7 Appendix

7 Appendices:

7.1 Appendix A – Core Team Meeting Materials

7.2 Appendix B – Community Workshops & Focus Group Meetings

7.3 Appendix C – Community Engagement

7.4 Appendix D – Stakeholder Questionnaires & Interview Notes

7.1 Appendix A

Core Team Meeting Information

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Kick-Off Meeting

Thursday, February 1st, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Public Notice Agenda

- **Introductions**
    - **MRPC Planning Team**
    - **Town participants – Working Group Members**

- **Project Purpose & Background:**
    - **Statewide, Regional, and Local Digital Equity Information**
    - **MBI Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Program**
    - **Project Scope of Services – T.P.R. Regional DeP project**
    - **Planning process (Timeline, Activities, Stakeholder Outreach, etc.)**
    - **Community Assets and Stakeholders**

- **Next Steps and Things to Consider:**
    - **MRPC Digital Equity Planning webpage**
    - **AmeriCorps – Lead for America Program**
    - **Statewide Digital Equity Plan Review & Comment**
    - **Statewide Digital Equity Survey**
    - **MBI News & Resources webpage**
    - **Future implementation grants and potential projects**
    - **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and local outreach partners**
    - **What local barriers exist? What type of training is needed? For whom?**
    - **What other stakeholders should be included? (Consider social services organizations, community groups, senior centers/councils-on-aging, social groups, businesses, libraries, schools, and clubs such as rod and gun clubs)**

Feb. 1, 2024 Digital Equity Planning (Templeton, Royalston, Phillipston) Kick-Off Mtng.

Sign In:

Name:	Organization:	Email:	Additional Stakeholders:
Rick MARTIN	ROYALSTON SELECT BOARD	RICK.MARTIN@ROYALSTON-MA.GOV	Kathy Morris - Librarian Michele DeLine - Website
John Columbus	Templeton Cable	jcolumbus@templeton ma.gov	
Chuck Kolberson	Phillipston Cable Advisory Committee	ck.mbox@gmail.com	
Steve Castle	Templeton Community TV (TCTV)	~~steve~~ TCTV@templetonMA.gov	
Dottie Bresnahan	TCTV	dbresnahan@templetonma.gov	
Erin Bresnahan	TCTV	erinabresnahan@gmail.com	
Gracelyn Currie	Templeton Grant writer Amin.	gcurrie@templetonma.gov	
Jackie Prime	Community Services/ library templeton	jprime@templetonma.gov	

Jeffrey Legros

From: Jeffrey Legros
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:46 PM
To: tctv@templetonma.gov; selectman@phillipston-ma.gov; Selectman Martin; Prime, Jackie; Currie, Gracelyn; Adam D. Lamontagne; Gage Pacier; patgale@mail.com; John Columbus; Shawn.thomas.lampert@gmail.com; Chuck Kolbenson
Cc: Glenn Eaton; Karen Chapman; Bresnahan, Dottie; Tracy Murphy; Joseph Boyle; Jonathan Vos; Ryan Doherty
Subject: Digital-Equity Planning Info & Materials - Templeton, Phillipston, Royalston
Attachments: Digital Equity Planning Info & Guidance Letter.pdf; 2022-MBI-Onepager-11-28-22-Web-V2.pdf; Municipal Presentation - MBI DeP - Program Overview.pdf; Municipal Presentation - MBI DeP - Plan Overview.pdf; DigitalEquity_Overview&Status.pdf

Categories: DeP NWC-TRP

Dear Digital Equity Planning Working Group Members:

In advance of the upcoming Digital Equity Planning Working Group meeting, I would like to provide you all with some background information and materials...

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) is pleased to be selected as the qualified Digital Equity Planning (DeP) service provider for your Municipality. The following information will be useful to familiarize yourself with the project and will serve as a reference or guide throughout the planning process:

MRPC is excited to be assisting your community with Digital Equity Planning and to announce our NEW Digital Equity Planning webpage. Within that page you will find (in the left hand sidebar) links to a list of Additional Resources and information about the Montachusett Region's AmeriCorps Lead for America program. As an AmeriCorps Lead for America "host site" communities of the Montachusett Region, and interested stakeholders and residents, have access to an AmeriCorps Lead for America Service Member who can provide additional Digital Equity resources and services. Contact your region's hosted service member, Chloe Zearfoss, to learn more about how she can assist your community.

To learn more about MBI's Digital Equity Planning program, AmeriCorps Lead for America community service program, and other important related programs such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), and E-Rate program, visit the links to those and other related programs listed on MRPC's Digital Equity Planning and Additional Resources webpages.

Remember to check out the Massachusetts Broadband Institutes Digital Equity Planning webpage to learn more about the program. Within the banner of that page you will find information about MBI's Internet for All Plan and lean how you can add local and regional information to the Massachusetts Broadband and Digital Equity Asset Inventory map.

In addition, under the News & Resources tab you will find important *and* informative Digital Equity News, Newsletters, Events, Broadband Information & Definitions, and other related information. Most importantly, you will also find links to view and download the Massachusetts Broadband Strategic Plan and important Broadband Maps & Data for your state, region, and municipality.

Finally, it's still not too late for you and members of your community to take the Statewide Digital Equity Survey. **Please consider sharing the link to the Statewide Digital Equity Survey on your Town webpage and social media accounts:**

https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC

Planning Staff at the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission are available to answer any questions you may have, and we look forward to working with you and your community throughout the Digital Equity Planning process. **Please share this information with any other municipal staff or community stakeholders and let us know if they, or anyone else in your community, should add to our project stakeholder outreach list.**

Best regards,

Jeffrey Legros, Senior Principal Planner
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453
Phone: 978.798.6177
Fax: 978.348.2490
Email: jlegros@mrpc.org

Please be advised that the Massachusetts Secretary of State considers e-mail to be a public record, and therefore subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66 § 10.

Dear Working Group Members and Interested Stakeholders:

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) is pleased to be selected as the qualified Digital Equity Planning (DeP) service provider for your Municipality. The following information[1] will be useful to familiarize yourself with the project and will serve as a reference or guide throughout the planning process:

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As an AmeriCorps Lead for America "host site" communities of the Montachusett Region, and interested stakeholders and residents, have access to an AmeriCorps Lead for America Service Member who can provide additional Digital Equity resources and services. Contact your region's hosted service member[iv], Chloe Zearfoss, to discuss how she can assist your community.

To learn more about MBI's Digital Equity Planning program[v], AmeriCorps Lead for America[vi] community service program, and other important related programs such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)[vii], and E-Rate program[viii], visit the links to those and other related programs listed on MRPC's Digital Equity Planning[ix] and Additional Resources[x] webpages.

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Finally, it's still not too late for you and members of your community to take the Statewide Digital Equity Survey[xx]. **Please consider sharing the link to the Statewide Digital Equity Survey on your Town webpage and social media accounts:**

https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC

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Best regards,

Jeffrey Legros, Senior Principal Planner

[1] Endnotes with full hypertext web-addresses for all links to information are provided on the following page.

[i] https://www.mrpc.org/digital-equity-planning
[ii] https://www.mrpc.org/additional-resources
[iii] https://www.mrpc.org/digital-equity-planning/pages/lead-for-america-americorps
[iv] mailto:czearfoss@mrpc.org
[v] https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal
[vi] https://www.leadforamerica.org/
[vii] https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/
[viii] https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries-e-rate
[ix] https://www.mrpc.org/digital-equity-planning
[x] https://www.mrpc.org/additional-resources
[xi] https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal
[xii] https://broadband.masstech.org/internetforall
[xiii] https://airtable.com/apppYdKn8YlQhyAVj/shr4TZlasNWRoBveE
[xiv] https://broadband.masstech.org/news
[xv] https://broadband.masstech.org/news/newsletters
[xvi] https://broadband.masstech.org/events
[xvii] https://broadband.masstech.org/what-broadband
[xviii] https://broadband.masstech.org/massachusetts-broadband-strategic-plan
[xix] https://broadband.masstech.org/map-gallery
[xx] https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC

Jeffrey Legros

From: tctv Templeton <tctv@TempletonMA.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 3:48 PM
To: Karen Chapman; Jeffrey Legros; selectman@phillipston-ma.gov; rick.martin@royalston-ma.gov; Chuck; Prime, Jackie; Currie, Gracelyn
Cc: 'TCTV'
Subject: Feb. 1 Digital Equity Planning meeting online invitation.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,
If you cannot make it to Town Hall for the Digital Equity Planning meeting on Thursday, Feb. 1, here is the online invitation to join. Please share with others as needed. Please do NOT distribute publicly.

Thank you,
TCTV

Here is the Zoom invite for the Digital Equity Planning meeting on Feb 1, 2024.

Templeton Community Television is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Digital Equity Planning Meeting of Feb 1, 2024
Time: Feb 1, 2024 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88491122696

Meeting ID: 884 9112 2696
Passcode: 193822

One tap mobile
+16465588656,,88491122696# US (New York)
+16469313860,,88491122696# US

Dial by your location
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 360 209 5623 US
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US
- +1 669 444 9171 US
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 689 278 1000 US
- +1 719 359 4580 US
- +1 253 205 0468 US
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 884 9112 2696

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kdcN8PGtY4

Steve Castle
Templeton Community TV | Montachusett.TV
978-479-7847
tctv@templetonma.gov

MONTACHUSETT.TV
Events & Culture in North Central Mass.

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[iv] mailto:czearfoss@mrpc.org
[v] https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal
[vi] https://www.leadforamerica.org/
[vii] https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/
[viii] https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries-e-rate
[ix] https://www.mrpc.org/digital-equity-planning
[x] https://www.mrpc.org/additional-resources
[xi] https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal
[xii] https://broadband.masstech.org/internetforall
[xiii] https://airtable.com/apppYdKn8YlQhyAVj/shr4TZlasNWRoBveE
[xiv] https://broadband.masstech.org/news
[xv] https://broadband.masstech.org/news/newsletters
[xvi] https://broadband.masstech.org/events
[xvii] https://broadband.masstech.org/what-broadband
[xviii] https://broadband.masstech.org/massachusetts-broadband-strategic-plan
[xix] https://broadband.masstech.org/map-gallery
[xx] https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC

Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

The ability to engage in digital equity planning activities is a critical step for municipal leaders and staff to build a broad understanding of how internet access, or lack thereof, affects residents of their community. The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) has launched the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program to accomplish two key goals:

1. Guide municipal decision-making and investments related to increasing access, adoption and usage of the internet for populations most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Prepare municipalities to submit grant proposals to existing or forthcoming state or federal programs to support digital equity activities.

Municipalities participating in this program will receive expert advisement from a bench of prequalified planning organizations on the determining factors of digital access, including: Internet Availability and Affordability, Device Access, and Digital Skills.

Municipalities are able to choose from two digital equity planning options with support from a prequalified planning consultant.

Digital Equity Charrette

Through the Digital Equity Charrette, consultants will organize and facilitate an intensive workshop engaging municipal officials, community groups, and other stakeholders to gather information on the needs of residents and the digital equity issues facing the municipality.

With guidance from the municipality's chosen consultant, digital equity stakeholders will work together to identify priorities, challenges, and solutions addressing the digital equity divide in the municipality.

Digital Equity Plan

Municipalities choosing to engage in this Digital Equity Planning option will execute a comprehensive planning exercise with the support of a consultant. The Digital Equity Plan will provide expanded data collection and dive into deeper conversations and engagement with plan participants.

The outcome of the Digital Equity Planning process will be a cohesive set of data, community input, and strategic action items that a municipality can execute in order to bridge the digital divide.

Learn more: broadband.masstech.org/municipal-digital-equity-planning-program

MRPC LUNCH 'N' LEARN SERIES

MUNICIPAL DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING

DECEMBER 1, 2022

Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) part of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative has created a Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program.

$50M in this program is funded by Federal ARPA and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act monies.

Goals of the Program

1. Guide municipal decision-making and investments that will increase access, adoption, and usage of the internet for the populations most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Prepare municipalities to submit grant proposals to existing or forthcoming state or federal programs to support digital equity activities.

What is Digital Equity?

"A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy."

-National Digital Inclusion Alliance

Three Pillars of Digital Equity

1. Internet access
    - Affordability and availability
2. Devices
    - Accessibility
3. Digital literacy
    - Skill to use internet and devices.

Program Process

1. Municipality applies for Planning Funds from MBI https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal-digital-equity-planning-program
2. Muni chooses Charrette (1-3 months) or Full Planning Service (3-6 months)
3. Muni chooses Consultant from MBI list
4. Contracts executed

5. Consultant meets with muni stakeholders to explain process
6. Inclusive of unserved and underserved residents
7. Planning process occurs
8. Resulting Digital Equity Plan is used to apply for additional funds to complete recommendations.

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Digital Equity Planning

An information and outreach session for the Montachusett Region

December 7, 2023

Presented at the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission Meeting

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at the MassTech Collaborative

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Broadband and Digital Equity Vision

The objective for broadband and digital equity for the Healey-Driscoll Administration in the coming years is that:

Availability	Quality of Service	Adoption
Every location has **access** to high-speed internet.	Every location has **reliable** service.	Every resident can **utilize** and **afford** the internet.

There is an opportunity for Massachusetts to continue to be a leader in connectivity among all states.

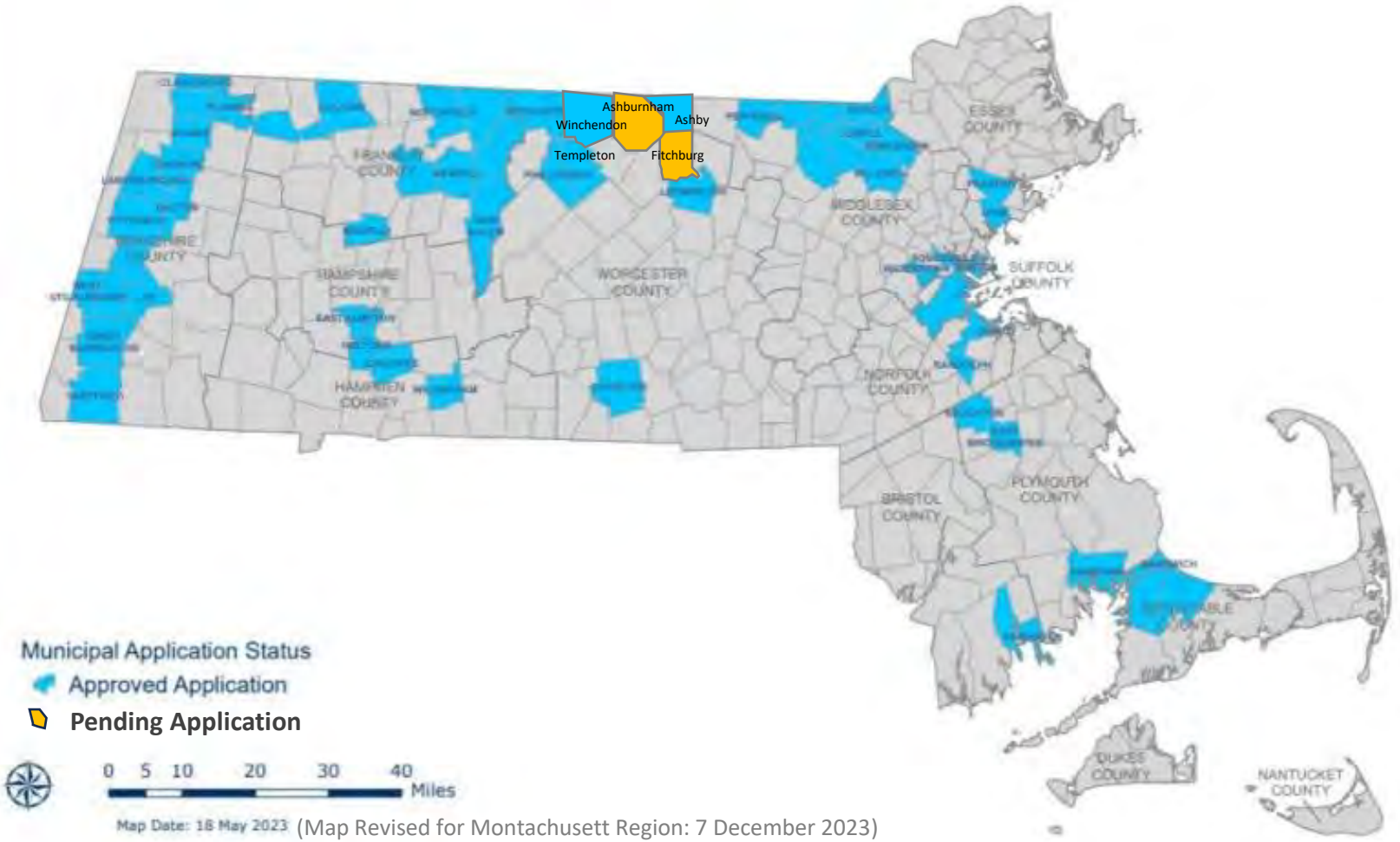
MBI INVESTMENT STRATEGY: BUILD ON EXISTING PROGRAMS

Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program

70 +
Participants

~$3.1M
DOLLARS AWARDED

12
GATEWAY CITIES + CITY OF BOSTON



(Map Revised for Montachusett Region: 7 December 2023)

MBI INVESTMENT STRATEGY: BUILD ON EXISTING PROGRAMS

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at the MassTech Collaborative

Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program 2.0 Opportunities

- Provide seed funding to Municipalities participating in planning program
- Open competitive grant funds to municipalities to access larger funding awards.

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS: LISTENING SESSIONS

Participants were asked which demographic groups across the state were most impacted by the digital divide, and this is what we heard:

- Housing- and transit-insecure people
- Low-income families
- Individuals in substance abuse recovery
- Seniors
- Immigrant communities (Non-English speaking)
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS: AVAILABILITY & AFFORDABILITY

While many survey respondents have internet, it is expensive and challenging to pay for.

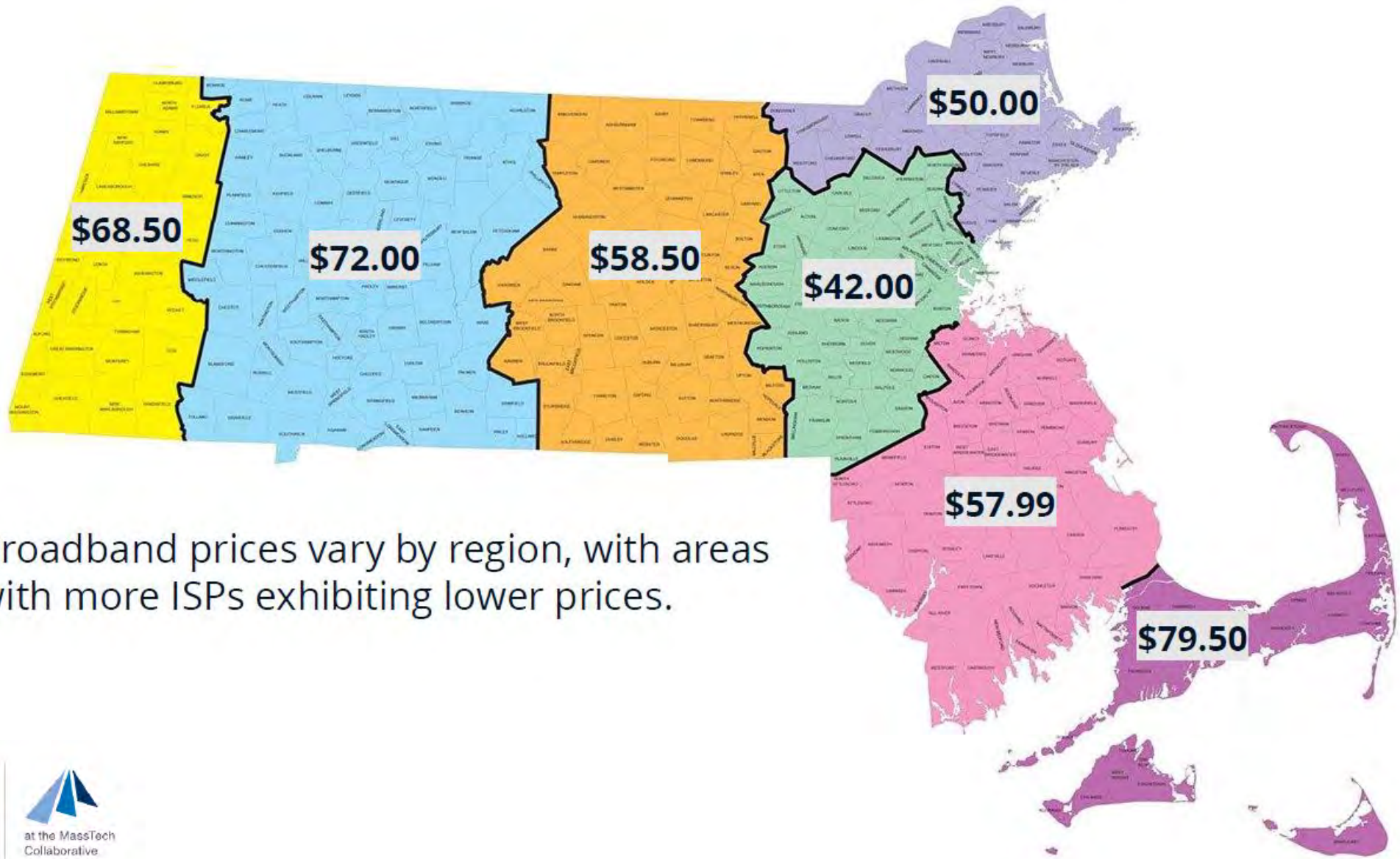
While **95% of respondents** have internet at home, **47% say it is hard to pay** for the internet each month.

Respondents reported paying a median of **$80 for unbundled internet** and **$99 for bundled internet** per month.

The ACP program could help alleviate costs, but **52%** of respondents **are not aware of the ACP program.**

Affordability Gap

The average for the lowest broadband price by region. Source: Broadband Now



Broadband prices vary by region, with areas with more ISPs exhibiting lower prices.

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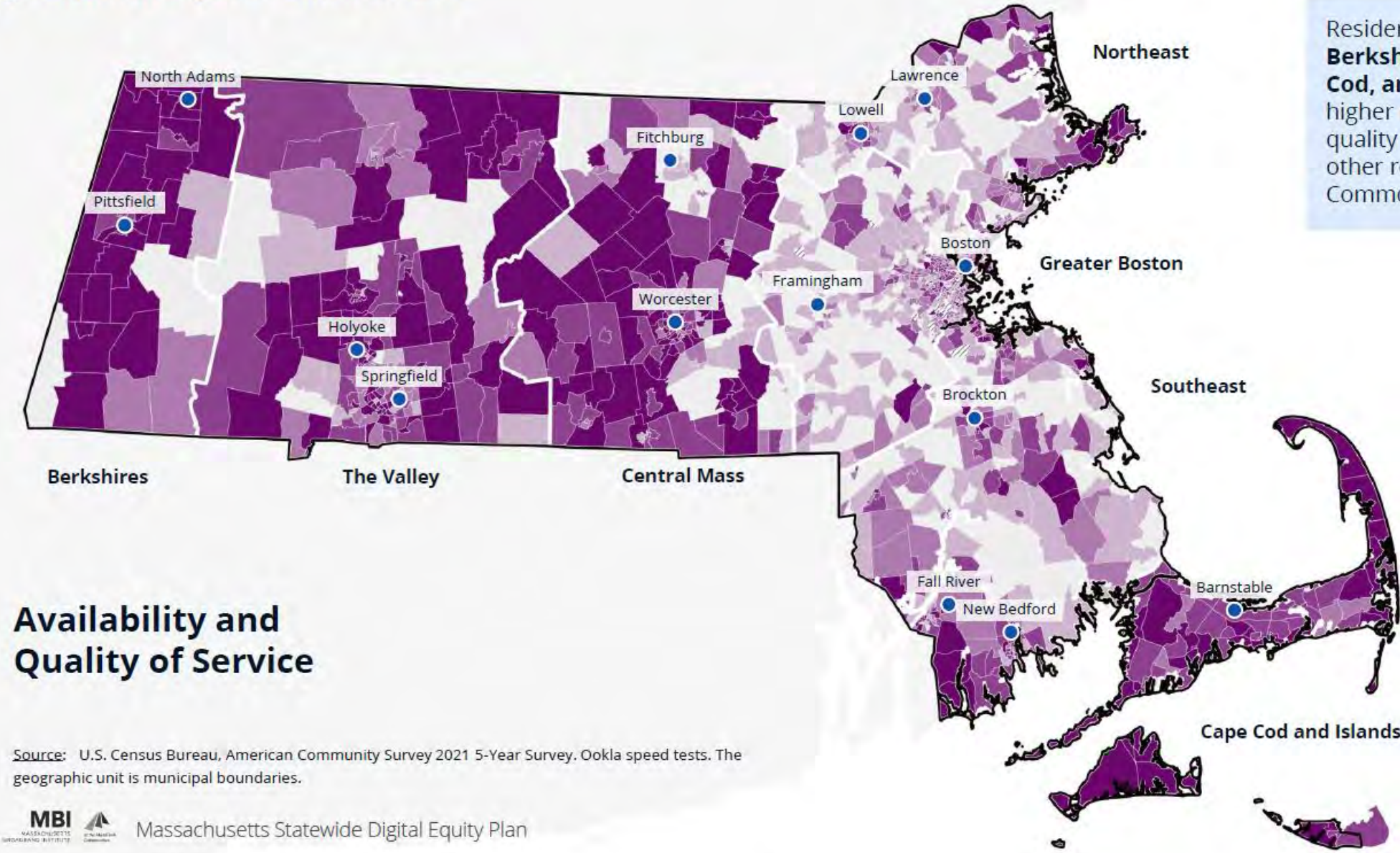
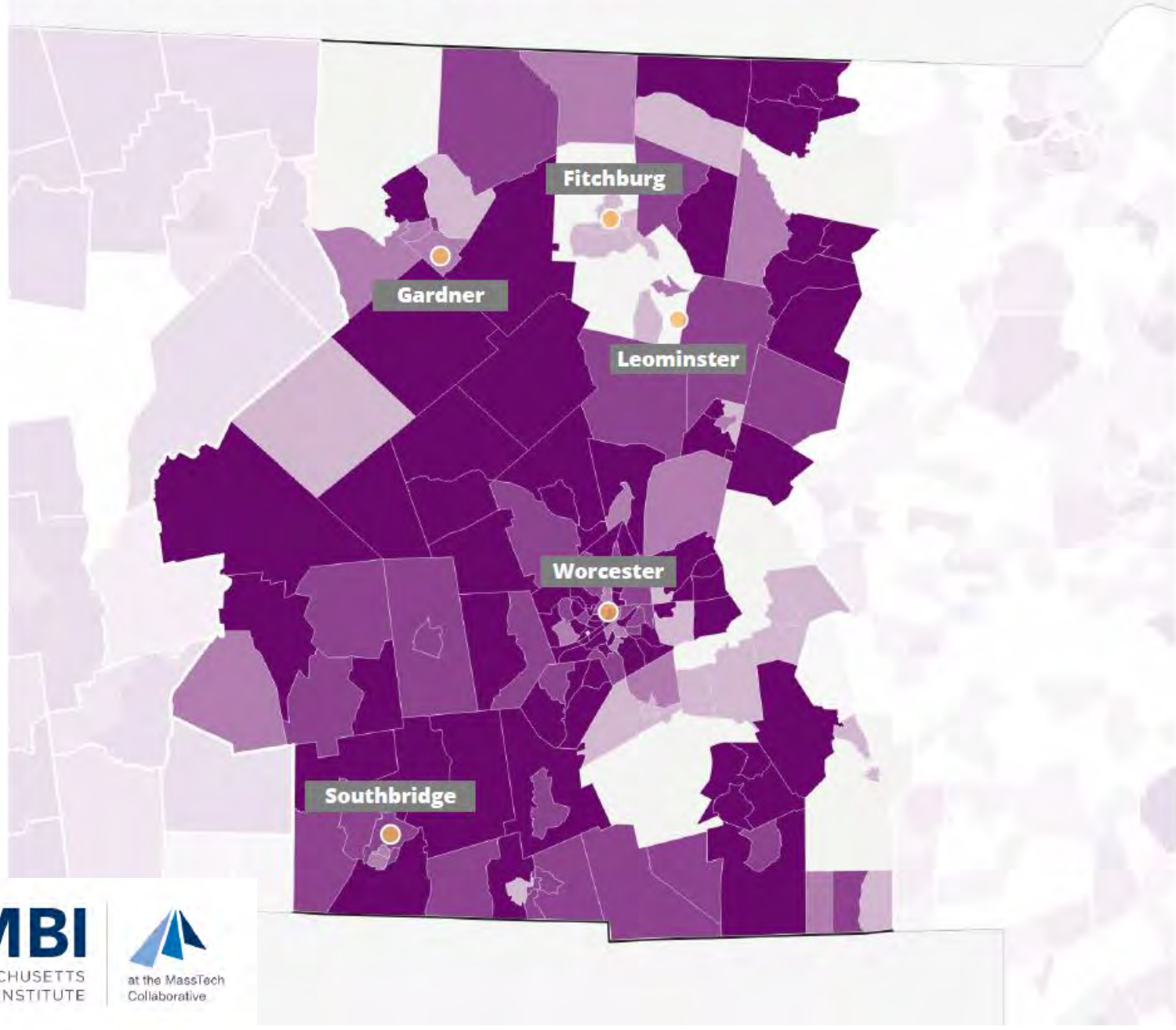
Residents of towns in the **Berkshires, The Valley, Cape Cod, and Central Mass** have a higher need for access and quality of service relative to other regions of the Commonwealth.



Availability and Quality of Service

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Survey. Ookla speed tests. The geographic unit is municipal boundaries.

Note: The availability gap score is comprised of three scores: 1) average upload speeds, 2) average download speeds, and 3) percent of the population (2021) not using internet at 100/20 megabits per second. This metric does not capture infrastructure. Sources: ACS 2017-2021, 5-year estimates and Ookla speed tests.



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at the MassTech Collaborative

Availability Gap

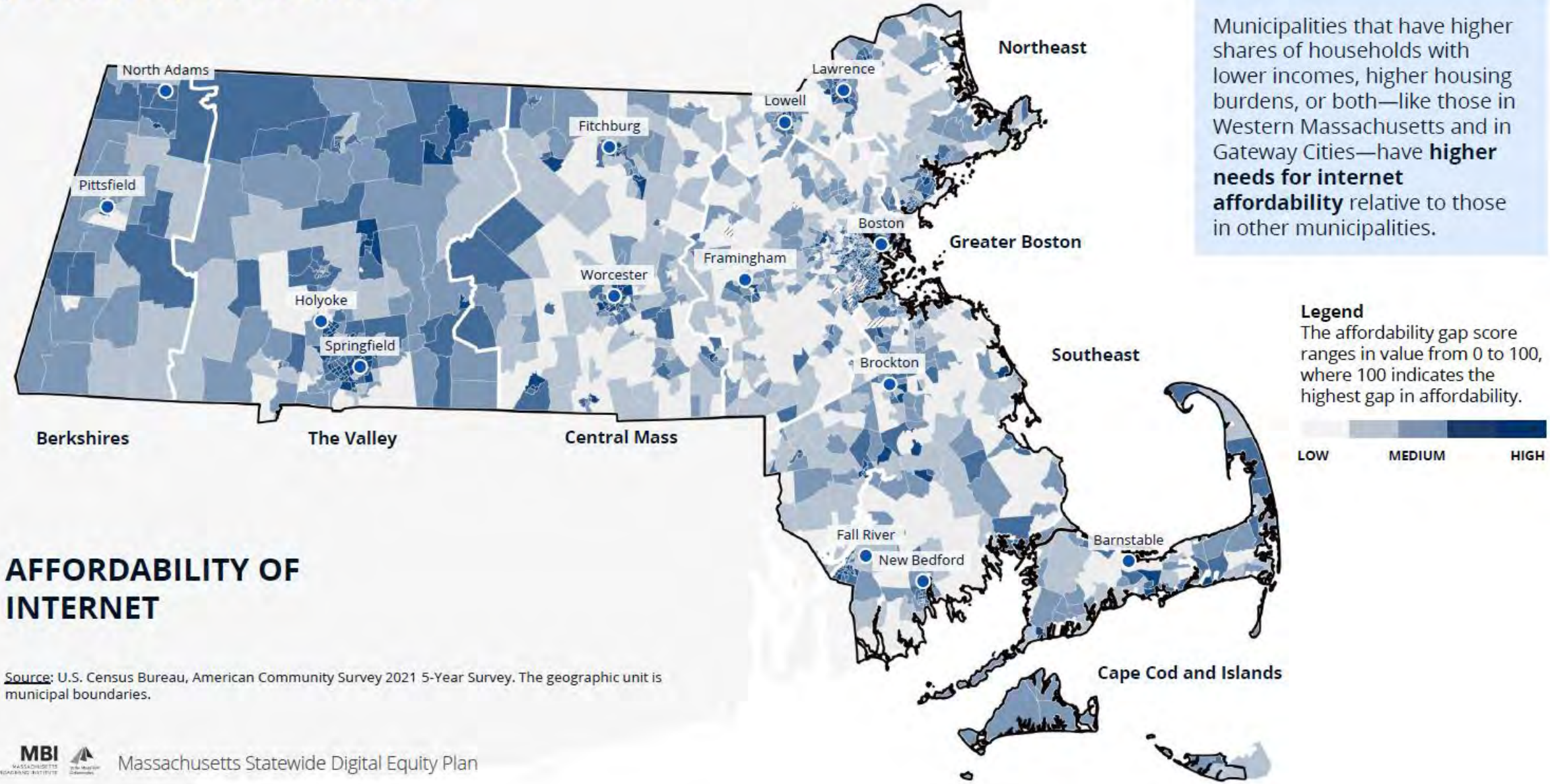
26% of statewide survey respondents reported that their internet service is not good enough to meet their household's needs

37% of municipalities in Central MA have little or no competition in the broadband market.

Legend
The availability gap score ranges in value from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the highest gap in availability.

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

DIGITAL EQUITY SNAPSHOTS



Municipalities that have higher shares of households with lower incomes, higher housing burdens, or both—like those in Western Massachusetts and in Gateway Cities—have **higher needs for internet affordability** relative to those in other municipalities.

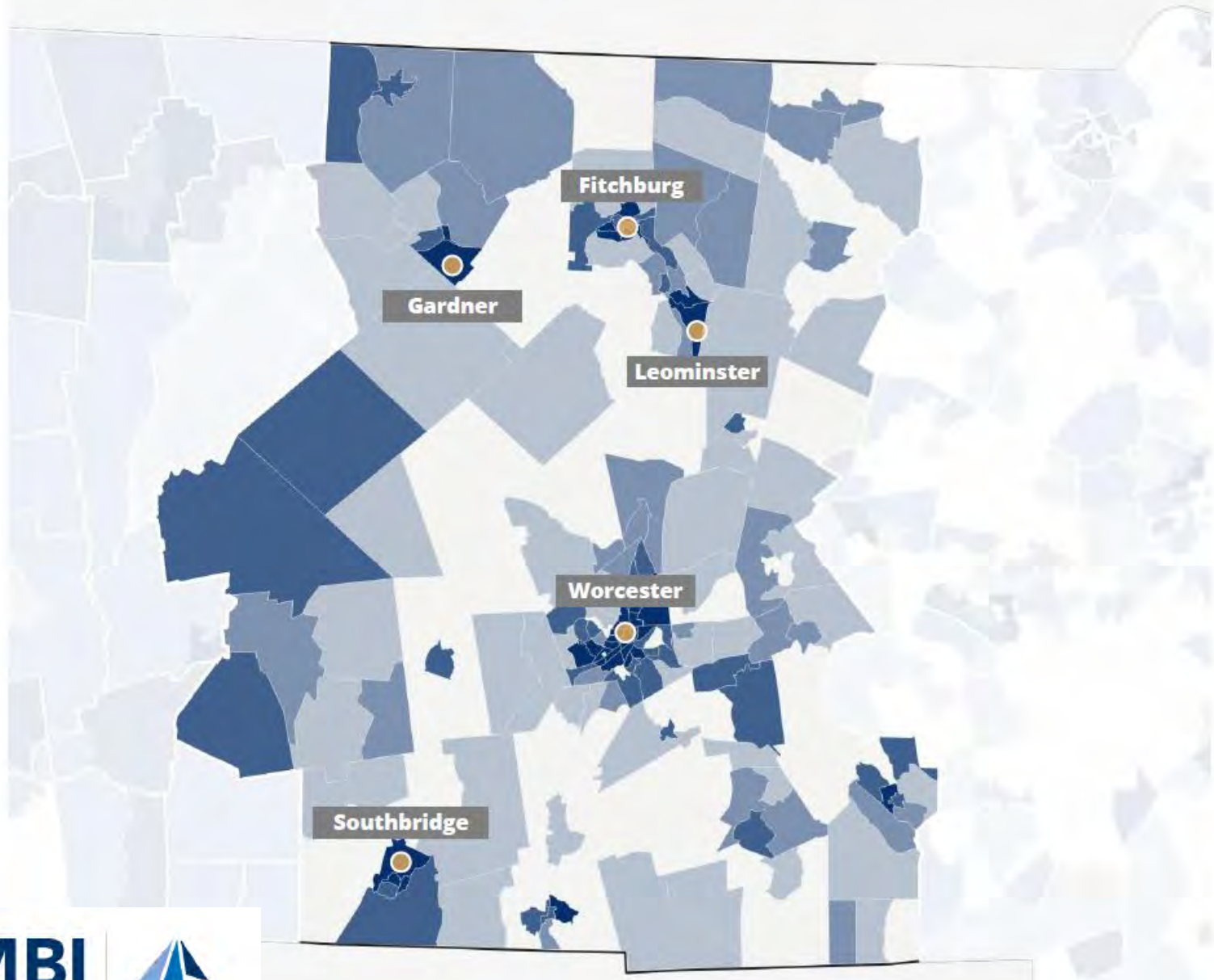
Legend
The affordability gap score ranges in value from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the highest gap in affordability.

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

AFFORDABILITY OF INTERNET

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Survey. The geographic unit is municipal boundaries.

Note: The affordability gap score is comprised of percent of households in poverty. Sources: ACS 2017-2021, 5-year estimates.



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at the MassTech Collaborative

Affordability Gap

Over **1 in 3** survey respondents statewide reported having at least some difficulty paying for their internet.

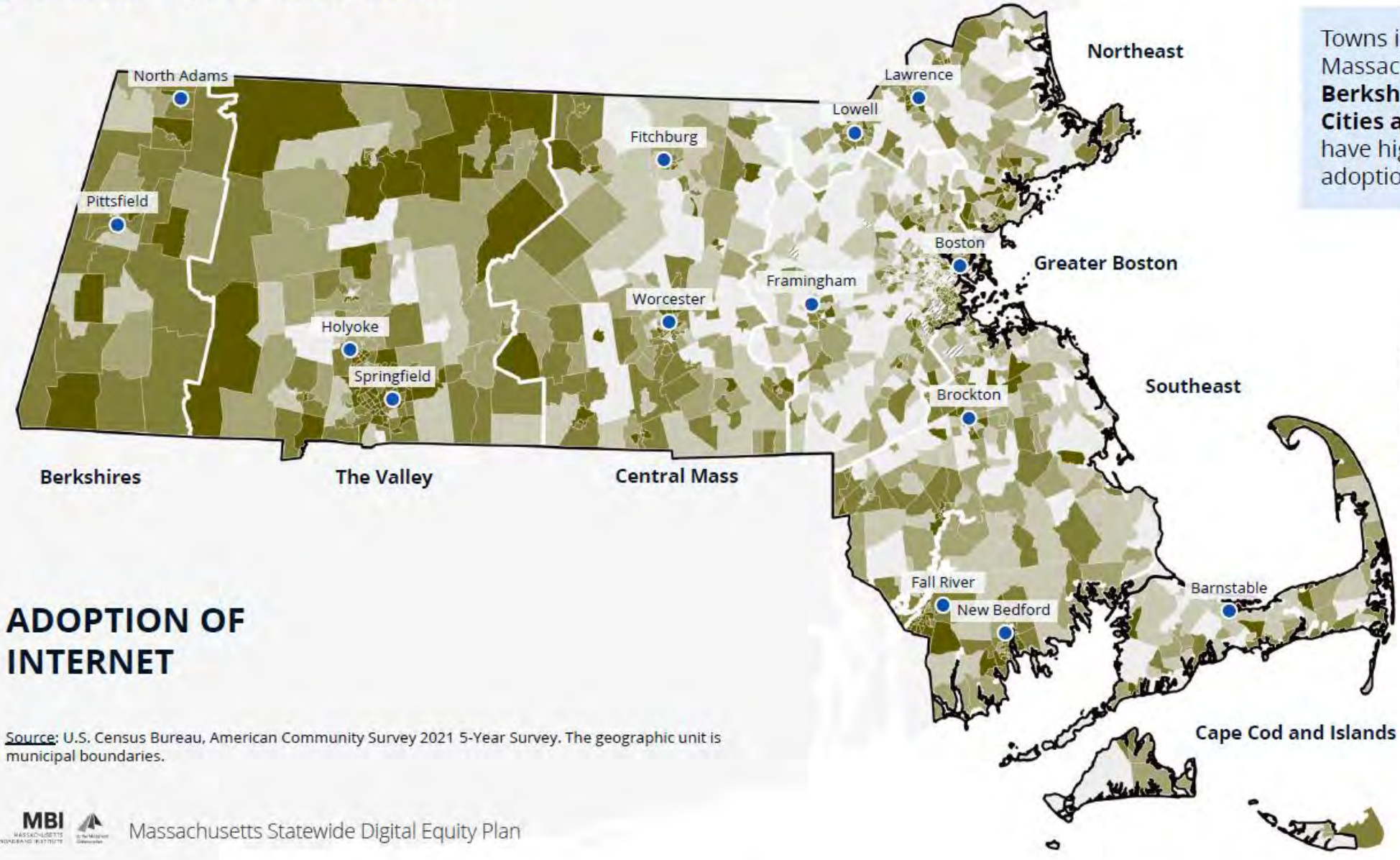
In Central MA, affordability gaps are highest in Worcester and in small towns across the region.

The average for the lowest broadband price regionwide is $58.50.

Legend
The affordability gap score ranges in value from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the highest gap in affordability.

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

DIGITAL EQUITY SNAPSHOTS



Towns in Southeast Massachusetts, **The Valley, the Berkshires, and Gateway Cities across the state** have higher needs for adoption relative to other areas.

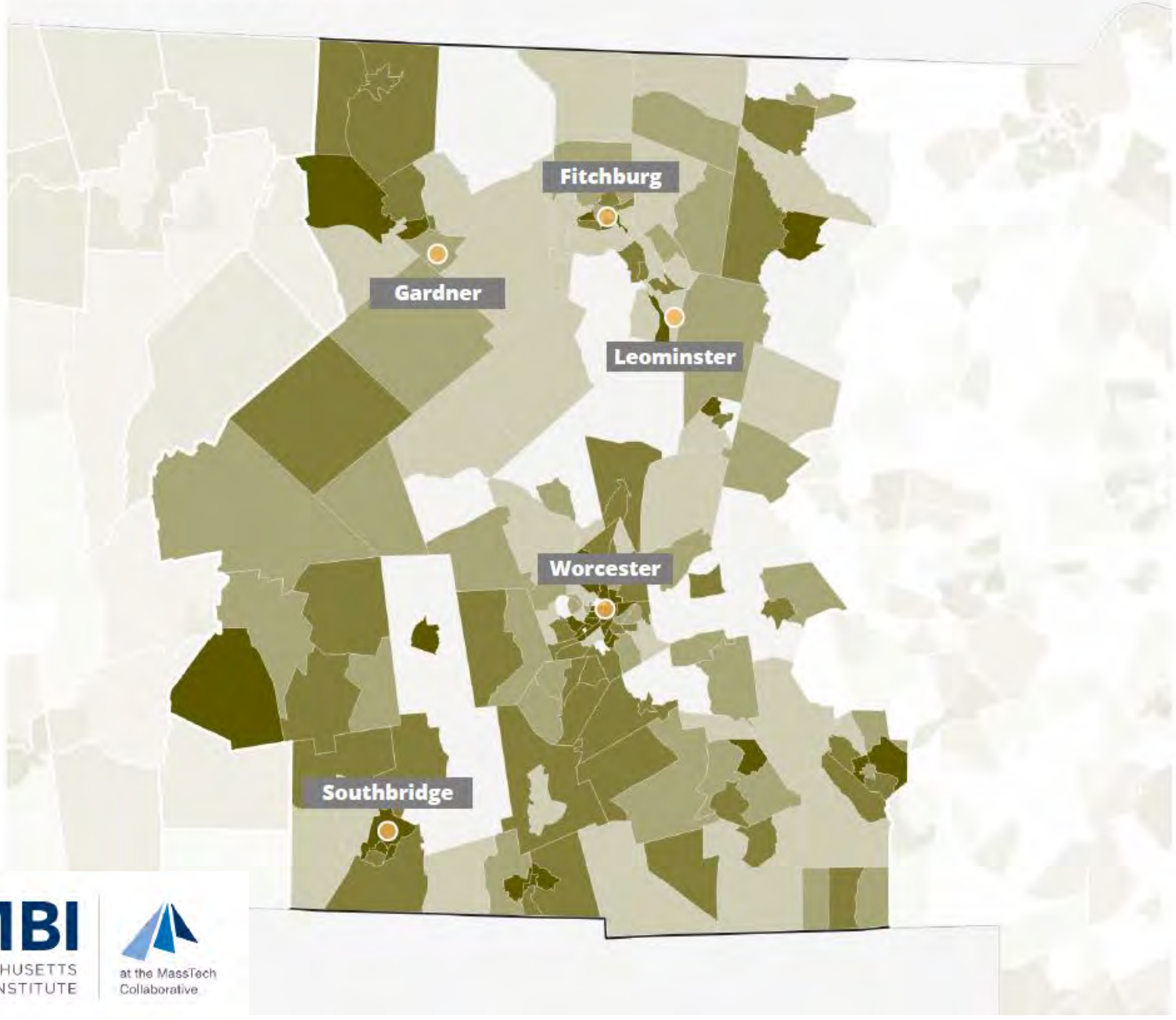
Legend
The adoption gap score ranges in value from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the highest gap in adoption.

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

ADOPTION OF INTERNET

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Survey. The geographic unit is municipal boundaries.

Note: The adoption gap score is comprised of two scores: 1) percent of homes without internet access or not subscribing, and 2) percent of homes with no computing devices.
Sources: ACS 2017-2021, 5-year estimates.



Adoption Gap

In Central MA, adoption gaps are highest in towns such as Worcester and Southbridge.

Statewide, **nearly half** of survey respondents without internet at home cite cost as a prohibiting factor.

Legend
The adoption gap score ranges in value from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the highest gap in adoption.

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE at the MassTech Collaborative

Digital Equity Planning

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) has rolled out its Municipal Digital-Equity Planning (DeP) program, which provides an opportunity for cities and towns to access free consultant services to undertake digital equity planning work on a municipal or multi-town/regional basis. The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission is a pre-qualified Digital Equity Planning consultant and can provide services to Cities and Towns of the Montachusett Region.

Digital equity refers to ensuring that residents have access to broadband services (including it being affordable and sufficient bandwidth), access to devices, and digital literacy. The MRPC strongly encourages municipalities to participate in digital equity planning so that the Montachusett Region is in the best position possible to access implementation resources, including future funding for broadband access, affordability, technology, and digital literacy.

The Three Components of Access—Availability, Affordability, Adoption

Availability: Is there sufficient infrastructure and coverage to deliver reliable, high-speed wired or wireless broadband service and technology tools for learning?

Affordability: Can learners and families/caregivers pay for the total cost of maintaining reliable, high-speed broadband service and technology tools for learning?

Adoption: Do learners and families/caregivers have the information, support, and skills to obtain regular, adequate access to reliable, high-speed broadband service and technology tools for learning?

Attachment A
Scope of Services
NW Worcester County Sub-Region Digital Equity Plan
Phillipston, Royalston, Templeton

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) will work with town officials and community organizations to create a NW Worcester County Regional Digital Equity Plan according to the tasks and timeline listed below for the Towns of Phillipston, Royalston, and Templeton. The Plan will show existing conditions, data analysis, barriers to equity, and recommendations for the three communities to realize digital equity for all in relation to affordable access to the internet and devices and the skills to use the internet and devices. The project will include significant outreach to vulnerable and high needs residents, as well as community-based organizations and businesses. MRPC will work with specifically with the Athol Royalston Regional School and Narragansett Regional School Districts, the Phillipston Board of Selectmen and Cable Advisory Committee, the Royalston Selectboard and Council on Aging, Templeton Community TV, Light & Water Department, and Emergency Response Director, and all three public libraries.

The tasks defined in this Scope of Services shall commence upon execution of this Agreement and be completed by December 30, 2024 (TENTATIVE REVISION).

Product: Sub-Regional Digital Equity Plan	**Tentative Revised Timeline for Task Completion**
Task #1-Kick-off: Meet with stakeholders and/or other town officials to discuss timeline, public survey, and other tasks, as well as discuss what local organizations will be participating, what priority populations are present, and who would participate on a steering committee.	February 2024
Task #2-Data Collection and Analysis: Form a comprehensive existing conditions assessment and analysis that will provide a baseline overview of digital access and equity gaps affecting the town's populations. Data sources include, but are not limited to, US Census demographics, M-Lab, Microsoft, FCC/NTIA, MBI-provided data, and USAC data to understand and analyze ACP adoption rates, levels of broadband subscription and infrastructure, internet use/experience, aggregate speed data, available services and pricing options, and device access/usage. Some of the data will be used for asset mapping to determine and visualize the availability of internet service providers and fiber and infrastructure.	February - June 2024

Tentative Revised Scope of Services

Product: Sub-Regional Digital Equity Plan	**Timeline for Task Completion**
Task #3-Community Outreach: MRPC will provide the survey developed by HR&A to gather public input regarding access to the internet, available devices, and skills of the residents. Distribution will be via survey link on the three town's websites, flyers around the towns in key locations with a QR code, social media, paper copies available in many locations, and copies delivered in person at focus groups or other community events. MRPC will consider using tablets to administer surveys at community events. MRPC staff will interview key stakeholders who oversee vulnerable populations to determine their needs. Phillipston and Royalston would like to identify senior populations who have no access to technology or how to use it, as well as discovering where gaps exist in coverage and holding instruction sessions. Templeton would like to investigate other viable high-speed internet services as economic development is constrained by lack of coverage. Templeton would like to examine the broadband spine along Route 2A and Baldwinville Road for municipal network use to connect municipal buildings and the public. Organizations such as those mentioned in Task #2 will be used to facilitate outreach to the community. Local data collected by the school districts and towns during the pandemic will also be collected and included in the analysis.	February-July 2024
Task #4-Initial Presentation: Present/provide data collected and analyzed to steering committee and key stakeholders and collect any additional input.	June 2024
Task #5-Developing Actions & Recommendations: MRPC staff will compile all the data collected from Tasks 1-4 and will develop common themes about barriers to accessibility to the internet and devices, financial impacts of accessibility, and digital literacy. Working with a consultant, staff will develop recommendations and actions for the sub-region to reduce barriers and create digital equity. Review these with the steering committee and key stakeholders for feedback.	June-August 2024
Task #6-Digital Equity Plan: Draft a Digital Equity Plan using all the data, mapping, analysis, survey results, actions and recommendations, and community and stakeholder feedback. The final plan will provide the planning process, the sub-region's baseline measures and benchmarks for digital equity, method of stakeholder engagement and public outreach, existing digital conditions and asset inventory, barriers to digital equity,	August – September 2023

measurable objectives, strategic recommendations to mitigate barriers, and a detailed, realistic vision for implementing actions, including funding sources and timelines. Provide draft Plan to steering committee and stakeholders for comment. Presentations as requested.	
Task #7-Revisions and Final Digital Equity Plan: Using comments from the community and stakeholders, make revisions as needed and provide final plan.	October 2024 November 2024

Deliverables:

- Existing Conditions Analysis Summary Report
- Asset Mapping
- Final Digital Equity Plan

Regional Points of Contact:
Phillipston: Melanie Jackson, Executive Administrator, selectman@phillipston-ma.gov
Royalston: Rick Martin, Select Board Vice-Chair, Rick.Martin@royalston-ma.gov
Templeton: Steve Castle, Executive Director Templeton Cable TV, tctv@templetonma.gov

MRPC Points of Contact: Karen Chapman, Planning and Development Director, kchapman@mrpc.org, (978)798-6168; Jeff Legros, Senior Planner, jlegros@mrpc.org, (978) 345-7376 ext. 323

MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING PROGRAM

Digital Equity Planning for the Montachusett Region

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Three Components of Access—Availability, Affordability, Adoption

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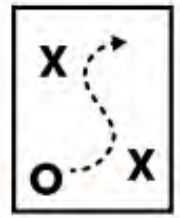
Digital Equity:

Digital equity is a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.

– National Digital Inclusion Alliance

32 percent

of U.S. households are subscription vulnerable, meaning they are unable to afford and maintain services.[42]



6 million

K-12 students face adoption barriers outside of availability and affordability.[50]

9 million

of 37 million households that are eligible for the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program applied.[71]

Digital Equity: The Goal

A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy.

Digital divide is the issue.
Digital inclusion is the work.
Digital equity is the goal.

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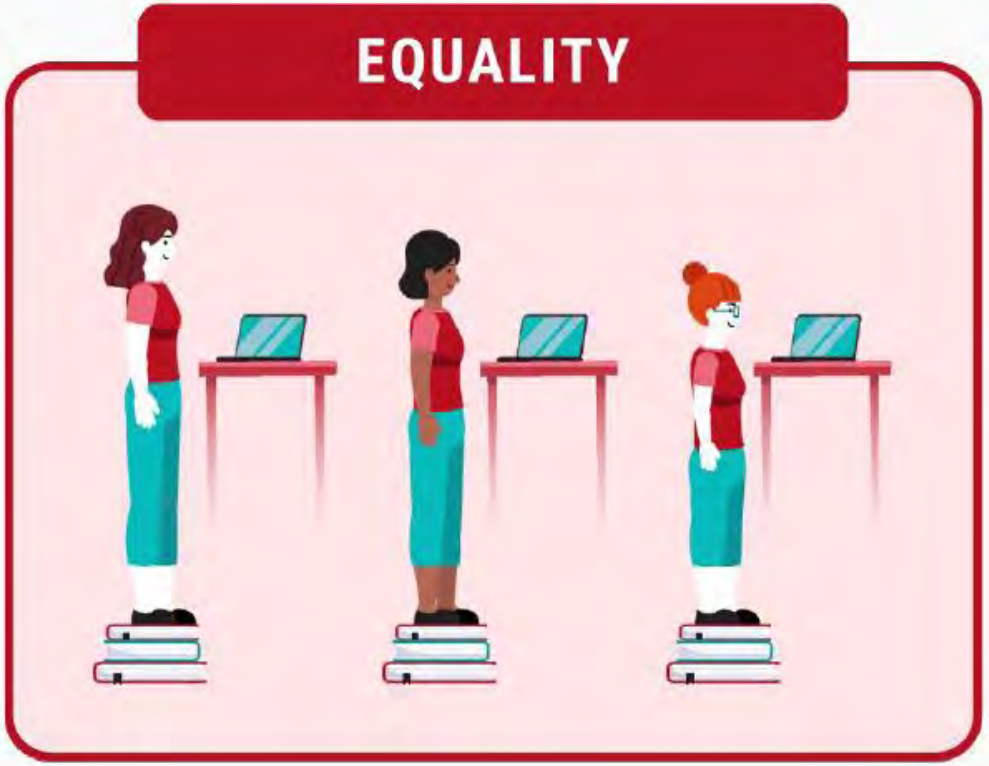
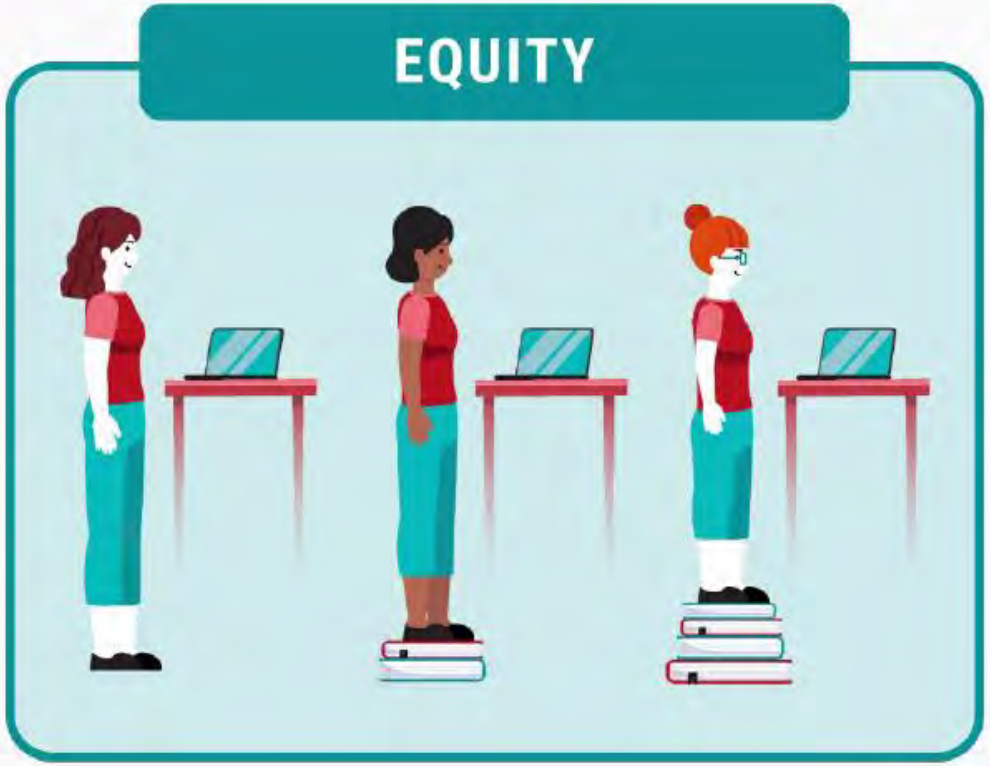
Why ‘Digital Equity’?





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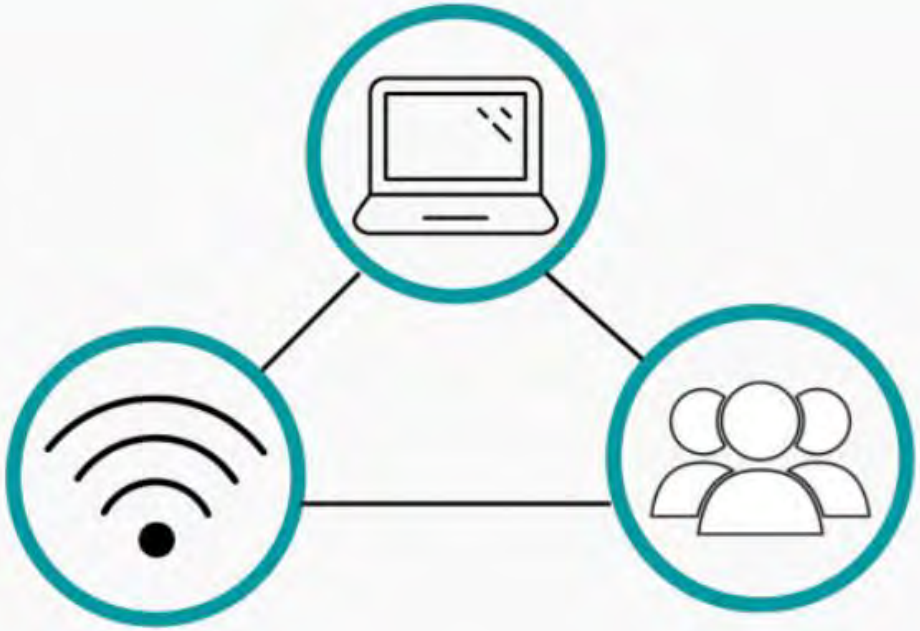
Covered Populations in the Digital Equity Act

1. Individuals who live in covered households
2. Aging individuals
3. Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals in a Federal correctional facility
4. Veterans
5. Individuals with disabilities
6. Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who—
    a. Are English learners
    b. Have low levels of literacy
7. Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
8. Individuals who primarily reside in a rural areas

Digital Inclusion: The Work

The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).



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Digital Divide: The Issue

The gap between those who have affordable access, skills and support to effectively engage online and those who do not.

The digital divide disproportionately affects Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Black people and other people of color, households with low incomes, people with disabilities, people in rural areas and older adults.

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Key Barriers to Digital Inclusion

BROADBAND

- ✗ Unaffordable
- ✗ Unreliable service
- ✗ Digital Redlining
- ✗ Complicated by land ownership rights on Tribal Lands

DEVICES

- ✗ Unaffordable
- ✗ Outdated software
- ✗ No access to device
- ✗ Device is not matching the needs of the user

DIGITAL SKILLS

- ✗ Limited digital skills
- ✗ Trainings are not accessible
- ✗ Fear & shame
- ✗ Privacy concerns

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The Solution

- Affordable Broadband
- Appropriate Devices
- Digital Literacy Trainings

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Regional Councils & Digital Equity

Digital equity work has strong alignment with traditional regional planning agency roles

- Regional perspective that spans jurisdictional boundaries
- Trusted, objective conveners
- Experience managing federal grants, planning processes, & reporting
- Procurement expertise
- Key technical capacities
  - Data collection & analysis
  - Community engagement
  - Policy & government affairs
- Intersection of digital equity with other planning issues
- Flexibility to work within formal & informal structures

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Making the Plan Your Own

MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING PROGRAM: ACTION PLAN

DRAFT – Spring 2023

Prepared by:

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

Town of _____, MA

Digital Equity Action Plan

DRAFT - Spring 2023

Prepared for:

Town of _____

INSERT TOWN LOGO[S] HERE

Prepared by:

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DRAFT

Suggested Digital Equity Plan Outline

- Section I: Introduction & Vision For Digital Equity
- Section II: Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement
- Section III: Current State of Digital Equity
- Section IV: Defining Objectives & Implementation Strategies
- Section V: Evaluation & Updates

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Tactics For Making It Your Own

Planning Process

- Construct the plan in a way that works best for your region/community
- Core planning team & lead stakeholders to engage may differ
- Tailored engagement & data collection strategies

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Tactics For Making It Your Own

Storytelling

- Help the plan tell the story of your people
- Highlight the stories of disconnected individuals or communities through:
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  - Videos
  - Pictures

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Tactics For Making It Your Own

Diversity

- Highlight the diversity within your region/community among your:
  - General population
  - Priority populations
  - Geography
  - Culture

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Developing a Vision For Digital Equity

Definitions: Vision & Mission

Vision - your north star for the plan. It is a "clear, specific, compelling picture" of what your collective vision is for the future of your community. In this context, it is a collective vision for **what your region or community would look like if it were digitally equitable.** It should be ambitious and transformative.

Mission - a general statement on how the vision will be achieved

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Definitions: Goals & Values

Goals - broad outcomes that are derived from and support the achievement of the vision. They can and should be derived from the measurable objectives developed.

Values - the distinctive and enduring principles you will follow in designing and implementing the plan. You may want to embed values into the plan so as digital inclusion programs are created, they are built on common values.

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Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?

Please complete the survey questions and return to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (jlegros@mrpc.org); To take the questionnaire online visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP

Your Name: _____ Your Organization/Role: _____

Questions for Town Contacts and Interested Stakeholder groups – Digital Equity Planning (Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston)	**Response Options**
Are you aware of the State's Digital Equity Project and have you taken the state survey and/or promoted it to the people you serve? https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC	
Would you like us to provide you with social media or other information to help you promote it to the people you serve?	
Are you on the State Asset Inventory Map?	
If not, do you want to be (should they be in your opinion because they serve a Covered Population and now or in the future want to support digital equity activities?)	
If YES, are you open to having me add you now?	
How many people do you typically serve in a year who fall within the Covered Population? Which Covered Population or Stakeholder Group is it? Examples of covered populations are senior citizens, low income individuals or families, minority groups, non-english speaking persons, veterans, incarcerated or previously incarcerated.	
How well do you think you know the people you serve's Digital Equity needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).	
Of those you serve, what do you think their major needs are in these categories: digital literacy, skills, devices, access, affordability, adoption?	
Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?	
Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?	

Please complete the survey questions and return to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (jlegros@mrpc.org); To take the questionnaire online visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type?	
What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?	
How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.) For example, do your workers work remote or hybrid now? Did your start offering more online services or remote virtual appointments or meetings?	
Is cybersecurity a concern for your organization?	
If YES, what would you need to make your organization more cyber-safe?	
Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)?	
If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?	
Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group?	
Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?	
Are there any stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or focus populations that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.	

Templeton Digital Equity Plan, Kick-Off Meeting (Meeting 1), February 1, 2024

Meeting Notes:

Templeton, Phillipston, Royalston Digital Equity Kick off Meeting

Introductions

Side note- Royalston JUST got Charter

Presentation

- Everything is connected to the internet- Upload/ download speeds are important

Question- Chart of cost- $50 in Templeton, Phillipston $80- what will all of this do to level it all out?

Templeton has a monopoly, therefore not eligible for certain grants

Chloe-

Been getting the ACP word out- but that's probably coming to an end

North Star- Digital learning center: Word, Excel

- Reach out

Questions for us- What questions in the survey? What information to gather? How to collect data?

Broadband 123, look up what it is, why Templeton is having a hard time (monopoly)

Workforce development, lab- TCTV, Wachusett Business Incubator MWCC

- Want to get young people there

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Meeting #2 – Plan Framing & Stakeholder Identification

Thursday, March 7th, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Public Notice Agenda

- **Introductions**
    - **MRPC Planning Team**
    - **Town participants – Working Group Members**
- **Plan Framing, Partnerships, and Stakeholders:**
    - **Existing Conditions Assessment**
        - **Data Collection**
        - **Public Survey**
    - **Covered Populations**
    - **Digital Equity Partners & Organizations**
    - **Digital Equity Stakeholders**
    - **Project Framing Worksheet Exercise**
- **Next Steps and Things to Consider:**
    - **Planning process (Timeline, Activities, Stakeholder Outreach, etc.)**
    - **Community Assets and Stakeholder Interviews**
    - **Potential sources and collection of data**
    - **Statewide Digital Equity Survey**
    - **What local barriers exist? What type of training is needed? For whom?**
    - **Digital data upload/download speed tests**
    - **Focus Group Meeting(s) & Community Events**
    - **Implementation Grant Program and potential projects**

DeP Core Team Mtng 2 — 3/7/2024
NW CNTY - T, P, R

Name	Role	Email
Rick Martin	Town of Royalston	rick.martin@royalston-ma.gov
Gracelyn Currie	Templeton - Grant Writer Admin	gcurrie@templetonma.gov
[illegible]	NBI	[illegible]
Terry Griffis	Templeton Select Board	tgriffis@templetonma.gov
Jackie Prime	Community Services-Templeton	jprime@templetonma.gov
Steve Castle	TCTV	~~Steve~~ tctv@templetonma.gov
Dottie Bresnahan	TCTV	dbresnahan@templetonma.gov
Erin Bresnahan	TCTV	erinabresnahan@gmail.com

Regional Councils & Digital Equity

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ILSR
INSTITUTE FOR Local Self-Reliance

Sean Gonsalves, ILSR, Senior Reporter, Editor and Communications Team Lead

Vicky Yuki, NDIA, Senior Programs Manager

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Regional Councils & Digital Equity Agenda

1. Alignment of Digital Equity Planning with Regional Council Roles
2. Making the Plan Your Own
3. Developing a Vision for Digital Equity

Regional Councils & Digital Equity

Digital equity work has strong alignment with traditional regional planning agency roles

- Regional perspective that spans jurisdictional boundaries
- Trusted, objective conveners
- Experience managing federal grants, planning processes, & reporting
- Procurement expertise
- Key technical capacities
  - Data collection & analysis
  - Community engagement
  - Policy & government affairs
- Intersection of digital equity with other planning issues
- Flexibility to work within formal & informal structures

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Group Discussion

- Considering what you heard in the Digital Inclusion Essentials session, in what ways does digital equity planning align with your agency's current work and strengths?
- Is your agency currently engaged in any digital equity work?
  - If so, what the work looks like?
  - If not, where are there opportunities for your agency to plug-in?
- What are the long-term consequences to your region and local communities of failing to address digital inequities?

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Making the Plan Your Own

Suggested Digital Equity Plan Outline

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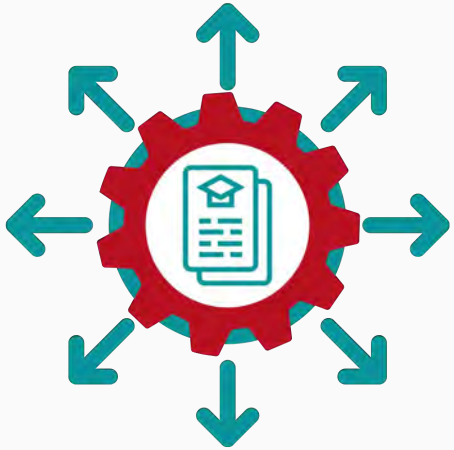

Fresno Housing

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Your Plan Will Be Unique

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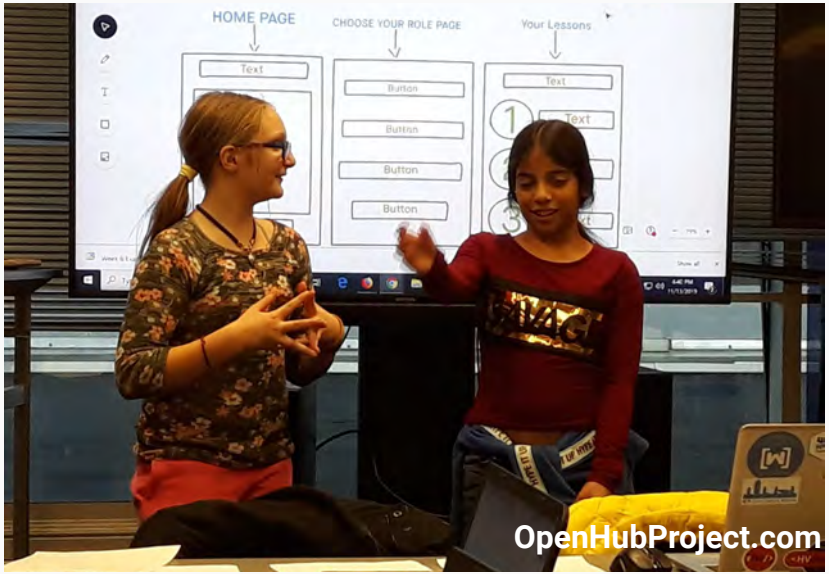

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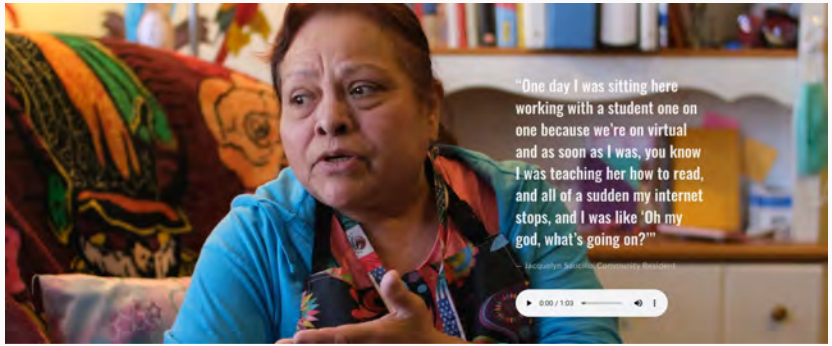
Example Storytelling

The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society:

- Digital Divide Diaries by Adam Echelman



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Plan Framing Activity

Instructions

- Find the Session 2: Digital Equity Plan Framing Worksheet
- Jot down key ideas for each box on the page
- These can be general principles & incomplete thoughts for now - they'll get refined with input from community partners into the guiding framework for your plan
- Try to add several items to the bullet lists (Goals, Values, Priority Groups)
- Think about how these elements can reflect the character & identity of your region/community

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Magazine Cover Activity

Instructions: 5 years from now, your plan (and its implementation) is the cover story of a magazine

- Choose a magazine and use your Plan Framing Worksheet answer:
  - What is the headline?
  - What is the subheading?
  - Who is interviewed & what do they say (include fictional quotes)?
  - What does the cover look like (draw a sketch)?
  - What does the story say? (include bullet points detailing highlights of the story)

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digitalinclusion.org | @netinclusion

THANK YOU!

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TEMPLETON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Take the statewide digital equity survey:

https://bit.ly/48jdwVL

Accessibility
Affordability
Adoption

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at the MassTech Collaborative

TOWN OF TEMPLETON
Incorporated 1762

MRPC

ROYALSTON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

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Accessibility
Affordability
Adoption

MBI
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at the MassTech Collaborative

MRPC

PHILLIPSTON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Take the statewide digital equity survey:

https://bit.ly/48jdwVL

Accessibility
Affordability
Adoption

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE

at the MassTech Collaborative

PHILLIPSTON, MASS
GERRY, OCT 20 1786
LT. GOV. WM. PHILLIPS
~ FEB. 5, 1814 ~

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Covered Populations in the Digital Equity Act

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NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

DIGITAL INCLUSION ESSENTIALS RESOURCES

Affordable/Low-Cost Internet

- Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Resource Page - NDIA has created an ACP Webpage that provides information about the program. In it, you'll find: ACP Webinar, Community FAQ section, NDIA ACP blog posts and much more!

- Free & Low-Cost Internet Plans - To support local efforts, NDIA has compiled a list of current offers from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that will help low-income households to acquire service at low or no cost. This detailed list was designed to be helpful for digital inclusion practitioners, community leaders, service providers, libraries, media and others who may give guidance to clients and constituents.

Affordable Devices & Digital Skill Training

- Digital Inclusion Startup Manual - This Start-Up Manual is intended to provide guidance to organizations looking to increase access and use of technology in disadvantaged communities through digital literacy training, affordable home broadband, affordable devices and tech support.

- NDIA Blog Post: Planning to Build a New Digital Skills Curriculum? - This blog post includes resources to develop a digital skills framework and a list of free online digital skills programs. This list includes multilingual programs, highlights special features about each program, and indicates which programs provide facilitator support.

Coalitions

- Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook: The new Coalition Guidebook provides an in-depth look at successful models across coalitions. This updated guidebook was developed with the input and accumulated experiences of 23 coalitions, at various stages of development, from communities around the country. Some key themes covered in the guidebook include: how coalitions form and are structured, keys to successful coalition operations, ways coalitions adapt over time to maintain effectiveness and sustainability, and much more!

Digital Navigators

- Digital Navigator Model - NDIA has created a Digital Navigator Model page as a hub for resources, best practices, and continued sharing across the community. In it, you'll find: how the Digital Navigator Model was created, what a Digital Navigator is and what are their responsibilities, a Digital Navigator webinar, and practical materials that can be adapted and utilized for local programs.

- National Digital Navigator Corps - Learn more about this grant opportunity from NDIA, funded by Google.org and supported by AMERIND Critical Infrastructure. Selected organizations will receive three years of funding to establish a digital navigator program in their community. Letters of intent are due on May 20th.

Policy

- NDIA's Policy Page - Visit the Policy page to learn more about: the top 5 federal Digital Inclusion funding sources, NDIA's policy priorities and to access the policy cheat sheet.

- Policy Cheat Sheet - NDIA created a Policy Cheat Sheet to help practitioners and advocates understand the increased digital inclusion funding.

Trailblazers

- Digital Inclusion Trailblazers is a public inventory of local government initiatives promoting digital literacy and broadband access for underserved residents. Trailblazers are models for other local governments to pursue digital inclusion efforts in their own communities.

Digital Equity Ecosystem
Partners And Organizations

1. Organizations Delivering Digital Inclusion Programs

Digital Inclusion Organizations: Organizations whose primary purpose is to provide direct digital inclusion services and resources to under-connected communities

- Digital Skills Training
- Access to Affordable/Free Internet
- Access to Affordable/Free Computer Devices

Organizations With Digital Inclusion Programs: Organizations providing digital inclusion services and programs to under-connected communities

- Local, County, and State Libraries
- Computer Refurbisher Organizations
- Workforce Development Organizations
- Adult Education Organizations
- Connecthome - Housing Authorities

2. Organizations Providing Digital Inclusion Related Services

Housing Organizations: Organizations that focus on providing affordable housing options to low-income families with some level of wraparound services as well as open Wi-Fi, computer labs, loaner devices, and digital navigation, workforce, and shelf-science programs

- Affordable Housing Organizations
- Local/State/Federal Housing Agencies- Self-Sufficiency Programs
- Private and Nonprofit Housing Providers

Educational Institutions: Education organizations serving disenfranchised areas and populations. These organizations help provide digital inclusion resources and services, such as one-to-one student computer devices, hotspot, free Wi-Fi, technical support, digital skills training, and volunteers

- K-12-School - After school and parent learning programs
- Local Colleges - technical programs
- Universities - Research and internship programs

3. Organizations Supporting Digital Inclusion Efforts

Philanthropic Organizations: Funding institutions serving disenfranchised communities - help support digital inclusion efforts and programs by providing grants and connections to community organizations

- Community Foundations
- Private Foundations
- Corporate Foundations and Social Responsibility Programs

Business/For-Profit Organizations: Private businesses and organizations that, through social responsibility, also focus on supporting community development and services for minority and disenfranchised communities

- Banks
- Internet Services Providers
- Tech Organizations
- Business and Entrepreneurs

Government And Administrative Organizations: Local, County, Regional, and State agencies that work to provide and/or support digital inclusion services and policy

- Municipal and County Governments
- Regional Planning Commissions and Councils of Government
- Economic Development Agencies, Public Utilities, and Smart City Organizations
- State Broadband Offices and/or Commissions
- State Agencies that Support Elements of Digital Inclusion

4. Digital Equity Advocacy And Issue-Based Organizations

Issue-Based Advocates And Organizations: People and organizations that work to serve and connect opportunities around certain issue areas

- Civic/Civil Rights Organizations
- Health Institutions
- Media and Arts Organizations
- Startup and Tech Supporting Organizations

Key Population And Identity Groups Focused Organizations: People and organizations that serve these key populations:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Older adults individuals
- Individuals with language barriers
- Individuals who are English learners
- Individuals with low levels of literacy
- Veterans
- Justice-involved individuals
- Individual experiencing homelessness
- Communities of color
- Native and Tribal communities

Place-Based Organizations: People and organizations that focus on supporting a particular community within a geographic area

- Faith-Based Organizations
- Neighborhood Associations
- Community Based Coalitions
- Community Anchor Institutions

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

SESSION 2: DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN FRAMING WORKSHEET

Instructions: Using this worksheet to begin drafting the guiding components of your digital equity plan. These may be general principles and ideas for now, which will get refined with input from community partners before being finalized in the plan

VISION: Your north star for the plan. It is a "clear, specific, compelling picture" of what your region/community would look like if it were digitally equitable. It should be ambitious and transformative.		
MISSION: A general statement on how the vision will be achieved.		
GOALS: Broad outcomes that are derived from and support the achievement of the vision.	**PRIORITY POPULATIONS: Groups in your region/community that face the greatest barriers to digital equity & on which the plan should be particularly focused.**	**VALUES: The distinctive and enduring principles you will follow in designing and implementing the plan.**
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

Group 1: Terri, Steve, Jackie

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

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Instructions: Using this worksheet to begin drafting the guiding components of your digital equity plan. These may be general principles and ideas for now, which will get refined with input from community partners before being finalized in the plan

VISION: Your north star for the plan. It is a "clear, specific, compelling picture" of what your region/community would look like if it were digitally equitable. It should be ambitious and transformative.
Provide Templeton with Town Wide accessability to Fiber Optics, Digital Literacy and provide resources to further address the lack of affordability, inclusion and Knowledge.
MISSION: A general statement on how the vision will be achieved.

GOALS: Broad outcomes that are derived from and support the achievement of the vision.	**PRIORITY POPULATIONS: Groups in your region/community that face the greatest barriers to digital equity & on which the plan should be particularly focused.**	**VALUES: The distinctive and enduring principles you will follow in designing and implementing the plan.**
• Affordability, Accessibility, Accountability • Digital Literacy • Ongoing Outreach • Fairness • Regional Coalition (Accountability) • Knowledge and Program Implementation •	• Rural • Aging Individuals • Veterans • Low Moderate Income • Low Literacy/Schools • Cable TV Subscribers • Library	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion • Equal Access (Equality) • Income equality • Outreach and Knowledge • Information Equality (transparency) • Tracking/Follow Up Accountability • Data Driven

Group 2: Rick Martin, Gracelyn, Magnus

- Royalston
- Templeton

SESSION 2: DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN FRAMING WORKSHEET

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VISION: Your north star for the plan. It is a "clear, specific, compelling picture" of what your region/community would look like if it were digitally equitable. It should be ambitious and transformative.
Every person has access to devices, digital education, internet access, at an affordable price or no cost.
MISSION: A general statement on how the vision will be achieved.
Our group needs provide Funding, direction, and the tools to our identified stakeholders in order for them to provide ~~identified~~ services to ther priority populations.

GOALS: Broad outcomes that are derived from and support the achievement of the vision.	**PRIORITY POPULATIONS: Groups in your region/community that face the greatest barriers to digital equity & on which the plan should be particularly focused.**	**VALUES: The distinctive and enduring principles you will follow in designing and implementing the plan.**
• Establish Funding "Tiger Team" to assist each town and stakeholder • achieve adequate Funding to accomplish ther goals. • Guarantee each Town and Library obtain adequate digital infrastructure • to support desired goals • Establish or identify a communication plan to push Digital Equity opportunities	• Rural • Aging. • Veterans	•

NDIA
NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

SESSION 5.1: STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION WORKSHEET

Instructions: Using the table below to identify each PRIORITY POPULATION group and the community based organizations, public agencies, or other partners that directly serve and engage with each population group. Then move on to other organizations that should be engaged as stakeholders throughout the planning process. The goal is to create a robust list of potential stakeholders within your region/community that can help plan, support, outreach, and implement strategies.

Priority Population(s)	Organization Name	Organization Type	Geographic Reach	Organization Focus Area(s)	Potential Areas to Partner	Engagement Tier(s)	Next Steps
Veterans	*Goodwill Inc*	*Nonprofit, CBO*	*Bexar County*	*Workforce*	• *Devices* • *Community Outreach* • *Program /Implementation*	*Working group, Stakeholder*	*Schedule introduction meeting with …*

RECOMMENDED STAKEHOLDERS

DIGITAL EQUITY ACT RECOMMENDED STAKEHOLDERS

- Community Anchor Institutions
- County and Municipal Governments
- Local Educational Agencies
- Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Entities, or Native Hawaiian Organizations
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Individuals with Disabilities, Including Organizations That Represent Individuals with Disabilities Including Children
- Older Adults Individuals & Organizations
- Organizations That Represent Individuals Who Are English Learners
- Organizations That Represent Individuals Who Have Low Levels of Literacy
- Organizations That Represent Veterans
- Civil Rights Organizations
- Entities That Carry Out Workforce Development Programs
- Agencies of the State That Are Responsible for Administering or Supervising Adult Education/Literacy
- Public Housing Authorities
- State Corrections Department

NDIA'S ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED STAKEHOLDERS

- Members of Priority (Covered) Populations and Historically Disconnected Communities ('Lived Experts")
- State Digital Equity/Broadband Office/DEA Administering Entity
- Local Corrections Department/Agency
- Educational Service Centers
- Digital Inclusion Coalitions
- Chambers of Commerce or Industry Associations
- Tribal Governments
- Regional Councils of Governments
- Economic Development Authorities
- Higher Education Institutions
    - Community & Technical Colleges
    - Public & Private Universities
    - Minority-Serving Institutions
- Public Housing Resident Associations & Other Affordable Housing Providers/Advocates
- Labor Unions (in Particular, Telecommunications Workers' Unions)
- Healthcare Systems and Networks
- Homeless Continuum of Care Providers
- Private and Nonprofit Multi-Family Housing Developers and Owners
- Faith-Based Institutions (i.e. Churches, Temples, Mosques, etc.)
- Entrepreneurs and Business Owners
- State or Local Foundations & Funders
- Advocacy Organizations
- Existing Multi-Stakeholder Groups (i.e. Councils on Aging, etc.)
- Refugee Resettlement Organizations
- Re-Entry Organizations
- Organizations Serving Undocumented Residents
- Early Intervention Coordinators (i.e. Those Providing in-Home Therapy for Children Ages 3-5)
- Trade Organizations
- Agriculture Extension Offices
- Cultural Organizations
- Local Media Outlets (Peg Station Leaders and Ethnic Media)

Grap 1: Terri, Dotty, Steve, Jackie Prime

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

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Veterans WBI	*Goodwill Inc*	*Nonprofit, CBO* NP	*Bexar County* Regional	*Workforce* Anything	• *Devices* • *Community Outreach* ✓ • *Program /Implementation*	*Working group, Stakeholder* Stakeholder	*Schedule introduction meeting with ...*
Veterans	[redacted] VOC VSO Vet Affairs American Legion	New Profit Municiple Municiple Non Profit	Regional Temp Atol / Rox Specific Town	Anything Anything Anything Anything	} Devices, Outreach Wellness, Training	Stakeholder Stakeholder Stakeholder Working group	"
Aging	[redacted] TSCC Council of Aging	Muni Muni	Temp Royalston	Basic Education	Devices Training Space	Stakeholders Stakeholders	"
Rural	Library	Municiple Entity	Town	Work space Education Training	Devices Staff	Stakeholder	"
InD w Dis	?						
Lang Barriers	Mount WCC	Public Education	Regional	Education Training Work space	Devices Training	Stakeholder	"

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- Civil Rights Organizations
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    - Public & Private Universities
    - Minority-Serving Institutions
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- Labor Unions (in Particular, Telecommunications Workers' Unions)
- Healthcare Systems and Networks
- Homeless Continuum of Care Providers
- Private and Nonprofit Multi-Family Housing Developers and Owners
- Faith-Based Institutions (i.e. Churches, Temples, Mosques, etc.)
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- State or Local Foundations & Funders
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- Trade Organizations
- Agriculture Extension Offices
- Cultural Organizations
- Local Media Outlets (Peg Station Leaders and Ethnic Media)

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

Group 2: Rick, Gracelynn, Magnus

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Veterans	~~Bald. Legion~~ ~~Goodwill Inc~~ VSO (Bikers Group) Community Services MVCC Friends of Templeton Veterans	~~Nonprofit,~~ ~~CBO~~ Legion - Civic Org. VSO - Town. Gov. FoTV - Nonprofit Bikers Group - Private	~~Bexar~~ County specific to Templeton and it's Villages → Region	~~Workforce~~ outreach support training advocacy resources	• Devices ✓ • Community Outreach ✓ • Program /Implementation ✓	Working VSO group, Stakeholder Legion, FoTV Bikers	Schedule introduction meeting with ... VSO - MRPC Legion, FoTV, Bikers - MRPC
Aging Adults	Senior Churches Library	Town Wide	Town Wide			Working Group	Housing Authority Senior Center
Cable TV subscribers	TCTV ✗	Town Wide	Regional		Regional Reach / Broadband Digital Literacy	online TV	MBI MassTech
Nursing Homes / Elderly Housing	Alliance Health Temp. Housing authority Pineview Pheonix Court	Private	Town Wide			Stakeholder	HOA
Disabled	GAAMHA School?	Private / Town	Region			Stakeholder	GAAMHA School?
Low to Moderate income	Affordable Housing Food Pantry Housing Authority	Town / state	Town Wide			Stakeholder	HOA
Racial or Ethnic Minorities	School or churches	Town	Town			Stakeholder	School?
Covid Kids lower Literacy	Schools Daycares Scouts	Town private civic	Town			Stakeholder	

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- Tribal Governments
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- Trade Organizations
- Agriculture Extension Offices
- Cultural Organizations
- Local Media Outlets (Peg Station Leaders and Ethnic Media)

MRPL
Chloe,
Ryan,
Jeff

NDIA
NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

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Rural, All							
~~Veterans Seniors~~ ~~Director~~	Sarah Custer Vet. Services	Town Town	Philipstown, Athol, Orange Royalston, Petersham	veterans services	• Devices - distribution/ Access • Outreach • Literacy / Program implementation	• Stakeholder Interviews • Focus Group	Contact Sarah Schedule focus group Survey.
~~Aging Director~~ ~~Center~~ ~~COA~~	Senior Center/ COA	Town	Towns	Seniors/ Aging Adults Activities	" "	" "	" "

Chloe to —
follow up w/
- Sarah Custer
- Michell Durkey
  - survey
  - Stakeholder interview
  - Focus Group?
  - Events?

and Michelle

RECOMMENDED STAKEHOLDERS

DIGITAL EQUITY ACT RECOMMENDED STAKEHOLDERS

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- Re-Entry Organizations
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- Trade Organizations
- Agriculture Extension Offices
- Cultural Organizations
- Local Media Outlets (Peg Station Leaders and Ethnic Media)

Mission Statement: The Towns will support access to programming and services that allow all individuals and communities to access the internet and connected devices needed for full participation in the Towns' society, civic participation, and economy.

Goals:

- **Identify a core team of digital equity advocates to pursue increased funding opportunities and help the community become an equal partner in digital equity.**
    - Identify and designate local "champion" or digital "navigator"
    - Support and participate in the creation of a regional digital equity coalition

- **Expand community outreach and strengthen existing partnerships.**
    - Coordination with MWCC, Montachusett Business Incubator, etc.

- **Promote access to affordable devices and digital infrastructure such as broadband internet.**
    - Library hot spot rental program
    - Computer lab with

- **Strengthen digital literacy throughout the community.**
    - Northstar Digital Literacy subscription for community or region
    - Classes for software programs, internet safety, email, setting up and using settings in a cell phone, tablet, laptop

- **Provide targeted support for vulnerable populations throughout the community, which can include students, adults seeking jobs and other employment, and seniors.**
    - Tech support "office hours", or forum
    - Dedicated computers/lab for job seeking, tele-health, video calling, online shopping, printing, etc.

- **Keep track of the local broadband and internet provider market and opportunities to better advocate for consumers and promote access, affordability, and economic growth opportunities in the local area.**
    - Explore the creation of a municipal broadband fiberoptic network serving Town-owned properties, schools, libraries, and commercial areas.

2019 Massachusetts Library E-rate Recipients

Municipality	Library	Discount %	5 Yr. Budget	5 Yr. Discount
Grand Total			75,000	55,000
Phillipston	Phillips Free Public Library	60%	25,000	15,000
Royalston	Phinehas S. Newton Library	90%	25,000	22,500
Templeton	Boynton Public Library	70%	25,000	17,500

5 Yr. Library Match	Discount / Yr.	Library Match / Yr.
20,000	11,000	4,000
10,000	3,000	2,000
2,500	4,500	500
7,500	3,500	1,500

Templeton, Phiillipston, Royalston Digital Equity Planning, Meeting 2

March 7, 2024

<u>Meeting Notes</u>:

NW County 3/7/24

New Member- Magnus Wachusett Business Incubator

Existing Conditions Assessment

- Data on individual towns so far
- Fata from the state survey

Survey: Can we get regional data?

- Dashboard- can get it from the map
- Leominster is at like 300

Where are we going to connect to the people in the target areas?

- We are not necessarily doing work for individuals, we are creating a plan on how to address.
- We are not going to have to identify every individual, but making sure we have the materials to best serve them.

The service is?

- That will come out of the plan
    - Faster, or more affordable could be that
    - Goals and actions will probably focus on digital literacy and training.

ADA compliance: a guy came in

- Seizures? ADHD? Like, disabilities?
- Settings in phones for accessible use

Breakout Groups

2 groups (maybe another on zoom

Chuck

from Phillipston is on Zoom with Jonathan and Tracy

ERATE- we need to check for the schools

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Meeting #3 – Review of Draft Existing Conditions & Development of Goals & Actions

Thursday, July 25th, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Public Notice Agenda

- **Introductions**
    - **MRPC Planning Team**
    - **Town participants – Working Group Members**
- **Existing Conditions Assessment (Draft) Review:**
    - **Existing Conditions Assessment Report**
        - **Data Collection (Session 4 Worksheet)**
        - **Working Group Input**
- **Community Needs:**
    - **Stakeholder Questionnaires & Interviews**
        - **Status update**
        - **Additional info needs**
- **Measurable Objectives & Implementation (Goals & Actions)**
    - **Working Group Input (Session 8.2 Worksheet)**
    - **Additional input and follow-ups**
- **Next Steps**
    - **Focus Group Meetings or Round-table discussions**
    - **Finalize & Present Plan**
    - **Prepare and submit Implementation Grant**

Digital Equity Planning: Existing Conditions & Community Needs Assessment

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, Massachusetts

This project was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds

Digital Equity Overview

Equitable access to broadband internet varies across demographic groups based on geographic location, race, age, income, education, and other related factors. Physical, geo-spatial, and socioeconomic challenges and barriers associated with these factors have resulted in noticeable gaps in equity related to broadband access, affordability, and adaptability at local, regional, and national scales. Similarly, broadband service and cost-based gaps also exist at each of these scales and often correlate to the same demographic factors specified above. These gaps, and their associated challenges and barriers are often exacerbated in rural areas at the community and regional scales. The rural communities of Northwest Worcester County of the Montachusett Region are no exception, and perhaps are a prime example of how Digital Equity gaps affect certain groups or segments of the population within rural areas.

With local and regional partners, in consultation with the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, under the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's Municipal Digital Equity Planning program, the Towns of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston are working to better understand their community needs in an effort to improve broadband internet access, enhance digital equity, and increase digital literacy among residents, businesses, and institutions. As with many other rural areas, broadband internet accessibility and connectivity issues currently do exist and are related to various factors, including gaps in reliable internet availability, the rural location of the communities, local and regional socioeconomic demographics affecting income and opportunity, higher-than average services costs, affordability and convenient access to devices and technology, gaps in digital literacy training, accessibility issues, and the lack of digital resources and programs preclude access for many individuals. Further, the populations of these rural communities and surrounding region include a high proportion of individuals representing a covered population of the Digital Equity Act.

The following existing conditions analysis and community needs assessment evaluates certain aspects of the Town of Templeton's, Phillipston's, and Royalston's population demographics with specific regard to the eight (8) Covered Populations of the Digital Equity Act. The analysis highlights vulnerabilities and inequities regarding internet access relative to availability, affordability, and adoptability – the three pillars of digital equitability and broadband internet accessibility. Finally,

DRAFT

the analysis also includes an assessment of community needs through information gathered during targeted outreach to interested stakeholders, covered populations, and local digital equity champions, including core team meetings, focus group meetings, stakeholder questionnaires and interviews, and local and regional responses to the Statewide Digital Equity Survey. The assessment of community needs was not limited only to internet accessibility, but also included an evaluation of the region's digital literacy opportunities, and the communities' level of digital literacy or knowledge, skills, abilities, and importantly, comfort levels, and willingness to adopt broadband internet and digital technologies. Community needs were assessed generally, but with specific regard to the status and needs of covered populations.

The overall purpose of this analysis was to understand the existing conditions around digital equity and digital technology, specifically broadband internet and internet-based computing devices, and the local levels of access, affordability, and adoptability of those services and technological devices particularly for covered populations, so that they may be best served by the recommendations of this Digital Equity Plan. In addition to providing information about available broadband internet services and devices, the analysis also aims to identify and evaluate the personal barriers and challenges experienced by people, especially covered populations, relative to broadband internet service accessibility or availability, adoption, and affordability. Further, it assesses not only those people *with* access to, or using such services or devices, but also those portions of the populations *without* access or use of, or otherwise lacking fixed broadband, lacking computer or other devices. It aims to better understand the barriers and challenges of populations not using the internet, and populations not using a device. Sometimes those challenges or barriers extend beyond access or affordability, and at times are related to a person's willingness to adopt such technology (services and devices, alike), rather than their ability or accessibility.

Much of the data for this analysis was obtained from input from the Digtial Equity Planning Core Team members, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, digital literacy assessments and tech-help sessions, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) survey results, FCC Data, other local and regional data and information, including the Massachusetts Division of Local Services' Data Analytics and Resources Bureau, and US Census data.

Local & Regional Community Context

Demographic trends in a community can impact local internet service demand and technology support needs. Understanding the demographic profiles of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, and the socioeconomic indicators and distribution and proportion of covered populations is essential to understanding and evaluating the needs of a community, and a critical component of any planning process which aims to identify strategies and actions for addressing those needs, especially when a primary focus of the Plan is achieving equitable outcomes.

Templeton Town

Templeton, located in North Worcester County and bordering the City of Gardner, and the towns of Hubbardston, Phillipston, Royalston, and Winchendon, is home to 8,261 residents with a population per square mile of 255.6, less than the county (570.7) and statewide (901.2) population densities. The median household income in Templeton is $101,768 which is above the Worcester County median income of $88,524 and Massachusetts median income of $96,505. Only 4.9% of residents in the town the town live below the poverty line, which is lower than the Worcester County average of 10.6% and statewide average of 10.4%. 96.4% of all residents report as white alone. Of those over the age of 25, 91.3% have completed a high school education and 29.0% have obtained bachelor's degrees or higher.

Computer and internet use in Templeton is comparable to the county and statewide averages with 94.6% of all households having a computer and 89.2% of households having a broadband internet subscription.[1] Figure 1, below is a summary of Digital Equity Indicators for the Town of Templeton.[2]

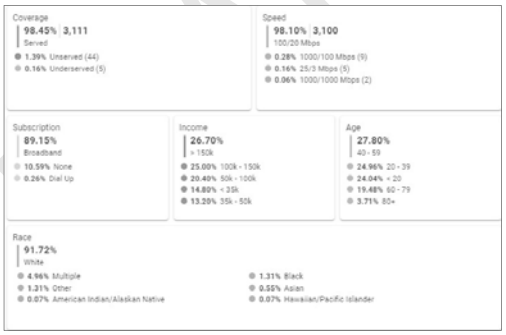


Figure 1. Broadband and Digital Equity Indicators, Templeton, MA.

[1] U.S. Census Bureau. *Quick Facts*, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/worcestercountymassachusetts,MA,templetontownworcestercountymassachusetts/BPS030223 (Accessed June 28, 2024.)
[2] Massachusetts Broadband Map: https://mapping.massbroadband.org/map (Accessed June 28, 2024.)

Phillipston Town

Phillipston, located in North Worcester County and bordering the towns of Templeton, Hubbardston, Barre, Petersham, Athol, and Royalston, is home to 1, 918 residents with a population density of 77.9 people per square mile, less than the county (570.7) and statewide (901.2) population densities. The median household income in Phillipston is $90,625 which is above the Worcester County median income of $88,524 and below the Massachusetts median income of $96,505. Only 4.6% of residents in the town the town live below the poverty line, which is lower than the Worcester County average of 10.6% and statewide average of 10.4%. 97.8% of all residents report as white alone. Of those over the age of 25, 92.1% have completed a high school education and 24.8% have obtained bachelor's degrees or higher.

Computer and internet use in Phillipston is comparable to the county and statewide averages with 92.9% of all households having a computer and 88.9% of households having a broadband internet subscription. Figure 2, below is a summary of Digital Equity Indicators for the Town of Phillipston.[3]

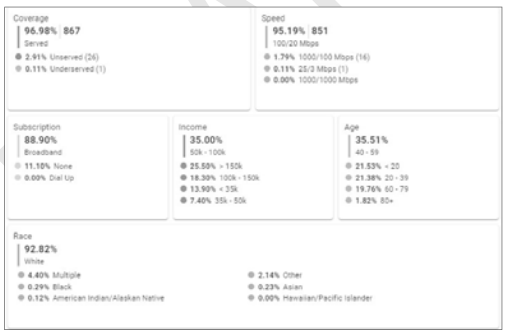


Figure 2. Broadband and Digital Equity Indicators, Phillipston, MA.

[3] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles. (Accessed June 28, 2024)

Royalston Town

Royalston is located in North Worcester County on the New Hampshire Border and on the border with Franklin County, Massachusetts. Royalston borders the Worcester County towns of Winchendon, Templeton, Phillipston, and Athol, and the Franklin County towns of Orange and Warwick, and is home to 1,455 residents with a population density of 34.2 people per square mile, less than the county (570.7) and statewide (901.2) population densities. The median household income in Royalston is $98,542 which is above the Worcester County median income of $88,524 and slightly above the Massachusetts median income of $96,505. Approximately 11.2% of residents in the town the town live below the poverty line, which is slightly higher than the Worcester County average of 10.6% and statewide average of 10.4%. 96.6% of all residents report as white alone. Of those over the age of 25, 88.6% have completed a high school education and 24.8% have obtained bachelor's degrees or higher.

Computer and internet use in Royalston is comparable to the county and statewide averages with 89.4% of all households having a computer. However, only 74.2% of households have a broadband internet subscription. Figure 3, below is a summary of Digital Equity Indicators for the Town of Royalston.[4]

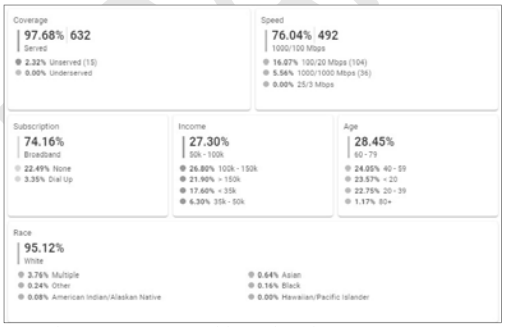


Figure 3. Broadband and Digital Equity Indicators, Royalston, MA.

[4] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles. (Accessed June 28, 2024)

Assessing Digital Equity in Rural Northwest Worcester County of the Montachusett Region

below:

Covered Populations

Individuals who live in Covered Households

The term "covered household" means a household, the taxable income of which for the most recently completed taxable year is not more than 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

Aging Individuals

The term "aging individual" has the meaning given the term "older individual" in section 102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002), within which the term "older individual" means an individual who is 60 years of age or older.

The region has a growing population of residents over 60 years of age. Outreach conducted through regional stakeholders, including Councils on Aging and Senior Centers indicate for digital literacy training, "tech help" sessions, and internet safety and cyber security education, as well as expanded advocacy, programs, and services for the region's aging adults in areas such as device usage, navigation of common software platforms, general computer skills, and comfort and trust of digital devices and technology.

It was noted in several interviews that internet and device access are crucial for seniors to access telemedicine, financial services and banking, and other online services that are now part of daily life. For medical patients and persons of all ages with disabilities, but especially for persons represented by multiple covered populations, such as aging adults with disabilities, aging adults who are veterans, or aging veterans who have one or more disabilities, etc., digital equity through enhanced digital literacy and advocacy is essential to successful and comfortable living. Further, older adults who have mobility or transportation limitations that make it difficult for them to visit healthcare providers' offices, telemedicine—the provision of healthcare remotely using ICTs—offers a convenient means of accessing healthcare services, but only if they are knowledgeable and comfortable using such technologies. There are currently barriers to healthcare access in the region that affect residents of all ages. More advocacy and equity in digital access through affordability, availability, and adoptability, and therefore better digital access to healthcare for

[5] https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c5e6cf675865 464a90ff1573c5072b42

Inmates at state and county jails and correctional facilities, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Veterans

The term "veteran" has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

Veterans make up a considerable portion of the region's population and are valued within the region. There are several Veteran's organizations serving the Montachusett Region, including the one-of-a-kind Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center. However, many veterans lack financial resource to afford internet, and, despite the presence of Veterans local and regional organizations and service programs, most do not currently offer any digital literacy resources, and veteran-specific digital equity, literacy, and affordability programs are unknown or non-existent.

The Montachusett Veteran's Outreach Center (MVOC) services over 700 Veteran's annually, most of whom reside in the Montachusett Region including veterans housing. In addition to their many services, MVOC offers free WiFi access for veterans at their Gardner office. Internet service is also available (free) to some residents and digital literacy classes are offered, however increased digital literacy programming is needed and desired by the organization and those they serve. A recent Digital Equity Veterans Focus Group meeting for the Montachusett Region was convened by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission as part of this planning process. The meeting waw hosted by the MVOC and Veteran's Services Officers from all Montachusett communities were invited to share their stories, ideas, needs, and visions for increased digital equity for the region's veterans.

Individuals with Disabilities

The term "disability" has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102).

Many residents of the northwest Montachusett Region have one or more disabilities. Templeton has 1,078 individuals (13.7%) with one or more disabilities, Phillipston has 198 individuals (12.0%), with one or more disabilities, Royalston has 130 individuals (10.6%) with one or more disabilities.

Meet with Commission on Disabilities or ADA Coordinators

Individuals with a Language Barrier

The Montachusett region has many individuals who are English learners and/or who have lower levels of literacy. Both of these groups of people are covered populations as individuals with a language barrier.

Many people born outside of the US, some non-English speaking, have immigrated to the Montachusett Region over the course of many generations. More recently, an influx of non-english speakers including those who speak Haitian-Creole, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese speakers have come to the Montachusett Region. Many of these individuals are also part of covered households who experience lower levels of income. Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston's populations consist mostly of white, English-speaking residents, however, the presence of a broad diversity of ethnicities and languages within the Montachusett Region make this an important population to consider, even in more rural English-speaking areas. Further, lower levels of education and, hence, literacy, are also more prevalent within the rural communities of the Montachusett Region, again, illustrating the importance of recognizing and considering the needs of this covered population.

Individuals who are Members of a Racial or Ethnic Minority Group

The resident populations of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, primarily identify as white and white alone. However, many people born outside of the US, some non-English speaking, and some of multiple ethnicities, have immigrated to the Montachusett Region over the course of many generations. More recently, there has been an increase of immigration of non-english speakers to nearby communities like Athol, Winchendon, Gardner, Leominster, and Fitchburg, including those who speak Haitian-Creole, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese. The diverse ethnic make-up of the greater region of the Montachusett area makes this covered population an important one to consider, even in more rural areas with predominantly white residents.

Individuals who Primarily Reside in a Rural Area

The term "rural area" has the meaning given the term in section 601(b)(3) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(b)(3)). All areas of all three communities, Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, meet the definition of "Rural Area", making 100% of the residents of these areas part of a "covered population" group.

Broadband Access

For such a rural region, a relatively high percentage of Templeton's (89.2%), Phillipston's (88.9%), and Royalston's (74.2%) households currently subscribe to broadband internet service. According to the U.S. Census, the proportion of residents subscribing to a broadband internet subscription in these three Worcester County Towns, located in the Northwestern-most portion of the Montachusett Region, is slightly lower than the national (93%) and statewide (90%) averages. Since 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, people rely more on broadband internet and online, web-based platforms for employment, education, banking, social interaction, and access to essential services and information than they did even a few short years ago. Broadband internet is more important now than ever, and is as important, or even more important in rural areas as it is within more

developed, suburban and metropolitan areas. Identifying challenges and barriers related to broadband access within underserved, rural communities, like Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, and understanding the needs of the residents to overcome those challenges and barriers is both critical and essential, and the primary purpose of this Plan.

Internet Availability & Digital Connectivity

Internet Availability can be assessed in terms of the number of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) serving and providing direct, connections to the internet at households, businesses, or institutions within a certain location or area. Further, it can be assessed based on the type of internet service provided (e.g., Fiber-optic, Cable, and Fixed Wireless Internet), and the average and maximum speed of that service (i.e., Digital Data Upload & Download Speeds measured in Megabytes per second [Mbps]).

A location, or more specifically, an address, that has "service" access to Broadband Internet service by an ISP is considered a ***Serviceable*** location. According to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), such addresses, if they have access to broadband service "that meets or exceeds 100 Mbps download speed and 20 Mbps upload speed", are considered "***Served***". According to MBI, addresses "with broadband service below 100 Mbps download speed and 20 Mbps upload speed but higher than 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed" are considered "***Underserved***". And finally, according to MBI, any address location without access to any broadband service or "with broadband service below 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed" is considered "***Unserved***".[6]

Digital Connectivity is a combined measure of people accessing and utilizing the internet (particularly broadband internet) and digital devices at home. Some factors that can be assessed to "measure" digital connectivity are: Average Household Size, Percentage of the Population Working from Home, Percentage of Households with Digital Computing Devices, Percentage of Households with Internet, Percentage of Households with Broadband Internet (defined as download/upload speeds above 100/20 Mbps), and Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability (percentage of households which have a Broadband Internet connection to their home that actually subscribe to a Broadband Internet Service).

Templeton

According to the Massachusetts Broadband Map the Town of Templeton (which includes the villages of Templeton Center, East Templeton, and Baldwinville, as well as Otter River) has 3,160 Serviceable Locations, of which 3,111 (98.4%) are classified as "Served", five (5; 1.3%) are classified as "Underserved", and 44 (3.2%) are classified as "Unserved". **Figure 4** below shows the total distribution of serviceable locations, relative to their status as Served, Underserved, or Unserved.

[6] Massachusetts Broadband Map: https://mapping.massbroadband.org/map (Accessed June 28, 2024.)

Figure 4. Broadband Coverage Map, Templeton, MA.

***Templeton Center*:**
With regard to **Internet Availability**, **Templeton Center (01468)** has four (4) primary Internet Service Providers (ISP), as shown within **Table 1** below. Cable and Fixed Wireless internet are available in Templeton. In addition to Cable and Fixed Wireless internet options, Satellite internet may also be available from various providers such as Dish, DirectTV, HughesNet, Viasat, and Starlink.

Table 1. Internet Availability by Service Providers in Templeton Center.

Templeton – Templeton Center (01468) Internet Availability				
Provider	**Connection**	**Availability**	**Avg. Download Speed**	**Max Download Speed**
Xfinity	Cable	99.9%	1,200 Mbps	1,200 Mbps
T-Mobile Home Internet	Fixed Wireless	95.9%	55 Mbps	100 Mbps
Verizon	Fixed Wireless	41.2%	50 Mbps	50 Mbps
Spectrum	Cable	2.9%	1,000 Mbps	1,000 Mbps
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.				

Regarding **Digital Connectivity**, **Templeton Center** is comparable to statewide and national averages with slightly more households with internet and broadband, working from home, and using devices, as shown within **Table 2**, below. One major variation from statewide and national averages is the availability of Fiber-optic infrastructure. Fiber-optic, which can handle greater bandwidth and provide higher speeds, does not exist in Tempelton Center, despite higher-than-average broadband internet and device adoption and usage.

Table 2. Digital Connectivity in Templeton Center.

Templeton (Templeton Center) Digital Connectivity			
Metric or Measure of Connectivity	**01468**	**Massachusetts**	**USA**
Average Household Size	2.5	2.5	2.7
Work from Home Percent	14%	15%	12%
Households with Devices	96%	95%	94%
Households with Internet	95%	91%	89%
Households with Broadband Internet	88%	81%	73%
Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability	88%	82%	74%
Fiber-optic Availability	0.00%	55.92%	58.45%
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.			

ISPReports.org calculates a **Digital Connectivity** rating of ***80/100*** for **Templeton Center** and an ISP (infrastructure) rating of ***D***. Given the proportion of the population working from home, and the high numbers of households with devices using the internet, the lack of fiber-optic infrastructure could be a limiting factor for the access of higher speeds as digital data bandwidth needs increase over time.

***East Templeton*:**
With regard to **Internet Availability**, **East Templeton (01438)** has three (3) primary Internet Service Providers (ISP), as shown within **Table 3** below. Cable and Fixed Wireless internet are available in East Templeton, a village of Templeton. In addition to Cable and Fixed Wireless internet options, Satellite internet may also be available from various providers such as Dish, DirectTV, HughesNet, Viasat, and Starlink.

Table 3. Internet Availability by Service Providers in East Templeton.

Templeton – East Templeton (01438) Internet Availability				
Provider	**Connection**	**Availability**	**Avg. Download Speed**	**Max Download Speed**
Xfinity	Cable	100.0%	1,200 Mbps	1,200 Mbps
T-Mobile Home Internet	Fixed Wireless	100.0%	100 Mbps	100 Mbps
Verizon	Fixed Wireless	16.0%	50 Mbps	50 Mbps
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.				

With regard to **Digital Connectivity**, **East Templeton** is comparable to statewide and national averages with relatively high levels of adoption and usage, as shown within **Table 4**, below. However, despite relatively high usage and adoption rates, **East Templeton** is below the statewide average number of internet service providers and Fiber-optic infrastructure does not exist within this area.

Table 4. Digital Connectivity in East Templeton.

Templeton (East Templeton) Digital Connectivity			
Metric or Measure of Connectivity	**01438**	**Massachusetts**	**USA**
Average Household Size	2.2	2.5	2.7
Work from Home Percent	23%	15%	12%
Households with Devices	91%	95%	94%
Households with Internet	91%	91%	89%
Households with Broadband Internet	80%	81%	73%
Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability	80%	82%	74%
Fiber-optic Availability	0.00%	55.92%	58.45%
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.			

ISPReports.org calculates a **Digital Connectivity** rating of ***65/100*** for **East Templeton** and an ISP (infrastructure) rating of ***D***. The limited number of providers and lack of fiber-optic infrastructure could be a limiting factor for the access of higher speeds as digital data bandwidth needs increase over time. Given that usage and adoption rates are consistent with statewide and national averages, and that a considerably higher proportion of people work from home, the lack of fiber-optic infrastructure is a significant inequity and could pose substantial challenges to this rural location in the future.

Baldwinville:
With regard to **Internet Availability**, **Baldwinville (01436)**, a village of Templeton, has three (3) primary Internet Service Providers (ISP), as shown in **Table 5** below. It should be noted that the number of available providers is below the statewide average of 4 and the national average of 5 to 6. Cable and Fixed Wireless internet are available in Baldwinville, a village of Templeton. In addition to Cable, and Fixed Wireless internet options, Satellite internet may also be available from various providers such as Dish, DirectTV, HughesNet, Viasat, and Starlink.

Table 5. Internet Availability by Service Providers in Baldwinville.

Templeton – Baldwinville (01436) Internet Availability				
Provider	**Connection**	**Availability**	**Avg. Download Speed**	**Max Download Speed**
Xfinity	Cable	100.0%	1,241 Mbps	2,000 Mbps
T-Mobile Home Internet	Fixed Wireless	99.9%	55 Mbps	100 Mbps
Verizon	Fixed Wireless	30.7%	50 Mbps	50 Mbps
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.				

With regard to **Digital Connectivity**, **Baldwinville** is comparable to statewide and national averages with a slightly lower proportion of households with internet, but relatively high levels of adoption and usage, as shown within **Table 6**, below. However, despite relatively high usage and adoption rates, **Baldwinville** is below the statewide average number of internet service providers and Fiber-optic infrastructure does not exist within this area.

Table 6. Digital Connectivity in Baldwinville.

Templeton (Baldwinville) Digital Connectivity			
Metric or Measure of Connectivity	**01436**	**Massachusetts**	**USA**
Average Household Size	2.7	2.5	2.7
Work from Home Percent	10%	15%	12%
Households with Devices	93%	95%	94%
Households with Internet	83%	91%	89%
Households with Broadband Internet	79%	81%	73%
Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability	79%	82%	74%
Fiber-optic Availability	0.00%	55.92%	58.45%
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.			

ISPReports.org calculates a **Digital Connectivity** rating of ***66/100*** and an ISP (infrastructure) rating of ***D***. As with other parts of Templeton, the limited number of providers and lack of fiber-optic infrastructure in Baldwinville could be a limiting factor for the access of higher speeds as digital data bandwidth needs increase over time. Given that usage and adoption rates are consistent with statewide and national averages, and that a considerable proportion of people work from home, the lack of fiber-optic infrastructure is a significant inequity and could pose substantial challenges to this rural location in the future.

Phillipston
According to the Massachusetts Broadband Map the Town of Phillipston has 894 Serviceable Locations, of which 867 (96.9%) are classified as "Served", one (1; 0.001%) are classified as "Underserved", and 26 (0.03%) are classified as "Unserved". **Figure 5** below shows the total distribution of serviceable locations, relative to Served, Underserved, and Unserved addresses.

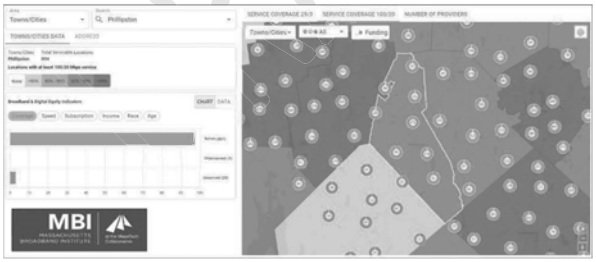


Figure 5. Broadband Coverage Map, Phillipston, MA.

With regard to ***Internet Availability***, **Phillipston** has five (5) primary Internet Service Providers (ISP), as shown in **Table 7** below. Fiber-optic, Cable, and Fixed Wireless internet are available in Phillipston. In addition to Fiber-optic, Cable, and Fixed Wireless internet options, Satellite internet

may also be available in Phillipston from various providers such as Dish, DirectTV, HughesNet, Viasat, and Starlink.

Table 7. Internet Availability by Service Providers in Phillipston.

Phillipston (01331) Internet Availability				
Provider	**Connection**	**Availability**	**Avg. Download Speed**	**Max Download Speed**
Spectrum	Cable	89.4%	1,000 Mbps	1,000 Mbps
T-Mobile Home Internet	Fixed Wireless	95.7%	37 Mbps	100 Mbps
Verizon	Fixed Wireless	24.2%	91 Mbps	300 Mbps
Xfinity	Cable	15.9%	1,314 Mbps	2,000 Mbps
EarthLink	Fiber-optic	3.0%	940 Mbps	940 Mbps
Verizon	Fiber-optic	3.0%	940 Mbps	940 Mbps
Spectrum	Fiber-optic	1.9%	1,000 Mbps	1,000 Mbps
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.				

With regard to ***Digital Connectivity***, **Phillipston** is similar to the state and national averages, as shown in **Table 8** below. With regard to the availability of Fiber-optic, however, like many of its other neighboring rural communities, Phillipston is far below the state and national average.

Table 8. Digital Connectivity in Phillipston.

Phillipston (01331) Digital Connectivity			
Metric or Measure of Connectivity	**Phillipston**	**Massachusetts**	**USA**
Average Household Size	2.5	2.5	2.7
Work from Home Percent	7%	15%	12%
Households with Devices	93%	95%	94%
Households with Internet	90%	91%	89%
Households with Broadband Internet	80%	81%	73%
Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability	80%	82%	74%
Fiber-optic Availability	4.91%	55.92%	58.45%
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.			

ISPReports.org calculates a Digital Connectivity rating of ***66/100*** and an ISP (infrastructure) rating of ***C-***. This summary indicates that Phillipston is consistent with statewide and national averages related to measures of Digital Connectivity, however, Broadband availability and usage is slightly below state averages and available infrastructure for providing higher speeds and supporting increased bandwidth through Fiber-optic is limited to only 5% of the Town, well below the statewide and national averages of 55.92% and 58.45%, repsectively.

Royalston
According to the Massachusetts Broadband Map the Town of Royalston has 647 Serviceable Locations, of which 632 (97.7%) are classified as "Served", zero (0; 0.0%) are classified as "Underserved", and 15 (0.02%) are classified as "Unserved". **Figure 6** below shows the total distribution of serviceable locations, relative to their status as Served, Underserved, or Unserved.

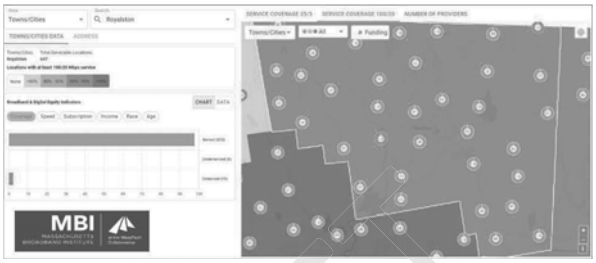


Figure 6. Broadband Coverage Map, Royalston, MA.

With regard to ***Internet Availability***, **Royalston** has four (4) primary Internet Service Providers (ISP), as shown in **Table 9** below. Fiber-optic, Cable, and Fixed Wireless internet are available in Royalston. In addition to Fiber-optic, Cable, and Fixed Wireless internet options, Satellite internet may also be available from various providers such as Dish, DirectTV, HughesNet, Viasat, and Starlink.

Table 9. Internet Availability by Service Providers in Royalston.

Royalston (01368) Internet Availability				
Provider	**Connection**	**Availability**	**Avg. Download Speed**	**Max Download Speed**
Spectrum	Fiber-optic	99.0%	1,000 Mbps	1,000 Mbps
T-Mobile Home Internet	Fixed Wireless	99.0%	33 Mbps	100 Mbps
Verizon	Fixed Wireless	10.9%	50 Mbps	50 Mbps
Spectrum	Cable	10.2%	1,000 Mbps	1,000 Mbps
Xfinity	Cable	2.9%	1,200 Mbps	1,200 Mbps
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.				

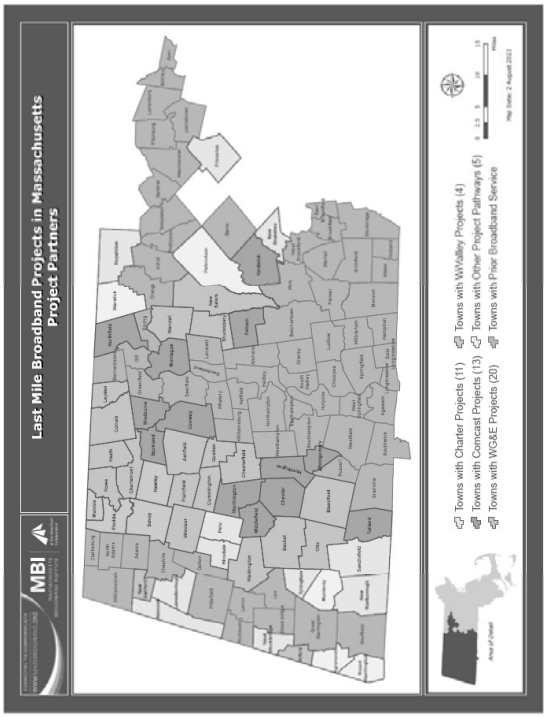
With regard to ***Digital Connectivity***, **Royalston** is below the state and national averages in most categories, as shown in **Table 10** below, and lower than its neighboring communities of Templeton and Phillipston, with the exception of the availability of Fiber-optic to most of the community.

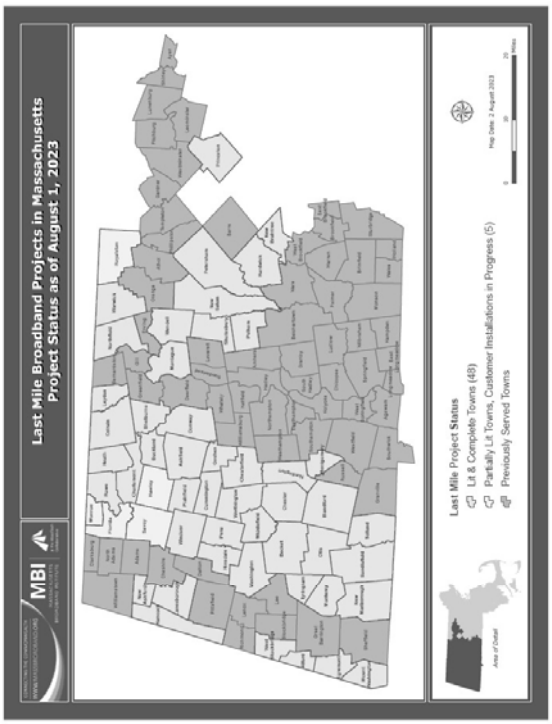
Table 10. Digital Connectivity in Royalston.

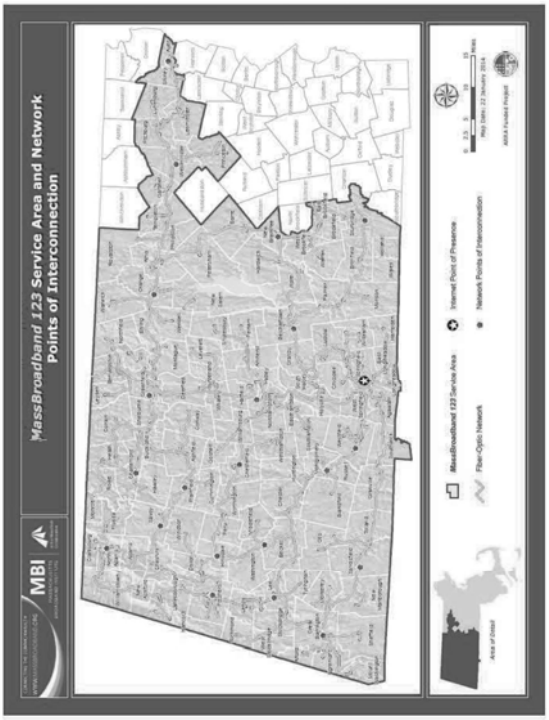
Royalston (01368) Digital Connectivity			
Metric or Measure of Connectivity	**Royalston**	**Massachusetts**	**USA**
Average Household Size	2.7	2.5	2.7
Work from Home Percent	8%	15%	12%
Households with Devices	90%	95%	94%
Households with Internet	78%	91%	89%
Households with Broadband Internet	35%	81%	73%
Broadband Internet Usage vs. Availability	35%	82%	74%
Fiber-optic Availability	98.99%	55.92%	58.45%
Source: ISP Reports (https://ispreports.org/) accessed June 25, 2024.			

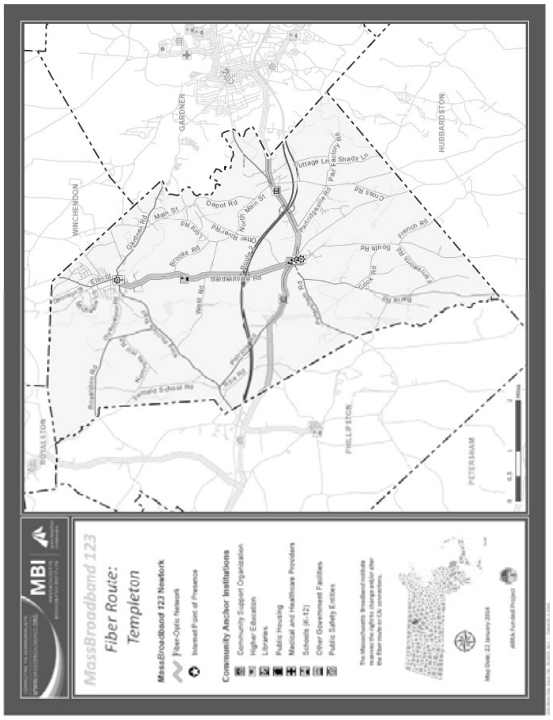
ISPReports.org calculates a **Digital Connectivity** rating of ***33/100*** for **Royalston** and an ISP (infrastructure) rating of ***B-***. An evaluation of the metrics calculated in the Digital Connectivity assessment shown above indicates that there is a considerable gap between the number of households that have access to broadband internet, and those that have adopted it. Therefore, it can be surmised that there is a high demand or "need" for broadband internet in Royalston, and that there may be existing barriers, such as affordability or digital literacy, that are limiting higher levels of adoption. However, it should also be noted that Royalston has only 12% of its population enrolled in school between 6th grade and college level, compared to the Massachusetts Statewide average of 17%, and that only 8% of Royalston's residents work from home, versus 15% statewide. These factors may indicate a lower level of digital connectivity "needs" within the community; however, they also may be a result of factors of digital inequity, such as its rural location, and lack of access to reliable internet (particularly broadband internet) until only recently. According to the Town librarian, when most communities were switching from dial-up internet service to DSL, DSL was not widely available to Royalston residents, and then when technological advances led to changes from DSL to cable (broadband), access in Royalston was still limited to DSL as the best available service for a considerable number of years. During that time many residents opted for Satellite-based internet service, and more recently Fixed Wireless internet as the most available, reliable, and affordable option for higher-speed internet. Many residents, and the Town's library, were early adopters of Starlink satellite internet, and the library was even part of its "beta" testing program. The recent availability of Spectrum Broadband Internet townwide may result in a greater level of adoption of broadband by a greater portion of the population, now that the services is more widely available. According to the librarian, actual speeds and levels of reliable service are currently being assessed and compared by Town residents and Community Anchor Institutions and may be variable dependent upon location and may not be completely reflective of anticipated or advertised speeds at all times or in all places. This should be confirmed with the Working Group and Stakeholders via focus group meetings.

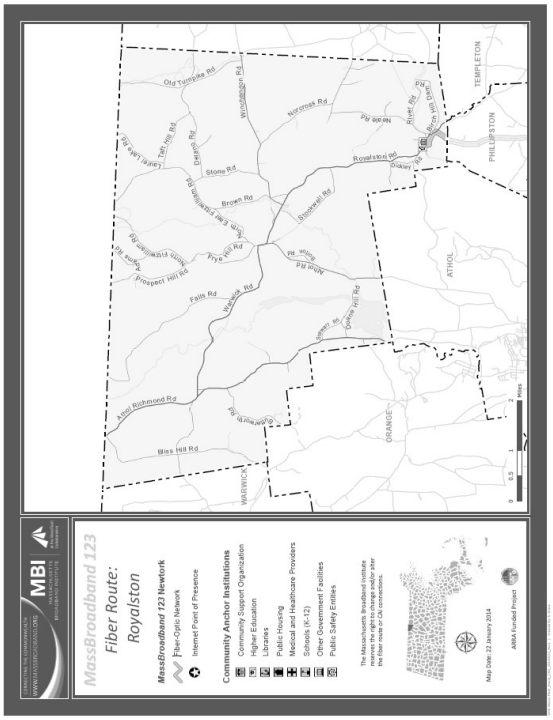
Public Broadband Infrastructure

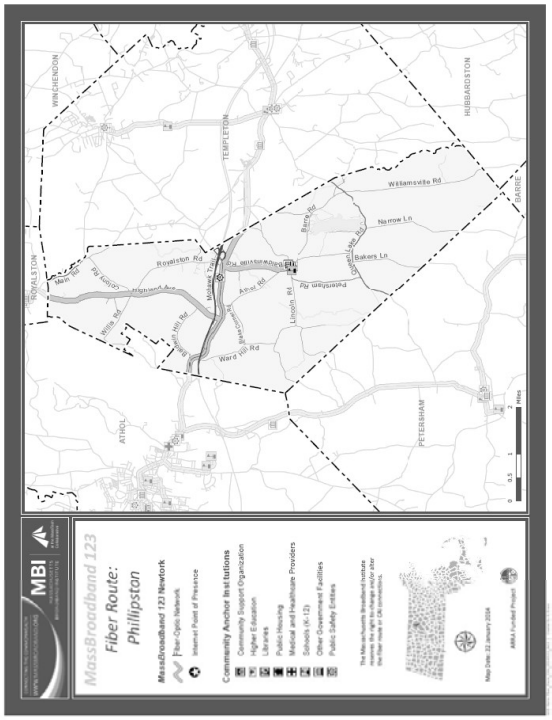












Critical Digital Assets & Community Anchor Institutions

Critical Digital Assets and Community Anchor Institutions are critical public resources for emergency personnel, residents, students, workers, and visitors to access internet services and devices outside their homes and for the effective and efficient administration of government and civic life. The following outlines the communities' digital assets and institutions and their current role in the availability of digital equity resources and the provision of public internet and digital literacy programs and services.

Critical Digital Assets

The term "Critical Digital Asset" means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System, including assets that perform Safety-Sensitive and/or Emergency Planning (SSEP) functions. Such assets (facilities- and systems-based infrastructure) are often critical to emergency response and public safety and provide support to protect, serve, or administer important government and public safety functions. Critical Digital Assets sometimes provide a pathway to other critical systems or a support system asset whose failure or compromise could result in a threat to public safety. Critical Digital Assets are often at risk of cyber-attacks and proper digital network security and access is crucial to their protection and function.

Below is a summary of the primary Critical Digital Assets for Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston:

Templeton

Critical Digital Assets – Templeton		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Other Government Facility	Templeton Highway Dept.	381 Baldwinville Rd.
Other Government Buildings	Templeton Mun Light & Water	86 Bridge Street
Public Safety	Templeton Fire Department Station #2	2 School Street
Post Office	Templeton Post Office	449 Patriots Road
Post Office	Baldwinville Post Office	38 Elm Street
Post Office	East Templeton Post Office	132 Patriots Road
Public Safety	Police Station Dispatch Center	33 South Road
Other Government Buildings	Templeton Wastewater Treatment Facility	33 Reservoir Rd
Other Government Buildings	Gardner Wastewater Treatment Facility	52 Plant Road
Public Safety	Templeton- Center Fire Station	18 - 22 South Road
Public Safety	Templeton Emergency Management	1 - 3 Elm Street

Phillipston

Critical Digital Assets - Phillipston		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Other Government Buildings	Phillipston Highway Department	95 Templeton Road
Public Safety	Emergency Management Facility	90 State Road
Public Safety	PHILLIPSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT	40 The Common

Royalston

Critical Digital Assets - Royalston		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Other Government Buildings	Whitney Hall	5 School Street
Post Office	Royalston Post Office/Royalston Historic Society	1 Athol Road
Other Government Buildings	Royalston DPW	19 Winchendon Road
Public Safety	Royalston Public Safety	4 Athol Road
Public Safety	Royalston Fire Station #2	17 Main Street

Community Anchor Institutions

The term "Community Anchor Institution" as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Below is a summary of the primary Community Anchor Institutions located within Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston:

Templeton

Community Anchor Institutions - Templeton		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Town Hall	Templeton Town Hall	160 Patriots Road
Clinics	Mountain View Family Practice	570 Baldwinville Road
Senior Center	Templeton Senior Community Center	16 Senior Drive
Church	Holy Cross Church	26 Lake Avenue
Church	First Church	1 Wellington Street
Church	St. Vincent de Paul	18 Pleasant Street
Church	Memorial Congregational Church	4 Memorial Street
Church	St. Martin's Rectory	248 State Road
Library	BOYNTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	27 BOYNTON ROAD
School	Templeton Elementary School	17 South Road
School	Narragansett Regional Middle School	460 Baldwinville Road
School	Narragansett High School	464 Baldwinville Road

Phillipston

Community Anchor Institutions - Phillipston		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Church	Congregational Church	66 The Common
Library	PHILLIPS FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	25 TEMPLETON ROAD
Town Hall	Phillipston Town Hall	50 On The Common
Other Government Building	Phillipston Memorial Community Building (former school)	20 On The Common

Royalston

Community Anchor Institutions - Royalston		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Church	First Congregational Church	15 On the Common
Church	Second Congregational Church	3 School St
Library	PHINEHAS S. NEWTON LIBRARY	19 ON THE COMMON
Town Hall	Royalston Town Hall	13 On The Common
School	The Village School	On The Common
School	Royalston Community School	96 Winchendon Road

Figure 7 below is a map showing the locations of all Critical Digital Assets and Community Anchor Institutions located within Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, as listed in the tables above.

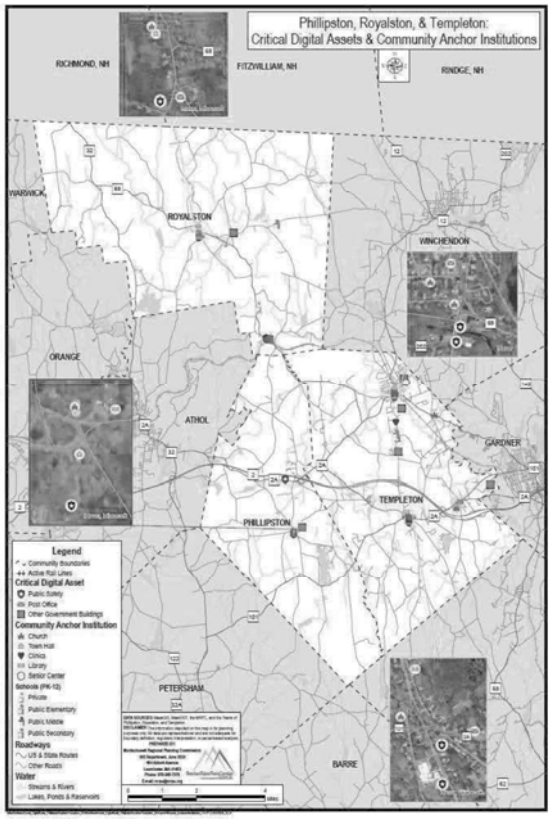


Figure 7. Critical Digital Assets & Community Anchor Institutions.

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

SESSION 8.2: MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION

You can use and adapt these prompt questions at different points in the process of establishing measurable objectives & implementation strategies after you have identified barriers to digital equity for each priority population group. These are suggestions to get you thinking and writing.

1. If you have already identified some of the barriers for each priority population in your community, list them here.

2. Make sure to consider the appropriate scale for each measurable objective, utilizing the following three axes:

    a. Geography - community-wide to targeted areas

    b. Population - general population to specific priority populations

    c. Digital inclusion domains - broad support (e.g., Digital Navigators & coalitions) to specific needs (devices, skills, etc)

3. **SMART** attributes can be used to help develop clearly defined objectives. SMART objectives include the following attributes:

    a. **S**pecific: includes the "who", "what", and "where." Use only one action verb to avoid issues with measuring success.

    b. **M**easurable: focuses on how much change is expected.

    c. **A**chievable: realistic given program resources and planned implementation.

    d. **R**elevant: relates directly to program/activity goals.

    e. **T**ime-bound: focuses on when the objective will be achieved.[1]

4. As you develop your measurable objectives and identify potential implementation strategies using the table below, consider the following questions :

    a. What is an achievable long-term target for each objective, and in what timeframe? In five years? In ten years? (*Hint: this could be the overall time horizon for your Digital Equity Plan, or it could be a specific timeframe for each objective*)

    b. What incremental targets (i.e., benchmarks) should be set to track progress and ensure your region/community is on track to achieve the objectives?
        i. What data will be used to measure progress? How often is it available? How will it be collected?
        ii. How will incremental targets inform the development and allocation of funding, staff, partnerships, and other key resources?

    c. How will you define what is in and out of scope?

    d. Among the identified priority populations, is there greater urgency for certain groups? How will you weigh strategies that benefit specific groups with those that benefit the population at-large (e.g., community-wide digital inclusion coalitions)?

[1] https://www.cdc.gov/std/program/pupestd/developing%20program%20goals%20and%20objectives.pdf

5. Using the table below, list a measurable objective that responds to each barrier, ways progress toward the objective will be measured, and possible implementation strategies to achieve the desired objective. Examples of each are provided to help get your team started.

Digital Equity Barrier	Measurable Objective	Metrics - How Objective Will Be Measured	Potential Implementation Strategies
Example: Survey respondents identifying as English Language learners reported difficulty in navigating a public service website.	*Example: By 2028, [X]% of public institutions will have online public resources available in a multilingual format.*	*Example:* ● *Baseline (current state from Needs Assessment)* ● *Incremental Target(s)* ● *Long-term Target*	*Establish a working group of staff responsible for web maintenance at all public agencies in the community along with native speakers of the top non-English languages in the community to work on content translation & posting.*

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Meeting #3 – Existing Conditions Review & Goals/Actions

Thursday, July 25th, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Sign-in Sheet

Name	Town/Position	Email
Gracelyn Currie	Templeton Grant Admin	gcurrie@templetonma.gov
Steve Castle	TCTV	tctv@templetonma.gov
Dottie Bresnahan	TCTV	dbresnahan@templetonma.gov

Notes: Jeff Legros & Gregor Goodlet in attendance for MRPC

Templeton Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Meeting #4 – Needs, Goals, & Actions

Thursday, September 5th, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Public Notice Agenda

- **Introductions**
    - **MRPC Planning Team**
    - **Town participants – Working Group Members**
    - **Status Update – Project Extension and Change of Scope**
- **Existing Conditions Assessment (Draft) Review:**
    - **Existing Conditions Assessment Report**
        - **Additional Comments/Working Group Input**
- **Community Needs:**
    - **Stakeholder Questionnaires & Interviews**
        - **Status update**
        - **Focus Groups or Pop-up Events**
        - **Additional info needs**
- **Measurable Objectives & Implementation (Goals & Actions)**
    - **Working Group Input (Session 8.2 Worksheet)**
    - **Needs/Actions notes from TCTV, Grant Admin, Community Services**
    - **Additional input and follow-ups**
- **Next Steps**
    - **Focus Group Meetings or Round-table discussions**
    - **Collect Additional Data; Finalize & Present Plan**
    - **Prepare and submit Implementation Grant**

Templeton Digital Equity Planning (DeP) Project

Meeting #4 – Needs, Goals, and Actions

Thursday, September 5th, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM
Tempelton Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

Sign-in Sheet

Name	Town/Position	Email
Gracelyn Currie	Templeton Grant Admin	gCurrie@templetonma.gov
Steve Caster	TCTV Director	tctv@templetonma.gov
Remote Jack: offline	Community Services	"on file"

Notes:

Digital Equity Planning: Existing Conditions & Community Needs Assessment

Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston, Massachusetts

This project was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds.

August 13, 2024
Revisions
- Example Only -
DRAFT

Digital Equity Overview

Equitable access to broadband internet varies across demographic groups based on geographic location, race, age, income, education, and other related factors. Physical, geo-spatial, and socioeconomic challenges and barriers associated with these factors have resulted in noticeable gaps in equity related to broadband access, affordability, and adaptability at local, regional, and national scales. Similarly, broadband service and cost-based gaps also exist at each of these scales and often correlate to the same demographic factors specified above. These gaps, and their associated challenges and barriers are often exacerbated in rural areas at the community and regional scales. The rural communities in Northwest Worcester County of the Montachusett Region are no exception, and perhaps are a prime example of how Digital Equity gaps affect certain groups or segments of the population within rural areas.

With local and regional partners, in consultation with the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, under the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's Municipal Digital Equity Planning program, the Towns of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston are working to better understand their community needs in an effort to improve broadband internet access, enhance digital equity, and increase digital literacy among residents, businesses, and institutions. As with many other rural areas, broadband internet accessibility and connectivity issues currently do exist and are related to various factors, including gaps in reliable internet availability, the rural location of the communities, local and regional socioeconomic demographics affecting income and opportunity, higher-than average services costs, affordability and convenient access to devices and technology, gaps in digital literacy training, accessibility issues, and the lack of digital resources and programs preclude access for many individuals. Further, the populations of these rural communities and surrounding region include a high proportion of individuals representing a covered population of the Digital Equity Act.

The following existing conditions analysis and community needs assessment evaluates certain aspects of the Town of Templeton's, Phillipston's, and Royalston's population demographics with specific regard to the eight (8) Covered Populations of the Digital Equity Act. The analysis highlights vulnerabilities and inequities regarding internet access relative to availability, affordability, and adoptability – the three pillars of digital equitability and broadband internet accessibility. Finally,

Prepared by Gracelyn Currie, Jakie Prime, and Steve Cassell (Received by MRPC 8/15/2024)

Digital Equity Planning – Town of Templeton

Draft Revisions

Existing Conditions & Community Needs Assessment

Page 25 – Critical Digital Assets:

Templeton **Critical Digital Assets - Templeton**		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Other Government Facility	Templeton Highway Dept.	381 Baldwinville Rd.
Other Government Buildings	Templeton Mun Light & Water	86 Bridge Street
Public Safety	Templeton Fire Department Station #2	2 School Street
Post Office	Templeton Post Office	449 Patriots Road
Post Office	Baldwinville Post Office	38 Elm Street
Post Office	East Templeton Post Office	132 Patriots Road
Public Safety	Police Station Dispatch Center	33 South Road
Other Government Buildings	Templeton Wastewater Treatment Facility	33 Reservoir Rd
Other Government Buildings	Gardner Wastewater Treatment Facility	52 Plant Road
Public Safety	Templeton- Center Fire Station	~~18 - 22 South Road~~ 466 Patriots Rd.
Public Safety	Templeton Emergency Management	1 ~~- 3~~ Elm Street
+ Other Government Buildings	Light Department Garage (Cable Server Storage Location)	3 Elm Street
+ Other Government Buildings	Town Hall	160 Patriots Road
+ Other Government Buildings	Scout Hall	135 Patriots Road
+ Other Government Buildings	Senior Center	79 Bridge Street

Page 26 – Community Anchor Institutions:

Templeton **Community Anchor Institutions - Templeton**		
Facility Type	**Organization**	**Location**
Town Hall	Templeton Town Hall	160 Patriots Road
Clinics	Mountain View Family Practice	570 Baldwinville Road
Senior Center	Templeton Senior Community Center	16 Senior Drive
Church	Holy Cross Church	26 Lake Avenue
Church	First Church	1 Wellington Street
Church	St. Vincent de Paul	18 Pleasant Street
Church	Memorial Congregational Church	4 Memorial Street
Church	St. Martin's Rectory	248 State Road
Library	Boyton Public Library	27 Boyton Road
School	Templeton Elementary School	17 South Road
School	Narragansett Regional Middle School	460 Baldwinville Road
School	Narragansett High School	464 Baldwinville Road
+ Government Support	Templeton Housing Authority	99 bridge Street
+ Government Support	Scout hall	135 Patriots Road
+ Nonprofit Support	Narragansett Historical Society	1 Boyton Road

Page 28 – Figure 7. Critical Digital Assets & Community Anchor Institutions

Separate the Philipston, Royalton, and Templeton maps onto their own pages to provide a clearer image and more precise locations of the assets and institutions.

Prepared by Gracelyn Currie, Jakie Prime, and Steve Cassell (Received by MRPC 8/15/2024)

Draft Goals and Objectives

Identified Barrier	Affected Priority Population	Solution	Implementation Grant Category
Lack of digital literacy among identified priority populations	Seniors, Rural, Veterans	Increase staff support to provide digital literacy education[1]	Staff capacity for digital equity / digital literacy / education, outreach, and adoption
Lack of in-home devises among identified priority populations and insufficient quantity/quality of publicly accessible substitutes	Seniors, Rural, Veterans	Expand the number of publicly accessible devises in Scout Hall and the Library[2]	Public space modernization
Lack of quality internet access available to the public in Town buildings[3]	Seniors, Rural, Veterans	Upgrade broadband/ Wi-Fi/ internet capabilities in Town Hall, Senior Center, Scout Hall, and Library	Public space modernization

1. Fund additional hours for preexisting TCTV employees to create digital literacy training videos and present them on the Senior Center's NEAT Board.
2. We would like to see 10-15 tablets and 1-2 desktop computers. Whether this is included in the plan or not, we would also like to download instant captioning software (XRAI Glass) on the tablets to help aid in the accessibility of public meetings. This would not interfere with the public's ability to use the tablets during Scout Hall and the Library's normal open hours.
3. If needed, we can run speed tests in the affected buildings to provide supporting data.

Templeton Digital Equity: TCTV (provided by Steve Castle by email on 10/2/2024)

Goal	Action	Category
Enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of local digital equity initiatives.	**Templeton Community Television (TCTV) is uniquely equipped to oversee digital initiatives and execute them.**	**All**
Increase affordability and access to fast, reliable internet.	**1. Promote discounts, affordability and provide equipment through TCTV** **2. Upgrade broadband/ Wi-Fi/ internet capabilities in Town Hall, Senior Center, Scout Hall, and Library[1]**	**Connectivity; Devices; Public space modernization**
Improve digital equity through community engagement and inclusion.	**Open houses at Scout Hall in Templeton, V.R., Karaoke, other digital tools.**	**Digital Literacy; Community Development**
Promote digital literacy to close the gap and empower the community	**1. TCTV can produce short videos, host classes, and be a digital help desk** **2. Increase staff support to provide digital literacy education[2]**	**Community Development; Staff capacity for digital equity / digital literacy / education, outreach, and adoption**
Increase access to devices within homes and public spaces.	**1. Purchase public computers and tablets to loan out. Also, hot spots, Wi-Fi, etc.** **2. Expand the number of publicly accessible digital devises/computers in Scout Hall, Library, and Senior Center[3]**	**Connectivity; Devices; Public Space Modernization**
Identify and secure long term or reoccurring funding avenues.	**Seek grants, funding, and partnerships to further Digital Lab for Workforce Development**	**Digital Literacy; Community Development**
Become a municipal leader in digital equity through collaboration, inclusion, and progression.	**Leverage TCTV's good standing in our community to host events and initiatives that engage and inform the public**	**Community Development**

[1] If needed, we can run speed tests in the affected buildings to provide supporting data.

[2] Fund additional hours for preexisting TCTV employees to create digital literacy training videos and present them on the Senior Center's NEAT Board.

[3] We would like to see 10-15 tablets, 3 laptops, and 3 desktop computers. Whether this is included in the plan or not, we would also like to download instant captioning software (XRAI Glass) on the tablets to help aid in the accessibility of public meetings. This would not interfere with the public's ability to use the tablets during Scout Hall and the Library's normal open hours.

Categories: Connectivity; Devices; Digital Literacy & Skills; Community Improvement & EquityGoal

Templeton Digital Equity: TCTV (provided by Steve Castle by email on 10/2/2024)

Further develop the city's technological resources and public digital workspaces.	**TCTV will test and utilize new and latest digital technologies to make available and services residents**	**All**
Target services to covered populations and other vulnerable groups and provide opportunities and ongoing support.	**1. Provide Tech-Help at Senior Center** **2. Provide training, resources, devices, and engagement opportunities for youth and others interested in digital tech at Scout Hall & Library** **3. TCTV can provide similar services to Phillipston and Royalston**	**All**
Advocate for residents and businesses alike to grow the local economy through digital inclusion.	**Open promotional advertising opportunities through TCTV and Montachusett.TV digital platforms that reach an audience of 100,000-plus people!**	**All**

Categories: Connectivity; Devices; Digital Literacy & Skills; Community Improvement & Equity

Categories: Connectivity; Devices; Digital Literacy & Skills; Community Improvement & EquityGoal

Templeton DE Meeting –Sept 5, 2024

Attendance: J.L., T.M. (MRPC); S.C., G.C., J.P. – Remote (Templeton DeP Core Team members)

Discussed timeline and new project scope

Existing conditions review comments: add Light Dept Garage – 3 Elm ST to critical assets

Take out Royalston and Phillipston Maps

Availability of services: SC unaware of other services other than cable

Is T Mobile available – Check T Mobile Maps ??

Cellular Networks? SC will look into if there are others

Verizon DSL users? Check to see if these users tap into other towns services and are they located on the fringes of Templeton?

Digital Literacy Training and Navigation:
Jeff discussed needs that are surfacing surrounding internet help desk for specific tasks as they arise. SC feels that TCTV can provide some of this to help interface with public and vice versa. Help desk can also provide assistance for hobbies as well as data processing, medical appointment, etc. and various tasks now required to be performed online.

MRPC is downloading free digital tutorials from a free help platform (**DigitalLearn.org**) to provide a free alternative to NorthStar once planning period ends and MRPC subscription expires. The intent is to provide each DE community with a 3-ring binder (& digital versions) of training materials.

Survey participation: Promote Survey to get additional responses: (only 15 responses at present)

- Templeton Web Site, Templeton Municipal Light & Water Bill
- **MRPC will table at Narragansett Warrior Fest Sept 14**/Movie in the Park in PM
- Reach out to Light company for survey info be included in billing **J.L. will email Tom**
- Scout signups – Sept 10 & 12 5:30 – 7pm, Not a lot of room/maybe survey box only **MRPC will provide survey box and flier(s)**
- Offer chance to win something for taking survey – **J.P./Library will seek prizes**
- Come up with catchy technique/ VR Demo at Scout Hall? **TCTV**
- Create a list of current and ongoing Public Internet and Digital Literacy/Navigator Programs and Resources in Town and through TCTV – **S.C. will come up with a list as an informational flyer or 1-pager**
- Use Digital Lab logo to promote services – What is the Digital Lab? What services will it provide? – **S.C. will come up with catchy flier to use**
- **S.C. will provide link to 360-degree video footage created by TCTV to loop as display**
- **G.C. (Grant Coordinator) will provide tablet to demo/register for captioning app**

School dept. compiled all kinds of data when they participated in the education superhighway. Jeff to follow up with the school to obtain some of the data if possible. JL asked the group if there is a another school contact, other than J.Perrine (IT) that should be contacted? **J.L. will follow up with J. Perrine by email.**

JL is compiling the community needs with information obtained up to this point.

Core Group is now looking over the general goals handed out to provide edits if appropriate. Core group should reach out to Jeff with ideas and thoughts on strategies/actions as well as categories the strategies/actions falls under. J.L. provided a Table of Goals with blank cells for additional goals and strategies/actions recommended by the group and asked that they complete it and provide it back by email or in person if needed.

Group will also reach out if there is a particular graphic one wants to use.

JL encouraged communication between the core group and he to compile a relevant list of general goals and specific strategies.

Timelines were discussed. It was agreed upon that the Core Group would provide input on a draft plan submitted to them by mid-October. JL will submit the plan by the end of Oct to MBI for their comment and then schedule a public session on the final plan to assure deliverables are to MBI by 10/31/24. The public session will incorporate comments from MBI.

A public presentation and comment/input may be held prior to submission of the plan to MBI upon clarification of process

MRPC will provide Templeton with a survey flier and survey box for Warrior Fest.

7.2 Appendix B

Focus Group Materials

NORTHSTAR DIGITAL LITERACY

Wednesday, May 1st at 10:30 am

Templeton Senior Center

What is Northstar?

A program that gives individuals an opportunity to improve their digital skills

Northstar offers lessons on:

- Basic computer skills
- Using email
- Microsoft Word
- Excel
- Social Media
- Cyber security

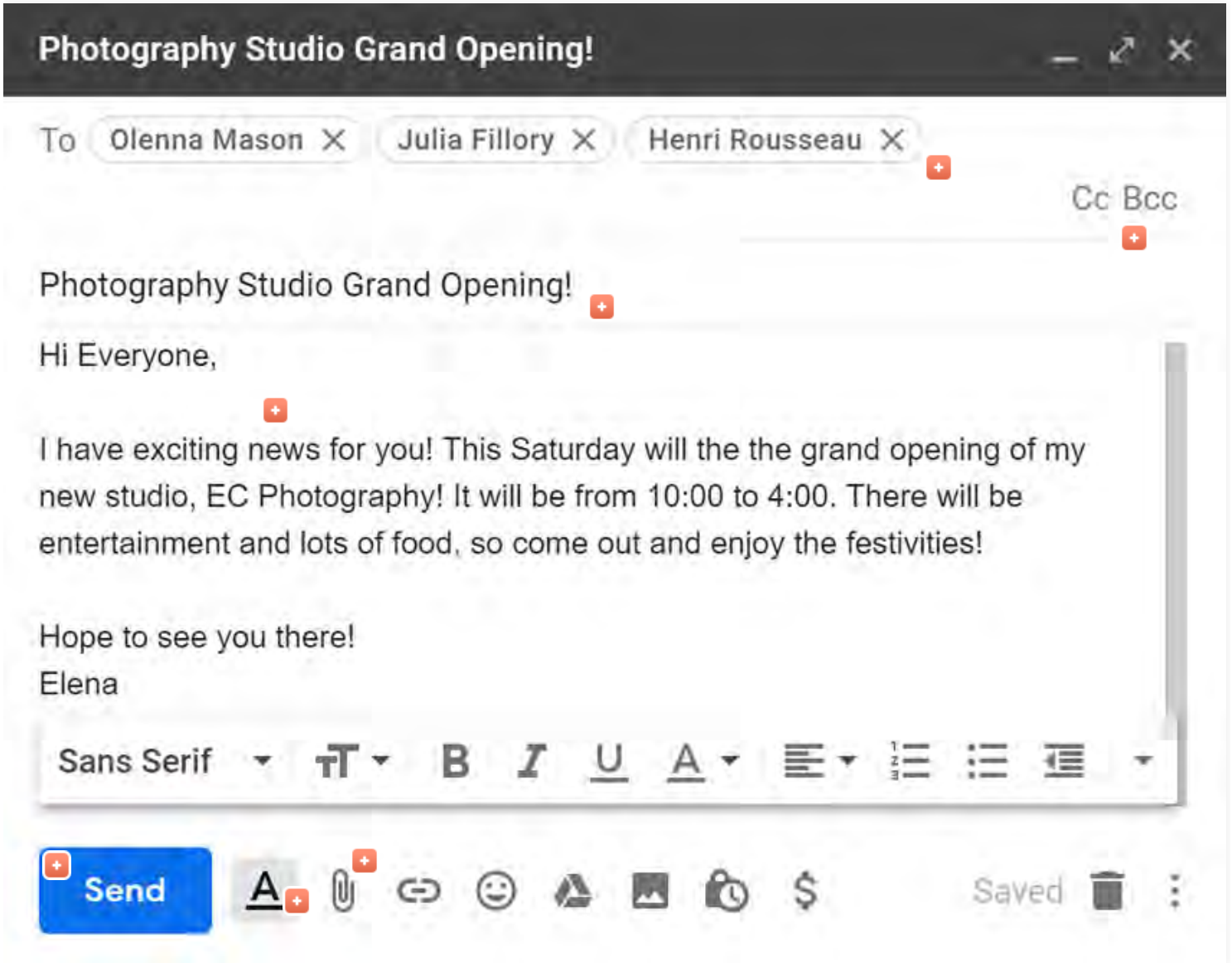
Bring your laptop or smartphone (if you have one!) to register for free!

Sending email

When you write an email, you'll be using the **compose window**. This is where you'll add the **email address of the recipient(s)**, the **subject**, and the **body** of the email, which is the message itself. You'll also be able to add various types of **text formatting**, as well as one or more **attachments**. If you want, you can even create a **signature** that will be added to the end of every email you send.

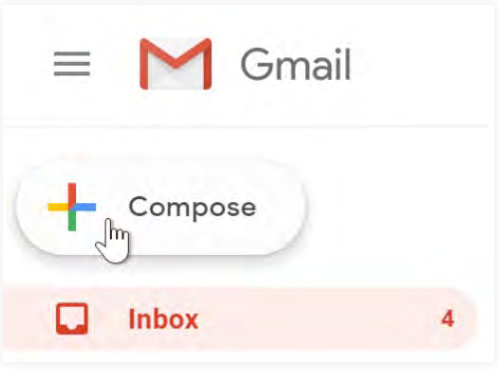
The compose window

Click the buttons in the interactive below to learn about the different parts of the compose window.

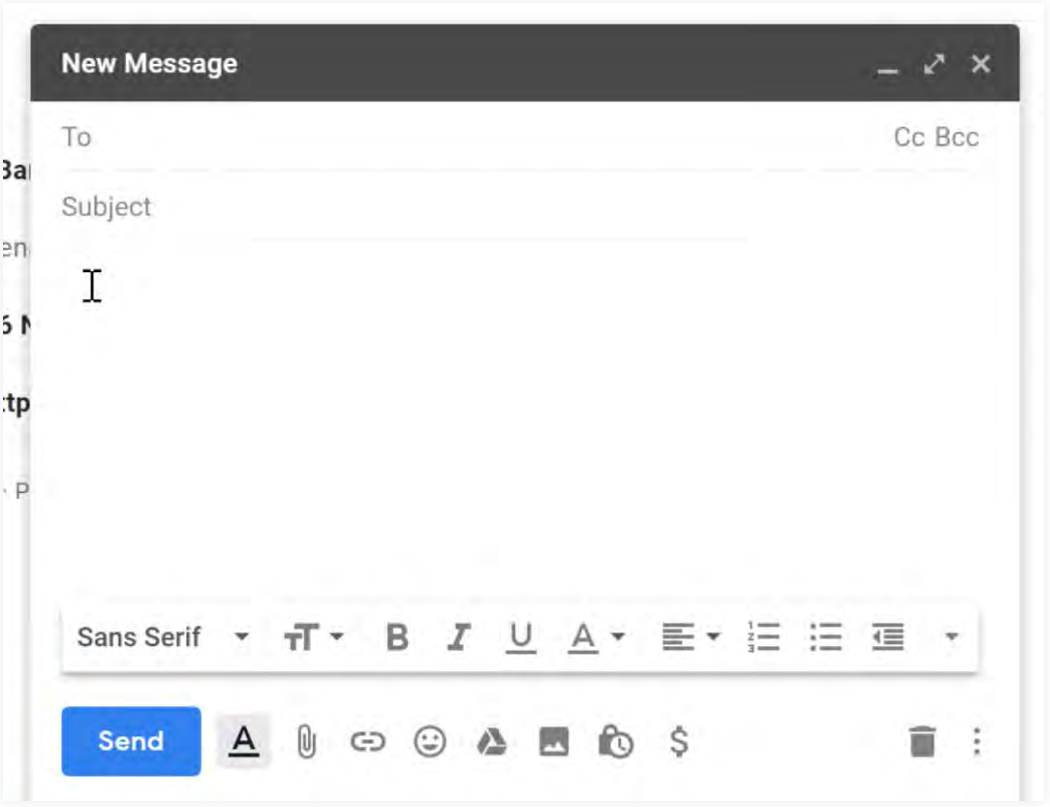


To send an email:

1. In the **left menu pane**, click the **Compose** button.



2. The **compose window** will appear in the lower-right corner of the page.



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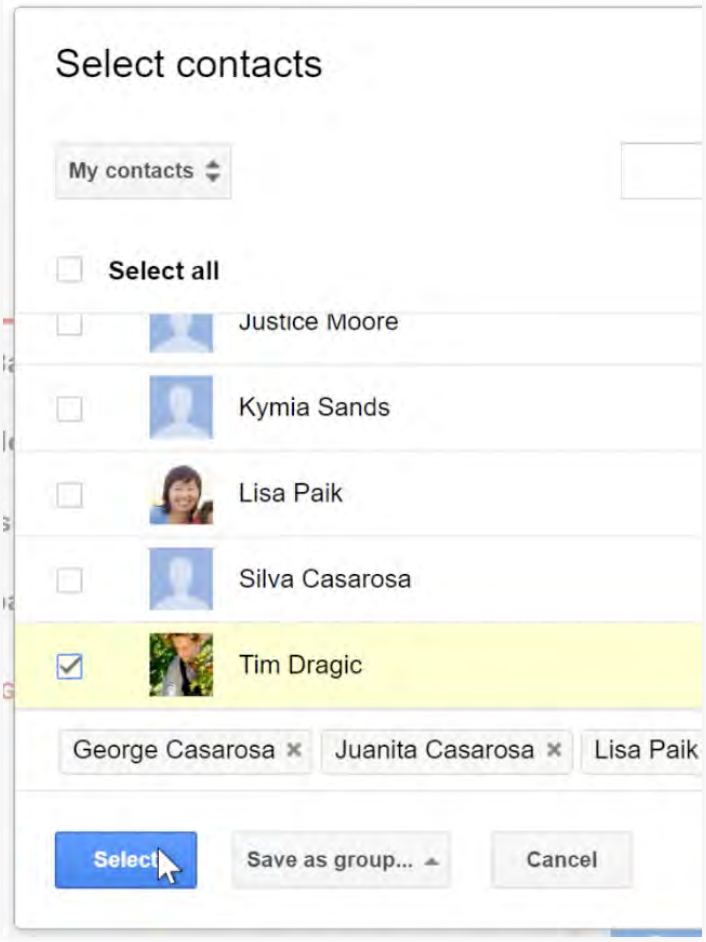

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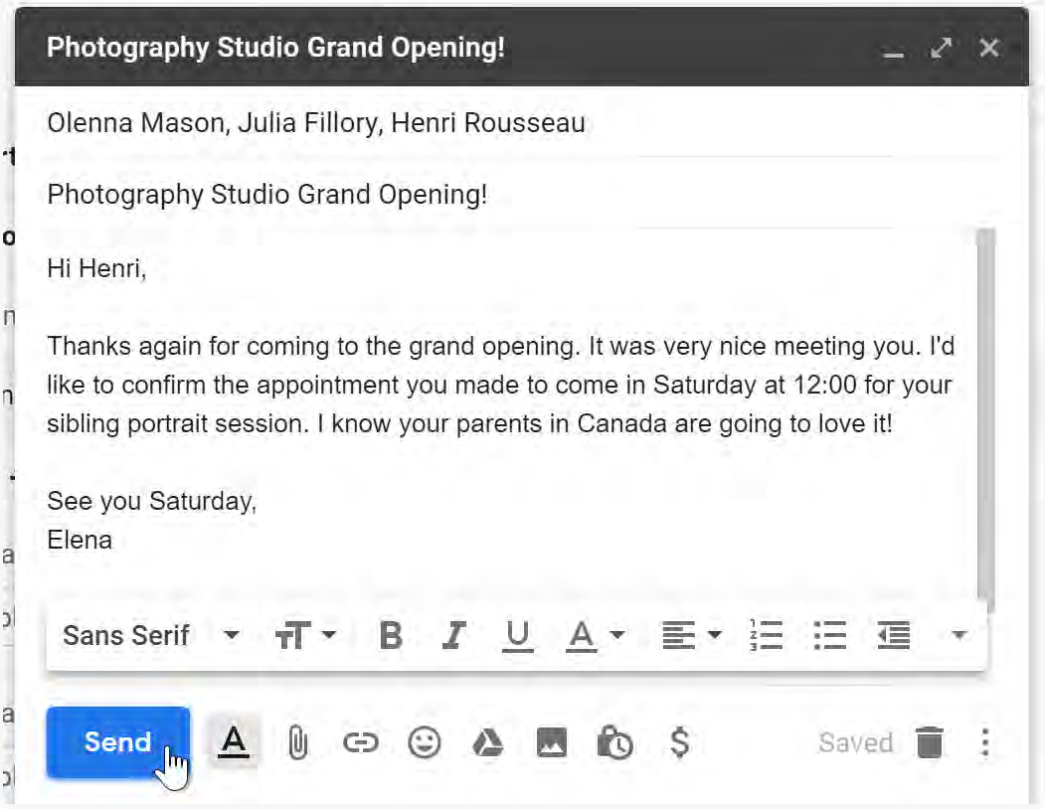

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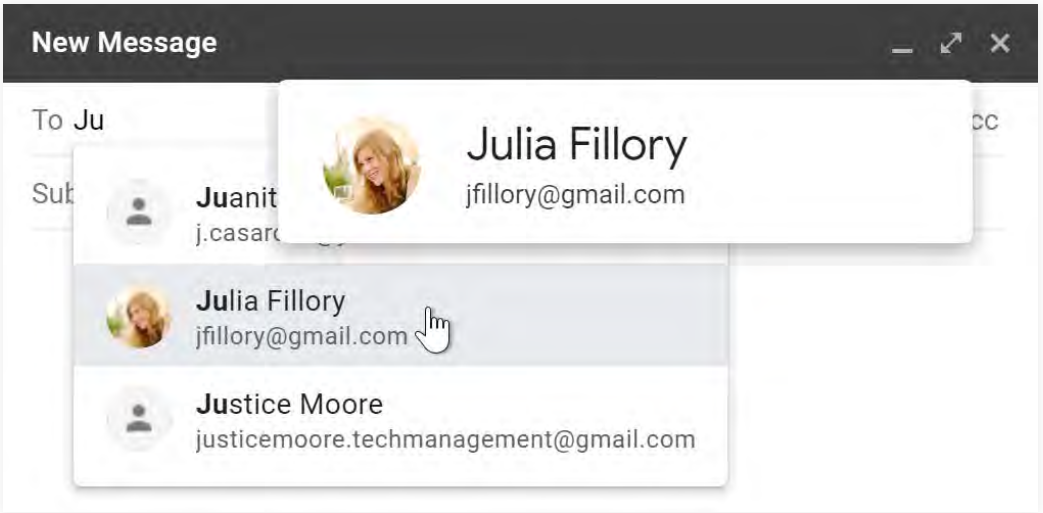

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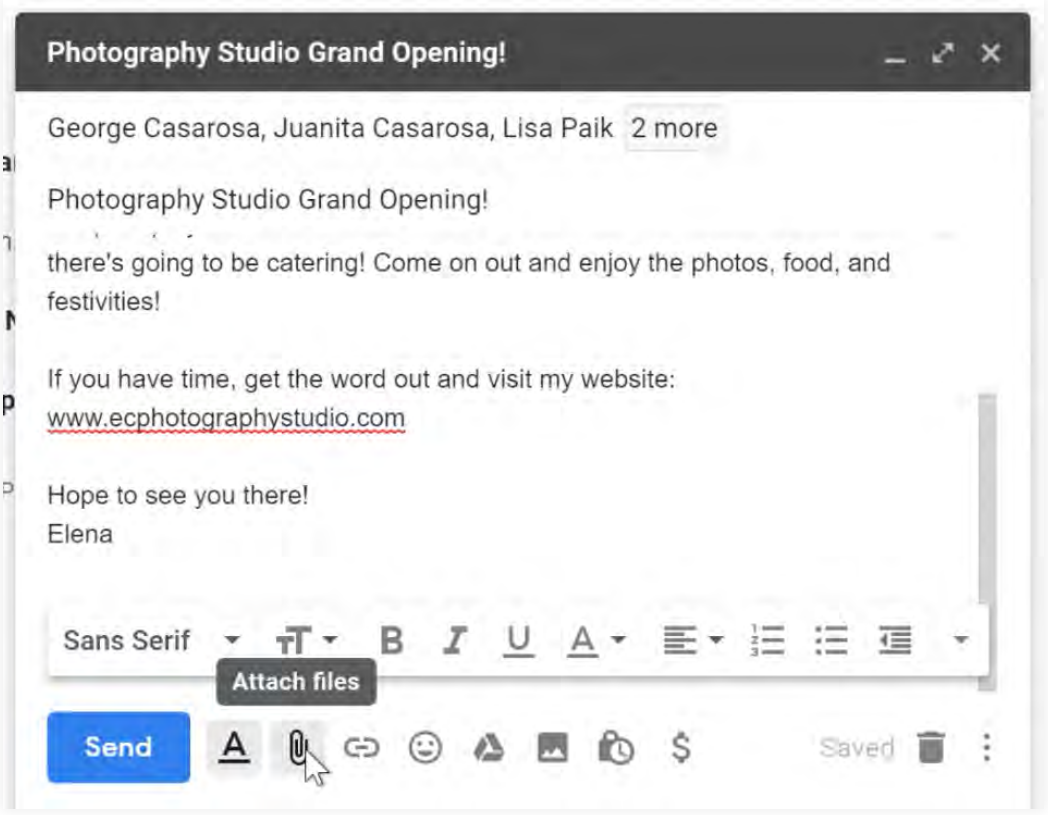

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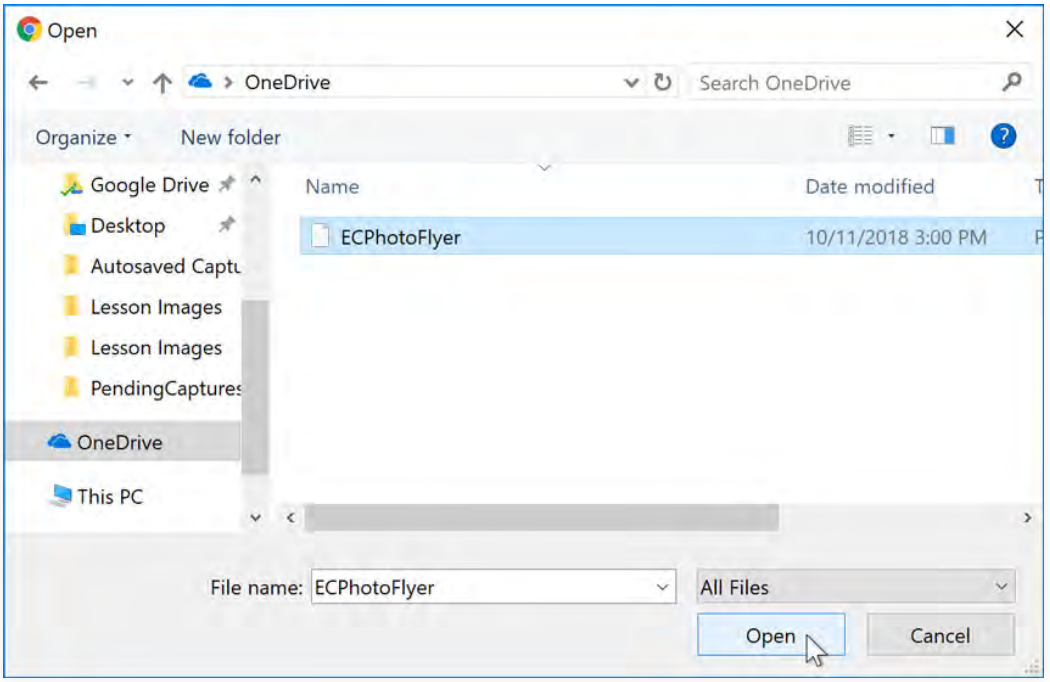

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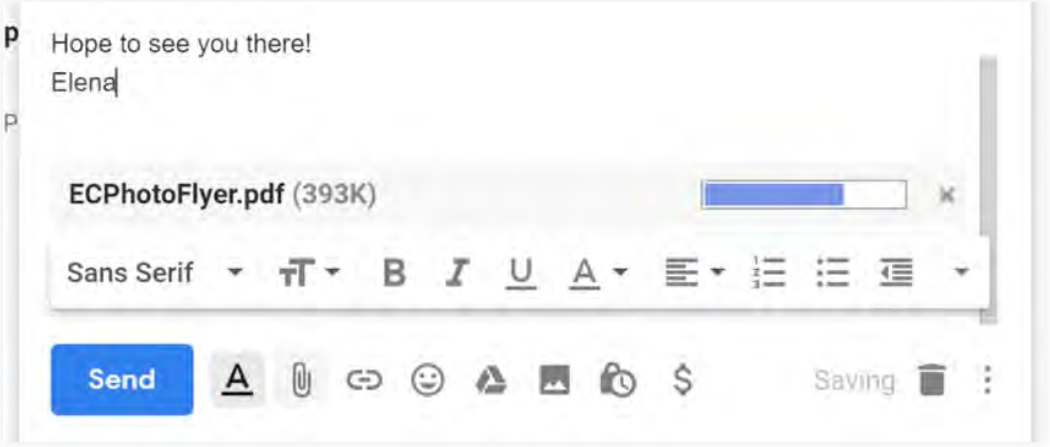

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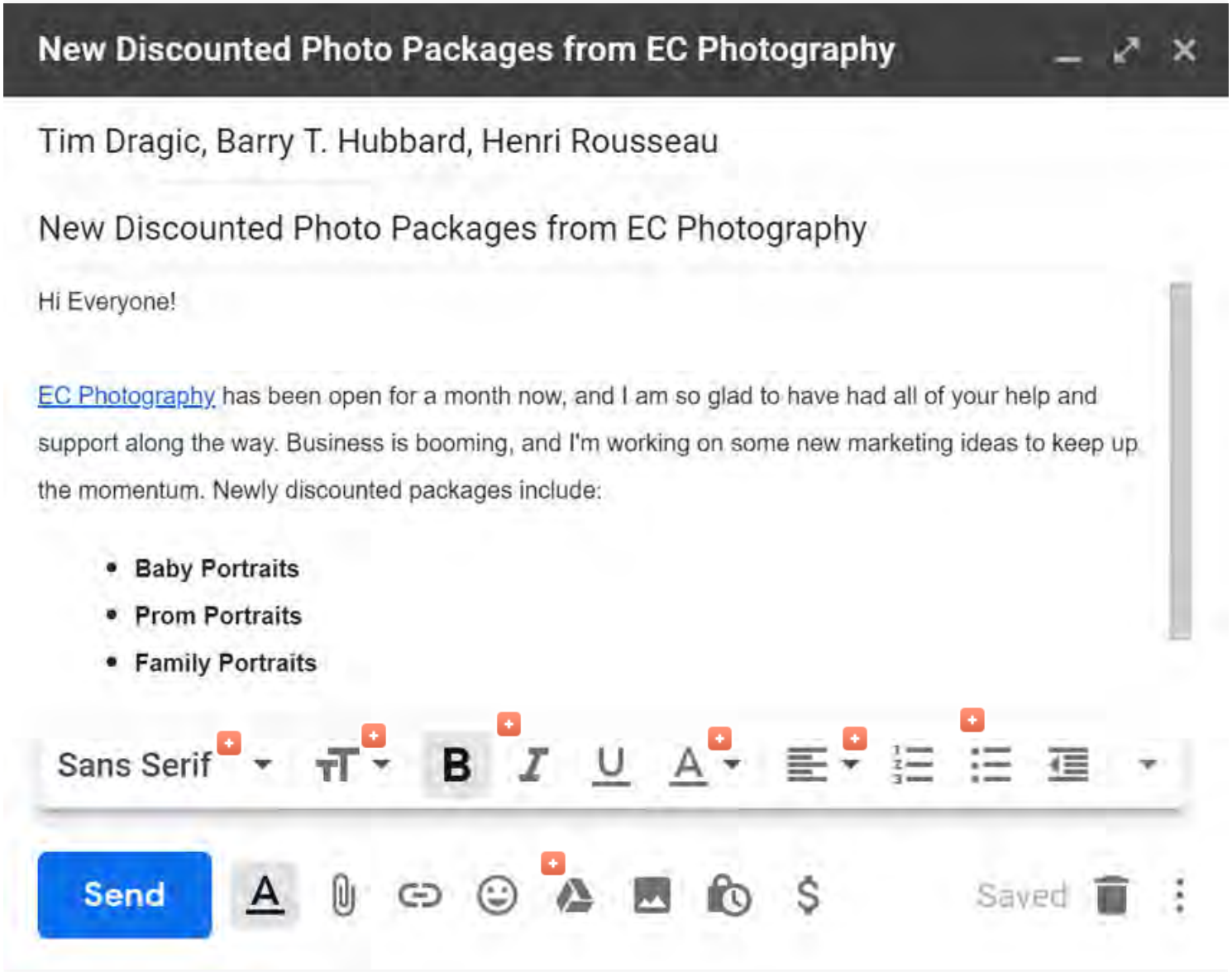

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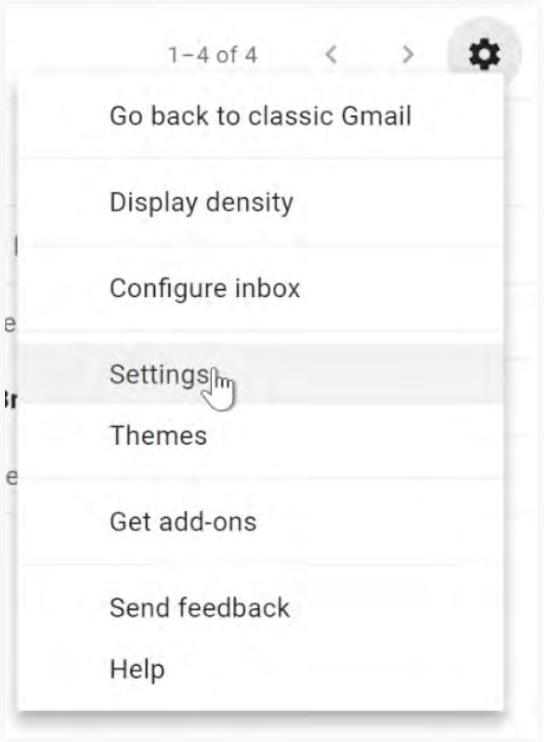

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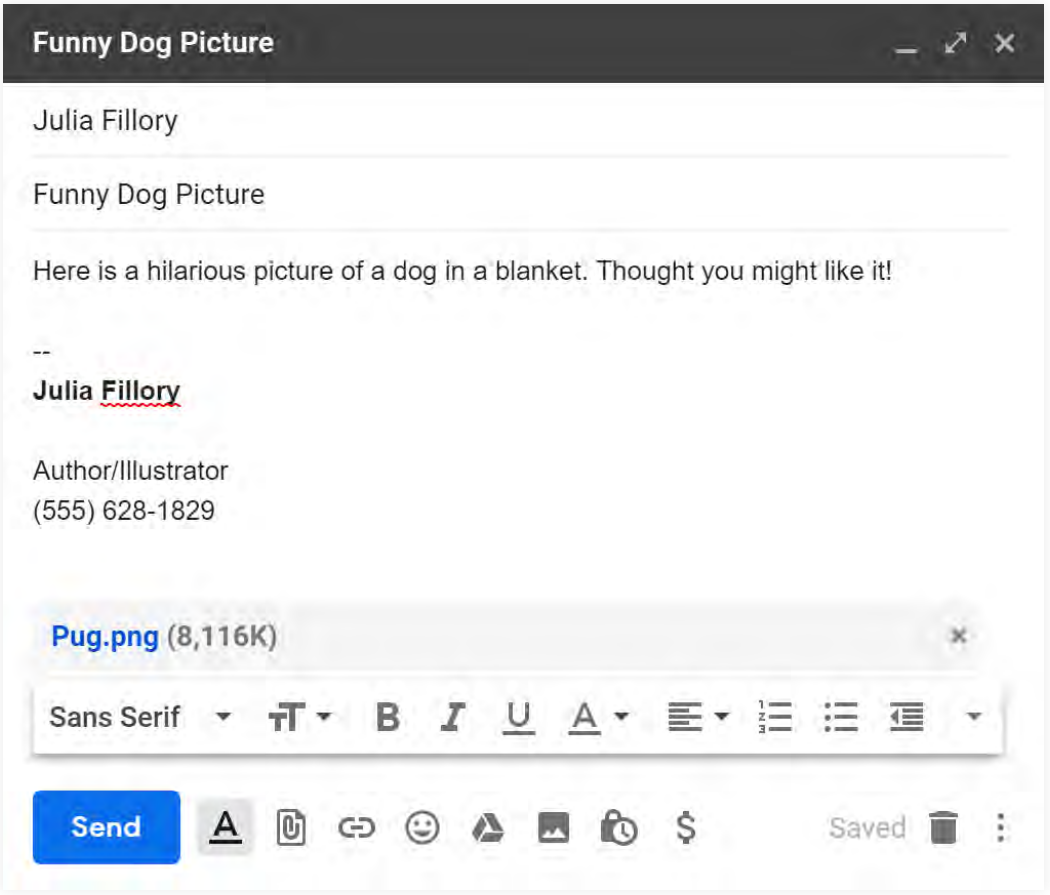

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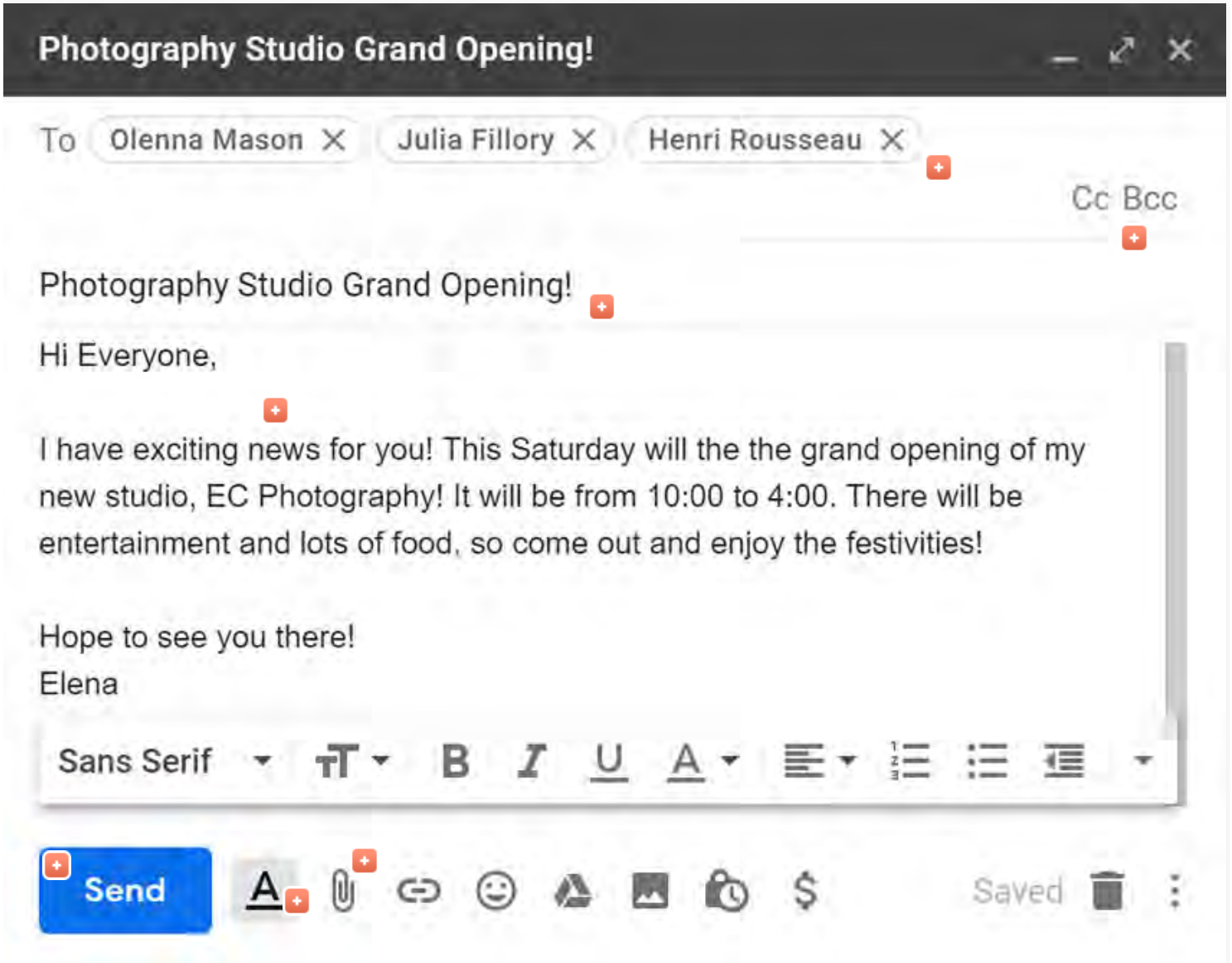
Sending email

When you write an email, you'll be using the **compose window**. This is where you'll add the **email address of the recipient(s)**, the **subject**, and the **body** of the email, which is the message itself. You'll also be able to add various types of **text formatting**, as well as one or more **attachments**. If you want, you can even create a **signature** that will be added to the end of every email you send.

The compose window

Click the buttons in the interactive below to learn about the different parts of the compose window.



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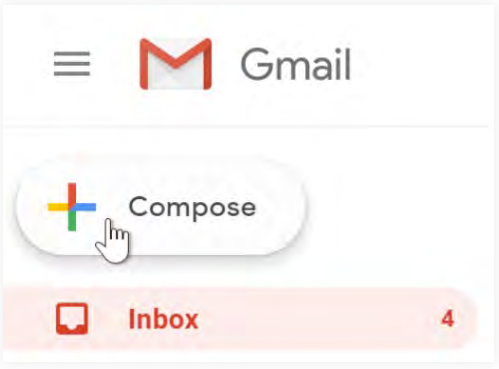

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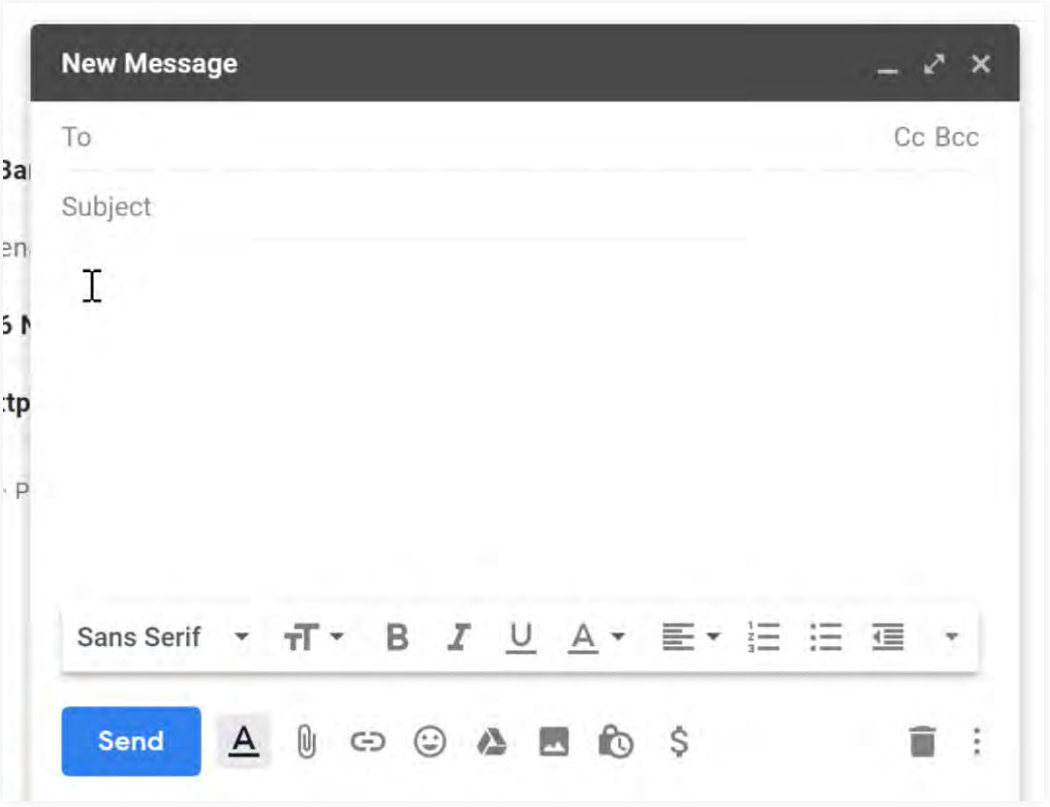

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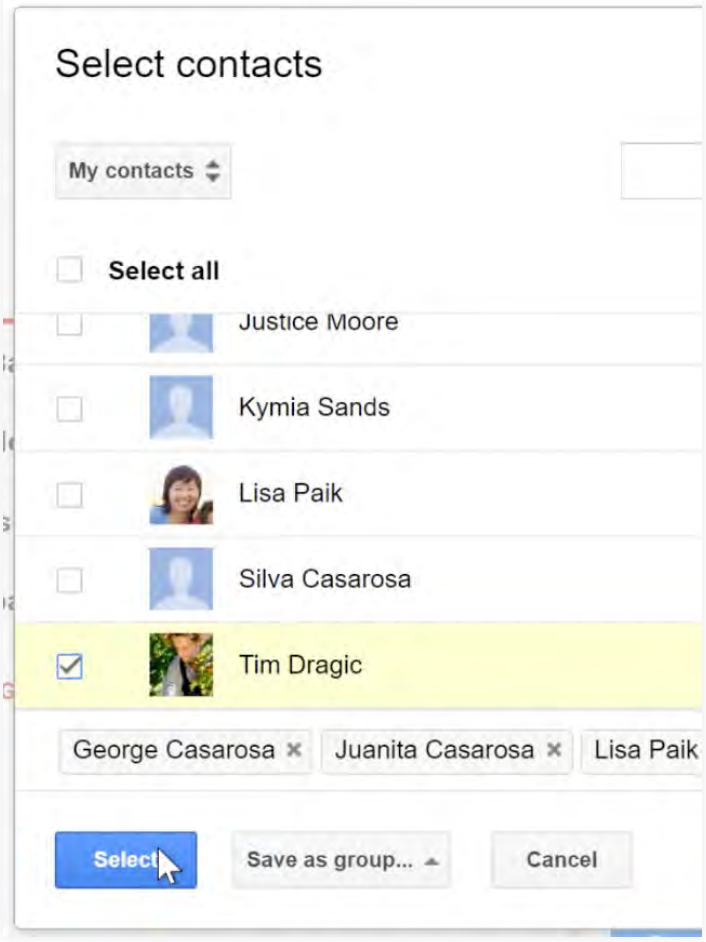

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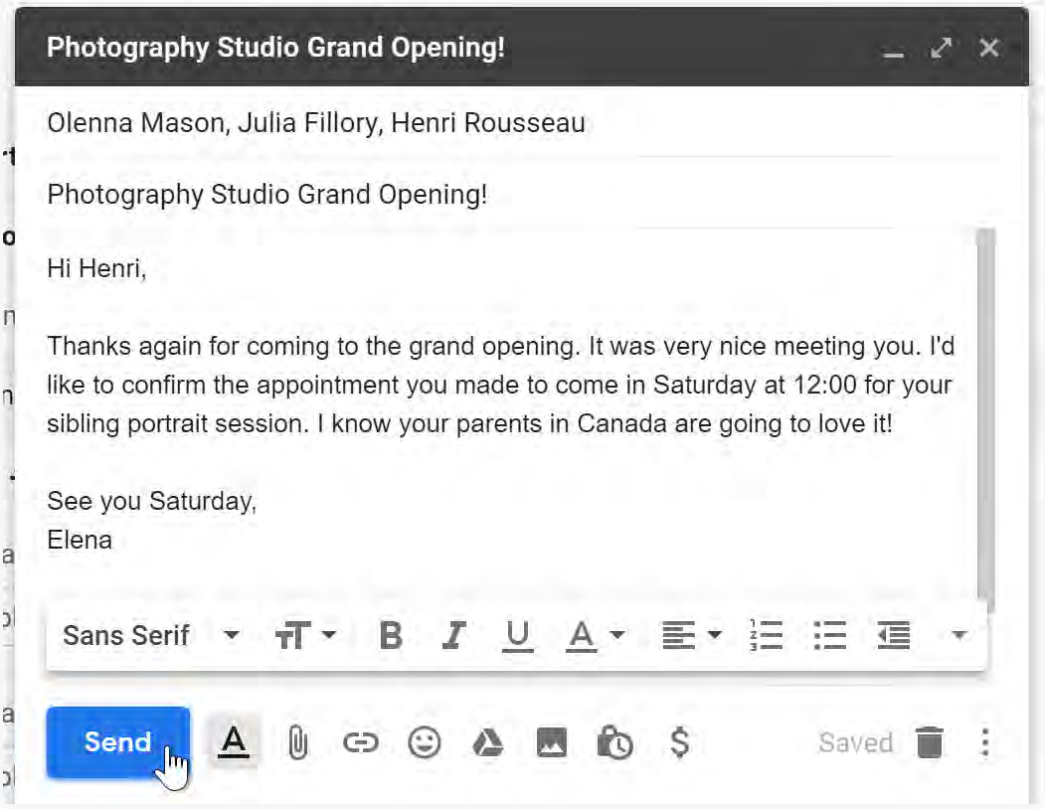

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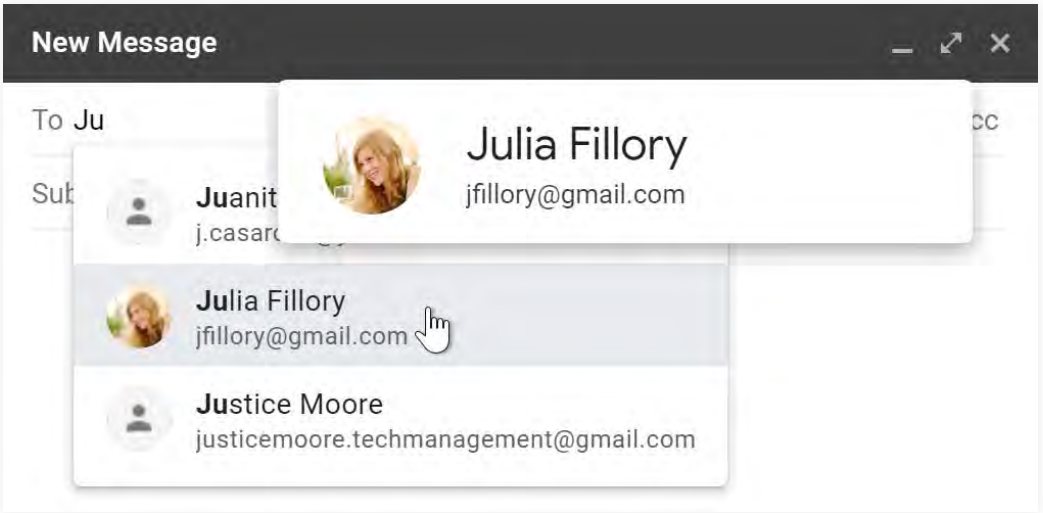

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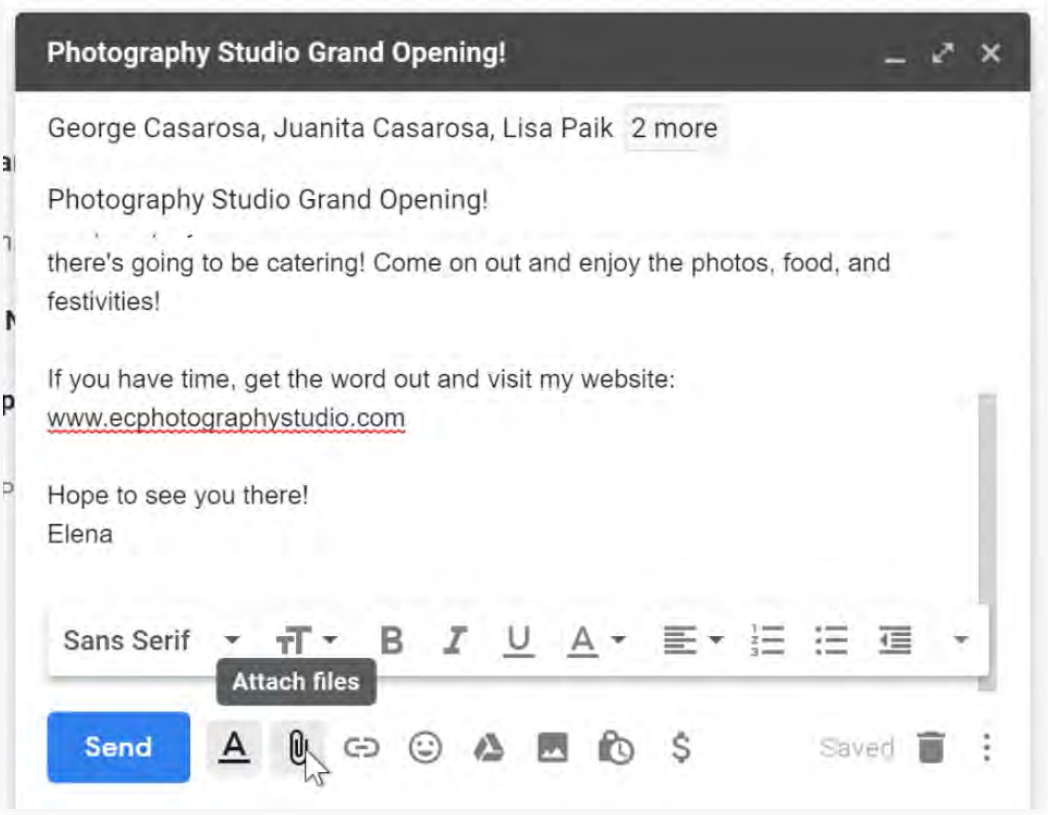

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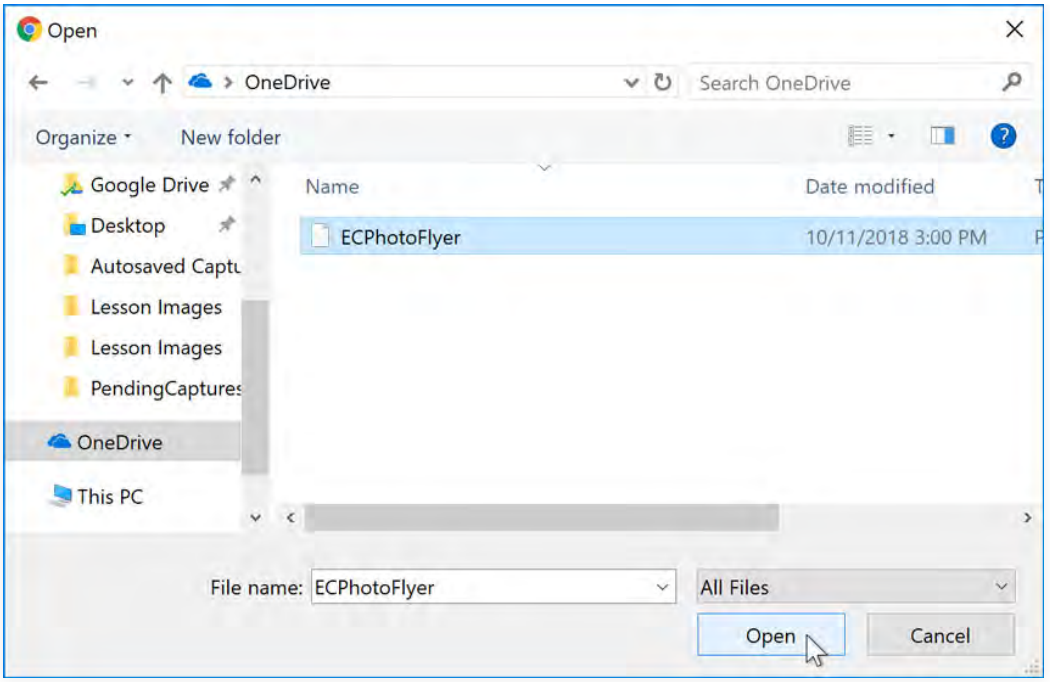

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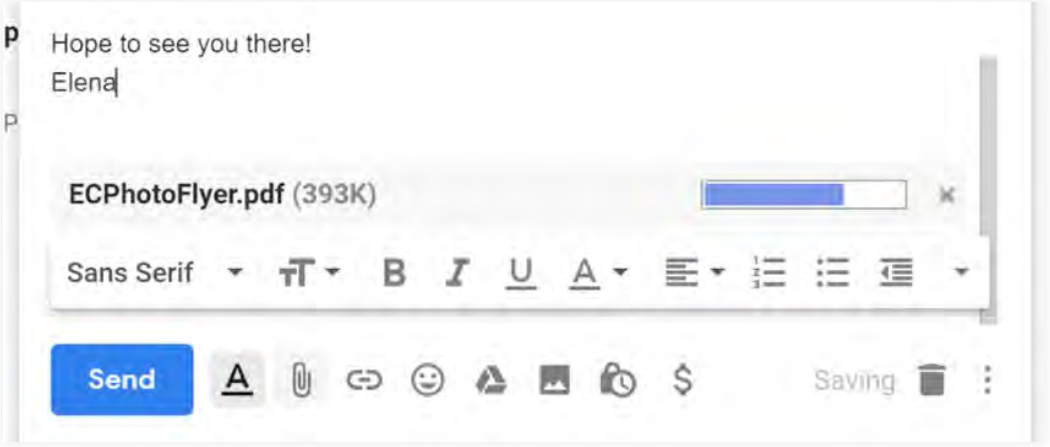

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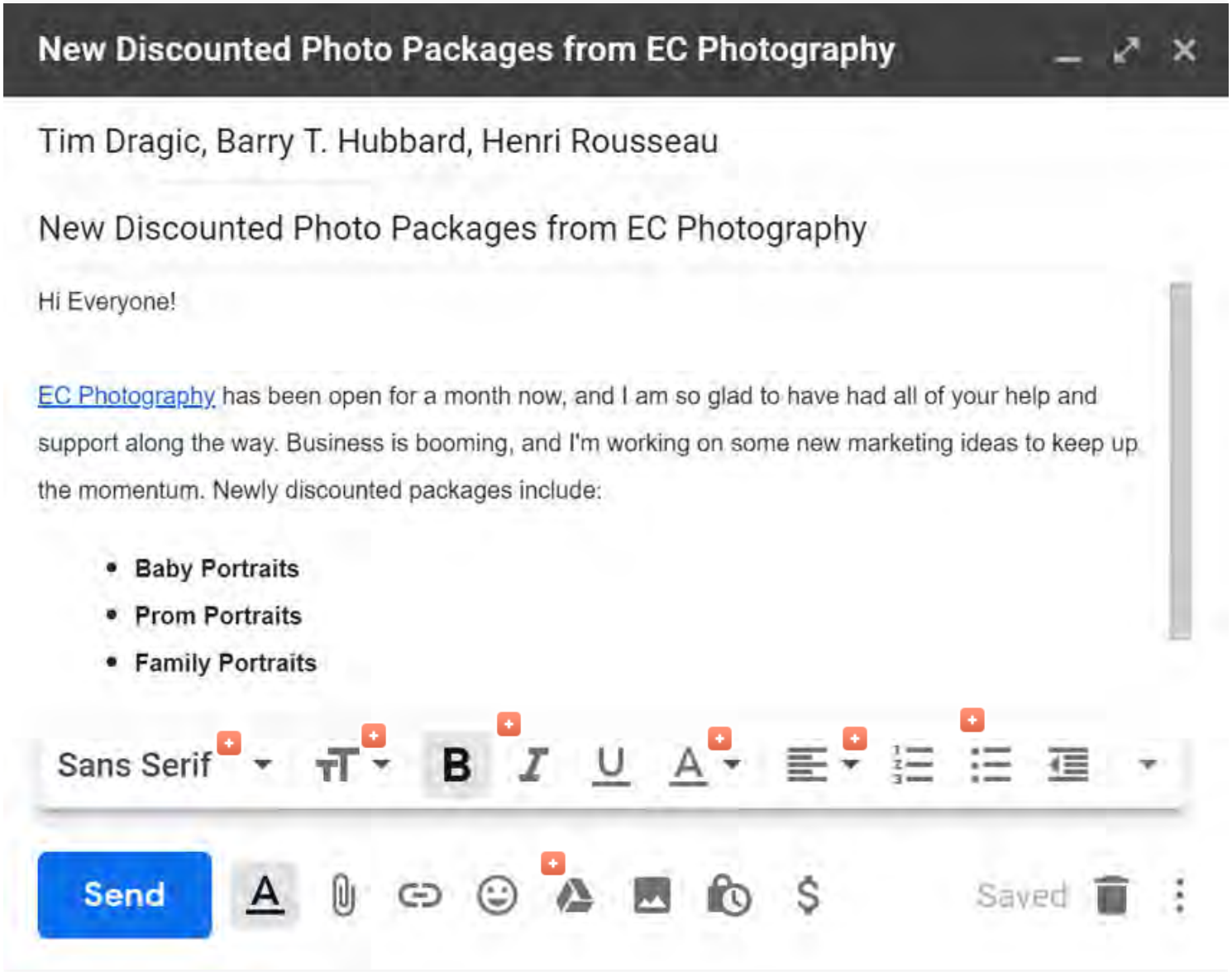

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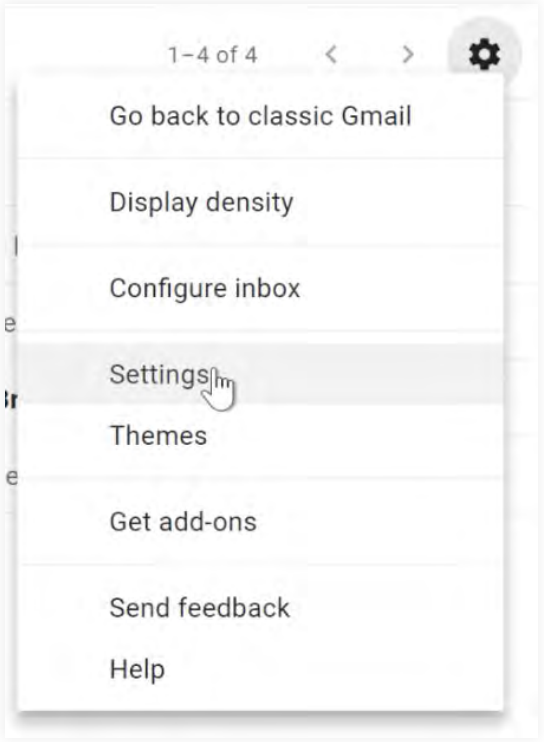

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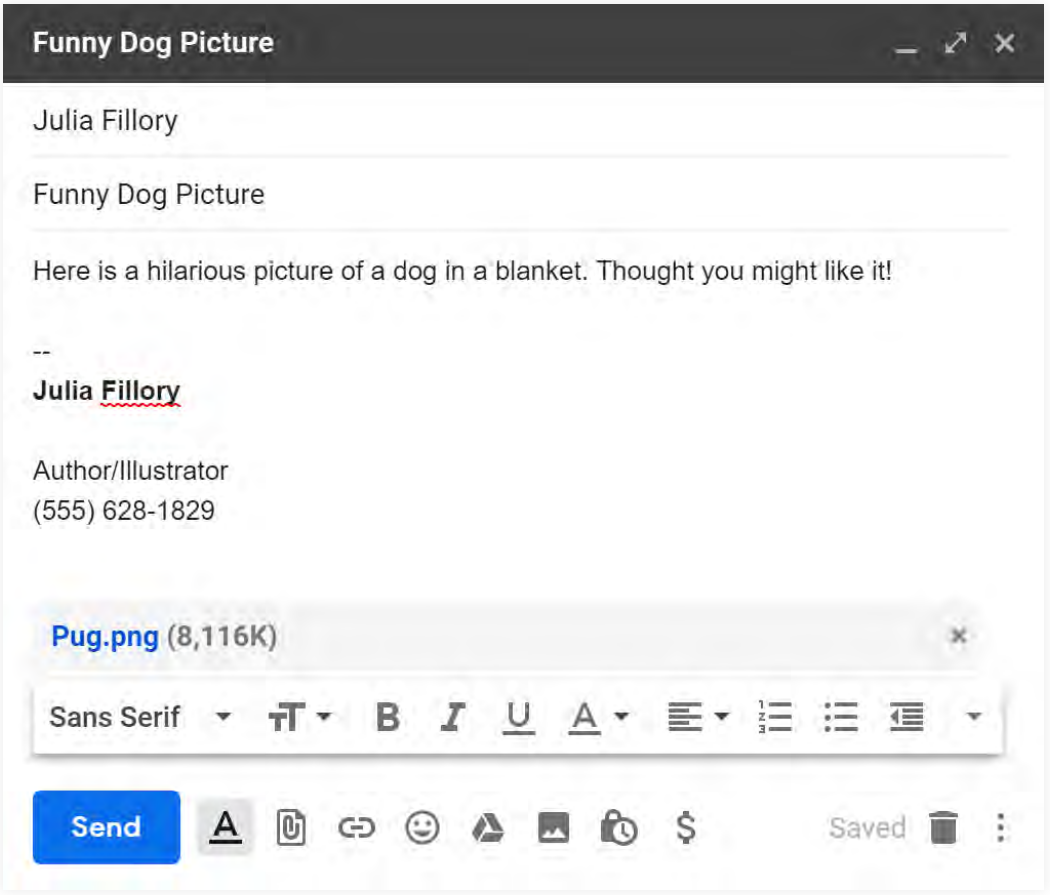

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Digital Equity Planning

Veterans Focus Group Meeting

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center

268 Central Street, Gardner, MA 01440

Wednesday, June 12, @ 1:30 – 3:00 PM

The needs of those you represent are important. Your voice matters.

Join us!

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

MONTACHUSETT VETERANS OUTREACH CENTER, INC.
SERVING ALL VETERANS

Veterans Focus Group Interview Write-up

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, 268 Central Street, Gardner, MA 01440

All attending veterans' agents are licensed to work with veterans but manage several of the covered Digital Equity target populations. Right from the start, agents were curious about what specifically the Digital Equity Program could provide. One veteran agent asked what digital equity meant and for specific goals of the program. For this reason, MBI should consider marketing the program better in the future. Likewise, the veterans' agents generally agreed they spend a quarter of their days helping people navigate the digital world, zoom meetings, prescriptions, medical appointments. This makes digital literacy important within the veteran community.

Many of the Veterans do not have access to internet connection. The top three reasons for this being affordability, trust, and literacy. Many do not trust the internet due to targeted scam attacks or general untrustworthiness. For example, 2-3 vets would buy into gift card scams, and one repeatedly lost $500 to scam emails that they were signing up for. The fear of becoming another scam/phishing victim or fear of being tracked are very real concerns for vets. This is why many vets still do not have internet at home.[1] However, according to the veterans' agents most vets still have data on their phones which is how they access the internet. Veterans use the internet mainly to apply for benefits[2], for social connection, entertainment, healthcare, hobbies, YouTube, or 'adult hobbies.'[3] In some cases the internet can help with severe problems too. For instance, one of the agents' clients built up a hoarding addiction while in the military, so he would collect a massive number of DVDs and books. When he finally adopted the internet, they were able to download their DVDs and books which freed up a lot of space in the house; 'can finally get to the toilet.' This is a story of internet success and is a good example of how internet access benefits veteran populations.

If veterans have any digital questions they go to one of three places: Library, to someone else, or to the Veterans Services Office. All the agents agreed that if there were to be a digital help session then the library would be the best place to hold an event because veterans visit the library the most. One of the agents states that there is no transportation to get anywhere, so veterans will go to the library before leaving town. This makes libraries an

[1] There is also a preference for paper copy surveys due to fear of scams and tracking. Also, some clients are more vocal than others.

[2] The Veterans agents would like it if the Vets came to them for benefits.

[3] This was a running joke during the meeting that many of the Veterans use the internet for less appropriate reasons.

essential place to reach the most veterans for their digital needs. Additional spaces to consider would be senior centers and housing authorities.

Furthermore, many locations that offer digital services lack privacy and adequate connection. Most places also require patrons to make an appointment before using their facilities, which often results in veterans getting put on a waiting list to use the organization's services. Wi-Fi is provided at the veteran's offices and other spaces where veterans go for their digital needs, but it can always be improved.

Moreover, most veterans own a computing device such as a cellphone, flip phone or something else with phone capabilities. Around 75% of veterans have phone or other internet access at their home. Most vets struggle with the affordability of the internet and lack the digital literacy or knowledge to use it. For this reason, creating veteran accessible digital literacy programs is crucial. This means holding events at familiar locations for veterans that are not crowded and have a vantage point that oversees exits/entries. To advertise these events MRPC should include pictures of the space and promote the event as a 'Scam Avoidance' help session with the bonus of free lunch.[4] Likewise, the veterans are very well connected; sometimes all it takes to advertise an event is to connect with one vet who will then go into the community spreading the word[5] to all their 'friends.' One of the agents commented that they are now able to serve 26 states because of veteran word of mouth. The Leominster Veterans location has a great space to hold events and holds regular Coffee and Cards served with lunch. This would be a great opportunity for MRPC to hold a focus group meeting to connect with a variety of veterans.

If in the end getting digital help is a hassle for veterans, then they choose not to engage with the internet and technology entirely.[6] For example, if they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy all together because it is over Zoom. Zero engagement with the internet is not feasible for veterans because more and more services require the use of the internet. All vets need access to digital literacy training and technical support; however, specifically low-income veterans require lower-cost computers/internet. The veterans that the agents oversee are often low-income, so the cost of a computing device is a real concern. As far as digital awareness goes, older generations, such as Vietnam or post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security. Similarly, newer generations have it down for the most part, but still require some help. An agent at the meeting states, "Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy." This means that vets require a range of digital literacy help, so towns and MRPC

[4] Everyone agreed that veterans will attend if there is something they can get out of it, food, coffee, etc.
[5] 'Word of mouth.'
[6] 'Arduous process to verify for online service.'

should be mindful of the veteran population they are dealing with. Digital skills are necessary for veterans to fully participate in everyday life.

Last, the agents would like the state to know how important affordable internet is, “Don’t take away low-income affordable internet.” Instead, the state should maintain ACP and make it better. They would also like MRPC to become more familiar with the state/town/veteran specific grant Chapter 115, safety net program. The agents say most people in Massachusetts do not know about this grant. Other than that, all agents apply for operation money wise grants through the state every other year to not over saturate.

Moving forward, **MRPC** should reach out to the Leominster Veterans Agent contact to set up a focus group meeting with the Veterans there. Furthermore, MRPC can investigate potential digital grants specific to the veteran’s population.

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

_____3_____ Attendees _____2____ Facilitators/Planners _____0_____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Question about goals for the programs? Access to the internet

The gentleman wanted to hear this

Who are you talking to in Leominster? Elizabeth Wood (fact check we were unsure)

Had questions about who has access (want to clarify what digital equity means)

This is working out…reintegration

We work with multiple of the target groups (certified to work with veteran groups)

50 units of housing 44 more to come (comcast lift zone provided to those houses ACP (coming to an end))

Women's home got free Wi-Fi in Winchendon

Men's used to but does not anymore

(Varys from house to house)

Generally speaking, everyone is low-income high risk

Most can not afford their own internet

Reasons for paper copies are suspicious of the internet (tracking and scams)

Some are not even on the internet

Barriers to using the internet?

Spend a quarter of their day helping people navigate the digital world (therapy [zoom], prescriptions, medical appointments)

If they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy

If they had additional access to hardware or physical technology to offer

Literacy training covered by the grant public can come in

Identifying costs of the fully functioning workstations ("pretty cool")

Do you provide internet?

Gardner is not signed up with the list of communities but asked those who serve communities not signed up to consider those communities needs still

Barnaul house

Worried about small money

Create better fliers to get better involvement

It is going to be hard to get clients to do the survey (some will be more vocal than others)

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	Directly reaching out

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life?	challenges and difficulties are all the scams out there (whole level of scams) One guy would sign up for scams and would lose 500 each one he signed up for Gift card scams (at least 2-3 would buy into it) When one of her guys would watch movies and shows online which helped with his hoarding (made his apartment safer to traverse) Runs a non-profit called frost call to help fight isolation for veterans (for the ones that can get into the program is lifechanging) Reducing isolation improving mental health (Would become more sociable after this) Hold events all over the state

3. What do you regularly use the internet for? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	Using it to apply for benefits (want them to come see the organization for benefits) Social Connection Entertainments Healthcare Hobbies Use youtube to watch their hobbies Don't have the money to online shop
4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	75% have data on their phones Pretty tough for them to access healthcare

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *75% yes*

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	affordability/trust/education/ fear of learning how to use it Fear of getting scammed

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? ● Friend or family member's home ● School ● Workplace ● Library or community center ● Business such as a cafe or bookstore ● Outdoor space such as a park	Library Or not at all Have someone else do it for them

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Lack of privacy Not always high quality Waiting list Not always a space for them to go Arduous process to verify for online services Wifi that is available is better than no Wi-Fi (could be improved) Clear path in Devens No transportation to get anywhere (will go to the library before leaving town) Libraries and Senior Centers (Housing authorities hit all of those buckets) Clients that need this are not traveling

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *Yes might be a flip phone or phone of some sort*

9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	These devices are NOT sufficient only good for social Some can not see whats on the screen Their clientele are low-income veterans Security education Older generations are not digitally educated Newer generation has it down
10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Digital literacy training Lower the cost Depends on the population Advertise as Scam avoidance (free lunch is a good bonus) Operation money wise grant through the state every other year as to not over saturate

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example… • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes: Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy
11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Get one of them to tell the others (word of mouth) (serves 26 states because of word of mouth) Include a picture of the space who will attend Less packed events Coffee and cards served with lunch (Leominster Veterans)

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: YES No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	
13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Vietnam post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security

13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	Limited access Steps to get the resources you need

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Don't take away low-income affordable internet Make it better Maintain ACP Consider Veteran specific grant Chapter 115/safety net program (state specific city/town) Most people in the state don't know what this AI meeting notes

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

Additional Questions

Please enter notes on any other region- or topic-specific questions discussed during your focus group session. Please make sure to include the question itself, as well as notes on participants' responses.	

Enter your notes online at: XXX

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

3 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners _____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Coffee & cards Tuesdays Leominster Veterans Center

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life? • One vet with a collection habit/hobby (aka hording) collected DVDS, VHS, Books, was a major part of hording issue. Internet allowed person to Internet can reduce isolation. Frostfall Non-profit	• Lack of trust due to tracking • Worried about scams/phishing • one vet repeatedly signed up for scams "send this to get this" $ giftcards, etc.
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• Apply for benefits • Entertainment • Social connection • Health care

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	Many vets do not. - Affordability - trust - Literacy

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Most have access by phone. ~75%

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	Difficult for most

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	. Trust . affordability . Education . Knowledge/digital literacy
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? • Friend or family member's home • School • Workplace • Library or community center • Business such as a cafe or bookstore • Outdoor space such as a park	. Library . Ask someone else to assist . Veteran Services office

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Usually not good. Plus no privacy! Sometimes appointment is needed but you don't know ahead of time. Better than nothing.

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes, most.
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	• Cell Phone • Sort of, not really. • Low-income veterans — cost • All veterans — trust security concerns.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	low-income vets All vets operation money-wise grant (state)

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Being familiar with space or seeing it ahead of time helps. Also, one person who others trust.

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	O.K but limited to access at the individual level. Public spaces can usually only accomodate 1- person at a time.

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	• Sign up • not enough stations / work stations. Limited hours

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	• Make it more affordable • Maintain ACP • consider vet-specific internet subsidy programs Chpt. 115 (Mass)

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	Develop programs and subsidies related to digital : Access : affordability - adoptability under chpt. 445

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

_____3_____ Attendees _____2____ Facilitators/Planners _____0_____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Question about goals for the programs? Access to the internet

The gentleman wanted to hear this

Who are you talking to in Leominster? Elizabeth Wood (fact check we were unsure)

Had questions about who has access (want to clarify what digital equity means)

This is working out…reintegration

We work with multiple of the target groups (certified to work with veteran groups)

50 units of housing 44 more to come (comcast lift zone provided to those houses ACP (coming to an end))

Women's home got free Wi-Fi in Winchendon

Men's used to but does not anymore

(Varys from house to house)

Generally speaking, everyone is low-income high risk

Most can not afford their own internet

Reasons for paper copies are suspicious of the internet (tracking and scams)

Some are not even on the internet

Barriers to using the internet?

Spend a quarter of their day helping people navigate the digital world (therapy [zoom], prescriptions, medical appointments)

If they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy

If they had additional access to hardware or physical technology to offer

Literacy training covered by the grant public can come in

Identifying costs of the fully functioning workstations ("pretty cool")

Do you provide internet?

Gardner is not signed up with the list of communities but asked those who serve communities not signed up to consider those communities needs still

Barnaul house

Worried about small money

Create better fliers to get better involvement

It is going to be hard to get clients to do the survey (some will be more vocal than others)

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	Directly reaching out

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life?	challenges and difficulties are all the scams out there (whole level of scams) One guy would sign up for scams and would lose 500 each one he signed up for Gift card scams (at least 2-3 would buy into it) When one of her guys would watch movies and shows online which helped with his hoarding (made his apartment safer to traverse) Runs a non-profit called frost call to help fight isolation for veterans (for the ones that can get into the program is lifechanging) Reducing isolation improving mental health (Would become more sociable after this) Hold events all over the state
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement	Using it to apply for benefits (want them to come see the organization for benefits) Social Connection Entertainments Healthcare Hobbies

● Public benefits ● Other?	Use youtube to watch their hobbies Don't have the money to online shop
4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	75% have data on their phones Pretty tough for them to access healthcare

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *75% yes*

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	affordability/trust/education/ fear of learning how to use it Fear of getting scammed

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? ● Friend or family member's home ● School ● Workplace ● Library or community center ● Business such as a cafe or bookstore ● Outdoor space such as a park	Library Or not at all Have someone else do it for them

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Lack of privacy Not always high quality Waiting list Not always a space for them to go Arduous process to verify for online services Wifi that is available is better than no Wi-Fi (could be improved) Clear path in Devens No transportation to get anywhere (will go to the library before leaving town) Libraries and Senior Centers (Housing authorities hit all of those buckets) Clients that need this are not traveling

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *Yes might be a flip phone or phone of some sort*

9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	These devices are NOT sufficient only good for social Some can not see whats on the screen Their clientele are low-income veterans Security education Older generations are not digitally educated Newer generation has it down
10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Digital literacy training Lower the cost Depends on the population Advertise as Scam avoidance (free lunch is a good bonus) Operation money wise grant through the state every other year as to not over saturate

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example… • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes: Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy
11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Get one of them to tell the others (word of mouth) (serves 26 states because of word of mouth) Include a picture of the space who will attend Less packed events Coffee and cards served with lunch (Leominster Veterans)

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: YES No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	
13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Vietnam post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	Limited access Steps to get the resources you need
14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Don’t take away low-income affordable internet Make it better Maintain ACP Consider Veteran specific grant Chapter 115/safety net program (state specific city/town) Most people in the state don’t know what this AI meeting notes

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

Additional Questions

Please enter notes on any other region- or topic-specific questions discussed during your focus group session. Please make sure to include the question itself, as well as notes on participants' responses.	

Enter your notes online at: XXX

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

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General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

3 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners _____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Coffee & cards Tuesdays Leominster Veterans Center

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life? Internet can reduce isolation. FrostCall Non-profit • One vet with a collection habit/hobby (aka hording) collected DVDS, VHS, Books, was a major part of hording issue. Internet allowed person to	• Lack of trust due to tracking • Worried about scams/phishing • one vet repeadetly signed up for scams "send this to get this" $ giftcards, etc.
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• Apply for benefits • Entertainment • Social connection • Health care

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	Many vets do not. - Affordability - trust - Literacy

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Most have access by phone. ~75%

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	Difficult for most

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	. Trust . affordability . Education . Knowledge/digital literacy
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? • Friend or family member's home • School • Workplace • Library or community center • Business such as a cafe or bookstore • Outdoor space such as a park	. Library . Ask someone else to assist . Veteran Services office

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Usually not good. Plus no privacy! Sometimes appointment is needed but you don't know ahead of time. Better than nothing.

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes, most.
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	- Cell phone - Sort of, not really. - Low-income veterans — cost - All veterans — trust security concerns.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	low-income vets All vets operation money-wise grant (state)

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Being familiar with space or seeing it ahead of time helps. Also, one person who others trust.

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* (Yes: 1) No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	O.K but limited to access at the individual level. Public spaces can usually only accommodate 1- person at a time.

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	• sign up • not enough stations / work stations. • Limited hours

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	• Make it more affordable • Maintain ACP • consider vet-specific internet subsidy program Chpt. 115 (Mass)

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	Develop programs and subsidies related to digital : Access : affordability . adoptability under Chpt. 445

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

TECH HELP AND DIGITAL EQUITY FOCUS GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, August 13th at 10:30 AM

16 Senior Dr, Baldwinville, Ma 01436

Have you struggled to access affordable, reliable, high-speed internet in the Town of Templeton? The Montachussett Regional Planning Commission is hosting a Digital Equity Focus Group Meeting to talk about your Broadband Internet needs and provide general Tech Help. We want to hear from you! Come share your experiences and get tech help with MRPC at this interactive listening session.

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Templeton Senior Center Focus Group Meeting Notes

8/13/24, 11-2

Attendees: Jeff, Lauren, ~8 community members

- Heard about meeting through newsletter and rideshare
- Use the internet for ancestry mapping, Facebook to stay in touch with relatives, personal businesses (writing sermons), research, emails, maps, senior center news letter
- Everybody had home internet service, said that AT&T is the best in Baldwinville, Verizon is the worst
- Mostly reliable internet, fluctuates with the weather (rain)
- 1 person had affordable internet ($10 per month because of housing)
- Some adults were paying for their adult children's internet as well
- Accessed library internet by sitting outside in the parking lot
- Most come to the senior center for the wifi as well
- Said the internet is reliable at the Gardner Library and Templeton Senior Center
- 1 just had a phone, others had phones and computers
- Barrier to using computer (ex: at library) was lack of knowledge eon how to use it
- Confidence in internet skills:
    - 1 not confident at all
    - 1 somewhat confident
    - 2 confident
    - 4 very confident
- Some did not trust the cloud
- Hard to figure out the best way to store and archive documents
- All concerned about privacy, one was locked out of L.L.Bean account by hackers who changed her password

Help needed:

- Saving addresses in GPS
- Can't remember email or password for certain cites or for the computer as a whole
- Want to disable the touchscreen of a laptop
- Need help navigating sites like Facebook
- Ads pop up on phone every time it opens (possible virus)
- Not getting notifications for texts but does get them for calls

Templeton Senior Center (Baldwinville)

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Templeton, Phillipston, Royalston
Focus Group Date	August 13, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	Time (90-Minutes Recommended)
Focus Group Location (address)	Baldwinville Senior Center
Primary Covered Population Focus	Aging Adults

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

7 8 6 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners 1 Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here (summarize main takeways):

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	• Newsletter • Ride Share

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life?	• Family research genealogy • Keeping in touch with family that are out of town or far away. • Communicate with doctors medical staff
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• home business • Research / writing • Genealogy • medical • family connections

Hours

Library does not have air conditioning. Ductless mini-split.

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* 8/8 yes.

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	Intermitent, Mostly reliable

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	necessary part of life should be more affordable or stable cost. Concerns that it keeps going up.

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* 7/8 1 only cell phone
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	old devices lost forgotten passwords.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Tech-Help Training

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: 1 Somewhat confident #: 1 Confident #: 2 Very Confident #: 4 Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	• saving docs • visual search and find

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: 8 No: ∅ Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	• Credit card scams password changed by other party

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Training
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	OK but hours limited

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Cost Grateful for public access to internet CAI!!!

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

★ Grateful that Town of Templeton participated

★ advertise public presentation
★ Gardner News / Athol Daily

7.3 Appendix C

Community Engagement

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Digital Equity Planning for the Montachusett Region

Broadband Internet Accessibility Survey

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) want to hear about your experiences with internet service! This survey should be completed by one individual per household. Your feedback is vital to understand barriers to internet access, relative to availability, affordability, and adoption to help close the digital divide. Thank you for your participation.

* 1. **Which municipality do you live in?**

- ◯ Ashburnham
- ◯ Ashby
- ◯ Fitchburg
- ◯ Phillipston
- ◯ Royalston
- ◯ Templeton
- ◯ Townsend
- ◯ Winchendon
- ◯ Other (please specify)

2. **What is your primary type of internet connection at <u>home</u>?**

- ◯ Broadband
- ◯ DSL (Digital Subscriber Line)
- ◯ Fiber
- ◯ Satellite
- ◯ Dial-up
- ◯ Mobile data (i.e., cellular data, SIM card, aka Subscriber Identity Module card)
- ◯ None - I do not have internet at home
- ◯ Other (please specify)

3. **Who is your home internet service provider?**

- ◯ Comcast-Xfinity
- ◯ T-Mobile Home Internet
- ◯ Verizon
- ◯ Spectrum
- ◯ AT&T
- ◯ Fitchburg Fiber
- ◯ I do not have a home internet service
- ◯ Other (please specify)

4. **How satisfied are you with your current home internet service?**

- ◯ Very satisfied
- ◯ Satisfied
- ◯ Neutral
- ◯ Dissatisfied
- ◯ Very dissatisfied
- ◯ I do not have home internet service

5. **If you sometimes use internet in places other than your home, or, you do not have internet at home, where do go to use the internet?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I have internet at home, but I sometimes use internet at the following places...
- ☐ I do not have internet at home, but when I need to use the internet I use it at the following places...
- ☐ My workplace
- ☐ A friend or family members home
- ☐ School, college, or university
- ☐ A public library
- ☐ A community center
- ☐ A business such as a restaurant, cafe, bookstore, pub, etc.
- ☐ A public space such as a park or government building
- ☐ On public transit or at a public transit station
- ☐ I do not regularly use the internet at any of these places
- ☐ Other (please specify)

6. **What are the main reasons you use the internet?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Work
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Entertainment/Hobbies
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ News
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Financial or Banking
- ☐ I do not use the internet
- ☐ Other (please specify)

7. **What challenges do you face in accessing or using the internet?**

- [ ] Internet service is too expensive - I cannot afford it
- [ ] Internet service is unavailable where I live
- [ ] Internet service upload and download speeds are too slow or unreliable
- [ ] My internet-connected digital equipment or devices are too old or low quality to function properly
- [ ] I cannot afford a computer or internet-connected digital device
- [ ] I do not know how to use a computer or internet-connected digital devices
- [ ] I am not confident or do not know how to navigate the internet or use online tools
- [ ] I am concerned about my online safety or privacy
- [ ] I choose not to use the internet
- [ ] Other (please specify)

8. **What devices do you use to access the internet?** (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Desktop computer
- [ ] Laptop
- [ ] Tablet
- [ ] Smartphone
- [ ] Smart TV
- [ ] Gaming console
- [ ] I do not have any internet-connected digital devices
- [ ] Other (please specify)

9. **How often do you experience home internet connectivity issues?**

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Rarely
- ◯ Sometimes
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Always
- ◯ I do not have home internet services

10. Do you feel that the cost of internet service is affordable for you?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

11. **What improvements would you suggest for digital inclusion and equity and/or enhanced internet access for all in your community?**

12. **How confident are you in your digital skills?**

- ◯ Very confident (I have a very high degree of digital skills and confidence)
- ◯ Confident (I have digital skills and confidence)
- ◯ Neutral (I have some digital skills but I have a low level of confidence)
- ◯ Not confident (I have very few digital skills and no confidence)
- ◯ Not at all confident (I have no digital skills and no confidence)

13. **What types of digital skills training would benefit you?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Basic computer skills
- ☐ Internet navigation
- ☐ Email basics
- ☐ Software usage
- ☐ Online safety
- ☐ Cyber security
- ☐ Coding
- ☐ Digital art, photo editing, or graphic design
- ☐ Telehealth
- ☐ Online license and registration renewals
- ☐ Online shopping and purchasing
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Creating online video content or pod casts
- ☐ Other (please specify)

14. **What is your age group?**

- ◯ Under 18
- ◯ 18-24
- ◯ 25-34
- ◯ 35-44
- ◯ 45-59
- ◯ 60-74
- ◯ 75 and older

15. **What is your highest level of education?**

- ◯ Less than high school
- ◯ High school diploma or equivalent
- ◯ Some college
- ◯ Associate degree
- ◯ Bachelor's degree
- ◯ Graduate degree

* 16. The Digital Equity Act of 2021 has identified certain populations as priority or "covered populations" of the Act. Covered populations are often subject to challenges or barriers to equitable internet access, relative to adoption, affordability, and availability of broadband internet services.

Do you or any of your household members belong to any of the following covered populations? (Check all that apply.)

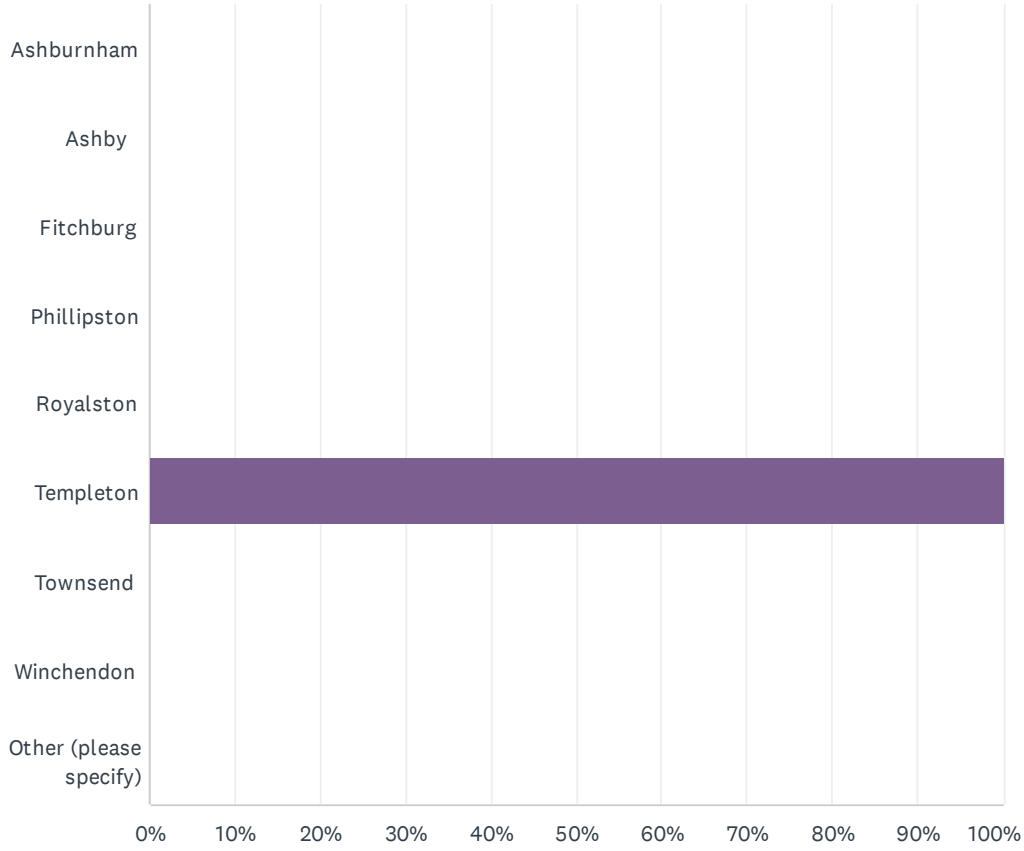
*The monthly salary equivalent to 150% of the federal poverty level for a family of 4 is $3,900. To find the number for a larger or smaller household, subtract $673 dollars for each family member less than 4, or add $673 for each family member greater than 4.

- ☐ Households with incomes less than 150% of the poverty level*
- ☐ Aging individuals 60 years or older
- ☐ Incarcerated or previously incarcerated individuals
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Individuals with disabilities
- ☐ Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are non-English speakers, English learners, and those having low levels of literacy
- ☐ Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
- ☐ Individuals who reside in rural areas
- ☐ None of the above

Local Digital Equity Survey Summary Results - Templeton(11-14-2024)

Q1 Which municipality do you live in?

Answered: 117 Skipped: 0

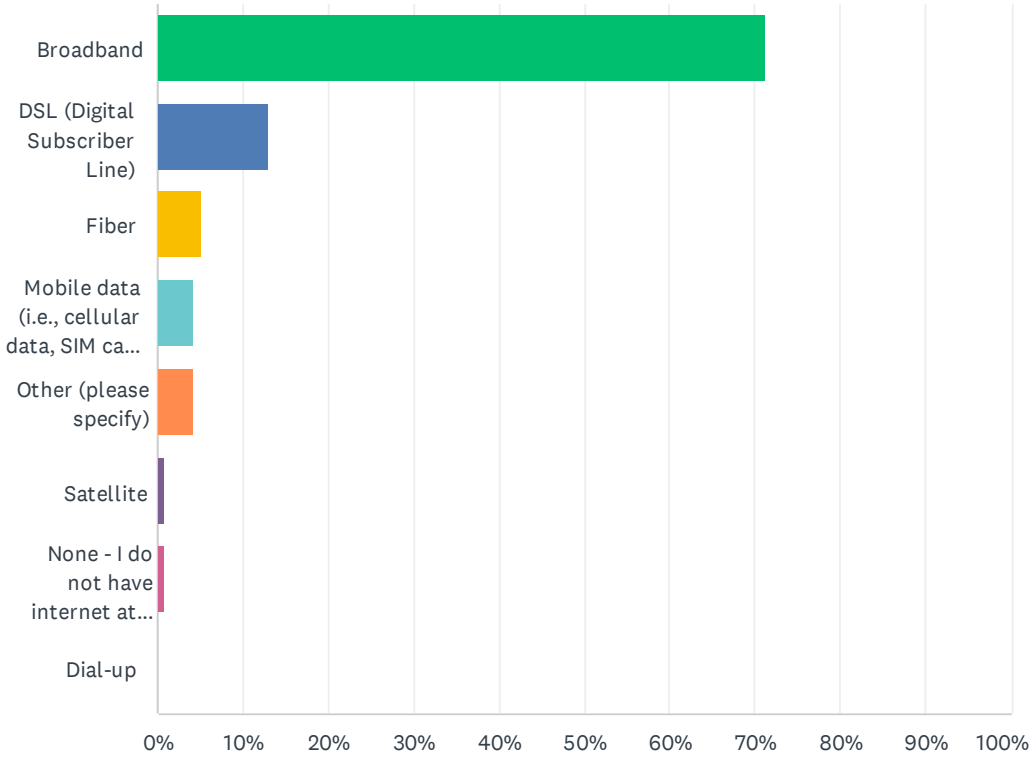


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ashburnham	0.00%	0
Ashby	0.00%	0
Fitchburg	0.00%	0
Phillipston	0.00%	0
Royalston	0.00%	0
Templeton	100.00%	117
Townsend	0.00%	0
Winchendon	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		117

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q2 What is your primary type of internet connection at home?

Answered: 115 Skipped: 2



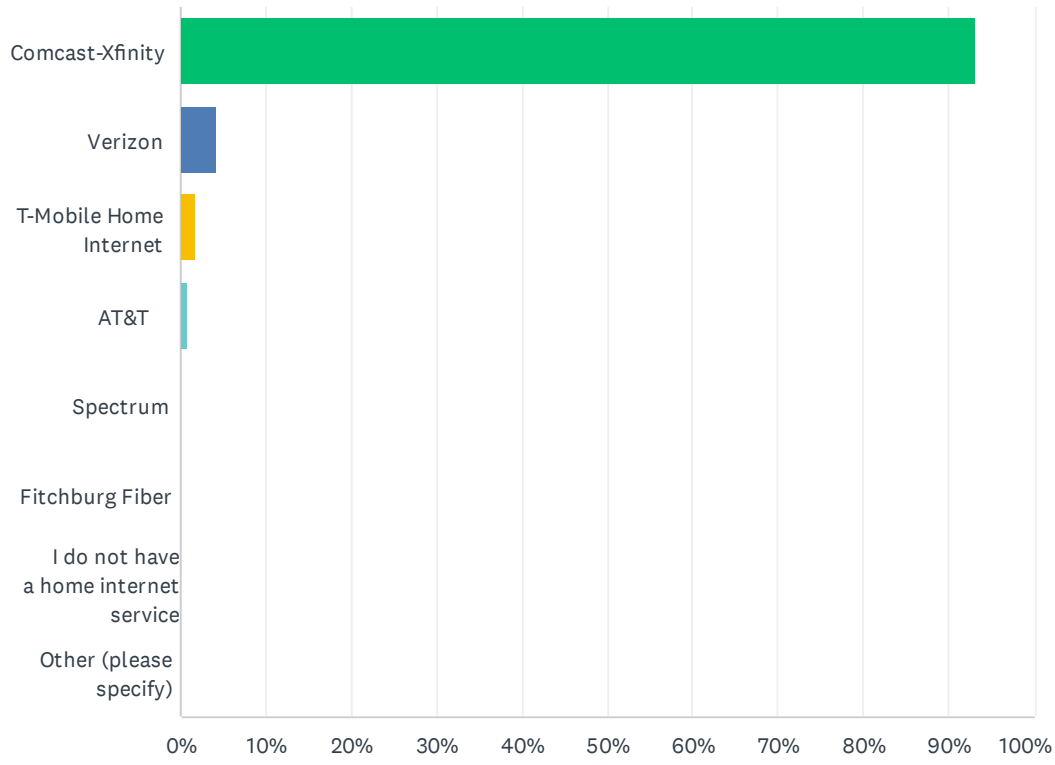
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Broadband	71.30%	82
DSL (Digital Subscriber Line)	13.04%	15
Fiber	5.22%	6
Mobile data (i.e., cellular data, SIM card, aka Subscriber Identity Module card)	4.35%	5
Other (please specify)	4.35%	5
Satellite	0.87%	1
None - I do not have internet at home	0.87%	1
Dial-up	0.00%	0
TOTAL		115

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Cable	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
2	Verizom jetpack	10/21/2024 10:34 AM
3	cable	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
4	WiFi	10/14/2024 5:43 PM

5	Comcast	9/29/2024 8:10 AM

Q3 Who is your home internet service provider?

Answered: 116 Skipped: 1

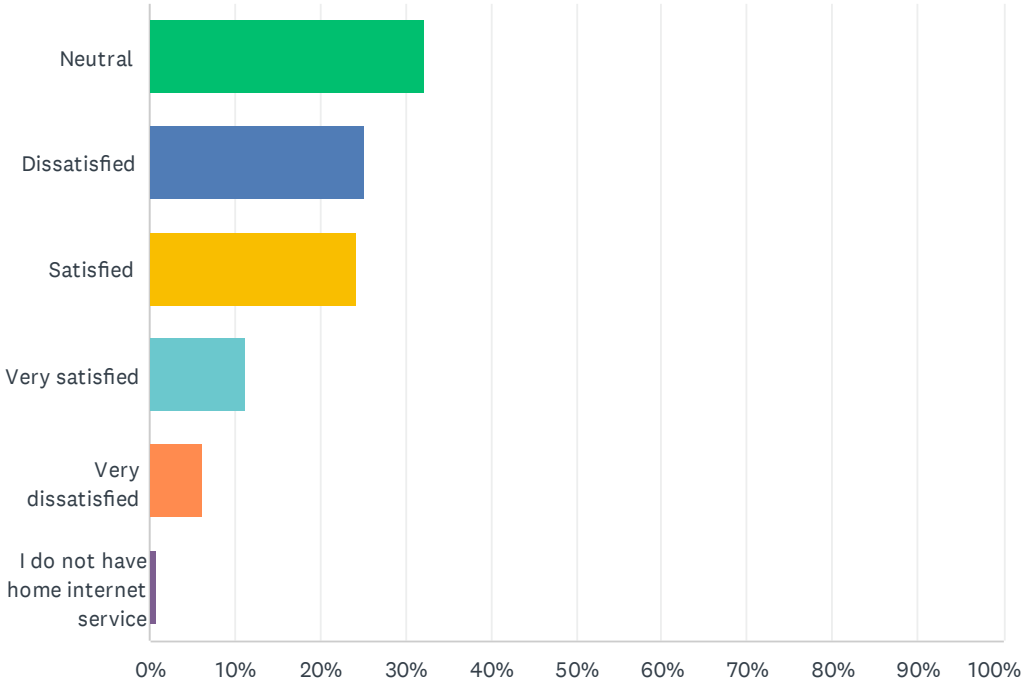


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Comcast-Xfinity	93.10%	108
Verizon	4.31%	5
T-Mobile Home Internet	1.72%	2
AT&T	0.86%	1
Spectrum	0.00%	0
Fitchburg Fiber	0.00%	0
I do not have a home internet service	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		116

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q4 How satisfied are you with your current home internet service?

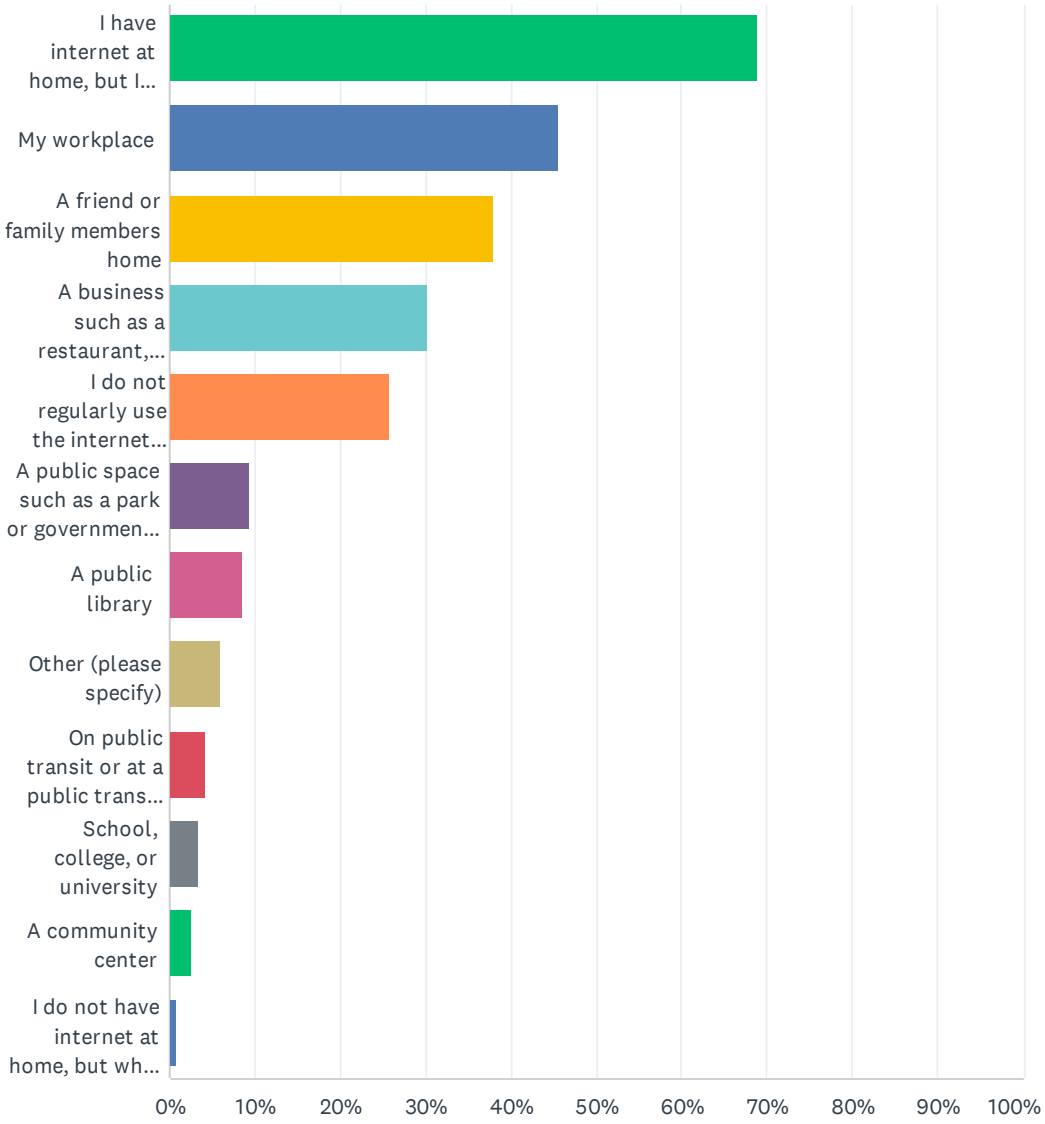
Answered: 115 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Neutral	32.17%	37
Dissatisfied	25.22%	29
Satisfied	24.35%	28
Very satisfied	11.30%	13
Very dissatisfied	6.09%	7
I do not have home internet service	0.87%	1
TOTAL		115

Q5 If you sometimes use internet in places other than your home, or, you do not have internet at home, where do go to use the internet? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 116 Skipped: 1

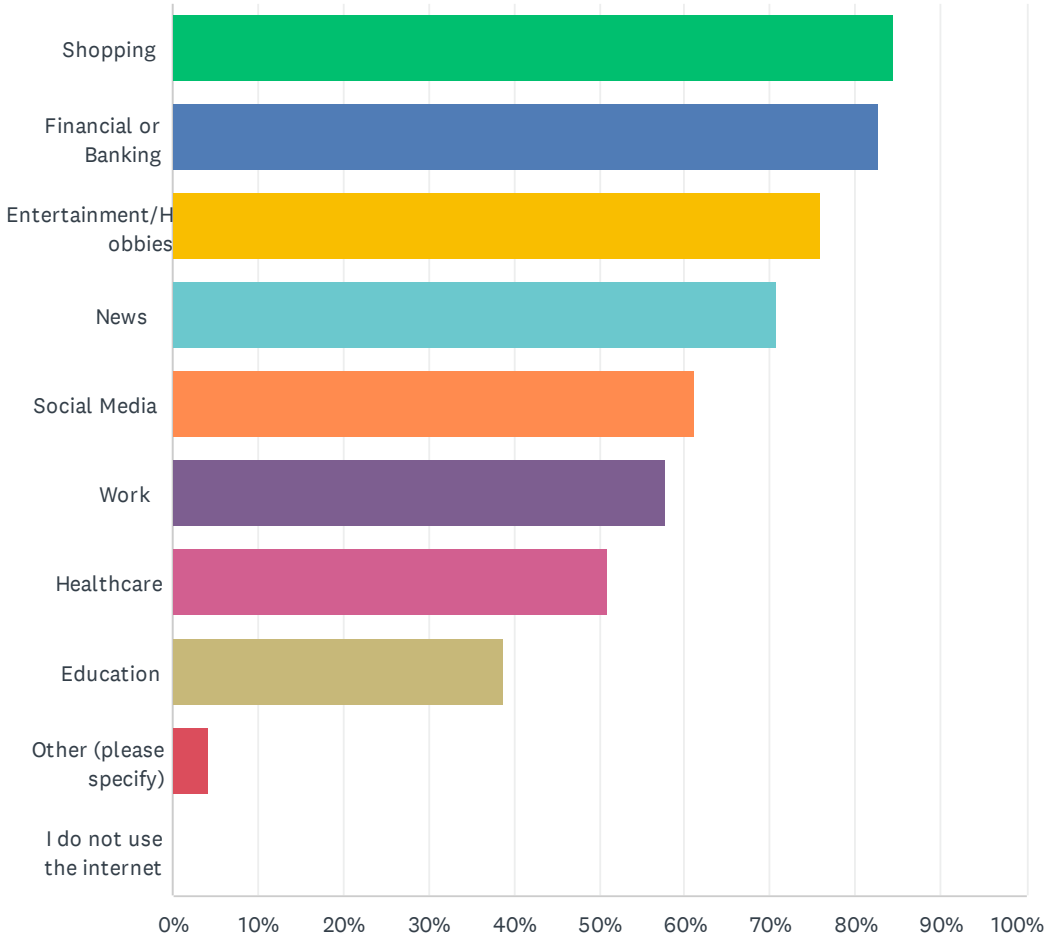


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I have internet at home, but I sometimes use internet at the following places...	68.97%	80
My workplace	45.69%	53
A friend or family members home	37.93%	44
A business such as a restaurant, cafe, bookstore, pub, etc.	30.17%	35
I do not regularly use the internet at any of these places	25.86%	30
A public space such as a park or government building	9.48%	11
A public library	8.62%	10
Other (please specify)	6.03%	7
On public transit or at a public transit station	4.31%	5
School, college, or university	3.45%	4
A community center	2.59%	3
I do not have internet at home, but when I need to use the internet I use it at the following places...	0.86%	1
Total Respondents: 116		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Summer home	10/17/2024 7:11 AM
2	my smart phone	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
3	Cell phone	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
4	my phone	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
5	Everywhere	10/5/2024 11:47 PM
6	Waiting rooms	9/30/2024 6:29 PM
7	Hotels while traveling.	9/29/2024 5:25 PM

Q6 What are the main reasons you use the internet? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 116 Skipped: 1

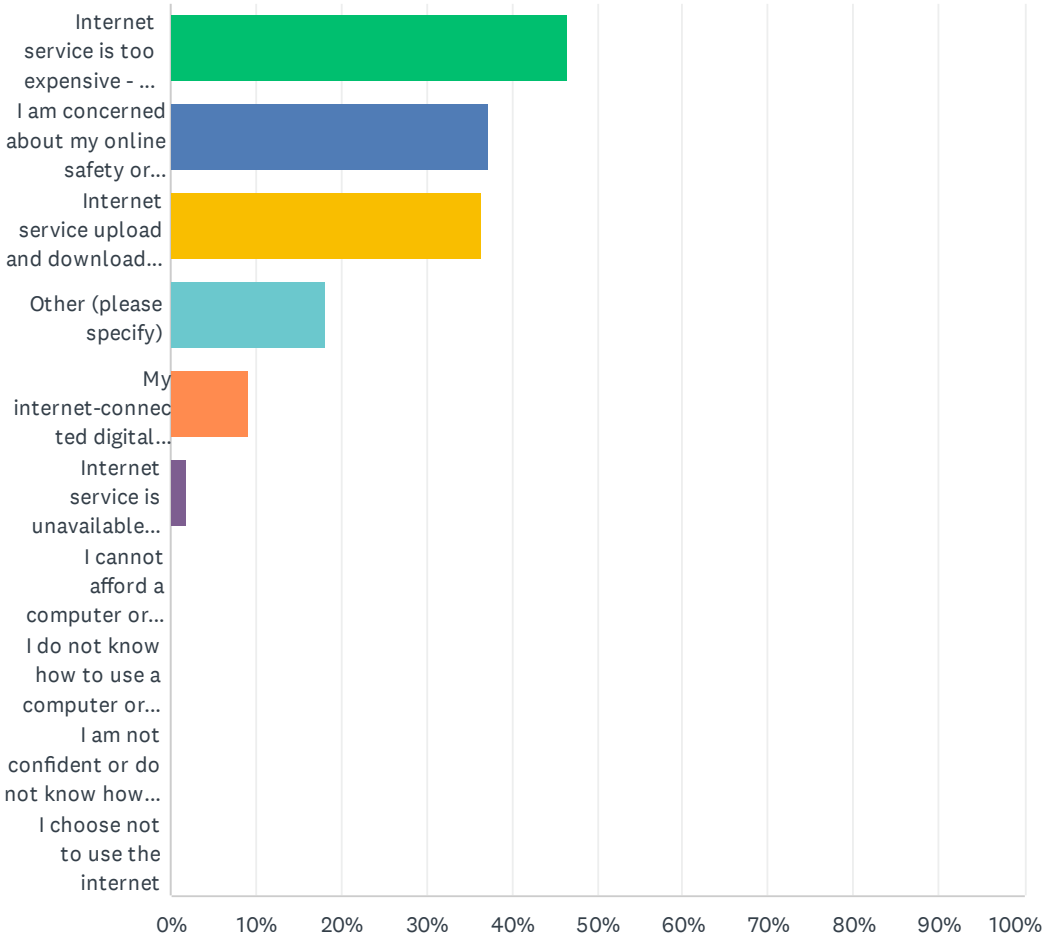


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Shopping	84.48%	98
Financial or Banking	82.76%	96
Entertainment/Hobbies	75.86%	88
News	70.69%	82
Social Media	61.21%	71
Work	57.76%	67
Healthcare	50.86%	59
Education	38.79%	45
Other (please specify)	4.31%	5
I do not use the internet	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 116		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Communicating with family around the world	10/15/2024 8:05 PM
2	To keep in touch with relatives who live a great distance away.	10/15/2024 9:17 AM
3	everything	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
4	email	10/10/2024 9:19 AM
5	Everything	10/5/2024 11:47 PM

Q7 What challenges do you face in accessing or using the internet?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 18

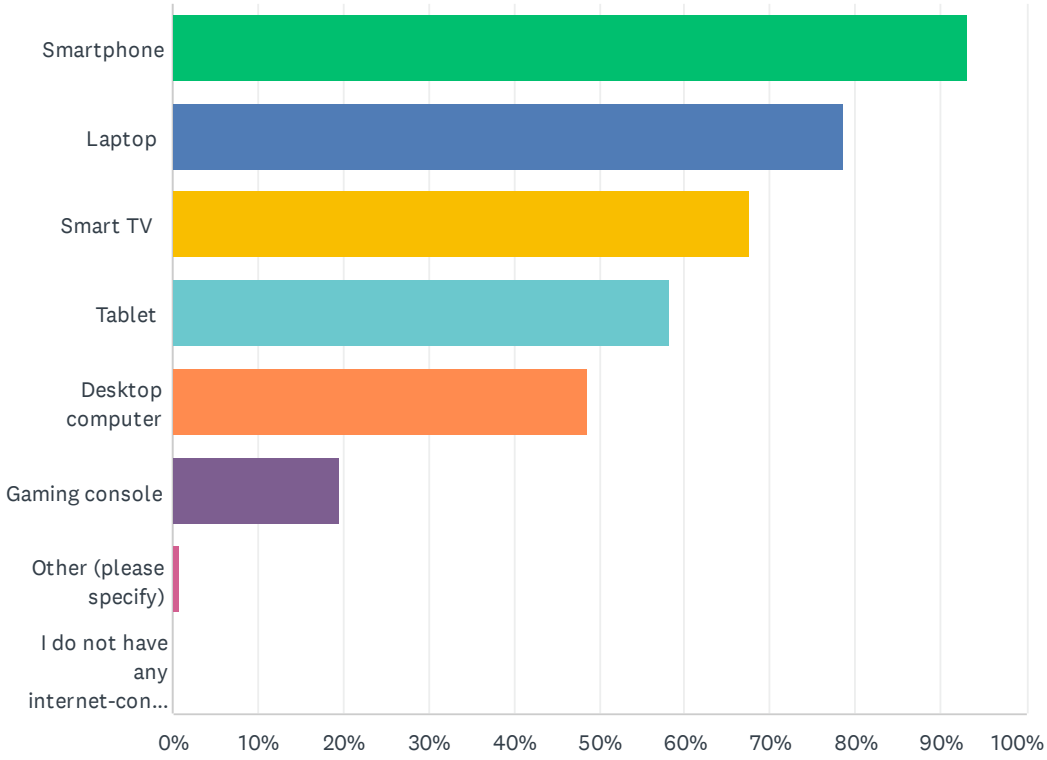


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Internet service is too expensive - I cannot afford it	46.46%	46
I am concerned about my online safety or privacy	37.37%	37
Internet service upload and download speeds are too slow or unreliable	36.36%	36
Other (please specify)	18.18%	18
My internet-connected digital equipment or devices are too old or low quality to function properly	9.09%	9
Internet service is unavailable where I live	2.02%	2
I cannot afford a computer or internet-connected digital device	0.00%	0
I do not know how to use a computer or internet-connected digital devices	0.00%	0
I am not confident or do not know how to navigate the internet or use online tools	0.00%	0
I choose not to use the internet	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 99		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	There is only one choice, so it is poor service for high prices	11/10/2024 7:32 PM
2	None	10/27/2024 3:28 PM
3	Only Comcast available in templeton need more options for competition	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
4	I need broadband service to work from home but our only provider is Comcast.	10/23/2024 4:09 PM
5	I don’t really have issues, but wish the cost was less. Especially for seniors.	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
6	Internet service is expensive.	10/15/2024 10:10 PM
7	I would like to have another option	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
8	None	10/15/2024 6:44 PM
9	No challenges	10/15/2024 11:02 AM
10	Connection goes in and out	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
11	Service is poor and inadequate with frequent outages the the sole provider in our area has not been able to fix for over 15 years	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
12	Inconsistent service	10/13/2024 7:17 PM
13	no choice in ISP, only Comcast serves our location	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
14	None	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
15	Poor cell service to	10/12/2024 4:54 PM
16	I do not face challenges accessing the internet. Why is this not an option for an answer?	10/9/2024 10:02 PM
17	I want municipal internet	10/5/2024 11:47 PM
18	I can afford internet, but find them to be very expensive	9/30/2024 8:12 AM

Q8 What devices do you use to access the internet? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 117 Skipped: 0

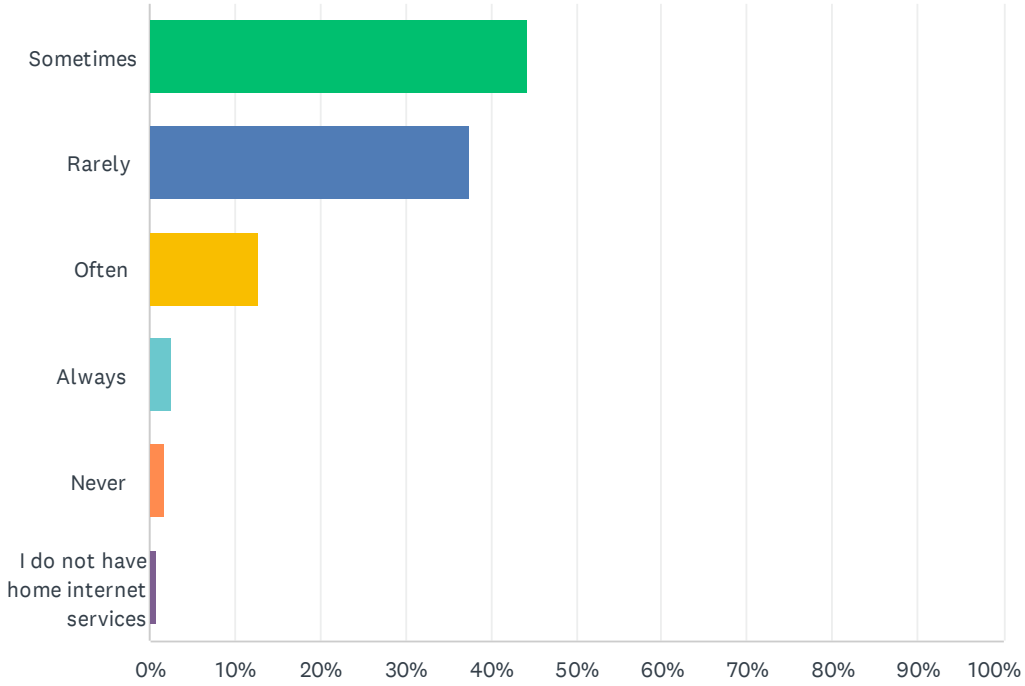


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Smartphone	93.16%	109
Laptop	78.63%	92
Smart TV	67.52%	79
Tablet	58.12%	68
Desktop computer	48.72%	57
Gaming console	19.66%	23
Other (please specify)	0.85%	1
I do not have any internet-connected digital devices	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 117		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	All devices	10/5/2024 11:47 PM

Q9 How often do you experience home internet connectivity issues?

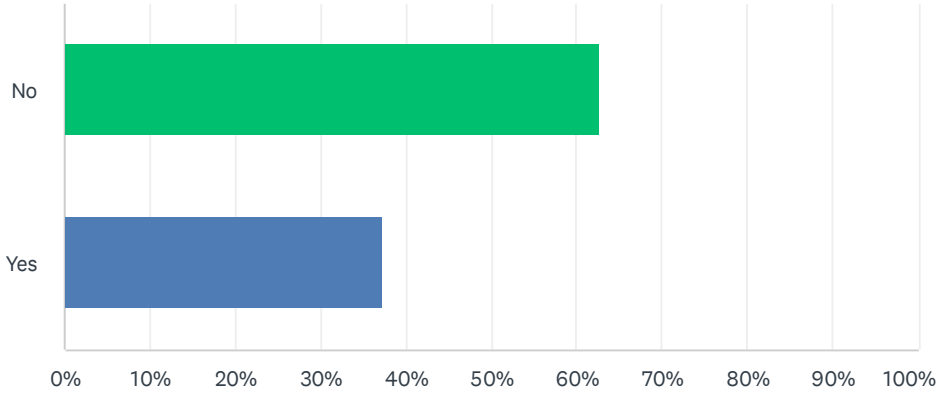
Answered: 117 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sometimes	44.44%	52
Rarely	37.61%	44
Often	12.82%	15
Always	2.56%	3
Never	1.71%	2
I do not have home internet services	0.85%	1
TOTAL		117

Q10 Do you feel that the cost of internet service is affordable for you?

Answered: 115 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	62.61%	72
Yes	37.39%	43
TOTAL		115

Q11 What improvements would you suggest for digital inclusion and equity and/or enhanced internet access for all in your community?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 39

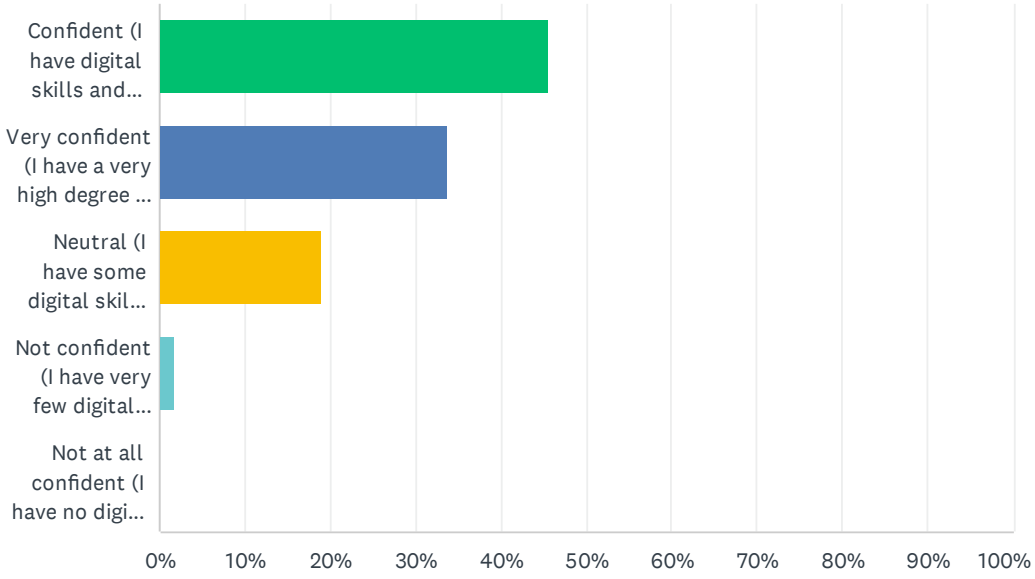
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Affordable, multiple choices of services	11/13/2024 2:32 PM
2	Moor choices for internet broadband providers	11/10/2024 7:32 PM
3	Fiber availability would put pressure on cable to lower prices	10/31/2024 5:02 PM
4	Discounted TV and Internet service for not just Veterans and seniors but like me I am disabled and extremely low income $12,350.00 per year also my wiring was installed in 1991 6 years before I bought the house and Comcast refuses to upgrade it and my friend from Highschool works for Spectrum and looked at my entire wiring and says it has more cracks than a old roadway and it causes outages at my house only	10/31/2024 1:54 AM
5	more choices	10/30/2024 5:26 PM
6	Bring the costs down. Everyone I speak with complains about that very issue.	10/30/2024 3:24 PM
7	Municipal option	10/27/2024 6:32 PM
8	None	10/26/2024 5:46 PM
9	More options to choose from	10/26/2024 9:48 AM
10	lower cost s	10/25/2024 4:57 PM
11	Make fiber optic cables available	10/25/2024 6:35 AM
12	Not sure	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
13	I wish out internet was more reliable	10/24/2024 6:19 PM
14	make sure that all homes have a cable internet connection (I have to use a cell phone-type hotspot connecting to a cell tower)	10/24/2024 12:51 PM
15	More internet providers	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
16	Faster	10/23/2024 7:45 PM
17	I would like to have access to other companies that offer broadband services.	10/23/2024 4:09 PM
18	Needs competition, Comcast is the only game in town	10/22/2024 4:55 PM
19	Free to all residents	10/22/2024 1:58 PM
20	Affordability for all residents	10/22/2024 12:42 PM
21	Less money with better service	10/21/2024 5:48 PM
22	Match upload speed with download speeds, no rental fee fo requied network equipment	10/21/2024 5:20 PM
23	To many bad signal areas	10/21/2024 5:00 PM
24	affordability	10/21/2024 10:20 AM
25	Decreased rates for seniors and low income. Additional choice of carriers so price is competitive	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
26	Municipal broadband would be great	10/20/2024 10:20 AM
27	Choice in providers	10/19/2024 3:19 PM
28	Lower price!	10/18/2024 11:30 AM

29	Lower cost	10/17/2024 7:11 AM
30	allow more companies to make competion so prices come down.	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
31	Just wish it wasn't so expensive.	10/15/2024 10:10 PM
32	Another option where I can save money	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
33	Allow for competition with other isps - free community access	10/15/2024 8:05 PM
34	Pay for it.	10/15/2024 6:44 PM
35	Hi speed internet	10/15/2024 6:26 PM
36	Better speeds and lower costs	10/15/2024 4:33 PM
37	Make it affordable	10/15/2024 1:44 PM
38	More competition to lower cost	10/15/2024 1:20 PM
39	None	10/15/2024 11:02 AM
40	Unsure as I lack total knowledge of all that is involved.	10/15/2024 9:17 AM
41	cheaper for seniors/better contectivity	10/15/2024 8:54 AM
42	I would like to have consistent service	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
43	Make it affordable	10/14/2024 5:43 PM
44	Have different companies to choose from.	10/14/2024 4:21 PM
45	Bring back live customer service. Have companies that offer reasonable rate and charges for renting equipment. Ie…. I bought my router for $99, the rental is $10+ plus the fees monthly	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
46	Better plans for low income/fixed income people.	10/14/2024 2:33 PM
47	Create our own internet grid similar to Petersham	10/14/2024 2:01 PM
48	Municipal broadband	10/14/2024 12:25 PM
49	lower cost of internet access	10/14/2024 10:33 AM
50	1. Alternate providers, particularly fiber options for our WFH needs. 2. It would be really cool to have a public ISP offered, not just private companies.	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
51	Municipal offering. More providers.	10/12/2024 5:58 PM
52	to have a municipality for cable and internet like our electric company (Shrewsbury has one).	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
53	More cell service, would provide more competition for providers without the significant infrastructure cost	10/12/2024 4:54 PM
54	Having options and competition	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
55	Make it affordable	10/12/2024 3:14 PM
56	More choices of providers. Comcast/Xfinity is a virtual monopoly. Extended fiber optics would greatly improve the experience.	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
57	lower prices	10/10/2024 9:19 AM
58	Not entirely sure what the definition of digital inclusion and equity is?	10/9/2024 10:02 PM
59	lower the cost for all users	10/6/2024 1:02 PM
60	Municipal internet	10/5/2024 11:47 PM
61	Lower the cost so more folks can afford to get it.	10/5/2024 1:27 PM
62	Less expensive.	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
63	signal is always getting interrupted. internet randomly goes out all of the time	10/4/2024 4:37 PM
64	Published backup plan for internet access when ISPs are working on the network or updating	10/3/2024 6:32 AM

	equipment that shuts down the entire neighborhood for days at a time.	
65	Utilities including internet should be public companies rather than private in order to ensure fair access and pricing	10/2/2024 8:39 PM
66	Low cost, reliable high-speed availabilty	10/2/2024 12:21 PM
67	Lower cost, better connectivity	10/2/2024 12:20 PM
68	more internet options in my area	10/1/2024 6:50 PM
69	better speed, reliability,less buffer problems	9/30/2024 4:04 PM
70	We only have one choice. Wish we had more options	9/30/2024 9:51 AM
71	I wish Comcast would lower their prices	9/30/2024 8:12 AM
72	reduce prices	9/29/2024 8:14 PM
73	Lower cost, high mps rate	9/29/2024 8:10 AM
74	Better cellular service for the area	9/28/2024 7:05 PM
75	Lower cost	9/28/2024 3:55 PM
76	cheaper prices	9/28/2024 2:28 PM
77	Option for other providers.	9/25/2024 1:22 PM
78	Better cell phone service as well as internet service	9/23/2024 12:55 PM

Q12 How confident are you in your digital skills?

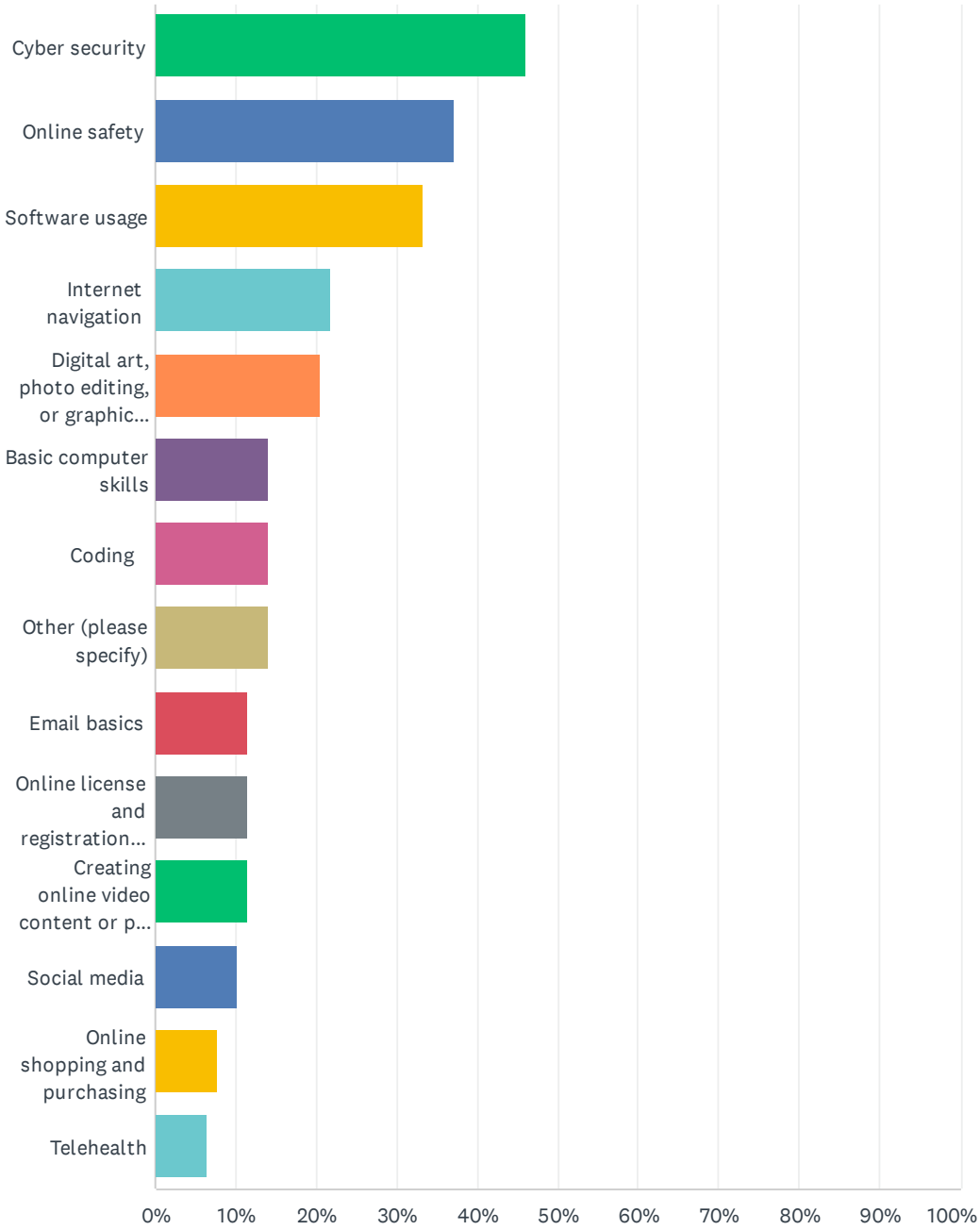
Answered: 116 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Confident (I have digital skills and confidence)	45.69%	53
Very confident (I have a very high degree of digital skills and confidence)	33.62%	39
Neutral (I have some digital skills but I have a low level of confidence)	18.97%	22
Not confident (I have very few digital skills and no confidence)	1.72%	2
Not at all confident (I have no digital skills and no confidence)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		116

Q13 What types of digital skills training would benefit you? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 78 Skipped: 39

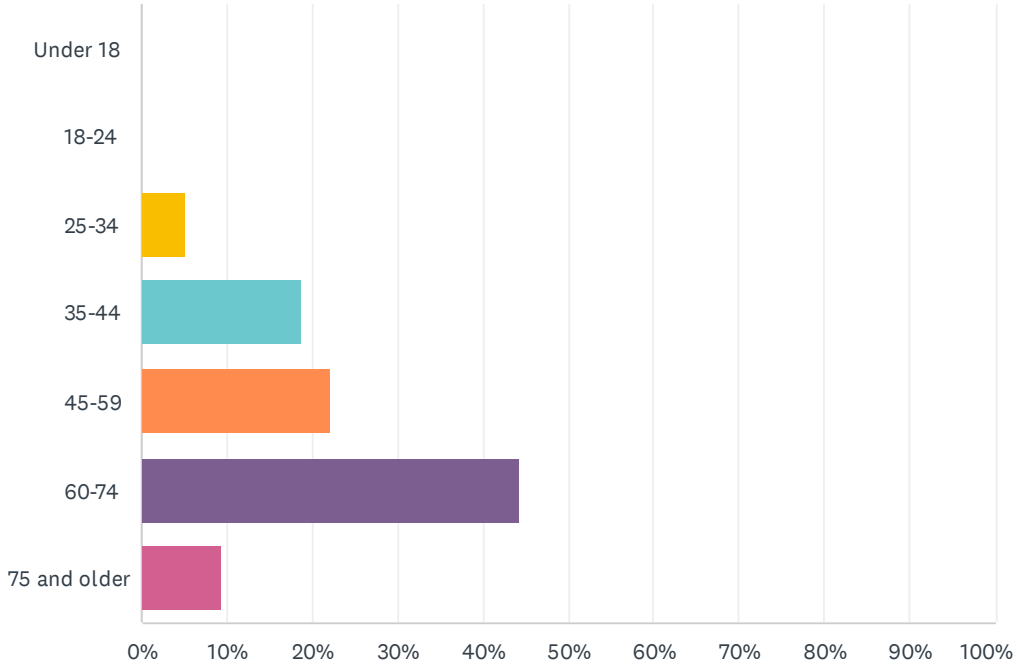


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cyber security	46.15%	36
Online safety	37.18%	29
Software usage	33.33%	26
Internet navigation	21.79%	17
Digital art, photo editing, or graphic design	20.51%	16
Basic computer skills	14.10%	11
Coding	14.10%	11
Other (please specify)	14.10%	11
Email basics	11.54%	9
Online license and registration renewals	11.54%	9
Creating online video content or pod casts	11.54%	9
Social media	10.26%	8
Online shopping and purchasing	7.69%	6
Telehealth	6.41%	5
Total Respondents: 78		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not needed all good for me	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
2	None	10/15/2024 6:44 PM
3	I have been fortunate to have been around long enough to know that I have had to evolve as the technology has. In addition I have been fortunate enough that my work requires me to be aware of changes and how to use it.	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
4	Home server installation and setup for smart home devices without using the cloud	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
5	None	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
6	Nothing	10/12/2024 4:54 PM
7	not needed	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
8	Why do I need the monachusett region to tach me skills?	10/9/2024 10:02 PM
9	None	10/5/2024 11:47 PM
10	None.	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
11	I'm comfortable with my knowledge at this time	9/30/2024 8:12 AM

Q14 What is your age group?

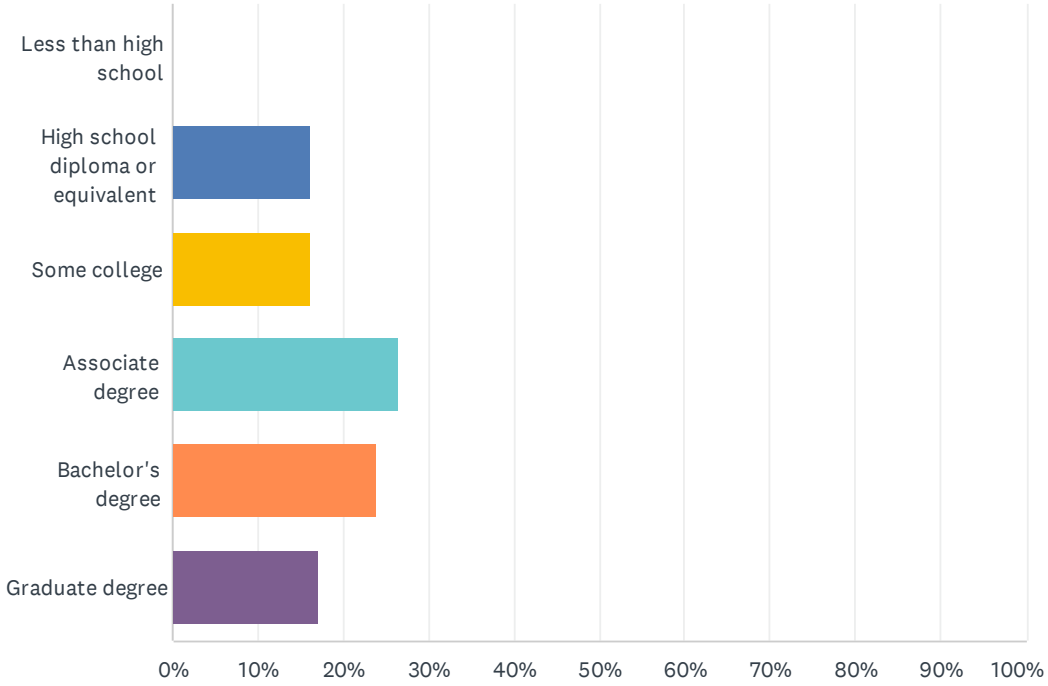
Answered: 117 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	0.00%	0
25-34	5.13%	6
35-44	18.80%	22
45-59	22.22%	26
60-74	44.44%	52
75 and older	9.40%	11
TOTAL		117

Q15 What is your highest level of education?

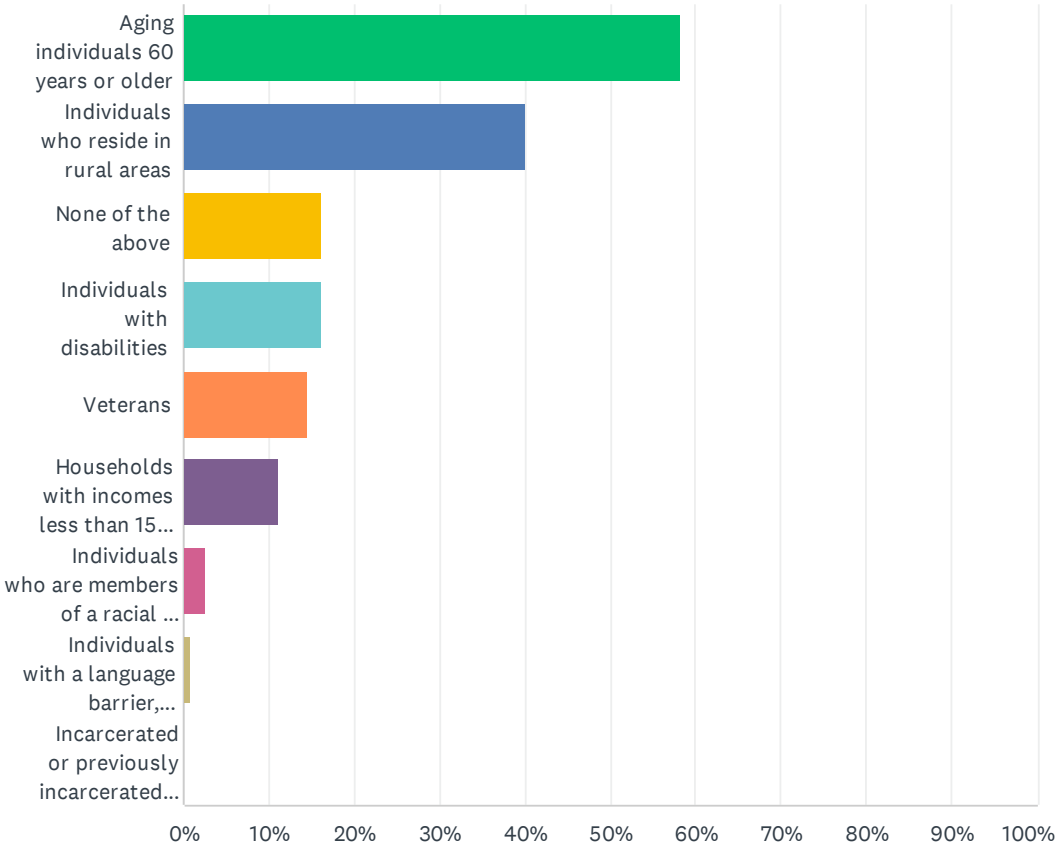
Answered: 117 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than high school	0.00%	0
High school diploma or equivalent	16.24%	19
Some college	16.24%	19
Associate degree	26.50%	31
Bachelor's degree	23.93%	28
Graduate degree	17.09%	20
TOTAL		117

Q16 The Digital Equity Act of 2021 has identified certain populations as priority or "covered populations" of the Act. Covered populations are often subject to challenges or barriers to equitable internet access, relative to adoption, affordability, and availability of broadband internet services. Do you or any of your household members belong to any of the following covered populations? (Check all that apply.)*The monthly salary equivalent to 150% of the federal poverty level for a family of 4 is $3,900. To find the number for a larger or smaller household, subtract $673 dollars for each family member less than 4, or add $673 for each family member greater than 4.

Answered: 117 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Aging individuals 60 years or older	58.12%	68
Individuals who reside in rural areas	40.17%	47
None of the above	16.24%	19
Individuals with disabilities	16.24%	19
Veterans	14.53%	17
Households with incomes less than 150% of the poverty level*	11.11%	13
Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group	2.56%	3
Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are non-English speakers, English learners, and those having low levels of literacy	0.85%	1
Incarcerated or previously incarcerated individuals	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 117		

Q17 Any respondents may choose to provide location-based information to support your answers related to internet connectivity and service. If so, please enter your address only.

Answered: 75 Skipped: 42

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	0.00%	0
Company	0.00%	0
Address	78.67%	59
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	97.33%	73
State/Province	98.67%	74
ZIP/Postal Code	98.67%	74
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address (Optional)	0.00%	0
Phone Number	0.00%	0

#	NAME	DATE
	There are no responses.	

#	COMPANY	DATE
	There are no responses.	

#	ADDRESS	DATE
1	78 Winchester Street	10/31/2024 1:54 AM
2	hubbardston Road	10/30/2024 3:24 PM
3	21 S MAIN ST	10/27/2024 9:41 PM
4	10 north main st	10/25/2024 4:57 PM
5	23 Wellington Road #45	10/25/2024 6:35 AM
6	134 pail factory rd	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
7	282 South Rd	10/24/2024 6:19 PM
8	147 Henshaw Road	10/24/2024 12:51 PM
9	356 S Main Street	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
10	15 High St	10/23/2024 7:45 PM
11	272 Otter River Road	10/23/2024 4:09 PM
12	46 Shore Dr	10/23/2024 8:53 AM
13	34 Cottage Lane	10/22/2024 3:45 PM
14	20 Cottage Lane, PO Box 132	10/22/2024 1:58 PM

15	361 Hubbardston Road	10/22/2024 12:42 PM
16	10 Winter Street	10/21/2024 5:20 PM
17	Victoria Ln	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
18	299 South Road	10/20/2024 7:46 PM
19	1 White Circle	10/20/2024 10:20 AM
20	15 Brandin Drive	10/18/2024 11:30 AM
21	7 Mill Brook Drive	10/17/2024 1:06 PM
22	675 Patriots Rd	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
23	1167 Patriots Rd	10/15/2024 10:10 PM
24	2 Muskett Drive	10/15/2024 8:51 PM
25	29 Brooks Village Rd	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
26	32 Pond View Road	10/15/2024 6:26 PM
27	Baldwinville rd	10/15/2024 4:33 PM
28	314 South Main St	10/15/2024 1:20 PM
29	527 Baldwinville Rd	10/15/2024 10:26 AM
30	9 Otter River Road	10/15/2024 8:54 AM
31	16 mill stone circle	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
32	100 Bridge St	10/14/2024 5:43 PM
33	7 Mill Stone Lane	10/14/2024 2:33 PM
34	16 Davis St	10/14/2024 12:25 PM
35	187 N Main St	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
36	50 Victoria Ln	10/12/2024 8:26 PM
37	1195 PATRIOTS RD	10/12/2024 5:58 PM
38	174 Farnswoth Road	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
39	764 Barre rd	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
40	15Lily Ln	10/12/2024 3:14 PM
41	18 fern st	10/12/2024 1:00 PM
42	88 Norcross Hill Road	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
43	15 Forest Street	10/9/2024 2:27 PM
44	17B Red Fox Crossing	10/5/2024 4:42 PM
45	31 Forest Street	10/5/2024 1:27 PM
46	399 State Road	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
47	128 State Road	10/2/2024 8:39 PM
48	baldwin Dr	10/1/2024 6:50 PM
49	49 highland ave	9/30/2024 4:04 PM
50	48 Pleasant St	9/30/2024 9:51 AM
51	13 Winchester Street	9/29/2024 8:14 PM
52	23 Walnut Street	9/29/2024 5:25 PM

53	172 Main Street	9/29/2024 10:57 AM
54	40 Gavin Rd.	9/29/2024 8:10 AM
55	12 Claire Avenue	9/28/2024 3:55 PM
56	16 Pine Dr	9/28/2024 2:28 PM
57	693 Patriots Rd Templeton, MA 01468	9/28/2024 9:04 AM
58	Carruth Rd	9/25/2024 1:22 PM
59	21 River Rd	9/23/2024 12:55 PM

#	ADDRESS 2	DATE
	There are no responses.	

#	CITY/TOWN	DATE
1	Templeton	11/13/2024 2:32 PM
2	BALDWINVILLE	10/31/2024 1:54 AM
3	Templeton	10/30/2024 5:26 PM
4	Templeton	10/30/2024 3:24 PM
5	TEMPLETON	10/27/2024 9:41 PM
6	Templeton	10/27/2024 6:32 PM
7	Templeton	10/27/2024 3:28 PM
8	Templeton	10/26/2024 5:46 PM
9	templeton	10/25/2024 4:57 PM
10	Templeton	10/25/2024 6:35 AM
11	Templeton	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
12	Templeton	10/24/2024 6:19 PM
13	Templeton	10/24/2024 12:51 PM
14	Templeton	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
15	E. Templeton	10/23/2024 7:45 PM
16	Templeton	10/23/2024 4:09 PM
17	Templeton	10/23/2024 8:53 AM
18	Templeton	10/22/2024 3:45 PM
19	East Templeton	10/22/2024 1:58 PM
20	Templeton	10/22/2024 12:42 PM
21	Templeton	10/21/2024 8:08 PM
22	Templeton	10/21/2024 5:20 PM
23	Templeton	10/21/2024 10:20 AM
24	Templeton	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
25	Templeton	10/20/2024 7:46 PM
26	Templeton	10/20/2024 10:20 AM
27	Templeton	10/18/2024 11:30 AM
28	Templeton	10/17/2024 1:06 PM

29	Templeton	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
30	Templeton	10/15/2024 10:10 PM
31	Templeton	10/15/2024 8:51 PM
32	Templeton	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
33	Templeton	10/15/2024 6:26 PM
34	Templeton	10/15/2024 4:33 PM
35	EAST TEMPLETON	10/15/2024 1:20 PM
36	Templeton	10/15/2024 10:26 AM
37	Templeton	10/15/2024 8:54 AM
38	Templeton	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
39	Baldwinville	10/14/2024 5:43 PM
40	Templeton	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
41	Templeton	10/14/2024 2:33 PM
42	Templeton	10/14/2024 2:01 PM
43	Baldwinville	10/14/2024 12:25 PM
44	Templeton	10/14/2024 10:33 AM
45	Templeton	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
46	Templeton	10/12/2024 8:26 PM
47	TEMPLETON	10/12/2024 5:58 PM
48	Templeton	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
49	Templeton	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
50	Baldwinville	10/12/2024 3:14 PM
51	baldwinville	10/12/2024 1:00 PM
52	Baldwinville	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
53	Baldwinville	10/9/2024 2:27 PM
54	Gardner, MA	10/5/2024 4:42 PM
55	Baldwinville	10/5/2024 1:27 PM
56	Baldwinville	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
57	Baldwinville	10/3/2024 11:21 AM
58	Baldwinville	10/2/2024 8:39 PM
59	Baldwinville	10/2/2024 12:21 PM
60	Templeton	10/2/2024 12:20 PM
61	Baldwinville	10/1/2024 6:50 PM
62	baldwincille, ma	9/30/2024 4:04 PM
63	Baldwinville	9/30/2024 9:51 AM
64	Baldwinville	9/30/2024 8:12 AM
65	Baldwinville	9/29/2024 8:14 PM
66	Baldwinville	9/29/2024 5:25 PM

67	Baldwinville	9/29/2024 10:57 AM
68	BALDWINVILLE	9/29/2024 8:10 AM
69	Baldwinville	9/28/2024 3:55 PM
70	Baldwinville	9/28/2024 2:28 PM
71	693 Patriots Rd Templeton, MA 01468, USA	9/28/2024 9:04 AM
72	Temple ton	9/25/2024 1:22 PM
73	Baldwinville	9/23/2024 12:55 PM
#	**STATE/PROVINCE**	**DATE**
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2	MA	10/31/2024 1:54 AM
3	MA	10/30/2024 5:26 PM
4	MA	10/30/2024 3:24 PM
5	MA	10/27/2024 9:41 PM
6	MA	10/27/2024 6:32 PM
7	MA	10/27/2024 3:28 PM
8	MA	10/26/2024 5:46 PM
9	MA	10/25/2024 4:57 PM
10	MA	10/25/2024 6:35 AM
11	MA	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
12	MA	10/24/2024 6:19 PM
13	MA	10/24/2024 12:51 PM
14	MA	10/24/2024 10:11 AM
15	MA	10/23/2024 7:45 PM
16	MA	10/23/2024 4:09 PM
17	MA	10/23/2024 8:53 AM
18	MA	10/22/2024 3:45 PM
19	MA	10/22/2024 1:58 PM
20	MA	10/22/2024 12:42 PM
21	MA	10/21/2024 8:08 PM
22	MA	10/21/2024 5:20 PM
23	MA	10/21/2024 10:20 AM
24	MA	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
25	MA	10/20/2024 7:46 PM
26	MA	10/20/2024 10:20 AM
27	MA	10/18/2024 11:30 AM
28	MA	10/17/2024 1:06 PM
29	MA	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
30	MA	10/15/2024 10:10 PM

31	MA	10/15/2024 8:51 PM
32	MA	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
33	MA	10/15/2024 6:26 PM
34	MA	10/15/2024 4:33 PM
35	MA	10/15/2024 1:20 PM
36	MA	10/15/2024 10:26 AM
37	MA	10/15/2024 8:54 AM
38	MA	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
39	MA	10/14/2024 5:43 PM
40	MA	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
41	MA	10/14/2024 2:33 PM
42	MA	10/14/2024 2:01 PM
43	MA	10/14/2024 12:25 PM
44	MA	10/14/2024 10:33 AM
45	MA	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
46	MA	10/12/2024 8:26 PM
47	MA	10/12/2024 5:58 PM
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49	MA	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
50	MA	10/12/2024 3:14 PM
51	MA	10/12/2024 1:00 PM
52	MA	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
53	MA	10/10/2024 9:19 AM
54	MA	10/9/2024 2:27 PM
55	MA	10/5/2024 4:42 PM
56	MA	10/5/2024 1:27 PM
57	MA	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
58	MA	10/3/2024 11:21 AM
59	MA	10/2/2024 8:39 PM
60	MA	10/2/2024 12:21 PM
61	MA	10/2/2024 12:20 PM
62	MA	10/1/2024 6:50 PM
63	MA	9/30/2024 4:04 PM
64	MA	9/30/2024 9:51 AM
65	MA	9/30/2024 8:12 AM
66	MA	9/29/2024 8:14 PM
67	MA	9/29/2024 5:25 PM
68	MA	9/29/2024 10:57 AM

69	MA	9/29/2024 8:10 AM
70	MA	9/28/2024 3:55 PM
71	MA	9/28/2024 2:28 PM
72	MA	9/28/2024 9:04 AM
73	MA	9/25/2024 1:22 PM
74	MA	9/23/2024 12:55 PM
#	**ZIP/POSTAL CODE**	**DATE**
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3	01468	10/30/2024 5:26 PM
4	01468	10/30/2024 3:24 PM
5	01468	10/27/2024 9:41 PM
6	01468	10/27/2024 6:32 PM
7	01468	10/27/2024 3:28 PM
8	01468	10/26/2024 5:46 PM
9	01438	10/25/2024 4:57 PM
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11	01468	10/24/2024 6:54 PM
12	01468	10/24/2024 6:19 PM
13	01468	10/24/2024 12:51 PM
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15	01438	10/23/2024 7:45 PM
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17	01468	10/23/2024 8:53 AM
18	91468	10/22/2024 4:55 PM
19	01468	10/22/2024 3:45 PM
20	01438	10/22/2024 1:58 PM
21	01468	10/22/2024 12:42 PM
22	01468	10/21/2024 8:08 PM
23	01468	10/21/2024 5:20 PM
24	01468	10/21/2024 10:20 AM
25	01468	10/21/2024 9:04 AM
26	01468	10/20/2024 7:46 PM
27	01468	10/20/2024 10:20 AM
28	01468	10/18/2024 11:30 AM
29	01468	10/17/2024 1:06 PM
30	01468	10/16/2024 10:52 AM
31	01468	10/15/2024 10:10 PM

32	01468	10/15/2024 8:51 PM
33	01468	10/15/2024 8:41 PM
34	01468	10/15/2024 6:26 PM
35	01468	10/15/2024 4:33 PM
36	01438	10/15/2024 1:20 PM
37	01436	10/15/2024 10:26 AM
38	01468	10/15/2024 8:54 AM
39	01468	10/15/2024 7:14 AM
40	01436	10/14/2024 5:43 PM
41	01468	10/14/2024 4:17 PM
42	01468	10/14/2024 2:33 PM
43	01468	10/14/2024 2:01 PM
44	MA	10/14/2024 12:25 PM
45	01468	10/14/2024 10:33 AM
46	01468	10/13/2024 11:42 AM
47	01468	10/12/2024 8:26 PM
48	01468	10/12/2024 5:58 PM
49	01468	10/12/2024 5:46 PM
50	01468	10/12/2024 3:54 PM
51	01436	10/12/2024 3:14 PM
52	01436	10/12/2024 1:00 PM
53	01436-1506	10/12/2024 11:48 AM
54	01436	10/9/2024 2:27 PM
55	01440	10/5/2024 4:42 PM
56	01436	10/5/2024 1:27 PM
57	01436	10/4/2024 6:57 PM
58	01436	10/3/2024 11:21 AM
59	01436	10/2/2024 8:39 PM
60	01436	10/2/2024 12:21 PM
61	01468	10/2/2024 12:20 PM
62	01436	10/1/2024 6:50 PM
63	01436	9/30/2024 4:04 PM
64	01436-1035	9/30/2024 9:51 AM
65	01436	9/30/2024 8:12 AM
66	01436	9/29/2024 8:14 PM
67	01436	9/29/2024 5:25 PM
68	01436	9/29/2024 10:57 AM
69	01436-1514	9/29/2024 8:10 AM

70	01436	9/28/2024 3:55 PM
71	01436	9/28/2024 2:28 PM
72	01468	9/28/2024 9:04 AM
73	01468	9/25/2024 1:22 PM
74	01436	9/23/2024 12:55 PM
#	**COUNTRY**	**DATE**
	There are no responses.	
#	**EMAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)**	**DATE**
	There are no responses.	
#	**PHONE NUMBER**	**DATE**
	There are no responses.	

Massachusetts Statewide Digital Equity Survey

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) wants to hear from you about your experiences with getting and using internet service! This survey is completely anonymous and should be completed by one individual per household. **Your feedback is vital to understand barriers to internet access, affordability, and adoption to help close the digital divide.** Thank you for your time and participation.

Section 1: Please answer the following questions.

1. What is your zip code? _____
2. Which Massachusetts municipality do you live in? _____

Do you have internet service in your home?

- ☐ **YES** – Please proceed to Section 2 below
- ☐ **NO** – Please skip to Section 3 (flip this page over)

Section 2: Please answer the following questions only if you CAN connect to the internet from home.

3. Who is your internet service provider? _____
4. What kind of internet service do you have at home? Please check all that apply.
   - ☐ A data plan for a smartphone, hotspot, or tablet
   - ☐ Dial-up internet
   - ☐ Home wireline connection (cable, fiber, DSL, etc.)
   - ☐ Satellite internet
5. How well does your home internet service work?
   - ☐ Good enough to meet my household's needs
   - ☐ I don't know
   - ☐ Not good enough to meet my household's needs
6. Is your home internet service bundled with other services such as telephone or TV?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No
7. How much do you pay for the internet every month? $_____
8. How hard is it for you to pay your internet bill?
   - ☐ Very hard
   - ☐ Not too hard
   - ☐ Somewhat hard
   - ☐ Not at all hard
9. Have you heard about the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) that provides discounted internet service for low-income households?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ I don't know
   - ☐ No

   For more information and to find out if you qualify for ACP, call the Federal Communication Commission's ACP Support Center: 877-384-2575.

When complete, skip to section 4 below.

Section 3: Please answer the following questions only if you CANNOT connect to the internet at home.

10. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the reason?
    - ☐ Service is not available in my area
    - ☐ Service is too expensive
    - ☐ I am concerned about online privacy or safety
    - ☐ I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools
    - ☐ I can't afford or access a device to use the internet
    - ☐ I don't want / don't use the internet.
    - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

11. If you do not have internet at home, where do you go to use the internet? Please check all that apply.
    - ☐ A workplace
    - ☐ A friend or family member's home
    - ☐ School, college, or university
    - ☐ A library or community center
    - ☐ A business such as a restaurant, cafe, or bookstore (e.g., McDonald's, Taco Bell, Starbucks, etc.)
    - ☐ A public space such as a park or government building
    - ☐ On public transit
    - ☐ I do not regularly access internet in these or any other spaces
    - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

When complete, proceed to section 4 below.

Section 4: All respondents should answer these questions.

12. Does everyone in your household have access to the computer devices they need to meet their everyday needs for internet use? (Computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet enabled devices)?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

13. Which of the following devices do you use most of the time to connect to the internet? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ Cellphone
    - ☐ Desktop computer
    - ☐ Laptop computer
    - ☐ Tablet (or similar device)
    - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

14. How much would you be able to pay for a laptop or desktop computer?
    - ☐ $0-50
    - ☐ $50-100
    - ☐ $100-150
    - ☐ $150-250
    - ☐ $250-500
    - ☐ More than $1,000

15. Are you able to regularly use the internet for online activities?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

16. Please rank the level of difficulty for what you use the internet for. (Easy, Not easy, Hard)

	Easy	*Not easy*	*Hard*
Searching and applying for a job	☐	☐	☐
Health care or telehealth services	☐	☐	☐
Participating in your local community	☐	☐	☐
General internet searching	☐	☐	☐
Transportation information	☐	☐	☐
Searching and/or applying for benefits or resources for you or your family	☐	☐	☐

17. If you do not have regular access to the internet, what would most like to use it for if you could?
    - ☐ Searching and applying for a job
    - ☐ Health care or telehealth services
    - ☐ Participating in your local community
    - ☐ General internet searching
    - ☐ Transportation information
    - ☐ Searching and/or applying for benefits or resources for you and your family
    - ☐ Something else
    - ☐ I don't want to use the internet regularly

18. What kind of digital skills support would you be most interested in?
    - ☐ In person classes
    - ☐ Online classes
    - ☐ In person support from a friend or instructor
    - ☐ A do-it-yourself training module

19. How concerned are you, if at all, about internet safety?
    - ☐ Very concerned
    - ☐ Somewhat concerned
    - ☐ Not very concerned
    - ☐ Not at all concerned

20. What are you most concerned about? (Select all that apply)
    - ☐ That my data could get stolen or used without my consent
    - ☐ That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked
    - ☐ That I could be tracked or surveilled
    - ☐ That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online

21. Are you aware of tools or resources you can use to stay safe online?
    - ☐ Yes, I have tools and resources I use stay safe online
    - ☐ No, I don't know of any tools or resources to stay safe online
    - ☐ I know of tools or resources to stay safe online, but they don't work for me
    - ☐ Other (please specify) : _____

22. How accessible are online government services like benefits portals, RMV services, or paying for permits or tickets to you?
    - ☐ Very accessible
    - ☐ Somewhat accessible
    - ☐ Not very accessible
    - ☐ Not at all accessible

23. When you have used online government services like benefits portals, RMV services, or paying for permits or tickets, how well did they work for you?
    - ☐ Very well
    - ☐ Somewhat well
    - ☐ Not too well
    - ☐ Not well at all

When complete, proceed to section 5 below.

Section 5: All respondents should answer these questions. *We collect demographic information so that we can make sure we are representing all neighborhoods, towns, cities and groups across the Commonwealth.*

24. What is your age?

- ☐ 18 to 24
- ☐ 25 to 34
- ☐ 35 to 44
- ☐ 45 to 59
- ☐ 60 to 74
- ☐ 75 and older
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

25. What is your gender identity?

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Gender fluid
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

26. How many people, including yourself, currently live in your household? *(Note: A household is defined as all the people who currently occupy the housing unit where you live).*

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

27. How many children under age 18, currently live in your household? *(Note: A household is defined as all the people who currently occupy the housing unit where you live).*

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

28. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- ☐ Less than high school, or high school incomplete (Up to grades 9-11 or Grade 12 with NO diploma)
- ☐ High school graduate (Grade 12 with diploma or GED certificate)
- ☐ Two-year associate degree from a college or university
- ☐ Four-year college or university degree/Bachelor's degree (e.g., BS, BA, AB)
- ☐ Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, MD, JD)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

29. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

30. Which of the following best describes your race? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ White or Caucasian
- ☐ Black or African-American
- ☐ Asian or Asian-American
- ☐ Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native
- ☐ Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Some other race (please specify) _____
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

31. Do you belong to a North American Indigenous, Native, or Tribal group?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

32. What is your total annual household income from all sources, and before taxes?
    - ☐ Less than $22,000
    - ☐ $22,000 to $29,999
    - ☐ $30,000 to $36,999
    - ☐ $37,000 to $44,999
    - ☐ $45,000 to $52,999
    - ☐ $53,000 to $59,999
    - ☐ $60,000 or more
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

33. Do you identify as a person with a disability? *(Note: Disability is defined as physical, emotional, or mental health conditions that result in limitations of activities or restrictions to full participation at school, at work, at home, or in the community).*
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

34. If you identify as a person with a disability, do you have difficulty in any of the following areas? Please check all that apply.
    - ☐ Seeing even if wearing glasses
    - ☐ Hearing even if using a hearing aid
    - ☐ Walking or climbing steps
    - ☐ Remembering or concentrating
    - ☐ Self-care
    - ☐ Communicating, for example understanding or being understood
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer
    - ☐ I do not identify as a person with a disability

35. Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

36. Did you serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

37. Do you live in affordable housing? *(Note: Affordable housing is defined as housing subsidized by a housing authority, paid for through a voucher, or in a building run by a private developer.)*
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Prefer not to answer

38. Where did you hear about this survey? Please check all that apply.
    - ☐ From a government website, email list, flyer, or other outreach
    - ☐ From a friend, colleague, or acquaintance
    - ☐ From a community meeting, community anchor such as a library or school, or other local institution
    - ☐ From an organization's website, email list, flyer, or other outreach
    - ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Thank you for taking the survey!

Your response will help shape Massachusetts's policies and future funding allocations to close the digital divide for all its residents. If you would like to learn more, please visit **https://broadband.masstech.org/.**

Q1 - Are yo	Q2 - Are yo	Q3 - What i	Q4 - Which	Q5 - Do you	Q7 - Who is	Q8 - What I	Q9 - How w	Q10 - Is you	Q11 - Not c	Q12 - How	Q13 - Have	Q14 - If you
Yes	Yes	01436	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	A data plan	Good enou	Yes	87	Somewhat	Yes	
Yes	Yes	01436	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	Home wire	Good enou	No	100	Not too har	Yes	
Yes	Yes	01468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	Fixed wirel	Good enou	Yes	210	Very Hard	No	
Yes	Yes	01468	Templeton	No							No	Service is n
Yes	Yes	01436	Templeton	Yes	Verizon Co	I don't kno	Not good e	Yes	10000	Somewhat	Yes	
Yes	Yes	01468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	A data plan	Good enou	No	130	Very Hard	Yes	
Yes	Yes	01436	Templeton	Yes	Verizon Co	I don't kno	Not good e	Yes	8700	Not too har	Yes	
Yes	Yes	1468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	Home wire	Not good e	Yes	100	Somewhat	Yes	
Yes	Yes	1436	Templeton	Yes	Xfinity	Home wire	Good enou	No				
Yes	Yes	1436	Templeton	Yes	Xfinity	Home wire	Good enou	Yes	364	Not at all h	No	
Yes	Yes	1468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	Home wire	Good enou	No		Not too har	Yes	
Yes	Yes	1468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	A data plan	Good enou	No		Not too har	Yes	
Yes	Yes	1468	Templeton	Yes	Comcast C	Home wire	Not good e	Yes	100	Somewhat	I don't know	
Yes	Yes	1468	Templeton	Yes	Xfinity	Home wire	Good enou	Yes				

Q14_10_TE	Q15 - If you	Q15_12_TE	Q16 - Does	Q17 - Whic	Q17_8_TEX	Q18 - How	Q19 - Are y	Q20_4 - Se	Q20_5 - He	Q20_6 - Pa	Q20_7 - Ge	Q20_8 - Tra
			No	Cellphone,Laptop com		$0-50	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
			Yes	Cellphone		$250-500	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
			Yes	Cellphone, Toast pos s		$500-1,00(	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
ot available	Other (plea	Hot spot or	Yes	Cellphone		$100-150	Yes		Easy		Easy	
			Yes	Cellphone,Laptop com		$100-150	No					
			Yes	Desktop computer		$250-500	Yes					
			Yes	Cellphone,Laptop com		$100-150	Yes	Not easy	Not easy	Hard	Easy	Hard
			Yes	Laptop computer		$500-1,00(	Yes	Easy	Not easy	Not easy	Easy	Not easy
			Yes	Cellphone,Tablet (or s		$250-500	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
			Yes	Desktop computer		$150-250	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Not easy
			Yes	Cellphone,Desktop co		More than $	Yes	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
			Yes	Laptop computer		$250-500	Yes	Not easy	Hard	Not easy	Easy	Not easy

Q20_9 - Se	Q22 - If you	Q23 - What	Q24 - How	Q25 - What	Q26 - Are y	Q26_7_TEX	Q27 - How	Q28 - Whe	Q29 - What	Q30 - What	Q31 - How	Q32 - How
Easy		In person c	Very conce	That my da	No, I donâ€™t know of		Very acces	Very well	45 to 59	Woman	6	0
Easy		A do-it-you	Somewhat	That my da	Yes, I have tools and re		Very acces	Very well	45 to 59	Woman	4	2
Easy												
			Very conce	That my da	Other (plea	Id like to kn	Somewhat	Somewhat	45 to 59	Woman	4	1
	Health care	In person s	Very conce	That my da	I know of tools or resou		Somewhat	Somewhat	60 to 74	Woman	2	0
		A do-it-you	Somewhat	That my da	Yes, I have tools and re		Somewhat	Somewhat	60 to 74	Prefer not t	1	
Hard		In person s	Very conce	That my da	I know of tools or resou		Not very ac	Somewhat	60 to 74	Woman	2	0
Not easy		In person c	Very conce	That my data could get stolen or u			Somewhat	Not too we	Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not t
Easy		A do-it-you	Very conce	That my data could get stolen or u			Very acces	Very well	60 to 74	Woman	2	0
Not easy		A do-it-you	Somewhat	That my data could get stolen or u			Very acces	Very well	60 to 74	Man	2	0
Easy		A do-it-you	Somewhat	That my data could get stolen or u			Somewhat	Somewhat	35 to 44	Prefer not t	5	3
Not easy		In person c	Very conce	That my data could get stolen or u			Not very ac	Not well at	60 to 74	Man	3	0

Q33 - What	Q34 - Are y	Q35 - Whic	Q35_9_TEX	Q36 - Do yo	Q37 - What	Q38 - Do yo	Q39 - If you	Q40 - Do yo	Q41 - Did y	Q42 - Do yo	Q43 - Wher	Q43_8_TEX
Two-year a	No	White or Caucasian		No	$60,000 or	No	I do not ide	No	No	No	From a government we	
High schoo	No	White or Caucasian		No	$60,000 or	No	I do not ide	No	No	No	From a government we	
Postgradua	No	White or Caucasian		No	$60,000 or	No	I do not ide	No	No	No	From an organizationâ	
Two-year a	No	White or Caucasian		No	$30,000 to	Prefer not t	Prefer not t	No	No	No	From a government we	
Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Other (plea	Human									
Two-year a	No	White or Caucasian		No	$30,000 to	No	I do not ide	No	No	No	From a government we	
Four-year c	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		spam
Four-year c	No	White or Caucasian		No	$60,000 or	No		No	No	No	From a friend, colleagu	
High schoo	No	White or Caucasian		No	$22,000 to	Yes	Seeing eve	No	No	No		City of Garc
Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	No	From a government we	
Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not to answer		Prefer not t	Prefer not t	Prefer not t	From a government we	

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Municipal Digital Equity Planning

Please help plan for digital equity and broadband internet accessibility by taking the Massachusetts Digital Equity Survey!

The survey is available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and other languages. Paper copies available at:

Templeton Town Hall
160 Patriots Road

Boynton Public Library
27 Boynton Road, Templeton

Templeton Senior Community Center
16 Senior Drive (79 Bridge Street), Baldwinville

www.bit.ly/48jdwVL

Scout Hall
135 Patriots Road, Templeton

TOWN OF TEMPLETON
Incorporated 1762

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

MRPC

TEMPLETON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN

Follow the link or scan the QR code to take the statewide digital equity survey:

https://bit.ly/48jdwVL

Broadband Internet

Accessibility

Affordability

Adoption

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE | at the MassTech Collaborative

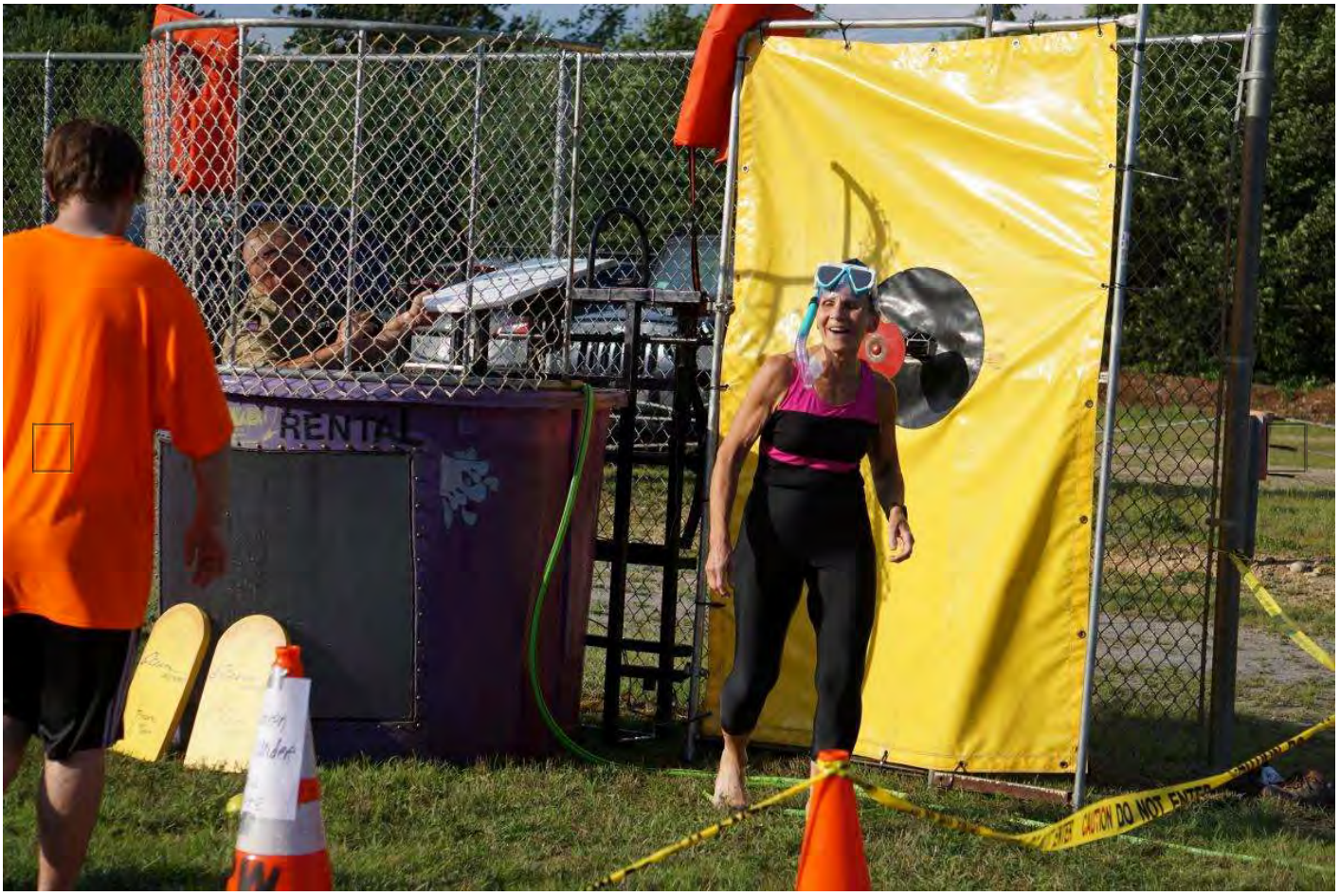
TOWN OF TEMPLETON Incorporated 1762

MRPC

The overall purpose of Digital Equity Planning is to understand the existing conditions around internet access and digital technology, specifically those related to, availability, affordability, and adoptability of broadband internet and digital devices with a focus on certain covered populations of the Digital Equity Act.

Published on *Templeton MA - Official Government Website* (https://www.templetonma.gov)

Arts & Craft Fair - NPOD



Celebrate 4th Annual National Play Outside Day Templeton Arts and Craft Fair with Us

Saturday August 2 and Sunday August 3 2025

Gilman Waite Park off Elm St. Baldwinvile MA

CLICK TO BOOK YOUR SPACE

Art & Craft Fair

Thank you,Templeton Firefighters Local 5311 a Sponsor of NPOD

Gates Open at 10:30am

- Arts & Craft Fair, Various Craft, Art and kids items for sale, visit the many local organizations tents, Food Vendors, Games, BIG Bounce House, small Bounce House, Live Music and More...

A List of a few of our Vendors last year 2024

Under the tent : Honest Weight Artisan Beer LLC.

Crafted Curiosities

Braids, beads, Bows and More - The Narragansett Cheerleaders - Fundraiser Table

UPCYCLED NEWS

Mama and Mimi Crochet

HOUSE OF GRACE AND REGISTRATION CGR

FOX & OWL CANDLES AND CRAFTS

Lulu Be's

http://Winchendon/Templeton Regional Animal Control

BEKKIS CREATIVE OFFERING

TASTEFULLY SIMPLE

Crochet Addict - Joyce Ahearn

THE WHIMSY LADY LAIR

Blink Crafts

Steriorgon

NANCY RIVERS -

B & L Novelty

CBK CRAFTS BY KELLY

AND MORE.....

Prettiest Princess Parties, LLC performed at NPOD

Movie at Dusk

Bring your chairs and blankets

If you like to sponsor / book space for the fair, Volunteer contact:

Candace Graves; Recreation@Templetonma.gov or Rachael Flurry at 978-894-2766

Click for Vendor Application (If you like Book Space at Art & Craft Fair)

Click to sponsor / Donate to the Event

NATIONAL PLAY OUTSIDE DAY

TEMPLETON PARKS & REC

-

AND MORE.....

Live Music 2024

Dan Cormier- Solo Acoustic

TWP 2024

Visit Parks & Rec Playgroup Coordinator Catie McClure and Staff /Volunteers @ NPOD

Templeton Parks & Rec Playgroup

Fun games with Parks & Rec Swim Director Hunter Marion and Staff /Volunteers @ NPOD

Free Kids activities

- *2 Bounce Houses*
- *Bubbles*
- *Fun Kids games*
- *Prize giveaways*
- *Visit our GW Playground*
- *Tug a Rope*
- *and MORE.....*

Join Parks & Rec Basketball Coordinator Ray Kauffman

- Free Basketball, Skills & Drills and Pick-up games (Times TBA)
- **FREE MOVIE @ DUSK**

Dunk Tank Open during day

Bring a Non perishable food items for " Templeton Food Pantry "

Scouts Tent They always bring the FUN at Scout Tent at NPOD!

Source URL:https://www.templetonma.gov/office-of-public-services/parks-recreation-commission/slideshows/arts-craft-fair-npod

National Play Outside Day/Craft Fair

Gilman-Waite Park, Baldwinville (Templeton), MA

Saturday, August 3, 2024

TEMPLETON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN
Follow the link or scan the QR code to take the statewide digital equity survey:
https://bit.ly/48jdwVL
Broadband Internet
Accessibility
Affordability
Adoption
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!
MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
MRPC
The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) wants to hear about your experiences with internet service! This survey is completely anonymous and should be completed by one individual per household. Your feedback is vital to understand barriers to internet access, affordability, and adoption to help close the digital divide. Thank you for your participation.
El Instituto de Banda Ancha de Massachusetts (MBI, por sus siglas en inglés) quiere conocer sus experiencias a la hora de utilizar el servicio de Internet. Esta encuesta es completamente anónima y debe completarse por una persona por hogar. Sus comentarios son vitales para entender las barreras al acceso a Internet, la asequibilidad y la incorporación para ayudar a cerrar la brecha digital. ¡Gracias por su participación!
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE

Templeton Parks & Rec Nation Play Outside Day / Craft Fair
At Gilman-Waite Park Baldwinville MA

Saturday, August 3, 2024 ♦ 10:30 AM - 6:30 PM

VENDOR REGISTRATION FORM

BUSINESS / ORGANIZATION : Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

CONTACT PERSON: Jeff Legros EMAIL: jlegros@mrpc.org

Address: 464 Abott Ave. (Street) Leominster (Town/City) MA (State) 01453 (Zip code)

TELEPHONE: 978-345-7376 FAX _____

PRODUCT / SERVICE INFO: Describe the products or services to be displayed Digital Equity Plan (Town of Templeton, Phillipston, Royalston); Internet Access and online safety.

Templeton Parks and Recreation Commission reserves the right to prohibit the sale of any /all items we deem unacceptable. We will do our best to try NOT to duplicate products, and that is why we need a complete list of your products.

NO FEE REGISTRATION

Mail / email No, Later than Thursday July 15, 2024

☐ **Vendor** ☒ **Not-For-Profit Vendor** ☐ **SPONSORSHIP** *vendor spot included*

One space is 10 X16.
IF you need a bigger spot please let us know.

***All VENDORS MUST** ... If you have Alcohol items that you intend to sell, you will need to obtain a Temporary License from the Templeton **Town Administrator's office / Select board**
Cooking food (food being prepare at the park) that you intend to sell, you will need to obtain a Temporary License from the **Templeton Board Of Health**
Additional charges may apply. The application forms are available Town Website, Templetonma.gov and Board of Health Office 978-894-2771

Donation / Sponsorship check out to **"Town of Templeton"** Memo: **REC NPOD**
Mail application and check: Templeton Parks & Rec, PO Box 572, Templeton MA 01468 or drop off in a envelope at the Library Parks & Rec Blue Box

I Have read and understand the guidelines included with this application. And by my signature, I agree to follow them.

SIGNATURE: _____ Date: 8/2/2024

Please Sign and return registration form soon must be received by July 15, 2024 to guarantee your space.

For additional information or questions or if you need the park gate open Friday 8/2
Drop off or pre-set up please contact ***Candace Graves*** Recreation@Templetonma.gov / 508-414-9734
Saturday 8/3 Park Gate opens 9 am
Movie Rain Date 10th

Warrior Fest

5th Annual
Homecoming Celebration

Sponsored by Narragansett's
Varsity Letterman's Club

Saturday, September 14th

Rear Lot | Game Field | 4pm-10pm

NRHS Club and Class Booths ★ Live Music ★ Local Vendors ★ Food Trucks ★ Games ★ Petting Zoo ★ Football ★ Fireworks

NRHS Varsity Football vs. Monty Tech @ 7:00pm

Fireworks Display @ 9:00pm

FREE VIDEO CREATED ON
POSTERMYWALL.COM

FUN FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY!

Narragansett Regional School District Warrior Fest

Homecoming Celebration

Narragansett High School, Templeton, MA

Saturday, September 14, 2024

Digital Equity Planning:
Town of Templeton
MBI
ENTERING
TEMPLETON
Town of Templeton
Broadband and Digital Equity Indicators; Tem
'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN
or scan the QR code to take the statewide digital equity survey:
Broadband Internet
Accessibility
Affordability
Adoption
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!
MRPC
MBI

Municipal Digital Equity Planning

Please help plan for digital equity and broadband internet accessibility by taking the Montachusett Region's "My Digital Equity" Survey!

www.surveymonkey.com/r/mydigital-equity

Paper copies of the survey are available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Haitain Creole, and Hmong at:

Templeton Town Hall
160 Patriots Road

Boynton Public Library
27 Boynton Road, Templeton

Templeton Senior Community Center
16 Senior Drive (79 Bridge Street), Baldwinville

Scout Hall
135 Patriots Road, Templeton

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE at the MassTech Collaborative

MRPC

TEMPLETON'S DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING HAS BEGUN

Follow the link or scan the QR code to take the Templeton digital equity survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/mydigital-equity

Broadband Internet

Accessibility

Affordability

Adoption

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE | at the MassTech Collaborative

TOWN OF TEMPLETON Incorporated 1762

MRPC

The overall purpose of Digital Equity Planning is to understand the existing conditions around internet access and digital technology, specifically those related to, availability, affordability, and adoptability of broadband internet and digital devices with a focus on certain covered populations of the Digital Equity Act.

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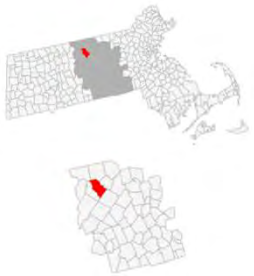
Digital Equity Planning: Town of Templeton

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE | at the MassTech Collaborative | Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

Town of Templeton

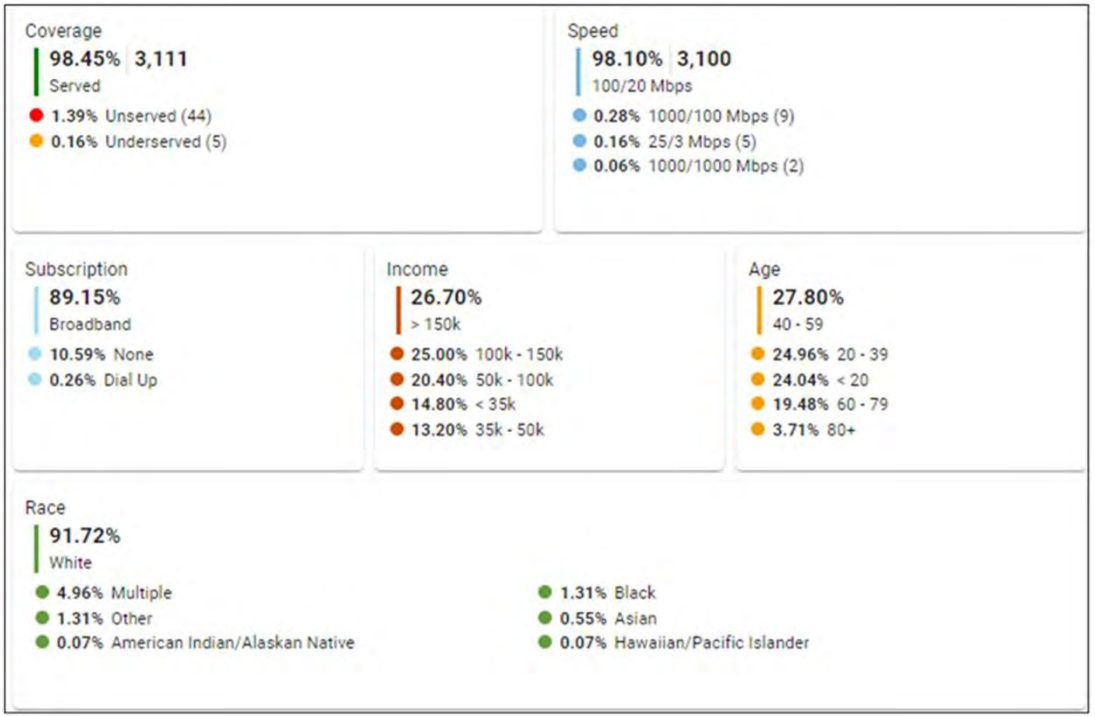


Templeton, located in North Worcester County and bordering the City of Gardner, and the towns of Hubbardston, Phillipston, Royalston, and Winchendon, is home to 8,261 residents with a population per square mile of 255.6, less than the county (570.7) and statewide (901.2) population densities.

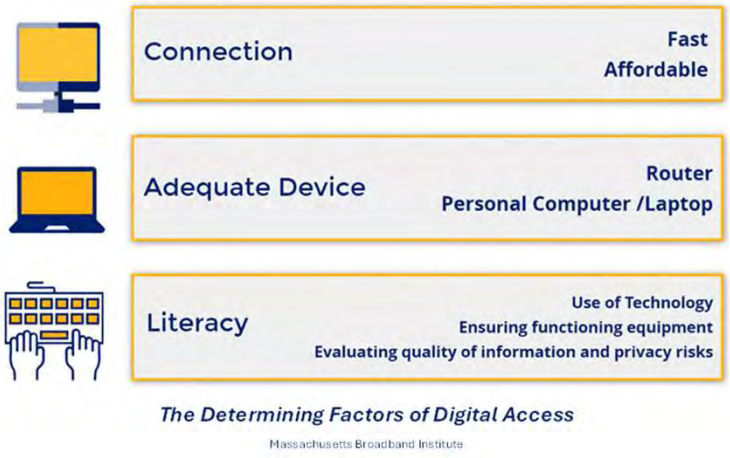
According to the Massachusetts Broadband Map the Town of Templeton (which includes the villages of Templeton, East Templeton, Baldwinville, and Otter River) has 3,160 Serviceable Locations, of which 3,111 are classified as "Served" (98.4%), five (5) are classified as "Underserved" (1.3%), and 44 are classified as "Unserved" (3.2%).

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE | at the MassTech Collaborative | Montachusett Regional Planning Commission Commonwealth of Massachusetts | TOWN OF TEMPLETON INDUSTRY Incorporated 1762

The overall purpose of Digital Equity Planning is to understand the existing conditions around internet access and digital technology, specifically those related to, availability, affordability, and adoptability of broadband internet and digital devices with a focus on certain covered populations of the Digital Equity Act.

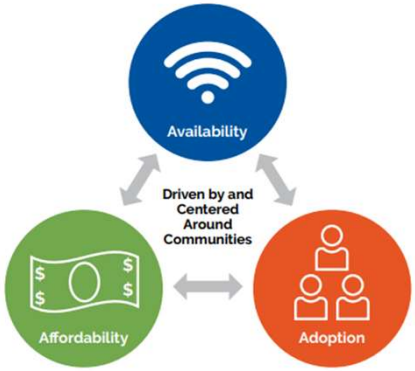


Broadband and Digital Equity Indicators, Templeton, MA



The Determining Factors of Digital Access

Massachusetts Broadband Institute



7.4 Appendix D

Stakeholder Questionnaires & Interview Notes

Please complete the survey questions and return to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (jlegros@mrpc.org); To take the questionnaire online visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP

Your Name: _____ Your Organization/Role: _____

Questions for Town Contacts and Interested Stakeholder groups – Digital Equity Planning (Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston)	**Response Options**
Are you aware of the State's Digital Equity Project and have you taken the state survey and/or promoted it to the people you serve? https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal https://mbicx.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bxTlMGFVF8KjigC	
Would you like us to provide you with social media or other information to help you promote it to the people you serve?	
Are you on the State Asset Inventory Map?	
If not, do you want to be (should they be in your opinion because they serve a Covered Population and now or in the future want to support digital equity activities?)	
If YES, are you open to having me add you now?	
How many people do you typically serve in a year who fall within the Covered Population? Which Covered Population or Stakeholder Group is it? Examples of covered populations are senior citizens, low income individuals or families, minority groups, non-english speaking persons, veterans, incarcerated or previously incarcerated.	
How well do you think you know the people you serve's Digital Equity needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).	
Of those you serve, what do you think their major needs are in these categories: digital literacy, skills, devices, access, affordability, adoption?	
Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?	
Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?	

Please complete the survey questions and return to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (jlegros@mrpc.org); To take the questionnaire online visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type?	
What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?	
How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.) For example, do your workers work remote or hybrid now? Did your start offering more online services or remote virtual appointments or meetings?	
Is cybersecurity a concern for your organization?	
If YES, what would you need to make your organization more cyber-safe?	
Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)?	
If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?	
Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group?	
Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?	
Are there any stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or focus populations that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.	

Templeton Community TV Interview Write-up

Steve Castle – Monday, June 24th at 3:00 PM in person at the Town Hall,160 Patriots Road, PO Box 620, East Templeton 01438 United States

Steve Castle is the Director of Templeton Community TV. Castle's field and expertise lies specifically in journalism. He is very passionate about providing TV/Cable services for his community and was hoping MRPC would provide more information on the resident's digital needs. Castle states he had no idea how to find out what people want and was hoping MRPC could do this for him.

In the Town of Templeton with a population of '8k – 9k' there is 99% internet coverage with just a few houses that are not covered, or 'do not pass.' When children come home from school, the town's internet speeds drop drastically due to over stressed bandwidth. Recently, Castle signed onto the BEAD Challenge disputing 4 houses, but that got nowhere. Additional testing would also be necessary to see if the town's cable is delivering adequate speeds. Castle is hoping that further digital equity work will reveal needy populations and their digital needs.

During the pandemic the Templeton TV center went through $5000 of transformations to move into a hybrid setting. A new facility is being built now for the center's relocation at the Scout Hall municipal building. This means the TV center would be sharing the space. Moreover, both TV center locations have a lot of digital or otherwise needs. First, within the Templeton Town Hall TV meeting space there is a need for more robust Wi-Fi. Castle writes in a previous questionnaire, "Public Access at Town Hall = STINKS." On multiple accounts when referring to the Wi-Fi at Town Hall Castle notes that it 'STINKS.' This means updating the router, bringing in better equipment, and introducing a mesh signal booster would be needed for the TV center to operate efficiently and successfully. Second, Castle showed interest in public workspaces and privacy cubes. He pointed out that at the new Scout Hall Community Center will be the offices for TCTV and that there is a need for 2 public workstations and other work areas at that location. When told about the single private workstation (cubes) castle asked, "How big are they?" We did not know the specific dimensions, but the question implies there may not be a lot of space at either of the potential locations Castle was thinking of. Castle also seemed interested in providing hot spots but did not know how the subscriptions worked. He was also interested in buying equipment such as a Document Reader with an overhead scanner or a SMART board.

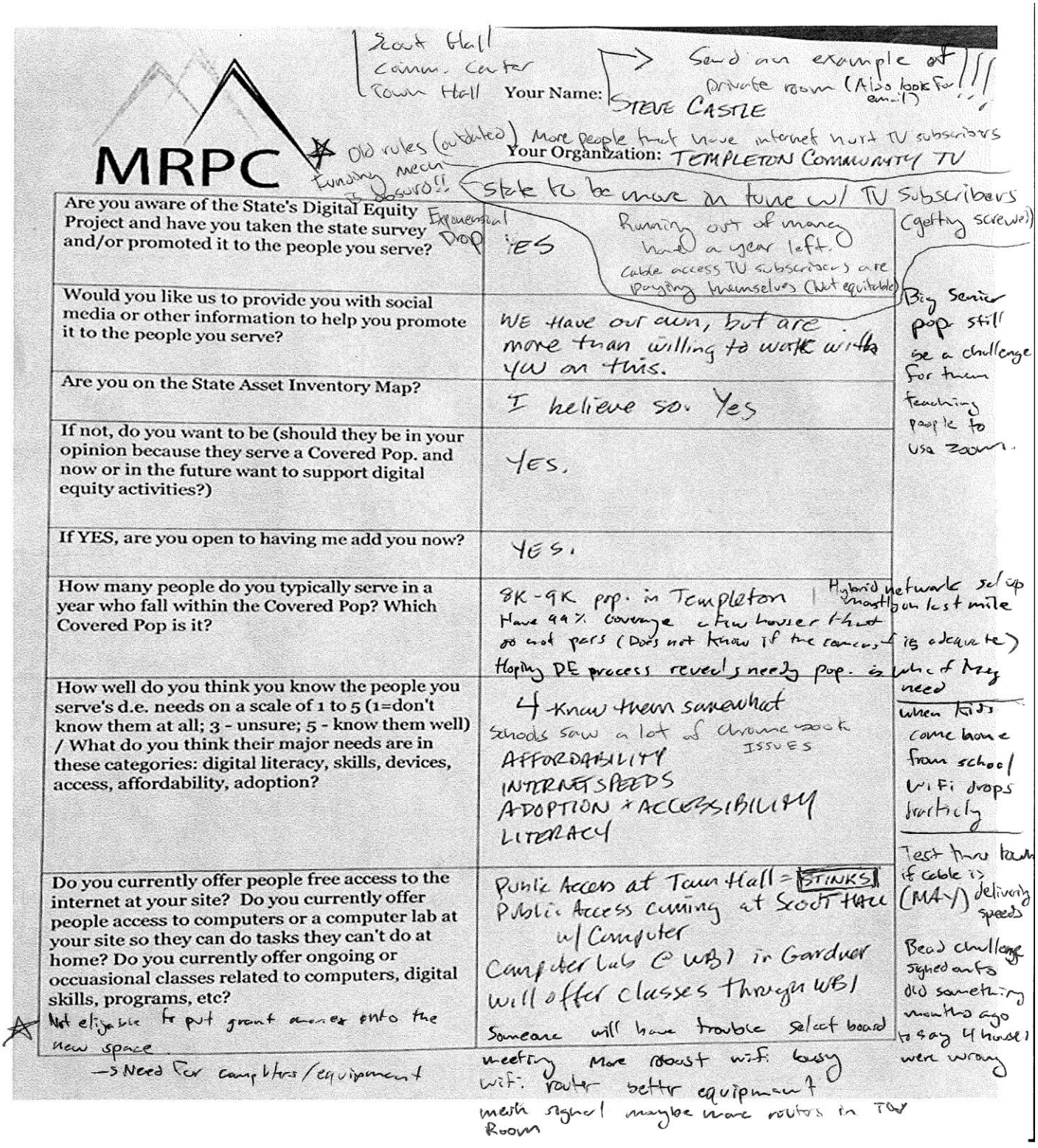
Furthermore, there is a great need for additional labor at the TCTV centers. To implement any digital training, safety classes with or at the Templeton TV center Castle stresses the importance of staff specific grant funding. He would like to run digital security or literacy classes; however, the current staffing is a constraint. This means Castle would like outside help. For example, if the Wachusett Business Incubator sent someone to the Templeton TCTV office/Scout Hall Community Center for classes and training on cyber security, then Castle would be able to

run these digital programs. As it stands, there is not enough staff to support such events. Provided additional staff, funding, and resources TCTV would be able to better serve its community.

Additionally, at multiple points during the interview Castle alluded to a stark drop in revenue streams due to declining cable TV subscriptions and rise in streaming media services. (Local Cable Access TV receives its funding as a percentage of cable TV subscriptions in the community.) Later, he emphasized the importance of the State being more in tune with TV subscribers slowly moving to digital streaming services. This causes TV subscribers to move away from cable subscriptions which TCTV relies on for income. Castle also noted that, "old funding mechanisms and [regulations] are absurd" to the point where it is impossible to get supplementary money. Castle gives the TV center a 'year' before it runs out of the necessary funds to continue operating.

Moving forward, Digital Equity Plans should recognize the conundrum of cable subscriptions declining resulting in declining funds for cable access television programs while at the same time cable access is becoming more important to the community and increasingly in demand for content development and event/activity coverage. There is a need for the State, Federal, and local governments to solve this problem and consider alternative models or sources of funding for cable access programs through updated regulations for cable funding**.**

In addition to further research, a list of TV or staffing-related funding opportunities would be helpful to include in the plan. Keeping Castle updated on resident digital needs data and including it in the plan would be beneficial as well.



MRPC

Scout Hall
Comm. Center
Town Hall

Your Name: STEVE CASTLE

→ Send an example of private room (Also look for email) !!!

Your Organization: TEMPLETON COMMUNITY TV

★ Old rules (outdated) Funding mech is absurd!!

More people that have internet hurt TV subscribers

State to be more in tune w/ TV subscribers (getting screwed)

Are you aware of the State's Digital Equity Project and have you taken the state survey and/or promoted it to the people you serve? Exponential Drop	YES Running out of money have a year left. Cable access TV subscribers are paying themselves (Not equitable)
Would you like us to provide you with social media or other information to help you promote it to the people you serve?	WE Have our own, but are more than willing to work with you on this.
Are you on the State Asset Inventory Map?	I believe so. Yes
If not, do you want to be (should they be in your opinion because they serve a Covered Pop. and now or in the future want to support digital equity activities?)	YES.
If YES, are you open to having me add you now?	YES.
How many people do you typically serve in a year who fall within the Covered Pop? Which Covered Pop is it?	8K-9K pop. in Templeton Have 99% coverage a few houses that do not pass (Does not know if the comcast is adequate) Hoping DE process reveals needy pop. is what they need Hybrid network set up mostly on last mile
How well do you think you know the people you serve's d.e. needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well) / What do you think their major needs are in these categories: digital literacy, skills, devices, access, affordability, adoption?	4 - know them somewhat Schools saw a lot of chromebook ISSUES AFFORDABILITY INTERNET SPEEDS ADOPTION + ACCESSIBILITY LITERACY
Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site? Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home? Do you currently offer ongoing or occuasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? ★ Not eligible to put grant money into the new space → Need for computers/equipment	Public Access at Town Hall = STINKS Public Access coming at Scout Hall w/ Computer Computer lab @ WBI in Gardner will offer classes through WBI Someone will have trouble select board meeting More robust wifi busy wifi router better equipment mesh signal maybe more routers in TV Room

Big Senior pop still be a challenge for them teaching people to use zoom.

when kids come home from school wifi drops drastically

Test thru town if cable is (MAY) delivering speeds

Bead challenge signed onto did something months ago to say 4 houses were wrong

→ Smart board => see how it works
Document Readers ???

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an org. to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)? How did the pandmic change how you work vis a vis computers/internet, etc. (e.g., do your workers work hybrid now? did your start offering more online services?)	Pandemic changed how TCTV works forever. We have received NO support for the extra costs + labor ~~[illegible]~~ involved
Is cybersecurity a concern for your org.?	Yes
If YES, what would you need to feel more safe? The grant may well include security works w/ Wachusett Business Incubator for classes/ training => *	Better security software, knowledge of town staff so they don't infect us. :)
Would you consider themselves a CAI? (community anchor institute)	This has different meanings. for different things !!! Desk tops
If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future? Are there any stakeholders in the area that should be included in the planning process? Michelle Durkee, VSO mdurkee@templetonMA.gov	Town Hall = stinks ✓ Jackie Prime, Librarian + Senior Center Director; Gracelyn Currie, Grant Writer; John Columbus, Housing Authority; Rich Curtis, Emergency Response (End of Baldwinville)
Is there someone at your org. who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition? Is there a person in your town/community that you consider to be a big advocate for digital equity?	TCTV now is the biggest advocate. However, some iniatives do not make sense for us + this needs to be clearly understood.

$5000 to switch meeting room to hybrid
→ labor mainly your
→ set up other location be done in next month
→ conference room youth and community center
* Any need for a workstation
New location needs a public workstation
other work areas
Enclosed Fully functional work station how big are they !!
Do not provide hotspots but wants to does not know how the subscript. works

"No idea how to find out what people want"
"Hoping MRPC could do this..."

Maybe a need for a class where are our costs...
Digital literacy assigned to cable TV.
looking for staffing !!!

THANK YOU!

Threatens our funding !!

capacity? Town wants?
"As I understood it staff position that comes w/ it"
Wants more staff [will put up grant quick]
"Grant + Not use TV Resources"
59-57K up to 20K

MRPC

Scout Hall
Comm. Center
Town Hall

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→ Send an example of private room (Also look for email) !!!

★ Old rules (outdated) Funding mech is absurd!!

More people that have internet hurt TV subscribers

Your Organization: TEMPLETON COMMUNITY TV

State to be more in tune w/ TV subscribers (getting screwed)

Are you aware of the State's Digital Equity Project and have you taken the state survey and/or promoted it to the people you serve? Exponential Drop	YES Running out of money have a year left. Cable access TV subscribers are paying themselves (Not equitable)
Would you like us to provide you with social media or other information to help you promote it to the people you serve?	WE have our own, but are more than willing to work with you on this.
Are you on the State Asset Inventory Map?	I believe so. Yes
If not, do you want to be (should they be in your opinion because they serve a Covered Pop. and now or in the future want to support digital equity activities?)	YES.
If YES, are you open to having me add you now?	YES.
How many people do you typically serve in a year who fall within the Covered Pop? Which Covered Pop is it?	8K-9K pop. in Templeton Have 99% coverage a few houses that do not pass (Does not know if the comcast is adequate) Hoping DE process reveals needy pop. is what they need Hybrid network set up mostly on last mile
How well do you think you know the people you serve's d.e. needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well) / What do you think their major needs are in these categories: digital literacy, skills, devices, access, affordability, adoption?	4 know them somewhat Schools saw a lot of chromebook ISSUES AFFORDABILITY INTERNET SPEEDS ADOPTION + ACCESSIBILITY LITERACY
Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site? Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home? Do you currently offer ongoing or occuasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc?	Public Access at Town Hall = STINKS Public Access coming at Scout Hall w/ Computer Computer lab @ WBI in Gardner will offer classes through WBI Someone will have trouble select board meeting More robust wifi busy wifi router better equipment mesh signal maybe more routers in TV Room

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Is cybersecurity a concern for your org.?	Yes
If YES, what would you need to feel more safe? The grant may well include security works w/ wachusett Business Incubator for classes/ training => *	Better security software, knowledge of town staff so they don't infect us. :)
Would you consider themselves a CAI? (community anchor institute)	This has different meanings. for different things !!! Desk tops
If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future? Are there any stakeholders in the area that should be included in the planning process? Michelle Durkee, VSO mdurkee@templetonMA.gov	Town Hall = stinks Wackie Prime, Librarian + Senior Center Director Gracelyn Currie, Grant Writer John Columbus, Housing Authority Rich Curtis, Emergency Response End of Baldwinville
Is there someone at your org. who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition? Is there a person in your town/community that you consider to be a big advocate for digital equity?	TCTV now is the biggest advocate. However, some iniatives do not make sense for us + this needs to be clearly understood.

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→ labor mainly your
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Enclosed Fully functional work station how big are they !!
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"As I understood it staff position that comes w/ it"
wants more staff [will put up grant quick]
"Grant + Not use TU Resources"
59-57K up to 20K

threatens our funding. !

MRPC

Your Name: STEVE CASTLE

Your Organization: TEMPLETON COMMUNITY TV

Are you aware of the State's Digital Equity Project and have you taken the state survey and/or promoted it to the people you serve?	YES
Would you like us to provide you with social media or other information to help you promote it to the people you serve?	WE have our own, but are more than willing to work with you on this.
Are you on the State Asset Inventory Map?	I believe so.
If not, do you want to be (should they be in your opinion because they serve a Covered Pop. and now or in the future want to support digital equity activities?)	YES.
If YES, are you open to having me add you now?	YES.
How many people do you typically serve in a year who fall within the Covered Pop? Which Covered Pop is it?	8K-9K pop. in Templeton
How well do you think you know the people you serve's d.e. needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well) / What do you think their major needs are in these categories: digital literacy, skills, devices, access, affordability, adoption?	4 know them somewhat AFFORDABILITY INTERNET SPEEDS ADOPTION + ACCESSIBILITY LITERACY
Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site? Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home? Do you currently offer ongoing or occuasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc?	Public Access at Town Hall = STINKS Public Access coming at Scott Hall (MAY) w/ Computer Computer Lab @ WBI in Gardner Will offer classes through WBI

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an org. to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)? How did the pandmic change how you work vis a vis computers/internet, etc. (e.g., do your workers work hybrid now? did your start offering more online services?)	Pandemic changed how TCTV works forever. We have received NO support for the extra costs + labor ~~and~~ involved.
Is cybersecurity a concern for your org.?	Yes
If YES, what would you need to feel more safe?	Better security software, knowledge of town staff so they don't infect us. :)
Would you consider themselves a CAI? (community anchor institute)	This has different meanings for different things
If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future? Are there any stakeholders in the area that should be included in the planning process? Michelle Durkee, VSO mdurkee@templetonMA.gov	Town Hall = stinks Jackie Prime, Librarian + Senior Center Director Gracelyn Corrie, Grant Writer John Columbus, Housing Authority Rich Curtis, Emergency Response
Is there someone at your org. who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition? Is there a person in your town/community that you consider to be a big advocate for digital equity?	TCTV now is the biggest advocate. However, some initiatives do not make sense for us + R threatens our funding. this needs to be clearly understood.

THANK YOU!

Veterans Focus Group Interview Write-up

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, 268 Central Street, Gardner, MA 01440

All attending veterans' agents are licensed to work with veterans but manage several of the covered Digital Equity target populations. Right from the start, agents were curious about what specifically the Digital Equity Program could provide. One veteran agent asked what digital equity meant and for specific goals of the program. For this reason, MBI should consider marketing the program better in the future. Likewise, the veterans' agents generally agreed they spend a quarter of their days helping people navigate the digital world, zoom meetings, prescriptions, medical appointments. This makes digital literacy important within the veteran community.

Many of the Veterans do not have access to internet connection. The top three reasons for this being affordability, trust, and literacy. Many do not trust the internet due to targeted scam attacks or general untrustworthiness. For example, 2-3 vets would buy into gift card scams, and one repeatedly lost $500 to scam emails that they were signing up for. The fear of becoming another scam/phishing victim or fear of being tracked are very real concerns for vets. This is why many vets still do not have internet at home.[1] However, according to the veterans' agents most vets still have data on their phones which is how they access the internet. Veterans use the internet mainly to apply for benefits[2], for social connection, entertainment, healthcare, hobbies, YouTube, or 'adult hobbies.'[3] In some cases the internet can help with severe problems too. For instance, one of the agents' clients built up a hoarding addiction while in the military, so he would collect a massive number of DVDs and books. When he finally adopted the internet, they were able to download their DVDs and books which freed up a lot of space in the house; 'can finally get to the toilet.' This is a story of internet success and is a good example of how internet access benefits veteran populations.

If veterans have any digital questions they go to one of three places: Library, to someone else, or to the Veterans Services Office. All the agents agreed that if there were to be a digital help session then the library would be the best place to hold an event because veterans visit the library the most. One of the agents states that there is no transportation to get anywhere, so veterans will go to the library before leaving town. This makes libraries an essential place to reach the most veterans for their digital needs. Additional spaces to consider would be senior centers and housing authorities.

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[1] There is also a preference for paper copy surveys due to fear of scams and tracking. Also, some clients are more vocal than others.

[2] The Veterans agents would like it if the Vets came to them for benefits.

[3] This was a running joke during the meeting that many of the Veterans use the internet for less appropriate reasons.

Furthermore, many locations that offer digital services lack privacy and adequate connection. Most places also require patrons to make an appointment before using their facilities, which often results in veterans getting put on a waiting list to use the organization's services. Wi-Fi is provided at the veteran's offices and other spaces where veterans go for their digital needs, but it can always be improved.

Moreover, most veterans own a computing device such as a cellphone, flip phone or something else with phone capabilities. Around 75% of veterans have phone or other internet access at their home. Most vets struggle with the affordability of the internet and lack the digital literacy or knowledge to use it. For this reason, creating veteran accessible digital literacy programs is crucial. This means holding events at familiar locations for veterans that are not crowded and have a vantage point that oversees exits/entries. To advertise these events MRPC should include pictures of the space and promote the event as a 'Scam Avoidance' help session with the bonus of free lunch.[4] Likewise, the veterans are very well connected; sometimes all it takes to advertise an event is to connect with one vet who will then go into the community spreading the word[5] to all their 'friends.' One of the agents commented that they are now able to serve 26 states because of veteran word of mouth. The Leominster Veterans location has a great space to hold events and holds regular Coffee and Cards served with lunch. This would be a great opportunity for MRPC to hold a focus group meeting to connect with a variety of veterans.

If in the end getting digital help is a hassle for veterans, then they choose not to engage with the internet and technology entirely.[6] For example, if they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy all together because it is over Zoom. Zero engagement with the internet is not feasible for veterans because more and more services require the use of the internet. All vets need access to digital literacy training and technical support; however, specifically low-income veterans require lower-cost computers/internet. The veterans that the agents oversee are often low-income, so the cost of a computing device is a real concern. As far as digital awareness goes, older generations, such as Vietnam or post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security. Similarly, newer generations have it down for the most part, but still require some help. An agent at the meeting states, "Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy." This means that vets require a range of digital literacy help, so towns and MRPC should be mindful of the veteran population they are dealing with. Digital skills are necessary for veterans to fully participate in everyday life.

Last, the agents would like the state to know how important affordable internet is, "Don't take away low-income affordable internet." Instead, the state should maintain ACP and make it

[4] Everyone agreed that veterans will attend if there is something they can get out of it, food, coffee, etc.
[5] 'Word of mouth.'
[6] 'Arduous process to verify for online service.'

better. They would also like MRPC to become more familiar with the state/town/veteran specific grant Chapter 115, safety net program. The agents say most people in Massachusetts do not know about this grant. Other than that, all agents apply for operation money wise grants through the state every other year to not over saturate.

Moving forward, **MRPC** should reach out to the Leominster Veterans Agent contact to set up a focus group meeting with the Veterans there. Furthermore, MRPC can investigate potential digital grants specific to the veteran's population.

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

_____3_____ Attendees _____2____ Facilitators/Planners _____0_____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Question about goals for the programs? Access to the internet

The gentleman wanted to hear this

Who are you talking to in Leominster? Elizabeth Wood (fact check we were unsure)

Had questions about who has access (want to clarify what digital equity means)

This is working out…reintegration

We work with multiple of the target groups (certified to work with veteran groups)

50 units of housing 44 more to come (comcast lift zone provided to those houses ACP (coming to an end))

Women's home got free Wi-Fi in Winchendon

Men's used to but does not anymore

(Varys from house to house)

Generally speaking, everyone is low-income high risk

Most can not afford their own internet

Reasons for paper copies are suspicious of the internet (tracking and scams)

Some are not even on the internet

Barriers to using the internet?

Spend a quarter of their day helping people navigate the digital world (therapy [zoom], prescriptions, medical appointments)

If they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy

If they had additional access to hardware or physical technology to offer

Literacy training covered by the grant public can come in

Identifying costs of the fully functioning workstations ("pretty cool")

Do you provide internet?

Gardner is not signed up with the list of communities but asked those who serve communities not signed up to consider those communities needs still

Barnaul house

Worried about small money

Create better fliers to get better involvement

It is going to be hard to get clients to do the survey (some will be more vocal than others)

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	Directly reaching out

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life?	challenges and difficulties are all the scams out there (whole level of scams) One guy would sign up for scams and would lose 500 each one he signed up for Gift card scams (at least 2-3 would buy into it) When one of her guys would watch movies and shows online which helped with his hoarding (made his apartment safer to traverse) Runs a non-profit called frost call to help fight isolation for veterans (for the ones that can get into the program is lifechanging) Reducing isolation improving mental health (Would become more sociable after this) Hold events all over the state

3. What do you regularly use the internet for? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	Using it to apply for benefits (want them to come see the organization for benefits) Social Connection Entertainments Healthcare Hobbies Use youtube to watch their hobbies Don't have the money to online shop
4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	75% have data on their phones Pretty tough for them to access healthcare

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *75% yes*

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	affordability/trust/education/ fear of learning how to use it Fear of getting scammed

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? ● Friend or family member's home ● School ● Workplace ● Library or community center ● Business such as a cafe or bookstore ● Outdoor space such as a park	Library Or not at all Have someone else do it for them

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Lack of privacy Not always high quality Waiting list Not always a space for them to go Arduous process to verify for online services Wifi that is available is better than no Wi-Fi (could be improved) Clear path in Devens No transportation to get anywhere (will go to the library before leaving town) Libraries and Senior Centers (Housing authorities hit all of those buckets) Clients that need this are not traveling

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *Yes might be a flip phone or phone of some sort*

9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	These devices are NOT sufficient only good for social Some can not see whats on the screen Their clientele are low-income veterans Security education Older generations are not digitally educated Newer generation has it down
10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Digital literacy training Lower the cost Depends on the population Advertise as Scam avoidance (free lunch is a good bonus) Operation money wise grant through the state every other year as to not over saturate

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example… • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes: Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy
11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Get one of them to tell the others (word of mouth) (serves 26 states because of word of mouth) Include a picture of the space who will attend Less packed events Coffee and cards served with lunch (Leominster Veterans)

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: YES No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	
13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Vietnam post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	Limited access Steps to get the resources you need
14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Don't take away low-income affordable internet Make it better Maintain ACP Consider Veteran specific grant Chapter 115/safety net program (state specific city/town) Most people in the state don't know what this AI meeting notes

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

Additional Questions

Please enter notes on any other region- or topic-specific questions discussed during your focus group session. Please make sure to include the question itself, as well as notes on participants' responses.	

Enter your notes online at: XXX

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

3 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners _____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Coffee & cards Tuesdays Leominster Veterans Center

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life? • One vet with a collection habit/hobby (aka hording) collected DVDS, VHS, Books, was a major part of hording issue. Internet allowed person to Internet can reduce isolation. Frostfall Non-profit	• Lack of trust due to tracking • Worried about scams/phishing • one vet repeatedly signed up for scams "send this to get this" $ giftcards, etc.
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• Apply for benefits • Entertainment • Social connection • Health care

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	Many vets do not. - Affordability - trust - Literacy

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Most have access by phone. ~75%

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	Difficult for most

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	. Trust . affordability . Education . Knowledge/digital literacy
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? • Friend or family member's home • School • Workplace • Library or community center • Business such as a cafe or bookstore • Outdoor space such as a park	. Library . Ask someone else to assist . Veteran Services office

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Usually not good. Plus no privacy! Sometimes appointment is needed but you don't know ahead of time. Better than nothing.

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes, most.
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	• Cell Phone • Sort of, not really. • Low-income veterans — cost • All veterans — trust security concerns.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	low-income vets All vets operation money-wise grant (state)

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Being familiar with space or seeing it ahead of time helps. Also, one person who others trust.

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: | No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	O.K but limited to access at the individual level. Public spaces can usually only accomodate 1- person at a time.

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	• Sign up • not enough stations / work stations. • Limited hours

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	• Make it more affordable • Maintain ACP • consider vet-specific internet subsidy program Chpt. 115 (Mass)

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	Develop programs and subsidies related to digital : Access : affordability . adoptability under chpt. 445

Templeton Housing Authority Interview Write-up

David Connor and Daira Marcano-Ferrer – Friday, June 14th at 1:30 pm in person at 108 Ipswich Drive Winchendon, MA 01475

Briefly, Executive Director of the Templeton Housing Authority, David Connor, was at this meeting but due to an overlapping time commitment he had to leave early.[1] Also, Daira Marcano-Ferrer Resident Services Coordinator at the Winchendon Housing Authority attended as well because she knows the digital needs of the Winchendon population best.

Provided the time MRPC had with David Connor, we learned that the Templeton Housing Authority oversees 60 senior housing units and 8 additional units.[2] The Templeton Housing Authority does not offer people free access to the internet on its site. Furthermore, a barrier many of the Templeton residents still face is not being connected at all.

Moreover, the housing authority oversees a population that is majority elderly individuals and younger disabled persons. Of this population, Connor says 20% to 30% of them are digitally literate and of those not digitally literate the older generation needs the most digital help. Connor has had previous meetings where he has shown interest in digital training. Like the Winchendon Housing Authority, the Templeton Housing Authority requires additional funding and labor to run tech help and training programs.

Moving forward, MRPC will reach out to the Templeton Senior Center for a more in-depth analysis of the Town of Templeton's digital needs.[3]

[1] See Daira Marcano's interview notes and write-up in the Winchendon Folder.
[2] There may have been more, but we did not get to it in this meeting.
[3] Was given a name for this, Jean Meals?

Digital Equity Stakeholder Questionnaire

#11

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Tuesday, June 04, 2024 3:59:43 PM
Last Modified:	Tuesday, June 04, 2024 4:06:50 PM
Time Spent:	00:07:06
IP Address:	75.147.41.186

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Templeton #4

Q2

Your Name and Position:

David Connor

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Templeton Housing Authority

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

No

733 Baldwinville Road
8 units
senior units total of 60
Majority of pop is elderly
younger disabled
20-30% digitally literate

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

No

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

dconnor@templetonha.org

Digital Equity Stakeholder Questionnaire

Talked about having training programs for digital

Have 1 computer for applying for housing

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Members of a racial or ethnic minority group,

Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy

,

Veterans

1 community building in Templeton family gen is well connected

4 laptops donated winch

Q8

* older gen needs most help not everyone has connection

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

Respondent skipped this question

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Yes

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

10

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Respondent skipped this question

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

No

Digital Equity Stakeholder Questionnaire

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

No

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

Respondent skipped this question

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

Respondent skipped this question

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

Respondent skipped this question

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

Continue to improve cyber security

Better to hold meetings @ the temple for senior center
Joan Maals talk to her

#11

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Templeton

Q2

Your Name and Position:

David Connor

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Templeton Housing Authority

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

No

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

No

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

dconnor@templetonha.org

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Members of a racial or ethnic minority group,

Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy

,

Veterans

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

Respondent skipped this question

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Yes

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

10

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Respondent skipped this question

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

No

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

No

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

Respondent skipped this question

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

Respondent skipped this question

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

Respondent skipped this question

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

Continue to improve cyber security

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Neither

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

yes

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

Daira Marcano-Ferrer at dmarcano@winha.org

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

Respondent skipped this question

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Respondent skipped this question

#16

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Monday, June 24, 2024 9:48:06 AM
Last Modified:	Monday, June 24, 2024 10:02:05 AM
Time Spent:	00:13:59
IP Address:	50.255.185.233

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Templeton

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Ann-Marie LaBollita

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Templeton Council on Aging

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Yes

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

alabollita@templetonma.gov

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Veterans,

Persons with Disabilities,

Rural Residents

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

hundreds

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Yes

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

60

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Digital Literacy	**high**
Digital Skills Adoption	**high**
Access to Digital Devices	**high**
Access to Broadband Internet Service	**moderate**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**moderate**
Willingness to Adopt Digital Technology	**moderate to high**
Ability to Adopt Digital Technology	**moderate**
Reliability, Speed, and Performance of Available Broadband Internet Service	**moderate**
Awareness and Confidence with Cyber Security and Internet Safety	**only a few come to these important classes**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

Yes

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

Yes

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

yes-North Star Digital literacy program recently

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

all of the above

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

we were shut down

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

knowledge

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Not sure

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

Respondent skipped this question

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

Respondent skipped this question

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

not sure

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Templeton Town Hall

Digital Equity Planning

Veterans Focus Group Meeting

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center

268 Central Street, Gardner, MA 01440

Wednesday, June 12, @ 1:30 – 3:00 PM

The needs of those you represent are important. Your voice matters.

Join us!

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
established 1968
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE
at the MassTech Collaborative

MONTACHUSETT VETERANS OUTREACH CENTER, INC.
SERVING ALL VETERANS

Veterans Focus Group Interview Write-up

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, 268 Central Street, Gardner, MA 01440

All attending veterans' agents are licensed to work with veterans but manage several of the covered Digital Equity target populations. Right from the start, agents were curious about what specifically the Digital Equity Program could provide. One veteran agent asked what digital equity meant and for specific goals of the program. For this reason, MBI should consider marketing the program better in the future. Likewise, the veterans' agents generally agreed they spend a quarter of their days helping people navigate the digital world, zoom meetings, prescriptions, medical appointments. This makes digital literacy important within the veteran community.

Many of the Veterans do not have access to internet connection. The top three reasons for this being affordability, trust, and literacy. Many do not trust the internet due to targeted scam attacks or general untrustworthiness. For example, 2-3 vets would buy into gift card scams, and one repeatedly lost $500 to scam emails that they were signing up for. The fear of becoming another scam/phishing victim or fear of being tracked are very real concerns for vets. This is why many vets still do not have internet at home.[1] However, according to the veterans' agents most vets still have data on their phones which is how they access the internet. Veterans use the internet mainly to apply for benefits[2], for social connection, entertainment, healthcare, hobbies, YouTube, or 'adult hobbies.'[3] In some cases the internet can help with severe problems too. For instance, one of the agents' clients built up a hoarding addiction while in the military, so he would collect a massive number of DVDs and books. When he finally adopted the internet, they were able to download their DVDs and books which freed up a lot of space in the house; 'can finally get to the toilet.' This is a story of internet success and is a good example of how internet access benefits veteran populations.

If veterans have any digital questions they go to one of three places: Library, to someone else, or to the Veterans Services Office. All the agents agreed that if there were to be a digital help session then the library would be the best place to hold an event because veterans visit the library the most. One of the agents states that there is no transportation to get anywhere, so veterans will go to the library before leaving town. This makes libraries an

[1] There is also a preference for paper copy surveys due to fear of scams and tracking. Also, some clients are more vocal than others.

[2] The Veterans agents would like it if the Vets came to them for benefits.

[3] This was a running joke during the meeting that many of the Veterans use the internet for less appropriate reasons.

essential place to reach the most veterans for their digital needs. Additional spaces to consider would be senior centers and housing authorities.

Furthermore, many locations that offer digital services lack privacy and adequate connection. Most places also require patrons to make an appointment before using their facilities, which often results in veterans getting put on a waiting list to use the organization's services. Wi-Fi is provided at the veteran's offices and other spaces where veterans go for their digital needs, but it can always be improved.

Moreover, most veterans own a computing device such as a cellphone, flip phone or something else with phone capabilities. Around 75% of veterans have phone or other internet access at their home. Most vets struggle with the affordability of the internet and lack the digital literacy or knowledge to use it. For this reason, creating veteran accessible digital literacy programs is crucial. This means holding events at familiar locations for veterans that are not crowded and have a vantage point that oversees exits/entries. To advertise these events MRPC should include pictures of the space and promote the event as a 'Scam Avoidance' help session with the bonus of free lunch.[4] Likewise, the veterans are very well connected; sometimes all it takes to advertise an event is to connect with one vet who will then go into the community spreading the word[5] to all their 'friends.' One of the agents commented that they are now able to serve 26 states because of veteran word of mouth. The Leominster Veterans location has a great space to hold events and holds regular Coffee and Cards served with lunch. This would be a great opportunity for MRPC to hold a focus group meeting to connect with a variety of veterans.

If in the end getting digital help is a hassle for veterans, then they choose not to engage with the internet and technology entirely.[6] For example, if they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy all together because it is over Zoom. Zero engagement with the internet is not feasible for veterans because more and more services require the use of the internet. All vets need access to digital literacy training and technical support; however, specifically low-income veterans require lower-cost computers/internet. The veterans that the agents oversee are often low-income, so the cost of a computing device is a real concern. As far as digital awareness goes, older generations, such as Vietnam or post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security. Similarly, newer generations have it down for the most part, but still require some help. An agent at the meeting states, "Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy." This means that vets require a range of digital literacy help, so towns and MRPC

[4] Everyone agreed that veterans will attend if there is something they can get out of it, food, coffee, etc.
[5] 'Word of mouth.'
[6] 'Arduous process to verify for online service.'

should be mindful of the veteran population they are dealing with. Digital skills are necessary for veterans to fully participate in everyday life.

Last, the agents would like the state to know how important affordable internet is, “Don’t take away low-income affordable internet.” Instead, the state should maintain ACP and make it better. They would also like MRPC to become more familiar with the state/town/veteran specific grant Chapter 115, safety net program. The agents say most people in Massachusetts do not know about this grant. Other than that, all agents apply for operation money wise grants through the state every other year to not over saturate.

Moving forward, **MRPC** should reach out to the Leominster Veterans Agent contact to set up a focus group meeting with the Veterans there. Furthermore, MRPC can investigate potential digital grants specific to the veteran’s population.

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

_____3_____ Attendees _____2____ Facilitators/Planners _____0_____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Question about goals for the programs? Access to the internet

The gentleman wanted to hear this

Who are you talking to in Leominster? Elizabeth Wood (fact check we were unsure)

Had questions about who has access (want to clarify what digital equity means)

This is working out…reintegration

We work with multiple of the target groups (certified to work with veteran groups)

50 units of housing 44 more to come (comcast lift zone provided to those houses ACP (coming to an end))

Women's home got free Wi-Fi in Winchendon

Men's used to but does not anymore

(Varys from house to house)

Generally speaking, everyone is low-income high risk

Most can not afford their own internet

Reasons for paper copies are suspicious of the internet (tracking and scams)

Some are not even on the internet

Barriers to using the internet?

Spend a quarter of their day helping people navigate the digital world (therapy [zoom], prescriptions, medical appointments)

If they do not trust the internet, then they stop going to therapy

If they had additional access to hardware or physical technology to offer

Literacy training covered by the grant public can come in

Identifying costs of the fully functioning workstations ("pretty cool")

Do you provide internet?

Gardner is not signed up with the list of communities but asked those who serve communities not signed up to consider those communities needs still

Barnaul house

Worried about small money

Create better fliers to get better involvement

It is going to be hard to get clients to do the survey (some will be more vocal than others)

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	Directly reaching out

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life?	challenges and difficulties are all the scams out there (whole level of scams) One guy would sign up for scams and would lose 500 each one he signed up for Gift card scams (at least 2-3 would buy into it) When one of her guys would watch movies and shows online which helped with his hoarding (made his apartment safer to traverse) Runs a non-profit called frost call to help fight isolation for veterans (for the ones that can get into the program is lifechanging) Reducing isolation improving mental health (Would become more sociable after this) Hold events all over the state

3. What do you regularly use the internet for? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	Using it to apply for benefits (want them to come see the organization for benefits) Social Connection Entertainments Healthcare Hobbies Use youtube to watch their hobbies Don't have the money to online shop
4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	75% have data on their phones Pretty tough for them to access healthcare

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *75% yes*

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	affordability/trust/education/ fear of learning how to use it Fear of getting scammed

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? ● Friend or family member's home ● School ● Workplace ● Library or community center ● Business such as a cafe or bookstore ● Outdoor space such as a park	Library Or not at all Have someone else do it for them

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Lack of privacy Not always high quality Waiting list Not always a space for them to go Arduous process to verify for online services Wifi that is available is better than no Wi-Fi (could be improved) Clear path in Devens No transportation to get anywhere (will go to the library before leaving town) Libraries and Senior Centers (Housing authorities hit all of those buckets) Clients that need this are not traveling

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *Yes might be a flip phone or phone of some sort*

9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	These devices are NOT sufficient only good for social Some can not see whats on the screen Their clientele are low-income veterans Security education Older generations are not digitally educated Newer generation has it down
10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Digital literacy training Lower the cost Depends on the population Advertise as Scam avoidance (free lunch is a good bonus) Operation money wise grant through the state every other year as to not over saturate

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example… • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes: Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy
11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Get one of them to tell the others (word of mouth) (serves 26 states because of word of mouth) Include a picture of the space who will attend Less packed events Coffee and cards served with lunch (Leominster Veterans)

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: YES No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	
13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Vietnam post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security

13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	Limited access Steps to get the resources you need

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Don't take away low-income affordable internet Make it better Maintain ACP Consider Veteran specific grant Chapter 115/safety net program (state specific city/town) Most people in the state don't know what this AI meeting notes

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

Additional Questions

Please enter notes on any other region- or topic-specific questions discussed during your focus group session. Please make sure to include the question itself, as well as notes on participants' responses.	

Enter your notes online at: XXX

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

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3 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners _____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Coffee & cards Tuesdays Leominster Veterans Center

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life? • One vet with a collection habit/hobby (aka hording) collected DVDS, VHS, Books, was a major part of hording issue. Internet allowed person to Internet can reduce isolation. Frostfall Non-profit	• Lack of trust due to tracking • Worried about scams/phishing • one vet repeatedly signed up for scams "send this to get this" $ giftcards, etc.
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• Apply for benefits • Entertainment • Social connection • Health care

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	Many vets do not. - Affordability - trust - Literacy

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Most have access by phone. ~75%

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	Difficult for most

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	. Trust . affordability . Education . Knowledge/digital literacy
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? • Friend or family member's home • School • Workplace • Library or community center • Business such as a cafe or bookstore • Outdoor space such as a park	. Library . Ask someone else to assist . Veteran Services office

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Usually not good. Plus no privacy! Sometimes appointment is needed but you don't know ahead of time. Better than nothing.

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes, most.
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	• Cell Phone • Sort of, not really. • Low-income veterans — cost • All veterans — trust security concerns.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	low-income vets All vets operation money-wise grant (state)

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Being familiar with space or seeing it ahead of time helps. Also, one person who others trust.

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	O.K but limited to access at the individual level. Public spaces can usually only accomodate 1- person at a time.

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	• Sign up • not enough stations / work stations. Limited hours

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	• Make it more affordable • Maintain ACP • consider vet-specific internet subsidy programs Chpt. 115 (Mass)

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	Develop programs and subsidies related to digital : Access : affordability - adoptability under chpt. 445

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Women's home got free Wi-Fi in Winchendon

Men's used to but does not anymore

(Varys from house to house)

Generally speaking, everyone is low-income high risk

Most can not afford their own internet

Reasons for paper copies are suspicious of the internet (tracking and scams)

Some are not even on the internet

Barriers to using the internet?

Spend a quarter of their day helping people navigate the digital world (therapy [zoom], prescriptions, medical appointments)

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Literacy training covered by the grant public can come in

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Gardner is not signed up with the list of communities but asked those who serve communities not signed up to consider those communities needs still

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It is going to be hard to get clients to do the survey (some will be more vocal than others)

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3. What do you regularly use the internet for? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement	Using it to apply for benefits (want them to come see the organization for benefits) Social Connection Entertainments Healthcare Hobbies

● Public benefits ● Other?	Use youtube to watch their hobbies Don't have the money to online shop
4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? ● Work ● School ● Healthcare ● Family and social connection ● Civic engagement ● Public benefits ● Other?	75% have data on their phones Pretty tough for them to access healthcare

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* *75% yes*

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7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? ● Friend or family member's home ● School ● Workplace ● Library or community center ● Business such as a cafe or bookstore ● Outdoor space such as a park	Library Or not at all Have someone else do it for them

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Lack of privacy Not always high quality Waiting list Not always a space for them to go Arduous process to verify for online services Wifi that is available is better than no Wi-Fi (could be improved) Clear path in Devens No transportation to get anywhere (will go to the library before leaving town) Libraries and Senior Centers (Housing authorities hit all of those buckets) Clients that need this are not traveling

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10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	Digital literacy training Lower the cost Depends on the population Advertise as Scam avoidance (free lunch is a good bonus) Operation money wise grant through the state every other year as to not over saturate

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example… • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes: Be careful how much you think the younger generation knows about digital literacy
11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Get one of them to tell the others (word of mouth) (serves 26 states because of word of mouth) Include a picture of the space who will attend Less packed events Coffee and cards served with lunch (Leominster Veterans)

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes: YES No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	
13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	Vietnam post-Vietnam vets do not have training on cyber security
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	Limited access Steps to get the resources you need
14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	Don’t take away low-income affordable internet Make it better Maintain ACP Consider Veteran specific grant Chapter 115/safety net program (state specific city/town) Most people in the state don’t know what this AI meeting notes

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	

Additional Questions

Please enter notes on any other region- or topic-specific questions discussed during your focus group session. Please make sure to include the question itself, as well as notes on participants' responses.	

Enter your notes online at: XXX

MBI Regional Partner Guidance

Focus Group Notes Submission Template

Please feel free to use this form to assist with note-taking by hand during your focus group session. After the session, enter your information into the online form at: XXX

General Session Information

Region Name	Montachusett Region
Focus Group Date	June 12, 2024
Focus Group Start and End Time	1:30 – 3:00 PM
Focus Group Location (address)	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center 268 Central Street Gardner, MA 01440
Primary Covered Population Focus	Veterans

Number of Total Attendees (not including facilitator, note-taker, or other organizing staff):

3 Attendees 2 Facilitators/Planners _____ Staff

If you have any additional details to share on the specifics of this session, please do so here:

Coffee & cards Tuesdays Leominster Veterans Center

Opening

1. How did you learn about this focus group session? What brought you here today?	

* 2. Does anyone have a story to share about a specific time or way the internet has changed your life? Internet can reduce isolation. FrostCall Non-profit • One vet with a collection habit/hobby (aka hording) collected DVDS, VHS, Books, was a major part of hording issue. Internet allowed person to	• Lack of trust due to tracking • Worried about scams/phishing • one vet repeadetly signed up for scams "send this to get this" $ giftcards, etc.
3. What do you regularly use the internet for? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	• Apply for benefits • Entertainment • Social connection • Health care

4. If you don't have access to the internet on a regular basis, but need it, what do you need it for the most? • Work • School • Healthcare • Family and social connection • Civic engagement • Public benefits • Other?	Many vets do not. - Affordability - trust - Literacy

Service Availability, Affordability, Access

*5. Do you have internet service in your home?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Most have access by phone. ~75%

6. For those of you who have internet service in your home, how is it in terms of speed and reliability? Good enough for what you and your family need?	

6 (follow-ups). How difficult is it for you to pay your internet bill every month, given other expenses? Have you ever had any especially positive or negative experiences with your internet service provider? If you've had issues with your service, have they been responsive and able to fix the problem? *7. If you do not have internet service in your home, what is the main reason why? • Service is not available in my area • Service is too expensive • I am concerned about online privacy or safety • I don't feel confident navigating the internet or using online tools • I can't afford or access a device to use the internet • I don't have a computer or internet at home • I don't feel that I need internet service	Difficult for most

7 (follow-ups). Are there any other reasons you do not have internet service in your home?	. Trust . affordability . Education . Knowledge/digital literacy
8. If you do not have internet service in your home, are there any common places that you go to access internet? • Friend or family member's home • School • Workplace • Library or community center • Business such as a cafe or bookstore • Outdoor space such as a park	. Library . Ask someone else to assist . Veteran Services office

8 (follow-ups). How is the quality of service at these locations? Where else do you wish you could access internet service?	Usually not good. Plus no privacy! Sometimes appointment is needed but you don't know ahead of time. Better than nothing.

Device Availability, Affordability, Access

*9. Do you own a computing device? (Including computers, smartphones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices)?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* Yes, most.
9 (follow-ups). If yes, what kind of computing devices do you own? If yes, are the devices you have sufficient for your needs? If no, what's the main barrier to having one?	- Cell phone - Sort of, not really. - Low-income veterans — cost - All veterans — trust security concerns.

10. For those of you who indicated that you don't have regular access to computers and the internet, what might help you to gain access to these technologies? • Lower-cost computers/internet • Digital literacy training • Access to technical support	low-income vets All vets operation money-wise grant (state)

Digital Skills

*11. How confident do you feel with navigating the internet and using different online services? For example... • Searching for/applying for jobs • Finding health/medical information • Taking a course or finding learning materials • Online banking or financial services • Accessing or applying for government services • Using a video chat service (e.g., Zoom) for work, school, or telehealth • Using word processing applications (e.g., Google Docs or Microsoft Word) to create a document • Finding ways to protect the privacy of your personal data • Using email • Using social media • Online shopping	Not confident at all #: Somewhat confident #: Confident #: Very Confident #: Notes:

11 (follow-ups). Are there some activities you feel more or less comfortable with than others? Are there activities you'd like to do on the internet but feel you don't have the knowledge or skillset access?	Being familiar with space or seeing it ahead of time helps. Also, one person who others trust.

Privacy and Internet Safety

*12. Are you concerned about your privacy and security online?	*Make a note of rough count of yes/no.* (Yes: 1) No: Notes:
12 (follow-ups). If yes, what are some of your specific concerns? • My data getting stolen or used without my consent • That I or a loved one could get scammed or tricked • That I could be tracked or surveilled • That I or a loved one could be harassed or abused online • Other concerns?	

13. How familiar are you with knowing how to maintain your cybersecurity online?	
13 (follow-ups). What kinds of resources, information, or support might help you feel safer online?	

Public Resources and Services

*14. How accessible and inclusive do you think online public resources and services are?	O.K but limited to access at the individual level. Public spaces can usually only accommodate 1- person at a time.

14 (follow-ups). What specific barriers or issues have you encountered when using these types of services? What changes might make some of these services feel more accessible or easy to use?	• sign up • not enough stations / work stations. • Limited hours

Other

15. What else should the State know about your needs or barriers related to computers and the internet?	• Make it more affordable • Maintain ACP • consider vet-specific internet subsidy program Chpt. 115 (Mass)

15 (follow-up). How could the State help you address these needs or barriers? *16. Where do you turn for digital help in your community? Are there organizations, programs, or places that are providing helpful resources and services? • Public Wi-Fi • Digital skills training providers • Device lending or access programs • Information on internet discounts • Others?	Develop programs and subsidies related to digital : Access : affordability . adoptability under Chpt. 445

#2

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Wednesday, May 01, 2024 10:13:50 AM
Last Modified:	Wednesday, May 01, 2024 10:20:30 AM
Time Spent:	00:06:39
IP Address:	50.212.7.250

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Other (please specify):
North Central Massachusetts

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Stephanie Marchetti, Executive Director

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, Gardner MA

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Respondent skipped this question

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

yes, we can post it on Facebook. smarchetti@veterans-outreach.org

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Veterans

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

We house 50 veterans throughout 6 properties in Gardner and Winchendon and serve several hundred more annually

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Other (please specify):

I don't know what the asset inventory map is

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

92

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Digital Literacy	**high need**
Digital Skills Adoption	**low need**
Access to Digital Devices	**low need**
Access to Broadband Internet Service	**moderate need**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**high need**
Willingness to Adopt Digital Technology	**low need**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

Yes

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

Yes

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

No, we used to refer folks to non-credit courses at MWCC but they aren't offered lately.

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

More reliable service and faster speed

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

Currently we are fully back in person, but more staff have laptops for when remote work is needed.

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

Residents and clients need more help in understanding what is a scam and when not to share information.

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Yes to Both

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

yes- Comcast installed a free Liftzone for us this past fall.

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

Stephanie Marchetti, Executive Director, if time permits

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

All staff as needed

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Provided contact info via email to Jeff Legros

#14

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Wednesday, June 12, 2024 8:31:49 AM
Last Modified:	Wednesday, June 12, 2024 8:55:41 AM
Time Spent:	00:23:52
IP Address:	50.208.162.97

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Ashby,
Other (please specify):
Ashburnham, Gardner, Princeton, Westminster

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Cory Hasselmann, Director of Veterans' Services

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Wachusett District Veterans' Services, 95 Pleasant St., Gardner MA 01440

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Yes

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

No

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

Respondent skipped this question

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Veterans,

Persons with Disabilities

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

500

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Respondent skipped this question

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

80

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Digital Literacy	**Clients have a really hard time using computers**
Access to Digital Devices	**A lot of our older clients do not have computers**
Access to Broadband Internet Service	**A lot of our clients either cant afford or do not see a need for internet**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**Most people we serve can not afford internet**
Willingness to Adopt Digital Technology	**70% willing 30% not**
Reliability, Speed, and Performance of Available Broadband Internet Service	**Most who have internet have whatever the cheapest is**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

Yes

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

No

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

Respondent skipped this question

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

tablets or computers for clients to use

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

Had to switch to remote for awhile and purchase laptops we did not need before

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

Organization is fine but our elderly clients are suseptible to scams

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Yes, CAI

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

Yes we have open WiFi

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

Robert our IT Director maybe

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

Robert our IT Director

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Respondent skipped this question

#13

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Friday, June 07, 2024 10:53:36 AM
Last Modified:	Friday, June 07, 2024 11:43:48 AM
Time Spent:	00:50:11
IP Address:	50.220.181.154

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Other (please specify):
Devens. We work with all communities throughout the commonwealth

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Cristen Comptois Outreach Coordinator

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Clear Path for Veterans New England Devens MA

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Yes

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

No

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

ccomptois@clearpathne.org

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Persons 60 years of age or older (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or aging adults)

,

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Members of a racial or ethnic minority group,

Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy

,

Veterans,

Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility

,

Persons with Disabilities,

Rural Residents

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

1500

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

No

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

3

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Digital Literacy	**Our senior population has a need but they have a fear/ anxiety around unfamiliarity**
Digital Skills Adoption	**fear or anxiety of learning something new... helping them understand the importance of digital.**
Access to Digital Devices	**our homeless often have a lack and cannot always provide documentation to help get them the help they need**
Access to Broadband Internet Service	**Most of the areas we cover has access but some of the more remote still have limitations of quality of the services**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**limited options that are unbundled: costs are rising across the board which effects our seniors and lower income clients**
Willingness to Adopt Digital Technology	**Anxiety fear**
Reliability, Speed, and Performance of Available Broadband Internet Service	**still outages which creates problems for working from home**
Awareness and Confidence with Cyber Security and Internet Safety	**Larger education component, fishing scams nefarious behaviour, loneliness, isolation. As accessibility increase there is more risk to our seniors to encounter nefarious behaviors.**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

Yes

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

Yes

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

no

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

pivoting to virtual, tool training for excel and other Microsoft software

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

We have gone more digital and our case management now has the ability to work remote with clients

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

best advice for firewalls and security insurance also literature for our clients on best way to spot scams

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Yes, CAI

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

yes, we have free guest Wifi

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

yes, we would like to learn more about what this would look like

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

no

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

United Way

Athol/Royalston Regional School District and Narragansett Regional School District Write-up

Jarred Perrine – Wednesday, July 17th at 1:21 pm over email

Domenic Sergio – Tuesday, April 11th

Jarred Perrine is Director of Technology for the Narragansett Regional School District (NRSD) and Domenic Sergio is the Technology Director of Althol/Royalston Public Schools. Jarred Perrine declined to do an interview, however, MRPC followed up over email and got some useful information.

For the Athol and Royalston Regional School District (ARRSD) there is a great need for more affordable internet and devices. For example, Sergio's district needs new computers and digital infrastructure to help pivot to a more virtual setting. Likewise, better internet is made possible through the E-Rate program categories 1 and 2 where once filed the internet speeds double and information is slowly moved to the cloud. This assists Sergio's school district moving to more remote settings. Affordability is the biggest barrier when it comes to improving or providing digital services for schools and households in the region. Since Sergios school district covers 64% of the district's population it is important that schools have less costly options to improving online provisions.

Furthermore, during covid many of the students used the schools' hot spots, which implies a need for more affordable internet access. According to the notes, during Covid hot spots were provided, but school districts did not go full remote, providing the guest network after school hours.[1] **MRPC should** follow up with Sergio to see if his district participated in the Education Superhighway pilot during covid to get more information on household internet access.

Moreover, children in the school district are aware of how to use digital devices. In the interview notes with Sergio, it says that 90-95% of kids know how to use devices. The Elementary schools also offer Digital Literacy Classes as part of their STEM and STEAM programs. However, there is still a need for cyber-security awareness classes for children and an Incident Response Plan[2] for staff.

Similarly, Perrine's school district, Narragansett Regional School District (NRSD) faces a lack of options when it comes to the internet in the area. Perrine states in his questionnaire that, "The biggest problem with broadband in this area is that there is only one provider, and they aren't very good" (2). During Covid-19, the NRSD needed to furbish approximately 30 students with hotspots so that they could access the internet at home.

[1] (30-50 1% to 3%)
[2] MDR Solution

The NRSD applies every year for the E-rate program access points and access point license. The E-rate program helps subsidize Perrine's school internet signals and helps them buy switches. Perrine states in his interview that, "We went from a 60% to a 70% school this year, which has helped. This year we also purchased some Wi-Fi sensors to help us optimize our Wi-Fi." This shows how important it is for all the Narragansett schools to participate in the program; and likewise goes to show how important the program is for the Athol/Royalston Regional School District as well. Both school districts provide Chromebooks and hotspots to students. Provided additional funding, both school districts would improve their digital services.

Moving forward, both Technology Directors provided names of people MRPC should contact regarding the digital equity project. Contacts such as the Athol/Royalston Regional School District superintendent[3], Shirley Mitchell, Family and Community Center are important to keep in mind. Perrine did say in his emails with MRPC that he is working to pull data from the Education Superhighway pilot in 2021 which contains Covid information. He has reached out to DESE[4] to get in contact, but so far, he has not had any luck.

[3] Reach out via email

[4] They were trying to work with multiple ISPs to identify which households didn't have broadband access. It had a map and everything. Contact person left so hard to reach out to.

Domenic Sergio - Athol/Royalston Regional School District

Digital Equity Stakeholder Interview; April 11

Started in Summer of '23

1:1 Chromebook district

90-95% kids know how to use devices

- cyber-security
- digital citizenship; no formal course, informal efforts, regular newsletter
- content filter + (Firewall)

→ During Covid hot-spots were provided but school districts didn't go full service (30-50 ~~$~~ 1% + 3%)

- after school guest network is made available

Policies & procedures → better communication and outreach might be more effective

Elementary schools: Digital Literacy Classes
STEM + STEAM

E-Rate Cat I & II; filed to double the internet speed → moving info. to Cloud

Athol → infrastructure is all and affordability is the biggest issue.

→ Vetting apps ; pre-approved list → include in digital curriculum at the state.

* Reach out to the superintendent via email
→ also Shirley Mitchell
Family & Community Center

Gregor Goodlett

From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 1:21 PM
To: Jeffrey Legros
Cc: Keith Parker; Gregor Goodlett
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Take care,
Jared

On Wed, Jul 17, 2024 at 11:33 AM Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org> wrote:

Hi Jared,

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- What was the overall scope or purpose of the Education Superhighway pilot project/program?
- Did they provide the Town/School Department with any broadband internet or digital literacy education services or equipment?

#17

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Wednesday, July 03, 2024 9:56:02 AM
Last Modified:	Wednesday, July 03, 2024 10:08:32 AM
Time Spent:	00:12:29
IP Address:	209.80.128.106

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Templeton

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Jared Perrine

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

Narragansett Regional School District

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Yes

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

No

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

jperrine@nrsd.org

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150% of the poverty level

,

Members of a racial or ethnic minority group,

Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy

,

Persons with Disabilities,

Rural Residents

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

Respondent skipped this question

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Respondent skipped this question

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

Respondent skipped this question

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Access to Digital Devices	**We provide Chromebooks to our of our kids.**
Access to Broadband Internet Service	**We did have a few families that required hotspots during covid**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**The biggest problem with broadband in this area is that there is only one provider and they aren't very good**
Reliability, Speed, and Performance of Available Broadband Internet Service	**The biggest problem with broadband in this area is that there is only one provider and they aren't very good**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

Yes

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

Yes

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

Yes, we offer Digital Citizenship content in our health classrooms

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

Respondent skipped this question

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

We have switched our phone and fax systems to all cloud products

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

We currently do phishing tests, and intrusion tests. We also just recently implemented MDR.

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Yes, CAI

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

No, we password protected our guest network this year to better protect our network.

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

Respondent skipped this question

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

Respondent skipped this question

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Respondent skipped this question

Jeffrey Legros

From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 1:21 PM
To: Jeffrey Legros
Cc: Keith Parker; Gregor Goodlett
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

Categories: DeP NWC-TRP

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- Did they provide the Town/School Department with any broadband internet or digital literacy education services or equipment?
- Was a report prepared by Education Superhighway, or is there a contact person for the project?

Also, one other related question that I have…

- Are any of the NRSD schools currently enrolled in the E-Rate program?
- If so, which schools and for how long have they been enrolled in the program?
- If not, are you familiar with the program or interested in learning how to sign-up?

Thank you for any additional information you may be able to provide.

Best regards,

Jeff Legros

Jeffrey Legros, Senior Principal Planner

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

464 Abbott Avenue

Leominster, MA 01453

Phone: 978.798.6177

Fax: 978.348.2490

Email: jlegros@mrpc.org

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From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 10:10 AM
To: Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org>
Cc: Keith Parker <kparker@nrsd.org>; Gregor Goodlett <ggoodlett@mrpc.org>
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

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Jeff,

I just filled out the survey. I am also trying to get access to some of the data we pulled together with the Education Superhighway through their pilot we did back in 2021. That contains some covid information. I'm not sure if that information is still available. If it is, I can shoot that over too.

Thanks,

Jared

On Wed, Jun 26, 2024 at 1:22 PM Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org> wrote:

> Hi Keith,
>
> As you know, MRPC is working with the towns of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston on Digital Equity Plans through a grant from the Mass Broadband Institute (MBI) and hoping you can help us by providing some information, and/or putting us in contact with Jarred Perrine and members of the Narragansett Regional School District IT and Data support staff. I have attached a stakeholder questionnaire and notice for you to complete and share with the appropriate members of the NRSD IT staff. Please complete and share the attached questionnaire or follow the link below to complete it online:
>
> https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP
>
> Currently, we are developing an existing conditions analysis to evaluate the pillars of digital equity: affordable and available access to the internet, access to affordable devices, and digital literacy in using the internet and devices.
>
> Most importantly at this time, we are looking for any data that the school district may have collected during the Covid-19 pandemic related to internet and digital computing devices and the related conditions for students, teachers, and support staff. In particular, we are hoping to learn more about internet access, digital computing devices, and internet bandwidth (speed and capacity) experienced by students, teachers, and staff during the period of remote/hybrid learning.
>
> For example:

- How was the access district wide to the internet and devices for students in Templeton and Phillipston?
- Did all students (and teachers) have access to the internet?
- Did the school provide hot spots for students (and/or teachers)?
- Were devices distributed to students and teachers or did they already have them?
- Are there are areas of the towns that you discovered were unserved or underserved (no internet available, unreliable, or without necessary, minimum speeds)?
- Were the internet service providers aware of the issues and did they assist with getting service to the students or teachers in any way? Was that interaction helpful?
- Any other general information about any digital issues would also be appreciated, particularly in Templeton and Phillipston.

Please let me know if you are able to assist with putting us in contact with the appropriate IT staff or helping answer any of these questions. Any information you can provide will be appreciated and we look forward to the opportunity to conduct a stakeholder interview with you and a member of the NRSD IT staff to review and discuss the attached questionnaire and related questions above.

Thank you,

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MassCUE Advisor, METAA Board Member

Digital Learning Advisory Council (DLAC) Member

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Jeffrey Legros

From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 12:01 PM
To: Jeffrey Legros
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

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Do you know if the school participates in both Categories 1 and 2? If so, are there different % rates for the two categories or are they both 70%?
We do. Both are 70%

Can you provide a little more detail on what technology, equipment, and services or subscriptions the District has used E-Rate to pay for?
Switches, Access Points, Firewall, and Internet Access

How much money ($) do you estimate that the program saves NRSD each year?
60,000-70,000 per year on average

During Covid-19 the school provided ~30 students/households with hot spots to provide internet at home. Does the school district still provide that service or is there still a need?
No.

Are the hotspots up to date with current technology and could they be used by the School Department, Town, Library, or Digital Lab/Community Center if there was funding to pay for the internet service subscription for some or all of them?
NA

Does the school district provide laptops to students for use in school, or at home?
We have devices for each of our students
PreK-4 devices stay at school
5-12 devices are allowed to go home

On Fri, Oct 25, 2024 at 3:17 PM Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org> wrote:

Hi Jared,

I am wrapping up the Digital Equity Plan for the Town of Templeton (and also Phillipston) and I had a couple of final follow-up questions for you:

You previously noted that the NRSD participates in the FCC E-Rate program to receive reduced costs for internet services and that they receive a 70% rate for those costs.

Do you know if the school participates in both Categories 1 and 2? If so, are there different % rates for the two categories or are they both 70%?

Can you provide a little more detail on what technology, equipment, and services or subscriptions the District has used E-Rate to pay for?

How much money ($) do you estimate that the program saves NRSD each year?

During Covid-19 the school provided ~30 students/households with hot spots to provide internet at home. Does the school district still provide that service or is there still a need?

Are the hotspots up to date with current technology and could they be used by the School Department, Town, Library, or Digital Lab/Community Center if there was funding to pay for the internet service subscription for some or all of them?

Does the school district provide laptops to students for use in school, or at home?

Thank you for any additional information you can provide. We have appreciated your willingness to participate and assist with this process.

Thank you,

Jeff

Jeffrey Legros, Senior Principal Planner

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

464 Abbott Avenue

Leominster, MA 01453

Phone: 978.798.6177

Fax: 978.348.2490

Email: jlegros@mrpc.org

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From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 9:59 AM

To: Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org>
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

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Hi again Jeff. I think I already filled out these questions on the electronic survey.

I reached out to the EdTEch department at the state, which was brand new when Education Superhighway did the pilot I mentioned. We received word back that they did not save the data associated with the pilot and the person that ran the pilot, Eliza Straim, is no longer working for the company.

The hotspot loaners were done before I came aboard here. But from talking to people in the department, we believe ~30 hotspots were given out to students.

Take care,

Jared

On Fri, Sep 6, 2024 at 4:34 PM Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org> wrote:

Hi Jared,

I am following up on our previous email communication from July. Did you hear back from the representatives of Education Superhighway about the information/data and maps related to their project with NRSD? Were you able to track down any additional information or data in your files?

Any additional information related to hotspots that were provided to students during remote learning, or any other anecdotal information on the approximate number of students who did not have internet service/access, and/or areas of town where internet service was unreliable would still be very useful for the plan.

Also, any other information or input on goals, strategies, or actions that you think could be important to the Digital Equity Plan will be greatly appreciated. We are nearing completion of the plan, and it will be finalized by the end of October. Let us know if you have any questions, comments, or information to share.

I am attaching a few follow-up questions as a guide. Please complete and return them to us by email or let us know if you would like to schedule an in-person meeting, phone call, or Teams video conference to review them together.

Thank you,
Jeff

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Cc: Keith Parker <kparker@nrsd.org>; Gregor Goodlett <ggoodlett@mrpc.org>
Subject: RE: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

Hi Jared,

Thank you for the additional info. Let us know if you are able to track anything down.

Thanks again,

Jeff

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https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DGVRZMP

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Director of Technology

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MassCUE Advisor, METAA Board Member

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Narragansett Regional School District
MassCUE Advisor, METAA Board Member
Digital Learning Advisory Council (DLAC) Member
@wiredpilgrim
jperrine@nrsd.org
978-939-1094 (office)
978-939-5179 (fax)

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Domenic Sergio - Athol/Royalston Regional School District

Digital Equity Stakeholder Interview; April 11

Started in Summer of '23

1:1 Chromebook district

90-95% kids know how to use devices

- cyber-security
- digital citizenship; no formal course, informal efforts, regular newsletter
- content filter + (firewall)

→ During Covid hot-spots were provided but school districts didn't go full scale (30-50 @ 1% + 3%)

- after school guest network is made available

Policies & procedures → better communication and outreach might be more effective

Elementary schools: Digital Literacy Classes
STEM + STEAM

E-Rate Cat I & II; filed to double the internet speed → moving info. to Cloud

Athol → infrastructure is old and affordability is the biggest issue.

→ Vetting apps for pre-approved list → include in digital curriculum at the state.

* Reach out to the superintendent via email
→ also Shirley Mitchell
Family & Community Center

Gregor Goodlett

From: Jared Perrine <jperrine@nrsd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 1:21 PM
To: Jeffrey Legros
Cc: Keith Parker; Gregor Goodlett
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - NRSD Templeton & Phillipston

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hey guys. I have not heard back. I even had DESE reach out to them. They were trying to work with multiple ISPs and tried to identify which households didn't have broadband access. It had a map and everything. I'll keep trying to get access to our old data. The contact person appears have to left so I don't actually have a contact at the moment. They did NOT provide any equipment.

As for erate. Yes, we apply every year for access points and access point licenses. They help to subsidize our school Internet signals and help us to buy switches. We went from a 60% to a 70% school this year, which has helped. This year, we also purchased some wifi sensors to help us optimize our wifi. All of our schools participate in the program.

Take care,
Jared

On Wed, Jul 17, 2024 at 11:33 AM Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org> wrote:

Hi Jared,

I am following up on your email below to see if you were able to track down any data/information related to the Education Superhighway pilot project that you referenced below. MRPC was not aware of this effort and any information you may be able to provide us will be beneficial to the Digital Equity Plan that we are currently preparing for the Towns of Templeton, Phillipston, and Royalston. Below are a few questions that may provide useful information:

- What was the overall scope or purpose of the Education Superhighway pilot project/program?
- Did they provide the Town/School Department with any broadband internet or digital literacy education services or equipment?

Boynton Public Library Interview Write-up

Jackie Prime – Monday, June 24th at 2:00 PM in person at the Templeton Library, 27 Boynton Road PO Box 296 Templeton, MA 01468

Jackie Prime is the Community Organizing Director of Templeton and Phillipston. MRPC has met with her several times and at each Core Team meeting and she has shown a lot of interest in the Digital Equity program.

Templeton Library Hours:

1. Monday 9 am – 6 pm
2. Wednesday 9 am – 5 pm
3. Thursday 9 am – 6 pm
4. Saturday 11:20 am – 2:20 pm

Phillipston Library Hours:

1. Tuesday 9 am – 2 pm
2. Wednesday 5 pm – 7 pm
3. Saturday 9 am – 1 pm

Furthermore, the internet connection at Templeton is not bad. Both libraries use free accounts/contracts through Comcast C/W Mars. The internet connection also reaches outside for both, but the Phillipston location is spottier. Recently the Templeton location underwent some renovations including rewiring the internet.

There is currently 1 public access computer because the library could not afford another.[1] If possible, Prime would like to bring back 1 or 2 more computers with additional funding. The current workstation does not have a webcam or soundproofing both of which were appealing features of a private cubical workspace; a future endeavor Prime would want to explore with grant money. The computers presently are used by children completing school homework, but other times residents may use the computers for job searches or other activities of the like. In addition to the 1 public computer the library also has access to 10 shared Chromebooks and a digital whiteboard because of a collaboration between Gardner and Templeton for a grant. Both share the technology for programming. Similarly, the Town of Templeton is good about sharing resources across departments.

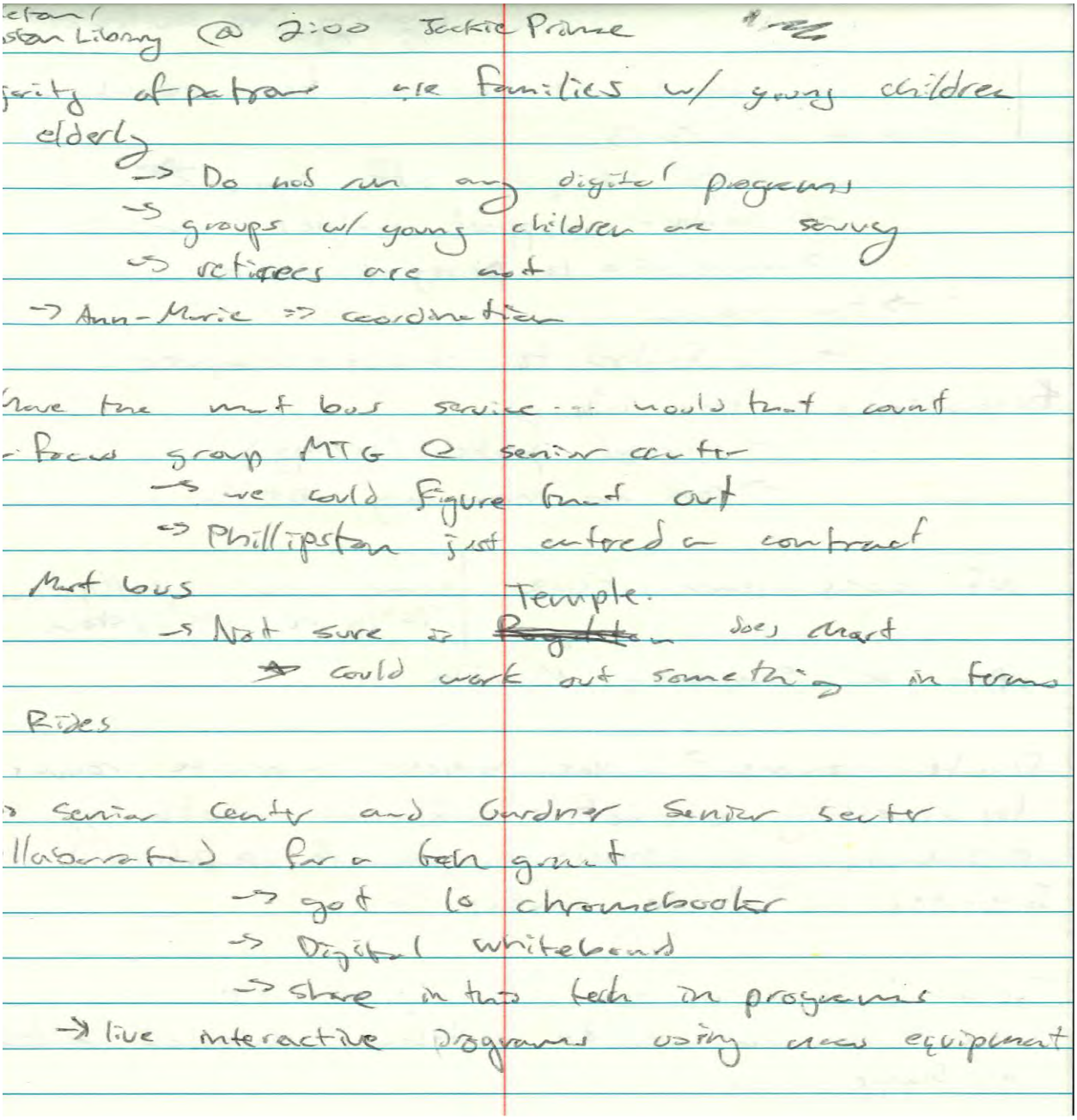
In addition to internet connection and access to computers, both locations offer homework programs for the youth. Besides the one program there are no other digital programs offered. With financial help, Prime would like to see more programming at the two libraries on

[1] Jackie Prime said this was off the record

cyber security or how to download e-books off the library's large inventory list. To run tech help or digital classes Prime would need someone to come in, potentially every other month. Additionally, the Templeton and Phillipston libraries do not offer hot spots. Prime highlighted the importance of providing hot spots for both of her locations, saying they would be very popular for people at home.

The towns of Templeton and Phillipston are low-income areas. Generally, many households have no internet or tech at home, making public libraries the best place for digital needs outside the house. When talking about what she wants the state to know in terms of these digital needs, Prime states that towns like Templeton 'get lost in the shuffle.' That these towns are not wealthy communities, so they are not up to date with the latest technology. Many residents get lost because they are not tech savvy or have older phones, not smart phones, which makes it difficult to run surveys through QR codes. Prime points out not everybody is on the cutting edge of technology and not everybody wants to be.

Moving forward, **MRPC** should reach out to siblings Puala Haily lunch in coordinator and Tim Haily newsletter point of contact at the Phillipston Church base for an interview and provide them with a survey box. Also, MRPC should ask Prime for an inventory list of renovations at her library location, and in a different email follow up about coordinating a Mart bus from the library to the senior center or vice versa for a focus group meeting.

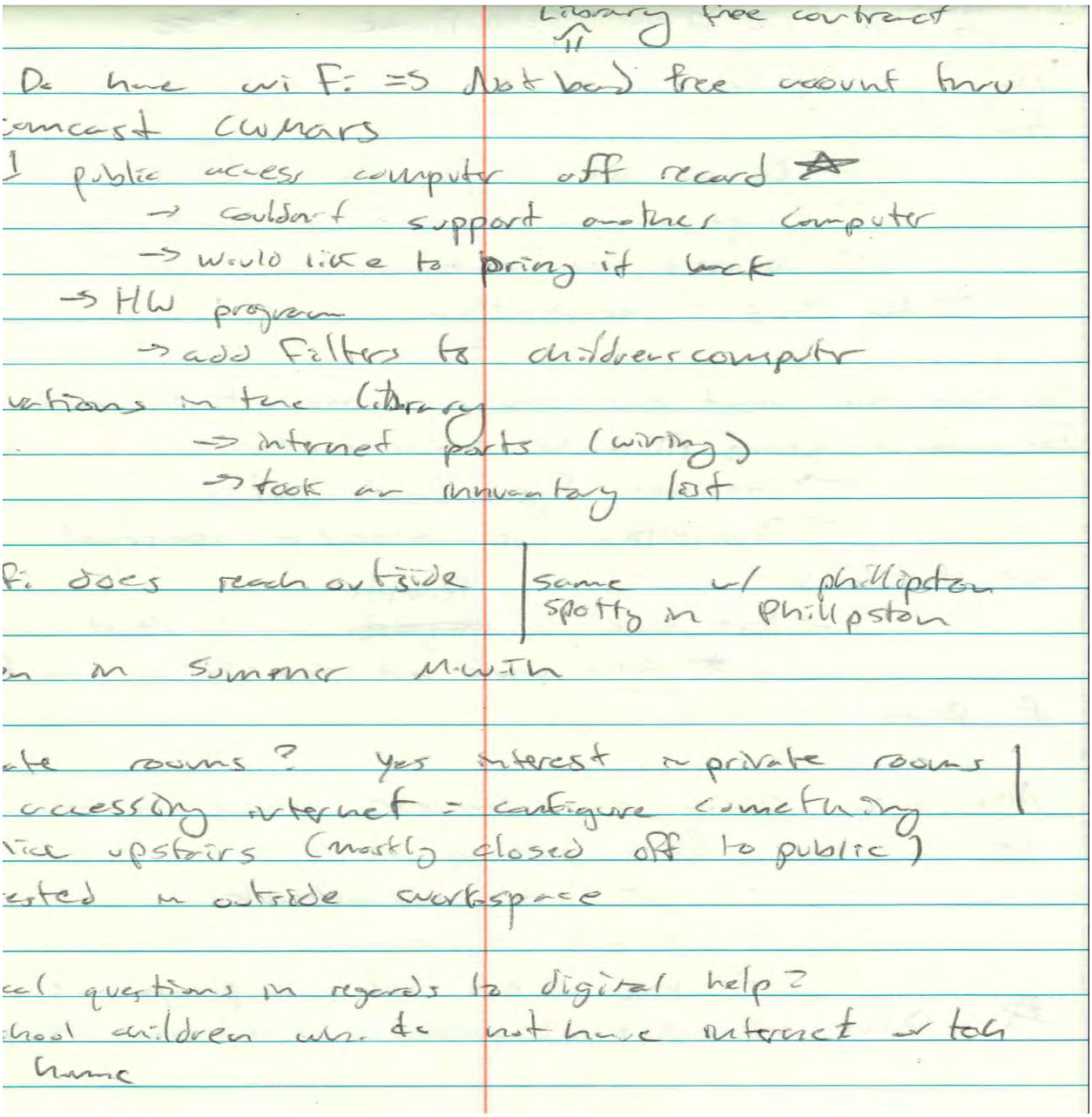


etan/
ston Library @ 2:00 Jackie Prince

jority of patrons are families w/ young children
elderly
-> Do not run any digital programs
-> groups w/ young children are savvy
-> retirees are not
-> Ann-Marie => coordination

have the mart bus service ... would that count
- focus group MTG @ senior center
-> we could figure that out
-> Phillipston just entered a contract
Mart bus
-> Not sure if ~~Royalston~~ Temple does chart
-> could work out something in terms
Rides

-> Senior Center and Gardner Senior Center
llaborated for a tech grant
-> got 10 chromebooks
-> Digital whiteboard
-> share in this tech in programs
-> live interactive programs using new equipment



Library free contract
⇑

Do have wi Fi => Not bad free account thru
comcast CWMars
1 public access computer off record ☆
→ couldn't support another computer
→ would like to bring it back
→ HW program
→ add filters to childrens computer
vations in the library
→ internet ports (wiring)
→ took an innuantory list

Fi does reach outside | same w/ phillipston
spotty in Phillpston

n in summer M-W-Th

ate rooms? yes interest in private rooms |
accessing internet = configure something
nice upstairs (mostly closed off to public)
ested in outside workspace

cal questions in regards to digital help?
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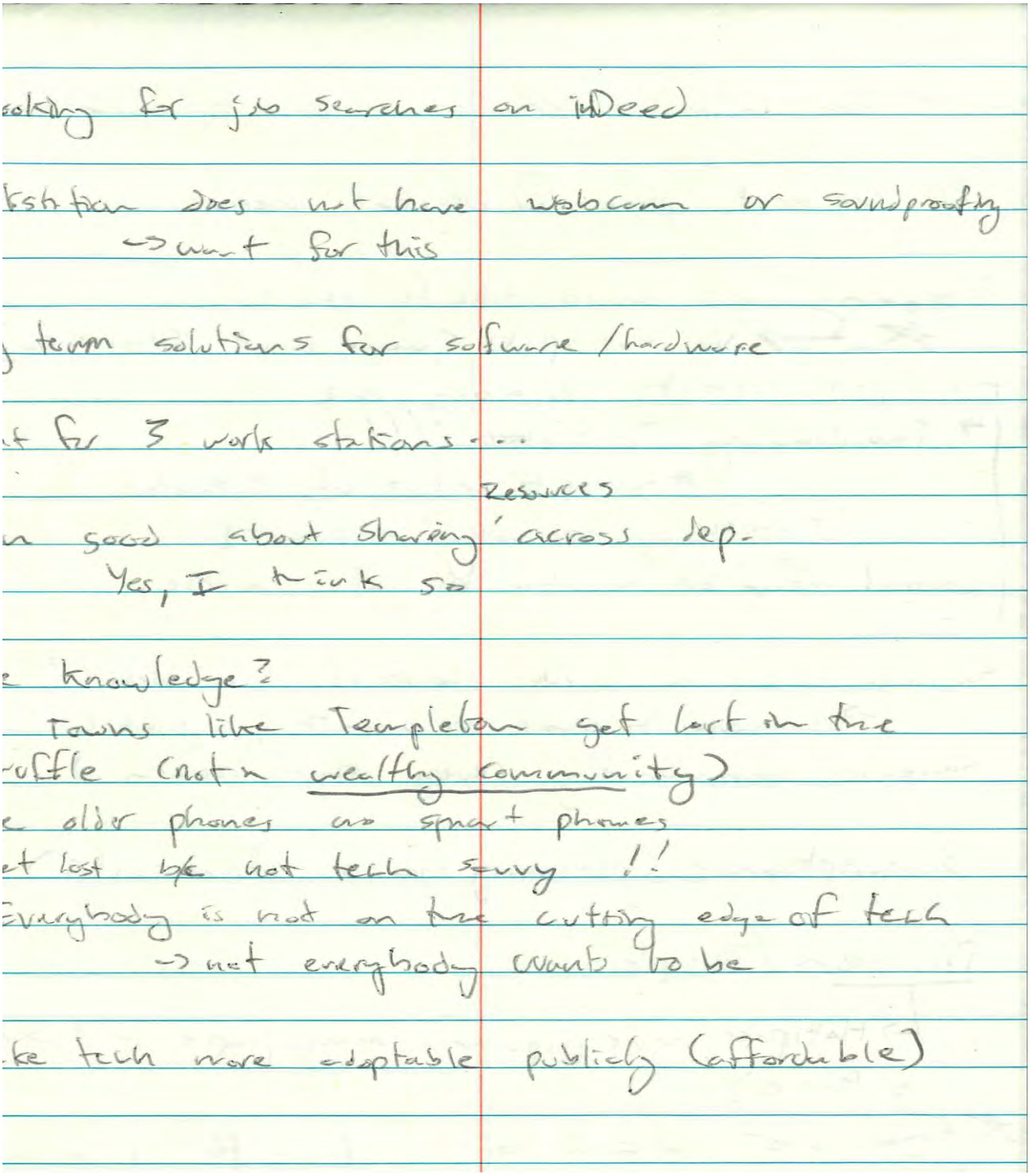

soking for job searches on indeed

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-> want for this

team solutions for software / hardware

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Resources
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Yes, I think so

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-> not everybody wants to be

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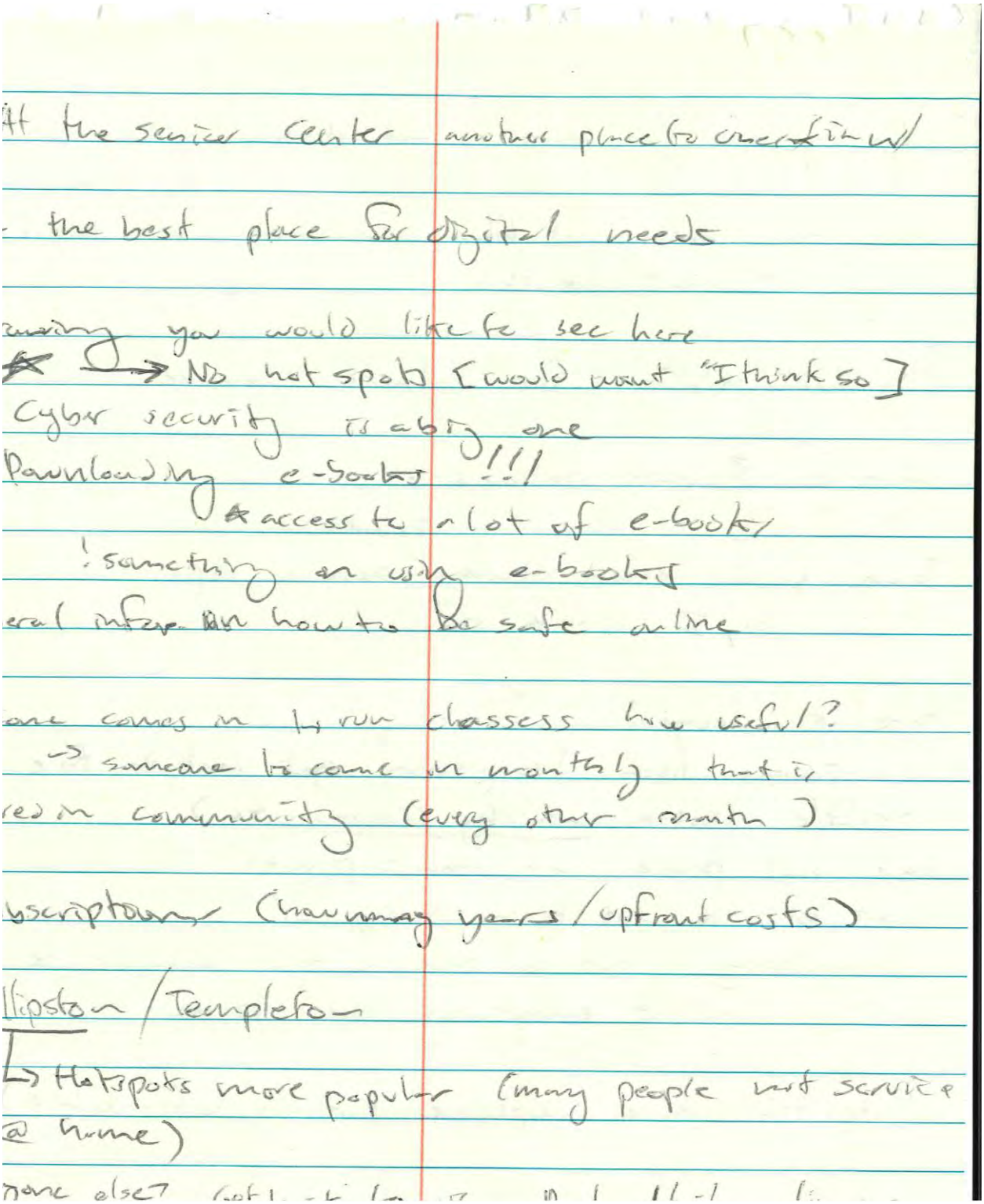

At the senior center another place to check in w/

- the best place for digital needs

...ing you would like to see here

★ → No hot spots [would want "I think so]

Cyber security is a big one

Downloading e-books !!!

★ access to a lot of e-books

! something on using e-books

...eral info on how to be safe online

...one comes in to run classess how useful?

→ someone to come in monthly that is

...red in community (every other month)

...bscriptions (how many years / upfront costs)

...llipston / Templeton

→ Hotspots more popular (many people not service @ home)

...one else? [illegible]

Tim Healy => Newsletter

Siblings w/ Paula H.

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@ home)

...one else? ...

Tim Healy => Newsletter

Siblings w/ Paula H.

Jeffrey Legros

From: Prime, Jackie <jprime@TempletonMA.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2024 10:51 AM
To: Jeffrey Legros
Cc: Gregor Goodlett
Subject: Re: Digital Equity Planning - E-Rate Program

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Hi Jeff and Gregor,

Yes- both the Boynton and Phillips Free libraries participate in the e-rate program.

Thank you,

Jackie Prime

Director of Community Services
Templeton, MA 01468
(978) 939-5582

From: Jeffrey Legros <jlegros@mrpc.org>
Sent: Friday, October 25, 2024 3:34 PM
To: Prime, Jackie <jprime@TempletonMA.gov>

Cc: Gregor Goodlett <ggoodlett@mrpc.org>
Subject: Digital Equity Planning - E-Rate Program

Hi Jackie,

We are currently preparing the Digital Equity Plan and in reviewing the information you sent and our notes from the interview we conducted, I did not see anything about the E-Rate program.

Does the Phillipston Public Library or the Boynton Public Library in Templeton currently participate in the E-Rate program offered by the FCC?

The program is available to public libraires and schools and it often provides between 50% and 80% of costs for internet services and other digital equipment and services. I know that the NRSD and ARSD both participate in the program at great savings, and that CWMARS is recently encouraging public libraries to apply in the program. I believe they offered a recent webinar on the subject and are offering some guidance to help libraries apply.

Let me know if either of the two libraires are already participating in the E-Rate program or if you think they would be interested in applying. If so I will update the plans accordingly.

Thank you,
Jeff

Jeffrey Legros, Senior Principal Planner
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453
Phone: 978.798.6177
Fax: 978.348.2490
Email: jlegros@mrpc.org

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Templeton Senior Center Focus Group Meeting Write-Up

8 Attendees – Tuesday, August 13th at 10:30 AM in person at 16 Senior Dr, Baldwinville, MA 01436

Attending the Baldwinville "Tech Help and Digital Equity Focus Group Meeting" there were 8 community members from the senior center including 1 staff member. All of whom heard about the event from the Newsletter and Ride Share.

Patrons reported using the internet regularly for home business or personal business activities such as writing sermons, writing for family geology research, for medical purposes, emails, maps, catching up on the senior center newsletter, and family connections such as staying in touch with relatives over Facebook. One community member stated using the internet to stay in touch with family that are out of town or far away. The Northwest County community clearly uses the internet, but there is need for additional assistance and funding for fair and equitable access to digital resources and the online.

Moreover, when the residents of Templeton do not have access to the internet they go to the Templeton Library, Templeton Senior Center,[1] and even the Gardner Library. Residents recount being able to access the Townsend Library internet from the outside parking lot. Senior center patrons are grateful for public access to the internet and with additional grant money public spaces in Templeton and the Northwest County should consider improving their digital services. Specifically, libraries and senior centers could extend the public Wi-Fi using an internet connection booster and provide outdoor digital seating areas to use the internet or work online outside.

Individual household experiences with internet connection have been described as intermittent and mostly reliable. Wi-Fi for Northwest County residents is influenced by the weather, so when there is rain, connection tends to fluctuate.[2] Additionally, there are concerns of affordability between the attendees. For instance, patrons all worry about the rising costs of internet. Thus, an affordable, stable or fixed cost is needed to make the internet for residents more accessible.

Most of the event attendees were very confident in their internet skills and had access to a computer or handheld device. However, the residents indicated the need for additional tech-help or digital literacy training to best navigate the internet or other online services.

- 1 not confident at all
- 1 somewhat confident
- 2 confident

[1] Most come for the senior center Wi-Fi

[2] Everybody had home internet service, said that AT&T is the best in Baldwinville, Verizon is the worst

- 4 very confident

Particularly, residents need help navigating sites like Facebook, operating their hand-held devices, cyber-security and scam avoidance, and storing or archiving information to the cloud.[3] A resident recalls, being locked out of their L.L. Bean account by hackers who changed their password. This shows a clear need for internet safety and cyber-security training. Provided additional funding Northwest County would implement more digital literacy training programs to ensure that everyone can equitably access the internet in a safe and meaningful way.

Moving forward, MRPC should find additional resources that would be able to address the needs listed above.

[3] Some patrons do not trust the cloud which implies there needs to be programs to help bring awareness about the cloud.

#24

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Monday, August 19, 2024 9:52:38 AM
Last Modified:	Monday, August 19, 2024 10:00:11 AM
Time Spent:	00:07:33
IP Address:	38.52.239.225

Page 1

Q1

Which community do you serve/represent? (If more than one, use the other box to identify the other communities).

Other (please specify):
All of the above apart from Royalston

Q2

Your Name and Position:

Eolann McMillan, prevention coordinator

Q3

Organization Name and Location:

LUK Inc, Fitchburg

Q4

Are you aware of the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program?https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal

Yes

Q5

Have you taken the statewide Digital Equity Survey? If not, please select "No" and follow the link below to take the survey:Statewide Digital Equity SurveyPlease promote and share the survey link with those you serve!

Yes

Q6

Would you like us to provide you with a flier or other information to help you promote the survey to the people you serve? If so, please indicate below and and provide an email address to send the flier to.

have it

Q7

Does your organization serve a Covered Household or Population as defined within the definitions of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (H.R. 1841)?Covered populations include: Aging individuals (sometimes referred to as senior citizens or older adults); Individuals or families of low-income households (not greater the 150% of the poverty level); Minority groups; Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals with disabilities; Veterans; Incarcerated individuals other than those who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.

Members of a racial or ethnic minority group,

Individuals with a language barrier – including English learners and individuals with low levels of literacy

,

Rural Residents

Q8

If your organization serves clients from one or more of the covered populations, how many covered people do you typically serve each year?

Respondent skipped this question

Q9

Is your organization on the statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

I don't know

Q10

If NOT, do you believe your organization SHOULD be included in statewide Digital Equity Asset Inventory Map?

Yes

Q11

How well do you think you know Digital Equity needs of those you serve? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=don't know them at all; 3 - unsure; 5 - know them well).

49

Q12

Please describe some of the greatest digital equity and broadband internet needs of those you serve within each of the following categories:

Digital Literacy	**limited**
Digital Skills Adoption	**limited in adult pops**
Access to Digital Devices	**limited and not equitable, students get through school**
Affordability of Broadband Internet Services	**high costs due to monopolies**
Willingness to Adopt Digital Technology	**lower in older pops**
Ability to Adopt Digital Technology	**lower in older pops**
Awareness and Confidence with Cyber Security and Internet Safety	**limited and not talked about enough**

Q13

Do you currently offer people free access to the internet at your site?

No

Q14

Do you currently offer people access to computers or a computer lab at your site so they can do tasks they can't do at home?

No

Q15

Do you currently offer ongoing or occasional classes related to computers, digital skills, programs, etc? If so, what type? (If not, skip question)

developing digital literacy training

Q16

What kind of computer/digital support could you use as an organization to do your work more efficiently or effectively (e.g., newer computers, faster speed, more reliable service, help pivoting to virtual)?

Respondent skipped this question

Q17

How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact or change how you work? (Such as remote work, computers/internet, etc.)

remote, young ppl need tech year round

Q18

Is cybersecurity or internet safety a concern for your organization or those you serve?

Yes,

Not Sure

Q19

If YES, what would you need to make your organization or its clients more cyber-safe?

Respondent skipped this question

Q20

Would you consider your organization a Critical Digital Asset (CDA) or a Community Anchor Institution (CAI)? The term “Critical Digital Asset” means a digital computer, communication system, or network that is a component of a critical Information System (this includes assets that perform Safety-Sensitive or Emergency Planning (“SSEP”) functions, or provide support to, protect, or provide a pathway to critical systems), or a support system asset whose failure or compromise as the result of a cyber attack would result in an adverse impact to an SSEP Function.The term “Community Anchor Institution” as defined within the Digital Equity Act of 2021 means a public school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a community college or other institution of higher education, a State library agency, and any other nonprofit or governmental community support organization.

Neither

Q21

If YES, do you currently have a public-facing free and open wifi network? If NO, would you be interested in being considered for one in the future?

Respondent skipped this question

Q22

Is there someone at your organization who may be interested in being part of a regional digital equity coalition or working group? If so, who?

me- emcmillan@luk.org

Q23

Is there a person within your community or organization that is an advocate for digital equity, digital literacy, and/or internet access and services? If so, who?

Respondent skipped this question

Q24

Are there any other important stakeholders, interested organizations or individuals, or covered populations, or focus groups that we should contact and include in the planning process? Please list any people, entities, or groups.

Respondent skipped this question