



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
GEOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY
OFFICE OF THE GIS STATE COORDINATOR



August 12, 2009

Mr. Larry Strickling, Administrator
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

RE: NTIA State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program

Mr. Strickling,

West Virginia's Governor Joe Manchin III regards broadband as necessary infrastructure on par with water, sewer, and roads. In early 2007, he identified broadband and wireless telecommunications access as a priority for the state and envisioned the Broadband Deployment Council (BDC). Under his leadership the BDC was created by legislation that same year. The stated purpose of the legislation is to provide broadband access to all West Virginia citizens by the end of 2010. The BDC is made up of state officials and industry representatives, including cable operators, telecommunication companies, fiber providers, representatives of employees, and equipment manufacturers. A systematic and organized approach is necessary because of the state's challenging topographical and demographic challenges. The legislation was modeled after existing bodies that plan, finance and regulate that infrastructure while at the same time recognizing that broadband is so unique that it requires its own specialized treatment.

The West Virginia Broadband Mapping Program will build upon the broadband mapping efforts attempted to date in the state in support of the Governor Manchin's call to action. The Office of the GIS State Coordinator in conjunction with the Broadband Deployment Council created a team of state and private GIS professional individuals and organizations that is fully able to provide the requested broadband mapping data and meet the aggressive delivery milestones required in the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. We are confident our proposed Broadband Mapping Initiative will provide broadband coverage data that is verified and meets the long term planning needs of our state in establishing broadband telecommunications infrastructure to unserved and underserved areas of our state.

If our grant application is successful West Virginia will be able to create comprehensive and verified broadband mapping coverage data that will enable the state to deploy telecommunications infrastructure wisely and efficiently in order to provide statewide access to collaborating medical, educational and government applications in facilitation of better public services.

Thank you for this opportunity to apply for grant funding under the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. If there is any additional information or supporting data you require please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Tony Simental, M.S.
WV GIS State Coordinator