



# Indiana Uplands Digital Inclusion Plan for Crawford County



## Digital Inclusion Plan Crawford County

### Goals & Strategies:

#### **Goal 1: Build/upgrade affordable and adequate broadband connectivity throughout the community and improve adoption**

Continual gathering of the public knowledge to keep the data justification flowing. Currently the County has completed 3 comprehensive surveys and has implemented the studies.

Relying on primary or secondary data sources (including school district data), identify broadband investment priority areas (BIPAs) in the community. These may include areas in need of broadband investment to upgrade existing service and/or stimulate competition.

Secure buy-in from local government and other stakeholders to provide funds and other resources to providers investing in the BIPAs. This includes identifying potential local, state, or federal sources.

Streamline easements, rights-of-way, property tax abatements, incentives, and others to ensure ROI is maximized for providers. Offer help to providers that have secured federal or state funds to invest in your community so they can begin construction/upgrades as soon as possible.

Design and implement an awareness campaign of discounted service plans (if any) as well as efforts to increase adoption among community residents, businesses, and organizations.

#### **Goal 2: Integrate digital inclusion strategies into community, economic, and workforce development.**

In partnership with the local economic development organization, chamber, and/or main street association survey existing businesses to identify their information technology and workforce needs. The local EDC obtained Broadband Ready status in 2019.

Identify facilities in the community that could potentially be transformed into business incubators, co-working spaces, telework nesting, and/or tech hubs.



In partnership with the EDC, develop and implement an entrepreneurship ecosystem with an emphasis on developing products and services more aligned to the digital economy as well as assess and improve business and organization's online presence.

Assess the community's online presence and reputation—Crawford County has a high percentage of people who work from home (12.5%). The EDC should develop and implement a digital engagement plan to a) improve online presence; b) proactively manage community's online reputation; c) and leverage digital platforms to increase civic engagement, trust and responsiveness.

Survey manufacturers and other businesses to better understand the barriers or workforce needs around the adoption of artificial intelligence. Develop tools and resources to help organizations adopt and benefit from artificial intelligence.

**Goal 3: Improve digital literacy and skills among all residents.**

Work with partners to advance access to devices and needs.

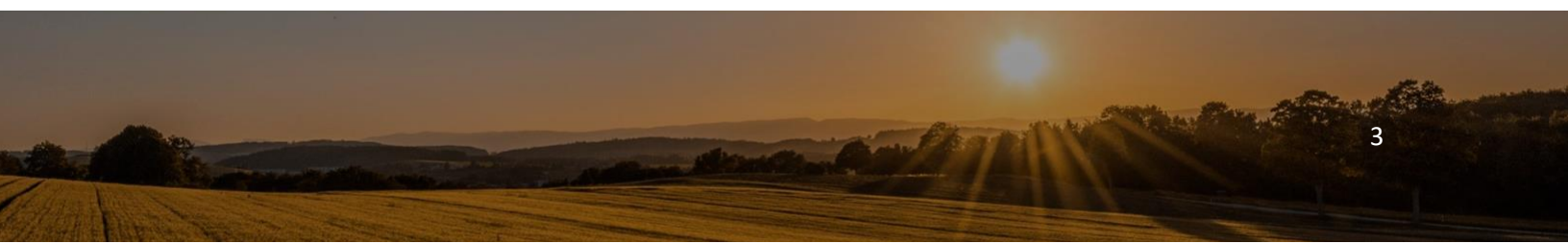
Inventory community anchor institutions and other relevant organizations (e.g., libraries, bookstores, community colleges, churches, etc.) with access to fast internet and devices that are better positioned to host digital literacy workshops and/or provide public access to devices and internet.

Inventory existing digital literacy workshops and classes to identify gaps and niches to be filled including but not limited to efforts conducted by schools, nonprofits, community colleges, local economic development organizations, etc.

**Goal 4: Strive to establish and sustain a digital equity ecosystem (Note: digital equity ecosystems are defined as the interactions between individuals, populations, and their larger socioeconomic and technical environments that play a role in shaping digital inclusion work).**

Expand the digital advisory team into a broader coalition of digital inclusion stakeholders in the community. This coalition can monitor implementation of the plan and review progress twice per year, coordinate networking around digital inclusion, and serve as a liaison to additional community coalitions.

Formalize tech savvy volunteer corps by establishing a recruiting, management, and mentorship system as well as providing continuous funding.





**REGIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
INITIATIVES**

Gather more timely and detailed information regarding internet access, availability, cost, and utilization. This data should continue to inform the implementation of the plan and monitor progress in reducing digital exclusion in the community.

Ensure that digital inclusion is a community and economic development priority in addition to a social justice issue.

