



## **“Aggregation of Demand”**

### ***Partnership with California’s Rural Regions***

#### **Partnership Concept Overview**

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) has embarked on “Aggregation of Demand” projects statewide, in partnership with California’s rural regions. The working partnerships are established to accelerate the deployment of broadband and other advanced communication services throughout rural California in order to promote economic competitiveness, access to essential services, and improve quality of life. The partnerships involve co-sponsorship and co-convening of a series of “fact-finding conversations” among civic leaders, stakeholders and industry followed by co-funding of a project to gather and analyze data about broadband awareness and demand, assess and aggregate prospective demand for broadband, and identify a preferred scenario for broadband infrastructure. The project results in a summary report that can serve as an “investment prospectus” to attract providers to build broadband infrastructure in Northern California.

#### **Background**

The California Public Utilities Commission directed the establishment of the California Emerging Technology Fund to close the Digital Divide in California by facilitating broadband access in underserved communities. CETF has identified rural communities as a priority focus. Although CETF has set an overall goal of leveraging its seed funding four-fold, in key rural areas CETF is looking for foundations and other organizations to partner on a 1:1 match basis. The Humboldt Area Foundation has stepped forward to partner on a 1:1 match for the Redwood Coast Region which is prototyping the methodology for aggregation of demand for broadband in rural areas. The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley is matching 1:1 for planning a regional telemedicine network. Most recently the McConnell Foundation has become an investment partner on a 1:1 match in a strategic joint venture in Northern California.

#### **Project Phases**

##### Planning Phase (2-3 Months, see details below)

- Fact Finding Conversations (2 Months) - Engage civic leaders, stakeholders and industry representatives to discuss broadband issues and challenges as input to the development of a Work Plan.
- Work Product: detailed project Work Plan.

##### Aggregation of Demand (Up to 12 Months)

- Gather and analyze data about potential aggregated demand by user sector, including an assessment of interface with telemedicine, public safety and emergency response. Identify existing infrastructure and identify preferred scenario.
- Work Product: “Investment Prospectus” on potential aggregated demand for broadband and preferred infrastructure scenario that would be used to attract broadband providers.

##### Negotiation for Broadband Deployment and Services (6 Months Following Above)

- Meetings and negotiations with providers co-convened by partners and CETF.
- Work Product: Agreement by one or more providers to deploy broadband in the region.



Below is the process outlining a 2-3 Month Planning Phase to develop a detailed Work Plan.

Planning Grant activities for an initial planning phase to develop a detailed Work Plan

1. Acceptance of the letter of agreement
2. A major planning meeting among all the counties and key stakeholders
3. Submission of the detailed Work Plan and Investment Proposal

The planning phase will result in an Investment Proposal and a detailed Work Plan (with monthly activities and quarterly deliverables) that contains the following specific plans to:

- (a) qualify and quantify the prospective demand for broadband service; and
- (b) identify a preferred infrastructure scenario in the multi-county region.

#### Quantify and Qualify Prospective Demand that Can Be Aggregated

- Delineation by category or sector of prospective users (subscribers) for broadband service to be interviewed or surveyed and the proposed timetable by county. This shall include outreach to all public agency groups (law enforcement and public safety including prisons, emergency response and services, K-12 education, higher education and research, libraries, general government services from federal, state and local agencies, public health and medical care, and national and state parks) and key business sectors (at least the top 10 employer groupings).
- Development of the interview or survey instrument(s) to be used to quantify and qualify prospective broadband users and subscribers (this step should involve reviewing what has been used by the Redwood Coast, ConnectKentucky and other “aggregation of demand” projects to accomplish a similar task in order to ensure that A-TCAA incorporates the best-available thinking and practices). The interview or survey instruments(s) need to ascertain demand by purpose, speed of communications and affordability.
- Development of the process and format for tracking the potential demand by user category in order to quantify the potential aggregated demand by community (city) and county.
- Identification of the specific personnel who will be involved in the interviews or surveys.
- Description of the outreach and engagement plan to local, state and federal elected officials.
- Description of the outreach and engagement plan for civic leaders.

#### Identify a Preferred Infrastructure Scenario

- Development of a plan for the identification, characterization and mapping to the extent possible of the existing broadband infrastructure (that either serves or runs through the four-five county region).
- Articulation of an approach to development and adoption of criteria for speed and other service performance specifications for broadband infrastructure.
- Delineation of the steps to developing alternative scenarios (technology, construction and connections) for building broadband infrastructure that meet the adopted criteria.
- Outline of the anticipated process for selecting a preferred scenario for broadband service.
- Identification of the specific personnel who will be involved in developing the scenarios.

#### In addition, the work plan needs to include:

- Development of the outreach and engagement plan to people with disabilities and the approach to ensure incorporation of accessibility into the aggregation of demand project and deployment of broadband in your region.
- Plan for evaluation of the project, including criteria and process for determining success.
- Updated comprehensive budget in the CETF prescribed format.

# California Aggregated Broadband Demand Projects

