Executive Summary, March 1, 2010, Needs Assessment: In the once proud industrial City of Pueblo, Colorado we find a community lost from its roots. Once a blue collar industrial town, we stood at the heart of our nation's expansion. In recent times our economy has hit rock bottom and with it a proud mix of people, immigrants from many nations. Today our community sits in the forefront of the least desirable categories such as: terminal unemployment which at 8.9% is the highest in State, excessive high school dropout rates at 47%, 2nd highest teen pregnancy in State. Most of Pueblo's population lives on less than $38,000 a year, that is joint income. 67% of our census track blocks show income below this range. Pueblo also has a high minority population of 48%. Colorado has one of the largest populations of college educated citizens, Pueblo has the lowest. In order for our proud community to pull itself up by its bootstraps, we must rebuild the base of our community through new technology and a futuristic vision for success. Technology and global expansion drove us to this low point and technology can bring us back to prominence. Technology starts with basic infrastructure in the form of Broadband systems and access. Increasing these technology rates will help to expand education and knowledge; this becomes the basis for success. Approach: We intend to expand broadband technology services, programs and access to underserved, low income, students, the elderly and disadvantaged small business in the City/County of Pueblo, Colorado. Our project will use broadband grant funds to open additional public computer centers which will have the ultimate effect of assisting our community and its citizens to become more competitive in a regional and global market place. This massive public partnership has brought together many public and private agencies in order to increase access, as well to provide educational and economic opportunities. Two new computer centers and two mobile labs are the basis of this project. We will give access to the poorest in our community. This is the base for new education and outreach programs. It will encompass all of Pueblo County. Mobile labs will also be made available to state/local agencies, police, fire and emergency management. A source for revenue and sustainability is planned and will be put into motion at the grants outset. Areas to be served: The current project scope includes all of Pueblo County, which geographically is one of the largest in the State of Colorado. Population in Pueblo County is about 167,000 people, most of which reside in and around Pueblo City limits. There are two school districts, both of which are having trouble dealing with high budgets deficits causing school closings. Both school districts will be partners and benefit from this project. Other recipients of programs and services will be the Pueblo Library District, City/County agencies, State Workforce Board, local community colleges and institutions of higher education. State and local emergency groups will also be given access to training and our mobile computer resources. There are too many census tract numbers to show service areas, so we will attach data seperately. We know 67%
of census tract data shows low income populations. Qualifications: Currently we have one public computer center housed at a public housing facility. Its Broadband technology, equipment, programs and public service access have become the basis for expansion. This high tech lab has been operational for nearly two years and boasts an impressive record of success and operational intuitiveness. The current director, community board and staff are the planning and operational team for this grant request. Other organizations have entrusted this group with facilities, funds, programs and other highly sought after resources. It is the intention of this group to use these resources to expand opportunity in this most proud community. The Executive Director has a Masters Degree in Policy Studies from DePaul University in Chicago, and is an operations expert. His undergraduate degree in Business and his vast corporate experience leads the way for this project. Jobs Opportunities: It is estimated that a potential of twelve new jobs will be created from this one project. This does not include the number we gain in time as a multiple effect as training and education progresses over the term of the grant. The new grant will directly hire five staff members. Two organizations will hire new staff to run the programs that will be based in the new public computer centers. Other individuals may have an opportunity to work extra hours as the partners provide services and support to this project. This includes the City/County of Pueblo, Pueblo Housing Authority and the Pueblo City/County Library District, State Workforce Board, among others. Once the new labs are open, The city plans to join in an attempt to provide additional funds as they work to gain access to resources available to them for capital projects. We are conservative in our jobs estimates however, we know in time many job opportunities will derive from this BTOP grant project. Project Details and Cost: Name, Pueblo Educational Broadband Technology Opportunities Project (PEBTOP) Address: 2601 Crawford, Pueblo CO 81004 Phone: (719)560-1007, email address, wcarrero@hapueblo.org Web Site: www.ElPuebloLearnig.org Project Director: William Carrero Project Assistant: Arnita Calderon El Pueblo Learning & Technology Services Inc is a non-for-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization, registered in the State of Colorado. We have a computer center that operates under the name of the Jack Quinn Neighborhood Networks Center. Grant Request: $800,000, Matching: $225,000 or 22%. Estimated final Matching @ 32% or $256,000. Total Project Budget: $1,025,000 Budget Period: est. Septemebcr 2010 to September 2013.