

STATE: NORTH CAROLINA

Date of Report: January 2006 – June 2007

Nature of report (preliminary, final, advisory, executive/legislative): The e-NC Authority Biennial Report, “*Transformation on the North Carolina Horizon*”.

Key recommendations:

- Complete, and keep up to date, an inventory of telecommunications infrastructure
- Establish Telecenters
- Identify and establish training programs
- Promote increased use of computers and the Internet
- Ensure that high-speed Internet service is available to rural North Carolina citizens and businesses

Key programs initiated:

- Established e-NC Authority in 2003, under S.L. 2003-425
 - Sunset extended to Dec 31, 2011
 - Established as the primary Internet policy and planning body for the rural and urban distressed areas of the state
 - Mandated to track availability of and deployment of high-speed Internet service across North Carolina
 - Advocate and serve as catalyst for infrastructure build-out in underserved areas
 - Provide advice and counsel to the N.C. legislature
 - In July 2006, sunset was extended to Dec. 31, 2011
- The e-NC Authority invests in long-term projects and grants related to high-speed connectivity through supply-building and demand-building programs.
 - Strategic approach towards projects that will yield the greatest impact for North Carolinians, their communities, families and businesses.
 - Four communities received grants through this program to establish Business & Technology Telecenters
 - Five e-Communities actions grants were completed which created technology leadership and planning at local levels through funds for the assessment of technology needs, digital literacy and public access
 - Launched the “technopreneur” program at one center to provide resources for one staff person to foster local-level entrepreneurial development through one-on-one training and counseling for citizens interested in starting a small business or growing their existing business through the use of technology

Recommended appropriation:

The 2007 N.C. Legislature authorized \$1.21 million in funding be distributed by the e-NC Authority as matching incentive grants for expansion of high-speed Internet service into communities with the lowest levels of connectivity. (Less than 50% of households in these areas have access to high-speed Internet service)

NORTH CAROLINA (cont.)

Web link to agency or task force:

<http://e-nc.org>

Statement of Values:

- The e-NC Authority is dedicated to ensuring that all North Carolina citizens, businesses and communities are aware of, know how to use and have access to high-speed Internet services at affordable prices, creating local opportunities for technology based economic development and job creation.
- *NOTE: High-Speed Internet access is defined by Session Law 2000 - 149 "Internet access with transmission speeds of at least 128 kbps for residential customers and at least 256 kbps for business customers".*

Where we've been:

N/A

Where we are today:

According to the 100 County Report, as of December 2006:

- 83.54 percent of all North Carolina households have access to high-speed Internet services
- 21 counties have less than 70% access to high-speed Internet service (four of these counties have less than 50%)
- Of all rural counties, the highest level of connectivity is 98.34% of households having access to high-speed Internet while the county with the lowest level is at 45.07% connectivity.
- Of all urban counties, the highest level of connectivity is 96.36 % of households having access to high-speed Internet which the county with the lowest level is at 72.61%

Where we want to be:

- Every citizen and business will have affordable broadband access

How are we going to get there?

- Tracking of high-speed and broadband Internet is the first step to figuring out how to increase build-out: what policies need to be implemented, what areas are underserved...
- Provide grant monies to invest in long-term projects related to high-speed connectivity through supply-building and demand-building programs.
- Use strategic approach towards projects that will yield the greatest impact for North Carolinians, their communities, families and businesses.

Broadband functionality (tiers of service)

N/A