



Champion Report Template

Theme Area: Connectivity

Champions: Pam Mahling, Janelle Riley, Kevin Larson, Tad Erickson, Stacey Stockdill, Sally Fineday, Monty Johnson

Date: April 15, 2014

Goals/Strategies or Action Steps:	What NEW success have you had in moving your theme goals forward over the reporting period?
<p>Goal 1: All Action Steps</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yuri Hupka, Little Falls resident and MA Student St. Cloud State University, was selected to receive a U of MN CURA award. Thanks to the work of Jeff Corn (CURA supervisor) the attached report was produced, <i>Findings on the Economic Benefits to Broadband Expansion to Rural and Remote Areas</i>. It identifies the benefits of connectivity and a few business models used to support broadband expansion in rural areas. This document is also posted on the CURA website: http://www.cura.umn.edu/publications/catalog/cap-188 2. Danna Mackenzie and Diane Wells met with Cheryal and me to talk about access to Armer Towers and submitting Expressions of Interest for a FCC funding opportunity and as part of a list being compiled of "Shovel Ready Broadband Projects." They told us if we were having issues with access to the Armer Towers to let them know, <i>"First is a follow-up from our conversation about ARMER tower access for broadband providers. We met with MNDOT last week and they assured us that they are working with many public and private tenants on co-location agreements for the ARMER towers. So, I was tasked to follow up with you to get more specifics about the bottle-necks you are running into when trying to access this resource. Not sure if we need to have a call or meeting to talk about this, but I am happy to continue to pursue resolution on any issues you are still having in this area."</i> 3. The Connectivity Champions and Todd County Fiberband Task Force submitted EOIs for all five counties. 4. The PC For People Project (PC4People) has evolved into the Resilient Region Demonstration Project: Grow Our Own IT Career Pathway for At Risk Youth (GOO-IT). This emerged from the discussions at the January 14 Resilient Region meeting. It is a three-year demonstration project and brings together the work of the Connectivity Champions, Economic Engine Champions, Economic Development Champions, and Changing Populations Champions to help address the digital divide and help at-risk youth (16 - 25) served by The Shop (Years 1-3) and Leech Lake Reservation (Years 2-4) begin pursuing a career in a high-growth, high-demand, high-pay sector Information Technology careers. If you wish to see a copy of the proposal we submitted to The Bush Foundation, please let me know. 5. Stacey Stockdill and Kevin Larson presented at the East Central Broadband Taskforce conference on April 3rd, 2014

What future activities has your theme prioritized for the coming year?

Connectivity

Connectivity Issue

Connectivity: Extending high-speed internet access to the entire region increases telecommuting opportunities, provides greater access to customers and markets for businesses, and allows all residents access to civic resources and commerce.

Connectivity Issue Goal

Connectivity: The number of households in the region served by high-speed internet-services rises from the current level of 40% to 95% served. The (region/rural areas) community is willing to invest to increase coverage. This will include both public and private investment in service.

Recommendation 1

Access across the region: Ensure all households in the region have high-speed internet access which meets common state standards.

Action Step 1A

Access: Promote, support and develop high-speed internet access throughout region for telecommuting, educational benefits, and supporting business activity.

Recommendation 2

Efficiency: Local units of governments will work across political boundaries to share equipment costs/facilities for more efficient delivery of high-speed internet.

Action Step 2A

Efficiency in installation: Lay conduit for fiber optics when upgrading sewer and water or digging trench.

Recommendation 3

Access for entrepreneurs: Provide access to technology needs and support to retain businesses and encourage potential entrepreneurs

Action Step 3A

Economic development: Determine the compatibility and interface between communications, smart grid technologies, and internet systems. Develop a recruiting initiative encouraging technology-oriented companies to explore opportunities offered in non-urban spaces.

Telecommuting: Create a business plan that facilitates legitimate telecommuting jobs and promotes high-speed internet connection in the region. Upgrade and expand high-speed internet infrastructure in housing so residents may work from home.

Action Step 3C

Map of access sites: Develop map or list of accessible sites within region to conduct web-type meetings, free Wi-Fi etc.

Action Step 3B

Recommendation 4

Access for children: All school aged children will have access to a computer with high-speed internet capabilities.

Action Step 4A

Support sites: Make available sites providing educational, internet, support, financial resources, etc.

Recommendation 5

Funding: Identify and pursue state, federal, and philanthropic grants to fund connectivity recommendations.