Washington State Broadband Office

September 2020 Update:
Broadband Accessibility and Digital Equity

Russ Elliott

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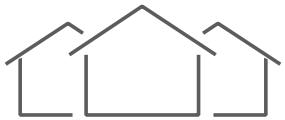SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

Washington State
Department of
Commerce

We strengthen communities
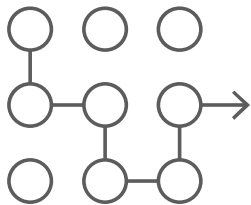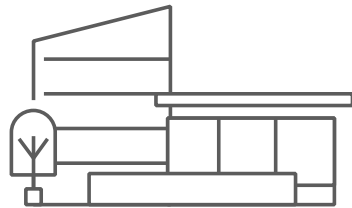
HOUSING HOMELESSNESS

INFRASTRUCTURE

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE
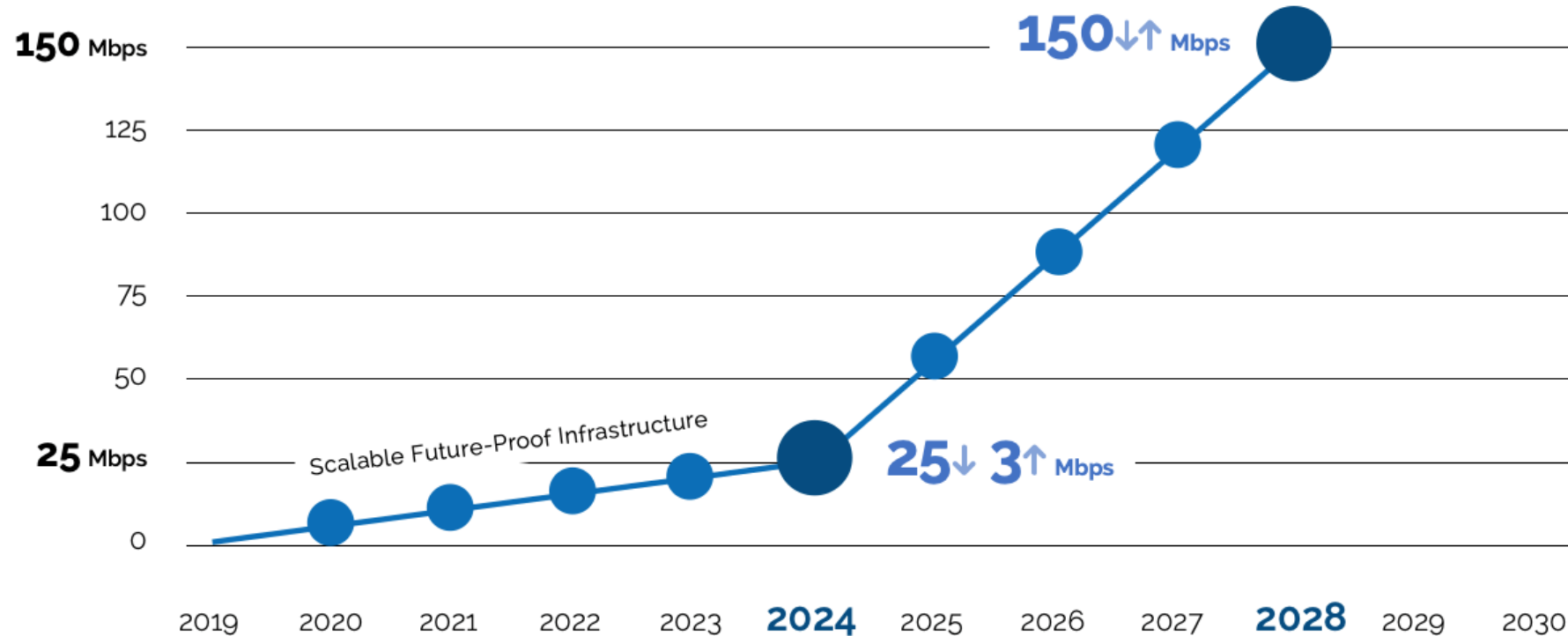
ENERGY

PLANNING

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CRIME VICTIMS & PUBLIC SAFETY

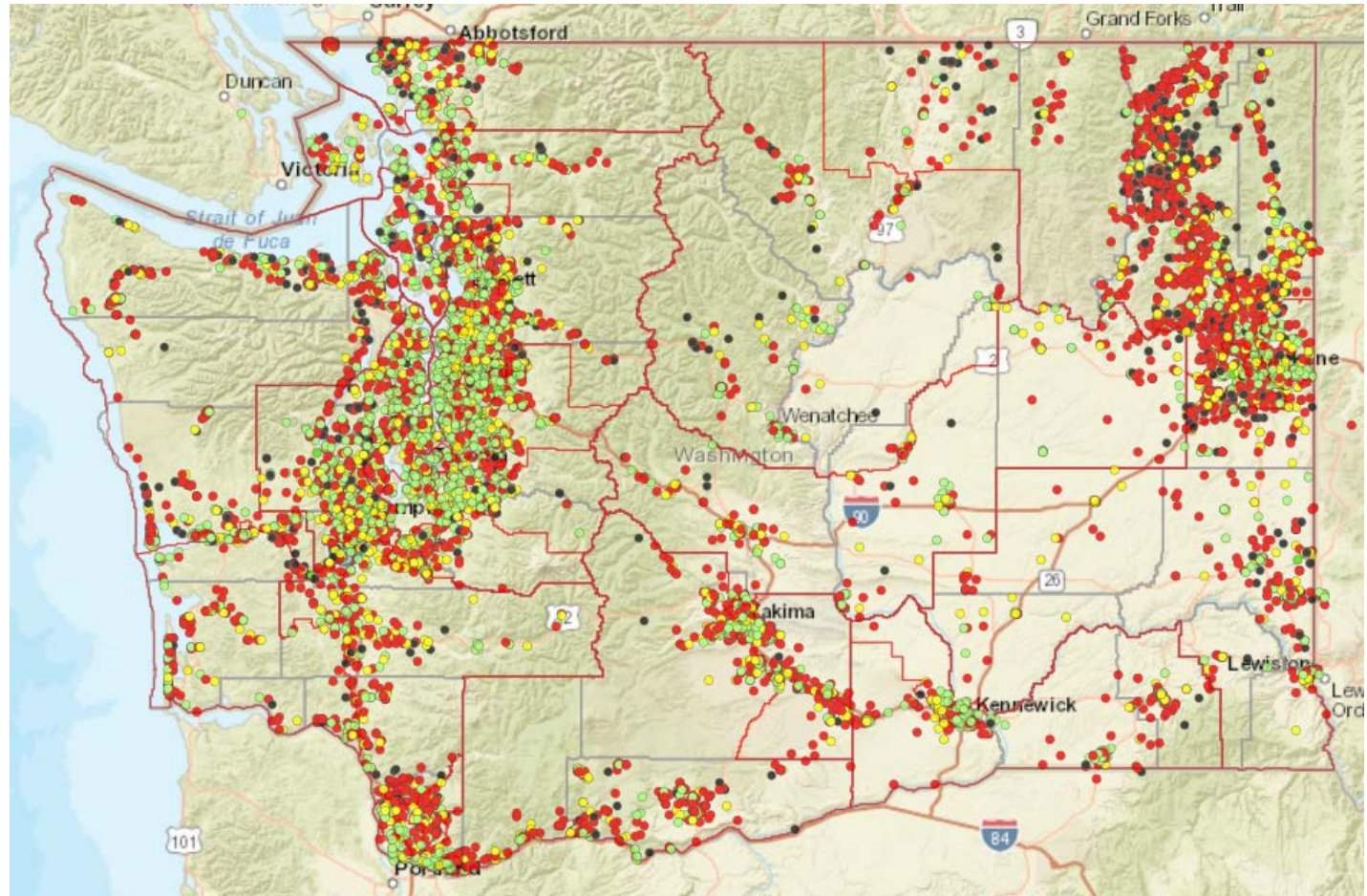**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

State Speed Goals – Residential

- 884,000 homes without fiber Est. $2.5+B
- WSBO Plan, Policy
- PWB Programs
- UTC Evaluation

Statewide Broadband Survey

September 22, 2020

- 26,590
  Respondents

- 93% (24,754)
  Have broadband

🔴 37% (9,739)
Less than 10 Mbps download

⚫ 7% (1836)
No access

- = 44% Unserved
  (less than 10 Mbps download)

No Broadband Access

Respondents can select multiple answers

September 22, 2020 *(1836)*

- Not available in area 49% *(906)*
- No access 47% (860)
- Too expensive 8% *(152)*
- Don't know how to get 0.7% *(12)*
- Don't have a computer 0.6% *(11)*
- Can't use a computer 0.05% *(1)*
- Worried about privacy 0.05% *(1)*
- Don't need it/not interested *(0)*
- Physical challenges *(0)*
- Use public wifi instead *(0)*
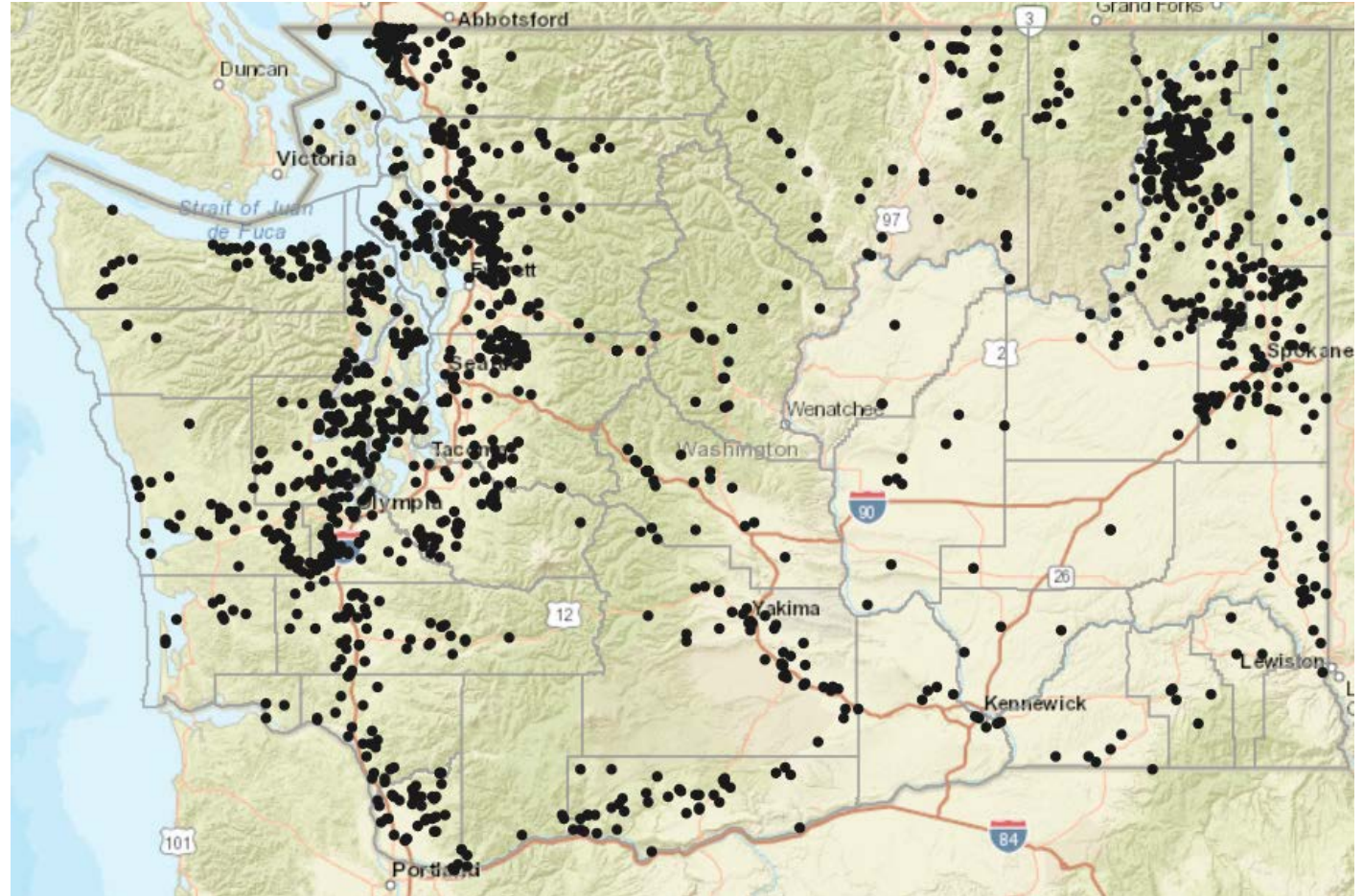
September 22, 2020

No access – too expensive 8% (152)

OSPI Estimated School District Device Needs

Districts ' Home Digital Access Data Collection Aug. - Sept. 2020
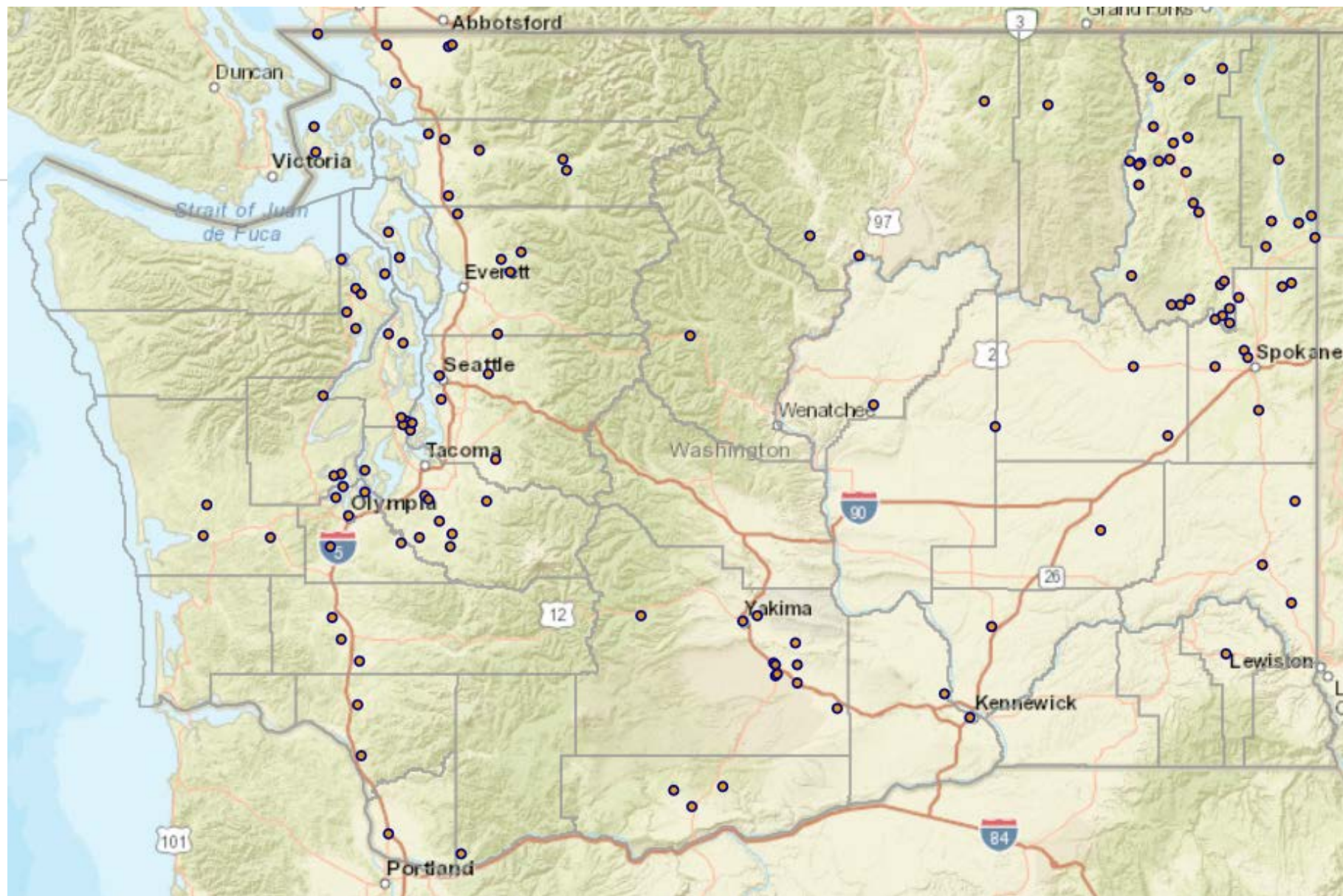
- K-12 students currently enrolled 716,250

- Devices needed to achieve 1:1 42,154 *(5.8%)*
  (does not include hotspots) - does not include data from ESDs 123 (SE Wa) and 105 (Yakima)

- Of enrolled students, it is estimated that:

  - 10% Have a shared learning device for use at home *(72,183)*

  - 3% No device available *(20,867)*

  - 6% No internet access *(42,091)*

The Broadband Delivery CHALLENGE

Solutions

- USF

- State block grants from federal agencies

- Mapping to define areas

- Rallying communities to engage in conversation

- Policies supporting state broadband legislative directive

- Public-Private Partnership Cooperative model

Unserved = Residents
<25 mbps download
< 3 mbps upload

Business Corridor
<1 gbps download

BROADBAND PROVIDER ROI

Break-Even

Served

Underserved

Unserved

URBAN   SUBURBAN   RURAL
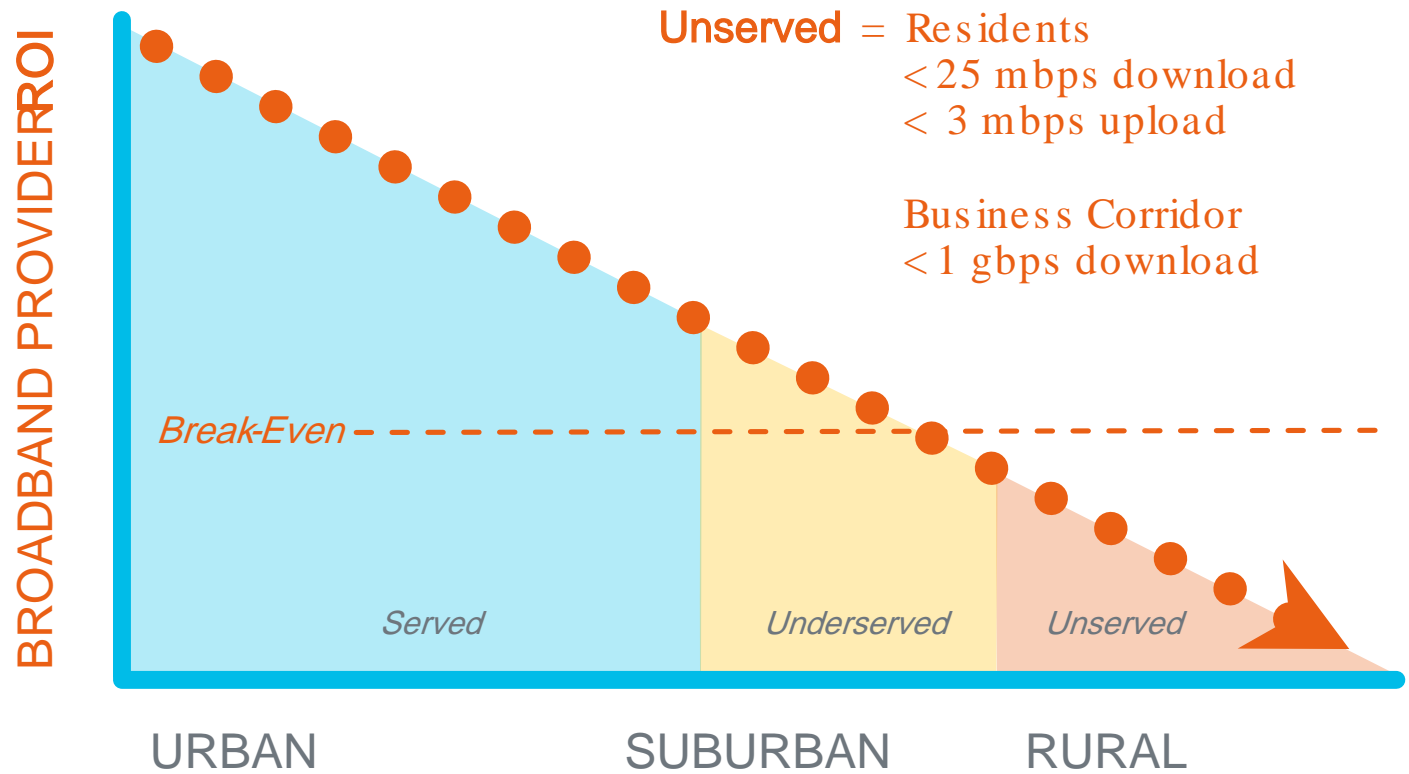
1. Maximize Federal & Private Sector Funding

- Barriers to public entity participation in federal funding opportunities
- Centralize data gathering and mapping
- Local Broadband Action Teams
- Identify and develop shovel-ready projects
- Matching Funds
- Tribal infrastructure funds matching program
- Considerations for Tribal Sovereignty and Private Investment
- Pilot funding model for early investment in planning stage
- Access to low income access programs
- Address barriers to private sector network expansion

2. Scalable, FutureProof Networks

- Change the speed discussion from asymmetrical to symmetrical to fulfil 2028 directives

- Under promise-over deliver advertised speeds

- Form official state broadband advisory committee for oversight, accountability and participation in state broadband office strategy and planning

- Structure broadband governance in state and local government to strengthen alignment between authority, accountability and resources

3. Address the Last Mile Issue

- Anchor Plus-1 to leverage connectivity in surrounding community
- Feasibility of public use IRUs through Public-Private Partnerships
- Dig-smart climb-smart policy at the community level
- .09 local broadband discretionary fund enhancement
- Support a technology agnostic approach for last mile infrastructure deployment
- Subsidy program to ensure sustainability of last mile delivery services
- Maximize utilization of existing assets including dark fiber, backhaul, mobile, etc.
- Data privacy law for providers

4. Support Digital Equity and Inclusion

- Policy guidance and centralized coordination with statewide DEI initiatives: *Poverty Reduction Work Group, Human Centered Design Committee, DSHS, DOH, ESD, ACT, Digital Equity Taskforce, Remote Learning Taskforce, OSPI, Seattle Digital Equity, All In Washington, Washington State University, Washington State Library | SOS, Digital Navigators*

- Facilitate access to low income programs

- DEI planning via local Broadband Action Teams

- Universal service mechanisms to ensure affordability

- Digital equity implementation grants, outreach, staff

- State WiFi hotspots program expansion

Access

Digital Equity and Inclusion

Affordable

Tools

Skills
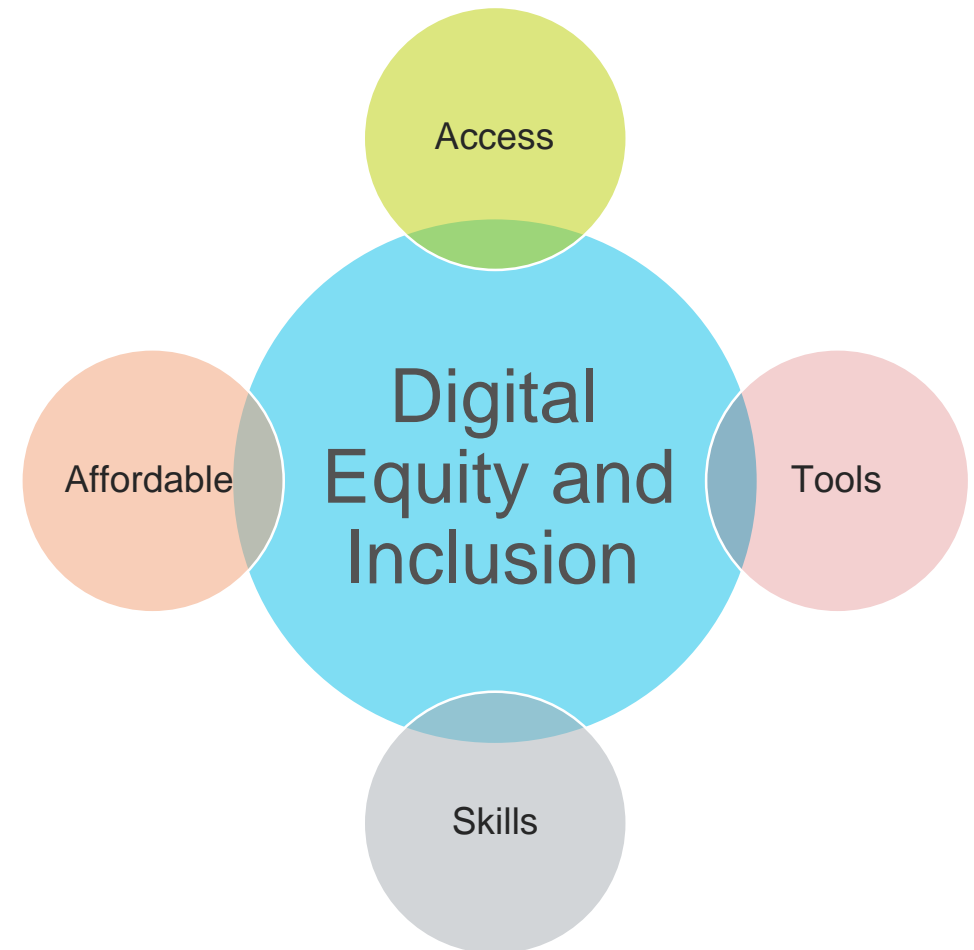
Emerging Technologies

Ensuring Washington State is a friendly environment for technologically agnostic, affordable last mile solutions

Currently in discussions with:

- 5G Cellular

- Microsoft TV White Space/ Airband

- SpaceX Starlink

- Amazon Kuiper

- Avista

- 2.5GHz EBS Educational Broadband Spectrum

FUNDING Opportunities

Become #1 State for receipt of federal funding

- FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (*RDOF*) $16B, $4.4B

- USDA Rural Development Broadband *ReConnect* Loan and Grant Program $550, $600M

- USDA Community Connect $40M

- Pending Stimulus

- FCC 2.5GHz Rural Tribal Window

- PWB Construction Cycle $17M

- USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine $50K-$1M

- State Universal Service Fund

- Private / Undiscovered

- CERB Rural Broadband Construction and Planning Program

Rapid Feasibility and Grant Maximization

September 9, 2020

- Better Health Together

- $207,000 to support access to federal broadband funding

- 18 broadband feasibility and grant writing applications

- 2 projects each to be awarded in: Spokane, Adams, Lincoln, Stevens, Ferry, Pend Oreille counties; Spokane Tribe of Indians Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

Next Steps

How you can help - action items:

- Visit broadband.wa.gov and take the State Broadband Access and Speed Survey

- Shovel ready projects identified and brought to the attention of WSBO

- Matching funds for federal opportunities

- Feasibility and technical assistance

"What gets measured gets done!"
Thank you.

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Department of
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