WEBSTER COUNTY
STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGY PLAN

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A. Executive Summary

A. Executive Summary

Purpose

This document provides a "road map" for technology-based growth and economic development in Webster County. Detailed assessments and recommendations are provided in Tab 1 of this report. The full report provides an overview of ConnectKentucky's findings and recommendations related to the assessment of Webster County's technology needs, particularly related to computers, broadband and Information Technology.

Summary

Webster County's e-Community Leadership Team is leading the way into a new economy for Webster County, working in partnership with ConnectKentucky. By leveraging the latest in technology and networking, ConnectKentucky is ensuring Kentucky remains the place of choice to work, live and raise a family.

Pursuing the *Five A's to technology acceleration in Kentucky* (Availability, Affordability, Awareness, Applications and Adoption) ConnectKentucky has established the Commonwealth as a national model for technology development. Over the past two years, Kentucky has achieved growth rates in technology availability and adoption that lead the nation.

Today, the world is smaller because technology makes it easier to work and to live nearly anywhere. In order to compete on a global scale, we must provide our citizens and businesses with the best available technology in the world, wherever they choose to live, learn, work or play. Central to technology-based development is access to and usage of computers and high-speed Internet, commonly referred to as "broadband."

The need for improved technology in Kentucky is great. In 2003 rankings, Kentucky was 44th in its proportion of high-tech companies, 45th in household computer use, and 43rd in resident Internet use. But that is changing fast, as Kentucky transforms from a technology laggard into a national leader in universal access and innovative technology solutions. Some evidence of the progress Kentucky has made:

- According to the Federal Communications Commission, Kentucky leads the nation in its rate of broadband adoption over the past two years.
- In 2003, about 60 percent of Kentucky households had the ability to subscribe to broadband. Now, an estimated 77 percent of households can access broadband, an addition of 240,000 households over two years. Increased investment from telecommunications companies is expected to bring the broadband coverage rate to 90 percent by the end of 2006.

Though Kentucky's recent progress has been swift, there remains much to be accomplished. If we do not act on our dreams, we are destined to remain at the bottom of most technology rankings.

With this vision of hope for all Kentuckians, Governor Fletcher introduced his *Prescription for Innovation*, a comprehensive initiative to achieve aggressive goals for broadband deployment and technology adoption in Kentucky. ConnectKentucky is working community by community, provider by provider to ensure that each of these goals is achieved by 2007, including:

1. Broadband availability for all Kentuckians, businesses and local governments;
2. Dramatically improved usage (adoption) of computers and the Internet;
3. Meaningful online applications for local government, businesses, educators, etc.;
4. Establishment of local technology leadership teams in every county promoting technology growth for: local government, business and industry, education, healthcare, agriculture, libraries, tourism and community-based organizations.

Governor Fletcher's *Prescription for Innovation* is being implemented through ConnectKentucky, in partnership with local community leaders. The leadership of Webster County asked ConnectKentucky to facilitate an evaluation of its current uses of technology, identifying and filling broadband coverage gaps and developing a strategic plan to increase the use of technology in each sector of the local community, including:

- Local government
- Business and industry
- K-12 education
- Higher education
- Healthcare
- Libraries
- Agriculture
- Tourism, recreation & parks
- Community-based organizations

This project has culminated in the development of initiatives to increase the competitiveness of Webster County through the expansion of broadband availability and the increased usage of computers and broadband-related applications. In completing this analysis, ConnectKentucky engaged local leaders in all economic sectors, led the group through a visioning exercise and developed a unique strategic plan for the county.

Additionally, ConnectKentucky has engaged its network of telecommunications and Information Technology resources to determine which technology resources are currently available to Webster County and which services are expected in the near future.

ConnectKentucky found that broadband is readily available in larger cities and communities, which contain more than 75% of the county's population, and there are broadband services of some kind available in various locations throughout the county. ConnectKentucky will work with current and potential broadband providers to achieve full broadband availability to all residents of Webster County by 2007.

ConnectKentucky recommends that Webster County focus on these general areas in order to encourage further build-out of broadband throughout the community and to create awareness of the broadband-related services that already exist.

- Creating awareness of the many available digital applications that provide convenience, growth, productivity and empowerment.

- Developing and expanding community applications that will drive the use of broadband access and ultimately encourage residents to become more technologically savvy.

Methodology

Activity 1 – Kickoff meeting and follow-up benchmarking meetings defined existing and future uses of broadband:

- How stakeholders currently use telecommunications and broadband services and applications
- What telecommunications and broadband needs are not currently being met
- What applications would be useful to increase the economic competitiveness of the area
- What telecommunications and broadband services and applications key stakeholders desire for the future

Activity 2 – Interviews with key telecommunications and Information Technology providers in the community determined what services and infrastructure are in place now and what services and infrastructure are planned for the future.

Activity 3 – ConnectKentucky reported the findings, provided analysis of potential alternatives and made recommendations on potential future initiatives:

- Benchmarked current uses of technology
- Researched applications that will enhance the economic vitality of the community in various participating sectors
- Recommended a strategic approach to adopting appropriate applications
- Provided project management to assure successful implementation
- Collected coverage data from existing broadband providers in the Commonwealth. In GIS format, mapped coverage footprints of all providers
- Provided data for areas not served by broadband
- Shared relevant market data with potential providers to encourage additional investment

- Identified possible grant and low-interest loan availability to areas not currently served

- Encouraged investment from all providers, including cable, telecommunications companies, municipals, satellite and wireless, to fill remaining gaps.

How Do We Get There?

ConnectKentucky will continue to assist the e-Community Leadership Team, working together to ensure that Webster County remains a strong place to work, live and raise a family. ConnectKentucky will remain engaged with the leadership and stakeholders from each sector to implement the recommendations provided in this report.

B. WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

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Business and Industry

Today, a number of factors are forcing businesses to change time-honored models of operation, including global competition, a trend toward partnering/outsourcing for all but core functions, and a demand for more personalized services. Each of these trends can save businesses time and money, but they require a sound technological infrastructure. The good news is that while these trends are emerging, the costs of technology are falling. Businesses cannot be sheltered from competitors. The reality is that Webster County businesses must adapt to the changing world in which they operate. Businesses have to learn the tools of the networked economy and innovate to survive.

Business and industry often experience the most direct benefit of high-speed Internet with increased sales, profit and growth. However, many businesses and industries are utilizing high-speed Internet to simplify processes, increase efficiency and develop new marketing methods. While the employees benefit immediately, the consumer ultimately sees lower prices and better quality.

Gaining benefits from the implementation of high speed Internet is not just for large corporations. For smaller businesses, technology creates an even playing field with companies much bigger than themselves. E-commerce (the buying and selling of goods over the Internet) allows small or even home-based businesses to operate and sell their goods on a national and sometimes international scale. Where small businesses were once limited to whatever local customers they could attract through local advertising and word of mouth, the Internet now allows them to attract customers across the globe.

Technology has allowed larger businesses to maximize efficiency in order to better serve customers. E-mail, intranets, paperless operations and automated logistics processes are just a few examples of how the Internet is allowing large companies to work with much greater efficiency and at lower costs. This allows those businesses to expand into other markets and grow their companies, or even pass the savings on to their customers.

K-12 Education

For our children to succeed in the New Economy, the tools of the Information Age should be as comfortable to use as a pencil and paper. The future health of the nation's economy depends on how broadly and deeply we reach a new level of literacy – that includes strong academic skills, thinking, reasoning, teamwork skills, and proficiency in the use of technology. Our schools must equip every student, regardless of family income, with the ability to use these tools. Equally important is the use of these tools in the educational process itself. The interactive nature of the Web provides a richer learning experience that engages and motivates students to explore and learn.

In Kentucky, Internet applications used in elementary and secondary schools continue to develop. Typically, the Internet is a communication tool for teachers and parents to remain up-to-date on the recent happenings of the classroom. Everything from homework assignments to scheduled activities and pictures can be found on classroom websites,

keeping everyone connected to educational resources. Elementary and secondary schools provide students with the opportunity to learn more about computer technology and explore the Internet with school computer labs. Committed to protecting students and maintaining a safe, educational environment, schools monitor and restrict Internet access of students to ensure the highest quality resources are being viewed and to ensure the safety of our children.

Healthcare

The healthcare industry has unique challenges. It inherently generates mountains of information yet at the same time is duty bound to keep these mountains hidden for the sake of individual privacy. For companies charged with managing and working with this information, high-speed Internet access and technology innovations are crucial. On a daily basis, doctors must keep up with the latest research; patient records have to be easily accessible and accurate; and images, test results and prescriptions have to be delivered promptly, without errors, to practitioners, pharmacies and insurance providers. In healthcare, errors and delays are not only costly, but also dangerous. Many providers are converting to electronic medical records which can be easily updated and shared on secure, internal networks. Network-based technologies like video-conferencing and digital stethoscopes allow specialists to consult with rural patients, reducing travel time and hazards. This ability to reach rural patients through technology has allowed many people to seek treatment that otherwise might not. Bringing the best of healthcare to every Kentucky citizen is a worthy goal.

Because of the nature of their activities, the healthcare industry has found the perfect partner in high-speed Internet technology. The convenience of the Internet has simplified information transfers and improved medical equipment while maintaining the integrity of confidential patient information.

Libraries

Today, libraries are more than just books on the shelves. Everything from the card catalog to check out can be simplified with the help of high-speed Internet. Public libraries often play a vital role in the community by providing every resident with the opportunity to receive instruction and use the Internet free of charge. Though they are not available 24 hours a day as a home computer is, libraries are still a central point of access to the Internet that is available to each and every citizen in the community. Many businesses have been launched as a result of research done on a computer in a Kentucky library. Many children are able to do their homework online or research reports because of the Internet access provided by the local library. Because the library plays such an important role in the community, it is essential that local libraries are on the cutting edge of technology and continue to develop new methods of keeping their patrons up to date. High speed Internet can help libraries continue their tradition as a trusted and indispensable resource.

Higher Education

Colleges, universities and community and technical colleges in Kentucky continue to find new ways to use the Internet to improve everyday activities. Websites are an important source of information about the institution, from providing news and information concerning campus activities to online registration of classes. Colleges and universities often implement the use of the school websites to attract prospective students, remain connected to alumni and allow for online donations.

The most common application of high-speed Internet on college and university campuses, however, is typically not actually used on-campus. Most colleges and universities offer online classes and academic programs to better equip students with the opportunity to learn. In 2004, 35,000 students participated in higher education classes through Kentucky Virtual University, www.kyvu.org. By bringing the classroom to the students, participants from every walk of life and region of the state were able to participate in higher education classes. However, it is necessary to have high-speed Internet to participate successfully in online classes. High-speed Internet is crucial to supporting the capabilities and the possibilities of higher education in Kentucky.

Community-Based Organizations

Non-profit agencies provide a wide variety of services to citizens, including health services, religious services, community sports and athletic facilities and public entertainment. Like any organization, community-based organizations need technology to manage operations, apply for grants, reduce costs, improve client services and better serve the community. Unfortunately, their budgets are typically limited, and they often depend on outdated technologies and donated services. As a result, community-based organizations must be creative in order to serve their constituents in the best manner possible. Fortunately, there is no shortage of creativity among community-based organizations, and many are using innovative solutions to offer important local services. As with other sectors, the Internet is an enabling factor for these creative solutions.

Government

Government serves citizens in numerous ways, from providing services such as vehicle registration to providing information such as election results. While it is common for people to feel disengaged from the everyday actions of state and local government, technology has allowed governments to begin closing that gap. On the state level, Kentucky has developed Kentucky.gov, a comprehensive website that provides government services and information to all citizens. On this site, residents can purchase and update hunting licenses; car dealers can access title searches on cars; and citizens can monitor the progress of legislation when the General Assembly is in session. By bringing the services of the state government to the convenience of residents' homes, the Kentucky.gov site provides participants a greater sense of relevance in the actions of state government.

Local governments have also seen the importance of an online presence. Local governments provide communities with many services, offer a great deal of local information and encourage public involvement and awareness. With a web presence, local governments can distribute information to more citizens, provide more opportunities for interaction with the agencies that affect them and make more convenient transactions that previously required a drive to the courthouse.

Tourism, Recreation, and Parks

As citizens become more comfortable with the Internet, they typically continue to find more uses for it. One of the industries benefiting from this trend is the tourism industry. Increasingly, people are using the Internet to research, book and pay for airline tickets, hotels, rental cars, and to make other logistical arrangements for their vacations and business travel. In light of this fact, hotels, travel agents, restaurants, attractions and other support businesses in the tourism industry are taking advantage of this trend and making their information and services available on the Internet.

Additionally, with the help of high-speed Internet and computer technology, the leisure time planned and purchased over the Internet can also be used more efficiently, allowing for a more enjoyable experience. Whether it is vacation, recreation or a visit to a local park, high-speed Internet is making the travel experience more enjoyable and more convenient. Already, a number of innovative tourism attractions are using high-speed Internet to improve services and meet the changing demands of their guests.

Agriculture

Too often, the agricultural community sees little need for broadband technology in the day-to-day activities of maintaining farms and livestock. However, broadband technology allows for growing innovation in agriculture, simplifying and mainstreaming important daily tasks, and developing marketing and sales. With high-speed Internet, farmers can remain up-to-date with everything from the weather to the conditions of the chicken coops equipped with temperature-sensitive monitors. Livestock farmers can access market prices and gain access to the latest in livestock management techniques. Farmers can advertise and even sell goods on the Internet, generating customers from all over the world. The Internet can also help Kentucky farmers diversify their operations and develop cutting edge revenue streams thus alleviating some of the loss of revenue from the Tobacco Quota Buyout Program. Internet resources can give Kentucky farmers an edge on production and results. The possibilities are virtually endless. The marriage of agriculture and high-speed Internet can produce abundant success for farmers across Kentucky by creating opportunities.

C. WHERE ARE WE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Webster County industries employ 3,121 workers. Manufacturing employs 648; the trade/transportation/utilities sector employs 625; and public administration employs 239. The leading individual employer is Carhartt Inc., www.carhartt.com, with 243 workers. Pittsburg Tank & Tower Co. Inc., www.watertank.com, employs 75. Pioneer Plastics Inc. employs 65, www.pioneerplastics.com.

Because technology is crucial to increasing its global reach, Pittsburg Tank and Tower embraced high-speed Internet in order to reach more people, more efficiently. High-speed Internet is beneficial to securing contracts with communities and governments across the country. E-mailing pictures and information allows Pittsburg Tank and Tower to support and manage the construction of tanks on the other side of the world without having to go to the location.

The Assessment

In its evaluation, the Webster County Leadership Team determined that the business and industry sector has begun making technology a priority, and the team set goals for enhanced access and use of technology. The current assessment includes:

- **Networked Places** – In the category of networked places, Webster County's business and industry sector scored a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale, with some office employees having always-on connections to the Internet at their desks.
- **Applications and Services** – In the area of technology applications and services, business and industry scored a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team found that some businesses in Webster County have a web presence to promote business services or products, and some businesses transmit or receive some orders electronically.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the business community, Webster County scored a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some view the Internet as essential to business operations. Employees are trained on basic applications.

The Vision

While the Webster Leadership Team found that business and industry's current use of technology is somewhat limited, the team has an aggressive vision for how the county's business and industry sector will be using technology in two years. The team set goals that would move the business and industry sector from the middle of the scoring system to scores of 4 in the three categories outlined above. The team's vision includes:

- Some businesses in Webster County will use high-speed connections for **enhanced web services** such as national and international online retail sales, advanced tracking of inventory and equipment, and multiparty video conferencing through computer webcams
- Where beneficial, employees will be equipped with portable wireless electronic devices such as **laptop computers**, and will have the ability to access the office network remotely, allowing flexibility and cost savings
- A **telework program** will be implemented within appropriate organizations, allowing employees the opportunity to work from home
- Where cost-effective, some businesses will use **Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)** to streamline and save money on telecommunication services
- Some businesses will **outsource** all or some of their non-core operations to local computer service companies, allowing a focus on core business activities

- Webster County businesses will encourage **technology training**, and all new hires will be required to have experience using new technologies in business applications

K-12 EDUCATION

The Webster County School District, www.webster.k12.ky.us, enrolled 1,839 students in the 2003-2004 school year. The school district presently includes four K-8 elementary schools and Webster County High School, serving students in grades 9-12. The district also includes an Area Technology Center managed through the Kentucky Workforce Cabinet. It provides vocational opportunities for students in the areas of technical education, health services, machine shop, computer-assisted drafting, electricity/electronics, computer repair, and welding.

In 2003, Webster County became the first school district in Kentucky to implement an alternative calendar that primarily uses a four-day school week. Initially adopted as a cost-saving measure, this calendar allowed the district to continue all academic and extracurricular programs. Other benefits have become evident, such as an improvement in student achievement results, enhanced quality of embedded professional development, restructuring of teacher planning days, reduction of student and teacher absenteeism, longer instructional time blocks for students, improved morale of students and teachers, and a decrease in disciplinary infractions.

Below are some important benchmarks related to recent Webster County graduates:

	Attendance Rate	Retention Rate	Dropout Rate
District	94.9%	1.3%	1.1%
State	94.3%	3.4%	2.2%

Transition to Adult Life

	College	Military	Work	Voc/Tech Training	Work & Part-Time School	Not Successful
District	50.4%	3.5%	22%	0.7%	18.4%	5%
State	54.8%	2.9%	26.7%	4.9%	6.7%	4%

Teachers throughout the district use PowerPoint in classroom instruction. The use of flex cams, video data projectors, and digital cameras is becoming more widespread. Currently three locations, Webster County High School, Webster County Middle School, and Dixon Elementary, are connected with fiber optics. The district's other locations are connected with partial T1s.

Providence Independent Schools, www.providence.k12.ky.us, enrolled 417 students in the 2003-2004 school year. It is mission of the Providence Independent Schools that 100 percent of its students complete an individualized course of study so that they can make a positive contribution to our community.

Providence Independent Schools have a ratio of 2.5 students per computer. All classrooms have computers. The district also has two SMART boards, six projector devices, and 10

TVs. All of the staff has been trained on Internet instruction. The district locations are connected together via fiber optics.

Below are some important benchmarks related to recent Providence Independent School graduates:

	Attendance Rate	Retention Rate	Dropout Rate
District	93.3%	0.8%	1.2%
State	94.3%	3.4%	2.2%

	College	Military	Work	Voc/Tech Training	Work & Part-Time School	Not Successful
District	25%	4.2%	33.3%	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
State	54.8%	2.9%	26.7%	4.9%	6.7%	4%

Christian Heritage Academy is a non-public school in Webster County. It enrolls 63 students in a PK-4 program.

The Assessment

In its evaluation, the Webster County Leadership Team determined that the K-12 education sector has made significant progress in making technology a priority, and the team set goals for enhanced access and use of technology and its applications. The current assessment includes:

- **Network Places –** In the category of network places, Webster County's K-12 education sector scored a 3 on a 0 to 5 scale. Schools provide at least one computer for every five students. Most classrooms have computers for student use. Some teachers use computer-based presentation tools and projectors for their lessons.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the education sector scored a 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. Most schools have an interactive website that offers access to homework assignments and communication with teachers and administrators. All teachers are trained to use the Internet for instruction. Parents and family members are encouraged to participate in student learning via e-mail and online applications. Some seniors are taking college-level classes on the Internet.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the education sector, Webster County scored a 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some schools have comprehensive plans for learning activities utilizing technology in the classroom. New hires are required to have experience using new technology in the classroom. Computer labs are made available to family and community members. Schools take responsibility for continuing e-rate and other discounts.

The Vision

The Webster County Leadership Team recognizes that the school systems have made technology a priority, and the team has outlined a clear vision for enhanced technology usage and application in the classroom. The team set goals that would move the K-12 Education sector to scores of 4 out of 5 in the networked places category and 5 out of 5 in applications and services as well as leadership. The vision includes:

- Most students are provided their own **laptop** computers to use at school and home
- Many classrooms have large, **flat panel displays or projectors** for **video-based instruction**
- Most schools have converted their phone system to **VoIP** to save money
- Schools use the network to **connect students, teachers and parents**, improve learning via **online resources**, and manage administrative responsibilities more efficiently
- Schools have **information technology literacy** requirements in place
- **Technology training** is offered in the community
- Many high school students use **online teachers and experts** to explore subjects and develop learning plans
- Many schools have **comprehensive plans** for learning activities utilizing technology in the classroom
- School districts actively promote technology literacy to drive positive impacts on **economic performance**, **skills** and **innovation** in the classroom
- The school system plays a **vital role** in raising the **skill level and awareness** of community and family members

HEALTHCARE

The Webster County branch of the Green River Health Department, www.healthdepartment.org, is the primary healthcare provider in Webster County. The mission of the GRHD is to improve the quality of life by promoting, protecting and enhancing the health and well-being of the public. The health department's focus is to develop and maintain healthy habits and lifestyles within Webster County and surrounding communities and to ensure the citizenry is protected through environmentally safe surroundings. Some services offered include Communicable Disease Control, Environmental Services, Public Health Education, Public Health Policy, Families and Children Risk Reduction, and Disaster Preparedness.

The Assessment

The Webster County Leadership Team found that the healthcare sector is in its infancy in terms of using technology to its advantage and identified a large opportunity for technology applications within the healthcare community.

- **Network Places** – In the category of network places, Webster County's healthcare sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some physicians and/or staff have access through a dial-up connection, with few others having always-on connections.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the healthcare sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Physicians and/or staff are utilizing a dial-up connection in order to access health-related sites.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the healthcare community, Webster County scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Most in the healthcare community are considering what advantage could come from implementing high-speed Internet in the office.

The Vision

The Webster County Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the healthcare sector but understands the industry is limited in its resources and ability to implement changes within a brief period. The team has set goals to move each of the three categories to a rating of 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team's vision includes:

- Some doctors regularly use **computers to enter and maintain patient records**
- **Digital instruments and imaging equipment** are being acquired
- Some providers have **informational websites**
- Some providers **store patient records** electronically
- **Telemedicine** is being evaluated
- Some offices are **electronically transmitting records** to insurers for reimbursement
- Some providers have begun the conversion to **electronic medical records**
- Some providers are investigating how to deploy **wireless technologies** for mobile workers

LIBRARIES

Webster County Public Library, www.youseemore.com/webster, is comprised of two facilities, one in Dixon and one in Providence. Currently, the Webster County Public Library offers wireless Internet access in addition to having four workstations available for public use. Both library locations are served by DSL. Through the library's website, a patron can browse the card catalog, view various reference materials, and get help in English or Spanish.

The Assessment

The Webster County Leadership Team found that the library rated higher overall than most other sectors in its current use of technology. The current assessment includes:

- **Network Places** – In the category of network places, libraries scored a 5 on a 0 to 5 scale. Most public libraries offer patrons a 100 mbps or faster network with some wireless areas.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, libraries scored a 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. The Webster County Library allows patrons to review their accounts online and pay fines by credit card. Patrons can access the library online as a portal for other online information services.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the library system, the sector again scores a 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. The library helps the community understand copyright issues and how to protect privacy on the Internet. New hires are required to have experience using new technology. The library takes internal responsibility for continuing e-rate and other discounts. The library has developed network management policies and technologies to prevent patrons from sending spam.

The Vision

The leadership team has set forth a two-year vision for enhancing the library so that it serves the community more effectively and efficiently, concentrating on network places and leadership. The team set an aggressive goal for the categories of network places and applications and services, with plans to move all categories to a maximum rating of 5 on a 0 to 5 scale. The vision includes:

- A publicly accessible wireless network with a **minimum speed of 100 mbps**, allowing for more productive time on computers
- Public libraries offer **live video consultations**
- Public libraries allow patrons to **borrow e-books over the Internet**. They help patrons conduct research and assist with legal access to copyrighted databases and publications, including music and movies
- **Two-way videoconferencing** is available to the general public
- Libraries continue to **upgrade their facilities** to offer the community the next generation in technology, services and training
- Libraries actively promote **technology literacy** to drive positive impacts on **economic performance, skills and innovation** in the community

HIGHER EDUCATION

Although there are no higher education facilities in Webster County, there are 18 facilities within a 60-mile drive of the county. The main providers of higher education in Webster County are two Kentucky Community and Technology Colleges: Henderson Community College, www.henderson.kctcs.edu and Madisonville Community College, www.madisonville.kctcs.edu.

Additionally, Webster County residents can attend two nearby four-year public universities: Murray State University's Henderson and Madisonville Campuses, www.murraystate.edu, and Western Kentucky University's Owensboro Campus, www.wku.edu. Nearby private colleges include Brescia College, www.brescia.edu, Kentucky Wesleyan College, www.kwc.edu, and Daymar College, www.daymarcollege.edu.

Henderson Community and Technical College (HCC), www.henderson.kctcs.edu, founded in 1964, was originally the Northwest Extension of the University of Kentucky, which opened in 1960. HCC, a charter member of the University of Kentucky Community and Technical College System, currently enrolls students in academic, technical and transfer programs and provides training for more than 4,000 citizens through its continuing education program. Henderson Community and Technical College became a member of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System in 1998.

Henderson Community and Technical College prepares students for the new global economy by offering programs in information technology. The Information Technology Program at HCC offers an Associate in Applied Science Degree and certificates in IT Fundamentals, Computer Programming, Network Administration, Database Administration and Electronic Commerce. In addition to its academic program in information technology, Henderson Community and Technical College has integrated technology into all aspects of the college. All computer labs have been recently upgraded. Professional development courses are offered to all faculty and staff to increase knowledge of technology. A variety of courses are offered online and a new technology center for the college is in the works.

Madisonville Community College, www.madisonville.kctcs.edu, is changing lives by providing a supportive educational environment that will help its students reach their postsecondary goals and start them on the road to lifelong learning. MCC has three campuses in Madisonville - Health, Technology, and North - and the newest facility is the

Muhlenberg County Campus. Madisonville Community College offers classes in Caldwell, Crittenden, Henderson, Hopkins, McLean, Muhlenberg and Webster counties. MCC can give students ready access to postsecondary education and workforce training with day, evening and weekend classes; off-campus locations; classes over television or the Internet; and short-term training.

The Information Technology (IT) program at Madisonville Community College leads to an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree that prepares graduates for entry-level positions as Information Technology professionals. Students will learn the skills needed to problem solve and communicate effectively within the complex information technology industry. The IT curriculum is supported by a solid foundation of general education and core courses that include writing, communications, computer and math skills. Students will obtain hands-on training to develop skills in local area networks (LANs) and how they operate, computer programming, networking, hardware and software maintenance, database design and web page development.

Murray State University, www.murraystate.edu, offers a full-service office in Webster County area for students enrolled in courses and programs at the Henderson Regional Campus. There are a variety of courses and programs available for students who do not have access to the main campus. Technology allows for students to take interactive television courses in Henderson from Murray State and other organizations. Wireless Internet, available throughout the campus, allows students to study in all areas and use the building in creative ways. Degree programs offered at the Henderson Campus include: business administration, elementary education, special education and nursing.

Western Kentucky University, www.wku.edu, has a campus located in Owensboro offering a wide variety of services and courses. Currently, WKU offers nine bachelor degrees, two minors, and eight master degrees. These degrees range from education to technology to nursing and sociology. Additionally, many courses are available online through Western's Bowling Green campus. More than 1,600 students took advantage of this opportunity and took courses through Western Kentucky University in Owensboro.

Western Kentucky University provides rigorous academic programs in the liberal arts and sciences, and traditional and emerging professional programs at a reasonable cost. Western's commitment is to ensure value in a holistic learning experience through high standards for student achievement and conduct, strong faculty, technological innovation, personalized attention, broad access, and public accountability for actions and outcomes. Western's success is reflected in the success of its graduates, who are known for their loyalty, leadership and adaptability. WKU recognizes that its mission continues to evolve in response to regional, national and global changes, and needs for life-long learning.

Kentucky Wesley College (KWC), www.kwc.edu, is rated one of the top ten best educational values in the South by *U.S. News and World Report*. Kentucky Wesleyan College, in partnership with the United Methodist Church, fosters a liberal arts education that nourishes, stimulates and prepares future leaders intellectually, spiritually and physically to achieve success in life.

Kentucky Wesleyan College is committed to providing students state-of-the-art technology systems and services. Across the curriculum, students are given the tools, knowledge and practical applications required to attain a level of computer proficiency consistent with the demands of any eventual career choice. Additionally, KWC's Library Learning Center

provides information and library services to meet the educational needs of the KWC community and to prepare students for the process of life-long learning.

Brescia University, www.brescia.edu, was founded in 1950 by the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. The university offers certificates, associates, baccalaureate and master's degrees through semester and time-shortened programs of higher education in the Ursuline tradition. Brescia emphasizes the liberal arts and prepares its traditional and non-traditional students for successful careers and for service to others.

Brescia University provides all students Internet access with 10/100 Ethernet. Many of the labs are equipped with computers and Internet. Additionally, Brescia University's Library and Student Support Services are now able to offer wireless Internet to its patrons. Future plans include expanding wireless Internet access to a larger part of the campus, including some outside areas.

Kentucky Virtual University (KYVU), www.kyvu.org, is the state's official virtual campus. It has a mission to be a student-centered, technology-based utility for the support of lifelong learning. Consistent with the statewide strategic agenda for postsecondary education, the primary purposes of KYVU are to: enhance and expand educational access and increase educational attainment across Kentucky; upgrade workforce skills and expand professional development through basic and continuing education; increase collaboration and foster efficiency and effectiveness in delivering courses and programs; and increase global competitiveness of Kentucky's educational resources.

KYVU provides college credit, professional development and supplemental studies while providing a single access point to statewide learning support services over the Internet. KYVU serves as a clearinghouse for a growing list of online learning opportunities. Kentucky was the first state in the country to offer its residents a comprehensive package of online educational resources: a virtual university, a virtual high school, www.kvhs.org, and a virtual library, including research help from reference librarians, www.kyvl.org.

Since no higher education institution exists in Webster County, all assessments have been combined into the K-12 Education sector as part of an education plan for the community.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

There are approximately 60 community-based organizations in Webster County. These community organizations include religious, educational, charitable, scientific, or literary organizations. Some examples of community-based organizations in Webster County are:

- International Association of Lions Club;
- Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.
- American Legion
- West Kentucky Family Enrichment Center, Inc.

Assessment

The Webster County eCommunity Leadership Team found that the community-based organization sector is just beginning to use technology to its advantage and identified a large opportunity for technology applications within the community-based organizations.

- **Networked Places** – In the category of networked places, Webster County's community-based organization sector is currently at stage 1 on a 0 to 5 scale, with most accessing the Internet through a limited dial-up connection.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the community-based organization sector is currently at stage 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Currently, organizations use e-mail and possibly other basic Internet functions.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the community-based organization community, Webster County is currently at stage 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. The Internet is seen as a possible enhancement and marketing tool.

The Vision

The Webster County eCommunity Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the community-based organization sector but understands the sector is limited in its resources and ability to implement changes within a brief period. The team has set goals to move each of the three categories to stage 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team's vision includes:

- Some organizations **have computers that are no older than three years old**
- Many **organizations have e-mail**
- Some office employees have **always-on connections to the Internet** at their desks
- Some **organizations have informational websites**
- Organizations are **minimally involved in community economic development** issues
- **Little or no plans exist for better using telecommunications** services and technologies
- Some organizations **provide technology training to their staff** at least once a year

GOVERNMENT

Government entities in Webster County are as follows: Webster County, Clay, Dixon (County Seat), Providence, Sebree, Slaughters and Wheatcroft.

Webster County is one of only 59 counties in Kentucky with a website, http://www.webstercountyky.com. From the website, a visitor can learn about economic development, tourism and historical sites, as well as learn more about the six communities within Webster County.

Webster County Property Valuation Administrator's office has a very interactive website, www.webstercountypva.com. From this website, a resident could view property maps, map parcels, and learn about property taxes in Webster County. The Webster County P.V.A. Office was the first county office featured on the Commonwealth Office of Technology Website.

The only other government entity with a website is the City of Clay, www.cityofclayky.com.

The Assessment

Although the government entities in Webster County have a limited online presence, the Webster County Leadership team found that the local government is currently using technology to improve processes in other areas. Overall, the team scored itself a 2 in networked places, 1 in applications and services, and 2 in leadership on a 0 to 5 scale.

- **Network Places** – In the category of network places, the government sector scored a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some employees have e-mail accounts. Some government sector employees also have always-on connections.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the government sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some employees use the Internet for e-mail and research purposes.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the government community, Webster County and its associated governments scored a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. Public agencies do not have a strategy for how best to use e-government. Minimal telecommunications planning has occurred. Some elected officials are involved in telecommunications issues.

The Vision

The Webster County Leadership Team has developed goals to provide a framework for robust e-Government functions in the next two years, bringing the rating in the category of network places to a 4; the rating for applications and services to a 4; and the rating for leadership to a 4. The team's vision includes:

- Some field workers use **wireless networks** to upload and download data in the field;
- Some employees are using **desktop videoconferencing**
- Sensors and **webcams monitor locations**, such as rivers, that are crucial to public safety
- Customers can make **routine payments**, such as parking fines, **online** using credit cards or EFT
- **Parks and recreation classes** can be registered for online
- Building inspections and violations can be entered from the field
- Some agencies have a formal policy that allows some employees to **work at home** at least one day a week
- **Rights-of-way and tower siting** policies are in place
- Elected officials understand the importance of the network for economic development and quality of life

TOURISM, RECREATION AND PARKS

Tourism and recreational points of interests in Webster County include:

- Heaven Scent Soap Company
- OT's Café
- Wildwood Golf Course
- Webster County Civil War Driving Tour, www.rootsweb.com/~kywebste/civilwar.htm
- Parker Warner Historic Museum, www.rootsweb.com/~kywebste/museum/museum.html.

The Assessment

The Webster County Leadership Team found that the tourism, recreation and parks sector is just beginning to use technology to its advantage and identified a large opportunity for technology applications within the tourism, recreation and parks Sector.

- **Network Places** – In the category of network places, Webster County's tourism, recreation and parks sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some employees can access the Internet through dial-up connections.

- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the tourism, recreation and parks sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some employees currently utilize the Internet for the purpose of e-mail.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the tourism, recreation and parks sector, Webster County scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. The Internet is seen as a possible way to enhance operations.

The Vision

The Webster County Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the agricultural sector but understands the industry is limited in its resources and ability to implement changes within a brief period. The team has set goals to move each of the three categories above to a rating of 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team's vision includes:

- Some office employees have **always-on connections** to the Internet at their desks
- Some facilities have an **informational website**
- Some facilities transmit or receive some **reservations electronically**
- The tourism, recreation, and parks sector view the Internet as **essential** to **business operations**
- Employees are **trained on basic applications**

AGRICULTURE

In 2002, there were 595 farms in Webster County (a 14 percent increase from 1997's total of 524 farms). These 595 farms comprise 159,496 acres. The average farm size was 268 acres. The market value of production was $77.3 million. Crops accounted for $17 million; livestock sales accounted for $60.3 million. Market value of production per farm was $129,994. In 2002, government payments averaged $8,130 ($2.9 million total for the county). Webster County is ranked fifth in the value of agricultural products sold in the state. The leading agricultural products in sales in the county:

- Poultry and eggs, $55.5 million
- Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas, $15.9 million
- Cattle and calves, $4.3 million

Webster County is the second leading producer of poultry and eggs, and the 13th leading producer of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas.

Webster County tobacco producers and farmers received a total of $1.6 million in burley payments from the Tobacco Buyout Program along with $5.6 million in dark payments.

The agriculture sector sees advanced communications being able to help producers and growers to retrieve information they need, when they need it. Technology will allow the farming community to not have to depend on others for information about topics such as weather, pricing and plant disease. Currently, the agricultural community is primarily served by the Webster County branch of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service and can be found online at ces.ca.uky.edu/webster. Through their website, farmers can learn the latest on beef, soybean rust, tobacco, insects and plant diseases.

The Assessment

The Webster County Leadership Team found that the agricultural sector is just beginning to use technology to its advantage and identified a large opportunity for technology applications within the farming community.

- **Network Places** – In the category of network places, Webster County's agricultural sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some growers, suppliers and processors have limited access through a dial-up connection.
- **Applications and Services** – In the category of technology applications and services, the agriculture sector scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. Some growers, suppliers, and processors utilize e-mail and Internet.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the agricultural community, Webster County scored a 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. The Internet is seen as a possible enhancement to the way daily business is conducted.

The Vision

The Webster County Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the agricultural sector but understands the industry is limited in its resources and ability to implement changes within a brief period. The team has set goals to move its rating in all categories to a 2 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team's vision includes:

- Some growers, suppliers and processors have **always-on connections** to the Internet at their desks
- Some growers, suppliers and processors have an **informational website**
- Some growers, suppliers and processors transmit or **receive some orders electronically**
- The Internet is seen as **essential to business operations**
- Employees are **trained on basic applications**

Business and Industry — Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	No computer use or website. Customers use phone and postal mail.	No technology or telecom plan.
1	Some employees have limited access to the Internet through a dial-up connection.	Some employees use basic e-mail services through their connection.	The Internet is considered a possible business enhancement.
2	● Some office employees have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks.	● Some businesses have an informational website. Some businesses transmit or receive some orders electronically.	● Some view the Internet as essential to business operations. Employees are trained on basic applications.
3	Most office employees have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks. Some mobile workers have laptop computers and can access the office network remotely. Affordable videoconferencing facilities are available in the community.	Most businesses have an informational website. Some retail websites can accept credit card transactions. Some businesses participate in the electronic supply chain.	Some businesses permit some employees periodically to telework. Some businesses encourage employees to take work-related classes offline. Employee training on new technology is a priority.
4	■ Some businesses use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Some office workers have converted from desktop computers to portable device. Some office computers have webcams for videoconferencing.	■ Some businesses outsource most of their computer services. Some retailers and manufacturers sell goods out of state or internationally. Some employees work remotely, some out of state.	■ Some businesses permit some employees to telework one or two days a week. Some businesses encourage employees to take work-related courses online. Businesses are working with educational partners to raise workforce skill levels.
5	Most businesses use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Most computers have video cameras. Some retailers and manufacturers use RFID (radio frequency identification) to track inventory and equipment.	Some businesses send and receive video mail. Some businesses outsource most of their computing services. Some businesses routinely use multiparty videoconferencing to coordinate operations.	Some businesses have restructured to focus on their core contribution and outsource nonessential functions. New hires are required to have experience using new technology in business applications.

Education: K-12 — Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Least Connected → Most Connected

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	Schools use phone and postal mail. Schools have no website.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
1	Few middle and high schools have computer labs for students. Few classrooms/teachers have access to computer projectors.	Few schools have an informational website. The Internet is not used as a resource for instruction or homework assignments.	Few experienced teachers are trained on how to incorporate material from the Internet into their curriculum.
2	Many middle and high schools have computer labs for students. Some classrooms and teachers have access to computer projectors.	Many schools have an informational website. The Internet is rarely used as a resource for instruction or homework assignments.	Few schools have plans for better using telecommunications services and technologies in their classrooms. Some experienced teachers are trained on how to incorporate material from the Internet into their curriculum.
3	● Schools provide at least one computer for every four students in grades K-12. Most classrooms have computers for student use. Some teachers use computer-based presentation tools and projectors for their lessons.	Some schools have an interactive website that offers access to homework assignments and communication with teachers and administrators. Many teachers can incorporate Internet material into the curriculum. Teachers welcome e-mail from parents and students.	The school board sees opportunities to use the network to raise test scores and operate the school more efficiently. Teacher training on new technologies is a priority at most school districts. Schools are using consultants to take advantage of e-rate and other school discounts.
4	■ Some high school students are provided their own laptop computers at school. Many classroom teachers have access to digital projection capabilities. Most middle and high schools have video programs that allow students to produce and share shows on a public network. Some schools use wireless sensors to monitor energy consumption.	● Many schools have an interactive website that offers access to homework assignments and e-mail contact with teachers and administrators. All teachers meet National Educational Technology Standards. Most students meet National Educational Technology Standards. Parents and family members are encouraged to participate in student learning via e-mail and online applications. Online classes are available to high school students via Internet-based instruction, including college online classes and Kentucky Virtual High School.	● Some schools have comprehensive plans for learning activities using technology in the classroom. New hires are required to have experience using new technology in the classroom. Computer labs are made available to family and community members. Schools take responsibility for continuing e-rate and other discounts.
5	Many classrooms have large, flat-panel displays or projectors for video-based instruction. Most schools have converted their phone system to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Most high schools have one-to-one computing for their students. Some school computer labs have been made available to the public.	■ Schools use the network to connect students, teachers and parents, improve learning via online resources, and manage administrative responsibilities more efficiently. All students meet grade level requirements in the National Educational Technology Standards. Technology training is offered in the community. Many high school students use online teachers and experts to explore subjects and execute individual learning plans.	■ All schools have comprehensive plans for learning activities utilizing technology in the classroom. School districts actively promote information technology literacy to drive positive impacts on economic performance, skills and innovation in the classroom. The school system plays a vital role in raising the skill level and awareness of community and family members.

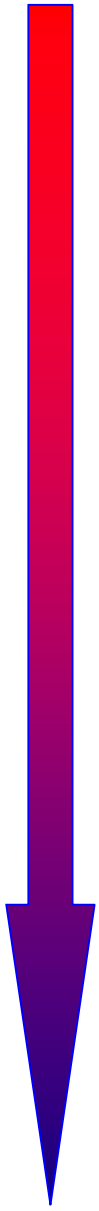
Healthcare	Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue. Blue is used when Assessment and Vision are the same.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	Customers use phone and postal mail. No website.	No technology or telecom plan.
1	Some physicians and/or staff have access to the Internet through a dial-up connection.	Physicians and/or staff use a dial-up connection in order to access health-related sites.	Healthcare providers are considering what advantage may come from using the Internet in the office.
2	● ■ Some doctors regularly use computers to enter and maintain patient records. Digital instruments and imaging equipment are being acquired.	● ■ Some providers have informational websites. Some providers store patient records electronically. Telemedicine is being evaluated. Some offices are electronically transmitting records to insurers for reimbursement.	● ■ Some providers have begun the conversion to electronic medical records. Some providers are investigating how to deploy wireless technologies for mobile workers.
3	Some doctors and nurses are using laptop and palmtop devices connected to wireless networks to enter patient information and access databases.	Many providers have informational websites. Many providers store patient records electronically. Telemedicine is being evaluated. Some offices are electronically transmitting records to insurers for reimbursement.	Many providers have begun the conversion to electronic medical records. Many providers are investigating how to deploy wireless technologies for mobile workers.
4	Internet-based video conferencing is used to consult experts and for training programs. Some patients are being monitored at home and at work via portable devices with wireless transmitters.	Some providers allow patients to e-mail doctors. Most providers store patient records electronically. Some lab results and images are received electronically.	Work is underway by some providers to begin online exchanging of test results and other medical records with appropriate parties. Healthcare leaders are talking with the community about enhancing online services and using the network to improve communitywide healthcare.
5	Most equipment has been converted to digital. Desktop videoconferencing is routine at all hospitals and major clinics. Telephone systems have converted to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Remote monitoring of patients with chronic conditions is standard procedure.	All providers allow patients to schedule appointments, view records and get advice online. All patient records are stored electronically and routinely sent electronically to distant providers to aid diagnosis and treatment for emergency patients. Telemedicine routinely is used to access specialists. Wireless feeds in ambulances provide real-time patient assessment to ER staff.	Healthcare leaders see themselves as a key part of the community's overall economic strategy. Leaders are visible and active in strategy development and implementation. Executives of the region's hospitals, clinics, insurers, employers and other healthcare providers are meeting regularly to find ways to collaboratively reduce the cost of healthcare without compromising quality of service.

Libraries	Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue. Blue is used when Assessment and Vision are the same.



Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Libraries do not provide Internet access.	Customers use postal mail or phone. No website.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
1	Some employees have access to a dial-up connection.	Some employees are accessing e-mail and library-related websites.	Employees are accessing the Internet in order to help the patrons of the facility.
2	Public libraries provide several computers with free access to the Internet.	Most libraries have a website with basic information about hours of operation and location.	Libraries are the first to offer free access and instruction in the use of the Internet.
3	There is rarely more than a 10-minute wait to use the Internet-enabled computers.	Most libraries have catalogs online. Patrons may use the Internet to place books on hold and request books from other libraries in the library system. Patrons can search online databases from home, school, or work. Libraries host live video feeds of public interest events.	The library research desk is an online community resource. Staff training on new technologies is a priority at most libraries. Libraries are using consultants to take advantage of e-rate and other discounts. Library policies reflect appropriate filtering requirements.
4	Public libraries have added network ports or wireless networks and electrical outlets to carrels.	● Patrons may review their accounts online and pay fines by credit card. Patrons can access the library online as a portal for other online information services.	● Libraries help the community understand copyright issues and how to protect privacy on the Internet. New hires are required to have experience using new technology. Libraries take internal responsibility for continuing e-rate and other discounts. Libraries have developed network management policies and technologies to prevent patrons from sending spam.
5	● ■ Most public libraries offer patrons a 54 mbps or faster wireless network.	■ Public libraries offer live video consultations. Public libraries allow patrons to borrow e-books over the Internet. They help patrons conduct research and assist with legal access to copyrighted databases and publications, including music and movies. Two-way videoconferencing is available to the general public.	■ Libraries continue to upgrade their facilities to offer the community the next generation in technology, services and training. Libraries actively promote information technology literacy to drive positive impacts on economic performance, skills, and innovation in the community.

Higher Education	Webster County

	Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
Least Connected	0	Not using the Internet.	Use phone and postal mail.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
	1	Some on-campus residents have broadband connections through non-university providers.	Few faculty members are trained to use the Internet for instruction. Few classes use digital content and/or web-based content for instruction.	Few departments have plans for better utilizing telecommunications services and technologies in their operations.
	2	Most on-campus residences have a 10 mbps connection to the network. Some classrooms are wired to the college/university network and are equipped with digital projection capabilities.	Some faculty members are trained to use the Internet for instruction. Some classes use digital content and/or web-based content for instruction.	Few departments have plans for better utilizing telecommunications services and technologies in their operations.
	3	Most on-campus residences have connections to the network in every room at least 10 mbps. Some classrooms have projection equipment that allows the instructor to display videos from the Internet into the classroom.	Many of the faculty are trained to use the Internet for instruction. Many classes use digital content and/or web-based content for instruction. Students use chat rooms to discuss lessons and ask questions of instructors outside of class hours. Online registration, catalogs and payment are available.	Specialized courses have been developed to cater to area businesses seeking to improve the skills of workers. Some colleges and universities have or are developing online classes to provide greater convenience for students and to increase student enrollment. Faculty training on new technology is a priority.
	4	Some classrooms have been remodeled to include network connections and power outlets at every seat. Many students bring laptop computers or other network-enabled devices to class. Some classrooms have video equipment for recording lectures.	Most of the faculty are trained to use the Internet for instruction. Most classes use digital content and web-based content for instruction. Some undergraduate students take distance learning classes for specialized subjects and graduate-level research.	Higher education and local businesses are working together to raise the skill level of the current workforce. Community colleges are expanding their capacity by using distance learning technologies to reduce the need for classroom time. Some colleges and universities are developing online classes to market to students in other parts of the country and the world.
Most Connected	5	Many classrooms have been remodeled to include network connections and power outlets at every seat. Most students bring laptop computers or other network-enabled devices to class. Many classrooms have video equipment for recording lectures.	Many undergraduate students take distance learning classes for specialized subjects and graduate-level research. All aspects of higher education are available through the network including instruction and administration.	Colleges and universities see themselves as a vital partner in the community's economic development strategy and have formed partnerships with local businesses to provide skilled technology workers and innovative solutions. Colleges and universities actively promote information technology literacy to drive positive impacts on economic performance, skills, and innovation in the classroom.

Community-Based Organizations — Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	No computer use. No website. Use phone and postal mail.	No technology or telecom plan.
1	● Accessing the Internet through a limited dial-up connection.	● Currently using e-mail and possibly other basic Internet functions.	● The Internet is seen as a possible enhancement and marketing tool.
2	■ Some organizations have computers that are no older than three years old. Many organizations have e-mail. Some office employees have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks.	■ Some organizations have informational websites.	■ Organizations are minimally involved in community economic development issues. Little or no plans exist for better using telecommunications services and technologies. Some organizations provide technology training to their staff at least once a year.
3	Most organizations with at least five paid staff have at least one computer for every three employees. Many organizations have e-mail.	Many organizations have an informational website. Many local chapters are able to share data electronically with the national parent organization. Some organizations accept online donations.	Some organizations are involved in specific economic development initiatives, but most do not participate. Some organizations plan to use telecommunications services and technologies within the next year. Some organizations provide technology training to their staff at least once a year.
4	Many organizations with at least five employees have direct connections to the Internet. All paid staff have e-mail accounts. Some organizations use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Some office workers have converted from desktop computers to portable wireless devices. Some office computers have video cameras.	Most organizations have an informational website. A unified portal provides access to a broad range of community information and services. Most local chapters are able to share data with the parent organization.	Some organization leaders are actively involved in community economic development issues and there are visible leaders taking a significant role in economic development. Many organizations plan to use telecommunications services and technologies within the next year. Most organizations provide technology training to their staff at least once a year.
5	Many organizations use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). Every organization is connected to the Internet. Every computer can access the Internet via a local area network. Many computers have video cameras. Most organizations use affordable videoconferencing facilities.	Most organizations accept online donations. Some organizations use an interactive service to further engage the community and make their services more broadly available. Electronic data sharing is a common practice between organizations locally and with national parent organizations.	Organizations collaborate with one another regularly to share resources and provide up-to-date training to their employees and volunteers. Organizations have a defined role in supporting local economic development initiatives. Most organizations plan to use telecommunications services and technologies within the next year.

Government	Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	No website.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
1	Select employees have access to the Internet through a dial-up connection.	● Some employees use the Internet for e-mail purposes.	The Internet is seen as a possible way to enhance the basic daily operations.
2	● Some employees have e-mail accounts.	Most public agency websites offer informational features such as a community calendar, staff directory and downloadable forms. Customers rely mostly on postal mail and telephone to conduct business.	● Public agencies do not have a strategy for how best to use e-government. Minimal telecommunications planning has occurred. Elected officials are not involved in telecommunications issues.
3	Many employees have e-mail accounts. Some field workers are collecting data on laptop computers or palmtops. Webcams are starting to be deployed.	Some e-government applications are available, such as simple building permit applications, e-mail listservs and some downloadable forms. E-mail from residents is manually routed to the appropriate departments. Some agencies routinely use the network to share data.	Government staff is actively involved in framing technology and telecommunications issues. Processes are underway for enhancing connectivity, rights-of-way management, and information technology innovation. Employees are trained and knowledgeable about basic applications.
4	■ Some field workers use wireless networks to upload and download data in the field. Some employees use desktop videoconferencing. Sensors and webcams monitor locations, such as rivers, that are important to public safety.	■ Customers can make routine payments, such as parking fines, online using credit cards or electronic fund transfer. Parks and recreation classes have online registration. Employees can enter building inspections and violations from the field.	■ Some agencies have a formal policy that allows some employees to work from home at least one day a week. Rights-of-way and tower siting policies are in place. Elected officials understand the importance of the network for economic development and quality of life.
5	The telephone system is being converted to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Many field workers use wireless networks to upload and download data in the field. Critical traffic signals are connected. Desktop videoconferencing is widely available.	Interactive applications, such as customer relationship management, online GIS and video streaming are in regular use. Employees manage benefits programs on an intranet. Emergency response teams can reliably communicate across jurisdictions. Council meetings are indexed and available for searching and retrieval online.	The government has tele-communications, e-government and information technology master plans in place to guide its efforts. Innovative processes are used to collaborate with the private sector.

Tourism, Recreation and Parks | Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	No computer use. No website. Customers use phone and postal mail.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
1	● Some employees can access the Internet through a dial-up connection.	● Some employees currently use the Internet for e-mail.	● The Internet is seen as a possible way to enhance operations.
2	Some office employees have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks.	Some facilities have an informational website. Some facilities transmit or receive some reservations electronically.	The Internet is seen as essential to business operations. Employees are trained on basic applications.
3	Most office employees have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks. Some mobile workers have laptop computers and can access the office network remotely. Affordable videoconferencing facilities are available.	Most facilities have an informational website. Some websites can accept credit card purchases. Some facilities participate in an electronic supply chain.	Some facilities permit some employees periodically to telework. Some facilities encourage employees to take work-related classes online. Employee training on new technology is a priority.
4	■ Some facilities use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Some office workers have converted from desktop computers to portable devices with wireless connections. Some office computers have webcams for videoconferencing.	■ Some facilities outsource most of their computing services. Some facilities market themselves out of state or internationally. Some employees work remotely.	■ Some facilities permit some employees to telework one or two days a week. Some facilities encourage employees to take work-related classes online. Facilities work with educational partners to raise workforce skill levels.
5	Most facilities use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Most computers have video cameras.	Some facilities send and receive video mail. Some facilities outsource most of their computing services. Some facilities routinely use multiparty videoconferencing to coordinate operations.	Some facilities have restructured to focus on their core contribution and outsource nonessential functions. New hires are required to have experience using new technology in business applications.

Agriculture	Webster County

● Webster County's Benchmark Assessment Results are presented in red.
■ Webster County's Vision for this Sector is presented in blue.

Stage	Networked Places	Applications & Services	Leadership
0	Not using the Internet.	No computer use. No website. All contacts via phone and postal mail.	There is no technology or telecom plan.
1	● Some growers, suppliers and processors have limited access through a dial-up connection.	● Some growers, suppliers and processors use e-mail and Internet.	● The Internet is seen as a possible enhancement to the way daily business is conducted.
2	■ Some growers, suppliers and processors have always-on connections to the Internet at their desks.	■ Some growers, suppliers and processors have an informational website. Some growers, suppliers, and processors transmit or receive some orders electronically.	■ The Internet is seen as essential to business operations. Employees are trained on basic applications.
3	Most growers, suppliers and processors have always-on connections to the Internet. Some mobile workers have laptop computers and can access the network remotely. Affordable videoconferencing facilities are available in the community.	Most growers, suppliers and processors have informational websites. Some websites can accept credit card purchases. Some growers, suppliers and processors participate in an electronic supply chain.	Some suppliers and processors permit employees periodically to telework. Some growers, suppliers and processors encourage employees to take work-related classes online.
4	Some growers, suppliers and processors use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Some workers have converted from desktop computers to portable devices with wireless connections. Some office computers have webcams for videoconferencing.	Some suppliers and processors outsource most of their computing services. Some growers, suppliers and processors sell goods out of state or internationally.	Training on new technology is a priority. Some processors and suppliers permit employees to telework one or two days a week.
5	Most growers, suppliers and processors use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to save money. Most computers have video cameras. Some use Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) to track inventory and equipment.	Some growers, suppliers and processors send and receive video mail. Some outsource most of their computing services. Some routinely use multiparty videoconferencing to coordinate operations.	Some suppliers and producers have restructured to focus on their core contribution and outsource nonessential functions. New hires are required to have experience using new technology.

D. HOW DO WE GET THERE?

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PROJECT CONCEPT: Education, Training and Awareness for Webster County

LONG-TERM GOAL

Organization, promotion and delivery of technology education, training and awareness to the entire community of Webster County.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

An educated community is essential in today's global economy. There are opportunities to leverage existing resources in Webster County to expand and enhance workforce training programs, encourage more post-secondary education, and create additional awareness within the community in regard to technology. Education, training and awareness are essential in our ability to expand technology within each sector of the community. These community sectors include: agriculture, business and industry, community-based organizations, government, healthcare, higher education, K-12 education, libraries, and tourism, parks and recreation.

SPECIFIC MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

(Criteria: clear, compelling, outcome-oriented, achievable within one year)

1. Inventory of all education/training/awareness resources in Webster County.
2. Development of additional education, training and awareness materials to further the use of technology and broadband applications.
3. Increase the citizen usage rates of computers and broadband in Webster County.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE OUTCOME

1. Identify all organizations within Webster County performing community education, training and awareness.
2. Divide current resources offered by organizations into three categories: education, training and awareness.
3. Determine which sectors could benefit from education/training/awareness opportunities.
4. Create new ways to market and promote opportunities to appropriate groups within the community.
5. Determine gaps in education/training/awareness and ways to fill those gaps.

NAMES OF IMPLEMENTATION CHAMPIONS

Educational Team

Webster County Public Schools, www.webster.k12.ky.us
Providence Independent Schools, www.providence.k12.ky.us
Henderson Community and Technical College, www.henderson.kctcs.edu
Murray State University, www.murraystate.edu
Green River Area Development District, www.gradd.org
Webster County Cooperative Extension Service, ces.ca.uky.edu/Webster

Webster County Public Library, www.youseemore.com/webster
Tri-County Training Consortium, www.tricountytraining.com

PROJECT CONCEPT: Conceptual Plan for E-Government Services in Webster County

LONG TERM GOAL

Using technology, improve internal and external efficiencies within city and county government, allowing for better communication between the different government entities and the citizens of Webster County.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Technology will allow local governments to deliver more applications and improved services to constituents while saving money. With growing public acceptance of online transactions and e-commerce growing dramatically, a well-planned e-government strategy will provide for the request and delivery of local government services over the Internet.

SPECIFIC MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

1. Determine the public need for electronic access to government.
2. Develop a strategy for significantly reducing visits by the public to government offices for routine transactions.
3. Identify applications specifically designed to help businesses interface with governments more efficiently.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

1. Review current e-government applications to identify areas containing gaps.
2. Develop a survey instrument to identify applications of public interest. Use the survey to examine potential e-government applications.
3. Identify high-volume services to target for automation/online service.
4. Identify partners and entities to assist in implementation.
5. Develop and launch applications.

E-GOVERNMENT TEAM

Webster County, www.webstercountyky.com

Clay, www.cityofclayky.com	Dixon
Providence	Sebree
Slaughters	Wheatcroft

Green River Area Development District, www.gradd.com

Potential Action Items

Business and Industry

- Develop a services directory for IT-related services in the county, including business-to-business opportunities.

- Educate small businesses on what telecommunications services are available and the benefits of using technology in business.

- Get businesses together to aggregate demand for high-speed services, create a more attractive market for infrastructure providers and ensure that the services meet local needs.

- Identify ways to reduce the costs of connecting to the Internet and potential funding sources for small businesses.

Education K-12

- Make it easier for low-income families to access computers and the Internet to facilitate communications with teachers and schools. Ask businesses to donate surplus computers to low-income parents.

- Develop informational websites for all schools with interactive features, including expanding student, parent and teacher access to student information, such as homework assignments and attendance records.

- Build relationships between education and broadband providers.

- Establish a countywide educational consortium (made up of public and private schools and adult education) to consolidate the various groups working on technology planning in the education sector.

- Expand Broadway Site to house all students and provide a community access and training site.

- Provide training in information technology resources for districts, especially for support staff and classified personnel.

- Expand course offerings to students by utilizing interactive television facilities and web-based courses.

- Improve multimedia presentation units for classrooms.

Healthcare

- Increase access to clinical information among providers and increase access to individual patient information by that patient.
- Increase use of video- and webconferencing tools to educate healthcare professionals through distance learning and inform public of current healthcare activities.
- Educate healthcare professionals on available technologies and benefits of technology in medicine.
- Expand access to affordable, high-speed networks for smaller providers and rural areas via private and public partnerships, to provide telemedicine and teleconferencing services.
- Seek grants for implementing technological upgrades and training for medical staff.

Libraries

- Improve the current website, and expand the capabilities of interacting with our patrons.
- Develop expanded Internet training programs for the public, targeting specific needs and groups.
- Market the current capabilities and services of the library system.
- Explore and develop options to increase customer-initiated transactions on-line, including financial and library services, such as paying fines on-line and accessing subscription databases and e-books.
- Investigate cost-efficient ways to provide increased bandwidth to rural libraries.
- Increase the number of public access computers and provide ports or wireless access points where patrons with laptop computers can connect to high-speed lines.
- Make library services more user-friendly.

Higher Education

- Increase methods of instruction delivery over the Internet in terms of video and/or audio and 3D-visualization technology.
- Encourage the use of Internet for online learning.

Community-Based Organizations

- Develop a networking event to share information, ideas, and innovations in technology deployment.
- Encourage organizations to use e-mail and the web, thereby eliminating the use of paper mail.
- Develop collaborative partnerships with educational institutions and corporate partners to provide web services/design and equipment.

Government

- Improve the ability to conduct business with government over the Internet, such as permitting, purchasing and payments.
- Increase the number of public access terminals in the county.
- Encourage inter-governmental sharing of software, information and e-commerce concepts.
- Develop more e-government applications that provide value to the consumer.
- Allow the donation of appropriate surplus computers to non-governmental organizations and individuals.
- Set awareness and training goals as well as objectives to be completed in one year.
- Develop more thorough employee technology training programs.
- Seek grant funding to improve the technology infrastructure and information technology support functions.
- Initiate and complete a new information technology strategic plan to improve all automated systems, re-engineer manual procedures and review how departments collaborate.
- Increase city-county collaboration.
- Create a partnership of public and private entities to develop a regional portal.
- Build a consortium of businesses and governments to identify and share best practices in website design and content, e.g. ADA compliance, multiple language support, and navigation techniques.
- Future implementation of online bill pay and record search will make some government services more convenient and user-friendly.

Tourism, Recreation & Parks

- Encourage more local companies to sell their goods and services online to promote local businesses and increase sales.
- Use technology to market county attractions to potential in-state and out-of-state tourists.
- Develop programs to set up public access points in malls, public buildings, and farm worker communities.
- Encourage local hotels to provide always-on access to their occupants, as well as devices with which to connect.
- Develop a community portal page to promote tourism in the county.
- Develop affordable, high-speed services for rural parts of the county.

Agriculture

- Develop educational materials, including hands on-training courses, to help the agriculture community to understand the importance of broadband as well as increasing education and awareness among the agriculture sector.
- Evaluate the feasibility of creating a local agricultural portal to connect the agriculture community together for advance information sharing, news and market distribution, etc.
- Create video conferencing centers for use by the agricultural community and create promotional materials to show possible uses of video conferencing.
- Create a listing of the providers in the community to allow for the agriculture sector to better understand what service is available and from whom.
- Create and/or promote materials for the new eXtension service, a national web-based information and education network providing 24/7/365 access to objective, science-based information from universities and partners nationwide.