Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: CHICAGO, CITY OF

Project Title: SmartChicago Sustainable Broadband Adoption Campaign

Project Type: Sustainable Broadband Adoption

Executive Summary

Broadband Need: SmartChicago Sustainable Broadband Adoption Campaign will serve vulnerable populations in five diverse, low-income neighborhoods in Chicago. All five neighborhoods have worked with a key partner, LISC/Chicago, over the past eight years through a comprehensive community planning and development approach that has resulted in the direct commitment of $59 million and has leveraged over $500 million across 16 New Communities Program neighborhoods. This application addresses the need to provide economic, social, and educational opportunities to vulnerable populations through integrating broadband access and technology through a range of programs. SmartChicago's comprehensive approach will build on existing relationships at local schools, libraries, community colleges, employment training centers, and non-profit partners. Area to be Served: SmartChicago Sustainable Adoption strategies will result in outreach to 14,996 households; education and training to 7,942 of these households (100% of whom will be vulnerable populations); marketing to 88,110 households; and technology training for 225 small businesses. As a result of these strategies, broadband adoption at home or business will reach a total of 6,308 residents, 213 businesses, and 7,942 end users at public computing centers. In 2009, the City of Chicago partnered with LISC to develop comprehensive digital excellence plans. The City of Chicago commissioned the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) to undertake a statistical survey of households citywide and in each of these neighborhoods that identified lack of broadband usage, and importantly, why households did not have broadband. While 61% of residents in the City had some type of access to Internet at home (including both dial-up and broadband), these neighborhoods showed lower rates of adoption. According to the UIC Survey, Census, and Metro Chicago Information Center data: Auburn Gresham had an Internet-at-home rate of 38%, an unemployment rate in 2007 of 22%, and a poverty level in 2000 of 21%. Chicago Lawn had an Internet-at-home rate of 51%, an unemployment rate of 9%, a poverty level of 20%, and 42% speak a language other than English at home. Englewood had an Internet-at-home rate of 56%, an unemployment rate of 22%, and a poverty level of 44%. Humboldt Park had an Internet-at-home rate of 43%, unemployment at 17%, poverty at 31%, and 50% speak a language other than English at home. Pilsen had an Internet-at-home rate of 39%, an unemployment rate of 8%, a poverty level of 27%, and 85.0% speak a language other than English at home. As a part of the local planning processes, large community gatherings and focus groups were held with hard-to-reach sub-populations (such as teenagers, seniors, Spanish-speaking residents, and disadvantaged businesses). A copy of the SmartChicago Master Plan is http://www.lisc-chicago.org/content/11/documents/scpmasterplan.pdf and in the Supplement. SmartChicago addresses the fundamental barriers which are: concerns over privacy (e.g. proper training for parents to provide a safe environment for their children on-line);
education on the value of the Internet to access employment, education, and social tools; and over-
coming language barriers and disabilities. SmartChicago strategies: 1) Access to education and jobs
through a comprehensive approach that meets the full-range of household need. FamilyNet Centers will
be created with new computer labs that will enhance the services of existing Centers for Working
Families (CWFs) that provide access to employment services, training, financial counseling, income
supports and household budgeting. 2,988 individuals will receive technology orientations, 764 will
receive training programs, 1,350 will receive Everyday Digital Classes, 900 will receive Civic 2.0 classes,
and 100 will receive community portal orientation programs. 1,350 Netbook computers will be offered
as incentives to graduates of the programs to bring back to their homes, including 1,000 for adults and
350 for youth. 2) Overcoming barriers of education, disabilities, language, youth and seniors: Tech
Outreach staff will be hired to reach vulnerable populations in our neighborhoods through culturally
sensitive outreach and trainings at FamilyNet Centers. Three programs will be expanded to serve youth,
almost all of whom are minority and most are low-income: Digital Youth Network after-school program
will serve 600 youth in five local schools; digitally-trained youth will be eligible for a summer
employment program; and You Media will be a replication of a highly successful program at Chicago
Public Libraries that will, for the first time, create three neighborhood-based You Media Labs to
encourage and support youth content creation and digital learning. These youth will be ambassadors to
their households, with 350 graduates receiving Netbooks for their homes and educating their parents
and peers to get on-line. We will reach 1,080 youth through outreach, 1,240 youth through training
programs, and 744 households will adopt broadband at home. Spanish ' A high proportion of our
neighborhoods speak a language other than English at home, especially Spanish. Between 28% and 62%
of current CWF users in each neighborhood speak Spanish at home. Materials will be bilingual and many
of the trainings at the new FamilyNet Centers will be bilingual ' particularly in Pilsen, Humboldt Park
and Chicago Lawn. One way we will drive demand, particularly by youth, is to help local residents create
content of interest to them and their neighbors. Five community portals will be created and will include
videos, free web presence for local businesses and community institutions. Portal workshops for
developing local content will reach 100 residents, leading to 60 households on-line. The portals will
reach 16,280 residents through libraries, schools, cell phones, and other public Internet access. 20
Touchsmart kiosks donated by HP will provide local content and Internet access in highly public locations
at local non-profits and public institutions. The kiosks will provide a digital means for outreach to 5,400
individuals. By exposing these individuals to the Internet and encouraging use of web tools, we estimate
this will lead to home adoption of 162 more households. 3) We will provide contracts with DBEs, such as
the technology services provider Edge First and the non-profit Women Business Development Center, to
provide technology assessments, small business skill workshops, and technology business plans.
Outreach will be provided to 248 businesses, and business trainings will be provided to 225 businesses.
One hundred fifty-five of these businesses will become broadband subscribers. Three broadband Wi Fi
hot spots that will be created to serve commercial and residential clusters. Wi Fi will directly provide
broadband to 310 households, 48 businesses and at least 125 households that do not live in the Wi Fi
areas will see the benefits of broadband and subscribe at home. Organizational Qualifications: The City
of Chicago will be fiscal agent for SmartChicago. The City, Chicago Public Libraries (CPL) and Chicago
Public Schools (CPS) have been leaders in 'digital excellence' since the 1990s, including installing Internet
access at all 79 Chicago Public Libraries at all (over 600) public schools. LISC/Chicago and its
neighborhood partners have built a path-breaking program of digital communications to support the development of healthier communities. LISC/Chicago has been recognized at the forefront of comprehensive community development, having launched the New Communities Program in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods eight years ago. It has built, or helped to build, 18 web sites, blogs and multi-media sharing sites. It has directly invested $59 million and leveraged over $500 million in neighborhood investments. In 2009, the City of Chicago and LISC began planning in the five neighborhoods identified in this proposal to create Smart Communities. A total of 25 key partners and 150 community anchors will provide the broad resources, reach, and implementation capacity to achieve successful outcomes. Jobs Created: A total of 87 direct jobs, 578 indirect jobs and 375 induced jobs will be created over the two-year grant period. Direct jobs include trainers, organizers, technical assistance providers and content creators and editors. Indirect jobs result primarily from job placements due to FamilyNet Center services and small business jobs created or retained due to direct services to businesses. Induced jobs are 34% of the total jobs created per Council of Economic Advisors methodology. SmartChicago will cost $7.80 million, including a request for $5.45 million, and a 30% match in cash and in-kind contributions of $2.36 million.