



**NORTH FLORIDA BROADBAND AUTHORITY (NFBA)  
UBIQUITOUS MIDDLE MILE PROJECT:  
BROADBAND NEEDS ASSESSMENT, DIAGNOSTICS, AND  
BENCHMARKING OF SELECTED ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS**

**FIRST INTERIM REPORT OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

**(July 7 – August 31, 2010)**

September 2, 2010

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**NFBA UBIQUITOUS MIDDLE MILE PROJECT: BROADBAND NEEDS ASSESSMENT, DIAGNOSTICS, AND BENCHMARKING OF SELECTED ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS: FIRST INTERIM REPORT OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

The Information Use Management and Policy Institute (Information Institute) at Florida State University has been conducting a number of activities in fulfillment of its award from the North Florida Broadband Authority (NFBA) to conduct work in support of its \$30 million Ubiquitous Middle Mile Project between July 7, 2010 and June 12, 2011. This first interim report provides a summary of project activities to date (July 7, 2010 – August 31, 2010) and descriptions of planned activities for the remainder of the project (September 1, 2010 – June 12, 2011).

The Information Institute met with NFBA staff on August 18 to review project status; that meeting included Christopher Sullivan from the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), who is committed to participating in the project by assisting with contacts and other details in hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Clinics (FQHCs), and rural health clinics. A summary of meeting notes is in Appendix A.

**Task 1: Detailed Project Tasking**

During the first phase of the study, members of the study team will detail project tasking and perform other organizational activities, all in consultation with the NFBA project liaison. This task includes organizational activities in preparation for the beginning of the data collection for the needs assessment phases of the project. Table 1 provides an overview of activities completed to date and a tentative timeline for completion on ongoing project activities.

Note that all project tasking is subject to change. This is dependent upon the outcome of a proposal to Workforce Florida, Inc. for broadband training in the North Central RACEC and Wakulla County, as well as changes made necessary by time or other constraints.

**Table 1. Key Activities, Status, and Timeline to Completion for Task 1**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
1. Prepare for data collection activities – <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiate development of contact list of selected anchor institutions.</li><li>• Write letter that explains project details and importance to selected anchor institution participants.</li><li>• Prepare to mail and/or email introduction letter to selected anchor institutions to introduce project.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In progress under the supervision of Marguerite and Lauren.</li><li>• Draft letter provided to NFBA to review; waiting on feedback.</li><li>• Planning staff and resource needs for the mailing.</li></ul>	<i>September 2010: Complete contact list</i> <i>September 2010: Finalize/print letter</i> <i>September 2010: Send mailing</i>

**Table 1. Key Activities, Status, and Timeline to Completion for Task 1, Continued.**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
<p>2. Begin development of survey methodology –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide whether to do a census (i.e., survey all institutions on the list) or use a sample (if there are more than 200 institutions);</li> <li>If a sample will be used, develop a simple random sample of a subset of the anchor institutions, in which each institution in the full list has the same probability of being chosen as does any other institution; and</li> <li>Create a professional-level account with Survey Monkey (<a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com/">http://www.surveymonkey.com/</a>), which will be used for the online survey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On hold pending completion of list of anchor institutions (see Activity 1)</li> <li>On hold pending completion of list of anchor institutions (see Activity 1)</li> <li>The Survey Monkey account has been created.</li> </ul>	<p><i>September 2010: Decide census vs. sample</i></p> <p><i>September 2010: Draw sample</i></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>
<p>3. Prepare to contact anchor institutions to develop a list of those interested in participating in the onsite diagnostics activities.</p>	<p>On hold pending completion of list of anchor institutions (see Activity 1)</p>	<p><i>September – October 2010: Begin contacting anchor institutions</i></p>
<p>4. Begin development of sampling/selection methodology for interviews and focus groups that pulls a simple random sample of anchor institutions in each county, in which each institution in the county has the same probability of being chosen as does any other institution in the county.</p>	<p>On hold pending completion of list of anchor institutions (see Activity 1)</p>	<p><i>September 2010: Finalize interview/focus group sampling strategy</i></p>
<p>5. Begin drafting measurement instruments –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft survey instrument;</li> <li>Draft metrics for diagnostics assessment; and</li> <li>Draft interview and focus group questions.</li> </ul>	<p>Drafts of all instruments are in progress, and will be shared with Marguerite in early September for feedback.</p>	<p><i>September 2010: Finalize measurement instruments</i></p>
<p>6. Prepare to produce survey –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft of Survey Monkey version; and</li> <li>Draft of paper version.</li> </ul>	<p>Survey Monkey account has been created and drafts of the paper and electronic survey are in progress.</p>	<p><i>September 2010: Finalize online and paper versions of survey</i></p>
<p>7. Begin developing a project website –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include sections for project information, data collection instruments, a self-diagnostics tool, and project reports; and</li> <li>Load a link to the Survey Monkey survey on the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prototype website with potential design solutions has been completed, and initial project information has been loaded.</li> <li>The link will be loaded when the survey goes live.</li> </ul>	<p><i>September 2010: Consult with NFBA liaison on prototype website</i></p> <p><i>September 2010: Survey goes live</i></p>
<p>8. Work with NFBA liaison to fine-tune project tasking and data collection instruments.</p>	<p>Project tasking is completed and was discussed at the Kickoff Meeting on August 18, 2010. Development of data collection instruments is in progress.</p>	<p><i>September 2010: Consult with NFBA liaison on data collection instruments</i></p>

**Table 1. Key Activities, Status, and Timeline to Completion for Task 1, Continued.**

9. Present project tasking and planning to NFBA at Kickoff Meeting.	The Kickoff Meeting took place on August 18, 2010. Discussion areas included a project overview, leveraging other projects, the project tasking draft, the role of the NFBA and the NFBA liaison, and next steps.	<i>Complete</i>
10. Deliver first interim report that details completed project activities.	Completed upon delivery of this report.	<i>Complete</i>

**Task 2: Data Collection**

Data collection activities will include conducting a needs assessment and benchmarking survey, onsite diagnostics collection, and interviews and/or focus groups that will follow up on the survey and collect data on situational factors and issues that impact anchor institutions' deployment of broadband networks. Key activities and a tentative time line for Task 2 are delineated in Table 2.

**Table 2. Key Activities, Status, and Time Line to Completion for Task 2**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
1. Conduct survey of anchor institutions – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mail survey packet (including cover letter, informed consent form, and a paper version of the survey) to selected anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Track survey completions.</li> <li>• Follow up with survey recipients by phone and/or email to encourage and aid in survey completion.</li> </ul>	On track to begin October 1, 2010.	<i>September 1, 2010 – January 31, 2011</i>
2. Conduct interviews and/or focus groups with representatives of anchor institutions in each county.	On track to begin October 1, 2010.	<i>September 1, 2010 – October 31, 2010</i>
3. Conduct diagnostics analyses at selected volunteer institutions (on-site and via the self-diagnostics tool).	On track to begin November 1, 2010.	<i>November 1, 2010 – January 31, 2011</i>
4. Deliver second interim report that details completed project activities.	On track for January 31, 2011.	<i>January 31, 2011</i>

**Task 3: Data Analysis**

The various data collected in Task 2 will be analyzed, tabulated, and verified using descriptive statistics, GIS mapping methodologies, and content analysis of primary themes and issues. This task encompasses data analysis activities related to the project's needs assessment. Key findings and specific recommendations arising from this analysis will be reported in Task 4 (below). Key activities and a tentative time line for Task 3 are delineated in Table 3.

**Table 3. Key Activities, Status, and Time Line to Completion for Task 3**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
1. Analyze interview and focus group data – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify situational factors and issues that impact whether anchor institutions decide to obtain or increase broadband capacity.</li> <li>• Describe improvements at anchor institutions that are due to the Ubiquitous Middle Mile project.</li> </ul>	On track to begin November 1, 2010.	<i>November 1, 2010 – November 30, 2010</i>
2. Analyze, tabulate, and verify survey data – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use descriptive statistics to analyze survey responses.</li> <li>• Describe the existing and future broadband uses and applications of the region’s anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Describe the existing bandwidth being purchased at the “front door” and at the workstation-level for the anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Determine the current cost for the bandwidth being purchased by anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Identify the vendor(s) currently supplying the existing bandwidth for anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Identify situational factors and issues that impact whether anchor institutions decide to obtain or increase broadband capacity.</li> <li>• Obtain baseline data related to broadband connectivity and use that can be used to justify and support additional broadband funding requests for the region.</li> <li>• Use GIS methodologies to map metrics such as anchor institution broadband costs and connections speeds.</li> </ul>	On track to begin February 1, 2011.	<i>February 1, 2011 – April 30, 2011</i>
3. Analyze diagnostics – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the existing broadband networks currently deployed in the region’s anchor institutions.</li> <li>• Identify situational factors and issues that impact how anchor institutions deploy their broadband networks.</li> <li>• Determine ways that the region’s anchor institutions can improve their network deployments to increase connection speeds at the workstation.</li> </ul>	On track to begin February 1, 2011.	<i>February 1, 2011 – April 30, 2011</i>
4. Deliver third interim report that details completed project activities.	On track for April 30, 2011.	<i>April 30, 2011</i>

**Task 4: Reporting**

The study team will develop a final draft report that describes project activities, summarizes findings, identifies key issues, and makes specific recommendations for middle mile network deployment and strategies to better meet the broadband service needs of anchor institutions in the North Central RACEC. Key NFBA staff will provide input for the report, and a member of the study team will be available to make an oral presentation to the NFBA if requested. Key activities and a tentative time line for Task 4 are delineated in Table 4. The delivery of the final report at the end of task 4 constitutes the end of the project.

**Table 4. Key Activities, Status, and Time Line to Completion for Task 4**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
1. Develop draft report – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe project activities.</li> <li>• Summarize findings and identify key issues.</li> <li>• Make specific recommendations for middle mile network deployment and strategies to better meet the anchor institution broadband service needs.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	On track to begin May 1, 2011.	<i>May 1, 2011 – June 12, 2011</i>
2. Work with NFBA liaison to finalize report.	On track to begin May 1, 2011.	<i>May 1, 2011 – June 12, 2011</i>
3. Deliver final report and make oral presentations findings to NFBA staff and NFBA board of directors.	On track for June 12, 2011.	<i>June 12, 2011</i>

**Summary**

In the first two months of the project (July 7 – August 31, 2010), the project team has started organizing the project in collaboration with the NFBA liaison. In addition, development has begun on the list of anchor institution contacts, measurement instruments and metrics, and the project website. The team is on track to begin the next phase of the project beginning September 1, 2010. Key activities to be accomplished in this next phase are finalizing the survey instrument and conducting the survey, conducting interviews and/or focus groups with anchor institution representatives, and conducting diagnostics at selected anchor institutions. The next Interim Report will be delivered to NFBA January 31, 2011.

**APPENDIX A**

**NFBA KICKOFF MEETING NOTES**

August 26, 2010

**Meeting Date:** August 18, 2010

**Participants**

- *FSU Information Use Management and Policy Institute:*
  - Chuck McClure ([mcclure@lis.fsu.edu](mailto:mcclure@lis.fsu.edu); 850-644-8109)
  - Virginia Ilie ([vilie@fsu.edu](mailto:vilie@fsu.edu); 850-644-9698)
  - Lauren Mandel ([lmandel@fsu.edu](mailto:lmandel@fsu.edu); 850-645-2196)
  - Nicole Alemanne ([nalemanne@fsu.edu](mailto:nalemanne@fsu.edu); 850-645-5683)
- *AHCA:* Christopher Sullivan ([christopher.sullivan@ahca.myflorida.gov](mailto:christopher.sullivan@ahca.myflorida.gov); 850-412-3780)
- *GSG/NFBA:*
  - Marguerite McCauley ([mmccauley@govserv.com](mailto:mmccauley@govserv.com); 850-681-3717)
  - Pat Lien ([plien@govserv.com](mailto:plien@govserv.com); 407-701-9037)
- *Airewire:*
  - Walt Henley ([whenley@airwire.com](mailto:whenley@airwire.com); 404-357-3072)

**Welcome and Introductions**

General introductions were made for meeting participants from the NFBA, Airewire and the Information Institute. A list of key Information Institute project staff (with short biographies) was distributed.

**Overview of the Project and Leveraging Other Projects**

Chuck described the basics steps of the project: (1) Determine the broadband-related conditions of anchor institutions in the RACEC, (2) then conduct onsite diagnostics at selected institutions, and (3) finally conduct training and education programs for the institutions. This led to a discussion of the way other projects can be leveraged, including a Workforce Florida project that may be granted to the Information Institute. If this project goes ahead, it will overlap with the NFBA project in needs assessment, and then proceed to the last step outlined by Chuck (training and education). The NFBA and Workforce Florida projects would leverage and amplify each other, allowing both the NFBA and Workforce Florida to obtain more return on investment. Another possible project that was discussed was the broadening of the NFBA work to the other two RACECS. At the time of the meeting that project was in the due diligence phase; it has now been awarded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

A number of handouts were provided by the Information Institute for meeting attendees and these are attached as appendices to this meeting summary.

### **Draft of Project Tasking**

Chuck explained that the tasking draft is preliminary until word comes through on the potential Workforce Florida project (estimated to be August 31). The addition of this project would require a harmonization of two projects' tasking schedules.

Marguerite noted that Wakulla County is included in the NFBA's portfolio even though it is not part of the RACEC.

### **Role of NFBA and NFBA Liaison**

Marguerite will serve as the NFBA liaison; she will continue to work with Lauren on the initial setup of the project, development of the contact database, and the survey. She also will continue to serve as a contact point for the Information Institute throughout the project. Airewire personnel will be brought in to provide technical support in the later stages of the project.

A discussion of a draft letter of introduction to the project was discussed. It was agreed that the letter will be distributed to institutions in the contact database by the Information Institute (on the NFBA's letterhead). A suggestion that the letter include a note that institutions that complete the online survey will be eligible for diagnostics was agreed to.

The NFBA will also provide project promotion support through discussions at their monthly board meetings. The Institute will be given 15 to 20 minutes at the October 13 meeting in Live Oak to make a presentation. The meeting will be at the Suwannee Water Management District Office, 9225 County Road 49, Live Oak at 2 pm.

### **Next Steps**

#### *Identifying Anchor Institutions*

It was determined that the contact database of anchor institutions will have to be constructed. The NFBA does not have a firm definition of the term and will be looking to the Information Institute to help create the definition. The definition used by the Information Institute (hospitals, rural health centers, federally-qualified health centers [FQHCs], K-12 schools including district offices, public libraries, community colleges, and county government headquarters) was discussed, and the general agreement was that this is a good working definition.

Various sources of information for identifying anchor institutions were discussed, including the SUNCOM customer list and census databases. In addition, Christopher noted that he is working on a project that will help identify hospitals, rural health centers, FQHCs, and (most likely) schools. Jeff Hendry may also have information for the directory/database.



Marguerite, Lauren, and other Institute staff will work together to populate a database for the project.

*Data Collection Instruments*

The survey will constitute the main instrument, and other information will be acquired through the diagnostics activities. Marguerite offered to review the survey and made comments and edits. It was also suggested that the survey be distributed on NFBA letterhead. Currently, the Institute expects to make the survey available both electronically and in print.

*Selecting Anchor Institutions for Diagnostics*

Diagnostics will be done in person at volunteer institutions. The number of institutions that are selected will be driven by budget limitations, with variables including the amount of work and time it will take to conduct diagnostics at the institutions and the complexity of each broadband configuration. These are not likely to be implemented until 2011.

**Final Thoughts/Comments**

Christopher noted that he is running an environmental scan of hospitals and FQHCs that will include information on broadband. The scan will be completed at the end of September and he may be able to provide data from it to the project team. This would include both contact information and geographical information.

Marguerite requested that the final report include individual fact sheets for each anchor institution participating in the diagnostics portion of project.

Chuck encouraged all to keep communication open and for folks to keep others informed who may not have been able to attend the meeting.