



DIGITAL EQUITY IN ARLINGTON



ARLINGTON
VIRGINIA

**HOUSING COMMISSION
MEETING**

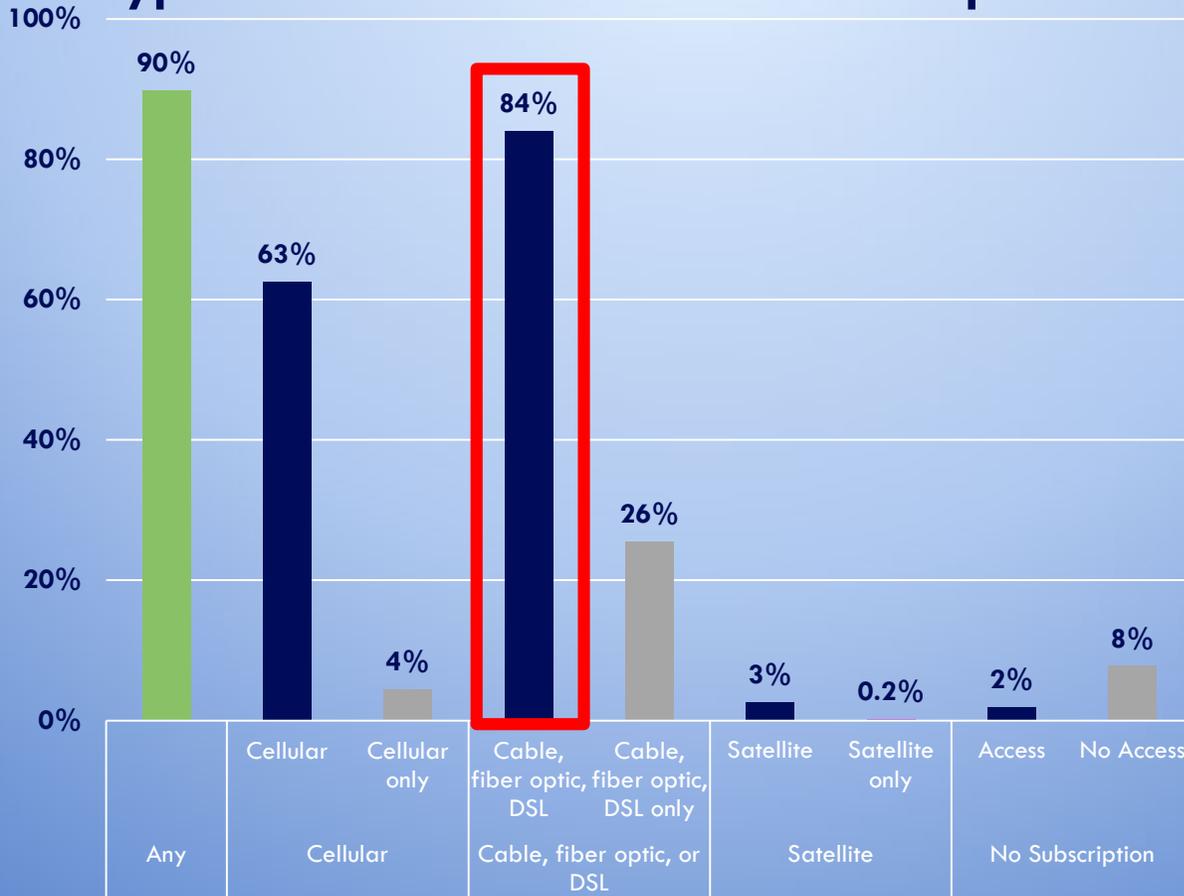
JANUARY 16, 2020

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- Digital Equity Overview
- Share Digital Equity Framework Proposal
- Respond to Questions

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Types of Household Internet Subscriptions



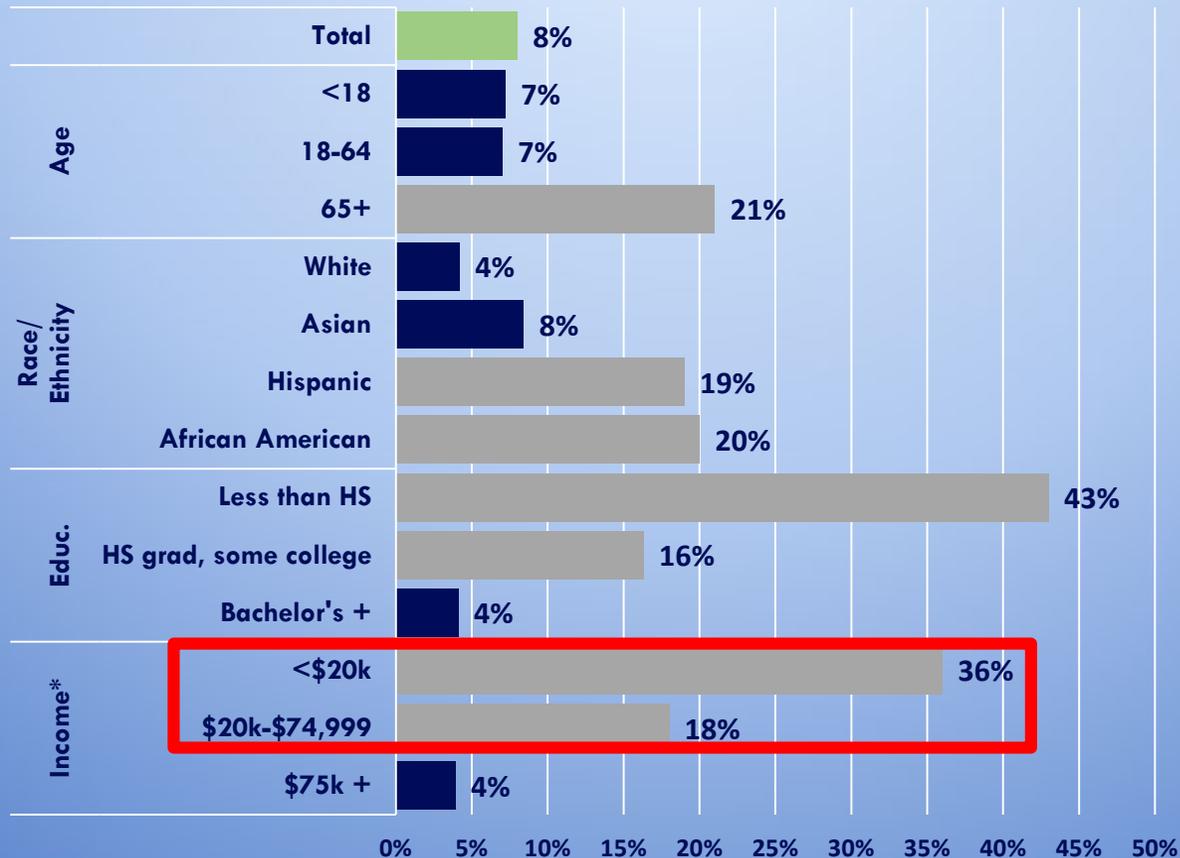
*Total households without internet only

- **90%** of Arlington households have some type of internet subscription in their home.
- **16%** of households do not have access to a home broadband internet connection (cable, fiber optic or DSL).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's [2013-2017] American Community Survey 5-year estimates

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Internet Subscription Disparities



*Total households without internet only

- **8%** of total population do not have an internet subscription or computer in their home.
- **Residents at greater risk:**
 - Older adults(65+)
 - African American and Hispanic individuals
 - With less than a high school education
 - Low-income

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's [2013-2017] American Community Survey 5-year estimates

WHERE DOES THE DISPARITY EXIST?

Households in certain zip codes are at a greater risk reporting no internet subscription.

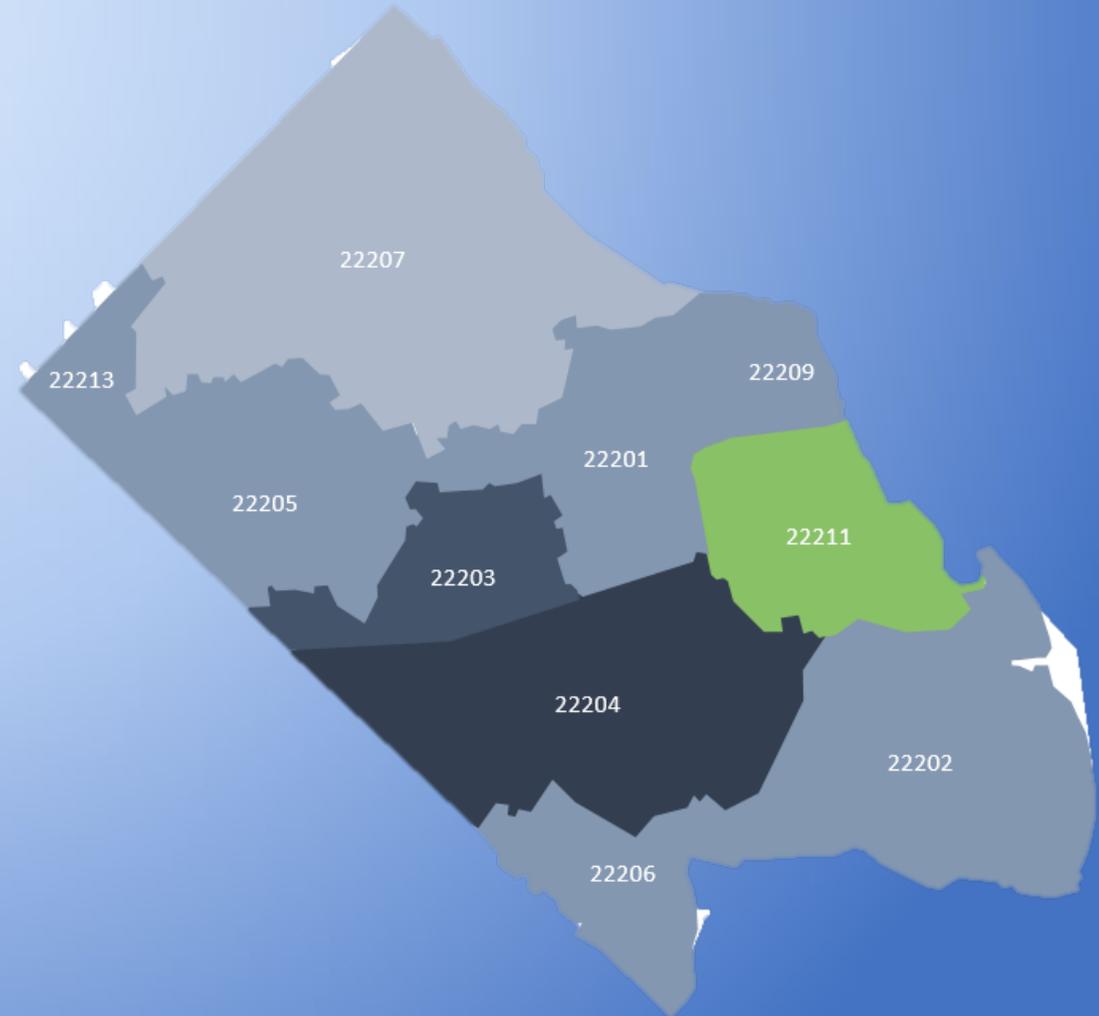
Arlington: 10%

22204: 17%

22203: 15%

22206: 9%

Census tracts with the lowest fixed home broadband adoptions rates correlate to Arlington's low- and moderate- income neighborhoods (Buckingham, Green Valley, Columbia Heights West, Douglas Park, Columbia Forest)

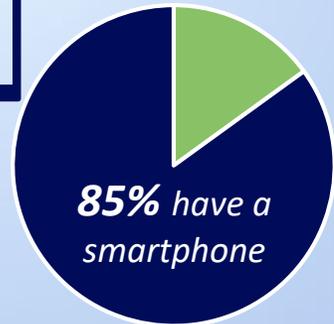


Source: U.S. Census Bureau's [2013-2017] American Community Survey 5-year estimates

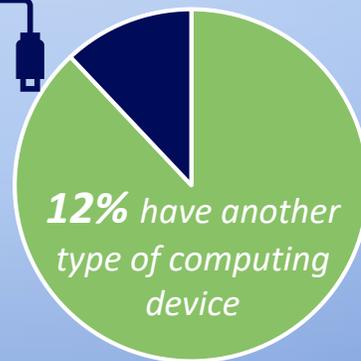
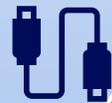
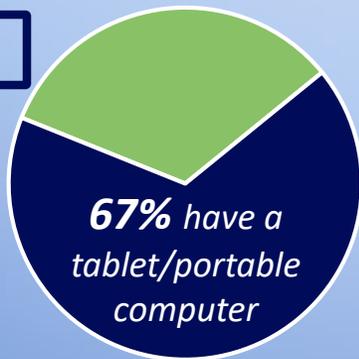
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6% only have a desktop/laptop



1% only have smartphone



- **95%** of households have one or more computing devices.
- Households can be represented in more than one graph if they own more than one computing device.
 - Ex: household owns a desktop and a smartphone.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's [2013-2017] American Community Survey 5-year estimates

WHAT IS CONSIDERED “AFFORDABLE” INTERNET?

- The Alliance for Affordable Internet recommends “1 for 2” target: 1 GB of data (for internet, phone, other telecommunications) priced at 2% or less of average monthly income.*
 - 2% of average monthly income for family earning \$75,000 (roughly 60% AMI) annually in Arlington is \$125 per month
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance affiliates who have researched the question estimate people are comfortable paying \$10 - \$15 a month for broadband with no data caps.

*Global definition created by Alliance for Affordable Internet.

WHY IS DIGITAL EQUITY IMPORTANT?

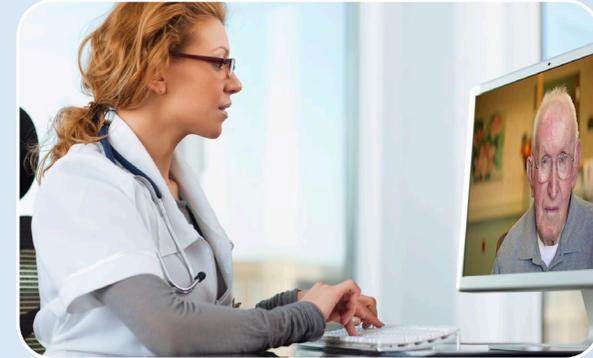
Access to the internet and digital connectivity enables residents to:

- Communicate with friends and family
- Research and apply for jobs
- Work remotely
- Make appointments
- Public safety awareness
- Participate in civic engagement
- Pay bills online
- Complete schoolwork online
- Access healthcare resources



BENEFITS OF DIGITAL EQUITY

United States
**Census
2020**



The 2020 Census is online first, but 16% of Arlington residents do not have high speed broadband. Increased opportunities for internet access will support more accurate counting for the Census and ensure that all Arlington residents are counted.

70% of teachers assign homework to be completed online, yet many Arlington families, particularly lower-income families, do not have high-speed broadband at home. Students without home broadband are often forced to use the internet at school afterhours, or at the public library, or at their friend's house or even the McDonalds parking lot, placing these students at an even greater disadvantage compared to their peers, also known as the homework gap.

Currently, 76% of U.S. hospitals connect with patients and practitioners through the use of video and other technology. However, broadband adoption continues to be one of the barriers to wide adoption of telehealth technologies. Connecting more Arlington residents to the internet and informing residents of the benefits of telehealth opportunities could save time and money, reduce patient transfers, decrease emergency department and urgent care center visits, and deliver savings to both the County and residents.

ONGOING ARLINGTON DIGITAL EQUITY INITIATIVES

Arlington has several Digital Equity initiatives in place...



...but are there other opportunities?

- Free wireless internet access at 20 public libraries and community centers
- Free computer access at 11 library and community center locations. All computers used 100% of the time at most libraries.
- Free digital literacy, basic computer, productivity application, programming, and one-on-one training opportunities through Libraries, DHS, APS, and DPR
- Arlington Mill Residences pilot program
- APS students in grades 2-12 given a device

EXPANDED APPROACH

- Digital Equity Action Plan
 - Establish a policy framework, set guiding principles, and develop strategies for achieving Arlington's digital equity goals, with community input.
 - **All Arlingtonians should have the information technology capacity needed to fully participate in the community and economy.**
 - **CONNECTIVITY:** Ability to connect to affordable home broadband internet options.
 - **ACCESS:** Accessing the internet and technology resources with a device.
 - **USABILITY:** Digital skills training and education are prioritized and usability of County resources is improved.
 - **PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY:** Strategies to achieve digital equity goals are sustainable, the community is engaged on the issue, and County structures are in place to support goals.



DIGITAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Structure

DEAP Core Staff
Group

Internal Staff
Working Group

Digital Inclusion
Network



Civic Engagement

Community Meetings

Brief Surveys

Partnered Focus
Groups



Propose

Policy Framework

Guiding Principles

Action Oriented
Strategies

NEXT STEPS

- Conversations from the first Digital Inclusion Network meeting, focus groups, and survey will inform direction of policy framework.
- Kickoff Focus Groups and Survey in February 2020.
- Aiming for County Board approval in September or October 2020.