Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA, THE

Project Title: The Daytona Online-Internet, Information & Technology Training (DO-IITT)

Project Type: Public Computer Center

_______________________ Executive Summary _________________________

Building on the concept the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, the Daytona Online-Internet, Information & Technology (DO-IITT) project seeks to empower the most "vulnerable populations" with broadband inclusion by expanding its existing service centers. The project is a city and county wide alliance of technology services that bridges community outreach, anchor institutions, higher institutions of learning, disadvantaged businesses, seniors, and unserved, underserved communities. The project seeks through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a greater partnership with the Department of Commerce's efforts in mitigating the large digital divide that exists. "Conversely, persons with low incomes, seniors, minorities, the less-educated, non-family households, and the non-employed tend to lag behind other groups in home broadband use." (U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, DIGITAL NATION 21st Century America's Progress Toward Universal Broadband Internet Access, An NTIA Research Preview, February 2010). "Nonetheless, a digital divide remains or has expanded slightly in some cases, even while the Internet access and computer ownership are rising for almost all groups. For example, our most recent data show that divides still exist between those with different levels of income and education, different racial and ethnic groups, old and young, single and dual-parents families..." (Falling Trough the Net: Toward Digital Inclusion, A Report on Americans' Access to Technology Tools, October 2000). The support of the Volusia County Library that provides 500,000 computer sessions in it's 16 branches and a more than 4,000,000 million item circulation understands the efforts of closing the digital divide in the targeted service area. This project also provides a technology avenue for the Federally mandated requirement of 8 hours Community Service that encourages computer literacy and training for residents. "The new year started off with a bust for employment in Volusia and Flagler counties, with both posting the highest joblessness rate since record-keeping began in 1990" (The Daytona Beach News-Journal, March 11,2010).The City of Daytona Beach, which lies in Volusia County has the third lowest median income in the state of Florida. More than 16.9 percent of the City of Daytona Beach Community residents live below the poverty level. Of residents age 25 years and older 14.5 percent do not have a high school diploma. More than 1/3 percent of the populations are minorities with 33.5 percent African American, 3.5 percent Hispanics, and 63 percent other. The extremely high numbers of unemployment, underemployment, lack of up-date computer skills and technology access to government services are serious problems that greatly hinder the residents' transition from welfare to work. Opportunities for learning and upward mobility for the residents are severely limited by the facts that 1) At least 96 percent of the households are female-headed 2) 67 percent have pre-school aged children 3) Majority of the residents have incomes below 11,498.00 per year. This transition of mobilizing the consumers from welfare to work can be greatly
enhanced with expanding the existing broadband to this community. The newly adopted broadband adoption rates will allow an even greater capacity of computer usage that will ensure technology resources are available to all. In many of the depressed, vulnerable communities, ownership of a computer to assist school age children with homework is outdated, limited at best and in most cases, it is not available at all. There is no silver bullet that will address all of the concerns, however the project's approach towards utilizing its 4 centers and partnering with the existing 16 County libraries in an e-resource effort serves as another path to move consumers from welfare to work. The project is an innovative approach to resource sharing and the overall technology needs of the "vulnerable populations". This approach is addressed by working with partner agencies to transition a training skills force to a work force. The adoption of expanding the broadband will 1) Increase the number of consumers completing secondary education or the GED program as evidence by letters of support from educational institutions. 2) Offer Jobs to residents. 3) Provide job training and placement. 4) Increase computer literacy training 5) Increase employees digital literacy skills 6) Provide a safe, secure place for residents to complete 8 hours mandated Community Service, which Federal Law affords computer literacy classes as a viable option. The Centers will distribute program schedules, newsletters and any information that will assist in identifying these underserved consumers that would like to utilize the public broadband located at the center. Presently, the centers' resources allows residents to take instructor-led or online computer that meets the Federal guidelines. An expansion of this project will allow an even greater level of community service to the underemployed African American and Hispanics and will be provide technology training and access to services that have been created due to this project under the Recovery Act. All administrative processes and procedures for fiscal management of this grant will be under the direct charge of the four member staff of the Finance Department of The Housing Authority of the City of Daytona Beach (HADB). Mr. Gregory Heard, Director of Finance for the Housing Authority has over twelve years experience as a public housing finance administrator. Mr. Heard along with Ms. Chandra Williamson, a member of the finance department team possess over 15 years combined experience in the housing finance industry. The mission of the department is 'to maintain accurate financial records and provide timely financial information, to assure compliance with laws and regulations pertaining to accounting, procurement and finance and to optimize the resources and assets of the Housing Authority of the City of Daytona Beach.' The Housing Authority's procurement policy is established to provide for the fair and equitable treatment of all persons or firms involved in purchasing by the Authority; assure that supplies, equipment, services, and construction activities are procured efficiently, effectively, and at the most favorable prices to the Authority; promote competition in contracting; provide safeguards by maintaining a centralized procurement system of quality and integrity; and to assure that the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority of The City of Daytona Beach administered highly successful Hope VI Neighborhood Networks Grant programs, One Ross Grant Neighborhood Networks Center, Two Family Self Sufficiency Programs serving over 500 Individuals, and non-HUD related grants. The Housing Authority has closed out five annual allocations from Public Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) and The Residents of Self-Sufficiency Program after successful implementation. All resident family self-sufficiency and economic empowerment programs are under the direction of the Resident Services Department, who reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Joyours Gamble. This staffing structure has standardized services and removed duplication of efforts between reports, both programmatic and financial, is produced for monthly project meetings
and quarterly reports. To further strengthen the housing authority's accountability to residents and funding sources, each resident services project produces and implements a 12 month work plan each which contains measurable outcomes and a reporting system to ensure timely and appropriate program implementation and coordination. The Housing Authority has a well-established track record both in delivering successful resident service programs with an emphasis on career development and case management services and in effectively management services and in effectively administering federal grant programs—including reporting, timely drawn downs and conducting quality control/evaluation. Formerly, the Housing Authority of the City of Daytona Beach administered 2 ROSS grants totaling over $300,000 dollars and two Hope VI Grants, totaling 25 Million dollars and an over 200 million dollar impact. Under the Recovery Act this project’s efforts will create 6 new jobs and leverage support to the 54 jobs that have been created by its partners that are in receipt of Recovery grant awards of over $5,438,944 million dollars allows for digital reinvestment to the local vulnerable communities. The overall cost of the project is $1.3 million dollars for a period of three years. A cash match of 47.3% is due to the outpouring of collaborative support, city and county-wide partnerships and community outreach that have chosen to reach-in to support for this project.