

14Q2_Supplemental Answers_South Carolina

Connected Nation, Inc.

Grant Number 45-50-M09044

Reporting Period End Date 06-30-14

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).

The following maps were updated using the most recent semi-annual State Broadband Initiative (SBI) broadband datasets:

- Broadband Availability at 768K (kilobyte)/200K
- Density of Unserved Households
- Broadband Availability at 3M (megabyte)/768K
- Maximum Advertised Download Speed
- Multi-Single Platform
- Provider Density
- Underserved Areas
- Broadband Growth
- Broadband Availability at 3M/768K by Congressional District

In addition, the interactive map was also updated with the datasets and analyzes listed above.

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 100 visits to the interactive map between April 1, 2014 and June 30, 2014.

During this quarter, the project received a total of six broadband inquiries. Users can also request non-confidential mapping data produced for the SBI grant program; one such request was received between April 1, 2014 and June 30, 2014.

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.

Engineering and Technical Services (ETS) staff began the semi-annual data collection process, by soliciting data and providing pertinent deadlines to ensure the highest level of participation during the submission cycle. ETS staff also worked with providers to give them information regarding Federal Communications Commission (FCC) 477, in order to help providers become more familiar with the data collection process in the

future and to help safeguard against issues that could arise between the SBI submission and the new FCC submission process.

In support of planning team efforts, the ETS team worked with the state project manager and Community Technology Advisors to audit broadband availability in Beaufort County, Lexington County, and Abbeville County. ETS also provided technical information and support on projects in Oconee County, Aiken County, and Marion County.

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.

The list of providers by county, along with the maximum advertised download/upload speeds and websites, were updated and published online; the list is available in both PDF and spreadsheet formats.

Broadband availability numbers were calculated at various speed tiers and technology types based on the most recent SBI datasets. This research was posted on the program website and released publicly via press release, blog posts, and social media posts. Some of the key findings include:

- Broadband adoption in South Carolina surpasses the national average, with 76% of households subscribing to broadband service in 2013, up from 62% in 2010, a 14 percentage point increase.
- Nearly three out of five South Carolina adults (59%) use mobile broadband service, up from 29% in 2010 when Connect South Carolina began measuring this trend.
- More than 424,000 households still do not subscribe to home broadband service.
- Although the state average is 76%, the rate of broadband adoption across economic and demographics lines falls below that mark: 59% adoption by adults with disabilities; 64% adoption by African Americans; 63% by those age 65 or older; 67% adoption by Hispanics; 49% adoption by households with lower incomes; and 67% adoption by rural households.
- More than 124,000 school-age children in South Carolina still do not have broadband access at home.
- Approximately 967,000 working-age adults in South Carolina would need assistance with tasks that are often required by employers, such as creating a spreadsheet, going online from a mobile device, using a word processor, or sending an e-mail.

Based on information released by the FCC, maps were created of price-cap carriers and eligible census blocks after review and comparison of the information.

Outreach to agencies across the state continued in an effort to solicit Community Anchor Institution (CAI) support, data, and participation in the program. CAI data collection over the past three months has included follow-up with our public safety contacts in an effort to see a redistribution of the CAI survey. The two key contacts that the program is working with are the South Carolina Firefighter Association and South Carolina Education Television. The South Carolina Firefighter Association sent the CAI survey to over 6,000 members alone.

At the end of Q2 2014, the program acquired just under 30 million positive media impressions (29,923,119). These impressions came as a result of the following events: Sumter County joining the Connected program, the declaration of residential broadband adoption surpassing the national average, the second annual Connections 2014 summit in partnership with IT-oLogy, the announcement of a formal partnership between Connect South Carolina and IT-oLogy, and the release of the new broadband availability figures.

Outreach and awareness staff also drafted and distributed three e-newsletters featuring the above-mentioned stories (provided via the "14Q2_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document), as well as the recent economic survey results and highlights from local outreach and community engagement by the Community Technology Advisors, including our attendance at the Summit on Information Technology, Clemson Day, and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) SBI annual workshop.

Twitter followers have increased by 8 to 1,173 from Q1 to Q2, while tweets were comprised mostly of the Connections 2014 summit and program highlights. On Facebook, the program has gained 10 fans over the last three months, with posts consisting of photos from Connections 2014 and community engagement activities.

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 2 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Peer review of 2014 business survey research completed

This milestone was partially met. Research staff finished the initial analysis and provided these results along with the survey methodology document and script to the peer reviewer. Peer reviewing is still underway. At this time, staff is waiting feedback from Dr. Mingjie Sun of Iowa State University, the peer reviewer. Staff anticipates receiving this feedback in Q3 2014.

Milestone: Analyze 2014 business survey research results and present initial findings to stakeholders

This milestone was partially met. Research staff finished an initial analysis on the 2014 business survey and provided these results to the peer reviewer. Once this process is completed, initial findings will be presented to NTIA and state stakeholders along with the final report. This milestone is anticipated to be complete in early Q3 2014.

Milestone: Commence development of the 2014 residential survey script

This milestone was met. Program representatives conducted meetings with state stakeholders to seek input regarding the design of 2014 residential survey script, and received no recommendations for further edits or additions to the script. As such, the script is being finalized for data collection in Q3 2014.

Milestone: Successful completion of 2014 Connect South Carolina Broadband Summit

This milestone was met. Connections 2014 welcomed 152 (9 via Livestream) attendees from across the state to Columbia, South Carolina to learn about developments in hardware and software, state technology innovations, and community engagement. Community Technology Advisors hosted a breakout session and lunch meeting to provide support to Community Champions and to inform local leaders on the status of broadband in their communities, the possibilities coming from future funding opportunities such as the Department of Commerce's Office of Innovation grants, and how they might get involved in their area's broadband planning efforts. The issues of broadband adoption and use were particularly relevant for attendees at this year's summit as leaders asked questions about harnessing the power of the technology they already possess to improve the lives of citizens in their communities. In particular, Lexington County School District One's enterprise information technology officer has continued discussions with Connected Nation leaders in attendance about ways to ensure students have broadband access after school hours for the one-to-one devices the District provides. An AARP representative in attendance voiced the lack of technology adoption in the senior population, which continues to be addressed by program officials. As a result, discussions of a partnership with AARP and the South Carolina Telecommunications Association to use the physical locations of local telecoms around the state, where seniors are already comfortable paying their telephone bills, for places to provide basic computer training to local seniors.

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

Year 5, Quarter 1 Milestone: Initiate 2014 business survey peer review.

This milestone was met. Research staff identified a peer reviewer, Dr. Mingjie Sun of Iowa State University, and completed the data collection process, initial analysis, and sent initial results along with the survey script and methodology document to the peer reviewer. At this time, the peer reviewing process is underway and is expected to be complete in Q3 2014.

Year 5, Quarter 1 Milestone: Initiate 2014 business survey research

This milestone was met in Q2 2014. Staff completed the data collection process and conducted the initial analysis on technology adoption and use among businesses by size, type, and sectors, and generated data files with weighted results.

Year 5, Quarter 1 Milestone: Finalize and distribute 2013 residential survey research results

This milestone was met. The survey research results were finalized with recommendations from the peer reviewer incorporated. These finalized results were distributed to the South Carolina Governor's Office, the Broadband Advisory Council, and other stakeholders, as well as announced publicly via press release and website update.

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

This milestone was met. Research staff finalized the analysis on the 2013 residential survey, and presented these results to the stakeholders via personal presentations at various meetings.

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

This milestone was met in Q2 2014. Program staff received a reviewing report from the peer reviewer, Dr. Lori Dickes from Clemson University. It stated the survey results are accurate, the methodology is solid, and the script is well designed considering important research questions regarding technology adoption and use in South Carolina.

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

This milestone was met. The 2013 economic development survey research results were finalized and distributed online and at the 2014 Connect South Carolina Broadband Summit.

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

This milestone was met. Initial findings of the 2013 economic development survey were presented to stakeholders through the summit held in Columbia in June, and were released publicly via the program website.

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

This milestone was met. Research staff received a reviewing report from the peer reviewer, Dr. Lori Dickes of Clemson University. It said that, "Overall, this survey is instructive and provides insights into the increasing importance of broadband to community and economic development in the state."

Technical Assistance Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter (Q3 2014):

- Initiate 2014 residential survey research
- Finalize and distribute 2014 business survey research results

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

According to the 2013 economic development survey:

- More than three out of four economic development professionals (78%) who help businesses relocate or expand say that it is “extremely important” or “very important” for a site to have available broadband service in order to attract new businesses;
- Two out of five site selection consultants (40%) say businesses always or often ask whether broadband is available at a particular speed at the proposed location;
- Two-thirds of site selection consultants (67%) report that businesses always or often ask whether the nearby workforce already has the required technical skills at the proposed location;
- Nearly two-thirds of surveyed economic development professionals (64%) believe that a community would become more attractive to businesses if the community were certified as having high-quality broadband service and a digitally-skilled workforce.

According to the 2013 Residential Technology Assessment:

- 76% of households in South Carolina subscribed to broadband service in 2013, up from 62% in 2010;
- Broadband adoption varies across different economic and demographics line: 59% adoption by adults with disabilities; 64% adoption by African Americans; 63% by those age 65 or older; 67% adoption by Hispanics; 49% adoption by households with lower incomes; and 67% adoption by rural households;
- More than 124,000 school-age children in South Carolina still do not have broadband access at home;
- Approximately 967,000 working-age adults in South Carolina would need assistance with tasks that are often required by employers, such as creating a spreadsheet, going online from a mobile device, using a word processor, or sending an e-mail.

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 2 per approved project plan:

Milestone: Assist in development and implementation of local regional technology growth strategies.

This milestone was met. Thirty-five (35) communities in the state have been engaged in local broadband planning efforts to date. Each engaged community has received assistance from program staff in completing an assessment of their current state of broadband access, adoption, and use followed by a detailed Technology Action Plan. In addition to the six action plans created, three (3) communities are near completion of their assessments, with a possible certification for one (1) community pending.

Among those communities nearing completion, the Town of Hilton Head Island has experienced particularly strong engagement as they utilized a broadband technology taskforce to address the issue of technology's effect on business and tourism. Additionally, as a portrayal of how the Connected community engagement program encourages a "community of communities" within the state, the Lexington County Champion drove over two hours to meet with the Anderson County Champion. She was able to gain valuable insight and advice from South Carolina's only certified Connected community as Lexington attempts to complete its assessment, hoping to reach Certification designation.

Community Technology Advisors continue 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.

Program staff has been able to provide assistance in the Edisto River Basin area, one of the most underserved areas in the state. Connect South Carolina was approached by a group hoping to bring wireless high-speed Internet to the area, possibly by forming a co-op. An introduction was provided to an ETS team member, who suggested using the Wireless ISP Association as a resource, as well as looking into the recently announced Rural Broadband Experiment funds. Members of this group, from the Edisto River Basin area, attended the 2014 summit and are continuing discussions with ETS staff to find a solution to these access issues. This project and relationship was a direct result of the Connected community engagement program.

The community engagement effort continues gaining on the program's goal of engaging all 46 counties in the state at some level, with 35 engaged communities and a total of 741 active planning team members through the end of the quarter. Community Technology Advisors continue reaching out to the 11 remaining counties. The most current version of the community engagement map has been provided as an attachment via the "14Q2_Project Attachment_Question 5_South Carolina" document.

Milestone: Conduct Year 5, Quarter 2 Task Force South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council meeting.

This milestone was met. On June 11, 2014, the quarterly meeting for the Broadband Advisory Council was conducted with seven members in attendance. Members were presented with the current state of community engagement efforts in South Carolina, an

overview of the long-term goals for South Carolina's program sustainability, and an overview of opportunities for enhancing workforce development and education through broadband. Council members expressed interest in enhancing digital learning among seniors and library patrons, expanding the footprint of Connect South Carolina's new residential survey data through public television, and joining rural conversations around development through meetings with the Clemson Extension office. A future meeting of the Council will take place at a date to be determined next quarter.

Planning Team Planned Major Activities for Next Quarter (Q3 2014):

- Assist in development and implementation of local regional technology growth Strategies
- Conduct Year 5, Quarter 3 Task Force South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council meeting.

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

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: 69
- Digital literacy programs: 66
- Broadband awareness programs: 78
- Broadband programs focused on vulnerable populations: 72

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.