

14Q1_Supplemental Answers_South Carolina

Connected Nation, Inc.

Grant Number 45-50-M09044

Reporting Period End Date 03-31-14

14 a_Project Attachment_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).

Engineering and Technical Services (ETS) staff conducted and completed provider outreach in support of the NTIA data submission. The broadband provider mapping data update was submitted in accordance with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) semi-annual requirement on March 27, 2014. This update included datasets for 100% of the South Carolina provider community, or 44 total providers. Of the 44 participating providers, 33 supplied an update to their network or coverage area(s), while 8 have reported no change. The remaining 3 represent providers who previously supplied data but were non-responsive in the current update effort; therefore, their previous dataset was put forward as part of the compilation.

An interactive mapping web application, called My ConnectView, continues to be maintained. The application is housed in a highly available, monitored, and managed environment. My ConnectView is publicly available on the program website (www.connectsc.org). There were a total of 155 visits to the interactive map between January 1, 2014 and March 31, 2014.

During this quarter, the project received a total of 3 broadband inquiries. Additional information received through e-mail from consumers that was also used for verification purposes totaled 4 for this quarter. Users can also request non-confidential mapping data produced for the SBI grant program. Two such requests were received between January 1, 2014 and March 31, 2014.

For this reporting period, 238 field verification tests were conducted. From program initiation through this reporting period, field validation testing has been completed against 38 companies (out of 44 viable providers) totaling 86.36% within the state of South Carolina.

In an effort to provide the most accurate validation information available, project to date validation numbers are in the process of being reviewed and recalculated to consider the impact on the total percentage of providers validated when removing companies that have gone out of business and/or have been merged with or acquired by other companies. As this review will continue in Q2, the validation numbers presented for this quarter are preliminary and conservative reflecting an adjustment to the percentage of providers validated in an effort to account for this variance.

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

Based on information released by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on the Rural Broadband Experiments, staff created maps of the eligible census tracts and assisted state stakeholders, broadband providers, and other stakeholders with reviewing and understanding the information provided to help with expressions of interest as possible. A copy of the map and detailed information prepared by program staff has been provided as an attachment via the "14Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document.

Additional maps created this quarter include broadband availability for each State House and State Senate district.

Tabular information on Community Anchor Institutions (CAI) connectivity was updated using October 2013 datasets to assist with information being reviewed and prepared by Policy and Research Development staff.

Outreach to agencies across the state continued in an effort to solicit CAI support, data, and participation in the program. Program staff continued engagements with the Municipal Association of South Carolina and State Library System and continued to work with and engage South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV). CAI gains this quarter include updated numbers provided by the South Carolina Division of State Information Technology.

The media impressions garnered by the program, during the first quarter of 2014 totaled 77,500,278. The impressions were largely the result of press releases distributed detailing Connect South Carolina's participation as a panelist at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce's Competitive Agenda Series held in January; the announcement of Beaufort County, Hilton Head Island, and Lexington County joining the Connected program, and an online editorial published on TheState.com with quotes and data provided by program staff. A copy of that story can be found at <http://www.thestate.com/2014/01/29/3234781/free-wi-fi-at-midlands-area-libraries.html> and has been provided as an attachment via the "14Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document in the Planning section.

Outreach and awareness staff drafted and distributed three e-newsletters to stakeholders highlighting stories from around the state including the newest counties to join the Connected program, Governor Haley's education proposal that asks for almost \$30 million directed towards bringing technology to the classroom, and the save the date for the upcoming technological summit hosted by Connect South Carolina and partner IT-oLogy.

Social media posts for the quarter were comprised of broadband and technology content taken from the state and around the country. At the end of Q1 2014, the

program has 82 fans on Facebook, up from the 176 at the end of Q4 2013, and 1,165 followers on Twitter, up from 1,158 at the end of Q4 2013.

14 b_Project Attachment_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 the next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.

Technical Assistance Milestones Year 5, Quarter 1 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Initiate 2014 business survey peer review.

This milestone was not met this quarter. Research staff finalized the survey script by incorporating feedback from state stakeholders, and provided this survey instrument to the data collection contractor. The data collection process is not yet complete, and methodology documents will not be available for review until the data collection is finished. Once the data collection process is completed, staff will be able to present initial results, the survey script, and methodology document to a peer reviewer for review. These tasks are scheduled to be completed in Q2 2014.

Milestone: Initiate 2014 business survey research

This milestone was partially met. Research staff created a spreadsheet based on the latest County Business Pattern that includes quotas to represent the state business distribution by sizes and sectors. Data collection for the 2014 business survey commenced in Q1 2014; however, the data collection process is not yet complete, and a data file with weighted results cannot be created until the data collection process is finished. A data file with weighted results will be generated in Q2 2014.

Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2013 residential survey research results

This milestone was not met. Survey data collected as a part of the 2013 residential survey is still being peer reviewed, and until that review is completed, finalization and distribution cannot take place. The program website was prepared for the new data during Q1 2014. Upon completion of the peer review, staff will present the 2013 residential survey research to the South Carolina Governor's Office, the Task Force, and other stakeholders, and it will announce the data publicly via press release, website update, and meetings with stakeholders.

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

Year 4, Quarter 4 Milestone: Analyze 2013 residential survey research results and present to stakeholders

This milestone was partially met this quarter. Research staff finished the initial analysis of the 2013 residential survey, and provided initial results to the peer reviewer for

review. The peer review process is still underway and until complete, survey results cannot be presented to state stakeholders. Presentation of the initial results to state stakeholders is anticipated to be completed in early Q2 2014.

Year 4, Quarter 4 Milestone: Peer review of 2013 residential survey research completed.

This milestone was partially met. Initial analysis of survey results was completed and provided to Dr. Lori Dickes from Clemson University. Dr. Dickes is currently reviewing the survey data, survey instrument, and survey methodology. Once that review is completed, staff will be able to provide the survey results to state stakeholders. It is expected that results of the peer review will be available in early Q2 2014.

Year 4, Quarter 4 Milestone: Commence development of the 2014 business survey script

This milestone was met. The 2014 business survey script was finalized and provided to the data collection contractor.

Year 4, Quarter 4 Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2013 economic development survey research results

This milestone was partially met. Initial analysis was completed and discussions entered into regarding public release of the final results with state stakeholders. At this time, the survey instrument, survey results, and a document outlining the survey methodology are being peer reviewed by Dr. Lori Dickes. Once we have received feedback from the peer review, staff will finalize and distribute the 2013 economic development survey research results. These are anticipated in early Q2 2014.

Year 4, Quarter 3 Milestone: Initiate 2013 residential survey peer review

This milestone was met this quarter. A peer reviewer was identified and a contract with Dr. Lori Dickes from Clemson University was executed. Subsequently, staff provided her with initial results, a document outlining the survey methodology used, and data from 2013 residential survey.

Year 4, Quarter 3 Milestone: Analyze 2013 Economic Development survey research results and present initial findings to stakeholders

This milestone was partially met. At this time, the survey data, survey results, and a document outlining the survey methodology has been presented to Dr. Lori Dickes for peer review. That peer review process has not yet finished. Once we have received feedback from the peer review, staff will present initial findings from the Economic Development survey to stakeholders.

Year 4, Quarter 3 Milestone: Peer review of 2013 economic development survey research completed

This milestone was partially met. Program research staff identified a peer reviewer and provided initial results to the peer reviewer. At this time, the peer review process is still underway. It is anticipated that the peer review process will be completed in early Q2 2014.

Year 4, Quarter 2 Milestone: Initiate 2013 economic development survey peer review

This milestone was met. Program research staff finished the initial analysis and identified a peer reviewer. Initial results were provided to the peer reviewer and the peer review process began.

Technical Assistance Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter (Q2 2014):

- Peer review of 2014 business survey research completed
- Analyze 2014 business survey research results and present initial findings to stakeholders
- Commence development of the 2014 residential survey script
- Successful completion of the 2014 Connect South Carolina broadband summit

14b_Project Attachment_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 the next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.

Planning Team Milestones Year 5, Quarter 1 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Facilitation of local/regional broadband planning activities in Year 5, Quarter 1

This milestone was met. Community Tech Team Specialists aided local/regional planning teams in completing a community assessment and Technology Action Plan in Clarendon County. Abbeville County's review has been completed and the team is days away from submitting their assessment. Lexington County held its Kick-off meeting this quarter with over 55 attendees present and plans to submit their assessment in Q2 2014. Beaufort County successfully formed two teams in an effort to focus on unique issues involving technology in the area – Connect Beaufort County focusing on rural development and Connect Hilton Head Island focusing on tourism and technology. Members of both teams met this quarter to discuss ways in which assessments can be completed and action items can be drafted with each individual end goal in mind. A Hilton Head Island Technology Taskforce took up the project and formed a widely advertised "Connect Hilton Head Island" group among local community leaders that involved input from various stakeholders.

Several other counties participating in the Connected community engagement program made significant progress, with Sumter County having planned a Kick-off meeting for early Q2, and initial interest meetings having been held in Fairfield and Union Counties. Laurens County was engaged this quarter, and is building its planning team, with inroads made in identifying contacts in several of the remaining unengaged communities in the state.

Community Tech Team Specialists have been diligent in working closely with community leaders to identify potential team members, managing and attending planning meetings while recording notes, providing research data, training participants, and tracking activities and attendees' time involvement. In addition, the Specialists have attended statewide conferences and hosted booths in local communities in an effort to raise broadband awareness to the general public.

Kick-off events held this quarter were well-attended by enthusiastic participants who were introduced to the Connected community engagement program through presentations developed and delivered by the Specialists, prior to breaking out into assessment groups focused on access, adoption, and use. Community information was gathered and a plan put into place to update the participants on the progress of assessment. The Lexington County Community Champion, with the aid of program staff, developed and distributed a thank-you e-Card to participants of the Kick-off meeting with a timeline and request for any additional information that may have been gathered since the meeting took place.

With the engagement of Laurens County, the South Carolina team is gaining on its goal of engaging all 46 counties in the state at some level, with 34 engaged communities and a total of 690 planning team members active in the South Carolina Connected community engagement program through the end of the quarter. Of those 12 remaining counties, Specialists have reached out to contacts in at least 3 (Calhoun, Edgefield, and Newberry) in hopes of scheduling meetings in Q2 2014. The most current version of the Community Engagement map has been provided as an attachment via the "14Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document.

Milestone: Conduct Year 5, Quarter 1 Task Force (Broadband Advisory Council) meeting

This milestone was met. The South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council (BBAC) met on February 4, 2014, and further discussed the "Life is Better With Broadband" campaign and confirmed it as a 2014 goal. Budgetary numbers and suggested approaches were discussed. Several Council Members talked about ways that they could see co-branding of the mail outs working as a way to pay for printing and mailing costs. The next South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council (BBAC) meeting will be held in June, where a more robust plan will be developed for implementation. Meetings will occur in Q2 2014 with stakeholders in an effort to raise funds for the budgetary line items.

Planning Team Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter (Q2 2014):

Planned major activities for next quarter include the South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council meeting.

Also, in Q2 2014 staff is looking forward to presenting several new technology action plans around the state as staff assist teams in implementation of their local regional technology growth strategies and engage new communities.

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

In March, program staff was asked to speak about mapping and broadband adoption in the state on a panel at the annual Southeast Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors in Raleigh, North Carolina. Information on the Connected community engagement efforts was also demonstrated.

In January, program representatives participated as a panelist at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce's Competitive Agenda Series where an online editorial published on TheState.com included quotes and data provided by the South Carolina SBI grant program. A copy of that story can be found at <http://www.thestate.com/2014/01/29/3234781/free-wi-fi-at-midlands-area-libraries.html> and has been provided as an attachment via the "14Q1_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document in the Planning Teams section.

Also in Q1 2014, an information webinar was hosted focusing on the FCC Rural Broadband Experiments, which drew the attention of several community leaders from across South Carolina. As staff members received questions around the Rural Broadband Experiment, Connect South Carolina was able, through the webinar, mapping support, and one-on-one conversations, to offer guidance and training for submissions of Expressions of Interest that could potentially help rural unserved areas get better service to broadband.

After attending the Lexington County Kick-off meeting on February 19, 2014, the Lexington School District One Superintendent, said, "Lexington County School District One is 'all in' on Connect South Carolina's initiative to ensure that all South Carolinians can experience the benefits of broadband. Technology and access to the Internet for all our students and their parents would be a great equalizer. Information is power, and there is no more powerful access to information than the Internet. The Internet is a window to the future." The Lexington County School District One Superintendent is very well-respected in the South Carolina education community and beyond. In 2004, she was recognized by e-School as one of the ten Tech Savvy Superintendents in the nation.

Multi-sector technology planning teams participating in the Connected community engagement program have identified the following technology assets within their own communities:

Public computer centers: 63
Digital literacy programs: 48
Broadband awareness programs: 66

Broadband programs focused on vulnerable populations: 66

These assets are inventoried during each community's assessment of local broadband access, adoption, and use and can be leveraged to develop locally relevant digital inclusion strategies during the community team's action planning process in an effort to continue to close the digital gaps in their communities.