The Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications (OTIA) works to expand broadband connectivity and digital inclusion across America and administers the BroadbandUSA program. OTIA has extensive experience as a convening authority to engage stakeholders in furthering the deployment and use of broadband technology in America; laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth; improving education, public safety, and health care; and advancing other national priorities.

The **BroadbandUSA** program promotes innovation and economic growth by supporting efforts to expand broadband connectivity and meaningful use for all Americans. BroadbandUSA works with stakeholders from local and state government, federal agencies, non-profits, and industry to:

- ✦ *Educate*: Arm stakeholders and broadband leaders with solution-neutral guides and tools that help them make the right decisions for their broadband initiatives.
- ✦ *Convene:* Lead regional workshops and events to advance the conversation and share lessons learned regarding broadband connectivity and digital inclusion.
- ✦ *Assist*: Provide technical assistance to communities and partners seeking neutral advice and support for their broadband projects.

Some key examples of BroadbandUSA's work include:

- ✦ *Technical Assistance*: BroadbandUSA staff provides online and direct, one-to-one and group technical assistance and training, leveraging its experience to support communities seeking public-private partnerships.
- ✦ *State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN):* SBLN is a community of practitioners who work on state broadband initiatives. BroadbandUSA coordinates the group and convenes participants to share priorities and best practices, discuss emerging telecommunications policy issues, link state and local jurisdictions to federal agencies and funding sources, and address barriers to collaboration across states and agencies.
- ✦ *Smart Cities:* BroadbandUSA works with the National Institute of Standards and Technology on its Global City Teams Challenge by co-leading the Wireless, Smart Buildings, and Ag and Rural Superclusters.

American Broadband Initiative (ABI): Through the ABI, OTIA works with over 25 federal agencies to leverage public assets and resources to expand our nation's broadband capacity. The core principles of the ABI are: (1) clarity, transparency, and responsiveness to stakeholders in the government process, (2) federal assets should provide the greatest possible benefit to stakeholders and the public, and (3) the federal government should be a good steward of taxpayer funds.

Minority Broadband Initiative (MBI): The MBI was launched in November 2019. Its stated goal is to leverage the networks and location of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to expand broadband coverage to underserved communities, particularly in the rural South. NTIA will use its convening authority to better ensure that HBCUs are included in broadband planning nationwide.

Broadband Availability Map: In 2018, Congress provided NTIA with funding to create a national broadband availability map in consultation with the FCC. OTIA launched the first version of the map in October 2019 for use by our federal, state, and local partners. Eight pilot states are included in the initial rollout.

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Updated as of March 2020