

**Central Coast Broadband Collaborative
Draft Work Plan
October 24, 2008**

Introduction

On June 20th, 2008 the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) convened the Central Coast Regional Broadband Roundtable in partnership with the Community Foundation for Monterey County, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB). One purpose of the Roundtable was to bring together regional public and private sector leaders from the region's three counties (Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz) to identify strategies and specific actions to expand broadband infrastructure and to improve access to and use of innovative technologies for diverse and important applications. These applications include e-Health and telemedicine, education, economic development, government services, and public safety. The primary focus is underserved populations, including immigrant and indigenous residents, and specific areas of the region, especially rural and remote but also underserved pockets within cities.

Another purpose of the Forum was to discuss ways for regional leaders to engage with CETF, the Governor's Broadband Task Force, and others including educational institutions and private sector investors and service providers on implementation initiatives. CETF prepared a summary of the Forum proceedings that outlined next steps agreed upon by the partners and participants. The recommendations build upon the important work to date by regional partners, the education community, municipalities, service providers and others, including through the Central Coast Broadband Access Project. Primary Forum recommendations are to continue the convening process, to identify key gaps in the region's broadband infrastructure, and to develop a collaborative regional strategy for connectivity, access and use, addressing regional disparities and leveraging the many institutional and technological assets of the region.

Following the Forum, CETF has joined with the regional partners to support the next stage of implementation, which includes the creation of the Central Coast Broadband Collaborative, preparation of the region's broadband work plan, and implementation of the work plan's first phase, to be completed by the end of 2008. CETF is providing a small grant to match a comparable grant from the Foundation. The Foundation will serve as the convener and facilitator for the planning process, ensuring the participation of key partners. AMBAG and CSUMB will be the leads for implementation of the first phase of activities and reporting to the Collaborative partners.

The following section outlines the work plan elements for the project. Outcomes will include the creation of the Central Coast Broadband Collaborative, recommendations for the operating and governance structure of the Collaborative, and preparation of the Collaborative's Work Plan, including a feasibility study of gaps in broadband infrastructure and identification of priorities and strategies to address critical gaps.

Overall Process

At the October 24th meeting of the Collaborative, the participants will review the draft work plan for the Collaborative, set up work groups and identify group leads, and schedule meetings and the process for input/review of the Work Plan. Work groups include the Technical Work Group, Applications Work Group, and the Governance Work Group. The Work Groups will identify key outcomes, next step actions, schedule and benchmarks, other champions, and other issues.

Proposed Work Plan

Task 1. Launch the Central Coast Broadband Collaborative

Task 1.1: Initiate the Project Planning Process. The Partners will convene stakeholders from throughout the region to review the draft work plan that was developed based on the recommendations from previous roundtables and implementation activities. The work plan lays out a planning process leading to a strategic action plan and a recommended governance structure for the Collaborative. There will be three Work Groups to address the key issues in developing the plan: Governance, Technology and Applications.

The Work Groups will operate concurrently.

Technical Work Group

Task 2. Recommend process to conduct a Feasibility Study of Regional Broadband Connectivity, Gaps and Priorities

Task 2.1: Identify and Recommend Feasibility Study Process. The Technical Work Group will scope out the process to identify gaps in the region's broadband infrastructure and cost estimates to build a complete regional broadband network including fiber. This could be accomplished through a pro bono feasibility study (which has been offered by one provider) that would map and assess broadband connectivity and technical gaps within the region, and estimate the costs of developing the preferred fiber (or other) broadband infrastructure.

The Technical Work Group will identify the key partners who would be needed to provide information on: all existing networks, e.g., school districts and municipalities; key nodes or hubs for the networks; locations for remote network sites; and the kinds of connectivity desired. The study will be used to develop a recommended business model for developing the regional broadband network, based on collaboration with K-12 and higher education partners, and include estimated costs for building out the infrastructure, potential existing resources, and technical requirements.

Task 2.2: Identify Potential Service Providers who could conduct the feasibility study.

Prepare a list of service providers who might conduct the feasibility study and prepare a "mini" request for pro bono services to conduct the study.

Applications Work Group

Task 3. Identify Opportunities for Application of Broadband Technologies

Task 3.1: Identify top priorities for broadband applications. Review the range of potential applications for broadband in the region, including critical gaps and needs, and identify top priorities for types of applications and locations.

As an example, there is an immediate opportunity to link health, economic development, education and workforce development in the Salinas Valley. The Work Group could conduct outreach with municipalities, the Workforce Investment Boards, area hospitals and clinics, schools, and community-based organizations to identify opportunities for career pathways and skills upgrading for digital literacy and workplace applications, especially for health information technologies. Explore opportunities for participation in the FCC Rural Health Care Pilot with the University of California, CETF and other partners to help develop the region's broadband infrastructure and connect beyond the region.

Task 3.2: Broadband Infrastructure Toolkit. The Central Coast Broadband Access Project Action Plan and the June 20th forum identified a need for a Broadband Infrastructure Toolkit. CETF is preparing a toolkit on policies and procedures as a resource for municipalities to include broadband infrastructure in overall planning and infrastructure projects. The Work Group could identify those municipalities interested in the Toolkit and help with dissemination of the CETF information and follow up implementation.

Task 3.3 Partner Learning Opportunities. Identify upcoming learning opportunities in collaboration with educational institutional partners, including a possible WeTEC's event in early December to discuss opportunities for the region's Work Plan with resource providers and experts.

Task 3.4: Prepare Recommendations. Provide recommendations to the overall Collaborative partnership for inclusion in the Work Plan.

Governance Work Group

Task 4. Develop the Governance Model and Regional Broadband Strategy Work Plan for the Central Coast Broadband Collaborative

Task 4.1: Identify participants to formalize the process of collaboration to advance broadband policy and implementation. The Central Coast Broadband Collaborative (CCBC) includes key leaders and champions from the public and private sectors in the three counties. The participants will identify additional champions who represent K-12, community colleges, municipalities (including elected officials/city managers, technology officers, public safety/emergency services, planners/public works, and economic development), hospitals and clinics, public and private research and educational institutions, and community-based organizations. These champions will be invited to participate in the Collaborative.

Task 4.2 Recommend the Governance Structure for the CCBC. The CCBC will recommend a formalized structure to institutionalize commitment to the policy process and the longer-term implementation of the regional broadband strategy. The recommendations should address membership, policy and decision-making process, and funding.

Task 4.3: Prepare Draft Work Plan for the CCBC. Based on input from the Applications and Technology Work Groups and other outreach, the Governance Work Group will prepare the draft Work Plan for the Collaborative. This task will include outreach to additional potential partners and investors including the Universities and education and research facilities; municipalities; health care and other institutions; and private sector providers to determine interest in participating in the development of infrastructure network development, and identify possible alternate funding sources. The Governance Work Group will work with the Applications Work Group to identify potential pilot projects.

Task 4.4: Convene the CCBC to review the draft work plan and determine process for next steps. AMBAG will assist with engaging local elected officials, to discuss policies and investment strategies for broadband infrastructure connectivity, and access to and use of technology applications, both wireline and wireless. Upon revisions, the CCBC will be asked to formally adopt the work plan.

Task 4.5: Convene the CCBC on a quarterly basis to share information, coordinate for Stage 1 implementation of the regional strategy, and identify next stage implementation priorities. The CCBC will need to identify additional resources to support the ongoing work.