

**Western New York Economic Development Fund
Recommendation Memo**

Not Recommended: Exhibit "D"

Applicant Name:	NBT Solutions, Inc.	REDC Region:	Western New York
Project Type:	Business Investment	County:	Erie
Industry:	Logistics/Trade	Locality:	Buffalo
Amount Requested:	\$33,230	Total Project Cost:	\$166,150

REGIONAL IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

Number of Jobs Retained:	3
Number of Jobs Created:	2
Average Salary of Jobs:	\$62,000
Indirect Jobs Created	0
Other Impact	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On March 16, 2010, the FCC's (Federal Communications Commission) National Broadband Plan was unveiled in an effort to improve broadband Internet access throughout the United States by 2020. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) required that the FCC draft the National Broadband Plan which is intended to achieve affordability and maximizing use of broadband to advance consumer welfare, civic participation, public safety and homeland security, community development, health care delivery, energy independence and efficiency, education, employee training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, job creation and economic growth, and other national purposes.

The plan is having an impact on the number of households now connected to the Internet. In its report issued in November of 2013, RVA, LLC estimated that Fiber to the Home (FTTH) services are now available to 21.3 million North American homes, an increase of more than 10 percent over the past six months. In addition, the report goes on to say that all but eight of nearly 880 FTTH service providers surveyed have fewer than 30,000 subscribers, with only five having more than 50,000 access lines and 97 percent of them having fewer than 10,000. "While large providers such as Verizon in the U.S., Bell and Bell Aliant in Canada and Telmex in Mexico continue to be very important, small providers such as rural telcos, real estate developers, small competitive providers and even rural electric cops are playing a key role in driving the expansion of fiber to the home," said Michael Render, president of RVA LLC, which tracks FTTH deployment for the Council.

The implications of the report are that the gap in broadband and Internet services are being filled by smaller providers. NBT Solution believes- and our market research confirms- that as these small providers grow they will require tools to help them design, manage, and market, the fiber assets they are putting in place. Through a series of focus group meetings with small fiber provides such as GWI (Maine) and Pangaea (North Carolina) we have determined that there is not a fiber optic management tool available to small fiber providers. The products that are on the market are too expensive, require large licensing fees, are "feature-bloated", and require extensive training and setup to use. Our proposed project is to design, build, and market a web-based, geospatial fiber optic management tool that is intended for small fiber companies (200-2000 miles of fiber). The application will help these organizations with the lifecycle of fiber optic construction and management by helping them with the costing and sizing required at the design phase of a project; the marketing of these fiber assets to clients; and the maintenance of these assets. The product will be cloud-based to eliminate large computer technology investments by the fiber providers and it will be built on open source technologies to minimize licensing fees. Clients will pay for the application using a subscription payment model that includes monthly payments.

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OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS RECEIVED FOR THIS PROJECT	
SOURCE	AMOUNT
N/A	N/A
PREVIOUS STATE ASSISTANCE OFFERED OR PROVIDED	
SOURCE	AMOUNT
N/A	N/A
BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION	
<p>Although the project has merits and it is likely to benefit the company, the applicant indicates the project will proceed without an allocation of Fund benefits over a longer time horizon. It was also not clear if the applicant sought any loan assistance to help finance the working capital request for this project.</p>	