Applicant Name: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH (INC)

Project Title: Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh Broadband Initiative

Project Type: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure

Executive Summary

The Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) is a municipal corporation, formed under the United States Housing Act of 1937, charged with providing decent, affordable housing for low-income persons. The Authority is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors which establishes goals, approves policy and budgets, and provides general direction to the HACP Executive Staff. HACP provides publicly assisted housing comprised of traditional public housing, scattered sites and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8). We currently house more than 20,000 Pittsburghers, manage more than 4,000 public housing units, and provide oversight of management on an additional 900 mixed-finance units. HACP's purpose is to develop and make available affordable, safe housing and help families achieve the independence they strive for. A brighter future is always within reach thanks to the commitment of HACP. The Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh would like to address the community's needs by upgrading, expanding, and equipping residents with broadband access and technology in several public housing communities. The Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh proposes to develop and execute this program within the life of the grant. Our public computer centers (Bedford Dwellings, and Northview Heights) will be equipped with broadband services, including wireless broadband, to create localized adoption of broadband technology and equipment. Our partnership with SLB Radio Productions will allow broadcast and podcast to propagate through broadband Internet, thus underserved low-income residents shall be enlightened to the possibilities of broadband technology. The Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh with the help of SLB Radio Productions will broadcast housing, employment, public affairs, community announcements, emergency alerts, and other pertinent information created by and for youth and others who live in the community. Public housing residents need access to broadband technology to actively pursue employment and educational opportunities. Our current facilities and broadband speed does not adequately support our current computer center’s capacity and network traffic. The Internet radio stations that we propose to create will provide information to those not comfortable using a computer. We believe that locally produced content ' combined with simple-to-use devices ' will make broadband an essential resource in the community. This approach will provide a cutting-edge way of getting people of all ages engaged to adopt broadband technology. This project would include equipment for upgrading our public computer center's computers and Internet connection speed with equipment suitable for broadband services. This project would also include a two studios and production/edition equipment; field equipment for youth and seniors to use in the neighborhood; computer media servers for streaming media and staff to provide oversight and training. In addition to broadcast and podcast, and production skills, we will also offer basic-to-advanced computer literacy, job searching, resume workshops, green jobs and home health aide training. The
Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh proposes to provide services in the Bedford Dwellings, Caliguiri Senior High-rise, and the Northview Heights communities. These communities lie in Congressional District 14, each community faces its own challenges. Bedford Dwellings is comprised of 378 occupied units with 328 units having household incomes less than 30% of the median income of homes in the surrounding community. Bedford Dwellings has an unemployment rate of at least 11%. The estimated number of residents that can be impacted from access to broadband technology through our public computer centers is about 2109. Northview Heights is comprised of 368 households, 289 of which have household incomes that are less than 30% of the median incomes of homes in the surrounding community. The unemployment rate for Northview Heights is about 17%. The estimated number of residents that will be impacted by the broadband initiative is 2526. While unemployment is not as much of an issue for seniors, having an active and engaging life is, we estimate the number of potential senior residents to be impacted by broadband technology to be about 300. The Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh is a campus wide housing organization stretching across the city of Pittsburgh. Our in-house MIS department is well experienced with over 20 years, computer/network experience. Our Resident Self Sufficiency department’s computer program is staffed with 2 computer professionals that have over 15 years of computer/network experience. Founded in 1978, SLB Radio Productions has been at the forefront of radio and audio for over 30 years and owns and operates a $250,000 digital broadcast studio and training facility housed in the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. SLB Radio Productions has a full-time staff of four and two part time employees, and a budget of about 200,000.