The City of Fayetteville looks forward to the day that all citizens and businesses have a high-speed connection to the Internet. Many citizens in the City of Fayetteville lack a computer at home and half of all residents do not have, or choose not to subscribe to a high speed connection. In addition to those that lack a computer at home, others cannot afford a broadband connection or have not come to understand the value that such a connection plays in education, employment, economic development and enhanced health care delivery. One of our anchor institutions, the Activity and Wellness Center for senior citizens will be provided broadband service. This service to seniors has proven that when they spend time online it reduces depression by 20 percent. In addition to the quality of life benefits, it is proven that reducing the incidence of depression by widespread Internet use among older Americans could trim the nation's health care bill. Providing broadband to the Area Agency on Aging Activity and Wellness Center provides Internet access, use, and enables seniors to connect with sources of social support when face-to-face interaction becomes more difficult. Another anchor institution is the Yvonne Richardson Center, this center provides supervised and filtered after school internet use to those that do not have access to the internet. School children and adults conduct school work, tutoring, mentoring and training at the center; furthermore, the City of Fayetteville will conduct community-based outreach programs so citizens from all ages will have an opportunity at no cost to gain or further their employment and computer skills. Emergency Services will be provided a direct broadband connection for video training and provide secondary locations for disaster command centers. The broadband system will connect the City's Government T.V. channel to any one of the anchor institutions so Emergency Services will be provided flexibility for emergency announcements to the public. This connection will allow live video so emergency services can have redundancy. Redundant locations include the anchor institutions such as Parks and Recreation, Utility Services, Animal Services, Water & Sewer, Solid Waste, Yvonne Richardson Center, Area Agency on Aging and Transportation. These anchor institutions are located where the expansion of broadband will provide connection to the local government through public kiosk connectivity. Other locations, such as the Animal Center will be able to provide citizens with remote connectivity that will help with adoption and location of lost pets. Parks and Recreation will have Kiosks for public use to aid in sign up for recreation programs and further development of greener infrastructure development. By partnering with BTOP the City of Fayetteville will be able to provide broadband service utilizing fiber optic connectivity to the above anchor institutions. With a total cost of the project of $804,200 the City of Fayetteville seeks $562,500 from the Federal Government for a 70/30 matching fund partnership. This partnership will provide expanded service to the public and will provide direct interaction with Local City Government. By utilizing the Information Technology Division,
the anchor institutions will be able to allow maintenance and cost free service to the users. The project will leverage City resources such as existing staff and facilities to empower our residents with access to the benefits of the information age, including job training and guidance. For residents that cannot afford or who do not own a computer this will be their means of accessing broadband Internet services at no charge. The project will be a joint effort of the six City of Fayetteville departments as listed above, including the Area Agency on Aging Activity and Wellness Center. Project management will be provided by the City of Fayetteville Information Technology Division. The project service area is in South Fayetteville, which encompasses approximately half of the 55 square miles in the City limits. The total population of the City of Fayetteville (2008) is 73,372, and the City’s residents are comprised of an ethnically and culturally diverse population. The City believes that jobs will be saved and or created by having training opportunities where instructors will be brought in to conduct workforce training, also increased vendor sales from whom the city purchases its broadband equipment, and the hiring of contractors to install the fiber cable system.