



# Issues Related to a Connectivity and Sustainability Plan

## Outline for Discussion

**Connectivity:** Achieving connectivity at a speed adequate for use in the near-term and expandable for long-term needs.

**Sustainability:** The ability to maintain a specific connectivity strategy for some foreseeable future.

### Issues for Consideration:

#### 1. Strategies for Connectivity

- a. Analysis of technical options: What options for connectivity exist? How might these options evolve in the near-term and long-term? Could connectivity needs be aggregated to lower costs? Can libraries other than those targeted in the Opportunity Online Broadband Grant Program benefit?
- b. Analysis of cost: How can the Gates Foundation's funding be leveraged to achieve funding for initial connectivity? What sources of funding are available at the local, regional, state, or federal level, including E-rate?

#### 2. Strategies for Sustainability

- a. Capacity: What services do libraries need to offer that will require higher speed broadband?
- b. Technical: Is the planned technology scalable, or is it "dead-end?" As the need for more bandwidth increases, how technically feasible is it to increase bandwidth? Will this increased level of bandwidth be available from service providers?
- c. Financial: What are potential sources of ongoing funding? Is there a single source of sustainable funding or is a funding package from multiple sources more realistic (local, state, federal (E-rate or otherwise)?
- d. Political: Successful implementation of a plan depends on some level of political support. How can this support be maintained as

political leadership changes? How can the value of the library's contribution to community growth and health be clearly presented?

- e. Institutional: Institutions or management structures will be charged with implementing of the initial connectivity plan. Who are they, and how will they assist with sustaining and increasing connectivity in a robust and viable way? How are the needs of local libraries for training, technical support, and advocacy going to be met?
- f. Human resources: How will the expertise (technical, policy, financial, etc.) needed to accomplish and oversee the sustainability after implementation be maintained?

### **Caveats**

- Sustainability has to be analyzed in terms of specific connectivity strategies.
- Connectivity must be forward looking and accommodate changing and growing needs; sustainability at 1.5 Mbps does not serve libraries or their users.
- Need must be continually reassessed with appropriate updates to the plan