Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB)
Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA)

Baseline Analytic Employment & Online Survey Reports

January 25, 2012
Executive Summary: Beginning February 2011, a detailed investigation was begun by the Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) program evaluators. The study initially focused on collecting previously identified baseline data gathered from seven targeted Wisconsin counties (and the primary communities) of 1.) Chippewa County (Eau Claire), 2.) Douglas County (Superior), 3.) Dunn County (Eau Claire), 4.) Eau Claire County, 5.) Grant County (Platteville), 6.) Marathon County (Wausau), and 7.) Menominee County. The purpose of the first year baseline effort was to establish a socio-economic database that existed prior to the introduction of the SBA program in the respective counties and their communities.

In order to collect these data, program evaluators gathered and analyzed information from multiple sources. These independent sources included, Wanted Analytics job posting databases (Appendix A), internally generated online surveys (Appendix B), U.S. Department of Labor and Census databases (Appendix C), and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development county economic reports (Appendix D). These sources also include the 2011 summer focus group findings that were reported in September 2011.

In March 2013, program evaluators will gather similar data from activities that occurred since this baseline report. The results of the final report will provide the project staff with a comparative foundation from which to better make informed inferences and conclusions based upon how the SBA program may have influenced recent socio-economic activities within the targeted areas of interest.

Methodology:
- **Wanted Analytics algorithms-** Using the Hiring Demand Dashboard software option, the job posting reports were filtered by the targeted counties within Wisconsin, and by specific occupational codes thought relevant to the broadband investment initiative. Three charts were generated from these data (See Appendix A). The first chart captures the four year job posting trend lines by county for those occupations thought to be directly influenced by broadband investments. The second chart captures the same demographic and time period, but instead uses occupations that were thought to be indirectly influenced by broadband investment. The third chart identifies all job postings from a four year period from the targeted Wisconsin counties.

- **Online Surveys-** Using the University of Wisconsin-Extension’s secure online survey software program, Checkbox, a ten question survey was created by project staff on April 9, 2011. The questions were then placed in easily accessible online and hard copy formats. Following a pilot test, the surveys were released to the public on May 1, 2011. Local participation in the surveys was encouraged by both project staff marketing members, as well as by each of the area education liaison representatives. By the completion of the first year baseline report (December 16, 2011), a total of 416 online surveys had been initiated by participants with a final net total of 402 having been completed. These numbers included both online and hand loaded versions.
- 2011 U.S. Census Demographics county reports & 2011 Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development county reports- These economic reports (Appendix C & D) will be used to track and compare whatever measureable socio- economic changes occur within the targeted areas over a year by year basis.

- Focus Groups- Previously reported in September 2011 briefing.

**Key Observations:**

- **Wanted Analytics**- This software program performed as expected. While not a panacea for identifying specific broadband investment returns, the Hiring Demand Dashboard program does provide a unique and independent glimpse of economic activities within the targeted communities and their surrounding counties. These reports will be used to validate and support broadband data findings that are discovered in other areas.

- Online Surveys-The baseline survey data suggests the demographic population of those who took the surveys was not particularly representative of the state of Wisconsin. Generally speaking, the survey participants tended to be older, whiter, wealthier, and more educated* than what might be expected from a random selection of 402 citizens taken from the entire state.

  Another baseline survey observation is an inference made from the 2011 summer focus groups held in each of the targeted communities. It is not altogether clear if our survey participants have a firm understanding for what constitutes “broadband services.” If ambiguity does exist, a definition problem may be occurring on the part of the respondents who are not certain about whether they currently do or do not have broadband services.

  A third observation is that the participation rates of some counties tended to be either over or under in quantity in relation to their population numbers. For example, Grant County, with a population of 51,200, represented 28% of the actual number of survey takers. Marathon County, on the other hand, with a population of 134,000, represented only 4% of the baseline survey takers. When aggregated, this phenomenon tends to skew the data toward a smaller populated county like Grant and away from the more populated ones like Marathon.

- 2011 U.S. Census Demographics county reports & 2011 Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development county reports- Gathered and retained socio-economic data reports for future use.

- Focus Groups-Previously reported in September 2011 briefing. These data will be used for comparative purposes against the upcoming focus groups scheduled for the summer of 2012.

**Recommendations:**

- **Wanted Analytics**- The software program is working and providing useful and independent data. No changes in the existing Hiring Demand Dashboard program algorithms (i.e. step-by-step processes) are necessary. The same is also true for the collection of 2011 U. S. Census Demographic county reports and 2011 Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development county data reports. Combined, these sources should provide insightful economic data from those counties currently participating in the broadband initiative.

- Online Surveys- The Checkbox Survey program is working as designed and providing the comparative data needed for next year’s final report. No structural changes to either the online or hard copy surveys or the questions are recommended at this time.
The 2012 marketing plan to promote new survey participation should begin in either late April or early May of this year. It is not recommended that anything be done to alter the existing demographic skew of survey participants to bring them more in line with the state’s population. Nevertheless, it may prove beneficial to our analysis if we were to encourage higher participation rates from the targeted communities and counties with larger populations.

- Focus Groups- The conduct, administration, and analysis of the 2011 summer focus groups went as planned. For the coming summer of 2012, it is recommended that the project schedule a four hour period of refresher training to be held in either late April or early May. Also, the project team may find it useful to invite to the final focus group sessions those members from the local communities who have been in direct contact with broadband initiative stakeholders. Their informed insight might prove interesting.

*Wisconsin median household income, 2009 $49,994
Wisconsin bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2005-2009 (25.5% of state)
Wisconsin Race Distributions:
  - White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2010 (83.3% of state)
  - Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b) 5.9%
  - Black persons, percent, 2010 (a) 6.3%
  - American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010 (a) 1.0%

Appendix A  Baseline Analytic Employment & Online Survey Reports

Appendix B  BCCB/SBA (Disaggregated) Online Survey Report

Appendix C  BCCB/SBA Baseline Report (2010 U.S. Census demographics)

- Wisconsin/US
- Chippewa County
- Douglas County
- Dunn County
- Eau Claire County
- Grant
- Marathon County
- Menominee County

Appendix D  County Workforce Profiles (Wisconsin Workforce Development)

D.1 Chippewa County
D.2 Douglas County
D.3 Dunn County
D.4 Eau Claire County
D.5 Grant County
D.6 Marathon County
D.7 Menominee County

Appendix E  Wanted Analytics Occupational Filter Discriminators

Appendix F  U. S. Department of Labor Statistics
(Standard Occupational Codes)