C. Executive Summary

7. Executive Summary of Overall Proposal:

True Broadband Networks (TBN) will lead a collaborative coalition of multiple small disadvantaged business partners including a technology charter school, computer learning center, faith-based and community anchor organizations that are currently working to address the broad spectrum of economic recovery issues present in the Greater Kansas City area’s most distressed low-income communities. These communities are plagued with poverty, unemployment, underperforming schools, illiteracy, adverse credit and the lack of available training and supplemental education opportunities. The proposed Public Computer Centers are located in the inner city of Kansas City, Missouri with a targeted population of 105,000. A third of these citizens are living below the poverty line and research has shown that areas such as these are underserved when it pertains to broadband Internet.

This problem is amplified by the fact that households with an annual income of $50,000 or less—about half of the country—only 35% have broadband service. Households with annual incomes above $50,000 are more than twice as likely to have broadband service. This statistic is from the following source: "Bringing Broadband to the Urban Poor," Business Week, December 31, 2008. This puts a severe constraint on this population to contribute to the economic growth and development of our country. Our proposed initiative will address this key issue as it will expand public access to broadband services and enhance broadband capacity by the deployment of new and expansion of existing Public Computer Centers located in underserved communities targeting vulnerable populations and serving as a key catalyst in the quest to bridge the digital divide and provide this needed service.

This project is designed as a shovel-ready initiative that will provide the broadband infrastructure for Internet connectivity and build out the capacity that will address the critical need for broadband services specific to education, employment, and economic development as well as enhanced services for health care education and children. In complete alignment with the BTOP statutory purposes, the key objectives of the True Broadband Technology Empowerment Collaborative are to provide public computer center access to both adults and children along with training and other services such as mentoring, counseling and assistance to low-income individuals with job placement to stimulate long-term economic growth and opportunity.

Our training courses will be delivered in collaboration with several partner organizations with the plan to reach over 60,000 citizens within the next 2 years through various educational tracks and career paths surrounding areas such as science and math, green technology, health
and wellness, adult basic education and GED completion, English as a second language, computer literacy, technology certifications, credit repair, multi-media technology and web development.

True Broadband Networks has been successfully delivering broadband to both the commercial and residential markets for over eight years and has participated in numerous municipal government contracts with project management as a core competency. True Broadband Networks recently delivered a City-Wide Wireless Network to the City of Kansas City, Missouri and successfully met the objectives. Our partners have several years of combined experience and expertise in establishing and maintaining PCC access in the Kansas City urban core and have substantial experience in providing community and job-related technology training to residents of targeted neighborhoods as well as extensive grant management experience.

Our project will deliver job skills to over 5000 citizens over the next 2 years and create or save at least 50-60 jobs per year by the utilization of the enhanced training and educational programs offered through the 4 proposed public computer centers.

This proposal will also support our additional program goals in the other BTOP categories of broadband infrastructure deployment and sustainable broadband adoption as they will further drive the objectives to generate awareness, demand and economic growth by making broadband available at a lower cost to 400+ low-income families’ homes in the initial demonstration project.