

Work Group: Advanced Communications Services and Technology
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Description of Activity by Goal and Objective

Goal 1: Expedite the provision of advanced communications services access in all areas of the San Joaquin Valley.

Objective A: Raise the profile of access to ACS as a fundamental and necessary service for all residents and businesses.
Activity (Q2) – Presentation of Governor’s Broadband Task Force report at work group’s first quarter meeting; update and discussion at second quarter meeting. 94 percent penetration in report; likely up to 95 or 96 percent by end of summer.

Objective B: Inform local elected officials about the benefits of ubiquitous access to ACS and provide model policies and other tools to help facilitate deployment.
Activity (Q2) – Continue to work on rural areas that do not yet have broadband service and inform elected officials of ways to encourage service.

Objective C: Identify communities and neighborhoods without affordable connection to delivery of ACS.
Activity (Q2) – Verbal updates at work group meeting indicate a need to update the task force map. Work is under way.

Objective D: Increase availability of affordable ACS in rural and other underserved areas.
Activity (Q2) – Affordability will move to the forefront now that service is close to being 100 percent. Speed also is an issue.

Objective F: Increase deployment through wired, fixed wireless, wireless and other available technologies.
Activity (Q2) – Progress is being made.

Objective H: Identify and seek all available funding for deployment of ACS.
Activity (Q2) – No action taken. Item is on agenda for work group’s Aug. 27 meeting.

Objective I: Leverage unused bandwidth for the benefit of the greatest number of users.
Activity (Q2) – No action taken.

Objective J: Incorporate ACS infrastructure into all new residential and commercial construction.
Activity (Q2) – No action taken.

Goal 2: Promote accessibility and utilization of ACS in targeting underserved communities and populations.

Objective A: Increase utilization of ACS by all residents.
Activity (Q2) – Great Valley Center is seeking funding to distribute the Pixley Connect model to similar rural communities with at-risk populations.

Objective B: Inform local officials about the importance and benefits of access to ACS and IT for all residents and businesses.
No action taken. Since we are moving toward 100 percent coverage, this activity may no longer be relevant.

Objective C: Implement projects to provide access to ACS and IT for all residents and businesses to eliminate the digital divide.
Activity (Q2) – This should be the No. 1 priority for the work group. Comprehensive strategy should be developed beyond pilot projects.

Objective D: Develop and implement a program to ensure all high school students graduate with the basic computer literacy skills.
No action taken.

Objective E: Expand the number of public locations for access to ACS to help disadvantaged residents and businesses to bridge the digital divide.
No action taken.

Goal 3: Expand and replicate successful model programs to increase access to ACS and IT to bridge the digital divide.

Objective A: Develop and implement a plan to expand and replicate the most successful strategies and programs to bridge the digital divide.

Activity (Q2) – Great Valley Center is preparing to distribute the Pixley Connect model program to other similar communities in the Valley.

Objective B: Foster demand for ACS access in underserved and disadvantaged communities, such as encouraging economic development and growth of home-based businesses.

Activity (Q2) – Adding new element to Pixley Connect project.

Goal 4: Accelerate deployment of ACS infrastructure through telemedicine and eHealth technology.

Objective A: Develop and implement a telemedicine and eHealth plan to connect health clinics with medical centers.
No action taken.

Objective B: Build upon ACS infrastructure for telemedicine and eHealth to promote other applications for education and economic development to increase access and affordability.

No action taken.

Planned Activities by Goal and Objective (for next 3-6 months)

Assess work of the group to reflect training and other strategies for increasing effective use of the tool now that broadband is widely available.

Work with California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Business, Transportation and Housing (BTH) on project to rank un-served communities by size so the work group can evaluate which communities might be high priorities for funding.

Discuss affordability and speed issues at Aug. 27 meeting.

Seek funding to take Pixley Connect model and distribute it to similar rural communities with at-risk populations.

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

There are no roadblocks now that the Governor's Broadband Task Force report has been released. However, more members—especially on the community-use side—would be helpful. The work group also should systematically identify potential funders and develop a strategy for applications.