

April 22, 2010

VT Quarterly Report as of 03/31/2010

State Broadband Data & Development Grant Program Quarterly Report Content

Directions: Please answer all questions completely. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call your assigned Federal Program Officer. Please note that each grantee's quarterly report will be made publicly available on the broadband mapping section of www.ntia.doc.gov.

Broadband Mapping:

1. Describe progress made against goals, objectives, and milestones detailed in the approved project plan. In regard to these goals, please provide the specific information listed below.
 - A. Broadband Provider Data:
 - a. Please provide the name of each broadband provider that you have identified as providing service in your state. (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - b. For each such provider, provide the following information on the attached spreadsheet:
 - i. Have you contacted the provider to provide data? (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - ii. Have you reached agreement for data sharing (signed NDA or other agreement)? (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - iii. Has the provider supplied you with a complete set of data? (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - iv. Have you completed validation of these data sets? (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - c. Have you encountered challenges with any providers that indicate that these providers may refuse to participate in this project? If so, describe the discussions to date with each of these providers.

VT Response - *Yes, some challenges have been encountered, although individual provider participation as a percentage of the Vermont provider community is very good. Two providers did not submit data. A small provider (Great Auk Wireless) did not submit data. Fortunately, their service coverage area is limited so the negative impact to the statewide broadband coverage data was limited. Charter Communications did not submit coverage data either. Comcast submitted data, but it was determined to be unusable for the project. For both Charter Communications and Comcast, VT had other service coverage datasets that were submitted in 2008 as part of the state's regulatory requirements. In both cases those data sets were considered to be accurate enough to be used in the Broadband Data Project data submission. We will continue to pursue updated data from those Providers in future months.*

- B. If you are additionally collecting data through other means (e.g. data extraction, extrapolation, etc.), please describe both your progress to date and the relevant activities to be undertaken in the future.

VT Response – Yes, we are collecting information through other means. Data for Wireless Tower sites and other information is being extracted from the required reporting data for VT Act 250 Data. Data is also being extracted from other public repositories such as Adirondack Park Agency maps for cell sites in western New York that may serve VT.

Collecting data for Wireless Tower Facilities site locations in Canada that provide service to VT is problematic. However, it is conventional wisdom that the number and service areas of Wireless Tower Facilities in Canada that provide service in VT is very limited and not significant for our purposes. The planned drive testing effort may help us find out how true conventional wisdom is in that case.

Drive testing and field verification is planned to begin in the next quarter and will help us to; 1) locate some previously undocumented facilities and 2.) verify how complete and accurate our data collection efforts are.

- C. Verification Activities:

- a. Please name the verification activities you plan to implement.

VT Response – The VT Broadband Mapping Team will be performing verification by survey (on-line and phone), drive testing, and a minimal amount of field verification.

- b. If you have begun verification activities, please describe the status of these activities. If not, what is your projected timeline for beginning and completing activities?

VT Response –

VT Broadband Data Verification Summary

- Total E911 address points in Vermont (study “population”): 319,745
- Total viable respondents: 739 (combination of residential survey and anchor institutions survey)
- Using respondents’ self-reported broadband connectivity from a sample survey, we have found that the broadband coverage availability map (GIS data) is 88.9% accurate.
- Confidence Level and Confidence Interval for provider data verification by respondents:

- *99% Confidence Level and 4.74% Confidence Interval*

OR

- *95% Confidence Level and 3.6% Confidence Interval*

- *In lay terms the confidence interval and level may be described as such:*

- *We can say that we are 99% confident that if every E-911 point in the study population were to respond, the accuracy of the broadband coverage availability map (GIS data) would fall within plus/minus 4.74 percentage points of 88.9%.*

OR

- *We can say that we are 95% confident that if every E-911 point in the study population were to respond, the accuracy of the broadband coverage availability map (GIS data) would fall within plus/minus 3.6 percentage points of 88.9%.*

Survey Verification Methodology

The State of Vermont's Department of Public Service (DPS) commissioned random sample phone surveys within Vermont. Respondents that provided both broadband connectivity and physical address information were utilized in the verification. A total of 282 respondents were able to be used for verification purposes.

The Center for Rural Studies surveyed all defined "Anchor Institution" E-911 points provided by VCGI to CRS. These points included town offices, educational facilities (K-16), medical facilities including EMS and medical offices and both volunteer and non-volunteer fire rescue facilities. A total of 457 Anchor Institution respondents were able to be used for verification purposes.

The Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI) mapped survey responses and anchor institution locations to specific lat/long coordinates. VCGI then intersected survey response and anchor institution locations (points) with the broadband coverage availability map to flag which locations/points have broadband availability according to the coverage map.

Drive Testing and Field Verification

Both Drive Testing and Field Verification activities will begin in the next quarter. To some degree field verification is weather dependent, but we don't expect significant delays due to weather. Drive Testing on all of VT's federal aid highways (~3800 miles) is scheduled to begin in May.

D. Staffing:

- a. How many jobs have been created or retained as a result of this project? (Use the same figure that you utilized in your ARRA report). (See attached spreadsheet.)
- b. Is the project currently fully staffed? If not, please describe the expected dates that you expect to hire the staff positions named above. Please also describe how any lack of staffing will impact the project's timeline. (See attached spreadsheet and further clarification below.)

VT Response – *The project is fully staffed internally at VCGI and amongst all of the VT Broadband Mapping Team members at this time. However, we still have two planned sub-contractor RFP's to release and award in order to meet all of the tasks designated in our proposal. The two RFPs are; 1.) a contract to develop the BroadbandVT website that will enable public access to broadband related interactive resources and information and 2.) a contract for marketing or public relations support to develop a robust outreach strategy oriented toward gaining cooperation from broadband providers and increasing public awareness of the effort.*

The two RFPs are in development and should be released in late April (Broadband Website Developer) and early May (BroadbandVT Marketing Consultant). RFPs have been awarded or are in development for all of the contractor tasks designated in the VT Broadband Data and Development Grant proposal.

- c. When fully staffed, how many full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs do you expect to create or retain as a result of this project? (See attached spreadsheet.)
- d. Please provide the title and percentage of FTE for each job. (See attached spreadsheet.)
- e. Subcontracts: If you plan to subcontract any portion of your work, please provide the following information on the attached spreadsheet for each subcontract greater than \$25,000. (See attached spreadsheet.)
 - i. Purpose of the subcontract.
 - ii. Name of Vendor (enter "Not Selected" if no vendor has been selected)
 - iii. Has an RFP been released (if applicable)? (Y, N, NA) If so, when?
 - iv. Has the project team executed a contract with the selected vendor? (Y,N) If so, please provide:
 - a. Start/end dates of contract
 - b. Contract value
 - i. Federal Portion
 - ii. In-kind Portion

- E. Please describe the status of any project milestone that has not been included in the information provided above.

VT Response - None

- F. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing.

VT Response – *The most substantial challenges that the VT Team faced in the Jan-Mar 2010 quarter were related to the resolution of data collection and data representation issues. As mentioned in section 1.A.c. above when two providers did not submit useable data the decision was made to include other data from another source. The decisions made relating to the data in each case are identified with more specifics in the documentation that was included with the delivery.*

2. Funding:

- a. How much federal grant funding has been expended as of the end of the last quarter, and how much funding remains? *(See attached spreadsheet.)*
- b. How much of the matching funds have been expended as of the end of the last quarter, and how much funding remains? *(See attached spreadsheet.)*
- c. For any funds expended for a subcontract, please identify the name of the subcontractor and the amount. An example is provided in the template. *(See attached spreadsheet.)*
- d. Hardware/Software: Has the project team purchased the software/hardware described in the application? If so, please list. Please note any hardware/software that has not yet been purchased and explain why it has not been purchased.

VT Response – *The hardware has not been purchased yet, but it will be purchased in the next quarter. The VT Broadband Mapping Team is still making decisions about our web strategy etc. and it is not yet clear as to whether we will be purchasing the software identified in our proposal. That decision will be made within the design discussions that will take place with the selected website development contractor.*

- e. Data Sets: Has the project team purchased the data sets described in the application? If so, please list. Please note any data set that has not yet been purchased and explain why it has not been purchased.

VT Response – *The Vermont Project team was not planning on purchasing any data in our proposal and that plan has not changed, so far.*

3. Please provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your broadband mapping project.

VT Response- *We believe that the VT Broadband Data and Development project has been very successful so far. There have been unexpected delays due to NDA's and website contract award*

problems, but they have not significantly delayed the delivery of a robust VT coverage data product for the March 31 delivery date.

Verification of the data is not as far along as we had originally planned in the proposal. At this time there are no obstacles to getting the remaining verification work started in the next quarter and completed as planned in time for the Sept. 1, 2010 delivery date.

The project started off slowly, but the Team has made smart decisions in allocating resources to get the coverage data submitted on March 31, 2010. As a community, the providers have been very responsive to our broadband coverage data requests. However the issue of Middle-mile and Backbone data was not addressed for this delivery in order to get coverage data from the Providers and not get into a contentious issue with them.

There is no denying that, as a state, we have an advantage in being relatively small in geographic coverage and also not heavily populated. Those realities served to reduce the data volumes that other states may have seen. But, the VT effort was not without complexities and issues of our own that slowed progress.

As an additional consideration we are concerned that decisions about what data can acceptably be included and whether a Provider's submission is complete are being made without national standards for acceptability. As the project moves forward it is hoped that data acceptability standards can be identified on a national level to support homogeneity of the broadband coverage representation across all of the states.

Broadband Planning:

Vermont Did Not Request Funding for Broadband Planning

1. If the project received funding for broadband planning, please describe progress made against all goals, objectives, and milestones detailed in the approved project plan. Be sure to include a description of each major activity/milestone that you plan to complete and your current status. (Answer below.)
2. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing. (Answer below.)
3. Does the project team anticipate any changes to the current project plan for broadband planning? If so, please describe these anticipated changes. Please note that NTIA will need to approve changes to the project plan before they can be implemented. (Answer below.)
4. Funding:

- a. How much grant funding has been expended as of the end of the last quarter, and how much funding remains? (Use attached spreadsheet.)
 - b. How much of the matching funds have been expended as of the end of the last quarter, and how much funding remains? (Use attached spreadsheet.)
 - c. For any funds expended for a subcontract, please identify the name of the subcontractor and the amount. An example is provided in the template. (Use attached spreadsheet.)
5. Please provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your broadband planning project. (Answer below.)