Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Innovative I.T., Inc.

Project Title: Connected Communities

Project Type: Sustainable Adoption

_____**Executive Summary**_____

Innovative I.T. provides leading, full-service technology support to California's Central Valley. In compliance with the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) and the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee's (CDLAC) initiatives, Innovative I.T. has spent the past two years implementing tenant internet solutions across the state for low-income housing developers required to provide high-speed internet service to their residents at no cost. With the assistance of BTOP funding, we will leverage this expertise to create a sustainable revenue stream to further support and advance our current business model and objectives. Our Connected Communities project, through innovative technology and aggressive awareness and education campaigning, will successfully connect over 8,000 low-income, Central Valley families to affordable broadband services.

In close collaboration with low-income housing developers, property management firms and local housing authorities, Connected Communities will serve a carefully selected portfolio of apartment complexes housing a collective minimum of 8,000 units located in six counties (Fresno County, Kern County, Kings County, Madera County, Merced County and Tulare County) across California's Central Valley. Each selected community will serve low-income demographics ranging from 40%-80% below the region's median income. Innovative I.T. anticipates a 60% broadband adoption rate from the 8,000 units by the end of the funding period, equaling 4,800 units with as many as 20,000 broadband users, and generating annual revenues in excess of $575,000.

Innovative I.T. seeks to address the digital divide evident throughout the Central Valley that results from a pervasive belief that broadband is too expensive, too foreign, or too extraneous. Because 32% of American adults say that the price of broadband must decrease before they would switch to a broadband connection at home, and because 50% of non-online users cite irrelevance as their reason for not subscribing to broadband, we see why a majority of disadvantaged communities continue to reside on the far end of American's current digital divide.

Innovative I.T.'s progressive utilization of technology addresses the issue of affordability through the engineering of localized networks within each project site to mitigate the re-distribution of carrier-class

data service, thus eliminating the need of costly, individual circuits. Once engineered and deployed, broadband connections will then be offered to all units at rates 50% or more below market, via IP billing gateways. While more than simply creating a low-cost option will be necessary to stimulate broadband adoption, eliminating the cost-barrier sets the stage for the launch of an effective Awareness & Relevance Campaign.

We will endeavor to stimulate penetration, continued demand and sustainability through an aggressive Awareness & Relevance Campaign that combats the challenges of perceived usefulness and relevancy. No less than once a quarter, each tenant will receive a published, bilingual (English/Spanish) newsletter that provides custom content specific to each location; it will include training on how to access and utilize enhanced services such as telemedicine and education, as well as encouraging tenants to enjoy and take advantage of the many entertainment-driven benefits of broadband.

In addition to specializing in large-scale, demanding projects, and having designed and implemented state-wide DSLAM/IP initiatives serving low-income communities, county-wide systems management servers (Microsoft technologies), multi-site Exchange clustering technologies, multi-state desktop management infrastructures, multi-site VoIP implementations, and public/metro wireless 802.11x technologies, the core management team of Innovative I.T. brings a wealth of experience to this grant proposal. Team Member backgrounds include: Services Director for an international I.T consulting firm; Chief Systems Administrator for Madera County Office of Education; Chief Systems Administrator for a national law firm; International Marketing and Sales Management Director; MA in Composition and Rhetorical Theory; MFA in Creative & Professional Writing; English/Spanish business, educational, and Marketing Manager; Associate Producer of Content Development for an international travel agency and Coordinator for international telco/IP initiatives.

While adhering to the direct and indirect cost principles, the proposed budget of $4,672,834 is reasonable with respect to the value of the anticipated results. All effort and expenses charged to the Connected Communities project will be for services specific to the project, and not for the general support of Innovative I.T.'s other business activities or endeavors. Ensuring that all proposed budget items are allowable, reasonable, and allocable, the enclosed total budget of $4,672,834 shall be satisfied through $755,496 in projected project income, and the remainder of $3,917,338 through the federal share.

Given our credentials and experience, we believe in our capacity to implement the project goals and provide secure and trustworthy results; our company expertise is precisely relevant and pertinent to the statutory purposes outlined by the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program and Recovery Act.

The demand for broadband access will increase and become the standard in communities that previously deemed at-home broadband usage as elective or excessive. Innovative I.T. aims to rid Valley residents of the perception that broadband is inaccessible, irrelevant, or too expensive. We seek to promote relevancy in the most vulnerable communities of California's Central Valley, thereby creating independence through active internet use in an otherwise dependent population of our valley. From relevance… to reliance and from Innovation… to integration.