

13Q1 Supplemental Answers Texas

Connected Nation, Inc. – Texas

Grant Number 48-50-M09064

Reporting Period End Date 03-31-13

Data Collection

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) submitted a semi-annual update of the broadband dataset to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) under the State Broadband Initiative (SBI) grant program. The submission included datasets for 91 percent of the Texas provider community, or 184 of 201 total providers. There were 167 participating providers and 17 additional non-participating providers whose estimated coverage areas have been submitted.

The program continues to maintain an interactive mapping web application, called My ConnectView. The application is housed in a highly available, monitored, and managed environment. My ConnectView is publicly available on the program website (<http://www.connectedtx.org/interactive-map>). There were a total of 962 visits to the interactive map between January 1, 2013, and March 31, 2013.

During this quarter, My ConnectView underwent an upgrade to the server software and the application programming interface (API), as well as additional enhancements to improve the user experience. The server was upgraded to ArcGIS for Server 10.1 and the ArcGIS API for Flex was upgraded to version 3.0. A new button to create permanent links allows users to develop a customized display of My ConnectView with various data layers turned on with a specific zoom level and then send the permanent link to another user, who will then get the same display in the interactive map setting. A date display was also added to the legend to inform the user of the current nature of the broadband data. Lastly, the pop-up window style was enhanced to allow users to scroll through multiple record selections, as well as view a better display of the record's information.

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 5 for this quarter.

For this reporting period, 391 field verification tests were conducted. During this quarter the Engineering and Technical Services (ETS) team began using device embedded software for collecting data on mobile networks. These speed and platform tests are in addition to the program's standard field verification and validation test and enabled significantly more verification tests than in previous quarters. From program initiation through this reporting period, in-the-field validation testing has been completed against 164 companies (out of a universe of 201 viable providers) totaling 81.59 percent within the state of Texas.

During this quarter, broadband growth maps were developed and made public on the program website. The analysis behind these maps shows where broadband coverage has changed in

comparison to the October 2010 datasets: where coverage 1) has been added where it already existed in October 2010, 2) has been removed, and 3) has been added in previously unserved areas.

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.

In support of FirstNet applications, additional broadband availability analyses based on the October 2012 SBI data collection were completed to include in the state's application. A breakdown of geographic area and household broadband availability by speed tier was completed to assist in understanding where the gaps exist in mobile broadband service and fixed broadband service to citizens in rural areas.

During this quarter, maps and tables were completed and made public on the Connected Nation website, <http://www.connectednation.org/fcc-maps>, displaying the analysis of census blocks eligible for Phase I of the Connect America Fund broadband subsidy program in comparison with the most recent October 2012 SBI broadband data collection. The maps and analysis published reflect the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) data release of eligible census blocks on January 4, 2013.

Connected Texas participated in a public safety campaign to generate excitement and learning about the role of broadband in the public safety sector this quarter. There has been and will continue to be a focus on establishing key relationships with sector leaders that can help reach the most Community Anchor Institutions (CAI).

Capacity Building

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 4, Quarter 1 per approved project plan:

Milestone: 2013, Quarter 1 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 through periodic status reports, continual direct interactions, and requests for information or data. Connected Texas has positioned itself as a go-to resource within the state as a primary champion of broadband as it relates to adoption, access, and use.

Milestone: Conduct 2013, Quarter 1, 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. As a direct result of a monthly stakeholder group discussion, Connected Texas has been invited to speak at the Texas Department of Agriculture's Rural Economic Development Roundtable that will be held in Q2 2013. Rural Economic Development representatives have also assisted program staff with community

engagement activities by introducing potential communities that could benefit and community leaders who could assist with the process.

Q1 2013 Challenges and Mitigation:

No major challenges occurred during the quarter.

Capacity Building Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

2013, Quarter 2, Connected Texas program office administration
Conduct 2013, Quarter 2, Stakeholder Group meeting

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

Program staff leveraged its ongoing SBI activities to provide the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) with data in support of Texas' FirstNet Grant Application. The data was included as part of their final grant application. The landmark program will create a much-needed public safety network for police, firefighters, emergency medical professionals and other public safety officials. In addition, FirstNet will improve operations, expand training, and enhance the interoperability of communications and cut costs.

Connected Texas teamed with Intel and the Texas Computer Education Association to hold an event during the SXSWedu Conference in Austin to support broadband adoption within Texas and to focus attention and discuss broadband solutions to support student engagement in the state. The event was well attended by school district technology administrators and superintendents. Program staff have committed to follow-up with specific school districts, at their request, to assist in the process of addressing broadband access and solutions available to students within the districts who do not have access to broadband.

Technical Assistance

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 4, Quarter 1 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2012 residential survey research results

This milestone was met. The results of the 2012 residential survey results were finalized and distributed during the quarter. Information and results from the survey were shared with program stakeholders and disseminated via press release and displayed on the Connected Texas website. The new survey data showed broadband adoption is increasing, with 69 percent of residents now subscribing to broadband service, up from 62 percent in 2011. However, over 5 million Texans still do not subscribe to home broadband service. The survey results were presented to NTIA and the state stakeholders in accordance with the project plan.

The release of the survey results was accompanied by a press release distributed to media outlets across the state and posted on the program website. This press release is included in the supporting document "13Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_Texas."

Milestone: Initiate 2013 business survey research

This milestone was met. The 2013 business survey was initiated in Q1 2013. The survey is currently underway. Initial survey results are on schedule to be analyzed in Q2 2013.

Milestone: Peer Review of the 2013 business survey

This milestone was not met. The 2013 business survey was initiated in Q1 2013 and is currently underway. The results are scheduled to be peer reviewed in Q2 2013 after the survey is completed and prior to releasing the initial survey results.

Technical Assistance Outstanding Milestones (not met or partially met) from previous quarters:**Year 3, Quarter 4 Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2012 statewide residential survey research results.**

In Q1 2013, Connected Texas received approval of a revised Project Plan. Within the newly approved Project Plan, this milestone is now reflected within Year 4, Quarter 1. As a result of the adjustment, additional reporting is included in the Year 4, Quarter 1 milestones.

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

This milestone has now been 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 performed a peer review on the survey in Q1 2013 prior to the survey being finalized and distributed. Dr. Strover agreed with the results and made suggestions for future surveys.

Q1 2013 Challenges and Mitigation:

No major challenges occurred during the quarter.

Technical Assistance Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

Analyze the 2013 business survey research results.

Peer review of the 2013 business survey.

Finalize the 2013 residential survey script.

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

In preparation for the Q1 2013 business survey, staff discussed potential survey topics with program stakeholders. The results of these discussions were incorporated into the 2013 business survey itself which is currently underway.

Program outreach staff raised awareness of technical assistance activities and information by publishing blog posts, social media posts, and media releases on the Connected Texas website. This information is included within the "13Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_Texas" enclosure.

Planning Teams

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 4, Quarter 1 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Conduct Year 4, Quarter 1 planning team meetings

This milestone was met. Program staff conducted 18 community planning meetings across Texas to advance broadband adoption, access, and use on a local level. Currently, there are 11 communities actively engaged in the local/regional planning process.

During the quarter, Gillespie County became the first Texas community to unveil a Technology Action Plan derived from active participation in the Connected Texas community engagement process. This action plan will make way for greater technology use across the county and pave the way for a brighter economic future. Program staff will continue to work with Gillespie County officials to assist in implementing some of the recommendations that were made in the report.

Q1 2013 Challenges and Mitigation:

No major challenges occurred during the quarter.

Planning Teams Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter:

Conduct Year 4, Quarter 2 planning team meetings

Plan and conduct the 2013 Annual Statewide Strategic Broadband Planning Meeting

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

Connected Texas leveraged its strategic relationships to begin planning for a Statewide Strategic Planning Meeting in partnership with the University of Texas and the Texas Connects Coalition, a Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Public Computing Center (PCC) awardee. The meeting will be held April 26 and 27, at the University of Texas at Austin and will include panels of stakeholders, broadband experts, government officials, and interested parties focusing on engaging disadvantage populations, broadband adoption, and public access to the Internet in Texas.

Meetings were conducted with three different Texas Councils of Government (CoGs) during Q1 2013. The purpose of these meetings was to engage and inform the CoGs on Connected Texas' Connected process. The CoGs have the ability to efficiently influence multiple communities by lending credibility and encouraging participation in drafting a technology assessment. To date, the CoGs have provided much needed assistance to the community engagement process by assisting with the scheduling and organization of community meetings and making direct introductions to community leaders.