



MN Ultra-High-Speed Internet Task Force June 19, 2009

Bernadine Joselyn
Director of Public Policy and Engagement
Blandin Foundation



About our Broadband Initiative

Five years ago...

Blandin Foundation invited diverse broadband stakeholders to the table to discuss issues and recommend policies.

Today...

The stakeholders are the same...

The issues are the same...

The policy stakes are even higher.



We hope that our hard work can
inform yours in the months
ahead!

Blandin Foundation Broadband Goals

- Increase understanding, capability and urgency of Minnesota's leadership about the need to enhance Minnesota's always-on, universal telecommunications network.
- Stimulate timely and effective public and private investment in rural networks and applications.
- Maximize the value of Internet connectedness for rural residents, businesses and communities.



Blandin Broadband Vision

To ensure a high quality of life and a globally competitive future for its citizens, businesses and communities, Minnesota is committed to making the necessary investment to become a world leader in the universal deployment and use of ultra high-speed next generation broadband

Principles

- Ubiquitous
- Symmetrical
- Affordable
- Competitive
- World Class
- Collaborative
- Neutrality
- Interoperability

What we've learned...

About communities and networks...

- Community leaders believe that world class infrastructure and services are vital to economic competitiveness
- They are frustrated by
 - The complexity of finding their own path towards world-class broadband
 - The challenges of engaging incumbent providers in constructive dialogue
- Communities are rewarded by incumbents for considering broadband utilities



About communities on market development...

- Efforts to spur use of broadband are measurably effective, especially when providers are engaged.
- Some community leaders would rather focus on infrastructure than community market development
- Subscription costs, computer ownership rates and Internet skills impact take rates – all can be addressed by the community
- Higher take rates can encourage all community sectors to move information, products and services online



About providers...

- Every provider is unique in investment, marketing and collaborative behavior
- The conflict between need for short term ROI and infrastructure investment is real
- Few providers actively engage with communities without threat of competition
- Providers often downplay the significance of their services as an economic development competitive advantage or disadvantage

Communities and Providers

Similar Interests – Different Languages

- Communities
 - World Class Broadband
 - Access to distance learning, tele-health, remote work opportunities
 - Ability to attract and retain skilled and creative workforce and residents
- Providers
 - Income generating networks
 - Income generating applications
 - Retain current and attract prospective customers



Our input to the Task Force

World Class Broadband

“Anything less than recommendations promoting world class broadband for MN citizens and businesses is a retreat from MN’s tradition of excellence and a loss for greater Minnesota.”
Jim Hoolihan

- *At a minimum, World Class is*
 - *Ultra high speed*
 - *Ubiquitous*
 - *Symmetrical*
 - *Affordable*



Elements of World Class

- **Ultra High Speed** - When UPM officials in Finland can electronically interact with local Grand Rapids managers at their lake homes at 9:00 a.m. Helsinki time
- **Ubiquitous** - When our broadband services retain and attract talented and creative people to live and work throughout Minnesota
- **Symmetrical** - When every Minnesotan has broadband access that enables effective online learning and tele-health
- **Affordable** - When policy makers can rely on broadband services to be a part of complex public policy solutions



Critical Task Force Roles

- Set a high standard for legislative consideration based on vision and principles
 - Determine what we need, not what is politically possible
- Clearly identify barriers to reaching the standard
 - Quality analysis on costs to serve versus expected income
 - Required capital or operational subsidy for rural areas
- Determine the investment and deployment strategies that will provide MN with the greatest community and economic development impact
- Create an atmosphere of enhanced trust and collaboration so that a greater range of possibilities exists for reaching the broadband vision

Broadband Stimulus Funding Strategy

- Apply for NTIA market development, public access and community education funds
- Work with statewide, regional and local partners to develop and implement program
 - MNSCU
 - Libraries Commissions
 - Providers
 - DEED
 - University of Minnesota
 - Regional Development Commissions
 - Initiative Foundations
 - Others