

“Seattle is a city known for technology and innovation, yet too many residents do not have sufficient Internet access or the skills necessary to participate fully in our high tech jobs and community. Working together, we can make Seattle a leader in ensuring digital equity and opportunity for all our residents.” Mayor Ed Murray



SHAPING DIGITAL EQUITY IN SEATTLE

The City of Seattle has launched a Digital Equity Initiative to improve Internet access, skills, and online services for all of Seattle’s residents. In the next few months, the city will seek input from experts and community members to draft a vision for digital equity for Seattle and to identify opportunities to take action. The second phase will be to develop an action plan based on priorities identified through that input. It also complements Seattle’s Race and Social Justice Initiative and the

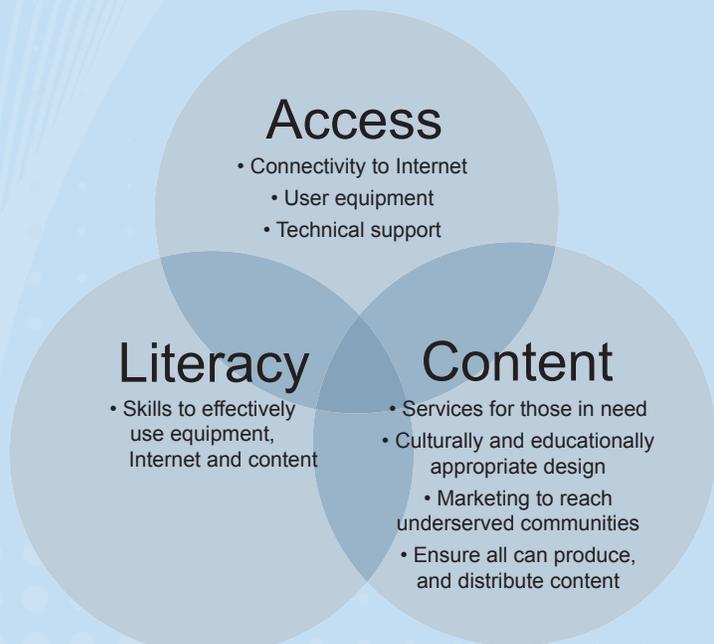
city’s work on equitable community and economic development, jobs, and education. Gathering perspectives and ideas from community members and city staff will help the city develop a plan that is meaningful to and serves all



of Seattle’s residents. To provide guidance, the city is convening an internal city departments’ committee and an external digital equity action committee (DEAC). The DEAC will include representatives

from local businesses, non-profit organizations, community groups, and educational institutions. Later this spring, experts and community members will be invited to comment on the draft vision, identify opportunities for partnerships and investments, and help set priorities.

January-March 2015	March-May 2015	June 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research and interviews Set up advisory committees Create draft vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committees and community roundtable participants comment on vision, opportunities, and action strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize vision and action strategies Present summary report and next steps for Digital Equity Plan



WHAT IS DIGITAL EQUITY?

Digital equity seeks to ensure all residents and neighborhoods have the information technology capacity needed for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services. The framework for digital equity encompasses three areas: Access, digital literacy, and content and services.

WHY DO WE NEED TO IMPROVE DIGITAL EQUITY?



Even in our connected city, digital opportunity is lacking for many. Here are some examples of the significant equity gaps that still exist.

- **Internet at Home:** 93,000 residents (15%) still don't have Internet access at home. The percent without access is even higher for our immigrant/refugee families.
- **Education & Internet Use:** 43% of adults without a high school degree don't use the Internet while only 5% of those who have completed college don't use the Internet. For those with mobile devices, half of those with a high school degree or less are not comfortable adding an app to their smartphone or tablet.
- **Income:** Seattle's lowest income residents earning under \$20,000 per year are about 25% less likely to use the Internet than those earning more than \$100,000 per year.
- **Race & Ethnicity:** Asian/ Pacific Islanders and African Americans are 20% less likely to go online to look for health and medical information than are Caucasians.
- **Age and Participation:** Seniors have less access and skills navigating the Internet. 45% of computer users over age 65 are not comfortable sending and opening email attachments.
- **Disabilities & Mobility:** Disabled residents, often with the greatest challenge getting around town, are 14% less likely to own a mobile device that could assist them.

For more details on these findings, visit: www.seattle.gov/tech/indicators

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Spanish / español

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City of Seattle

CURRENT CITY EFFORTS TO PROMOTE DIGITAL EQUITY



Current efforts include the following programs. Many of these are provided through partnerships with community organizations, Internet service providers and others.

- Public access computers at libraries, Parks and Recreation Community Centers, Neighborhood Service Centers, and the Mayor's Office of Senior Citizens (MOSC).

- Technology training at libraries, MOSC, and some Community Centers.
- Technology Matching Fund and other grants to enable community groups to provide access and training.
- Free high speed cable Internet to eligible community organizations.

- "Get Online" education campaign to help residents learn about discounts on home Internet services and computers.
- Surplus city computers provided to nonprofits and schools.
- Education material about Internet safety, use of the Internet, and where to find training.