

Connect Manistee County!

Affordable internet access to all residents and businesses in Manistee County

FACT SHEET



What is the *Connect Manistee County* Project?

The *Connect Manistee County* project's goal is to pursue development of a broadband infrastructure to provide affordable Internet access to all community members. In early 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to help stimulate job growth across the country. Among many other important initiatives the ARRA marked 7.2 billion dollars to be made available nationally for improving access to, and use of, broadband services. In response to this federal funding, Manistee County has launched a project called *Connect Manistee County* with a vision to provide broadband coverage to every corner of the county.

What is Broadband?

Broadband can be simply defined as a fast connection to the Internet that is always *on*. It allows you to send emails, surf the web, download images and music, watch videos, join a web conference, and much more. Broadband has the ability to bring people from different regions together in a common meeting place, enable employees to work from home, or students to attend class and complete assignments remotely.

How has the *Connect Manistee County* project progressed so far?

At the September County Commissioners' Board Meeting, the Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution of support for the Alliance for Economic Success, on behalf of the County, to collaborate with

diverse interests and seek federal stimulus funding to develop a county-wide high speed communications system.

Who Supports *Connect Manistee County*?

A number of organizations support the initiative and are part of a leadership team that will explore and determine how best to move forward with this project. This team is just beginning to form and membership will grow and expand as the project progresses. Current members include representation from:

- Manistee County
- Manistee Independent School District
- City of Manistee
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
- West Shore Medical Center
- West Shore Community College
- Manistee County Library
- Downtown Development Authority; City of Manistee
- Filer Township
- Onkama & Arcadia Communities
- Alliance for Economic Success

Why Now?

In Manistee County, high speed broadband capability has been identified as a significant infrastructure need through the county-wide visioning effort and in most strategic planning initiatives, including the County's Master Plan, the strategy for the Alliance for Economic Success and, most recently, in the Onkama Community Master Plan. Since 2006 efforts have been made to explore ways to provide this vital infrastructure and service to all County residents and businesses. Funding has been one of the greatest challenges. With the potential for ARRA funding, it is time to come together as a community... learn more, plan and take action!

Contact Us!

If you would like more information or would like to be involved in this project, contact the Alliance for Economic Success via email at info@allianceforeconomicsuccess.com or by phone at (231) 723-4325.