

Dear Library Directors,

This is a lengthy but important announcement concerning the possibility of receiving grant money through the ARRA initiative.

A great deal of information has been shared since the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 was signed in February about where libraries have an opportunity to receive funding.

One well-known opportunity is the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP); the other is the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP). Gene Hainer asked that I track news and information about the broadband options in ARRA. Now that these grant programs have actually been released we have a better idea of how libraries could fit into the grants.

The Broadband Portal is at: <http://broadbandusa.sc.egov.usda.gov/>.

The Colorado State Library has been contacted by two broadband vendors, Viaero and Zip from the eastern plains area. Both companies are interested in working with libraries to include them in a grant application. I have received quite a bit of information from Viaero, but just an email from Zip at this point, so I am just passing on the information that I have received from Viaero.

Viaero is a cellular provider that is going to be using broadband equipment and technology that can attach to all of their cell towers. This company is preparing a pilot project around Fort Morgan that includes the public library. See the attached documents for:

1. An overview of Viaero and a map of the coverage area.
2. A "library form" (Contact information at the end of that document.)
3. The contact information for Micah Schwalb, the Viaero representative.

For those of you who fall outside the service areas that Viaero or Zip cover, a list of libraries and Internet Service Providers also is attached. You can check to see what companies service your area. These ISPs may or may not have decided to submit a BTOP or BIP application.

I suggest that you contact vendors in your area and let them know of your interest in being included in any grant they may be proposing for BTOP or BIP. I also have included some questions you can ask, if they are applying for either of the grant programs.

In some cases no vendors from your area may be applying for funding, or may be waiting for a round two or three to be announced between now and next spring before submitting an application. In some other areas you may have a choice of vendors, in which case you will have to choose which you would like to commit to.

Several library leaders have informed me that they have been in contact with or are contacting their local and state legislators. In most cases, the vendors who are applying for the grant should have done that themselves.

If you have any questions or helpful information that I can share with the library community, please let me know.

Best regards,

Shelley

Shelley Walchak, Senior Consultant  
Library Community Programs  
Colorado State Library  
303.866.6891 | [walchak\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:walchak_s@cde.state.co.us)

## Questions for internet service providers regarding inclusion of libraries in broadband funding applications for BTP or BIP

*This is not a complete list of possible questions. Additional technical questions regarding connectivity and other topics generated by the system administrator or IT staff that oversee internet services for your library(ies) may need to be discussed with vendors for potential grant proposals involving library participation.*

1. What information would you need to have to consider having libraries as part of your broadband application?
2. What kind of broadband service do you provide and how many megabits per second will you offer to my library and at what cost? (This will allow you to compare with current service).
3. What are the up-front and on-going costs if we do partner with you and agree to have you provide our service?
4. What costs will you cover in the funding requested, or "ask" in the grant proposal for BTOP or BIP?
5. *If appropriate...* will you cover my libraries and all my branches? *Or*, how many square miles will your system cover?
6. Do you have any outside investors? Have you gotten any legislators or other supporters that are willing to write a letter of support for your application?
7. Have you sought the support of federal, state, and local officials?
8. Does your system comply with the *Buy America* requirements in the Recovery Act (ARRA).
9. How many years have you been in business?
10. What information do they need from you to include you on the grant?
11. If funded, will you help libraries to install your equipment on site?
12. Do you have a call center that libraries can rely upon if your system goes down?