

STATE: OHIO

Date of Report: Several documents form the "report" for the State of Ohio, including:

- Ohio Broadband Council (OBC) Charter (December 4, 2007).
- OBC Policy Subcommittee Recommendation Defining Broadband (Undated)
- Connect Ohio Technology Assessment (June 2008).

A Strategic Plan is being drafted.

Nature of report (preliminary, final, advisory, executive/legislative): Executive

Key recommendations: The OBC Policy Subcommittee has recommended a working definition of "broadband". See Broadband Functionality (Tiers of Service) heading below.

Key programs initiated:

- **Ohio Broadband Council** - The Ohio Broadband Council (OBC) serves as the coordinating body for Broadband Ohio and has oversight of the network from a policy, procedure, process and development standpoint. Policy considerations cover both external policies (i.e., those policies that impact the potential customers of the network) and internal policies that determine how the network is operated, extended and maintained.

The OBC develops and maintains the strategic Broadband Ohio plan. OBC's mission is to develop plans consistent with the overall technology goals and objectives of the State, while supporting, to the extent possible, the specific missions of each agency. This approach is designed to enable agencies to focus their energy and funding on serving the needs of their constituents.

The OBC will be co-chaired by Ohio's chief information officer and the executive director of the Ohio Supercomputer Center. The membership will include the director of the Governor's Office of Appalachia and representatives of Ohio Departments of Budget and Management, Development, Education, Jobs and Family Services, Public Safety and Health. Additionally, bipartisan representation from both houses of the Ohio General Assembly will serve on the council. Also, the Governor will appoint at least six representatives from business, associations, local governments and the general public.

- **Connect Ohio** - Connect Ohio is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and will operate as a non-profit with a headquarters in Columbus. Connect Ohio's three-year strategy involves a partnership between the state and broadband providers to create detailed maps of broadband coverage in order to accurately pinpoint remaining gaps in broadband availability in Ohio.

Connect Ohio will also work to establish public-private partnerships that will assist in supplying computers to areas that have broadband service but lack computer access.

- **Appalachian Ohio Broadband Task Force.** The Appalachian Ohio Broadband Task Force is a group of industry representatives, elected and government officials, and interested citizens. The group was created by Congressman Zack Space to spur further deployment of broadband technology to areas of Southeastern Ohio that do not have access to this service.
- **Connecting Rural Ohio.** This project is part of a broader effort by various agencies and groups in the Central and Southeastern Ohio region to link instruction and learning, teachers and students, schools, homes and businesses via broadband Internet connectivity. OSC and OSU-CIO engineers are working in conjunction with community and state leaders to install satellite dishes, LAN antennas and learning centers in communities that are geographically remote and far removed from terrestrial broadband Internet connectivity.

Appropriations:

- \$2.9 million in 2007-08 biennium on Connect Ohio
- \$3.2 million anticipated for 2010-2011 biennium on Connect Ohio.

Web link to agency or task force:

<http://www.ohiobroadbandcouncil.org/index.shtml>

Statement of Values:

Mission of Ohio Broadband Council.

The Council will fully participate in the planning, integration and implementation of the Ohio Broadband Plan to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of broadband service to Ohio's eighty-eight (88) counties. The Council will develop plans consistent with the overall technology goals and objectives of the State, while supporting, to the extent possible the specific missions of each agency.

The Council shall achieve the following "Turnaround Ohio" goals:

1. Establish Ohio as a world-class competitor by making Ohio the national leader in the deployment and effective use of broadband networking.

2. Develop the jobs of the future by leveraging the state's investment in broadband infrastructure to create a competitive, well-connected economy in Ohio.

3. Create cost savings through the coordination of Ohio's public broadband resources, leveraging the state's significant investments and more efficiently operating and spending limited resources.

Where we've been: Not yet addressed.

Where we are today:

- Statewide, 55% of Ohio adults subscribe to broadband service at home. The Pew Internet and American Life Project recently measured the national broadband adoption rate at 54%.
- In contrast, 92% of Ohio adults have broadband service available where they live. That leaves more than 350,000 Ohio households that cannot connect to broadband service from home.
- At the same time, 14% of households don't know that broadband is available where they live, indicating a lack of awareness about available broadband choices.
- Across Ohio, 96% of urban households have broadband service available to them, compared to only 79% of rural households. This lack of broadband availability is a barrier to adoption for rural homes – 18% of rural residents who don't subscribe to broadband say it's because it's not available. However, a much greater portion of them - 49% - say it's because they don't need broadband. Thus, even in rural areas, lack of demand is the largest barrier to adoption.
- The lack of demand for services is not limited to rural areas. More than one-half of all Ohio residents who do not subscribe to broadband service believe they do not need broadband, or feel that they do not know enough about broadband to benefit from it. This means there are currently almost 1 million Ohio adults who have the ability to subscribe to broadband but believe they don't need broadband.
- More than one-half of Ohio residents who do not own a computer believe they don't need a computer, and 14% of this group have children at home. Lack of a computer is the largest barrier to Internet adoption (dial-up or broadband) across Ohio.
- Currently 42% of employed Ohio residents use the Internet to work from home (during normal business hours or after hours), and another 24% of working residents would work from home if allowed to do so. Of note, 11% of retirees,

30% of non-working disabled persons, and 24% of all non-working Ohio residents would join the labor force if they could work from home.

- Sixty percent 60% of all Ohio businesses use broadband service for their work.
- Among those businesses that do not subscribe to broadband, nearly one-half do not use a computer, and 31% believe they do not need broadband service. By contrast, only 6% say that the monthly subscription cost is a barrier to broadband adoption. Another 6% of Ohio businesses that do not have broadband service say it is because broadband is not available.
- Median annual revenues for Ohio businesses that use broadband are double those of businesses that do not subscribe to broadband.

Where we want to be: No specific goals set yet. See Statement of Values.

How are we going to get there? Strategic plan is in development.

Broadband functionality (tiers of service) -

Recommendation of OBC Policy Subcommittee on definition of "broadband":

- Broadband is defined by the ability to perform online applications at a reasonable performance level for the end user.
- Broadband is a range of speeds and will evolve over time as applications and needs change. It is a summation of the downstream data rate (transmission to the user) and upstream data rate (transmission from the user).
- The minimum speed required to use the most basic of broadband-enabled applications is determined by the FCC and will require periodic reviews to determine if the minimum is acceptable for available applications.
- Beyond the minimum speed, set by the FCC, the ratio of the downstream and upstream must be a minimum of 10:1 (the ratio of the downstream and upstream data rates can increase from 10:1 to a fully symmetrical 1:1).
- Broadband must have the capability to be always on, and have a sustainable steady state data rate.
- Burstable speeds provide benefit to users, but should not be considered in the same manner as steady data rates.
- An increasing scale that continues to differentiate within speed tiers allows stakeholders to measure specific broadband availability over time.