

## ***Community Informatics Websites and Organizations***

1. American Planning Association. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.planning.org/>.

The American Planning Association is a nonprofit public interest and research organization representing 30,000 practicing planners, officials, and citizens involved with urban and rural planning issues. Sixty-five percent of APA's members work for state and local government agencies. These members are involved, on a day-to-day basis, in formulating planning policies and preparing land-use regulations. APA's objective is to encourage planning that will meet the needs of people and society more effectively.

2. The Association for Community Networks (AFCN). Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.afcn.org/resources/>.

AFCN is an education nonprofit dedicated to fostering and supporting community networking (community-based creation and provision of technology services). The Resources section of AFCN's Web site offers links to information about and examples of community networks, community networking and development toolkits, books, directories, grants, assessment or "mapping" tools, hardware and software information, training materials, accessibility aids, translators, educational guides, and more.

3. Benton Foundation Best Practices Toolkit. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from [http://www.pewtrusts.com/pdf/extranet\\_benchmarks.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.com/pdf/extranet_benchmarks.pdf).

Benchmarks for Building Extranets and Online Communities, by Jillaine Smith. Whether trying to organize a group of grantees, a set of volunteers or some other collection of constituents, building an online community is not always easy. With support from the Trusts, the Benton Foundation has developed guidelines to help foundations and nonprofits plan, build and sustain online communities.

4. Center for Technology in Government. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/>.

The Center for Technology in Government (CTG) works with government to develop information strategies that foster innovation and enhance the quality and coordination of public services. They conduct applied research and partnership projects on the policy, management, and technology issues surrounding information use in the public sector.

5. The Community Connector. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://databases.si.umich.edu/cfdocs/community/index.cfm>.

A project of the Community Networking Initiative at the University of Michigan School of Information. This site provides a wealth of information, including articles, reports, guides, development and assessment tools, Web links, funding sources and other resources to people and organizations that are using technology to improve their local communities. It covers the following topics: how technology impacts communities, connecting with others working in community technology, tools and ideas to help run a community information center, education and research tools, and funding information.

6. Community Technology Advisors Corp. (CTAC). Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from [www.communitytechnologyadvisors.com/](http://www.communitytechnologyadvisors.com/).

CTAC services are oriented around creating business development opportunities with telecommunication service providers. CTAC is vendor and technology neutral, and acts as a mediator for the community when dealing with telecommunication companies. CTAC collects information from service providers that can help communities understand what levels of existing telecommunication services are available to area businesses, organizations and residents. CTAC also uses a very brief survey directed at community businesses to find out how they are currently using technology and how it compares to their competitors, what their future plans for technology deployment are, and what are the barriers to this deployment. The end-user survey gives CTAC a feel for the technological sophistication of the community and how individual organizations can leverage their planned technology investments to benefit the community. CTAC services

are designed to allow community members to participate, learn and move forward in the Information Economy.

7. CSPP's Readiness Guide for Living in the Networked World. Retrieved on July 26, 2007 from

[http://www.cspp.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=228&Itemid=160](http://www.cspp.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=228&Itemid=160)

A self-assessment tool designed to help you and your community determine how prepared you are to participate in the Networked World. It facilitates the first step of understanding where you are and provides a vision of where you need to be to reap the benefits of being connected in a Networked World. Most importantly, it prepares you to take actions that will enable your community, government, businesses, schools, community groups, and citizens, to benefit from being as connected as possible.

8. Digital Divide Network. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.digitaldividenetwork.org/>.

There has always been a gap between those people and communities who can make effective use of information technology and those who cannot. Now, more than ever, unequal adoption of technology excludes many from reaping the fruits of the economy. The term "digital divide" refers to this gap between those who can effectively use new information and communication tools, such as the Internet, and those who cannot. While a consensus does not exist on the extent of the divide (and whether the divide is growing or narrowing), researchers are nearly unanimous in acknowledging that some sort of divide exists at this point in time. At this website, you'll have the resources at your fingertips to learn about the digital divide, as well as links to many IT issues.

9. FirstGov. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.firstgov.gov>

The U.S. government's official web portal. A substantial body of online information, services and resources. There is specific information geared towards businesses, citizens, government, and general references at the following respective websites:

[http://www.firstgov.gov/Business/Business\\_Gateway.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Business/Business_Gateway.shtml)

[http://www.firstgov.gov/Citizen/Citizen\\_Gateway.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Citizen/Citizen_Gateway.shtml)

[http://www.firstgov.gov/Government/Government\\_Gateway.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Government/Government_Gateway.shtml)

[http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Reference\\_Shelf.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf.shtml)

10. GETTING ONLINE: A Guide to the Internet for Small Town Leaders. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.smallcommunities.org/ncsc/>

This is a publication of the National Center for Small Communities. The GETTING ONLINE guide covers the following topics: getting on the Internet, exploring the Web, putting local government online, encouraging public access and use, attracting high-speed telecommunications services, and Web sites of interest.

11. Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. IIRA Home Page retrieved July 26, 2007 from <http://www.iira.org/>.

The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs is designed to improve the quality of life in rural areas by developing public-private partnerships with local agencies on small business development and community development projects in rural areas. The Institute works on projects including rural economic and community development (including value-added agriculture), health care, education, public transportation, public management policies, housing, and technology.

12. Illinois Telecommunications Association. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.il-ita.com/>.

The mission of the Illinois Telecommunications Association is to create a forum for its members to identify and to examine issues of importance; to foster collaboration among its members; and to present on behalf of the telecommunications industry a unified position on matters of importance before the regulatory and legislative bodies of Illinois.

13. Intelligent Community Forum. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.intelligentcommunity.org/>.

The Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) is a special interest group within the

World Teleport Association that focuses on the uses of broadband technology for economic development by communities large and small in both the developed and developing world. Because real estate is a critical part of urban development, ICF also addresses the development of intelligent buildings, Internet hosting centers and similar facilities. ICF conducts research, creates conference content, publishes newsletters and presents annual Awards for Intelligent Community and Intelligent Building developers.

14. International City/County Management Association. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.icma.org/>.

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) is the professional and educational organization representing appointed managers and administrators in local governments throughout the world.

15. I S P G L O S S A R Y. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://isp.webopedia.com/>

Good source for the most up-to-date terms, definitions, and acronyms for and about internet service providers. From this page are multitudes of other links.

16. Lonestar Broadband Toolkit. Retrieved on July 26, 2007 from [http://www.lonestarbroadband.org/tif\\_doc.pdf](http://www.lonestarbroadband.org/tif_doc.pdf).

A toolkit for rural leaders and official interested in securing high-speed telecommunication services. The "toolkit" was developed by a Policy Research Project at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. Included in the "toolkit" is a Community network development tool which is a planning aid that lays out the steps and requirements for planning and implementing a community-based computer network:

There are various assessment tools at:

<http://www.lonestarbroadband.org/howtoguide/assesstools.htm>

A broadband checklist is provided at:

<http://www.lonestarbroadband.org/howtoguide/checklist.htm>

17. National Rural Development Partnership. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nrdp/>.

The National Rural Development Partnership (NRDP) works to strengthen rural America through collaborative partnerships. The NRDP brings together partners from local, state, tribal, and federal governments, as well as from the for-profit and nonprofit private sector.

18. Rural Information Center. Home Page retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/>

The Rural Information Center provides information and referral services for rural communities, officials, organizations and citizens. For more information or assistance, call 1-800-633-7701, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, EST. The Rural Information Center also has a resource page at

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/resource.htm> that links to a wide variety of rural resources.

19. Rural Telecommunications Congress. *Rural Telecommunications Congress home page*. Colorado: Colorado Mountain College. Retrieved July 3, 2007, from <http://ruraltelecon.org/>.

“The Rural Telecommunications Congress (RTC) is a national membership organization dedicated to assuring that rural areas in the United States have access to the information and support they need to obtain and use advanced telecommunications services and technology for social and economic development” -- RTC Home page.

20. The Rural E-Commerce Extension Initiative. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/index.html>.

The Southern Rural Development Center has had a federally-funded Rural E-Commerce Extension Demonstration Project. The project's website is a searchable library of e-commerce, e-government and e-community resources. The site explains more about this project and how the center plans to increase the value and availability of outstanding educational materials for use with rural small businesses, governments and communities.

21. Smart Communities Implementation Guide. Retrieved on July 26, 2007 from [www.smartcommunities.org/](http://www.smartcommunities.org/).

This tool was developed by The World Federation for Smart Communities International Center for Communications, San Diego State University and the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS). Smart Communities are defined as communities that use technology to transform the way they conduct business. The Smart Community implementation guide is a planning guide for communities that want to start the process of using information technology as a catalyst for transforming themselves to meet the challenges of the new economy. The guide considers four key dimensions necessary for the transformation of a community; Key Leaders and Individuals, Tools, Technical Infrastructure and Institutional infrastructure. The guide looks at community as a system and provides detailed criteria that should be considered when assessing community readiness to become a "smart community".

22. TechFoundation. Retrieved on July 29, 2007 from <http://www.techfoundation.org/>.

TechFoundation is an innovative charitable organization that is bridging the gap between nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and their technology needs. TechFoundation is dedicated to a world where the resources that today's businesses use to create wealth - Capital, Expertise and Technology - are accessible for NPOs to better serve humanity.

TechFoundation has created four programs to help alleviate the Nonprofit Digital Divide:

- TechMarketplace™: A business-to-nonprofit distribution channel that provides discounted and donated technology to NPOs and those that serve their technology needs;
- Geeks for America™: A technology fellowship placing recent college graduates in NPOs to provide technology expertise;
- TechConnect™: Networking and educational seminars that provide expertise for nonprofit IT leaders, senior managers, and funders;
- TechGrants™: A newsletter and a grant program that provide NPOs with access to capital to help fulfill their technology needs.

23. Telecommunications Infrastructure Readiness Index. Retrieved on July 26, 2007 from

<http://www.communitydevelopment.uiuc.edu/commtele/telecommindex.htm>.

An inventory and evaluation diagnostic of the telecommunications Infrastructure within your community. There are three components: Part A, the telecommunications Quotient helps analyze individual affinity for using telecommunications technology; Part B, the Infrastructure Index, helps the community document local Internet access and evaluate the community presence on the World Wide Web; Part C, includes an assessment of telecommunications providers in your community.

24. U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2002). *Census 2000 urban and rural classification*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on July 17, 2007 from

[http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/ua\\_2k.html](http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/ua_2k.html).

This website provides details on the U.S. Census Bureau's urban and rural classification. It provides details of the criteria used by the Census Bureau to determine urban and rural classification.

25. U.S. Bureau of the Census (2002). *Metropolitan areas definitions*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on July 17, 2007 from

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metrodef.html>.

This website provides details of metropolitan or micropolitan definitions and gives details about the standards that are used to define an area.

26. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2002). *Measuring rurality: Rural-urban continuum codes*. Retrieved on July 17, 2007 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/RuralUrbCon/>

This website provides details about rural-urban continuum codes. This is a classification scheme that distinguishes metropolitan counties by size and nonmetropolitan counties by degree of urbanization and proximity to metro areas.

27. U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration. (2002). *National Telecommunications and Information Administration* [Home page]. Washington, DC: Retrieved on July 4, 2007, from <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/>.

“The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is the President's principal adviser on telecommunications and information policy issues, and in this role frequently works with other Executive Branch agencies to develop and present the Administration's position on these issues”—About the NTIA (<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/aboutntia/aboutntia.htm>). They have a variety of publications and reports on telecommunications issues.

28. Wiring Rural Vermont. Retrieved on July 26, 2007 from <http://crs.uvm.edu/vcrd/>.

A toolkit for rural community telecommunication planning was developed as a joint project by the Center for Rural Studies and the Vermont Council on Rural Development Telecommunications Committee. Developed to address the need for a program to help rural communities plan comprehensively for the build-out of telecommunications infrastructure that can both preserve and enhance the village or town center.