

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

General Information

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration	2. Award Identification Number 50-43-B10511	3. DUNS Number 137761792
4. Recipient Organization Vermont Council on Rural Development 43 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602		
5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 12-31-2012	6. Is this the last Annual Report of the Award Period? <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No </p>	
7. Certification: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purposes set forth in the award documents.		
7a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Certifying Official Paul Costello Executive Director	7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension) 802-223-5763	
	7d. Email Address pcostello@vtrural.org	
7b. Signature of Certifying Official Submitted Electronically	7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY): 01-23-2013	

PROJECT INDICATORS																																																
<p>1. Does your Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) project foster a particular broadband technology or technologies? If so, please describe this technology (or technologies) (600 words or less). Not applicable</p>																																																
<p>2a. Please list all of the broadband equipment and/or supplies you have purchased during the most recent calendar year using BTOP grant funds or other (matching) funds, including any customer premises equipment or end-user devices. If additional space is needed, please attach a list of equipment and/or supplies. Please also describe how the equipment and supplies have been deployed (100 words or less).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Manufacturer</th> <th>Item</th> <th>Unit Cost per Item</th> <th>Number of Units</th> <th>Narrative description of how the equipment and supplies were deployed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>na</td> <td>na</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>na</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Totals</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="button" value="Add Equipment"/> <input type="button" value="Remove Equipment"/> </p>					Manufacturer	Item	Unit Cost per Item	Number of Units	Narrative description of how the equipment and supplies were deployed	na	na	0	0	na	Totals		0	0																														
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<p>2b. To the extent you distribute equipment/supplies to beneficiaries of your project, please describe the equipment/supplies you distribute, the quantities distributed, and the specific populations to whom the equipment/supplies are distributed (600 words or less). Recipients of supplies in e-Vermont fall into the following categories: libraries, schools participating in Digital Wish, community groups expanding public Internet access (public access computers, routers at public buildings), and occasional supplies for particular community projects, such as scanners for digitizing municipal and historic records. In 2012, libraries received 5 barcode scanners, 6 Nooks, 15 Kindles, 14 iPads, 2 scanners, 27 desktop computers, 6 laptop computers, 6 flip cameras, 1 audio recorder, 1 web cam, 2 routers, and software. Community groups expanding public Internet access received 2 digital cameras, 5 flash drives, 1 document camera, 1 scanner, 3 routers, 2 computers, 1 printer and software.</p>																																																
<p>3. For SBA access and training provided with BTOP grant funds, please provide the information below. Unless otherwise indicated in the instructions, figures should be reported cumulatively from award inception to the end of the most recent calendar year. For each type of training (other than open access), please count only the participants who completed the course.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Types of Access or Training</th> <th>Number of People Targeted</th> <th>Number of People Participating</th> <th>Total Training Hours Offered</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Open Lab Access</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multimedia</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Skills</td> <td>675</td> <td>698</td> <td>1,950</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GED</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>College Preparatory Training</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Basic Internet and Computer Use</td> <td>750</td> <td>991</td> <td>1,982</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Certified Training Programs</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (please specify): School Trainings</td> <td>1,465</td> <td>1,465</td> <td>32,816</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>2,890</td> <td>3,154</td> <td>36,748</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Types of Access or Training	Number of People Targeted	Number of People Participating	Total Training Hours Offered	Open Lab Access	0	0	0	Multimedia	0	0	0	Office Skills	675	698	1,950	ESL	0	0	0	GED	0	0	0	College Preparatory Training	0	0	0	Basic Internet and Computer Use	750	991	1,982	Certified Training Programs	0	0	0	Other (please specify): School Trainings	1,465	1,465	32,816	Total	2,890	3,154	36,748
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<p>4. Please describe key economic and social successes of your project during the past year, and why you believe the project is successful thus far (600 words or less). *Please Note: Basic Internet and Computer Use hours went down from last year because of recoding - we removed conferences from that category and now include only training offered through the Vermont State Colleges* e-Vermont concluded its work in 2012. Our program delivered direct benefits to communities throughout the state and built from those individual successes to improve broadband adoption statewide and offer models for rural areas beyond Vermont. In fall of 2012, the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) produced a report detailing major e-Vermont successes, available at e4vt.org. This website also offers toolkits of best practices learned during e-Vermont, including how to create public Internet access,</p>																																																

teach basic Internet skills, start using online tools for business, integrate technology into the classroom, encourage civic engagement, begin community-wide online conversations, design beginner-friendly websites, and build digital archives of local history.

In addition to the report and toolkits, we provided regional outreach around lessons learned in e-Vermont through a conference organized by the Snelling Center for Government in collaboration with VCRD and e-Vermont partners. This conference, attended by 300 state and community leaders, explored next steps in promoting effective use of online tools for economic development, community connections, and education, and strategies for closing the digital divide.

Individual subrecipients completed the strong work begun in 2011, expanding their reach and in some instances adding new programs.

The Snelling Center for Government finished its resource center for creating municipal websites and launched websites for 15 municipalities.

Front Porch Forum completed 28 forums in e-Vermont towns, with an average household take rate of 35% and a total of 9,753 subscribers. The online calendar tool built in 2011 was fully deployed to all e-Vermont towns in 2012 and integrated into the Snelling Center municipal website template. FPF continues to expand, with a goal of reaching every Vermont town.

The Small Business Development Center continued its business advising, with a total of 164 businesses receiving individualized assistance. VtSBDC also continued offering workshops, 46 total. In recognition of the importance of basic business training in using online tools, the Vermont Department of Labor funded development of VtSBDC workshops on mobile marketing and cloud computing, materials from which are available in e-Vermont's online business toolkit.

The Vermont State Colleges (VSC) finished in-community and online trainings in basic computer skills, with a total of 76 offered. Based on this experience, they developed a training program for how to work with Internet beginners. They now provide (through e4vt.org) a turnkey package that any organization can integrate into their professional development offerings.

VSC and the Vermont Department of Libraries partnered to launch an Internet Interns program that places college students in public libraries to provide 1:1 assistance in learning basic computer skills. The Vermont Community Foundation recognized the strength of this partnership through one of their first Innovations and Collaborations grants. Interns completed over 600 hours of in-community work in the first year.

Vermont's public libraries received supplies to complement the professional training and intern services they received. Over the course of the project, 26 libraries received these supplies.

Digital Wish distributed 1,326 Netbooks to classrooms serving 1,294 Vermont students, conducted over 3,000 educator trainings and launched a statewide afterschool program where students created computer games and websites.

In addition to coordinating the subrecipients' work, as described above, and bringing lessons learned statewide, as described at the beginning, VCRD staff implemented special projects selected by towns based on local needs, such as wireless Internet zones in downtowns, digitization of historic records, community computer labs in schools, mobile computer labs, beginner friendly website design, and online farmers' markets.

5. Please estimate the level of broadband adoption in the community(ies) and/or area(s) your project serves, explain your methodology for estimating the level of broadband adoption, and explain changes in the broadband adoption level, if any, since the project began.

5a. Adoption Level (%):	Narrative description of level, methodology, and change from the level at project inception (600 words or less).
42	Although e-Vermont, the Department of Public Service and the Internet service providers reached agreement on providing aggregate subscription information for towns on a quarterly basis, we were only able to establish this agreement for 4 quarters per town. In 2011, average take rates across all e-Vermont towns rose from 35.8% to 42.4%. We expect this trend has continued in 2012 but we've exceeded the 4 quarters and have not been successful in negotiating for additional updates to the information from private sector service providers.

6. Please describe the two most common barriers to broadband adoption that you have experienced this year in connection with your project. What steps did you take to address them (600 words or less)?

As reported in 2011, basic digital literacy is a problem that we have targeted through an approach that intercepts learners at a point where they have a clear need for getting online - for example if they are applying for government benefits or jobs that have switched to an online platform or if they simply arrive in a place like the library with an interest, such as looking up recipes or connecting with grandchildren. In 2012, we developed a range of programs to work with these Internet beginners at the threshold of starting to navigate

the online world. Those resources included the iConnect training in working with Internet beginners, beginner tutorial materials (online and in print) that could be made commonly available across public libraries, beginner friendly website design to make critical websites more intuitive for beginners, and the instruction offered through Internet Interns. Details on all of these programs are found in the toolkits at e4vt.org.

One barrier to learning new digital skills is the availability of broadband for practice. Even if the infrastructure reaches a beginner's home, they likely won't subscribe before learning how to use it. While e-Vermont has supported public Internet access at libraries, constraints in space and hours of operation often mean that this access is necessary but not sufficient. We have actively expanded Internet access options in our e-Vermont communities through hot spots, computer access in community centers, Grange Halls and town offices, a community learning space project that opened a local high school to computer lab use, mobile computer labs that travel to senior centers and farms, and wireless Internet zones in downtown areas.

In addition to basic digital literacy barriers, our 2011 report noted lack of a strong digital culture as a second obstacle. The e-Vermont approach of tying online tools directly to existing local goals and individual interests has been a key part in overcoming these cultural obstacles in rural communities. One important element of this approach is developing systems to track the impact of online tools once they enter into use. For example, our small business advisor will work with businesses to connect their objectives for using online tools directly to their current business plan and to clearly frame what they expect from these tools before investing time and money. Digital Wish received additional funding to return to e-Vermont schools, measure lasting impact from their program, and develop a course in sustaining technology projects in schools (now available at www.digitalwish.com). Front Porch Forum corresponds with local leaders to shape goals not only for growing forum membership but also sparking the sort of conversations that help build community. VCRD collects success stories to share in which community members say specifically what it is that online tools have accomplished in their town. e-Vermont's final report is filled with these types of stories, told in narrative, quotes, and statistics. Ultimately, we have found that sustained narrowing of the cultural gap portion of the digital divide requires us to be very clear about what success looks like, on a case-by-case basis, and report back on that success.

7. To the extent that you have made any subcontracts or sub grants, please provide the number of subcontracts or sub grants that have been made to socially and economically disadvantaged small business (SDB) concerns as defined by section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 647, as modified by NTIA's adoption of an alternative small business size standard for use in BTOP. Please also provide the names of these SDB entities. (150 words or less)

Not Applicable

8. Please describe any best practices / lessons learned that can be shared with other similar BTOP projects (900 words or less).

e-Vermont has created online toolkits at e4vt.org to share best practices and lessons learned. Topics covered include:

- Community Conversations: A guide for non-profit organizations and community leaders who want to identify local goals that can be served by online tools.
- Public Internet Access: Detailed instructions for setting up public Internet access points, including hotspots, Wi-Fi zones, library access, mobile computer labs and community learning space at public school buildings.
- Basics for Beginners: A collection of recommended tutorial sites and videos.
- Teaching Internet Basics: An innovative program, iConnect, teaches anyone how to effectively walk beginners through basic Internet tasks and get them started on the path to learning more. The manuals and instructor guides available online allow any organization to implement this training. This Teaching toolkit also includes lessons learned from the Internet Interns program which places college students at public libraries to provide computer assistance.
- Website Design: A list of design principles that go beyond basic usability to create a website that Internet beginners can easily navigate. Of particular importance to organizations shifting essential functions to an all-online platform, such as payroll, employee accounts management, healthcare management or benefits applications.
- Business Tools: An introduction for small business owners on how to connect basic business goals with appropriate online tools.
- Education: For educators and community members interested in how technology can be used in the elementary school classroom.
- Municipal Websites: For town officials, this toolkit outlines guidelines for municipal website design.
- Digital History: Instructions for local historical societies and other groups with a collection of historic materials they would like to put into a digital archive.

The www.e4vt.org website also shares stories from e-Vermont communities, a library of webcasts on basic Internet skills, progress reports, and a report from the conference on Vermont's Digital Future held in May 2012.