



## **Broadband Stimulus Funding for Texas Communities**

### **Broadband Technology Opportunities Program Workshop**

Office of Congressman **Ciro Rodriguez**    ♦    City of San Antonio, Texas  
Texas Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (TATOA)

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## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

The Recovery Act (ARRA) appropriated \$7.2 billion to “expand broadband access to unserved and underserved communities across the U.S., increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure, and provide long-term economic benefits.”

The US Department of Agriculture / Rural Utilities Service (RUS) *Broadband Initiatives Program* (BIP) was allocated \$2.5 billion for loans and grants to broadband infrastructure projects in rural areas. Rural proposals declined by BIP may next be submitted to BTOP.

The Dept of Commerce / NTIA *Broadband Technology Opportunities Program* (BTOP) will receive \$4.7 billion to provide grants to fund broadband infrastructure, public computer centers and sustainable broadband adoption projects. (Note that the last two fund categories can offer particular promise for all community telecom leaders.)



## BIP/BTOP Broadband Stimulus Funding – Round One

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) published a July 9, 2009 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for first round of broadband stimulus funding.

Round One allocated approximately \$4B of the \$7.4B ARRA appropriation; \$28B total applications received during July 14 - August 20, 2009 window. Reviewing underway; awards announcements expected to begin in 30 days.

BTOP Applications from Texas:

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/applications/results.cfm?org=&keywords=&projtype=&program=&state=TX>

State Application Recommendations:

[http://www.texasagriculture.gov/vgn/tda/files/1848/34515\\_BTOP%20List%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/vgn/tda/files/1848/34515_BTOP%20List%20-%20FINAL.pdf)

\*Call for BTOP Reviewers: <http://broadbandusa.sc.egov.usda.gov/reviewers.htm>



## RUS Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) Grants, Loans and Guarantees

\$2.4B of \$4 billion allocated in the first round NOFA went to RUS for BIP funding of 'middle mile' and 'last mile' broadband infrastructure.

(Note RUS has additional loan guarantee power as well.)

Round Two funding allocation for RUS has not yet been announced.

In order to apply for funding from the RUS, 75% of the area being served must be rural and without sufficient access to high-speed broadband to facilitate rural economic development. Funding can be requested for loans, grants or loan/grant combinations.

Priority will be given applications for broadband systems that allow end users to have a choice of more than one service provider, to projects servicing the highest proportion of rural residents, and to borrowers or former borrowers under Title II of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.



## NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Grants

BTOP competitive grants may be awarded to support development of:

- broadband infrastructure
- public computer centers
- sustainable broadband adoption projects

Eligible grant applicants include: states, political subdivisions of states, municipalities, nonprofits, or private companies.

The BTOP grants do not have the same requirements (rural, remote, un(der)served, etc.) as BIP funds; urban areas can apply for BTOP.

Community telecom planners might consider NTIA funding for public computer centers and sustainable broadband adoption projects (such as collaborative broadband proposals for education, workforce development, training, economic growth and other priorities of the 2009 Recovery Act.)



## BIP/BTOP Broadband Stimulus Funding – Second (Final) Round

Unofficial, uninformed guesses...

BIP and BTOP stimulus funding may be awarded at more than one time.

ARRA Broadband Stimulus Funds remaining after Round One allocations, potentially reflecting any adjustments and including any rollover, will be offered under a second, Final Round NOFA to be released (in 3 months?).

Round Two funding allocation for RUS BIP has not yet been announced. NTIA may allocate substantially more for BTOP grants in the second round.

Funding objectives listed in ARRA will remain unchanged for final round, although process and specifics may be affected by agencies' Round One experiences. Possible revisions may refine procedures and focus funding.



## Don't forget USF - especially library E-rate!

- Universal Service is funded by telephone customer fees
- All Texas public libraries are eligible for USF E-rate funds
- Telecom/Internet subsidy is non-competitive (guaranteed)
- Yet 90% of Texas libraries are not receiving E-rate funding

The new *Texas Library E-rate Project*, sponsored by the Governor's Office, Texas State Library, Texas Library Association, Texas Association of Counties and the TeleCommunity Resource Center, helps Texas public libraries apply for and receive 2010-2011 E-rate funds.

For more information: Gene Crick <[gcrick@main.org](mailto:gcrick@main.org)>



## For More Information

- *BroadbandUSA.Gov* – information and application website for RUS/BIP and NTIA/BTOP broadband stimulus programs
- [Helpdesk@broadbandusa.gov](mailto:Helpdesk@broadbandusa.gov) or 1-888-861-5509
- USDA/RUS telecom specialist for Texas:  
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Thank you,  
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