

High-Speed Internet Deployment and Adoption Strategy Work Group

Introduction

During the 2008 session, the Legislature passed Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6438 establishing a High-Speed Internet Strategy Work Group. The legislation specifies that the Work Group is to be supported by the Washington State Department of Information Services (DIS).

The legislation states that the Work Group is to prepare a strategy for Washington State to:

- Develop geographic information system maps and inventories of public and private high-speed internet infrastructure
- Address management of proprietary and competitively sensitive data
- Spur development of high-speed internet resources across the state
- Track residential and business adoption of high-speed internet, computers, and related information technology
- Build, facilitate, and use local technology planning teams to help with internet deployment to disenfranchised or unserved areas
- Work with Washington State University Extension to establish low-cost programs to improve computer ownership, technology literacy, and high-speed internet access for unserved populations in the state

The legislation also indicated that the Work Group is to be comprised of representatives of:

- Economic Development
- Local Community Development
- Local Government
- Community Planning
- Technology Planning
- Education
- Health Care
- Telecommunications Provider
- Technology Companies
- Telecommunications Unions
- Public Utilities
- Public Safety
- Tribal Government

DIS extended invitations for participation in the Work Group and has scheduled seven meetings of the Work Group between July and November 2008. Following a competitive bidding process, DIS also hired CBG Communications, Inc. (CBG) to assist in facilitating the Work Group meetings and developing the strategy.

Work Group Composition

The Work Group is comprised of the following members:

Representative	Organization Represented
Twyla Barnes	Educational Services District 112
Jim Broman	Lacey Fire District #3
Betty Buckley	Communities Connect Network
Earl Heister	Information Services Board Member
Johan Hellman	Verizon
Phil Jones	Utilities and Transportation Commission
David Keyes	City of Seattle
John Klein	King County
Gail Love	Communication Workers of America
Ron Lucas	Rainier Communications Commission/Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors
Gary Mallon	Greater Spokane Incorporated
Ron Main	Broadband Cable Association of Washington
Susie Mason	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Alison McCaffree	NPower
Lew McMurrin	Washington Technology Industry Association
Jeff Mero	Association of Washington Public Hospital Districts
Matt Mitchell	Washington State University Extension
Matt Newbry	Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development
Joe Poire	Port of Whitman County
Gary Robinson	Department of Information Services
David Siburg	Kitsap Public Utilities District
Ed Stern	Association of Washington Cities/City of Poulsbo
Mary Taylor	CenturyTel
Michael Tracy	Grays Harbor Economic Development Council
Dan Youmans	AT&T

Work Plan

At the first meeting of the Work Group the membership reviewed the legislation establishing the Work Group and endorsed a work plan to ensure that the strategy is completed by December 1, 2008. The work plan includes the following tasks for each meeting.

Meeting #1 (July 9) - Completed

- Discuss Enabling Legislation
- Discuss 2007 Broadband Disparity Study
- Discuss Work Plan

Meeting #2 (August 7) – Completed

- Develop geographic information system maps and inventories of public and private high-speed internet infrastructure
- Address management of proprietary and competitively sensitive data
- Track residential and business adoption of high-speed internet, computers and related information technology

Meeting #3 (September 10)

- Develop geographic information system maps and inventories of public and private high-speed internet infrastructure
- Address management of proprietary and competitively sensitive data
- Track residential and business adoption of high-speed internet, computers and related information technology
- Build, facilitate, and use local technology planning teams to help with internet deployment to disenfranchised or unserved areas

Meeting #4 (October 8)

- Address management of proprietary and competitively sensitive data
- Spur development of high-speed internet resources across the state
- Build, facilitate, and use local technology planning teams to help with internet deployment to disenfranchised or unserved areas
- Work with Washington State University Extension to establish low-cost programs to improve computer ownership, technology literacy and high-speed internet access for unserved populations in the state

Meeting #5 (October 22)

- Strategies
- Recommendations

Meeting #6 (November 6)

- Initial Findings
- Initial Recommendations

Meeting #7 (November 19)

- Final Report Development

Activities of the Work Group to Date

During the first meeting, CBG presented the results of the Broadband Disparity Study performed for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) in accordance with SHB 1128, Section 149 (3). CBG reviewed baseline findings about broadband availability and adoption in five counties in the state. These findings include:

- Factors that inhibit broadband availability
- Factors that inhibit broadband adoption and use
- Five key residential adoption profiles that had emerged
- Ways to increase broadband adoption
- Economic impacts from lack of broadband availability
- Potential broadband deployment and development models

At the second meeting the Work Group reviewed and discussed the following topics:

- How best to define high-speed internet
- How to create a geographic information system (GIS) map and inventories of public and private high-speed internet infrastructure
- The management of proprietary and competitively sensitive data
- Other states' high-speed internet initiatives
- Federal initiatives and possible federal funding for state mapping initiatives
- The best methods to track residential and business adoption of high speed internet services
- The deployment of electricity, telephone, and cable television in comparison to broadband adoption

In preparation for the upcoming September meeting, information is being gathering about:

- How best to build and facilitate local technology planning teams
- Costs for implementing a mapping system, ongoing maintenance, and support for deployment

At each meeting members of the public have also been invited to address the Work Group about the meeting topics.

A web site has been established for the Work Group. All of the meeting materials and background information associated with the activities of the Work Group are posted at the site, which is available at: <http://dis.wa.gov/hiswg/default.htm>.

Next Steps

The Work Group will continue to follow the work plan so that a full report on a High-Speed Internet Strategy will be completed for submission to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 2008.