



Elko County Leaders Join Innovative Broadband Expansion Effort

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Area leaders enlist in Connected program to bridge technology gap, boost economy, and pave way for improved quality of life

Elko, NV – Elko community leaders have enrolled their community in an innovative program that seeks to boost the local economy and quality of life for residents through increased access, adoption, and use of broadband.

Staff from Connect Nevada, the statewide nonprofit promoting broadband expansion, led area leaders through the steps of the new [Connected](#) community certification program that offers a comprehensive and localized way for communities to bridge the digital divide impacting many communities.

The Elko County Connected community leadership team recently met to begin building a plan to ensure that every home, school, organization, and business in the county has access to broadband.

Nearly a dozen local leaders are already involved in the project. The committee is part of Nevada's plan to deliver broadband access to every part of the state. Ultimately, the goal of the Connected community certification program is to increase the number of high-tech companies and jobs in Nevada.

The team will assess the current state of technology in the county, determine what improvements are needed, and devise a plan for achieving those goals.

Community members interested in the project are welcome to join future meetings. Volunteers represent the following areas:

- Business and industry
- Healthcare
- Libraries
- K-12 education
- Higher education
- Community-based organizations

- Government
- Agriculture
- Tourism, recreation and parks

The meetings are organized by Connect Nevada, a nonprofit group that is working to accelerate the availability and use of technology throughout the state towards creating a better business environment, more effective community and economic development, improved healthcare, more efficient government, and enhanced education.

Elko County Chairperson John Rice is excited to see the opportunities for technological progress that the Connected process will bring. He said: "We're very excited to be working with Connect Nevada, examining our broadband resources and looking at ways we can advance our community with heightened access to digital technologies. It goes without saying that broadband provides the conduit our community will need to advance education, health care and commerce. We already enjoy a certain level of connectivity. Our Connect Nevada project brings stakeholders from the private and public sector to the table to discuss our future broadband opportunities, so we can remain competitive with other communities across the nation in matters of workforce and economic development."

The use of broadband technology is already enhancing the lives and businesses of citizens all across the state. In fact, Nevada businesses with broadband report an average of \$100,000 higher annual revenue than businesses without. Many companies cite the availability of broadband as essential to starting or expanding their operations. The Internet also allows small businesses, even those based in remote locations, to compete worldwide.

Broadband also promises to boost the economy and quality of life in Nevada. For example, doctors can remotely monitor patients with chronic illnesses, working parents can complete their college degrees by attending classes online, and tourists can make online reservations.

For more information about the project or to join the Connected community technology team, please contact Connect Nevada Program Manager Lindsey Niedzielski at lniedzielski@connectnv.org or (775) 343-9600.

The next meeting of the Elko County *Connected* community technology team is set for:

**Monday, October 22 at 10 a.m.
Great Basin College
1500 College Parkway, Elko, NV 89801**

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About Connect Nevada: The Governor's Office and the Nevada Broadband Task Force are leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access, adoption, and use across the state. Connect Nevada is a nonprofit organization that was commissioned by the state to work with all Nevada broadband providers, create detailed maps of current broadband coverage, and coordinate efforts with other Federal grant award recipients in the state. Connect Nevada is now supporting the development of a statewide plan for the deployment and adoption of broadband. The goal is to spread high-speed Internet across the state and make sure all Nevada residents have access to its life-changing benefits. For more information visit: www.connectnv.org.

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