

Building Information Communities

Community Assessment



developed by the

Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Community Council

The Building Information Age Communities assessment was developed by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) and the NITC's Community Council. This assessment tool and additional resources are available from the NITC's Web site (<http://www.nitc.state.ne.us>).

This instrument was adapted with permission from the "Report Card for the Information Age" developed by the Docking Institute for Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. We are grateful for the use of the instrument and for all of the work they have done in helping communities utilize information technology as a community and economic development tool. For more information on the Docking Institute, see <http://www.fhsu.edu/docking>.

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How to Use This Tool

This assessment is designed to be a simple tool to help communities document how information technology is currently being utilized and to suggest additional ways in which information technology may be utilized. The assessment tool focuses on 15 key areas:

- Community Leadership and IT Planning
- Economic Development
- E-Commerce
- Agriculture
- Public Access and Universal Service
- Education
- Public Library Resources
- Health Care
- Technology Training and Retention
- Broadband Services and Infrastructure
- Local Government and Community Services
- Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement and Emergency Services
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Arts, Culture, History, and Non-profits
- Funding Strategies

The breadth of the categories underscores the importance of taking a community-wide approach to information technology planning. Rather than having one person complete the entire assessment instrument, it may be easier to assign topics to key individuals in the community. For example, the library director could answer the section on Public Library Resources and perhaps also the section on Public Access and Universal Service. The director of the chamber of commerce could answer the Economic Development and E-Commerce sections. In some cases, it may work better to have a group of interested individuals work on a section.

Not all of the strategies listed in this instrument may fit your community. If you run across a question that you feel is not applicable to your community, you may simply write "not applicable" or "N/A" across the checkboxes. In order to keep the assessment fairly simple, all questions are yes/no questions. If you have a difficult time answering a question, you may add a qualifying comment. Highlight those questions to which you answered "no" but would like to be addressed in your community's strategic plan.

After the assessment has been completed, it is important to bring together community leaders and interested citizens to discuss the findings of the community assessment and to begin developing a strategic information technology plan for your community. This

plan can be part of a community and economic development plan or a separate plan. If a separate strategic plan for information technology is developed, it should be complementary to any existing community and economic development strategic plan. Some questions you may ask include: What are your community's strengths regarding telecommunications? What are your community's weaknesses regarding telecommunications? What kind of a community do we want our community to be in five, ten, or twenty years? What do we need to do now in order to achieve this community vision?

Before developing a strategic information technology plan, a community may need additional information. For example, an inventory of information technology infrastructure, information technology businesses, and information technology positions would be helpful in developing a plan to address information technology related economic development opportunities.

Although all fifteen areas should be addressed during the initial assessment, communities may decide to focus strategic planning efforts on two or three areas. Strategic planning efforts do not need to be limited to the city or village limits. In many cases, a county-wide or regional strategic planning effort may be more effective.

Additional resources are available in the Community section of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Information Technology Clearinghouse (<http://www.nitc.state.ne.us>).

Community Leadership and IT Planning

Community leadership and institutional support are cornerstones of Information Age communities. The membership of a well-balanced community information technology committee includes business owners and managers, local government officials, economic and community development leaders, educational leaders, health care providers, and library staff. Many committees also include representatives of non-profits and cultural organizations as well as senior citizens, youth, and any other significant demographic groups.

Some communities have very formal technology work groups, incorporated non-profit organizations or formally appointed city or county task forces. Some of these formal groups have significant budgets and their own projects. Other successful communities have much more informal councils or coordinating groups that serve to provide a place for information exchange. These groups may not have their own projects, but may encourage cooperation and partnerships between members such as schools and businesses, or health care providers and telecommunications providers. Both types of groups generally serve in a significant role as “champions” of technology adoption.

Community leadership and IT planning factors to assess:	yes	no
Is there a group, such as an information technology task force, to encourage technology use in the community?		
A well-balanced community information technology development effort includes representation from many parts of the community. Are the following involved in the community effort?		
▪ Business people (including agriculture)		
▪ Local government (including administrators and/or elected officials, law enforcement, and users of Geographic Information Systems)		
▪ Economic and community development leaders		
▪ Educational leaders (including K-12 and postsecondary institutions serving the area)		
▪ Library director		
▪ Health care providers		
▪ Non-profits, arts, history and cultural organizations		
▪ Senior citizens, youth, and/or other significant demographic groups		

Community leadership and IT planning factors to assess (continued):	yes	no
Has a strategic information technology plan been developed?		
Have there been community meetings to build community input and support for the strategic plan?		
Are public/private partnerships used to accelerate information technology development?		

Economic Development

Information Age communities actively plan to take advantage of the Information Economy. Activities related to economic development include strategic planning, policy decisions, budget decisions, business support, appropriate infrastructure and marketing. An economic development organization may also act as an educator, information source, and a coach as it urges small local businesses to use the technology tools available to them.

Economic development factors to assess:	yes	no
Does the community's economic development strategic plan recognize threats and opportunities posed by the Information Economy?		
Is there a coalition of public and private organizations who support the development and recruitment of information technology businesses?		
Have community leaders formally targeted information-based businesses for development and recruitment to the community? Are any or all of the following targeted?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Back-office businesses such as finance centers, title companies, insurance companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inbound call centers providing order taking or service? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telemarketing firms? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warehouse and shipping companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Video or audio development companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brokerage firms? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Software development companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Web service companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional headquarters of companies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information technology manufacturers? 		
Is the community assisting businesses by developing and/or recruiting information workers?		
Are city, county, and regional authorities prepared to "fast track" approvals for construction, site plans, utility extensions, inspection, etc. in order to meet a new or expanding business's time frame?		

Economic development factors to assess (continued):	yes	no
Have economic development leaders fashioned incentives that fit information-based businesses? These may be training programs, facilities, property tax incentives, capital investment incentives or other innovative programs.		
Does the community have a program to incubate or assist information technology businesses?		
Is there a program to foster telecommuting work at home through information technology?		
Does the community work to attract "lone eagles" – professionals who are able to work anywhere they choose because of information technology?		
Do travel/tourism organizations use the Internet to promote restaurants, lodging and attractions in their area?		
Is the Internet used for economic development research and prospecting?		
Does the community Web site have information on the following:		
▪ Available sites and facilities?		
▪ Available telecommunications infrastructure?		
▪ Available utility services?		
▪ Labor statistics including availability, skill levels, and wage levels for representative job classes?		
▪ Training programs?		
▪ Incentive programs (if any)?		
▪ Educational institutions?		
▪ Housing information?		
▪ Contact people?		
Does the local chamber of commerce recognize businesses that are innovatively using information technology in the community?		
Does the community have a technology park or a facility that can house an information technology business?		
Does the community have information technology support services (i.e., computer and printer repair services or network support services)?		
Have local or state economic development officials worked to create "clusters" of similar types of information businesses? Such clusters are able to address training needs, infrastructure needs, governmental regulatory problems, and attract similar businesses.		

Electronic Commerce

In order to prosper in the increasingly competitive global economy, Nebraska businesses must be prepared to fully participate in the Information Age. Nearly every business and every industry is being impacted by the explosive growth of e-commerce:

- Seventy percent of small-business owners now have access to the Internet, up from 57 percent last year. Thirty-eight percent report having a Web site, up from 28 percent a year ago¹
- Online business to business transactions are expected to grow from \$336 billion (or 3 percent of the market) in 2000 to \$6.3 trillion (or 42 percent of the market) by 2005).²
- Online business to consumer sales are expected to surpass \$29.3 billion in 2000. Although online sales accounted for less than 1 percent of total retail sales in the U.S., online sales are predicted to account for 5 to 7 percent of retail sales by 2004³.

Many small businesses are not fully prepared to participate in the new economy. Although the number of small businesses using the Internet has increased, there is evidence that many smaller companies lack the technical knowledge and expertise to effectively use information technologies to reduce costs, increase productivity, and broaden their markets. A recent study found that small businesses with 26-100 employees were more likely to report seeing a positive impact from their use of the Internet than businesses with fewer employees.⁴

As business to business e-commerce grows, small companies which are unable to utilize e-commerce to make purchases or to sell their products to other businesses will be at a decided disadvantage. Because small and medium-sized businesses account for more than 50 percent of the existing jobs in the United States and create 80-90 percent of the new jobs, their ability to compete in the new economy could have serious economic implications--especially in rural areas where the primary employers are often small and medium-sized businesses.⁵

Electronic commerce factors to assess:	yes	no
Are there resources (public or private) in the community for businesses who want to learn to conduct electronic commerce?		
There are several types of electronic commerce. Are many small businesses in the community using the Internet to:		
▪ Research market information?		
▪ Research competitors' offerings and prices?		
▪ Send e-mail and transfer documents?		
▪ Track government and large company procurement announcements?		
▪ Advertise products?		
▪ Sell products over the Web using pre-existing business relationships?		
▪ Sell products using a toll-free number advertised on the Web?		
▪ Sell products over the Web using credit card transactions?		
Do local governments use the Internet to post bids and buy goods or services?		
Do local businesses generally have Web pages with their own domain names?		
Is there a business in the community that offers Web design services?		
Is there more than one business in the community that offers Web design services?		
Does a local Internet service provider host Web sites for local businesses?		
Is there more than one local Internet service provider hosting Web sites?		
Are there local outlets for shipping products in a timely manner?		
Are these tools generally being used by small businesses in the community:		
▪ Computerized accounting/bookkeeping?		
▪ Computerized inventory (if there is an inventory)?		
▪ A business plan which incorporates information technology?		

Agriculture

Technological improvements have altered the face of agriculture over the past century. Information technology continues to impact agricultural production, marketing, and sales.

Agriculture factors to assess:	yes	no
Are most agricultural producers using information technology to obtain information on weather?		
Are most agricultural producers using information technology to obtain information on prices and markets?		
Are agricultural producers using information technology to research new hybrids, production practices, etc.		
Are most agricultural producers using information technology to develop new markets?		
Are most agricultural producers selling online?		
Are most agricultural producers using information technology as a production management tool?		
Are most agricultural producers using GPS/GIS in their operations?		
Do most agricultural producers order goods and services online?		
Are agricultural producers using information technology to collaborate with other producers?		
Do most local agribusinesses have a Web site?		
Do most local agribusinesses use e-mail to communicate with their customers?		

Public Access and Universal Service

Although the number of individuals online continues to increase, a digital divide still exists between the affluent and the poor, between college graduates and those without high school diplomas, between whites and many minority groups, and between rural and metropolitan areas. As more and more information and services are being made available online, it is important for communities to look for ways to provide access for members of the community who would not otherwise have access to computers and the Internet.

Public access and universal service factors to assess:	yes	no
Is there a place in the library, schools, or a community technology center where residents who do not own a personal computer can use one to do work and access the Internet?		
Is there a program to recycle older computers to loan or give to economically disadvantaged households?		
Is there a video-conferencing site for public and private sector use in the community or in the region?		
Is there a community accessible facility equipped for multimedia presentations for public and private use?		
Do most households have telephones?		
Do most households have computers?		
Are most adults in the community online? *		
Are eligible entities (schools, libraries, and health care facilities) receiving support from the Universal Service Fund?		

**As of July, 2000, over 50% of adults in the United States were online according to Nielsen NetRatings. To see the latest statistics, see NUA Internet Surveys at <http://www.nua.ie>.*

Education

The education system is a critical part of an Information Age community. Schools must be able to produce students with strong analytical and technology skills necessary. Lifelong learning is growing increasingly important as new skills are needed in a variety of professions. Technology should bolster the entire educational effort. Information technologies can enable teachers to have information resources far beyond the classroom, to connect one school to another, to use multi-media to teach and to learn, and to reinforce the teaching of basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics through individualized programs.

Education factors to assess:	yes	no
Does the public school system have a technology plan to use for its own school improvement and budgeting purposes and to qualify for financial assistance grants such as the Universal Service Fund's e-rate program?		
Is technology integrated throughout the K-12 curriculum?		
Are teachers continually trained to use information technology as a teaching tool?		
Are administrators and staff continually trained to use information technology as an administrative tool?		
Are computers, in laboratory or classroom settings, available for daily use by all students?		
Is the Internet available and used in the classroom as a teaching aid, and not simply for browsing?		
Are school computers networked within and between schools in the local systems?		
Are youth involved in technology projects with senior citizens and the business community?		
Do schools have Web pages with information about programs, current events, student and teacher achievements, and PTA information?		
Are students, teachers, parents, and administrators using e-mail to communicate?		
Do teachers have convenient access to telephones to communicate with parents?		
Are two-way interactive distance learning and/or Web-based courses used to expand course offerings for students?		
Are adult education classes in computer technology offered by the school system?		
Are colleges and universities encouraged to offer courses in the community using distance learning technologies and traditional methods?		

Public Library Resources

The Information Age has expanded the role of public libraries. In addition to providing access to books and periodicals, libraries also serve as public Internet access sites. Some libraries regularly offer training in information technology. Information technology is also making it easier for library patrons to find information and to access library services. Through Web-accessible catalogs, patrons can search a library's catalog from home.

Public library factors to assess:	yes	no
Does the public library provide free access to personal computers and software to patrons?		
Are librarians continually trained to use information technology as a research tool?		
Does the public library offer free training in the use of computer software and the Internet?		
Does the public library have an automated catalog and circulation system?		
Does the public library have online and/or CD-ROM reference tools available to its patrons?		
Is the public library networked with state and regional library systems?		
Is the public library networked with other local libraries to access holdings and other resources?		
Does the public library have a Web site to provide information and linkages to Internet resources?		
Is remote access available to search the library catalog and request renewals or inter-library loans?		

Health Care

Information technology is transforming health care. Through telemedicine, a resident of Callaway can stay in the community and still receive health care services from providers located in Kearney. Health care providers can receive training without traveling an hour or more. In some areas of the United States, nurses are providing home health care services through telemedicine.

Health care factors to assess:	yes	no
Do health care practitioners use interactive television for specialist consultation?		
Is interactive television available for emergency room consultation with primary care physicians?		
Is teleradiology technology available for rapid reading of X-rays by radiologists?		
Is interactive television used for home health care visits to elderly and disabled persons?		
Are medical records maintained in a digital format in a readily accessible database?		
Is interactive television used for in-service training of health care practitioners?		
Does a local computer network connect health care and medical service providers?		
Does the major health care facility in the community have a Web site?		
Does a local health care provider provide a 24 hour "ask a nurse" service?		

IT Training and Retention

There is a tremendous need for IT training at all levels, from basic computer skills to training on the latest programming language. K-12 schools, community colleges, colleges, universities, and libraries can provide training. In some communities, youth have taken an active role in providing training. A growing number of organizations are also offering training online.

IT training and retention factors to assess:	yes	no
Are presentations made regularly to raise the public's information technology awareness?		
Are newspaper columns and/or other media (i.e., radio or cable) used to raise the public's information technology awareness?		
Is an annual information technology fair held to demonstrate student and other uses of information technologies and to allow local vendors to display their goods for the public?		
Are basic computer and Internet literacy courses available to the public at little or no cost?		
Are intermediate level courses in common business and personal use software available?		
Are advanced training programs for certification in computer technologies available?		
Have workforce technology training needs of both employers and workers been surveyed?		
Are programs in place to teach senior citizens to use new information technologies?		
Have community information technology training resources been catalogued for reference?		
Do employers and educational institutions coordinate their respective needs and course offerings?		

Broadband Services and Infrastructure

Telecommunications infrastructure is becoming as vital to a community as roads, water, and sewers. For many communities, affordable access to advanced telecommunications services is an issue. There is, unfortunately, no easy, one-size-fits-all solution. Aggregating local and/or regional demand has been used successfully in a number of communities, regions, and states across the United States. Many municipalities are also looking at their cable franchising agreements as a way to leverage investments by cable providers. DSL is becoming available in many communities and offers an affordable option for small offices and home-based businesses. Some communities have found that terrestrial wireless provides an affordable solution. Satellite services may be the best option for some rural users.

The following are broadband services and infrastructure factors to assess:	yes	no
Do community leaders talk periodically with private infrastructure providers about plans and needs in serving the local community?		
Has the community identified customers with advanced telecommunications needs?		
Has the community inventoried its telecommunications infrastructure assets?		
Has the community inventoried its aggregated demand for telecommunications services (either a demand for a certain service such as DSL or for all telecommunications services)?		
Has the community projected the need for broadband services and infrastructure for the next 3 to 5 years?		
Is 56 kbps local dial-up Internet access available to all areas of the community?		
Is the community served by more than one Internet service provider?		
Is there competition to provide high-bandwidth telecommunications services in the community?		
Are high-bandwidth telecommunications services available in the community at a price that is competitive with prices in other communities?		
There are varying levels of business infrastructure development that a community may have:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there at least one business development area that has infrastructure for high-bandwidth telecommunications? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a backbone of high-bandwidth infrastructure that can be reached from many places in the community? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is high-bandwidth telecommunications infrastructure readily available throughout the entire community? 		

Broadband services and infrastructure factors to assess (continued):	yes	no
Is xDSL available in the community?		
Is ISDN available in the community?		
Have terrestrial wireless options been explored?		
Have satellite options been explored?		
Has the community made site visits to "leading edge" communities in the deployment of broadband services and infrastructure?		

A glossary of terms is available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/itc/citizens/glossary.htm> .

Local Government and Community Services

Local governments are involved in many aspects of information technology planning and development in a community. Often, they provide leadership to planning efforts. They can also play a significant role in infrastructure development. Local governments can use their demand for telecommunications services and their power to award franchises or grant easements to leverage investments in the community's infrastructure.

Local governments can also provide more efficient and convenient services to citizens by making public information available online or even allowing citizens to pay parking tickets or utility bills online. Although law enforcement and emergency services as well as GIS fall under local government services, they are addressed as separate categories to emphasize the importance of cross-agency coordination in addressing them.

Local government and community services factors to assess:	yes	no
Do governments collaborate on telecommunications and information networking infrastructure?		
Are computers in local government networked within buildings and across jurisdictional lines?		
Do local governments regularly include budgeted funding for technology upgrades and employee training?		
Does the city government have a Web site?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are meeting agendas available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are meeting minutes available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are budget documents available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are property tax appraisals available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are ordinances available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are land use and zoning maps available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is information for new or prospective residents available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are permits, forms, and applications available online? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can citizens perform online information searches? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can citizens complete online transactions? 		
Does the county government have a Web site?		

Local government and community services factors to assess (continued):	yes	no
▪ Are meeting agendas available online?		
▪ Are meeting minutes available online?		
▪ Are budget documents available online?		
▪ Are property tax appraisals available online?		
▪ Are ordinances available online?		
▪ Are land use and zoning maps available online?		
▪ Is information for new or prospective residents available online?		
▪ Are permits, forms, and applications available online?		
▪ Can citizens perform online information searches)?		
▪ Can citizens complete online transactions?		
Do local governments use the Internet to post bids and buy goods or services?		
Do local officials play a role in state-level information networking policy formation?		
Have existing local ordinances been reviewed and modified to remove anti-technology bias?		
Do local governments use their purchasing power to support telecommunications services upgrades in the community?		
Do local government officials talk periodically with private infrastructure providers about plans and needs in serving the local community?		
Do local government officials publicly recognize local technology infrastructure providers and businesses who are bringing cutting edge information technologies to the community?		
Do human service organizations have a centralized computer database of community resources?		
Do human service organizations communicate with the public and each other electronically?		
Does the community have a World Wide Web site for the community with links to other local home pages?		
Do community Web sites have information of specific interest to newcomers and visitors?		
Is there a Web site for posting of community events and discussion of local issues?		

Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement and Emergency Services

Having law enforcement officials from different agencies communicate with each other by holding up signs during a recent manhunt is a compelling example of the need for coordination of criminal justice, law enforcement, and emergency services. In Nebraska, two initiatives focus on cross-agency coordination. The Criminal Justice Information Systems Advisory Committee (<http://www.cjis.state.ne.us>) provides advice and direction on issues relating to data sharing and use of information technology among criminal justice agencies. A study has also been completed on public safety wireless design and is available at <http://www.das.state.ne.us/doc/radiotf/IntrotoWebPage.html>.

Criminal justice, law enforcement and emergency services factors to assess:	yes	no
Are all criminal justice agencies in your community organized and do they meet regularly?		
Can all offices in the criminal justice community exchange e-mail?		
Can all offices in the criminal justice community exchange documents electronically?		
Do all criminal justice agencies use information technology to maintain their records?		
Do all criminal justice agencies use common data tables?		
Do all criminal justice agencies have immediate electronic access to:		
▪ Local criminal justice records?		
▪ State criminal justice records?		
▪ Federal criminal justice records?		
Are communications systems of local criminal justice and emergency service providers compatible with the systems of other agencies		
▪ Within the community?		
▪ Within the service area?		
▪ Within the county?		
▪ Within the state?		
Can all emergency services be dispatched and controlled from a single point?		

Criminal justice, law enforcement and emergency services factors to assess (continued):	yes	no
Do emergency service dispatch personnel collect, retain, maintain and access information about		
▪ Emergency procedures for hazardous waste or toxic materials?		
▪ Location of known hazardous waste or toxic material within their service area?		
▪ Location of residences by road and/or telephone number?		
▪ Road closings or other barriers to emergency vehicle dispatch?		
Do all criminal justice agencies maintain continuing funding for information technology support, systems enhancement or replacement, and training?		
Are the communications systems of local law enforcement agencies and emergency services providers compatible with the systems of other law enforcement agencies and emergency services providers in the community, the county, and the state?		

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a powerful information technology which allows a broad range of information to be integrated and analyzed based on the physical location of the objects about which the information is gathered. GIS is used in mapping, tax assessment, transportation planning and maintenance, natural resource management, emergency response, reapportionment, economic development, and numerous other government and private functions. Interagency and intergovernmental collaboration is critical in GIS development due to the high costs of GIS database development and the overall importance of data sharing. In 1991 the Legislature passed legislation which created a Nebraska Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Steering Committee to facilitate acquisition of GIS technology at all levels of government and to make recommendations to the Legislature. More information on the GIS Steering Committee can be found at <http://www.ids.state.ne.us/idsd-gis/index.html>.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) factors to assess:	yes	no
Do the city and county governments cooperate in a computerized geographic information system?		
Has there been an assessment of the overlapping data and/or mapping needs of local agencies such as the County Assessor, County Register of Deeds, city/county emergency response, city/county planning and zoning authorities, city/county public safety agencies, natural resources districts, local utilities and public works departments, economic development entities, and County Engineer/Highway Superintendent?		
Has there been an effort to determine what digital maps, geospatial data or technical assistance is available through state government agencies?		

Non-profits, Arts, Culture, and History

Non-profit agencies are using information technology to more effectively and efficiently disseminate information and to communicate with volunteers and other organizations.

Non-profits, arts, culture, and history factors to assess:	yes	no
Do most local non-profits have Web sites?		
Do most local non-profits use e-mail to communicate with community members?		
Do local service organizations donate time to improve information technology in the schools, libraries, or community center?		
Do local service organizations renovate used computers for social service organizations or disadvantaged families?		
Is information available on the Internet or on a local network on the following components of the community:		
▪ Visual arts (galleries and exhibits, organizations, arts classes and instruction)?		
▪ Music (organizations, performance, classes and instruction)?		
▪ Theater (organizations, performances, training and instruction)?		
▪ Local artists?		

Funding Strategies

Information Age development requires a significant investment in information technology. These investments may include automating procedures, rewiring buildings, building municipal area networks, and building technology parks. Expenditures for new projects, maintenance, training, and replacement of outdated equipment may require financing from multiple sources. Cooperative arrangements between entities may provide an effective strategy for holding down costs.

Funding strategy factors to assess:	yes	no
Have cooperative arrangements been made for entities to aggregate demand and share costs related to information technology?		
Have local sources of funding for IT-related projects been identified?		
Does the community have a group of people assigned to seek out and follow up on alternative funding strategies for IT development?		
Have grant opportunities from federal, state, and private sources been researched?		

References

¹ Dun & Bradstreet, "Small Businesses Skeptical of Internet Impact," June 1, 2000, reported by NUA Internet Surveys, (<http://www.nua.ie>) and Dun & Bradstreet, "D&B Study Shows Seven Out of 10 U.S. Small Businesses Now Have Internet Access," May 25, 2000, (<http://www.dnb.com/newsview/0500news8.htm>)

² Jupiter Communications, "US B2B To Surpass USD6 Trillion by 2005," reported by NUA Internet Surveys, (<http://www.nua.ie>)

³ Gartner Group, "US B2C Sales To Top USD29.3 Bn This Year," reported by NUA Internet Surveys, (<http://www.nua.ie>)

⁴ Dun & Bradstreet, "Small Businesses Skeptical of Internet Impact" June 1, 2000, reported by NUA Internet Surveys, (<http://www.nua.ie>) and Dun & Bradstreet, "D&B Study Shows Seven Out of 10 U.S. Small Businesses Now Have Internet Access," May 25, 2000, (<http://www.dnb.com/newsview/0500news8.htm>)

⁵ Philip M. Burgess and Florine P. Raitano, *Points West Special Report: The "Other" Digital Divide*, September 1999, (<http://www.newwest.org>).