

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Town of Manchester

Project Title: Connecticut Municipal Net

Project Type: Sustainable Adoption

Executive Summary

SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

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The CT-Muni-Net is a state-wide effort to create clusters of 18 Inter-connected Municipalities which in turn are also inter-connected with high speed broadband connections. Currently there is very limited or no connectivity between the CT-Muni-Net Towns which prevents the sharing and delivery of critical regional/state-wide educational, public safety, computer center and library services to underserved populations throughout Connecticut.

While there are many innovative CT-Muni-Net projects detailed in the last mile section, which support and promote broadband demand and affordability, there are several key regional projects worth highlighting:

1. Regional Adult Education Center – This regional education center currently supports 13 towns, but does not have broadband connectivity to underserved populations such as Hartford. The Puerto Rican Forum of Hartford has partnered with the Regional Adult Education Center to educate a large underserved Spanish Speaking population. To facilitate distance learning to this underserved group, a private grant for \$630,000 has been obtained to support the educational component of distance learning, but will require the complimentary broadband element to promote and sustain these educational services.

A second important partner of the Regional Adult Education Center is Eastern Connecticut State University which provides college credit courses at the Adult Education's Computer Center. With

broadband connectivity, college credit courses will also be available to the underserved populations throughout Connecticut via the CT-Muni-Net.

2. Regional Emergency Management Center – This regional emergency management center, while funded both locally and on a state basis, it is not currently connected to the regional towns that it is supporting. The Municipal broadband inter-connectivity provided by this project will promote safety awareness, sharing of regional emergency services and the coordination of first responder services as demanded by major emergency/catastrophic events.

3. Regional Medical/Health Communications - The CT-Muni-Net has established relationships with the medical industry, such as ECHN (Eastern Connecticut Health Network), and will provide high speed inter-connectivity to the regional hospitals, associated doctors, medical staff and real-time transmissions to the First Responder mobile units.

With the preceding and many other critical services made available by the CT-Muni-Net on a regional/state-wide basis, future growth and sustainable adoption of broadband services throughout Connecticut are inevitable.

Manchester, the applicant / lead municipality has successfully deployed and maintained 44 miles of high-speed broadband fiber connecting 37 buildings and 17 schools for 7+ years. A state-wide precedent was established by Manchester when the DPUC ruled that under the municipal gain statute, all Connecticut Towns have the right to put up dark fiber on utility poles in the space referred to as “municipal gain”. Manchester’s model will be emulated by the other 17 members of the CT-Muni-Net.

The population of the target areas is 370,102.

The overall cost for the CT-Muni-Net is \$20,937,161.10.