

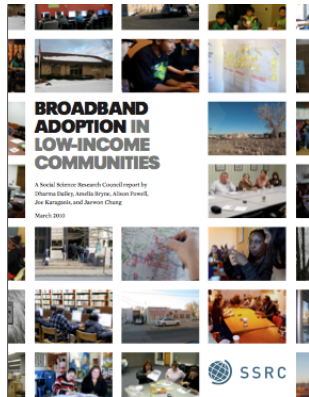


We see possibilities.

March 2010
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Report on Broadband Adoption in Low-Income Communities



Last week, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and [Social Science Research Council](#) (SSRC) released the findings of the SSRC report, [Broadband Adoption in Low-Income Communities](#). Main Street Project, [Media Literacy Project](#) and the [Media Mobilizing Project](#) - members of the [Media Action Grassroots Network](#) (MAG-Net) - played a key role in the study, setting up over 100 community conversations with organizations and individuals who struggle with Internet access.

The FCC commissioned the research in order to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers to home broadband adoption in low-income and other marginalized communities, and to shape the final National Broadband Plan to be completed this month.

The report's main findings are:

1. Broadband access has become a requirement of socio-economic inclusion, and low-income communities know this.
2. Price is only one factor in adoption, but relates to more than a monthly fee. Skill and language are also barriers.
3. Libraries and other community organizations are under increasing pressure to fill the gap between low home access and high community demand.

To ensure that the researchers heard from as many low-income and communities of color as possible, Main Street Project arranged interviews and conversations in both rural and urban areas, in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and with Lao, Somali, Hmong, African-American, Latino, and homeless community members.

"Having the researchers and the FCC hear story after story about the broadband barriers faced by low-income, immigrant and communities of color here in Minnesota was critical," said Steven Renderos, Main Street Project's media justice organizer. "This lays the groundwork for more inclusive and creative thinking about how to ensure meaningful access."

[Download the complete report here \(PDF\).](#)

Main Street Project's partners in the Minnesota Digital Justice Coalition also participated in the SSRC study: [People Escaping Poverty Project](#) (PEPP), [Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing](#) and [Twin Cities Community Voice Mail](#). Last month the Coalition hosted a community forum on Internet access as part of the MAG-Net's National Day of Action. At the gathering, Minnesota Secretary of

State of State Mark Ritchie highlighted the connection between Internet access and civic participation.

The coalition's work is possible because of funding through the [Media Democracy Fund](#) and MAG-Net.

To help us continue to work towards digital inclusion, [donate today](#).

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