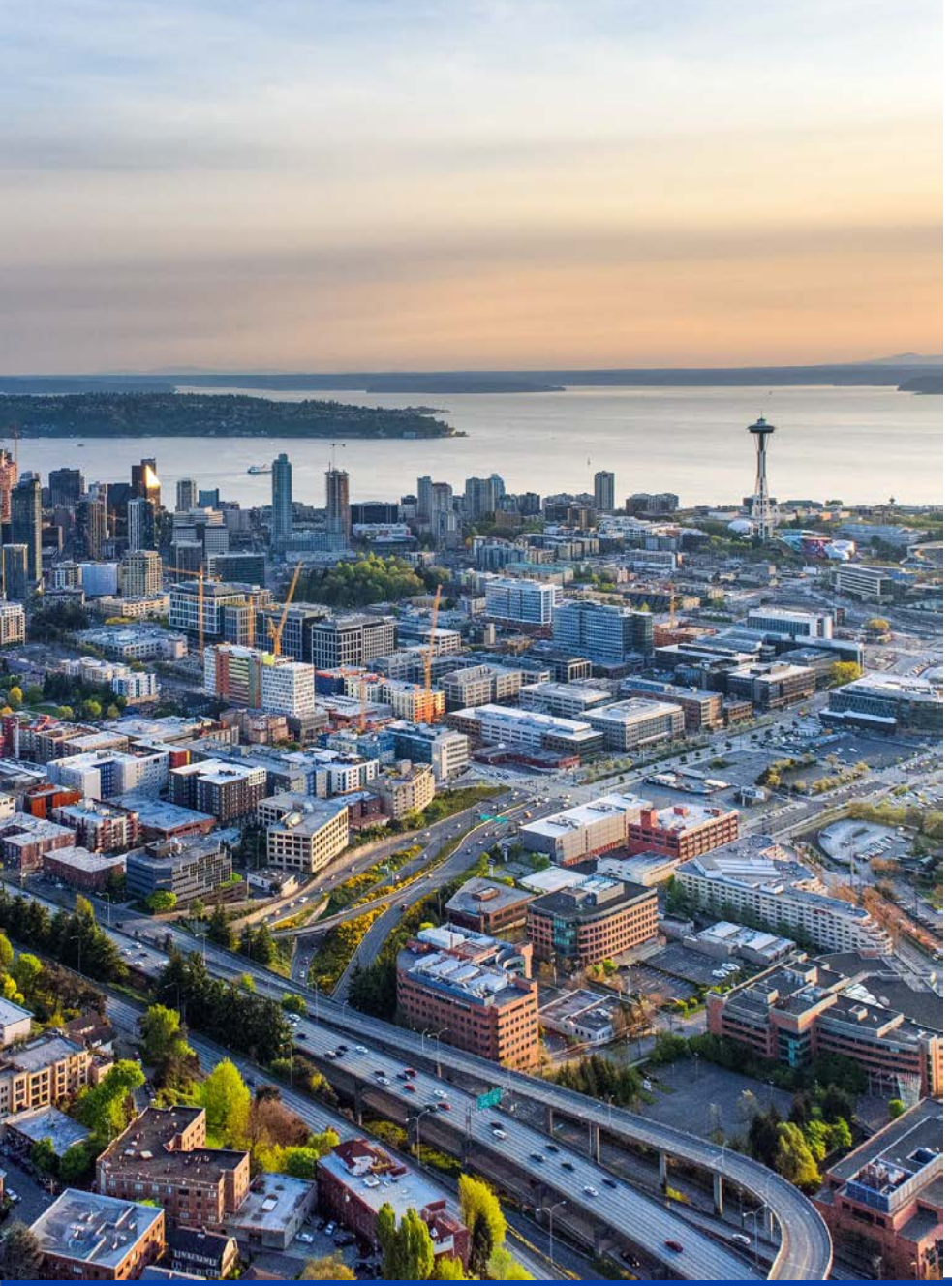
Internet for All Seattle

Transportation & Utilities Committee

September 16, 2020

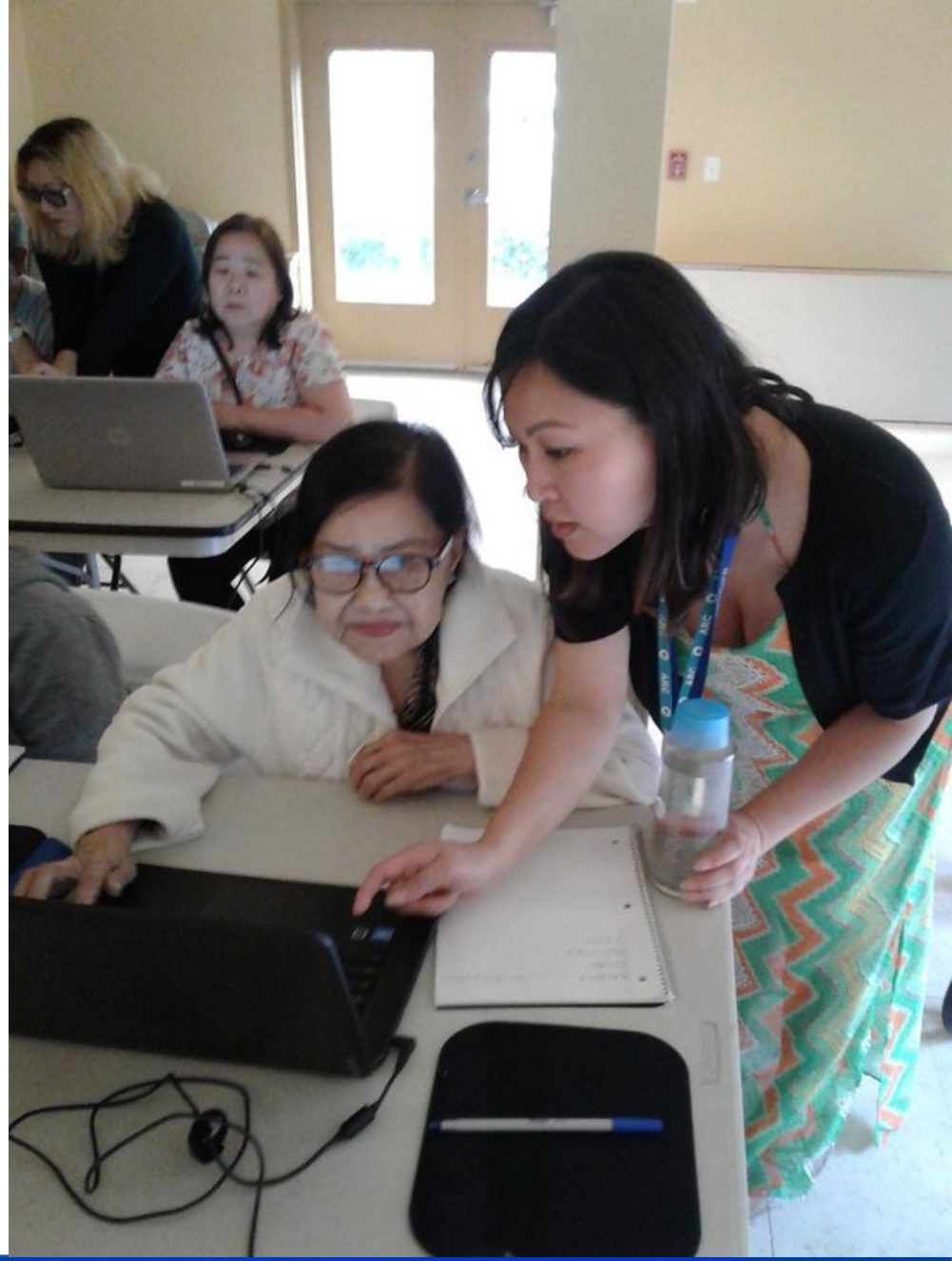


Internet for All Seattle Report

- **Res. 31956 requests Seattle IT to report on how it plans to implement Internet for All Seattle objectives including:**
  - Gap Analysis (Data primarily from 2018 Technology Access and Adoption Study, 2020 King County Broadband Access)
  - Lessons Learned
  - Action Plan (Strategies, Partnerships, Infrastructure, Resources, Timeline, Evaluations)
- **Written and reviewed by internal and external partners and stakeholders.**
- **Welcome feedback from Council, to collaborate to target and refine strategies and actions.**
- **First of subsequent committee reports.**

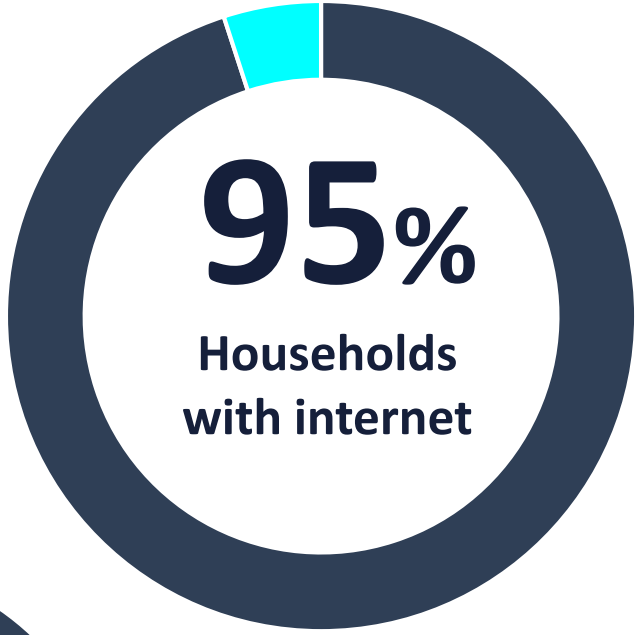
Importance of Internet for All

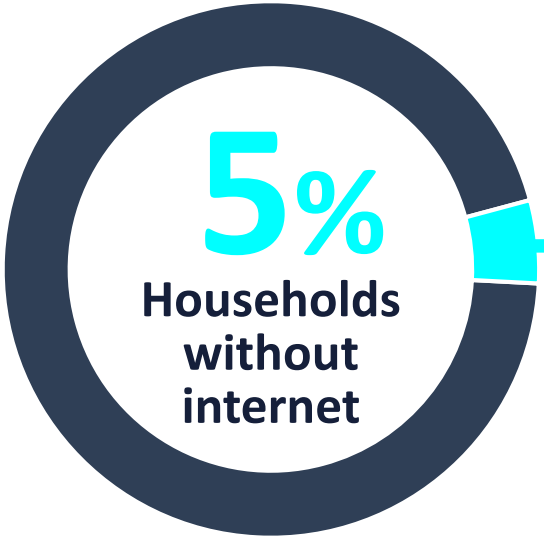
- The importance of reliable and affordable internet has become more critical now than ever before.
- Access to technology is a race and social justice issue.
- COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the need to address our digital divide.
- Improving digital equity is a critical part of Seattle's long-term inclusive economic recovery.



What is the current state of broadband?

- We are a well-connected City
- Internet adoption gap is concentrated in specific geographic areas
- Explained by affordability not infrastructure

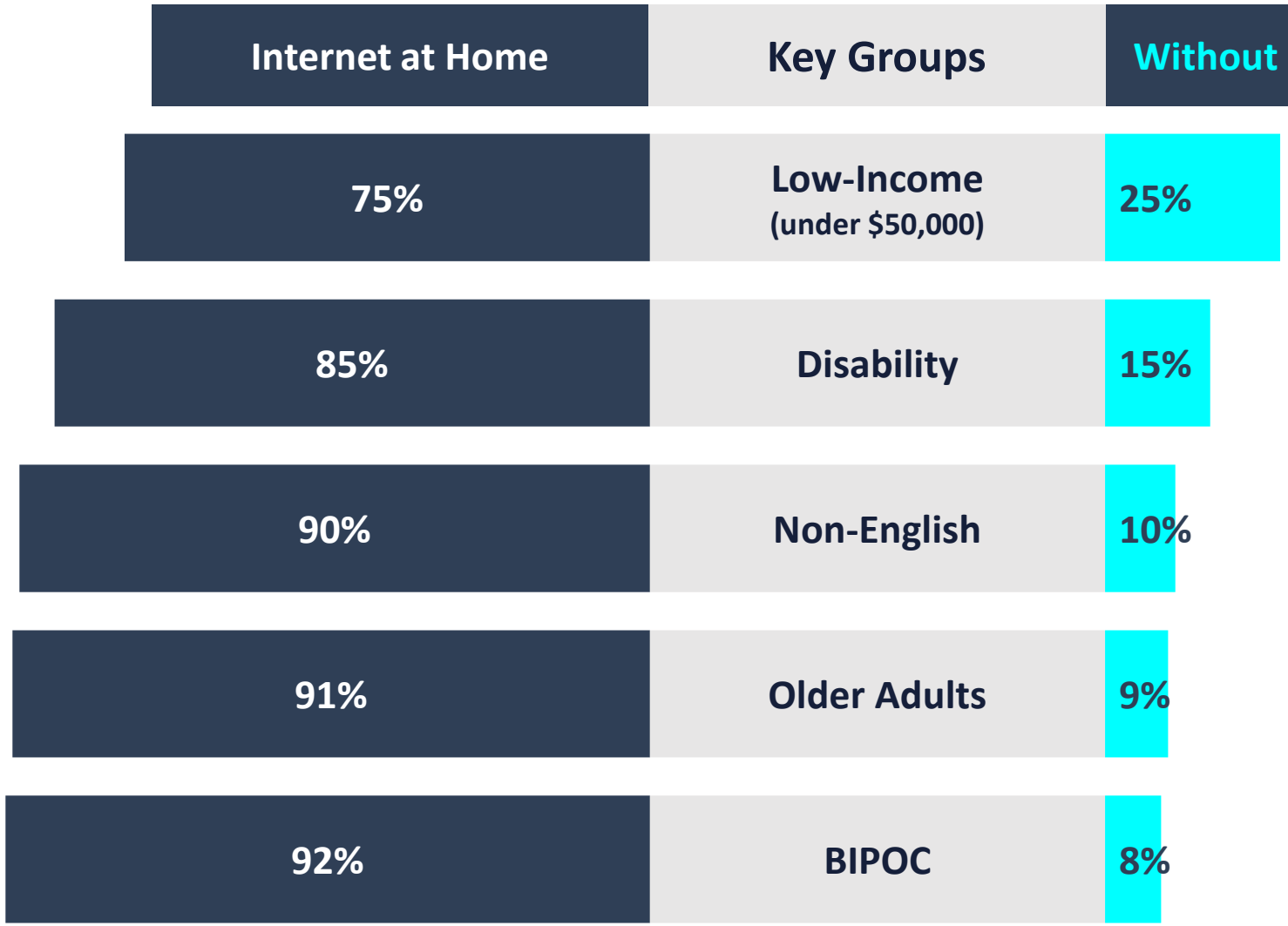




About 17,000 households

Data Source: 2018 Technology Access and Adoption Study

Gap within key groups = ~17,000 households



$50,000

Once a household's income reaches $50k, internet access no longer correlates with income.

Approximately 10,000 households under $25,000 are without internet at home and are the most significantly impacted.

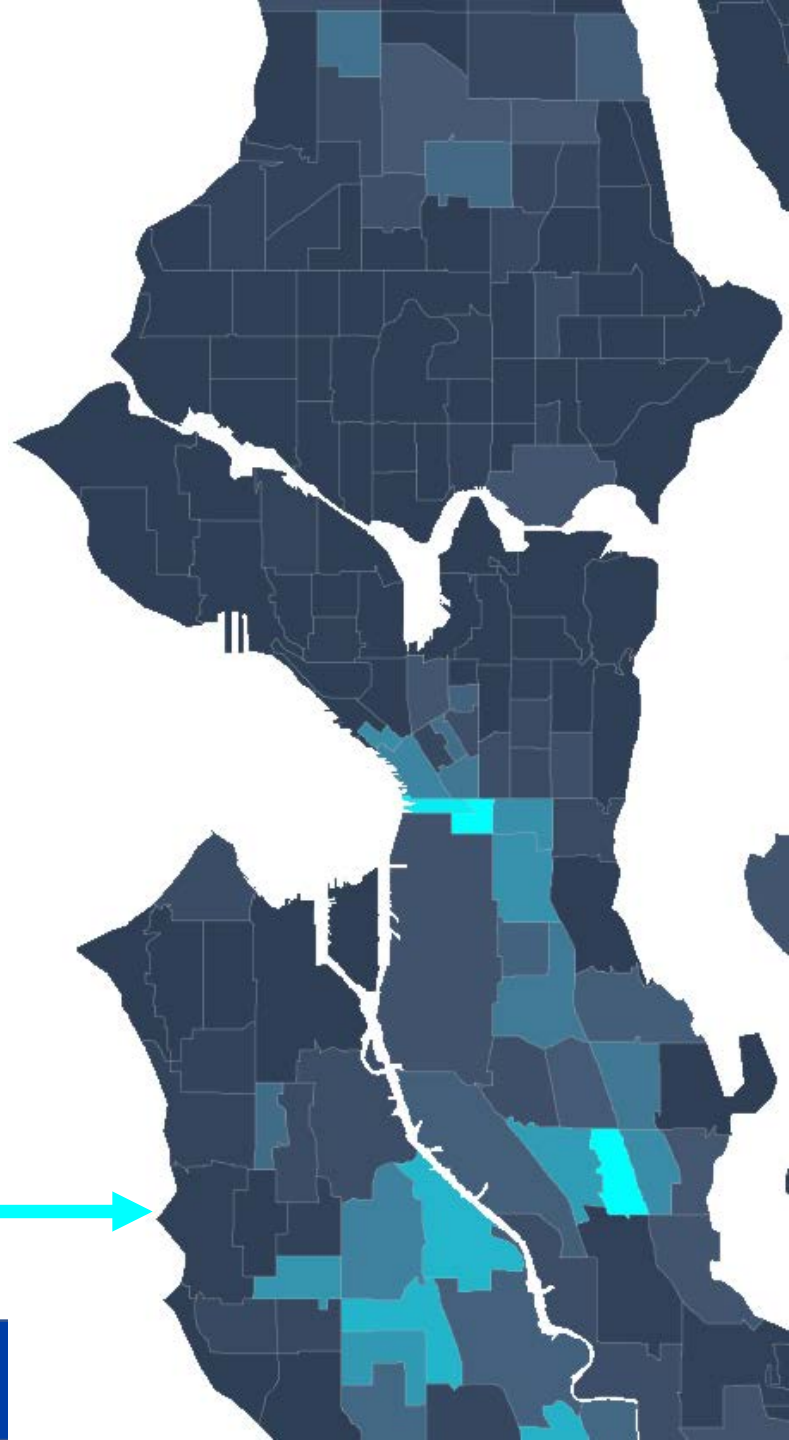
Households could select more than one characteristic.

Gap in specific geographic areas

Primary Barrier is Cost

The gap analysis finds that internet adoption is lacking in specific geographic areas and is driven primarily by the affordability of broadband service.

- South Central Seattle (Pioneer Square, Yesler Terrace, and International District)
- South Seattle (New Holly, Rainier Valley, and Beacon Hill)
- West Seattle (High Point and South Park)
- Areas of downtown
- Lake City



The lighter areas represent a higher proportion of residents without internet in their home.

What explains these gaps?

In 2018, for the 5% of households without internet, cited the following barriers			
61%	Say cost is a primary barrier to obtaining internet access.	**16%**	Don’t know how to obtain internet access.
30%	Don’t have a device to access the internet.	**8%**	Say the internet is too slow and/or unreliable.
20%	Don’t have the credit or deposit requirements.	**8%**	Don’t trust the internet or technology companies.

Action Plan Objectives

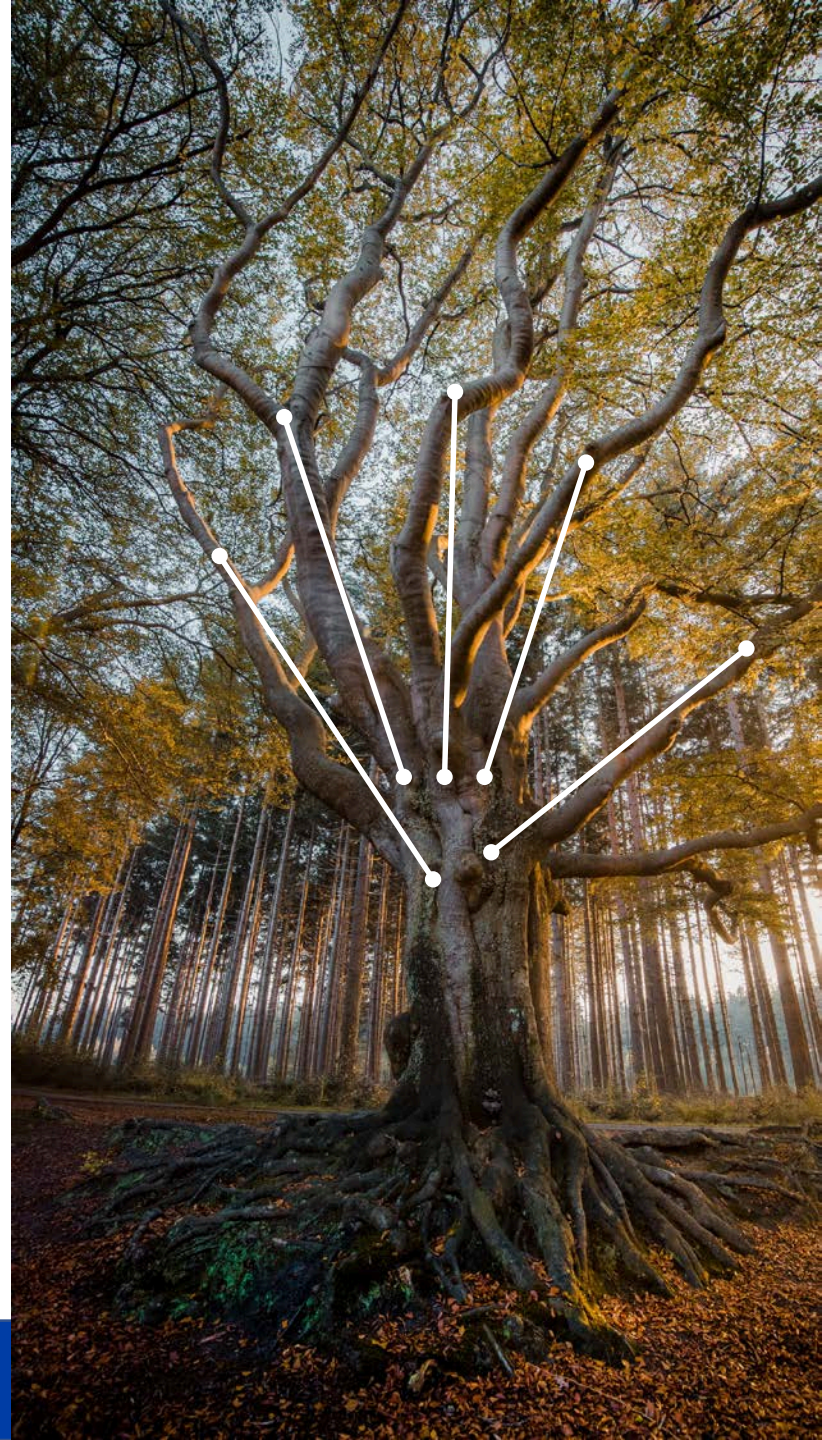
City of Seattle | SPS | Community-Based Organizations | Telecoms/ISPs | Private Sector/Tech Companies

1. Support Seattle Public Schools' efforts to increase and improve student-household internet access and quality.
2. Foster up to 20,000 internet connections & devices for underserved.
3. For the 2023 Technology Access and Adoption Study, the data points toward universal internet adoption.
4. Significantly increase the internet adoption rate for households with annual incomes under $25,000.

Students | Job Seekers | Low-Income | DisAbility | Non-English | Older Adults | BIPOC | Insecurely Housed

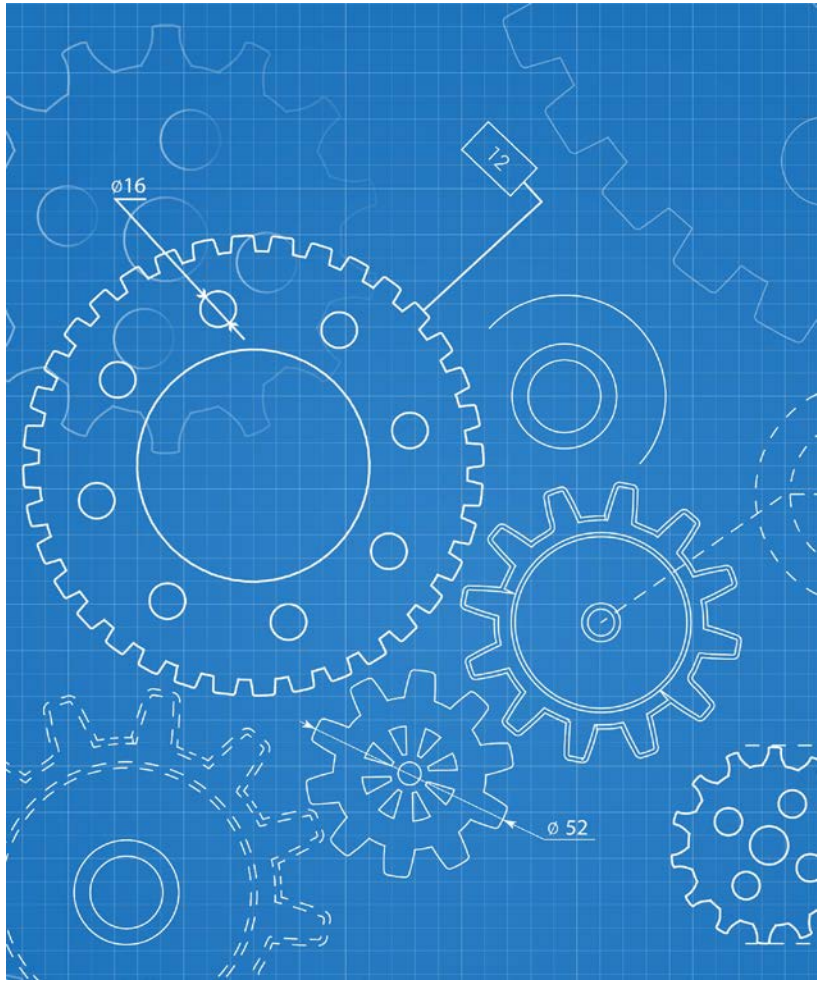
Key partners in meeting objectives

- **Private-sector and philanthropic partners**
  - Business community
  - Internet service providers / telecoms
  - “All in Washington” newly launched Digital Equity Initiative
- **Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Public Library**
- **SHA, affordable housing providers**
- **Community-based organizations**
- **Local and federal governments**
  - City Council, King County, regional agencies, and Washington State Broadband Office
- **Digital equity boards and commissions**
  - CTAB, IAC, Digital Equity Learning Network



Seattle IT built an Action Plan to meet these objectives

- Leverages lessons learned from other municipalities
- Relies on partnerships with internal and external stakeholders
- Built to directly address gaps in access
  - Focus on specific geographic areas and highly impacted groups
  - Take advantage of Seattle's strong infrastructure
  - Address the root cause of gaps in residential broadband–affordability
  - Holistic look at digital equity



Lessons Learned from Other Municipal Efforts

- Prioritize residents that are most highly-impacted
- Look at digital equity holistically–not just internet connectivity but devices, services, and skills
- Adoption of low-cost internet services require reduction of sign-up barriers and engagement with our community
- Follow best practices from Seattle–specific and national studies

Digital Inclusion TRAILBLAZERS

Digital Inclusion Alliance

Seattle is 1 of 15 cities recognized as "National Digital Inclusion Trailblazer"

- Seattle
- San Francisco
- New York City
- Kansas City
- Portland
- Long Beach
- Austin
- Boston
- Chattanooga
- San Antonio
- District of Columbia
- Louisville
- Provo
- Salt Lake City
- Detroit

Action Plan Strategies

Increase awareness and adoption of low-cost internet programs and devices.

Expand no or low-cost connectivity options in targeted areas of the City.

Partner with organizations to deliver culturally relevant digital inclusion programs.

Pursue private sector and philanthropic funding.

Champion legislation/policies to advance universal internet access and adoption.

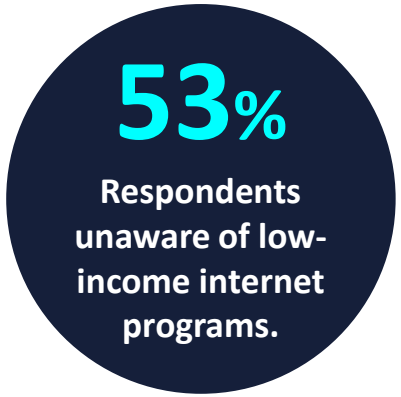
Strengthen regional collaboration by forming an “Internet for All” Coalition.

Advocate to ensure Internet Service Provider offerings meet residents’ needs.

Examine new technologies to ensure best-in-class internet infrastructure and consumer choices.

Action Plan Snapshot

- **Strategy 1: Increase awareness and adoption of low-cost internet programs and devices.**
  - Ramp up the City's outreach and engagement about low-income programs for residents and nonprofits.
  - Partner with SPS and SHA to promote internet sign-ups.
  - Explore a one-stop portal for streamlined enrollment in all low-income programs, including access to internet (using Affordable Seattle model/website).



- **Strategy 2: Expand more public Wi-Fi in digital equity areas.**
  - SPL will deploy upgraded Wi-Fi outside all branches in Q4-2020.
  - Develop proposal to strategically deploy more public Wi-Fi in digital equity zones.

Action Plan Snapshot

- **Strategy 3: Partner with organizations to deliver culturally relevant digital inclusion programs.**
  - Continue effective, scalable programs that address adoption barriers beyond internet access (e.g., Digital Bridge).
  - Support digital navigators through a train-the-trainer model to provide 1:1 device, connectivity, and technology support.

- **Strategy 4: Pursue private sector and philanthropic support.**
  - Partner with corporate and philanthropic donors to secure support for Internet for All.
  - Leverage strong, positive engagement from the private sector to advance digital equity.

Action Plan Snapshot

- **Strategy 5: Champion legislation/policies to advance universal internet adoption.**
  - Advocate for state and federal Digital Equity Act and similar legislation that will provide funding and support for state and local digital inclusion action.
  - Explore a policy enabling internet access in all new affordable housing investments.
- **Strategy 6: Strengthen regional collaboration by forming an "Internet for All" Coalition.**
  - Establish an Internet for All Coalition to help advance the Action Plan. Leverage existing bodies, including the City's Community Technology Advisory Board, Innovation Advisory Council and Digital Equity Learning Network.
  - Review opportunities to coordinate with Port of Seattle, King County, Seattle Public Schools, Metro Transit, Sound Transit, University of Washington, and other public agencies on long-term wired and wireless infrastructure expansion.

Action Plan Snapshot

- **Strategy 7: Advocate to ensure Internet Service Provider offerings meet residents' needs.**
  - Request aggregated enrollment data for low-cost internet programs (evaluation process).
  - Request to extend and improve ISPs COVID-19 mitigations (e.g. waive 90-day waiting period, increase speeds beyond 25 Mbps).
- **Strategy 8: Examine new technologies to ensure best-in-class internet infrastructure and consumer choices.**
  - Monitor and research technologies including Wi-Fi 6, Satellite Internet, 10G Platform, G.Fast, Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS), Microsoft Airband, and WiMax.
  - Examine opportunities to leverage City network infrastructure as a platform for low-cost wireless broadband delivery.

Timeline and Key Milestones for Internet for All

2020
Submit IFA report with an emphasis regarding gap analysis.
Support Seattle Public Schools' efforts to increase and improve student-household internet access and quality.
Continue engagement with private partners and community organizations.
Continue and start new actions to foster up to 20,000 internet connections & devices for underserved.
2021
With Council feedback on strategy and proposed actions, provide an updated report with further refinement of proposed actions.
Provide update on evaluation outcomes and status update for actions in operation.
Provide update on engagement with partners to develop "Internet for All fund".
2022-2023
Complete objective of fostering up to 20,000 internet connections & devices for underserved.
By the 2023 Technology Access and Adoption Study, the data points towards universal internet adoption.
Significantly increase the internet adoption rate for households with annual incomes under $25,000.

Next Steps

- Submitted initial IFA report on 9/14.
- Continue engagement with private partners and community organizations.
- Receive feedback from Council to target and refine action plan.
- Look forward to reporting back on our progress.
  - Update Q1 2021
- Continue to bolster significant ongoing Digital Equity initiatives.

Current City of Seattle Digital Equity Initiatives

Questions