TED STRICKLAND
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

May 3, 2010

The Honorable Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
and Administrator, National Telecommunications and
Information Administration (NTIA)
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The State of Ohio appreciates the opportunity to consult with the US Department of Commerce as you review and evaluate grant applications in the second round of funding for the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). Although many of the projects that propose to serve Ohio are worthy of recommendation, to ensure maximum benefit to the state's areas of need and optimize the return on investment, recommendations for each category of funding are focused on key projects that are comprehensive and align with Ohio's broadband strategic plan.

Ohio currently lacks comprehensive community infrastructure, and therefore, experiences inferior access to affordable broadband services primarily in rural and Appalachian areas. This deficiency has created an environment that restricts economic development and limits educational opportunities. Due to Ohio's geographic and socioeconomic realities, rural providers are unable to aggregate sufficient demand to ensure a reasonable return on their investment. Funding for the Ohio Middle Mile Consortium would reduce the burden of upfront capital investment and change the focus to a long-term investment strategy aimed at producing a sustainable broadband model. Once broadband is available, it is critical to address the barriers to residential broadband adoption including the perceived lack of value, price, and computer ownership. These barriers would be reduced through the recommended Public Computing Center projects by increasing access to computer resources at no cost to the communities. Additionally the recommended Sustainable Broadband Adoption programs are designed to link with the Public Computing projects to provide the necessary training in the use of these resources to build the foundation needed to increase the residential adoption rate.

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The following applications would address above disparities and barriers:

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

I highly recommend the following projects, as described below, for Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Funding:

- Connecting Appalachian Ohio OMMC (ID# 6233)
- GigEPAC – Gig PLUS Availability Coalition OMMC (ID# 7296)
- Transforming NE Ohio: From Rust Belt to Tech Powerhouse OMMC (ID# 4395)

The Ohio Middle Mile Consortium (OMMC) represents three integrated proposals targeting middle mile expansion designed to pass 3,606,510 households and 534,363 businesses as well as serve or pass 5,958 anchor institutions. The total job creation projected as result of funding OMMC is 1,552 jobs over the life of the project. Connecting Appalachian Ohio represents an expansion of middle mile across 34 Appalachian counties through the deployment of 1,960 miles of fiber-optics to directly connect 592 community anchors and pass 457,000 households which are underserved and 125,000 which are unserved. This project will serve the most economically disadvantaged region of the state and create 725 jobs, while providing an unprecedented level of progress to address Appalachian Ohio's infrastructure needs. GigEPAC propose a public-private partnership among three existing network providers to address the compelling problem of the digital divide for rural communities in 28 counties in western Ohio resulting in the construction of over 700 miles of fiber optic cable aimed at delivering affordable rates for 30,488 unserved households and 2,959 anchor institutions. OneCommunity will pass 2,166,554 households and 210,987 businesses and serve or pass 3,552 anchor institutions with its middle mile expansion. This project will also create 499 jobs in northeast Ohio, while improving the environment for economic development through increased access to affordable broadband services.

While each project can stand on its own merits, together they represent a cohesive solution to address the needs of the unserved and underserved for affordable broadband services while expanding connectivity for community anchors and improving the overall economic development climate in Ohio.

Please see attached a two-page overview of the Ohio Middle Mile Consortium for additional information.

PUBLIC COMPUTING CENTER

I highly recommend the following project, as described below, for Public Computing Center funding:

- Ohio Public Access through Libraries – OPAL I (ID# 5331)

I recommend the following projects for Public Computing Center funding:

- Shaker Heights Public Library – Public Computing, Training & Entrepreneurial Centers (ID# 4728)
- Toledo-Lucas County Public Library - @ccess Center: The Public Library of the Future (ID# 4808)
- Ella M Everhard Public Library – Wadsworth Public Library Multimedia/Technology Center (ID# 6084)
- GMN Tri County Community Action Committee – Noble County Community Connection (ID# 6281)

Libraries are community anchor institutions that are widely trusted as an information resource to the general population. They are highly relied on by the unemployed and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, which typically experience lower broadband adoption rates. Libraries are seeing an increase in the number of users due to increased unemployment and have become increasingly important resource centers for job seekers during recessionary times. Increased demand for computer access continues to stretch the resources of libraries which have experienced a decrease in funding from both state and local sources. The State Library of Ohio proposes to enhance public access computing opportunities in 89 Ohio public library systems to meet the growing demand in libraries to assist individuals who do not have access or cannot afford broadband services.

SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

I highly recommend the following project, as described below, for Sustainable Broadband Adoption funding:

- Public Adoption through Libraries - OPAL II Every Community Online (ID# 6581)

I recommend the following project for Sustainable Broadband Adoption funding:

- The Ohio State University – Power3: A mentoring alliance between Academia, Business and Government (ID# 6827)

State research indicates that 62% of Ohio adults subscribe to broadband. Of those who do not subscribe to broadband some cite availability or cost as the barrier to adoption but for more than half, the barrier is perceived value. A training and outreach effort is needed to convey and introduce the benefits of broadband to non-adopters. Connected Nation proposes to provide equipment, curriculum, trainers, technical support, and public awareness to inform and train new users through libraries, encouraging residential adoption. This partnership between the State Library of Ohio, Connect Ohio, community colleges and the private sector offers a comprehensive solution to increase broadband adoption in Ohio by producing a coordinated statewide public awareness campaign and introducing new users to the benefits of broadband. In collaboration with the State Library of Ohio's Public Computing Capacity request, Connect Ohio will provide 6,000 incremental public computing stations in Ohio, enabling the training of

450,000 Ohioans and producing 210,000 incremental broadband subscriptions. Over 140 jobs would be created in local settings to provide training and follow-up to new adopters.

The projects listed above, requesting funding for BTOP, represent a coordinated strategy to support Ohio's goal to provide service to the unserved, advanced services to those areas we believe are underserved and address identified barriers to broadband adoption. Support of these projects will blanket the State to meet the collective needs of citizens, businesses, government, healthcare, education, public safety, libraries and last mile providers by expanding infrastructure, public computing centers, and ensuring sustainable adoption of broadband services.

Thank you for your consideration of these projects. Also enclosed is county-by-county data to further support NTIA's review. Ohio broadband availability maps and research materials are also available on Connect Ohio's website at http://connectohio.org/mapping_and_research/.

Please contact Namrata Mujumdar in my office at (614) 728-7531 with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

Ted Strickland

Ted Strickland
Governor, State of Ohio

County Level Broadband Service & Usage Data

County	broadband availability	adoption rate	total # HH	unserved # HH	avg cost of service	avg speed (mbps)	Unemployment rate
Adams	47.91%	16%	11,822	6,158	$37.90	2.2	16.5%
Allen	99.67%	53%	44,245	146	$38.80	1.7	12.2%
Ashland	93.67%	48%	20,832	1,319	$30.40	1.7	13.6%
Ashtabula	90.87%	49%	43,792	3,998	$34.10	1.1	14.5%
Athens	85.07%	35%	24,901	3,718	$41.50	3.3	9.8%
Auglaize	98.83%	56%	18,470	216	$39.20	2.1	10.6%
Belmont	82.28%	40%	31,236	5,535	$30.10	2.2	11.4%
Brown	69.83%	39%	17,193	5,187	$37.95	2.5	14.5%
Butler	99.03%	54%	129,793	1,259	$34.90	2.5	10.5%
Carroll	60.48%	29%	13,016	5,144	$35.70	1.5	15.7%
Champaign	79.01%	55%	15,890	3,335	$36.90	2.3	12.6%
Clark	97.48%	50%	61,056	1,539	$35.20	3.2	11.7%
Clermont	97.91%	60%	69,226	1,447	$36.90	2.26	11.3%
Clinton	87.81%	36%	16,577	2,021	$37.50	1.4	18.7%
Columbiana	82.17%	43%	46,083	8,217	$35.00	2.1	14.3%
Coshocton	70.71%	32%	16,107	4,718	$34.40	1.2	14.4%
Crawford	98.64%	31%	20,178	274	$30.70	2.7	13.8%
Cuyahoga	99.78%	57%	616,903	1,357	$32.10	2.2	9.8%
Darke	81.64%	39%	21,583	3,963	$35.30	2.4	12.5%
Defiance	98.89%	56%	16,040	178	$35.50	1.2	13.8%
Delaware	96.73%	73%	42,374	1,386	$38.40	2.7	8.4%
Erie	98.51%	48%	35,909	535	$32.90	2.1	12.9%
Fairfield	89.68%	58%	47,922	4,946	$37.10	2.7	10.3%
Fayette	95.46%	39%	11,904	540	$33.80	1.8	13.1%
Franklin	99.97%	67%	471,016	141	$38.20	2.3	9.5%
Fulton	97.47%	60%	16,232	411	$36.90	1.9	14.4%
Gallia	74.55%	21%	13,498	3,435	$30.40	1.5	11.8%
Geauga	89.46%	62%	32,805	3,458	$31.80	2	9.1%
Greene	96.40%	64%	58,224	2,096	$32.90	3	11.3%
Guernsey	75.45%	30%	18,771	4,608	$36.80	2.2	14.5%
Hamilton	99.93%	58%	373,393	261	$37.50	2.8	10.2%
Hancock	99.04%	59%	29,785	286	$37.20	2	10.3%

County	broadband availability	adoption rate	total # HH	unserved # HH	avg cost of service	avg speed (mbps)	Unemployment rate
Hardin	93.68%	36%	12,907	816	$38.40	2.1	12.6%
Harrison	65.35%	39%	7,680	2,661	$33.80	2.4	13.7%
Henry	97.36%	42%	11,622	307	$37.90	1.6	14.9%
Highland	69.58%	38%	17,583	5,349	$38.90	2.7	18.3%
Hocking	53.86%	28%	12,141	5,602	$37.70	2.6	13.2%
Holmes	60.92%	35%	12,280	4,799	$33.00	2.3	8.8%
Huron	95.27%	46%	23,594	1,116	$34.60	1.4	16.8%
Jackson	72.09%	27%	13,909	3,882	$39.70	2.3	12.9%
Jefferson	89.35%	38%	33,291	3,545	$38.50	0.9	14.6%
Knox	82.93%	42%	21,793	3,720	$39.10	1.5	11.0%
Lake	94.34%	67%	93,487	5,291	$29.90	1.8	9.6%
Lawrence	83.52%	30%	27,189	4,481	$44.20	3.2	8.8%
Licking	97.26%	54%	58,760	1,610	$35.80	2	11.0%
Logan	92.45%	47%	21,571	1,629	$35.50	1.6	12.6%
Lorain	99.33%	60%	111,368	746	$36.60	1.7	10.5%
Lucas	99.91%	55%	196,259	177	$31.50	3	12.8%
Madison	90.40%	50%	14,399	1,382	$42.40	2.2	10.9%
Mahoning	98.96%	52%	111,762	1,162	$31.90	3.3	14.4%
Marion	97.59%	54%	26,298	634	$33.20	2.4	12.0%
Medina	94.22%	65%	56,793	3,283	$33.20	2.2	9.3%
Meigs	70.92%	23%	10,782	3,135	$32.70	2	16.9%
Mercer	91.56%	50%	15,875	1,340	$35.00	1.1	9.2%
Miami	90.47%	61%	40,554	3,865	$34.90	1.5	12.6%
Monroe	51.59%	18%	7,212	3,491	$29.80	1.5	16.5%
Montgomery	99.02%	61%	248,443	2,435	$35.20	1.8	12.5%
Morgan	56.76%	25%	7,771	3,360	$32.90	1.7	17.2%
Morrow	82.58%	41%	12,132	2,113	$38.80	2.1	12.3%
Muskingum	85.56%	51%	35,163	5,078	$37.70	2	15.2%
Noble	46.70%	21%	5,480	2,921	$37.50	1.2	17.2%
Ottawa	94.14%	47%	25,532	1,496	$33.60	3.6	18.0%
Paulding	98.16%	54%	8,478	156	$35.60	1.9	13.2%
Perry	64.33%	35%	13,655	4,871	$37.00	1.7	15.4%
Pickaway	81.17%	46%	18,596	3,502	$39.00	1.9	13.2%
Pike	78.17%	39%	11,602	2,533	$34.40	1.8	17.1%

County	broadband availability	adoption rate	total # HH	unserved # HH	avg cost of service	avg speed (mbps)	Unemployment rate
Portage	92.75%	64%	60,096	4,357	$31.70	2.3	11.6%
Preble	80.76%	46%	17,186	3,307	$39.20	1.7	13.3%
Putnam	98.21%	42%	12,753	228	$36.50	2.4	11.7%
Richland	96.83%	56%	53,062	1,682	$40.80	2.1	13.4%
Ross	95.27%	49%	29,461	1,394	$37.50	2.5	13.3%
Sandusky	97.64%	56%	25,253	596	$37.80	1.9	12.5%
Scioto	87.01%	39%	34,054	4,424	$35.30	4.6	14.2%
Seneca	100.00%	52%	23,692	0	$37.70	2.8	13.4%
Shelby	91.62%	58%	18,682	1,566	$40.50	2.3	13.7%
Stark	96.29%	60%	157,024	5,826	$32.70	2.3	13.3%
Summit	98.26%	64%	230,880	4,017	$31.20	1.6	11.5%
Trumbull	95.99%	58%	95,117	3,814	$33.90	2.1	14.7%
Tuscarawas	82.51%	51%	38,113	6,666	$34.80	2.2	12.6%
Union	91.80%	58%	15,217	1,248	$42.50	2.2	9.7%
Van Wert	94.28%	47%	12,363	707	$35.10	3.3	13.7%
Vinton	54.65%	33%	5,653	2,564	$41.20	1.9	15.5%
Warren	98.32%	70%	58,692	986	$37.60	2.3	10.1%
Washington	76.44%	37%	27,760	6,540	$36.80	3	10.5%
Wayne	95.50%	50%	42,324	1,905	$35.40	1.6	11.1%
Williams	98.94%	40%	16,140	171	$30.30	2.5	15.7%
Wood	99.91%	56%	47,468	43	$38.20	3.3	11.6%
Wyandot	96.00%	39%	9,324	373	$30.00	2.5	14.1%

Source: Connect Ohio Research, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Ohio Department of Development

Ohio Middle Mile Consortium

Expanding broadband to underserved and unserved Ohioans

Introducing a Comprehensive Statewide Plan

The Ohio Middle Mile Consortium (OMMC) formed in February 2010 to integrate three comprehensive community infrastructure applications for federal stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Because of its 23 years experience successfully operating a statewide network, the Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut called on the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet) to coordinate integrating the three OMMC applications to the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

The applications were submitted in the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) category on March 26, 2010. The NTIA is expected to announce awards by September 2010.

The OMMC-related projects include:

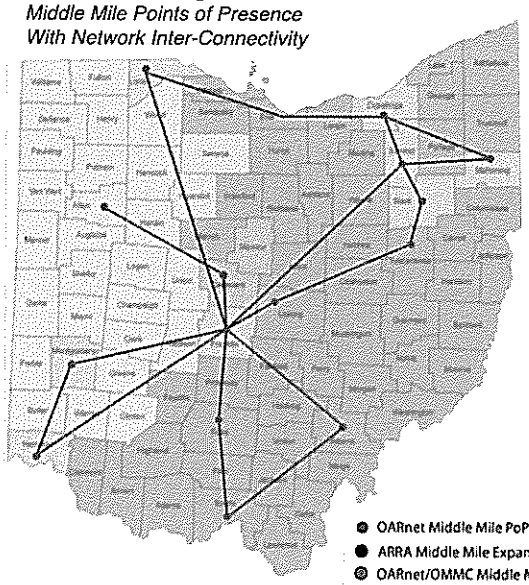
- Connecting Appalachian Ohio Middle Mile Consortium, led by Horizon Telcom in southeastern Ohio
- GigEPAC Ohio Middle Mile Consortium, led by Com Net, Inc. in western Ohio
- Transforming NE Ohio from Rust Belt to Tech Powerhouse-An Ohio Middle Mile Consortium Project, led by OneCommunity in northeastern Ohio

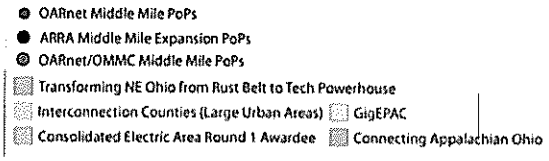
Although each of the three OMMC projects can stand on its own merits, together they represent a seamless middle mile solution for the state. OARnet is positioned as a sub-recipient in all three applications to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Collectively, the federal funds applied for in the three OMMC applications total less than the $150 million threshold for a single project in the BTOP-CCI category, further demonstrating the value of the comprehensive integrated plan approach.

Expanding Ohio's Broadband Infrastructure

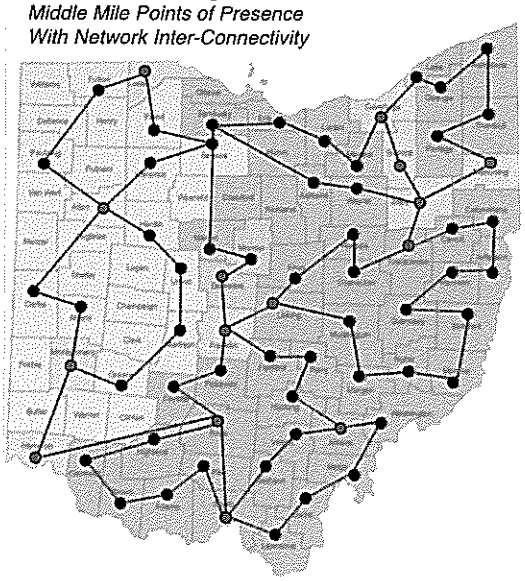
The OMMC projects complement OARnet's statewide network by increasing middle mile connection points (points of presence, or "POPs") from the current 14 to 68. The expanded distribution of POPs dramatically reduces "last mile" costs for connectors throughout the state. The OMMC applications collectively add more than 1,500 fiber miles to the existing 3,500-plus miles of optical fiber in the state. The maps on this page illustrate the OMMC coverage.

Pre-ARRA Funding
Middle Mile Points of Presence
With Network Inter-Connectivity





Post-ARRA Funding
Middle Mile Points of Presence
With Network Inter-Connectivity



Ohio Middle Mile Consortium

Providing Broadband To More Ohioans

The OMMC projects will expand the middle mile access for local and statewide networks, resulting in a broader range of affordable broadband services to their clients. This will, in turn, provide enhanced and extended broadband Internet, video and voice services to Ohio community anchors.

This infrastructure will support new initiatives reaching unserved and underserved Ohioans, as well as initiatives promoting the retention and creation of jobs in economically distressed areas of the state.

OMMC-Related Projects Projected To Reach:

- 3.6 million households
- 534,000+ businesses
- 83 private and public universities and colleges
- 34 community colleges
- 2,356 K-12 and career training centers
- 1,300+ health care facilities
- 2,200 state and local government offices
- 1,500 public safety operations
- 429 libraries

Guiding the Consortium

OARnet, the technology operations arm of the University System of Ohio, will provide the strategic and administrative support for Ohio Middle Mile Consortium projects.

The OARnet-facilitated OMMC Project Model, illustrated to the right, establishes an executive committee with representation from each of the three lead applicants, as well as a technical committee to focus on sustaining collaboration.

This structure will foster cooperation, growth and sustainability and will further enhance broadband services within Ohio.

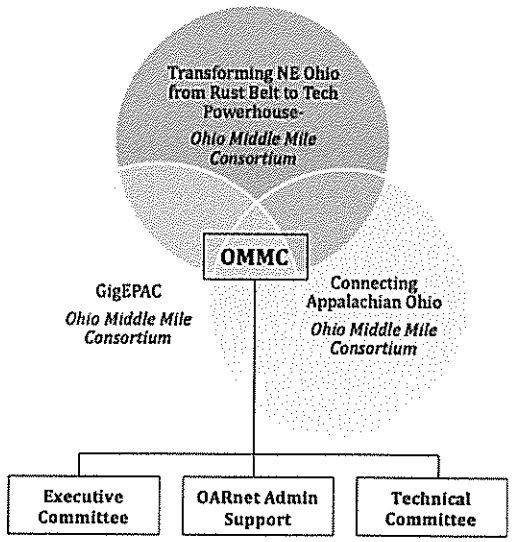
Optimizing Ohio's Future

Recent Ohio ARRA initiatives that support renewable energy, ambulatory surgical care facilities, affordable housing, green jobs, and a host of other programs require affordable and accessible broadband services to realize their goals.

Broadband access is essential to transition Ohio from its traditional industrial economy to a global technology and advanced manufacturing economy.

Comprehensive broadband services for the state are vital to support educating, developing and retraining the workforce to realize the opportunities of the future.

OMMC Project Model



For more information contact:
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