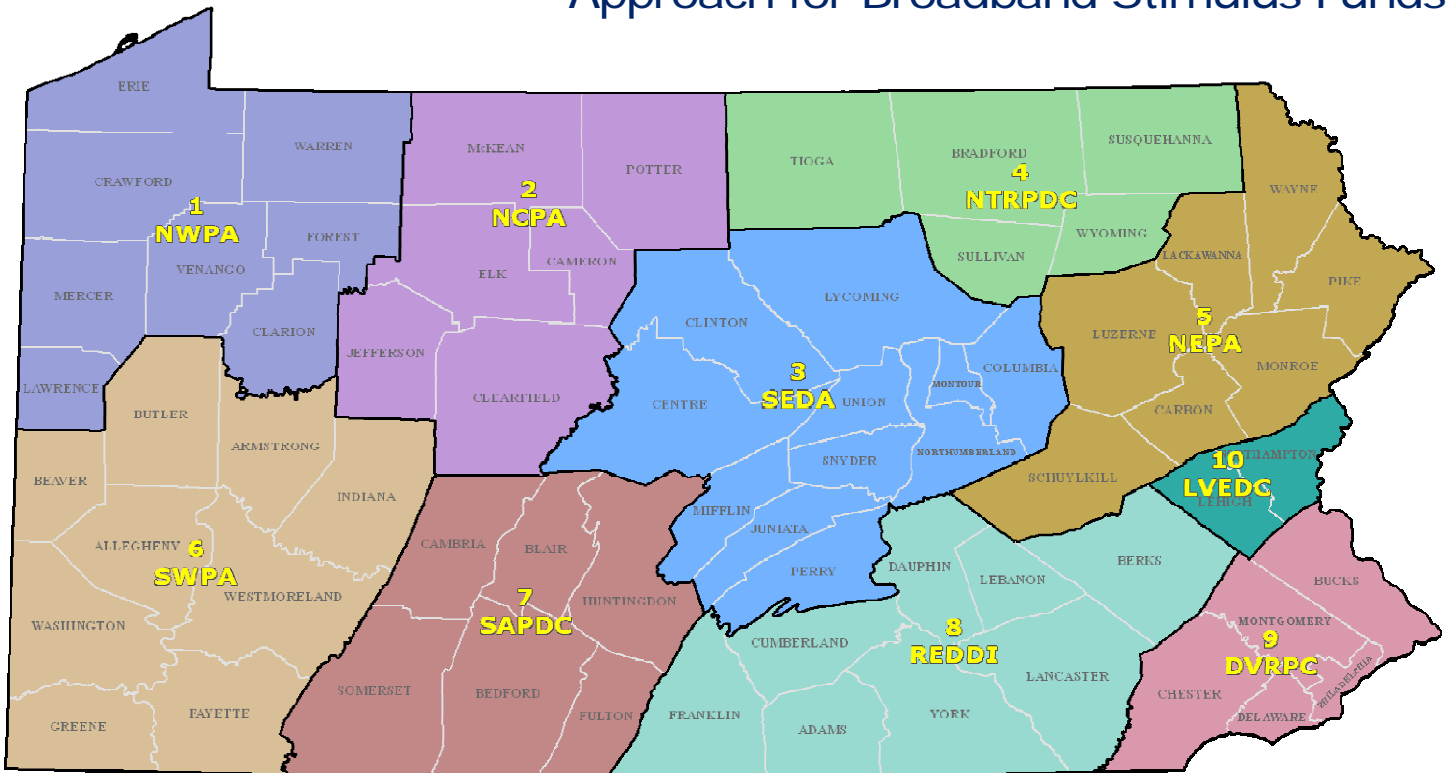


Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Office of Administration
Finance Building Room 207
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Released: June 19, 2009

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Approach for Broadband Stimulus Funds



Introduction

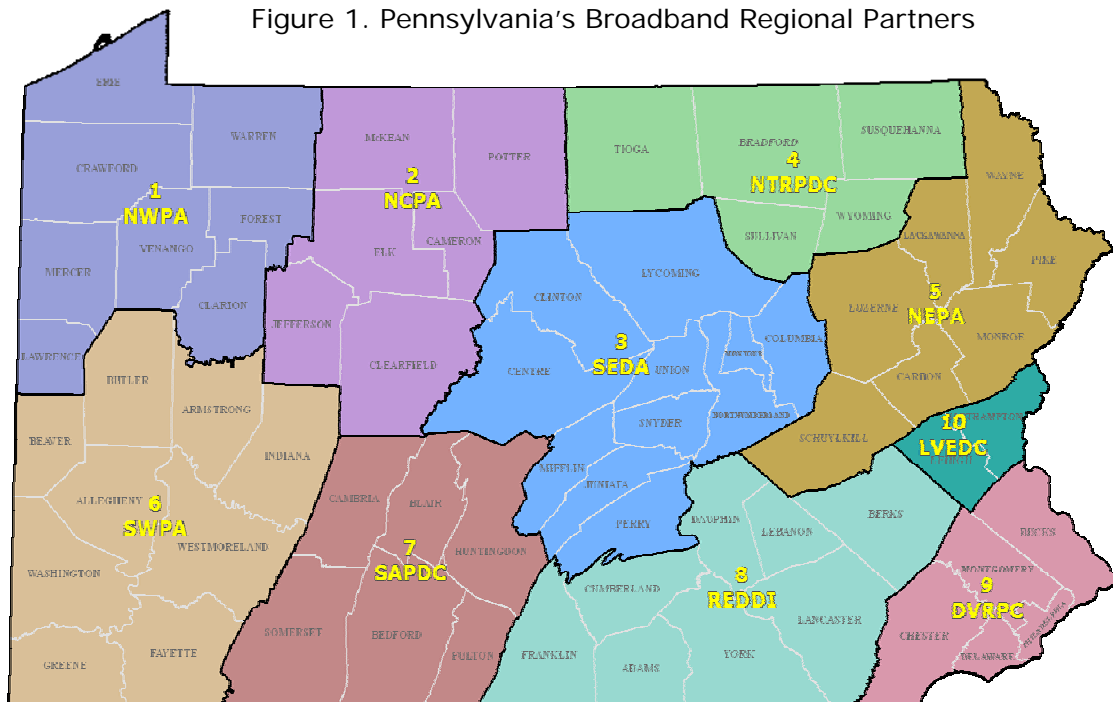
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania plans to submit a grant application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for stimulus funds for projects related to broadband deployment and/or other areas covered under the grant guidelines. Pennsylvania seeks to efficiently expand access for its citizens that do not currently have broadband and/or wireless access in their communities and to increase the utilization of existing broadband services in communities where there is access but limited households and businesses connected to the system. The commonwealth also seeks to ensure that quality content is available for all Pennsylvania broadband users.

Although grant application materials and guidelines have not yet been published, the commonwealth needs to prioritize applications from across the state to ensure the greatest numbers of citizens are being served by these stimulus funds. In anticipation of numerous applications from across the state, the commonwealth has developed the following procedure for companies, organizations or other entities that wish to partner with the commonwealth on our consolidated application. This process may change if contrary guidance is provided in the grant application.

Organizational Structure

For the purposes of reviewing and prioritizing broadband stimulus grant applications, the commonwealth has divided the state into 10 zones. In each zone the commonwealth has established a Regional Partner (RP). The RP in zones 1 through 7, as depicted in the map below, will be the Local Development District (LDD). In Zone 8 the RP will be the Regional Economic Development District Initiative (REDDI), comprising Franklin, Cumberland, York, Adams, Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster and Berks Counties. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), designated as Zone 9, will be the RP for Philadelphia, Chester, Bucks, Delaware and Montgomery Counties. Zone 10 will be represented by the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC) comprising Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

Figure 1. Pennsylvania's Broadband Regional Partners



Proposal Submission

Although the commonwealth's priority is to provide broadband services to those areas of the state designated as "unserved" and "underserved," proposals submitted for potential inclusion into the commonwealth's consolidated broadband grant application can encompass any project allowable under the grant guidelines. Ideally, the commonwealth would like to see at least one project from each partner which encourages wider broadband use and one project which either enhances existing broadband coverage or provides coverage where none exists.

All proposals submitted by entities that wish to partner with the commonwealth will be by zone and pass through the appropriate RP for their input prior to inclusion into the commonwealth's broadband application. Potential partners may submit projects which cover one zone, part of one zone or more than one zone. Proposals which span more than one zone must be submitted to each affected RP.

The commonwealth and its RPs will evaluate potential applications using the criteria below. These measures are meant to be broad, though other criteria may be used in the evaluation of any particular project.

- Applications which have prioritized unserved and underserved regions, including areas with pre-existing and documented aggregate demand for broadband services.
- Applications which have already documented the need for broadband services. Documentation can be provided by mapping, surveys or other measurement instruments.
- Projects which are consistent with the goals in the state plan.
- Projects where the applicant has demonstrated the ability to perform the work in the timeframe mandated by the grant.
- Projects which encourage multi-disciplinary approaches (job creation, economic development, education, health care, local government, public safety, workforce development, general quality of life).
- Projects which adequately identify how the match will be accomplished.
- Projects which are sustainable after the grant funds have been expended.
- Projects which demonstrate a prior planning component.
- Projects which show that concrete project steps have been undertaken or completed.
- Projects where budgets have been prepared and providers have been involved or identified.
- Projects where partnership agreements are in place or letters of agreement have already been signed.
- Projects which have already identified end-user need for grant funds.
- Projects where a cost benefit analysis has clearly demonstrated the value of the project to the local community.
- Projects which might solve multiple issues, e.g. wireless broadband would also address the lack of cell phone coverage in many parts of the state.

The commonwealth, in consultation with the appropriate RP, will decide which proposals will be included in the commonwealth's grant application.

All proposals should be sent to both the commonwealth and appropriate RP. Proposals can be received either electronically or in paper format. Proposals which do not strictly follow the grant guidelines for submission may be summarily rejected. Additionally, all proposals require a detailed budget which includes a clear understanding of how the match will be accomplished. Below are the email and mailing addresses for proposal submission for each RP and the commonwealth. The appropriate RP and the commonwealth must receive all proposals by a date which will be specified by the commonwealth. That date will be determined by the submission dates in the grant guidelines. Proposals received after that date will not be reviewed or accepted for inclusion with the commonwealth's grant submission.

Contact Information for Regional Partners

Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC)

2158 Avenue C, Ste. 200
Bethlehem, PA 18017
Pete Reinke, VP Regional Development
(610) 266-6852
preinke@lehighvalley.org

Regional Economic Development District Initiatives of South-Central Pennsylvania (REDDI)

1519 North Third Street, 2nd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17102-1911
James Austin, Program Coordinator
(717) 920-8450
jaustin@reddionline.com

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520
Donald Shanis, Deputy Executive Director
(215) 592-1800
dshanis@dvrpc.org

Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission

395 Seneca Street
P.O. Box 1127
Oil City, PA 16301
W. Randy Rice, Director, Community Development & Planning
(814) 297-7158 x105
randyr@nwcommission.org

North Central Pennsylvania Planning & Regional Development Commission

651 Montmorenci Road
Ridgway, PA 15853
Jim Swanson
(814) 773-3162 ext 3007
jswanson@ncentral.com

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA)

1151 Oak Street
Pittston, PA 18640
Brian P. Langan, Government Services Manager
(570) 655-5581 ext. 255
blangan@nepa-alliance.org

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC)

425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 2500
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1852
Jamie Colecchi, Community Assistance Manager
(412) 391-5590 x325
jcolecchi@spcregion.org

Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission

541 58th Street
Altoona, PA 16602
Fred Query
(814) 949-6508
query@sapdc.org

SEDA - Council of Governments

201 Furnace Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Jim Baker, Chief Information Tech Group
(570) 524-4491 x266
jbaker@seda-cog.org

Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission

312 Main Street
Towanda, Pennsylvania 18848
Brian Baker
888-868-8800
baker@northerntier.org

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

ra-OA-Stimulus@state.pa.us

Partnering With the Commonwealth

Although entities may apply directly to the NTIA for broadband grant funding, some entities may want to submit an application with the state's application. The commonwealth encourages such partner applications in the following circumstances:

1. **The application seeks access to commonwealth tower infrastructure.** The commonwealth owns approximately 140 radio towers located throughout the state, with many positioned strategically in those areas typically designated as unserved and underserved for broadband services. These towers serve the state's public safety radio network. This network also includes about 400 small microcells – typically 78-foot telephone. Although microcells would not normally be used for broadband deployment, this infrastructure can supply a vendor with a "point of presence" for both electricity and data lines (and in some cases land or rights-of-way) for additional infrastructure should it have to be built.

The commonwealth will offer its partners access to our tower infrastructure for broadband deployment, at competitive rates, prior to considering other uses for tower space or uses by non-commonwealth partners. In addition, the commonwealth is considering providing data backhaul services along portions of its microwave network depending on the needs of its partner companies.

- 2. The application furthers priorities in the state broadband plan.** All entities who participate in this process will be reviewed by both local stakeholders as well as the commonwealth. Projects which are approved will be included in the commonwealth's consolidated broadband grant application. This will send a powerful message to NTIA that the commonwealth and its partners have carefully selected the projects in the state's application which further broadband goals in the state's plan.

Matching Funds

The broadband grant likely will require a 20% match. Any proposal received by the commonwealth should address how the match will be made. Although the commonwealth will entertain proposals from entities that cannot make the match, those which have a solid match component are more likely to be accepted.

Statewide Proposal

Proposals from entities that address an issue from a statewide perspective will be reviewed jointly by the state and all RPs.

Commonwealth Proposals

The commonwealth may submit several grant proposals that address particular issues across the state, specific areas of the state, or for needed infrastructure improvements which may be required to support potential partners. The commonwealth will share its proposal submissions with the appropriate RP(s) prior to inclusion in our grant application.

Proposals From RPs

It is expected that one or more RPs will submit proposals for broadband stimulus funds. These will be reviewed by the commonwealth prior to inclusion in the state's consolidated grant application.

Disclosure

Any entity desiring to partner with the commonwealth on its consolidated grant application must disclose the following:

- If it is applying for broadband stimulus funds through any other mechanism
- If it has received any broadband stimulus funds from any source
- If it represents any entity applying for broadband stimulus funds
- If it is a sub-contractor for any entity either applying for or receiving broadband stimulus funds

Broadband Mapping

The broadband stimulus grant will include provisions for broadband mapping. The state will include a proposal in its consolidated application to address this issue. Therefore the state will not include regional projects involving broadband mapping in the state's grant application.