

Community Engagement Strategy Guide

This guide provides strategies and best practices for engaging with key stakeholder groups to support regional digital access planning and implementation activities.

This guide was built in collaboration with COGs during the September 2026 Texas Regional Broadband Program Intensive Workshop.

Engaging the Public

ENTITIES TO CONNECT WITH

- Advocacy groups
- Civic organizations
- Religious groups
- Economic development corporations (EDCs) and chambers of commerce
- Elected officials
- Local electronic recycling programs
- Local/regional tech advocacy networks
- Gaming clubs
- Public housing entities

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DATA COLLECTION

- Host or attend public meetings & listening sessions (in-person or virtual)
 - Provide information to the public about the plan and implementation
 - Collect data on digital access barriers currently facing
 - Co-host these events with local partners (libraries, schools, etc.) to increase participation
- Host or attend local community events, job fairs
- Host lunch and learns to provide education and share about plans
- Attend school district college fairs & other school activities
- Distribute information through school communications channels
- Conduct surveys of residents and business
 - Use social media to promote
 - Provide collateral to partners (graphics, sample social media/newsletter posts, etc.) to make sharing easy
 - Distribute paper versions or flyers at community events (back-to-school nights, football games, food distribution days at the food bank) where people are already gathering
- Use public officials and their communications channels to connect with interested groups & community members

Engaging Internet Service Providers (ISPs)

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DATA COLLECTION

- Provide county-specific data to local or interested ISPs to encourage expansion of networks
- Leverage connections to local governments, chambers, local co-ops to get connected to ISP contacts
- Direct outreach to local ISPs
- Attend Texas Broadband Development Office's monthly community roundtable to get updates on broadband and connect with industry — first Thursday of the month at 2 PM CST via [this link](#)
- Encourage ISPs to participate in community events or contribute devices, etc. to communities
 - Consider co-hosting these events (or encourage local partners to co-host) to increase community participation
- Consider writing support letters for ISP grant applications for projects within your region, especially if they are supported by county-level officials

Engaging with COG Workstreams

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DATA COLLECTION

- Form an intra-COG working group with regular meeting cadence to share about the program and think through ways of collaboration
- Connect with AAA, ADRC, 211, and senior programs to understand client needs and how digital access services could be integrated into existing programming or how digital access screening questions could be built into existing intake processes
- Reach out to committees within COGs (e.g. Board meetings, LEA Advisory Committee, Executive Committee Meetings)
- Connect/partner with peer COGs for learning, best practices sharing
- Reach out to partner orgs that the COG interacts with for other boards and programming (e.g. workforce development boards, community action programs)
- Connect with other agencies and departments to get or collect data and information
- Collaborate with other departments hosting external events for data collection or education opportunities
- Survey COG board and other committees about digital access barriers and opportunities from the perspective of the organizations/constituencies they represent

Engaging with CAIs / Local Governments

ENTITIES TO CONNECT WITH

- County judges & commissioners
- City councils
- COG boards
- Economic development corporations (EDCs) & chambers of commerce
- ISDs and Education Service Centers (ESCs)
- Health districts & local clinics, hospitals
- Library systems
- City manager associations
- Housing authority
- Emergency management associations
- Local colleges
- Transit authorities
- County extension offices

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DATA COLLECTION

- Meet with county judges to understand local broadband context and to connect with stakeholders that may be reaching out to elected officials
- Solicit support from these organizations to promote surveys, town halls, other engagement activities
 - Tag partners on social media to spread the word
 - Provide basic collateral to make promotion simple & message consistent
- Conduct in-person meetings, meet & greets, and roundtables
 - Go in-person to local government officials for sit-down meetings
- Develop & distribute regular newsletter with updates on programs, resources, engagement opportunities
 - Provide content for partners' newsletters that already have engaged following
- Create and distribute one-pagers with education and engagement opportunities
- Attend Commissioners Court and other public meetings to share information, updates, and engagement opportunities
- Work with ISDs to understand student home internet access barriers
- Meet with libraries to understand services offered and barriers they see as they interact with patrons
- Identify any existing data related to digital access (e.g. library device lending or hotspot checkout programs, health clinics telehealth usage data) that partners may already have