Regional Plan for Broadband and Digital Opportunity

Guidance Document

Introduction

This guidance document is designed to help you develop your Regional Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan. Once completed, plans should be submitted to the Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) for review and approval, with feedback from the Broadband Development Office (BDO).

Participation in the Texas Regional Broadband Program requires submission of a completed plan to TARC by [deadline]. Plans must be updated quarterly, or as necessary, throughout each reporting period as determined by TARC and as milestones for goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) are achieved.

Refer to the examples provided in this guidance document to assist you in completing the templates found in the Regional Plan for Broadband and Digital Opportunity Template Packet.

Needs and Assessment

Guidance for completing Table 1 in template packet

Using prior assessments, stakeholder input and community engagement, each Councils of Government (COG) will identify priority areas. This information will be used to complete Table 1 in the template packet. The table below can be used as a guide.

Needs and Asset Assessment Summary Table			
Area	**Key Findings**	**Gaps**	**Implications for Planning Goals**
Broadband Infrastructure	*Describe where people can get reliable internet service, where it is still missing or not adequate. Include details about different types of internet and how fast or dependable it is.*	*Identify what's missing. Where are the biggest challenges? What services or support do people need but don't currently have?*	*Use this section to explain how the findings in each category— like gaps in internet access, device availability, or digital skills— should shape your region's broadband and digital opportunity*

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				goals and strategies.
Digital Opportunity Gaps	*Describe how people in the region are using technology, what challenges they face in getting online or affording devices, and how comfortable they are with digital tools—especially among groups who may need extra support.*			
Demographic and Economic Data	*Summarize key facts about population patterns, commercial and industrial data, and other relevant demographic information (e.g., income, age, education, disability status, linguistic isolation, veteran status) to help identify where digital support is most needed.*			
Existing Resources and Assets	*Evaluate and inventory existing programs, resources, and local initiatives that help individuals access the internet or develop digital skills, including libraries, schools, clinics, and community centers.*			

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Planning Regional Goals

Guidance for completing Table 2 in template packet

Use the Digital Opportunity and Broadband Planning Regional Goals table below to decide which goals and KPIs you will include in your plan.

You can also use these existing plans as a model:
- [Technical Assistance Program (TAP) County Broadband Plans](#)

- RGV Broadband Coalition: [Rio Grande Valley Broadband & Digital Opportunity Plan](#)

Then, use the six Objective Examples Tables below as a guide to complete Table 2 in the template packet. Table 2 will need to be copied several times to include all required information.

- **Select 2–4 Digital Opportunity and Broadband Planning Regional Goals:** Choices include: Broadband Access & Adoption, Access and Technology, Digital Literacy Skills Development, Capacity Building, etc.
- **Define strategies**: Outline specific actions your region will take to achieve each goal. Strategies should be tailored to each COG's local context.
- **Choose KPIs:** Select 1–2 key performance indicators per goal that are meaningful, trackable and aligned with the reporting framework.

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Planning Regional Goals	
Goals (Pick 2-4)	**KPIs (Pick 1-2)**
1. **Broadband Access & Adoption** *People can access and afford high-quality, reliable internet service.*	• Number of partnerships established to support enrollment into internet discount programs. • Number of households newly subscribed to broadband service (in the COG's region, post-engagement/intervention). • Number of individuals provided with direct assistance to apply for broadband subsidy programs. • Number of new public Wi-Fi access points or community technology hubs established/upgraded (e.g., in libraries, community centers). • Number of unique visitors/users accessing public Wi-Fi or technology hubs. • Number of broadband service providers engaged in regional planning or infrastructure mapping initiatives.
2. **zDevice Access & Technology** *People can access appropriate and affordable digital technology devices.*	• Number of computing devices (laptops, tablets) distributed or provided at low/no cost. • Number of individuals receiving technical support for their devices (e.g., troubleshooting, setup assistance).

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	• Number of partnerships established with organizations for device refurbishment or distribution programs. • Number of public access points or device lending programs established or expanded (e.g., libraries, community centers, housing authorities).
3. Digital Literacy Skills Development *Develop the digital literacy skills necessary for full participation in work and life; Individuals are equipped with the skills needed to navigate digital tools, access online resources, and succeed in an increasingly tech-driven economy.*	• Number of individuals completing foundational digital literacy training programs/courses (e.g., basic computer skills, internet safety). • Number of individuals receiving advanced digital skills training (e.g., job search skills, online education tools). • Number of digital navigation sessions or one-on-one tech support interactions provided. • Number of unique digital literacy resources/tools made available to the public (e.g., online modules, physical guides).
4. Capacity Building *Enhance strategic planning and resource development to support long-term broadband growth and sustainability.*	• Number of regional assessments or needs analyses completed/updated by the COG (e.g., to identify service gaps, inform strategies). • Number of COG staff/Regional Digital Access Specialists completing professional development/training related to digital opportunity. • Number of internal systems, tools, or processes adopted to support digital opportunity implementation (e.g., data dashboards, resource tracking tools, reporting templates). • Number of COG staff or partners trained to use data and evaluation tools for broadband and digital opportunity planning.
5. Collaboration *Support local initiatives, partnerships, and programs that encourage creative technology solutions and digital participation.*	• Number of unique external partner organizations formally engaged in program activities (e.g., co-hosting events, sharing resources, joint planning). • Number of regional stakeholder convening meetings held by the COG (focused on digital opportunity). • Number of community anchor institutions actively participating in plan development or implementation. • Number of joint outreach or engagement activities conducted with external partners.

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6. **Access to Public Resources & Essential Services** Foster access to tools, resources, and training that empower individuals and communities to fully participate in the digital economy and society.	• Number of individuals assisted in accessing online public services (e.g., telehealth, government benefits, educational platforms). • Number of community anchor institutions (e.g., libraries, clinics, schools, community centers) engaged in facilitating access to online resources. • Number of digital resources or services identified for future addition to the Resource Finder by the COG/region.

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 1

Goal	1. Broadband Access and Adoption. *People can access and afford high-quality, reliable internet connectivity.*
Strategy 1.a	*Maximize utilization of subsidy programs by covered populations.*
KPI	Number of regional partnerships established to support enrollment in Internet discount programs for eligible residents across all counties served.
Target	5-10 formal partnerships
Potential Regional Partners	• Public Library Systems • Regional Clinics • School Districts or Education Service Centers serving multiple counties.

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 2

Goal	1. Broadband Access and Adoption. *People can access and afford high-quality, reliable internet connectivity.*
Strategy 1.b	***Increase availability of trusted community spaces that provide free Wi-Fi and device access.***
KPI	Number of new public Wi-Fi access points or community technology hubs established or upgraded.
Target	3-5 new or upgraded access points per region
Potential Regional Partners	• Public Library Systems • Community Centers • Town Halls or Municipal Buildings

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 3

Goal	2. Device Access and Technology. *People can access appropriate and affordable digital technology devices.*
Strategy 2.a	***Establish regional partnerships to expand access to affordable and functional computing devices.***
KPI	• Number of computing devices (laptops, tablets) distributed or provided at low/no cost. • Number of partnerships established with organizations for device distribution or refurbishment programs. • Number of individuals receiving technical support for their devices (e.g., troubleshooting or setup assistance)
Target	• 3-5 formal partnerships per county • 100-200 devices per county • 100-200 individuals served per county
Potential Regional Partners	• Public Library Systems • Workforce Development Boards • School Districts/Education Service Centers • Community Health Clinics • Nonprofits

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 4

Goal	2. Device Access and Technology. *People can access appropriate and affordable digital technology devices.*
Strategy 2.b	***Expand device access and support for aging individuals and individuals with disabilities through regional partnerships.***
KPI	• Number of partnerships established with organizations for device distribution or refurbishment programs. • Number of computing devices (laptops, tablets) distributed or provided at low/no cost. • Number of individuals receiving technical support for their devices (e.g., troubleshooting or setup assistance)
Target	• 3-5 formal partnerships per county • 100-200 devices per county • 100-200 individuals served per county
Potential Regional Partners	• Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) • Senior Centers and Assisted Living Facilities • Disability Service Providers • Nonprofits

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 5

Goal	3. Digital Literacy Skills Development *People across the region develop the digital skills necessary for work, education, and daily life.*
Strategy 3.a	***Promote availability of existing training support and resources through on-demand video content, accessible print materials, and face-to-face outreach.***
KPI	• Number of individuals completing foundational digital literacy training programs/courses. • Number of unique digital literacy resources/tools made available to the public (e.g., online modules, printed guides, video tutorials).
Target	• 150–300 individuals per region per year • 5–10 new or adapted resources per county
Potential Regional Partners	• Public Library System • Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) • Adult Education Centers • Literacy Coalitions or Nonprofits • Workforce Development Agencies and Boards • Community Health Clinics

(Example)

Digital Opportunity and Broadband Regional Planning Objective 6

Goal	*4. Capacity Building* *Enhance strategic planning and resource development to support long-term broadband growth and sustainability.*
Strategy *(Note: Strategies A and B are combined on one slide because they share KPIs, Target, and Potential Regional Partners)*	**4.a Partner with anchor institutions (e.g., libraries, clinics, schools) to serve as access points and support hubs for digital public services such as telehealth, government benefits, and online education** **4.b Identify and promote digital resources for future inclusion in regional tools like the Resource Finder, ensuring residents can easily locate and use online services.**
KPI	- Number of individuals completing foundational digital literacy training programs/courses. - Number of unique digital literacy resources/tools made available to the public (e.g., online modules, printed guides, video tutorials).
Target	150–300 individuals per region per year 5–10 new or adapted resources per county
Potential Regional Partners	- Public Library System - Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) - Adult Education Centers - Literacy Coalitions or Nonprofits - Workforce Development Agencies and Boards - Community Health Clinics

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KPI Tracker

Guidance for completing Table 3 in template packet

To fill out the KPI Tracker you will need to establish baselines. When determining baselines for your region, it is essential to consider both statewide and regional metrics, as available. Each COG should identify a baseline that aligns with the unique characteristics of the regions represented by the COG. The following resources may be used to assist in this process:

- The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan (TDOP)
- Texas Digital Opportunity Hub
- Technical Assistance Program (TAP) County Broadband Plans

By leveraging these resources, COGs can create a baseline that effectively reflects the needs and opportunities within each region. This ensures that local initiatives align with broader statewide goals while honoring regional distinctiveness.

Below is an example of a completed KPI Tracker. You will need to copy Table 3 in the template packet several times to include all self-selected goals, strategies and KPIs.

(Example) KPI Tracking Table							
Goal	Strategy	KPI	Baseline	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Broadband Access & Adoption	**1.a**	Establish regional partnerships to support enrollment in Internet discount programs for eligible residents across all counties served.	0	1	3	6	8
Broadband Access & Adoption	**1.b**	Number of new public Wi-Fi access points or community technology hubs established or upgraded	0	0	1	3	5
Device Access & Technology	**2.a**	Number of partnerships established with organizations for device distribution or refurbishment programs.	1	2	3	5	6
Device Access & Technology	**2.a**	Number of computing devices (laptops, tablets) distributed or provided at low/no cost.	30	50	100	115	175
Device Access & Technology	**2.a**	Number of individuals receiving technical support for their devices (e.g., troubleshooting or setup assistance)	15	25	60	85	120

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KPI Highlights and Milestones

Guidance for completing Table 4 in template packet

To fill out the KPI Highlights and Milestones table, list each strategy and corresponding KPI. In the narrative update, describe the programmatic methods used to deliver the KPIs.

Below is an example of a completed KPI Highlights and Milestones table. You will need to copy Table 4 in the template packet several times to include all self-selected goals, strategies and KPIs.

		(Example) KPI Highlights and Milestones	
Goal	**Strategy**	**KPI**	**Narrative Update**
Digital Literacy & Skills Dev.	2.a	Number of computing devices (laptops, tablets) distributed or provided at low/no cost.	A total of 115 devices were distributed this quarter, prioritizing low-income households. Distribution events were held in collaboration with libraries and housing authorities, with multilingual support provided at each site.
Digital Literacy & Skills Dev.	2.a	Number of partnerships established with organizations for device distribution or refurbishment programs.	Formal partnerships were established with PCs for People and a local vocational school to support device refurbishment and distribution. The vocational school will assist with refurbishing donated devices, while PCs for People will manage inventory and logistics across the region.
Digital Literacy & Skills Dev.	2.a	Number of individuals receiving technical support for their devices (e.g., troubleshooting or setup assistance)	Over 70 individuals received one-on-one technical support through library help desks, pop-up clinics, and digital navigator sessions.

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Authorization

Guidance for completing Table 5 in template packet

The final step in the Regional Plan is to complete the authorization table pictured below. When ready to submit, please save as **.docx** or **.pdf** and email to the primary contact for TRBP, Alex Guerrero.

Authorized By	
COG	
Title	
Executive Director Name	
Regional Digital Access Specialist Name	
Date	

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