

Before the  
**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**  
Washington, DC 20554

**BROADBAND AND ECONOMIC  
OPPORTUNITY**

**NBP Public Notice # 18**

**GN Docket Nos. 09-47, 09-51, 09-137**

**Comments of the  
City of Los Angeles, California**

**I. Introduction**

On November 12, 2009, the Federal Communications Commission (“Commission”) issued its 18<sup>th</sup> Public Notice (DA 09-2414 or “Notice #18”) seeking insights into its efforts to develop a broadband plan for the nation. In Notice #18, the Commission seeks comments on the impact of the availability of broadband on businesses of all sizes, non-profit organizations and economic opportunity and workforce development. The City of Los Angeles, California (“City”) associates itself with the comments the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (“NATOA”) filed in response to Notice #18 in outlining the integral and ever increasing role that access to affordable broadband plays in the economic health of our county.

In addition to supporting NATOA’s comments, the City’s Information Technology Agency distributed a questionnaire among the City’s various departments that offer the public access to high speed broadband access services to inquire how those departments believe the availability and presence of such services are enhancing economic development and job training within the City. ITA then assembled the aggregated the answers of the departments in

an effort to offer the Commission a glimpse into one community's effort to harness technology for its citizens' benefit. ITA offers that summary in Section III of these comments.

## **II. The City Has A Vision for all Angelenos**

The primary task of the City of Los Angeles' Information Technology Agency ("ITA") is to guide the City by researching, testing and implementing new technologies – including broadband – in ways that to make the City a better place to live, work and play. New developments in technology such as fiber optics, wireless communications, networking and the Internet have created tremendous opportunities to enhance public services in the City. ITA is poised to take advantage of these exciting technologies on behalf of the City. Implementation of an electronic government is ITA's commitment to the residents, elected officials and other City departments.

### **A. The Vision at Work**

Not long ago, if Angelenos wanted information from City government, they had to travel to downtown and deal with traffic and parking. Once inside City Hall, they had to check the building directory and wander City Hall to try and locate the department they needed. On occasion, transactions required multiple trips to City Hall; first to pick up a Council meeting agenda to find out when an item of interest would be heard, then attend the Council meeting. Today, all ordinances, documents, agendas, motions and resolutions are available to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Internet using home or business computers, or public computer centers located in the City's libraries, job training sites or as well as in Parks and Recreation Department locations. (Council meetings are also available on the City's cable television channel and through the Internet.)

ITA understands that telecommunications providers are investing hundreds of millions of dollars to develop new systems that may be harnessed to bring new products to Angelenos. The City's E-government services infrastructure has expanded fifteen times from its original capacity to accommodate upcoming online services and e-permit applications. ITA, on behalf of the City, stands ready to employ the fastest delivery of e-government information and services to City departments and citizens of the City of Los Angeles. ITA further understands that such a vision cannot be achieved until all Angelenos have access to affordable broadband services and it applauds the efforts of the Commission in crafting a National Broadband Plan to make such a vision a reality.

### **III. Responses to Notice #18 Questions**

ITA developed a questionnaire for use by its primary access providers to offer the Commission an insight into the details of a single community's public outreach efforts.

#### **A. What are the key "community hubs" (*i.e.*, libraries, community colleges, job training centers, unemployment offices) that act as access points for individuals to gain broadband access in your community?**

The City of Los Angeles provides a high-speed access point to the Internet at 154 public computer centers strategically deployed at neighborhood libraries, workforce training sites, and community and recreation centers. Additionally, the City has established two outdoor Wi-Fi networks at sites that are considered community hub locations, where individuals gain access to free wireless broadband internet services.

The City of Los Angeles community hubs include:

- 73 Library Locations
- 37 Community Development Department Work Source Centers
- 5 Youth and Family Centers
- 2 Homeless Shelters
- 37 Recreation and Parks that include Recreation Centers and Senior Centers

- 2 Outdoor Wi-Fi Networks.

In addition, there are thirty-five additional City facilities identified as candidate community hubs for public access to computers and broadband service. Due to a severe budget crisis, however, these senior and child care center sites currently do not have broadband internet access service. The City is aggressively pursuing ARRA Broadband Technology Opportunity grants from the National Telecommunications and Information Agency to further expand these public hubs

**1. Current broadband availability rate at these hubs:**

- Library community hubs provide 5 MBps for wireline offerings and 3 MBps for wireless connections.
- Job training centers provide 5 MBps
- Recreation and Parks community hubs provide 0.78 MBps.

**2. Technology employed at these hubs (*i.e.*, dial-up, DSL, cable, DIA):**

A variety of broadband connections are currently used including DSL, Cable Modem, and DIA, resulting in varied speeds to the hubs, and various speeds at each individual work station.

**3. Ratio of available computers to the number of people who are regularly served by the community hub:**

The City makes available approximately 3,450 work stations at its public computers. The number of computers is spread out to cover a service area of 469 square miles and a population (2007) of over 4 million. In addition, the demographics of Los Angeles make it one of the nation's most ethnically and culturally diverse populations. These resources are heavily used. For instance, last year, the City libraries' electronic resources were accessed more than 142 million times, using the 2,300 public computers in the City's 72 libraries. Total use of library facilities exceeded six million hours. Occasionally, library patrons have lengthy waits

before they're able to access the computers. To relieve pressure on the high demand for computer workstations, the libraries have made Wi-Fi internet access available to individuals with their own Wi-Fi enabled devices.

**a. There are time limits on individual access.**

Despite making almost 3,500 workstations available city-wide, time limits are required to provide meaningful access. At the teen centers, sharing and time limitations are mandatory for the 3 or 4 computers per site that are shared by as many as 20 teens working on educational assignments. .

All centers located at libraries are available during regular operating hours 6 or 7 days a week depending upon the library. All of the Parks and Recreation centers are open during regular recreation center hours, which are not typically business hours, due to the need for after school and late night programs.

Once a user has accessed the center, there are management requirements to ensure that as many users as possible have access to work stations. In addition, library patrons may reserve a 1-hour Internet computer workstation for up to 2 hours per day, up to 3 days in advance. A number of workstations are set aside for 15-minute Internet sessions for which no library card is needed.

**b. Are there restrictions on activities?**

The City employs acceptable use policies that are consistent with local, state and federal laws and regulations.

**4. What services do these community hubs offer that make broadband more relevant (i.e., training, digital literacy, resource guides, etc.)?**

The City offers training and educational programs to respond to the needs of our community such as computer skills, job search skills, homework help, transportation planning

as well as introductions and benefits of the internet. The City combines on-line services with in-person guidance at work placement centers, family source centers, child care centers and after school centers as well as at our libraries.

An example of training may be found in City libraries where classes are offered in Computer Comfort, Basic E-Mail, Searching the Internet, Database and/or Catalog Searching, Word Processing. The libraries have also begun video tutorials of these and other classes, such as “Using Learning Express: Test prep for citizenship, job skills, GED, SAT the 3 R’s and more,” which are available on-demand to the public via the library’s web site remotely or in the library. Students who master these skills are offered resources related to health, test preparation, job-hunting, resume writing, planning for college, genealogy, homework resources, small business, resources for Seniors, Parent’s Guide to the Internet and much more including a self-paced tutorials are also available on the library’s website.

Additionally, on an informal basis, librarians and other professional staff offer one-on-one on-demand computer training throughout each day as they serve patrons seeking information and assistance. The City provides a wide variety of specialized classes on the Internet as requested by teachers who bring their students to the library for an introduction and assistance in using the computers for research projects. Other training and services can be found in targeted areas such as education, children and health care. These would include:

- Free Adult Literacy Centers in 20 of the centers and family literacy programs in many of the Community Development Department locations.
- A specialized Adult Literacy website offering interactive self-paced online learning resources, such as Learning Express, PLATO Web-Learning and Reading Upgrade which provides skill-building in reading, math, writing and other subjects.
- Partnering with the Los Angeles Unified School District system to provide supplementary resources, including Web-based services, create a library that is available 24/7.

- Kids' Path and TeenWeb sites offer educational resources, such as databases, tailored to the curriculum, as well as reading lists, interactive learning games, and online reading clubs.
- Live Homework Help (LHH) connects students to expert tutors for one-on-one on-demand homework assistance via the Internet in English and Spanish for math, science, social studies and English.
- Educational Enrichment for Children: At Child Care Centers offers interactive family literacy program activity and other child development learning activities are provided. This includes educational games using computers.
- Access to several health-related databases which provide valuable information on nutrition, medical tests and procedures, pregnancy and childbirth; prescription medications, diseases and disabilities, childhood illnesses, alternative medicines and more.
- Full-text database of academic and professional publications, magazines, newsletters and newspapers, research reports, focused on alternative approaches to health care and wellness.

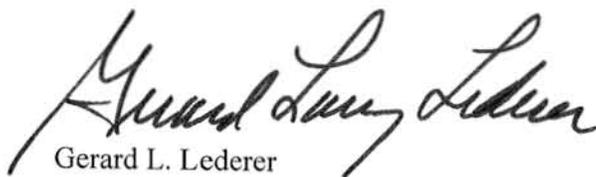
#### **5. Hubs Employed for job training and job readiness**

Job training and readiness training are provided by several of the City's agencies. Among these programs are the libraries' standard classes such as: Computer Comfort, Basic E-Mail, Searching the Internet, Database and/or Catalog Searching, and Word Processing. In addition ThinkFree is loaded on the public PCs.

Specialized workshops may also be offered in using Web-based job and career, resume-building or entrepreneurship resources. In addition, City agencies offer Using Microsoft Publisher. Once students have mastered these skills, the City offers resources related to health, test preparation, job-hunting, resume writing, planning for college, genealogy, homework resources, small business, resources for Seniors, Parent's Guide to the Internet and much more including a self-paced tutorials are also available on the library's website.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The City of Los Angeles (“City”) associates itself with the comments of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors filed in response to Notice #18 and encourages the Commission to develop a national Broadband Plan that will hasten the day that all Angelenos and all Americans have access to affordable broadband access. Such universal access is vitally important to the future of our nation.



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