Smart Communities
CHICAGO DIGITAL EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

Connecting Our Communities

PILSEN
SMART COMMUNITIES PLAN

MARCH 2010

STOP

1 Pilsen: A Smart Community that Builds on its Traditions

Pilsen's source of pride, or *orgullo*, is based on a vibrant Mexican heritage, quality housing, strategic location, and strong local organizations. In 2006, the Pilsen Planning Committee released "Pilsen: A Center of Mexican Life," identifying 32 specific projects that aim to expand housing options for Pilsen residents; build a stronger neighborhood economy; make Pilsen a self-reliant, family-oriented community; create a stronger image for Pilsen as a historic Mexican neighborhood; and develop educational opportunities for residents of all ages.

The Pilsen neighborhood is one of five Smart Communities in Chicago — a pilot program that aspires to enable full participation in meaningful digital activities by households, businesses and institutions to increase local knowledge, expand economic and educational opportunities, and enhance connections among residents and businesses. The program is a part of the City of Chicago's Digital Excellence Initiative and is administered by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation/Chicago.

The Smart Communities program serves five digitally underserved communities: Pilsen (Lower West Side), Humboldt Park, and the Southwest Partners comprising Auburn Gresham, Chicago Lawn and Englewood. Each community has its own assets and challenges, but they all share a history of working together through the New Communities Program, a long-term initiative by LISC/Chicago to support comprehensive community development in 16 Chicago neighborhoods. Smart Communities provides a new opportunity to link our neighborhoods through the use of technology, build solutions that work in different settings, and design and implement technology solutions to foster communication and collaboration.

Smart Communities responds to a major recommendation of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Closing the Digital Divide, whose work culminated in the 2007 report, *The City that NetWorks*. The Advisory Council's vision is that Internet access, hardware, software, education, and mind-set changes will lead to digital transformation. Smart Communities will develop a series of pilot projects to "test how best to convert digital excellence into personal and community transformation."

In its report, the Advisory Council identified digital excellence drivers that everyone in a community requires to fully participate in the new era of information technology. We began our work of determining how to foster digital excellence in our communities by addressing these five drivers:

- **Raising awareness/evolving mind-sets** that value learning, connecting and communicating through technology, and that recognize the personal and economic development opportunities of expanding Internet participation.
- **Effective Internet access** that is high-speed, affordable and available everywhere.
- **Affordable hardware** with capacity to connect to the Internet and tap into the full range of its resources and **suitable software** that meets the needs of individuals, families, businesses and communities.
- **Digital education** that provides the training and technical support for users to become comfortable and proficient with technology.

- **Digital programming, skills and content** that makes technology relevant and useful to a broad array of users and improves the information flows into and out of neighborhoods.

This plan was created from ideas about how to use technology to propel existing quality-of-life strategies and goals that have been defined by Pilsen. Through exploration, planning meetings, and new resources, we have found ways to expand access to local services, get better connected, enhance our commercial corridors, and improve educational opportunities all through the better use of technology. While we have already experimented with web sites, youth training, and digital art creation, we believe that with a plan in place, we will be able to achieve our goals and reach more of our residents and local businesses, expanding opportunities for everyone in Pilsen.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND LEAD AGENCY

Pilsen covers the area between 16th Street on the north, the South Branch of the Chicago River to the south, the Dan Ryan Expressway on the east, and Western Avenue to the west. Located four miles south and west of downtown, Pilsen has excellent access to transportation and major job centers. Thanks to decades of organizing, the neighborhood has made substantial progress in housing, K–12 education and economic development. A major community concern today is to preserve Pilsen's Mexican cultural heritage.

In 1990, six neighborhood parishes came together to found The Resurrection Project (TRP), which got its start fighting crime and blight. Over the past two decades, TRP has developed over 350 units of affordable housing, helped close over 800 mortgage loans and developed more than 41,000 square feet of commercial and community space, leveraging more than $146 million in community reinvestment. As Pilsen's lead agency for the New Communities Program, TRP has convened more than a dozen community groups to develop a quality-of-life plan for the neighborhood and share continuing responsibility for the plan's implementation through the Pilsen Planning Committee. A subset of Pilsen Planning Committee members formed the Pilsen Planning Group to assist in developing a Smart Communities plan for the neighborhood.

Community	Population 2000	Current Broadband Usage	Residents Without Broadband	Reason: Cost	Reason: No Interest	Reason: Difficult to Use
AUBURN GRESHAM	55,928	38%	34,675	49%	41%	35%
CHICAGO LAWN	61,412	51%	30,092	50%	39%	32%
ENGLEWOOD	40,222	56%	17,698	35%	39%	18%
HUMBOLDT PARK	65,836	43%	37,527	53%	33%	29%
PILSEN	44,031	38%	27,299	62%	39%	41%

TABLE 1: WHY RESIDENTS DON'T USE BROADBAND INTERNET

BROADBAND CHALLENGES

Four of every 10 Chicagoans face barriers to broadband access and therefore are limited or nonparticipating users of the Internet, according to the July 2009 study, *Digital Excellence in Chicago*. The study — conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Iowa and commissioned by the City of Chicago — found particularly low levels of Internet usage in the five Smart Communities and similar neighborhoods across the city whose residents are older, Latino, African-American, low-income or less educated.

A survey of residents identified three primary barriers to regular broadband use:

- cost
- lack of interest
- difficulty of use

Pilsen lags other neighborhoods of Chicago with similar demographics in use of technology, likely due to language barriers for Spanish-speakers. TRP's own grassroots survey of parents at Cooper Elementary showed 57 percent of 134 respondents have computers in the home, primarily for their children's benefit. However, only 40 percent have

high-speed Internet access at home. Over 65 percent of the respondents said they would be interested in taking computer training classes at Cooper. Local planning meetings also identified privacy and security concerns for families and young children to be a particular challenge, especially within the Latino community.

This plan provides a roadmap for addressing each one of these barriers so that Pilsen residents and businesses can take full advantage of digital resources, from online city services and social networking to employment opportunities and online banking. Access to these resources will in turn help make technology another tool in the ongoing development of our communities. We have put particular emphasis on outreach and training to ensure that all families and small businesses feel comfortable with technology—bringing the benefits and knowledge directly to residents and businesses in the neighborhood.

The strategies and projects identified in this document build upon Pilsen's quality-of-life plan, which is available at http://www.newcommunities.org/cmadocs/Pilsen_QofL_2006.pdf

Vision and Work Plan

LOCAL PLANNING

Pilsen's digital excellence planning included planning meetings, internal discussions among TRP staff and key partner agencies, and two public meetings that brought together about 40 community members and agency representatives. Lead agency staff made special efforts to engage Spanish-speakers and members of the business community in the planning process. The resulting vision and work plans have distilled concrete projects from the ideas, hopes and insights of local residents, business owners, youth and arts program staff and volunteers, librarians, educators and other institutional leaders.

The plan anchors the new strategies on existing priorities of the 2006 Pilsen quality-of-life plan. This plan is much more about *how to achieve existing strategies* than creating new projects and activities. From the Pilsen Portal to a new FamilyNet Center, the plan brings the benefits of technology to increase communication and service delivery to residents of Pilsen.

The process began when representatives of Smart Communities lead agencies, City agencies, non-profit leaders and private-sector technology firms participated in several meetings in February and March 2009 to discuss the opportunities of the program and provide technical information to participating agencies. These meetings were used to develop draft vision statements and goals, identify key constituencies, define potential key corridors for broadband access, and brain-storm opportunities for projects that would meet the vision and goals.

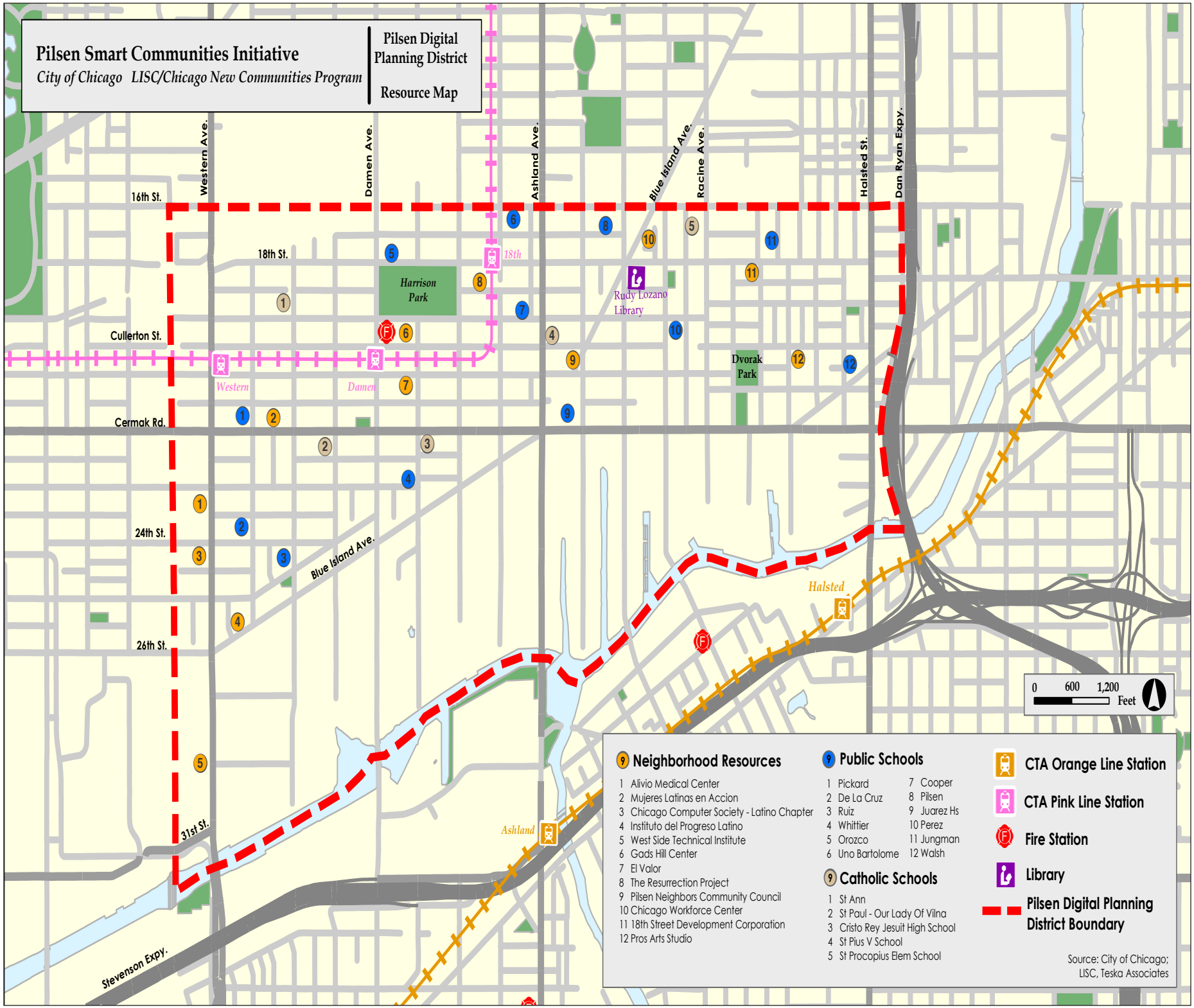
On May 18 and June 4, Pilsen held two public workshops on digital excellence. The May 18 Technology Town Hall at Casa Michoacan drew 30 residents and leaders of small businesses, educational institutions and youth programs. After a presentation of the draft vision and goals, the audience self-selected into break-out sessions to discuss the digital needs and program possibilities for key local constituencies: seniors, youth, small business owners and job-seekers. Ensuring Internet accessibility for Spanish speakers was a concern across all the breakout groups.

On June 4, a smaller group of local leaders met at West Side Technical Institute to discuss the idea of a Pilsen web portal in greater depth, with an eye toward capitalizing on the upcoming National Council of La Raza conference, to be held in Chicago in late July. Afterwards, TRP staff and key agency partners took the ideas generated at meetings and developed concrete, time-limited projects from them.

On July 21, Mayor Richard M. Daley held a press conference at Centro Familiar Guadalupano hosted by The Resurrection Project in Pilsen announcing the City's digital excellence programs, including this planning effort.

VISION

In Pilsen, we envision a technological ecosystem that will amplify all forms of technological training — workforce development, arts, cultural activities and commerce — resulting in a sustainable system of community and cultural preservation.


Pilsen Smart Communities Initiative
City of Chicago LISC/Chicago New Communities Program
Pilsen Digital Planning District
Resource Map
Western Ave.
Damen Ave.
Ashland Ave.
Blue Island Ave.
Racine Ave.
Halsted St.
Dan Ryan Expy.
16th St.
18th St.
Cullerton St.
Cermak Rd.
24th St.
26th St.
31st St.
Stevenson Expy.
Harrison Park
Rudy Lozano Library
Dvorak Park
18th
Western
Damen
Halsted
Ashland
0 600 1,200 Feet
Neighborhood Resources
1 Alivio Medical Center
2 Mujeres Latinas en Accion
3 Chicago Computer Society - Latino Chapter
4 Instituto del Progreso Latino
5 West Side Technical Institute
6 Gads Hill Center
7 El Valor
8 The Resurrection Project
9 Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
10 Chicago Workforce Center
11 18th Street Development Corporation
12 Pros Arts Studio
Public Schools
1 Pickard
2 De La Cruz
3 Ruiz
4 Whittier
5 Orozco
6 Uno Bartolome
7 Cooper
8 Pilsen
9 Juarez Hs
10 Perez
11 Jungman
12 Walsh
Catholic Schools
1 St Ann
2 St Paul - Our Lady Of Vilna
3 Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
4 St Pius V School
5 St Procopius Elem School
CTA Orange Line Station
CTA Pink Line Station
Fire Station
Library
Pilsen Digital Planning District Boundary
Source: City of Chicago; LISC, Teska Associates

3 Strategies and Projects

The Smart Communities Plan is based on the premise that providing access to the Internet is not enough. Access + outreach + training are all essential ingredients to successful adoption in the home, at work, or at your local organization. We have identified the following set of new projects that will help implement the strategies identified in our 2006 quality-of-life plan:

STRATEGY 1

Expand housing options for Pilsen residents

Access to broadband technology is an important element to ensure that affordable housing in Pilsen provides the infrastructure needed to connect families to jobs, education, and training, as well as reinforce social connections both within Pilsen and to families and friends in Mexico and other parts of Chicago and the U.S. New housing should be technology-friendly by providing broadband access to the home, and existing housing should be upgraded to incorporate broadband access, outreach and training.

1.1 ENSURE NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING HAS BROADBAND ACCESS TO THE HOME, AND THAT EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS RETROFITTED TO PROVIDE BROADBAND ACCESS

Non-profit developers of affordable housing should not have to choose between additional costs for fiber conduit versus other building amenities. Projects such as Casa Morelos are wired for broadband, but the residents of all new affordable housing should have the same opportunities for broadband at an affordable level. Funding is needed to support technology upgrades to enable this access. Residents of affordable housing need the Internet for access to resources such as jobs, training, and education and should not have to stretch their pocketbooks to pay for access to the home.

Similarly, funds are needed to retrofit existing affordable housing, such as the 201 units owned and managed by The Resurrection Project for broadband access, such as Wi-Fi, point-to-point wireless, or fiber access.

STRATEGY 2

Build a stronger neighborhood economy

Technology is a tool to reinforce Pilsen's economic development strategies, including enhancing commercial and industrial districts, expanding access to employment, and attracting economic development to Pilsen.

2.1 LIGHT UP COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS WITH BROADBAND

Affordable, high-speed broadband access is particularly needed for small- to mid-size businesses and multi-family housing along commercial corridors. The density of businesses and housing makes a business case for new, fiber-level or point-to-point wireless services (in addition to Wi-Fi for public access) to be provided along major commercial corridors, including 18th Street, Ashland, Cermak, and Western Avenue in Pilsen.

2.2 TECH KIOSKS

To further technology access for underserved populations, Internet kiosks should be placed at accessible and popular sites in Pilsen. Kiosks will be hardwired to online resources and applications via the community portal, offering community information, employment resources and other information, and potentially general Internet access. They will also serve as a wireless connection for Wi-Fi and Bluetooth devices for people with laptop computers or mobile devices. Kiosks should be placed in high-traffic locations, especially those in which people who do not have computers at home may be going. Non-profit locations should include Instituto Progreso Latino and Resurrection Project. Kiosks, whether temporary or permanent, should also be placed in locations to attract customers and help visitors and tourists, such as at the 18th Street and Damen Avenue CTA stations.

2.3 BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTERS

The heart of Pilsen is the small business community — from restaurants to art-related businesses to a range of manufacturers. Many of these businesses need direct technology support — from training to certifications. They need a fully-equipped computer resource center — with new hardware, software and presentation equipment — designed to meet the needs of small businesses to conduct group training, assessments and one-on-one coaching. In Pilsen, these services should be provided by Eighteenth Street Development Corporation and Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. For example, computers, a projector and software are needed at The Hispanic Entrepreneurial Technology Center (HETC) at the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Pilsen site. Small business owners will receive training, choosing among topics like office productivity programs, accounting and financial management tools, and desktop publishing, as well as social networking sites. All training will be available in Spanish; a unique component will include classes related to entrepreneurship. Outreach will be provided to assist businesses in creating web sites and getting connected to the new Pilsen Portal (See Strategy 3).

2.4 CREATE A FAMILYNET CENTER FOR TRAINING AND ACCESS

The employment training and placement services by the Instituto del Progreso Latino should be expanded through the creation of a FamilyNet Center to enhance employment and skill-matching and job skills such as certifications. Equipped with 10 or more modern computer workstations for adults and children (including kid-friendly workstations) and high-speed Internet connections, the new FamilyNet Center will become a central point of digital access and learning in Pilsen and connect people with skills and jobs. Because the new FamilyNet Center is connected to the Center for Working Families at the Instituto, participants will have built-in access to a variety of employment, financial education, and other services. The FamilyNet Center will offer access to educational programs, such as Everyday Digital and Civic 2.0 (see Strategy 5), but also provide hands-on training sessions in specific skills and certifications. By adding new computer capacity, higher broadband speeds, trained staff, and expanded weekday and weekend hours, the FamilyNet Center will be able to serve over 600 individuals per year.

2.5 LOCAL AFFINITY MARKETING

A Local Affinity Marketing program will provide Pilsen residents with affinity cards similar to those available through the major supermarkets, which can be used by consumers to access special offers and sales while also providing aggregated data on shopping habits to local businesses. Our program will create a platform that allows a number of local businesses to share the system, thereby lowering cost of entry and allowing local businesses to target customers more efficiently (while also maintaining strong privacy protections). Eighteenth Street Development Corporation will supplement its coupon book program with an electronic version that will be available on www.pilsenportal.org.

A concurrent program will create site advertising and special discounts specifically aimed at local residents to promote local businesses to the community. A local shoe store could send a mailer for a back-to-school sale to a list of anyone who bought children's clothing or toys at local stores, for example, and a resident who regularly purchases dinner at a local restaurant could be offered a discount on the lunch special via email. Together, the elements of the Local Affinity campaign would drive economic growth both by making shopping locally more attractive for consumers and by helping local firms understand their markets more completely.

2.6 BUILD THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL MINORITY- AND WOMEN-OWNED FIRMS TO PROVIDE TECH SUPPORT

As technology moves into people's homes and businesses, there will be an even greater need for technical support. There is an opportunity to build the capacity and demand for minority- and

women-owned businesses to meet the demand for affordable technical support in our communities. By aggregating demand of local residents, non-profit organizations, and small businesses, local tech support firms can thrive in our communities. The Resurrection Project and a private IT firm should develop a partnership to provide these needed services. The provider will not only offer tech support to the community, but will provide workforce development by training residents in A+ certification, the entry-level credential for a career in technical support. In addition, local minority and women-owned firms should be provided opportunities to participate in contracts for building out broadband networks in the community.

2.7 USE TECHNOLOGY AS AN ENGINE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Greater technology skills and higher levels of broadband availability in our commercial corridors and at the Pilsen Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) will encourage existing businesses to expand and to attract new "high bandwidth" industries that create high skill jobs — from artists and tech firms to our commercial corridors to manufacturers that need high speeds to connect to their suppliers and customers for the Pilsen PMD. We need to make sure that fiber is available to businesses in the PMD that need high bandwidth at an affordable level.

STRATEGY 3

Make Pilsen a self-reliant, family oriented community

Pilsen will lead a broadband adoption campaign using grassroots outreach and user-friendly trainings and incentives to excite people about the benefits of technology — from the local restaurant on 18th Street coming on-line for the first time to engaging youth and seniors through a new community portal. The projects listed below will help implement strategies in the 2006 quality-of-life plan including: enhance the role of schools and churches as centers of community life, social programs and family services; and catalog, coordinate and improve local programs.

3.1 TECH OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

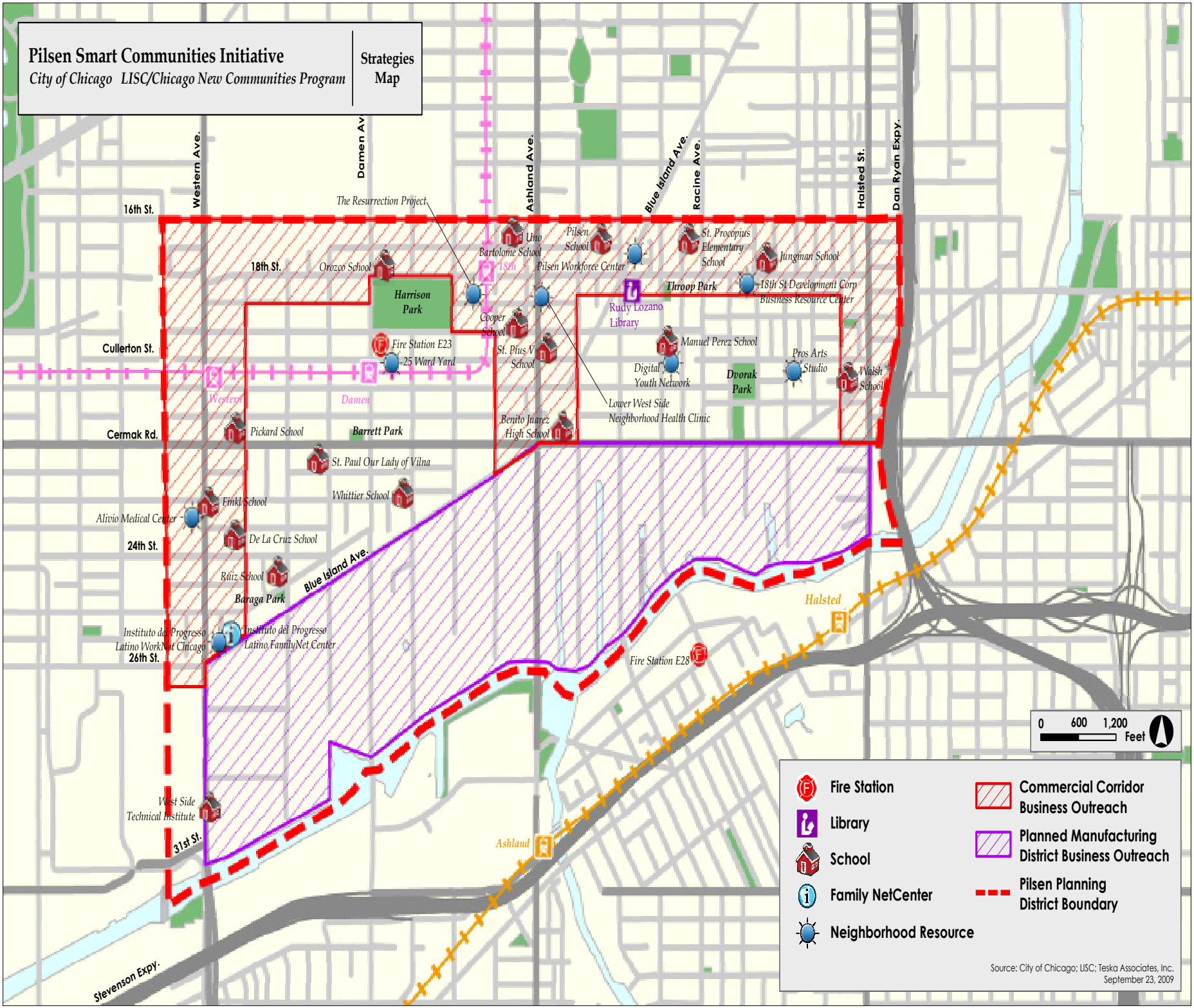
An outreach campaign is needed to communicate with people online and through traditional means. The goal is to reach everyone in the community. The strategies were developed based on survey results, community meetings, and focus groups conducted for this project.
A Tech Organizer will coordinate the activities, bringing residents, non-profit organizations, churches, and schools into new technologies. The organizer will use pilsenportal.org, Everyday Digital, Civic 2.0 and good, old-fashioned door-to-door outreach to make sure everyone in Pilsen is aware of tools that are available to reinforce the neighborhood's connections and the strength of its families and local organizations.

3.2 PILSENPORTAL.ORG

If the traditional tool of the organizer is a list of names and a clip board, the high tech version is a community portal that serves as the window to the neighborhood, the virtual telephone lines connecting people, the neighborhood news site, and center for blogs, web sites, and information, all in one. Pilsenportal.org (www.pilsenportal.org) was established during the planning process as an early action project, putting the idea to test in the field. This neighborhood-created and -managed web site provides an online place for residents, business owners and others to post calendar items, directory listings, photos, stories and comments about their community. Because pilsenportal.org encourages all organizations and residents to post material and comment on it, it is likely to attract substantially more unique visitors than existing web sites created by single organizations in the neighborhoods. Those sites, in Pilsen, Englewood and Auburn Gresham, attract from 3,000 to 6,000 unique visitors per quarter (Google Analytics, May through July 2009).

3.3 MARKETING CAMPAIGN

A community-focused marketing firm will provide ongoing services to expand awareness of the campaign through a mix of English and Spanish local media in Pilsen such as *Contra Tiempo* and Radio Arte and citywide media outlets such as Extra and Hoy and La Que Buena 105.1 FM, Univision Channel 66 and Telemundo Channel 44. In addition we will involve local blogs such as Tamale Chica and Our Pilsen. The goal of this campaign is to reach nearly every resident of Pilsen through multiple media venues. We will also consider advertising though outlets such as the CTA bus system and LCD advertising in CTA 'L' stations to provide bilingual marketing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Stevenson Expy.
The Resurrection Project
Uno Bartolome School
Pilsen School
Pilsen Workforce Center
St. Procopius Elementary School
Jungman School
18th St Development Corp Business Resource Center
Throop Park
Rudy Lozano Library
Orozco School
Harrison Park
Cooper School
St. Pius V School
Fire Station E23
25 Ward Yard
Manuel Perez School
Digital Youth Network
Dvorak Park
Pros Arts Studio
Walsh School
Lower West Side Neighborhood Health Clinic
Benito Juarez High School
Pickard School
Barrett Park
St. Paul Our Lady of Vilna
Whittier School
Finkl School
Alivio Medical Center
De La Cruz School
Ruiz School
Baraga Park
Instituto del Progresso Latino WorkNet Chicago
Instituto del Progresso Latino FamilyNet Center
Halsted
Fire Station E28
West Side Technical Institute
Ashland
0 600 1,200 Feet
Fire Station
Library
School
Family NetCenter
Neighborhood Resource
Commercial Corridor Business Outreach
Planned Manufacturing District Business Outreach
Pilsen Planning District Boundary
Source: City of Chicago; LISC; Teska Associates, Inc.
September 23, 2009

materials to encourage all Pilsen residents to get online and leverage pilsenportal.org and other resources.

3.4 PROVIDE HARDWARE, SOFTWARE AND TRAINING TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO BUILD THEIR CAPACITY

Hardware and software will be provided as incentives to individuals and community organizations to take full advantage of broadband technologies.

Neighborhood Use — Computers are needed at the new FamilyNet Centers for use by participants in classes and workshops and for drop-in users during open-computer times.

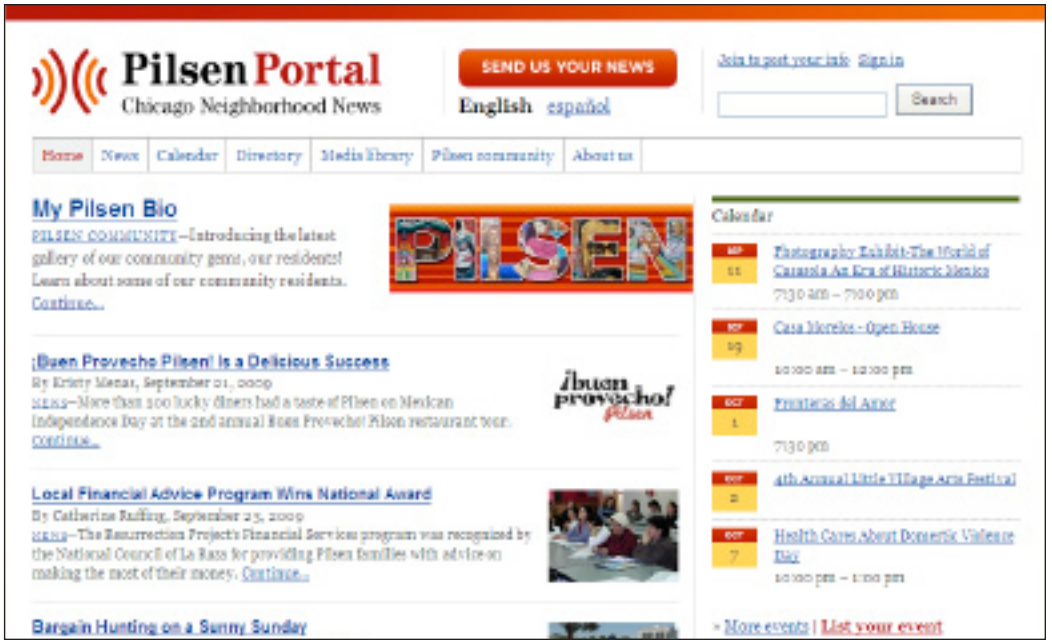
Community Organization Use — To support heavier use of the Internet and high-bandwidth tools, additional equipment, laptops and appropriate software should be deployed at lead agencies, other partner organizations and existing community technology centers.

High-Tech Loaner Program — Develop a loaner program for specialized hardware (video equipment, scanners, etc.) and a system to keep the specialized equipment maintained and up-to-date.

Free Software Workshops — Hold workshops to raise awareness of the availability of quality free and open source software.

3.5 PROVIDE HARDWARE TO RESIDENTS AND SMALL BUSINESSES AS INCENTIVES FOR TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

To encourage individuals and families to use the Internet every day, we will create an incentive program that provides refurbished or new



equipment to individuals who complete training programs at the FamilyNet Center at Instituto del Progreso Latino and the Business Resource Centers at the Hispanic Chamber. The program should be based on the experiences of Digibridge and involve organizations such as Pros Arts Studio.

Personal Use — Free distribution of refurbished desktop and notebook computers will be used as incentives by community groups to encourage youth and adults to participate in and graduate from multiple-session training programs. Initially, we plan on securing resources for distributing 50 netbooks, and 250 refurbished computers as incentives. They will be distributed only after participants have completed a series of trainings and shown a sustainable interest in use of technology tools or services.

Business Use — Graduates of rigorous business training programs should receive a mid- to high-end refurbished laptop or desktop capable of core business functions with a goal of 100 refurbished machines in Pilsen.

3.6 HEALTH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

We will work with Alivio Medical Center to provide greater information on prevention of illnesses that hit our community particularly hard — from diabetes to asthma and blood pressure. While there are many website resources in the public domain, we need accurate, local information that people can trust, and links to reliable resources in our community and online.

STRATEGY 4

Create a stronger image of Pilsen as a vibrant, attractive community

Technology should be used to reinforce the sense of place in Pilsen, making the area one of the most connected in Chicago and across the country. The community already has the concentration of businesses, residents, schools, churches and local organizations. We have made progress in neighborhood identity projects such as murals and public plazas. We are working toward special public places such as El Paseo on Sangamon Street and El Zocolo at 18th Street and Paulina. The community has used websites to publicize neighborhood festivals, reaching families and friends in Mexico. We need to make sure that our public places are wired for technology and accessible for all of our residents.

4.1 EXPAND BROADBAND AT PUBLIC COMPUTING SITES

To bring affordable broadband access closer to all residents in our community, we will work with public and private partners to develop a network of computer-access sites and wireless hotspots throughout Pilsen. These services will be created and promoted by trusted local partners and will be free or affordable. In addition to bringing broadband to the home in all affordable housing, new centers are needed at strategic locations including computer labs at Casa Maravilla (senior housing), and St. Pius and St. Paul parishes and all other local churches, expanding access to seniors and church members. Some of these parishes and churches still rely on dial-up services — they will need access and training to make sure they are connected to the broader community, reaching people who may not otherwise go into a computer lab. We also need to upgrade some of our sites and software to ensure that they are accessible to persons with disabilities.

4.2 BACKBONE FIBER NETWORK

Pilsen will encourage and support the City of Chicago's efforts to increase very high-speed fiber-optic connectivity with public-sector institutions serving as hubs, including firehouses, police stations, libraries, park field houses, community colleges and public schools. Fiber is needed to provide advanced services, video, and virtually unlimited data capability. Current Internet capacity in our community limits the applications needed to spark community renewal. As part of the Smart Communities planning process our team recommended the following locations that could make a particularly high-impact with advanced broadband: West Side Technical Institute, Lozano Chicago Public Library, Harrison Park, Benito Juarez High School and Orozco Community Academy. Over time, all of our schools should have access to fiber infrastructure to enable the latest advances of technology to be available to all of our children.

4.3 WI-FI NETWORK

In addition to providing broadband to businesses and residents along commercial corridors such as 18th Street and Ashland and Western avenues, Wi-Fi access is needed in public plazas, including El Paseo along Sangamon Street and El Zocolo adjacent to the 18th Street CTA station. A Wi-Fi mesh network for community organizations is also needed so that local non-profits have access to the Internet for staff and public use.

4.4 INTERNATIONAL INTERNET CONNECTION

Casa Michoacan (Pilsen site of the Federation of Michoacan Clubs in Illinois, or FEDECMI) will create a network of Skype-enabled Internet access points both in Pilsen and in local sites in the Mexican state of Michoacan, giving immigrants greater ability to stay in contact with their loved ones in their towns of origin. FEDECMI has already donated 200 computers to Zinapécuaro, Michoacan to create labs for the community there. Both Pilsen and Zinapécuaro tech labs will need webcams to enable full use of Skype.

STRATEGY 5

Develop educational opportunities for residents of all ages

We view learning about the possibilities and capacities of information technology as a process that cannot be limited to one age group or population. Our goals for digital proficiency include education, especially for our youth and senior residents, training that meets the needs of small businesses and their potential employees, and technical support to ensure computers remain operational and well-used. We are committed to providing training that meets the needs of both our English- and Spanish-speaking community members.

5.1 YOUTH MEDIA TRAINING AND DIGITAL YOUTH NETWORK

Pros Arts Studio currently offers youth training in video editing, digital photography and website creation. Pros Arts Studio and neighborhood schools (public and private) will partner to bring these programs to more students in middle and high school. As a part of pilsenportal.org, bilingual video tutorials will be created to educate consumers on how to buy a computer, how to save money by using free software, etc. The videos will be developed by the Smart Communities Project Manager and consultants, possibly including youth video producers and coordinated with Pros Arts Studio.

We will also tap into the University of Chicago's Urban Education Institute for its expertise in developing the Digital Youth Network model and pilot the program in Pilsen at Orozco Community Academy. This innovative program engages youth in the creation of content — providing both access and skills training. Instructors have experience working with local youth on spoken word, written, video, multimedia and social networking content, and will know how to use the latest software or techniques to showcase student work in a variety of online venues.

5.2 DEVELOP "CIVIC 2.0" PROGRAMS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

Experienced community organizers with web and social-networking skills will teach courses designed for community leaders, covering how to use web tools for civic engagement and community building. The leaders in turn will pass on the skills at the block club and community organization levels. The program will be bilingual and topics will include use of: transit maps and BusTracker (including mobile applications); CLEARpath, the Chicago Police safety information database; immigration rights and services; City of Chicago web services; and pilsenportal.org and organization websites.

5.3 PROVIDE TRAININGS IN EVERYDAY DIGITAL USES

We will develop new curriculum and tap into existing workshop offerings to train residents on what they need to use technology everyday. Workshops will help residents learn tools such as online bill-paying and financial software; Facebook and other social networks; online commerce; office software including Google Docs; photo sharing (Flickr); video (YouTube); blogging; supervision of Internet use by children; and use of Skype for free long-distance calls.

5.4 ONLINE TECH TRAINING AND ESL CLASSES

Expand Instituto del Progreso Latino's existing adult distance learning program through which students can learn English as a Second Language and how to use Microsoft Office software. Additional loaner laptops and software are needed for people who don't already have computers at home. Additional staffing needs will be met by hiring local teachers.

5.5 DIGITAL SUMMER JOBS

Building on the after-school program model, and our communities' experience providing summer youth employment, we will work with local youth-serving organizations, the City of Chicago and business partners to develop an eight-week paid summer job that exposes youth from the Digital Youth Network to employment opportunities in the technology industry and builds their resume and skill set. Instituto del Progreso Latino helped employ over 100 children in the summer of 2009.

5.6 YOUMEDIA

Based on groundbreaking research that found that youth tend to use computers to hang out with friends, tinker with digital media, and "geek out" in online groups, the Chicago Public Library founded YouMedia to help youth further explore these core interests. Funded in part by the MacArthur Foundation, the program is now available only downtown at the Harold Washington Library, but should be expanded to neighborhood libraries, such as Rudy Lozano in Pilsen.

5.7 WORKSHOPS ON INTERNET SECURITY

To address concerns regarding personal and family privacy and security, residents have requested trainings on Internet security. The training should be incorporated into existing programs provided on a regular basis, as well as offered as stand-alone workshops. These workshops would teach people to avoid Internet scams, keep children safe online, conduct online financial transactions safely, etc.

4 Next: Launch Projects to Reach Goals

Pilsen will achieve digital excellence when residents, businesses and institutions in the neighborhood have high-speed Internet access, up-to-date hardware and software, and familiarity with and knowledge of technology. All of the projects in this plan will help meet long-standing goals of the community.

Early investment in Pilsen and the other four Smart Communities has already leveraged significant results. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, LISC/Chicago and the MacArthur Foundation provided more than $800,000 in seed capital to support planning, staffing and early implementation of the Smart Communities plans. In return, all five communities completed their plans, launched early action projects including www.pilsenportal.org, ,and have received print, Internet and television coverage of this groundbreaking work.

Microsoft has been an early leader by providing software grants to seven organizations in Pilsen 2009. We are confident that other foundation and private sector partners will see the value in providing new equipment, software and training to our non-profit partners who connect thousands of residents daily to education, jobs, services and businesses.

Technology planning was well underway in mid-2009 when the U.S. Department of Commerce announced that it would distribute substantial funding nationwide through a new Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTO P) funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Through the digital excellence partnership between the City of Chicago and LISC/Chicago, Pilsen and the other Smart Communities were the focus of the City's BTO P application under the category of Sustainable Broadband Adoption. It was announced earlier this year that the program would receive $7.07 million in federal Recovery Act funds. The grant will provide computers and training to more than 11,000 Chicago residents and 500 small businesses and nonprofits in Humboldt Park, Pilsen, Auburn Gresham, Chicago Lawn and Englewood, with the hope of helping thousands of Chicago residents and businesses emerge from the recession stronger than before.

Although securing BTO P funding was a huge step forward in executing this plan, the full breadth of our vision includes projects that will not be supported by the federal program. In addition to the BTO P funding, Pilsen will seek support from other foundations and corporations for this plan. We believe that we will be successful in raising the necessary funds because the plan is based on strong community input, sound approaches and realistic goals, and it reinforces our existing plans and strategies.

Conclusion

Pilsen has been a leader in affordable housing, the arts, education, and retention of industry. Its strategic location and rich history make it the perfect candidate for a Smart Community. Our residents and community leaders are excited by the possibilities that 21st century information technology holds, from strengthening ties among far-flung families to new opportunities for entrepreneurship. We have accelerated the process by launching pilsenportal.org and refining it each day. We want to do more than access content. We will create content, continuing our legacy of opening up opportunities for all residents. The possibilities and plans outlined above are a blueprint to achieve digital excellence in our neighborhood and take advantage of a new set of tools to improve Pilsen's quality of life.

Leadership

PILSEN PLANNING GROUP AND PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

Pilsen Planning Group

- David Betlejewski, Eighteenth Street Development Corporation
- Maria Codina, Arturo Velasquez West Side Technical Institute
- Oscar De La Torre, Gads Hill
- Tom Dubois, Instituto del Progreso Latino
- Mario Gonzalez, Pilsen Neighbors
- Jaime Guzman, The Resurrection Project
- Alheli Herrera, Federacion de Clubes Michoacanos
- Benny Morten, St. Ann Catholic School
- Gerardo Rodriguez, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Elvia Rodriguez, Pros Arts Studios
- Vicente Sanchez, 2^{5th} Ward Public Service Office

Planning Participants

- Michael Baker, Chicago Public Library
- Isauro Barrera, Pilsen resident
- Daniel Buys, Pilsen resident
- Clarisse Croteau-Chonka, Digital Workforce Education Society
- Maria Codina, Arturo Velasquez West Side Technical Institute
- Claudio Cortes, resident/small business owner
- Juana Cortes, Pilsen resident
- Jorge Cestou, The Resurrection Project
- Oscar de la Torre, Gads Hill Center
- Julia Escamilla, Alivio Medical Center
- Jeanette Galicia, The Resurrection Project
- Alfredo Gamez, Pilsen resident
- Miguel Guevara, Instituto del Progreso Latino
- Hector Hernandez, Chicago Public Library, Lozano Branch
- Alheli Herrera, Casa Michoacan
- Julian Lazalde, Pilsen Neighbors
- Yvette Leigh, Chicago Public Library
- Benny Morton, St. Anne Catholic School
- Alvaro Obregon, The Resurrection Project
- Eli Orozco, Pilsen resident
- Andrew Pincon, Digibridge
- Arturo Pintor, Pilsen resident
- David Pintor, The Resurrection Project
- Edgardo Reyes, Pilsen resident
- Silvia Rivera, Radio Arte/WRTE 90.5 FM
- Antonia Rodriguez, Alivio Medical Center
- Gerardo Rodriguez, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Elvia Rodriguez, Pros Arts Studios
- Marty Sanchez, Alivio Medical Center
- Eric Schwister, St. Pius Parish
- Mike Thompson, Casa Aztlan
- Sarai Linares, Casa Azltan
- Victor Vizueta, Instituto del Progreso Latino

LISC/CHICAGO

- Susana Vasquez, Director, New Communities Program
- Gordon Walek, Communications Manager

CITY OF CHICAGO

- Hardik Bhatt, Chief Information Officer, Department of Innovation & Technology
- Danielle DuMerer, Project Manager, Department of Innovation & Technology
- Matthew Guilford, Program Manager, Digital Excellence and Innovation, Department of Innovation & Technology
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PROGRAM AND PLANNING SUPPORT

- City of Chicago
- State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
- LISC/Chicago
- Microsoft Corporation
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

ABOUT THE NEW COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The New Communities Program (NCP) is a long-term initiative by LISC/Chicago to support comprehensive community development in 16 Chicago neighborhoods.

The nation's largest demonstration of comprehensive community development, NCP has delivered substantial and visible neighborhood improvements across the city thanks to a 10-year funding commitment from the MacArthur Foundation. LISC/Chicago has invested more than $50 million in grants and loans in the NCP neighborhoods, supporting more than 500 different projects ranging from healthy-lifestyle initiatives and youth sports leagues to retail and affordable housing development. Thousands of residents and hundreds of community organizations have been involved through NCP.

The NCP model is that each effort be led by a neighborhood-based lead agency that coordinates programs among other local organizations and citywide support groups. Lead agencies are encouraged to forge partnerships with other non-profit groups, businesses, government and residents to address issues such as affordable housing, prisoner re-entry, cultural programming, education reform, community marketing and open space.

Smart Communities builds upon the NCP platform and on the quality-of-life plans prepared by each community. The plans have been steered by local lead agencies that have a resume of "getting it done" and grassroots connections to the communities they serve. It incorporates project ideas from those plans and identifies new tools and techniques to implement long-standing community development goals.

ABOUT THE DIGITAL EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

The Digital Excellence Initiative aims to make Chicago a global leader in the application of technology to increasing economic competitiveness, strengthening communities and improving lives. Guided by the work of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Closing the Digital Divide, the initiative fosters deployment of broadband infrastructure, public access to technology and new insights into digital participation and needs. The initiative is managed by the City of Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology and is supported by a range of private sector, non-profit and governmental partners.

The 2007 *City That Networks* report and the 2009 *Digital Excellence in Chicago* study are available at www.cityofchicago.org/digitalexcellence

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Smart Communities

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