



Champion Report

Theme Area: **Connectivity**

Cheryal Hills, Pam Mahling, Janelle Riley, Kevin Larson, Kristi Westbrook, Stacey Stockdill, Sally Fineday, Paul Drange, Anna Gruber, Janet Johnson, Rich Utech, Michael Amick, Matt Killian, Mary Gottsch, Sheila Haverkamp, Megan Rehbein, Maureen Ideker, Brenda Thomas, Glenn Anderson

REPORTING PERIOD:

April 1, 2015 through Mid-June 2015

What NEW success have you had in moving your theme goals forward over the reporting period?	
Goal 1: All Action Steps	CTC continues to work on implementing the state Border to Border broadband project.
	<p>A number of the BBC Resilient Region broadband projects received Blandin dollars. Their progress to date is as follows:</p> <p>Telehealth project: A Schedule is being developed. Tentatively workshops will be held in Wadena in July, Todd County in August, Morrison County in September, Cass County in October and Crow Wing County in November.</p> <p>LLBO Replication PC4People The Shop – Grow Our Own IT Project: LLBO met with Sam Drong from PC4People to talk about the LLBO project. Partnerships are in place. LLBO is working with Initiative Foundation to obtain a VISTA. A potential VISTA applicant has been identified and if selected will begin training in September 2015.</p> <p>CTC School Technologies Bundle: CTC staff are meeting with the principal to determine next steps in purchasing identified equipment.</p> <p>BLAEDC High Tech Work Center – NJPA will be providing an intern. The project work plan has been developed and the project will begin in June and should be completed by the end of August.</p> <p>We continue to share learning opportunities provided through BBC to our task force members and BBC Steering Committee Members.</p> <p>Sally Fineday represented the Resilient Region Project at the May BBC Conference.</p> <p>There will be a 3-day BBC Conference November 18 to 20 in the Twin Cities. There will be 2 scholarships available. Let Dawn Espe know as soon as possible if you would like to attend. (We will not be able to support travel expenses).</p>
	<p>Wifi Mapping Project. Funding has not yet been obtained from Blandin Foundation; however, Initiative Foundation will invest in the project and an intern will be obtained in part from NJPA funding as well as from the University of Minnesota at Crookston. The project will map Wadena county and then serve as a demonstration project regarding what it will take to map all five-counties.</p>
How are you working with any of the other RR Theme areas?	
Many Resilient Region Champions attended the March 17 visioning meeting. Thank you!!	
List any Goals or Recommendations within the plan that your team are struggling to address?	
How to truly serve the needs of the region and make sure that the system is sustainable and scale-able.	

Resilient Region Plan: Connectivity

Connectivity Issue

Connectivity: Extending high-speed internet access to the entire region increases telecommuting opportunities, provides greater access to customers and markets for businesses, and allows all residents access to civic resources and commerce.

Connectivity Issue Goal

Connectivity: The number of households in the region served by high-speed internet-services rises from the current level of 40% to 95% served. The (region/rural areas) community is willing to invest to increase coverage. This will include both public and private investment in service.

Action Step 1A

Access: Promote, support and develop high-speed internet access throughout region for telecommuting, educational benefits, and supporting business activity.

Recommendation 2

Efficiency: Local units of governments will work across political boundaries to share equipment costs/facilities for more efficient delivery of high-speed internet.

Action Step 2A

Efficiency in installation: Lay conduit for fiber optics when upgrading sewer and water or digging trench.

Recommendation 3

Access for entrepreneurs: Provide access to technology needs and support to retain businesses and encourage potential entrepreneurs

Action Step 3A

Economic development: Determine the compatibility and interface between communications, smart grid technologies, and internet systems. Develop a recruiting initiative encouraging technology-oriented companies to explore opportunities offered in non-urban spaces.

Telecommuting: Create a business plan that facilitates legitimate telecommuting jobs and promotes high-speed internet connection in the region. Upgrade and expand high-speed internet infrastructure in housing so residents may work from home.

Action Step 3C

Map of access sites: Develop map or list of accessible sites within region to conduct web-type meetings, free Wi-Fi etc.

Action Step 3B

Recommendation 4

Access for children: All school aged children will have access to a computer with high-speed internet capabilities.

Action Step 4A

Support sites: Make available sites providing educational, internet, support, financial resources, etc.

Recommendation 5

Funding: Identify and pursue state, federal, and philanthropic grants to fund connectivity recommendations.