

STATE: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Date of Report: April 11, 2007

Nature of report (preliminary, final, advisory, executive/legislative): Final. This Report was prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG).

Key recommendations:

Regional (21 local governments surrounding the District of Columbia) Recommendations:

- Set regional goals for broadband availability and adoption, which should include some or all of the following:
 - 1 Gbps to Every Household by 2015.
 - Affordable Broadband for All
 - Regional Asset Map
 - Regional Broadband Advisory Board. This Board would be made up of subject matter experts from the government, nonprofit, education and private sectors, and would be tasked with an ongoing survey of broadband availability, options and models as well as adoption within the metropolitan Washington region, and report to the COG members on a regular basis.
- Investigate the Possibility of Leveraging Existing Regional Infrastructure for Public Use.

Local Recommendations (District of Columbia).

- Set Local Goals for Broadband Availability and Adoption, including some or all of the following:
 - Creation of Office of Broadband
 - Goals for Adoption of Broadband by Citizens
 - Establish Legal Guidelines for Removing Barriers to Deployment.
- Leverage Public Works Projects for Fiber Deployment
- Recognize Multiple Technologies and Business Models

Key programs initiated: None

Recommended appropriation: None

Web link to agency or task force:

http://www.mwcog.org/news/press/detail.asp?NEWS_ID=254

Statement of Values:

The mission of the Broadband Access Task Force is to strengthen the region's economy and transform its communities by fostering the development of broadband internet access throughout the National Capital Region, as a key feature of common public infrastructure. Building upon the 2002 report and recommendations of COG's Digital Divide Task Force, the new effort will identify and promote local and regional broadband access initiatives to help residents, businesses, schools, public agencies and community organizations make effective use of this technology to achieve their program management, telework, telemedicine, education, and service delivery goals while providing a greater experience for visitors to the region.

Where we've been:

In May 2000, the COG established a Digital Divide Task Force (DDTF) to examine technology access issues in the Washington metropolitan region and identify ways COG area local governments can further enhance access and use of technology by area residents and businesses, regardless of location within the region, race, income or other socioeconomic factors. The DDTF found that although the digital divide was narrowing, disparities still existed.

Where we are today:

The level of broadband access has improved dramatically, as has the degree of sophistication among local governments regarding their role in both providing access to citizens and in using broadband technologies to achieve their jurisdictional goals. The focus has shifted from bridging the digital divide to strategically using technology to do the work of government.

The Report cites national statistics on broadband penetration, noting the distinction between availability and adoption. No local or regional mapping was done of the District of Columbia area. No independent research (other than a survey of local governments regarding their attitudes toward municipal broadband) was done by the COG.

Where we want to be:

- All citizens of the Washington metropolitan region should have access to information and information technology.
- High-speed technology infrastructure is essential for the economic development of communities and should be available throughout the Washington metropolitan region.
- Local governments should be leaders in promoting digital opportunity.
- Information on digital opportunity programs, services and resources should be readily available to local governments, businesses, the technology industry, community-based groups and citizens.

How are we going to get there?

See key recommendations summarized above.

Broadband functionality (tiers of service) – None