



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



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226 Capitol Boulevard Bldg., Suite 508
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0760
Phone: (615) 741-3012
Fax: (615) 532-2443
www.tn.gov/tacir

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commission Members

FROM: Cliff Lippard
Executive Director

DATE: 13 December 2017

SUBJECT: Broadband Adoption Working Group—Update

Following the release of the Commission's January 2017 report *Broadband Internet Deployment, Availability, and Adoption in Tennessee* and the passage of the Tennessee Broadband Accessibility Act (Public Chapter 228, Acts of 2017), a working group was created within the Governor's Rural Task Force to develop ways to increase broadband adoption through existing programs. Those invited to participate in addition to commission staff have included representatives for agencies that assisted the Commission with its report, such as the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Tennessee Department of Education, the University of Tennessee's County Technical Assistance Service, the US Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. Representatives for several other state and local stakeholders have also participated.

The working group has been divided into three subgroups focused on identifying best practices, leveraging existing resources, and developing a communications plan. Commission staff has participated in the identifying best practices subgroup, which has used the research and recommendations in the Commission's report as one of the starting points for its own work. The working group plans to release a resource guide in spring 2018 for local officials to use when assessing their existing needs and choosing among strategies for increasing broadband adoption in their communities.

Also, it is encouraging to note that the percentage of Tennesseans who have adopted broadband continues to increase. Approximately 43% of all households in the state subscribed to residential fixed connections of at least 25 megabits per second download

and 3 megabits per second upload (25/3) as of June 30, 2016, according to the most recent Federal Communications Commission (FCC) analysis, which was released in April. This is a 5% increase from one year earlier. The FCC's analysis does not include the rate of adoption among households that actually have access to service of at least 25/3.