

RUS CONFERENCE

Making Rural Communities Better with Broadband

Session: GETTING A RURAL BROADBAND EFFORT STARTED

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STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR CREATING A BROADBAND NETWORK

- PROJECT GOALS
- METHODOLOGY
- USER NEEDS
- NETWORK ISSUES
- RECOMMENDATIONS
- STRATEGIC PLAN



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TELECOMMUNICATIONS 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

Submitted by: Telecommunications Steering Group

PROJECT GOALS

WHY DO THIS?

- IT IS HARD
- IT TAKES A LOT OF TIME
- IT TAKES A LOT OF MONEY AND RESOURCES
 - DOES IT MAKE SENSE FINANCIALLY?
- IT TAKES A LOT OF POLITICAL SUPPORT
- YOU WILL NEED TO HIRE EXPERTS TO HELP –
 - CONSULTANTS, PROJECT MANAGERS AND ENGINEERS
- IS THERE ANY OTHER WAY THAN BUILDING YOUR OWN NETWORK?
- WILL IT GET YOU WHAT YOU WANT?

WHICH IS WHAT?

PROJECT GOALS (Cont.)

- **WHAT: Do you want this project to achieve?**
 - Are you lacking broadband in your community?
 - Do you want to have a network that is owned by the community
 - Do you want to work with your local providers?
- **WHY: Do you want to do a broadband project?**
 - To save money or to provide more broadband
- **WHO: Will be the CHAMPION of this project?**
 - If it is a community project, is there a mayor, tribal leader or council person that will be the “pot stirrer?”
- **WHEN: Do you have any time goals that you want to meet?**
 - Is there a new business that you want to want to entice to build in your town? Or a new school that will require a new fiber network?
- **WHERE: Do you want this broadband?**
 - Will you build a new network in the downtown area or will it serve all your community residents?

METHODOLOGY: Needs Assessment

- Start with a Needs Assessment
 - What are the needs of the Community
 - What are the needs of the various users of the network?
 - What do they want to accomplish with the network?
 - What is the network like that is presently in place?
- You are Assessing
 - The needs of the users
 - The technology that is currently in place
- Don't assume that every community has the same needs
 - No cookie cutter solution!
 - No one solution fits all answers to creating a broadband network

USER NEEDS

MEET WITH THE USERS

- Ascertain the various agencies, businesses, individuals that use the network.
- Set up meetings with the various groups or government bureaus
- Discuss what they have now, how well is it working
- Dig into the issues, don't assume that when they say all is going well with the Internet, that it is really going well...

BRAINSTORM!



NETWORK ISSUES

- Hire an engineering firm to research the network
 - What exists presently
 - Can any of the existing network be upgraded? Will you need to build out a new network?
 - Would it be a fiber network? Can you use a wireless solution? Or combination
 - What about redundancy and diverse routing?
 - What are some of the rough capital costs to implementing upgrades?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a list of recommendations to bring to the council or mayor that you can use to justify developing a new broadband network.

- **Do you need to create a new corporation?**
- **Do you need to get regulatory certifications? CLEC?**
- **Will you recommend a new network? Will you compete with existing networks?**
- **Can you partner with other providers?**

RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont.)

- **How will you improve the network?**
- **What will you need to do to “UNCLOG” your bottleneck to the outside world?**
- **Can you bring your network to the residents by expanding the copper network with DSL or will you bring fiber to the home?**
- **How will you fund the network?**
 - **RUS**
 - **Other federal agencies**
 - **Private funds**
 - **Municipal Bonds**

YOUR PLAN

Build a plan you can take to the bank:

1. What is your corporate structure or which agency will be the overseer of the project
2. Regulatory certifications, if any, including CLEC certification
3. Initial engineering design by a certified engineering firm
 - This will become a detailed plan as you move through the process
4. Financial plan that includes market assumptions, capital costs, revenue and expenses projected over a time period.
 - You can use this to prove your plan is viable to your council, mayor etc.
5. Environmental requirements
 - Any project with federal funding requires environmental and historic reviews, even if only for equipment installations. Major “ground disturbing” projects will likely require an environmental assessment



Gila River Telecommunications, Inc
20 Year Celebration

Thank you!

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