

Broadband Coalition Launches Plan to Bridge the Digital Divide and Expand Opportunity in Rio Grande Valley

Initiative aims to expand high-speed internet, digital skills, and economic opportunity in South Texas

WESLACO, TX, UNITED STATES, February 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Rio Grande Valley Broadband Coalition today unveils the [RGV Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan](#), a bold initiative to ensure every home, business, and community anchor institution in the region has access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet.



Members of the Rio Grande Valley Broadband Coalition

Developed through a multi-sector partnership of local governments, internet providers, schools, healthcare institutions, small businesses, and nonprofits, the plan addresses long-standing connectivity gaps that have limited education, jobs, healthcare access, and economic growth across the region.

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Broadband is the foundation for opportunity in today's economy. This is a plan to ensure all residents can access the connectivity they need to thrive.”

*Jordana Barton-Garcia,
Director of the RGV
Broadband Coalition*

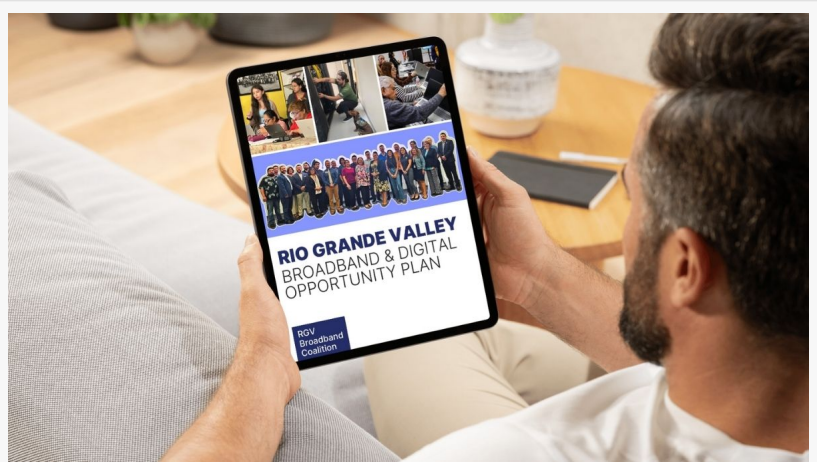
“Broadband is the foundation for opportunity in today's economy,” said Jordana Barton-Garcia, Director of the RGV Broadband Coalition. “This plan represents a turning point, ensuring that all residents — no matter who they are or where in the Rio Grande Valley they live — can access the connectivity they need to thrive.”

A Strategy for Closing the Digital Divide

Much of the RGV still lacks reliable internet access, holding the region back in a world that increasingly depends on digital tools. The RGV Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan is a

roadmap to change that, focusing on:

- Expanding broadband infrastructure to connect unserved and underserved communities
- Increasing digital skills training to help residents navigate online education, work, and services
- Preparing a local workforce for in-demand, high-wage technology jobs
- Enhancing telehealth access to improve healthcare outcomes and lower costs
- Supporting small businesses in adopting digital tools to grow, compete, and better serve their customers



Rio Grande Valley Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan Cover

This plan aligns with federal and state funding opportunities, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program and the Texas Digital Opportunity Plan (TDOP), positioning the RGV for growth and tackling its status as a persistent poverty region.

Building Prosperity in the Rio Grande Valley

The RGV Broadband Coalition ensures that local voices drive broadband solutions, with a strong focus on rural areas, colonias, and low-income communities. The plan includes strategies to boost:

- **Workforce & Economic Growth:** The Fiber Broadband Association's OpTIC Path program will train local workers for fiber technician jobs, keeping talent in the region. Investing in next-generation industries like AI, cybersecurity, and telehealth will create new job opportunities and economic momentum.
- **Healthcare Access & Telehealth:** Expanding telehealth services will connect more residents to remote healthcare, digital health records, and essential medical services. Partnerships with hospitals, clinics, and public health officials will improve healthcare outcomes and access.
- **Small Business Support:** With small businesses employing 60% of the RGV workforce, initiatives like the South Texas Small Business Broadband Fund will provide broadband access, training, and funding to help local businesses grow in the digital economy.

At the launch event hosted by the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council in Weslaco, Rose Benavidez, Board Member for the South Texas College Board of Trustees said: "Closing the digital divide means expanding opportunities for education, jobs, and healthcare. With this plan, we are setting the stage for a more connected, more prosperous Rio Grande Valley which harnesses the talents and creativity of all our people."

The coalition is already working to implement some of the plan's activities and is actively seeking

partners and funding opportunities to put the full plan into action and accelerate digital opportunity efforts.

For more information or to get involved, visit the [RGV Broadband Coalition Website](#) or contact Ricardo Saenz, ricardo@connecthumanity.fund.

About the Rio Grande Valley Broadband Coalition

The RGV Broadband Coalition is a multi-sector partnership dedicated to expanding digital opportunity across Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties in South Texas. Led by Connect Humanity as the backbone organization, the coalition unites local governments, internet service providers, businesses, schools, healthcare providers, and nonprofits to develop and implement a comprehensive broadband strategy. Its mission is to bridge the digital divide by ensuring all residents and small businesses have access to affordable, high-speed, and reliable internet, fostering economic growth, educational advancement, and civic engagement throughout the region.

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