



## Tech Executive Leadership Initiative

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# A Robust Internal System for Successful Broadband Implementation

Using five priorities to guide New York City's management of new  
broadband contracts

Photo by Thomas Jensen via Unsplash

## BACKGROUND

*As part of their 10-week policy training, the leaders of the Tech Executive Leadership Initiative spent 6 weeks working on a real-world government challenge. In teams of 4-5, the leaders proposed ideas to help the City of New York ensure that vendors awarded contracts through its record-setting investments in broadband infrastructure – which are further detailed in the City's [Internet Master Plan \(IMP\)](#) and [request for proposals](#) for broadband expansion – go beyond lip service and adhere to City's digital inclusion principles to meaningfully close the digital divide. Each team narrowed its focus to a specific part of the problem, conducted research, and developed solutions. Below is an overview of one team's solution: A new performance management system to organize the City's broadband contracting process.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New York City's Mayor's Office of the CTO should couple its Universal Solicitation for Broadband RFP with a robust internal performance management system for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) awarded contracts through this process. This system should be anchored by five main priorities, including: well-defined metrics for digital equity; a regular performance review schedule; and mechanisms to reward or penalize vendors based on performance. Though the City may carry out some of these functions, consolidating them into a formal system would help the City keep broadband projects on track amidst its many other initiatives.

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### PROBLEM

As part of its Internet Master Plan, the City of New York launched the [Universal Solicitation for Broadband](#), a citywide request for proposals (RFP) to bring connectivity to 600,000 New Yorkers. While the RFP holds enormous promise, it also presents a large operational challenge for the City. It requires extensive coordination and management between stakeholders in the public, private, non-profit sectors.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that the RFP is successful, the City should formalize its internal operations for managing this initiative via a robust performance management system. To create and maintain an effective ISP performance management system, the City of New York should be guided by five main priorities:

- 1. Defining digital equity metrics to measure ISP performance.** These criteria can include metrics such as the number of newly-connected households, the price of broadband service, the speed of service, and the number of blocks newly outfitted with fiber.
- 2. Conducting quarterly performance evaluations of ISPs using the digital equity metrics.** The City should then convene quarterly meetings of representatives from the City and the ISPs to assess vendors using these metrics.
- 3. Using the outcomes of quarterly performance evaluations to award future contracts.** By making future contracts contingent on good performance, the City can bolster or curtail ISPs' access to future monthly subscribers – a metric that most ISPs are keen to optimize.
- 4. Ensuring that established digital equity metrics are included in future ISP contracts and by other government agencies.** ISPs should be required to use one standardized reporting process for all City agencies.
- 5. Communicating the impact of digital equity broadband initiatives to the Mayor and to NYC residents.** To help drive broadband adoption, the City should publicize stories about how these broadband investments have meaningfully benefited residents.

For more details on each of the five priorities, please see: (1) an [operational plan](#) describing how to implement this initiative; (2) an [infographic](#) that describes the main functions of the performance management system.

### ABOUT TELI

This project was completed as part of the Tech Executive Leadership Initiative (TELI), a 10-week skills-building initiative that prepares experienced technology leaders to engage effectively with public sector challenges. Learn more at [aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli](http://aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli).

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