwaves; Buffalo Cable TV; Burcham Solutions (d.b.a. det-Com); Cable One, Inc.; Cameron Telephone Company LLC; Cap Rock Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Central Texas Cable Partners, Inc.; Central Texas Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Central Texas Telephone Investments LP; CenturyLink; Cequel Communications (also d.b.a. Cebridge, Suddenlink); Charter Communications; CKS Wireless, Inc.; Clearwire Corporation; Coleman County Telephone Cooperative LLC; Colorado Valley Telephone Cooperative LLC; Comcast Cable Communications LLC; Community Telephone Company, Inc.; Consolidated Communications; Conterra Communications; Cumby Telephone Company, Inc.; DCT Texas.Net; Dell Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Digital Passage; Digitex.com; East Texas Broadband; East Texas Cable; East Texas DSL; East Texas WiFi; Eastex Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; ECTISP; Electra Telephone Company; eNet; ENMR Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (d.b.a. ENMR Plateau Communications, Inc.); ERF Wireless; ETAN Industries; Etex Communications LP; ETS Cablevision Company, Inc.; Farm to Market Broadband LP; Fidelity Communications; Five Area Telephone Company, Inc.; Ganado Telephone Company, Inc.; GEUS; Gower Computer Support, Inc.; GoZoe Wireless, LLP; Grande Communications Network LLC; Grayson CableRocket LLC; Greasy Bend Ventures, Inc. (d.b.a. Live Air Networks); GTEK Communications; Guadalupe Valley Communications Systems; GVEC.net; Helmsco/CentralLink; Hill Country Telephone Cooperative; Hometown Computing; Iguana Net; Indian Creek Internet; Industry Telephone Company; Internet America; JAB Wireless(also d.b.a.Dot 11 Networks, Partnership Broadband, Element Networks, and KeyOn Communications, Inc.); James Cable; La Ward Telephone Exchange, Inc.; Lake Livingston Telephone Company; Leap Wireless International, Inc.; Level 3 Communications; Livingston Telephone Company, Incorporated; Maverick Internet; McDonald Group; Mexus Communications; Mid-Plains Rural Co-op, Inc.; Millenium Telecom; NDemand; NetWest Online, Inc.; Neu Ventures, Inc.; New Source Broadband; Nortex Communications; North Texas Broadband LLC; North Texas Cellular, Inc.; North Texas Telephone Company; Northland Communications; NTS Communications; Our Town Internet; Panhandle Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Pathwayz; Peoples Communication; Phantom Wave (d.b.a. Argon Technologies); Poka Lambro Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Presidio Community Wireless Network; Promptwireless LLP; RB3 LLC; Ridgewood Cable; Rioplex Wireless Ltd.; Riviera Telephone Company, Inc.; Rock Solid Internet & Telephone; Rodzoo Wireless; Santa Rosa Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Skynet Communications; Skynet Country Online; Smithville System; SOS Communications; South Plains Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Southwest Arkansas Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Southwest Texas Telephone Company; Speed of Light

Broadband, Inc.; Sprint Nextel Corporation; Starnet; Stelera Wireless LLC; Tatum Telephone; Taylor Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Telecom Cable LLC; Terral Telephone Company (d.b.a. Wavelinx); TGN Cable; Texas Broadband, Inc.; Texas CellNet; Texas Wireless Internet; Texhoma Wireless; TheSPECnet (also d.b.a. ELC Internet Services, Inc.); TierOne Converged Networks, Inc.; Time Warner Cable, Inc.; TISD; T-Mobile USA, Inc.; Totelcom Communications, Inc.; TXOL Internet; Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Verizon Southwest, Inc.; Versalink Enterprises; VRFutureNet; Webfire Communications; WEHCo Video (d.b.a. Kilgore Video, Kilgore Cable); West Tex Connect; West Texas Rural Telephone Cooperative; Wes-Tex Telecommunications Ltd.; Wharton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Windjammer Communications, LLC; Windstream Communications; XIT Telecommunications & Technology Ltd.; Zeecon Internet; Zito Midwest LLC (d.b.a. Galaxy Cable) and Zulu Internet.

There were no mergers or acquisitions identified during this time period.

From program initiation through this reporting period, in-the-field validation testing has been completed against 155 companies (out of a universe of 199 viable providers) totaling 77.89 percent within the state of Texas.

**4. Provide any other information or statistics that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your broadband data collection, validation and publication activities.**

Connected Texas facilitated relations with broadband provider, Zeecon Wireless, to assist the Llano Independent School District and the City of Llano in obtaining more bandwidth through a new, high-speed fiber optic service. Additional details can be found in the full story enclosed in the "12Q4\_Project Attachment\_Question 5\_Texas" document.

Thanks to the communication from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) regarding the importance of Community Anchor Institution (CAI) outreach and data collection, this quarter has seen a newfound commitment from state stakeholders. Multiple sector agencies and organizations have been engaged during the fourth quarter, and the program continues to have gains in data collection numbers specifically from the education, library, and public safety sectors.

The Connected Texas initiative celebrated several milestone successes this quarter, including the monthly e-newsletter now reaching more than 2,360 subscribers. Two press releases, that helped account for mainstream media stories that reached more than 4.1 million people, were disseminated this quarter. Twenty-nine project-relevant items were also posted on the project's Facebook page in addition to 34 Tweets that have helped grow the project's Twitter followers to 602. The program maintains a blog available at <http://www.connectedtx.org/blog>. Six entries were posted on the blog this quarter, which accounted for part of the 2,751 total visits to the website. This information is included in the "12Q4\_Project Attachment\_Question 5\_Texas" enclosure.

## **Capacity Building Attachment**

### ***Explanation of Reduction in Capacity Building expenditures***

The Grants Management Office discovered that the state program manager was coding 100% of his time to the Capacity Building project. All of state program manager's time had been appropriately charged to the Texas SBI grant, just not categorized properly within the various projects of the grant. In the previous quarterly report ending 9/30/2012, Connected Nation reported the Capacity Building project in Item 9 of the Performance Progress Report at 97% of Total Federal Funding amount expended. The state program manager is responsible for the oversight of all activities related to the Texas SBI grant. Because his role and related job responsibilities and activities span the various SBI projects, his time coding should have also been reflective of those job duties. Based on his review and the categorization of his activities, and with his supervisor's input and approval, the state program manager's time was reclassified to more accurately reflect his work. As a result of this reclassification, the Q4 report in Item 9 of the Performance Progress Report has decreased to 80% of Total Federal Funding amount expended for the Capacity Building project. Even though this is an isolated incident, the importance of accurate time coding among the projects within each grant has been reinforced by the grants management officer with additional training.

**2. Describe your progress meeting each major activity/milestone approved in the Project Plan for this project; any challenges or obstacles encountered and mitigation strategies you have employed; planned major activities for next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.**

Broadband Capacity Building Milestones Year 3, Quarter 4 per approved project plan:

**Milestone: Year 3, Quarter 4 Connected Texas program office administration.**

This milestone was met. The program office in Austin remains fully staffed and interacting with stakeholders, broadband providers, and other representatives throughout the state of Texas. A highlight during the quarter occurred when program representatives were called upon and testified before the Texas Senate Committee on Education with regard to broadband availability throughout Texas and specifically Texas' K-12 schools.

**Milestone: Conduct 2012, Quarter 3, Stakeholder Group meeting.**

This milestone was met. Stakeholder group meetings occurred each month during the quarter. The program manager utilized these recurring meetings in order to present state partners with programmatic updates and solicit feedback.

Broadband Capacity Building Annual Milestones Year 3 approved project plan:

**Milestone: The Connected Texas Program Office, run by the Connected Texas Program Coordinator, will administer the Connected Texas program of activities and become a clearinghouse and resource for broadband deployment efforts**

**within the state. Activities and deliverables from the program office include a variety of tasks that involve administering the project plan, preparing weekly program status reports, managing workflow and the timeline, verifying work quality, documenting and evaluating recommendations, gathering documentation in support of community projects, and gathering other information as required by TDA, Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force, and/or other Texas stakeholders. Program office activities also include providing weekly project status reports and initiative updates to the Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force, and/or other Texas stakeholders, attending the Texas Broadband Task Force meetings conducted quarterly, reporting on Connected Texas activities, documenting Task Force recommendations for Connected Texas, and supporting the meeting as needed and requested by TDA.**

This milestone was met. The program office in Austin is fully staffed and interacting with state stakeholders. Connected Texas continues to be recognized as a clearinghouse of broadband activities within the state and has been called upon to testify to legislatures, on multiple occasions, regarding the broadband landscape within the state.

**Milestone: Connected Texas will work in tandem with TDA, the Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force, and members of the Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) to convene a Stakeholder Group. It is projected that the Stakeholder Group will meet quarterly to review program progress and offer recommendations for the program and other related programs. Stakeholder Group meeting outcomes and recommendations will be communicated with all stakeholders via the Connected Texas website updates, blogs, press releases, reports or as required by Stakeholder Group. The Stakeholder Group will provide for and support outcomes such as: outreach and collaboration with experts, non-profits, and trade associations and assessing current programs and laws/regulations that may be used to overcome broadband growth and adoption barriers.**

This milestone was met. The program manager convenes a stakeholder group monthly, beyond the required quarterly meetings, to review program progress and discuss future opportunities and recommendations. More notable updates are communicated publicly via blog posts on the Connected Texas website.

Capacity Building Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

2013, Quarter 1, Connected Texas program office administration  
Conduct 2013, Quarter 1, Stakeholder Group meeting

**Technical Assistance Attachment**

**2. Describe your progress meeting each major activity/milestone approved in the Project Plan for this project; any challenges or obstacles encountered and mitigation strategies you have employed; planned major activities for next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.**

Technical Assistance Milestones Year 3, Quarter 4 per approved project plan:

**Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2012 statewide residential survey research results.**

This milestone was not met. The results from the 2012 statewide residential survey have been analyzed and are currently awaiting peer review prior to being finalized and distributed. The program anticipates publicly announcing the survey results in Q1 2013.

Technical Assistance Outstanding Milestones (not met or partially met) from previous quarters:

**Outstanding Milestone: Year 3, Quarter 3 Analyze 2012 statewide residential survey research results**

This milestone was met. Program research staff completed the 2012 residential survey in Q4 2012 and analyzed the resulting data. The results are awaiting peer review prior to release.

**Outstanding Milestone: Year 3, Quarter 3 Peer Review of the 2012 statewide residential survey.**

This milestone was not met. The 2012 residential survey concluded in Q4 2012 and program research staff analyzed the resulting data. Dr. Sharon Strover, of the University of Texas at Austin, has been retained as peer reviewer for the project. It is expected that the peer review of the 2012 residential survey will be completed in Q1 2013.

Technical Assistance Annual Milestones Year 3 per approved project plan:

**Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2011 statewide business survey research results. Activities include incorporating stakeholder requests and creating final report detailing results of 2011 statewide business survey, delivering in-person presentation of 2011 statewide business research results to the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force and/or other Texas stakeholders, and announcing the release of data via press release, website update and meetings with stakeholders.**

This milestone was met. The 2011 statewide business survey results were released in-person to our stakeholders and announced via press release and blog updates. The results were publicized and highlighted on the Connected Texas website in May 2012.

The published white paper document remains available via

[http://www.connectedtx.org/sites/default/files/learn-sidebar-docs/tx\\_biz\\_2012.pdf](http://www.connectedtx.org/sites/default/files/learn-sidebar-docs/tx_biz_2012.pdf).

**Milestone: Analyze the research plan for years 3 through 5 through collaboration with the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force, and/or other Texas stakeholders and make modifications deemed necessary and appropriate. \*\*Connected Texas along with TDA, the Texas PUC, and the Texas Broadband Task Force will reevaluate research efforts after the Year 2 research is complete to determine whether to proceed with scheduled research or refocus funding on target areas determined in previous years. Connected Texas will seek NTIA approval of new research plans. Primary**

**corresponding activities include developing research plan and seeking NTIA approval for Years 3 through 5.**

This milestone was partially met. The research plan was reevaluated in collaboration with state stakeholders and included in a project plan amendment submitted to NTIA. Upon approval, Connected Texas will conduct business surveys in Q1 2013 and Q1 2014, and residential surveys in Q3 2013 and Q3 2014. These survey instruments will be created with input from state stakeholders to ensure that each survey covers topics related to technology adoption and barriers to adoption among Texas residents and businesses that are of the highest priority to the state stakeholders.

**Milestone: Initiate the currently proposed 2012 statewide residential survey research or modified research, if changes are recommended. Corresponding primary activities include writing survey instrument (script with appropriate programming notes), collecting respondent data, and creating data file with weighted results.**

This milestone was met. The 2012 statewide residential survey was initiated in Q3 2012 and completed in Q4 2012. Initial survey results have been analyzed and are awaiting peer review prior to release and publication.

**Milestone: After the analysis and review process that includes collaborating with the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force, and/or other Texas stakeholders, the 2012 statewide residential survey research results will be finalized and submitted to the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas PUC, the Texas Broadband Task Force and/or other Texas stakeholders. Data will be released via in-person presentations, press releases, webinars, or website updates.**

This milestone was not met. The 2012 statewide residential survey was initiated in Q3 2012 and completed in Q4 2012. Initial results have been analyzed and are awaiting peer review prior to release and publication. It is expected that the peer review process will be completed in Q1 2013 at which time the results will be provided to state stakeholders and publicly presented on the program website.

**Milestone: Facilitate peer review of 2012 residential survey results and resulting analysis. Review peer recommendation and update program as required.**

This milestone was not met. Dr. Sharon Strover, of the University of Texas at Austin, has been retained to serve as peer reviewer for the program. The 2012 residential survey results are awaiting the completion of the peer review process. It is expected that the peer review process will be completed in Q1 2013.

Technical Assistance Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

Finalize and distribute 2012 residential survey research results

Initiate 2013 business survey research

Peer Review of the 2013 business survey

**4. Provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses this project's process.**

Connected Texas released new research showing 92 percent of Texas households have access to fixed broadband of at least 3 megabytes per second (Mbps) download speed and approximately 141,000 rural Texas households still do not have access to basic high speed Internet. Additionally, the program released a report showing a surge in online learning in Texas. Nearly 9 out of 10 Texas households with children own a computer and half of those homes subscribe to Internet service so that schoolwork can be conducted online.

Planning began for a business broadband survey. Potential survey topics were discussed with state stakeholders, and the survey is expected to begin in Q1 2013.

Program outreach staff raised awareness of technical assistance activities and information by publishing blog posts and media releases on the Connected Texas website. This information is included in the "12Q4\_Project Attachment\_Question 5\_Texas" enclosure.

**Planning Teams Attachment**

**2. Describe your progress meeting each major activity/milestone approved in the Project Plan for this project; any challenges or obstacles encountered and mitigation strategies you have employed; planned major activities for next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.**

Planning Teams Milestones Year 3, Quarter 4 per approved project plan:

**Milestone: Conduct Year 3, Quarter 4 planning team meetings**

This milestone was met. Program staff conducted 13 community engagement and planning meetings with 6 communities and 3 Councils of Government during the quarter. Gillespie County will be the first community in Texas to complete a community broadband assessment. An event for its release is being planned for Q1 2013.

Planning Teams Annual Milestones Year 3 per approved project plan:

**Milestone: Connected Texas will continue to facilitate regional planning and training sessions. Activities include scheduling meetings, setting agendas, taking meeting notes, and working with regional planning teams to identify target sectors and regional and local subject matters for the train-the-trainer sessions. The Planning Specialist will support each regional planning team in establishing and implementing regional broadband plans based on Connected Texas' broadband mapping, broadband provider data, research, best practices, and existing data from other sources. They will also facilitate a training session, provide training toolkits for team members to use in their own communities, document training session attendance, and add attendees to regional contact database. The Planning Specialist will hold 1 planning meeting for each of the**



**established regions, every quarter, in Year 3. We anticipate having up to 29 regional planning teams.**

This milestone was met. Connected Texas has been facilitating community engagement sessions with community teams across the state. The number of teams and the makeup of each team are still being determined, in collaboration with state stakeholders.

Through 2012, 13 community engagement meetings were held with 6 communities and 3 Councils of Government. It has been challenging to use regions across the state to facilitate these meetings. The initial plan was to utilize the Council of Government (COG) regions however not all of the COGs were interested in participating. As a result, Texas is working with all communities that have a desire to improve their broadband access, adoption, and use, regardless of region.

**Milestone: Connected Texas, in conjunction with the Texas Association of Regional Councils, Texas Broadband Task Force, and the Texas Department of Agriculture will plan and conduct a state strategic broadband planning session. The activities include preparing an agenda, securing a location, sending invitations, facilitating the meeting, and recording meeting outcomes.**

This milestone was met. Connected Texas conducted a statewide strategic broadband planning session and summit in Dallas on June 5, 2012. The summit was held in partnership with the Telecommunications Industry Association's (TIA) national conference. The summit drew a large crowd representing a wide range of sectors – from education to agriculture. Dialogue focused on job creation and the economic development that comes from expanding broadband access, adoption, and use across the state.

Planning Teams Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

Conduct Year 4, Quarter 1 planning team meetings