



Indiana Uplands Digital Inclusion Plan Martin County 2021



Martin County Digital Inclusion Plan

Goals & Strategies

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

Strategy 1a) 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.

We will work with our local current providers as well as consulting groups that can help guide us on the best fit for our school systems, industry, and all stakeholders in the county. We must provide an atmosphere that supports the many remote workers working for our Crane Defense.

Strategy 1c) 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.

Coordinate meetings between the internet providers, the local elected officials and utility companies to ensure we are speaking the same language. We will work with teams to consult us on and research sources that we can attain in the county to support these efforts.

Strategy 1d) 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.

Promote incentive programs and investment opportunities for providers. Stay in constant contact with elected officials, so they are aware of these opportunities coming down the pike.

Strategy 1f) 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.

Have public forums to provide the county residents with educational opportunities to gain the skill set needed to be ready for this growth. Market these efforts through



public groups, chamber of commerce, community foundation, school systems and social media efforts.

Goal 2: Ensure residents have access to quality and reliable devices.

Strategy 2a) identify businesses and organizations in the community that may be willing to donate devices including desktops, laptops, and tablets.

Work with school systems, libraries and community focused teams to gain the metrics on what is available currently to our county.

Strategy 2b) work with local schools and other nonprofits to launch a tech savvy volunteer corps (TSVC) made up of students and adults than can a) reformat donated devices; b) provide technical assistance; c) and/or provide digital literacy workshops. See Digital Navigator model.

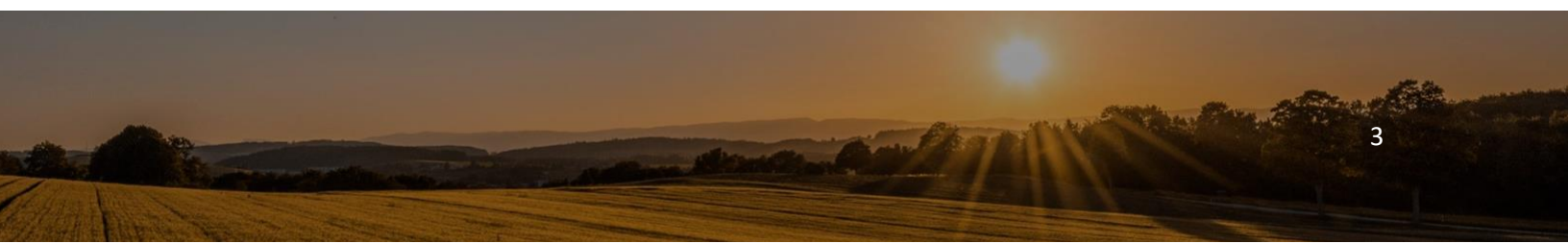
Work with to determine if we could be a loaner program at both libraries in Martin County and develop this program per city.

Strategy 2c) establish a device give-away or loan program in partnership with community nonprofits. Device program should be administered by a local organization and coordinated with donating businesses and organizations as well as the tech savvy volunteer corp. Or, establish a branch of existing device programs such as PC's for People.

Work with the Martin County Community Foundation to see what opportunities they can help with in collaboration with our schools and libraries to coordinate these efforts.

Strategy 2d) partner with local nonprofits involved in the delivery of social programs to potentially identify community residents in need of devices and/or digital literacy workshops. Likewise, work closely with schools to identify families in need of devices as well.

Work with counselors in schools, church groups and St Vincent DePaul to find out where the need is at for a county outreach. This will help us determine a starting point on data collection.





Strategy 2e) research and secure grants to offer incentives to volunteers and help support the device program in the community.

Work with the Martin County Community Foundation to offer Vision grants for volunteers to support the device loaner program. Have student groups such as Beta and Martin County youth council support these programs. Seek support from our digital fellows program support manager.

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

Strategy 3a) 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.

Shoals and Loogootee Library would be our public support systems for this effort. The Alliance works closely with both librarians so this program should go smoothly to setup.

Strategy 3b) 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.

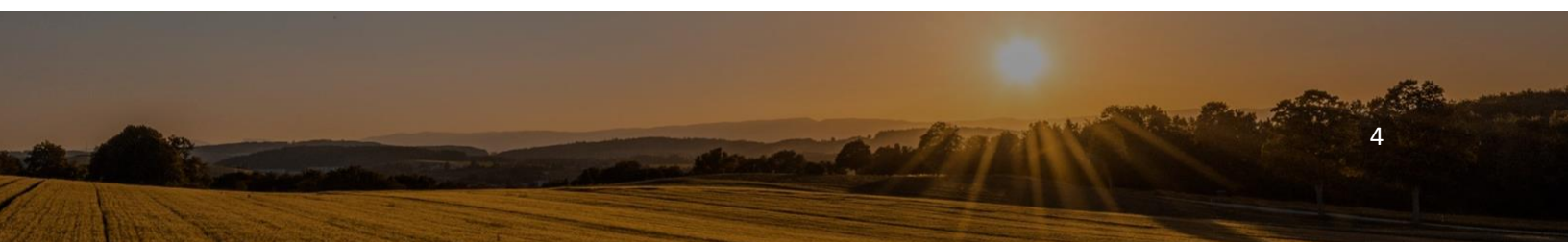
Seek information from our county on what is out there for workshops, Work One is a current opportunity, and we can develop this out further based on the programs Work One is currently supporting.

Strategy 3c) once locations conducive to hosting digital literacy workshops and existing efforts are identified, jointly develop a schedule to offer frequent workshops for free or at a discounted price targeting multiple groups in the community.

TSVC can help conduct these workshops in addition to existing teaching and faculty.

Goal 4: Integrate digital inclusion strategies into community, economic, and workforce development.

Strategy 4a) 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. Use this information to inform effort outlined in Strategy 3c.





Strategy 4b) identify facilities in the community that could potentially be transformed into business incubators, co-working spaces, telework nesting, and/or tech hubs.

Partner with the ROI STEM fellows in both school systems. STEM Fellows work to advance science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities in Indiana Uplands schools. Partner with STEM programs related at the Academy at Westgate to bring in business collaboration.

Strategy 4c) in partnership with LEDO, chamber, and/or main street association develop and implement an entrepreneurship ecosystem with an emphasis on developing products and services more aligned to the digital economy (e.g., artificial intelligence startups, app development, online services, consulting, data analysis, etc.) as well as assess and improve business and organization's online presence.

Develop and expand the Digital Advisory team for Martin County.

Strategy 4d) conduct annual "hackathons" to complement existing business plan competitions where students or residents compete to develop app or online services to improve city services, community responsiveness, and/or quality of life in general.

Work with both school systems programs through Project Lead the Way (PLTW) to work with current school programs on programming to showcase current school work and community involvement.

Strategy 4e) deploy incentives to a) subsidize home internet subscriptions for remote workers; b) provide a nesting and/or co-working facility to remote workers (see Strategy 4b); c) make it easy for businesses to allow and/or hire remote workers; d) potentially subsidize outside employers to hire residents as remote workers.

Many Martin County residents are teleworking for NSWC, NSA , CAAA and Crane contractors we could look at offering incentives for employers allowing employees to work from home and offer those employees discounts in their services or possible community offers in the region.

Strategy 4f) assess the community's online presence and reputation; 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.

Develop a plan for the year ahead on what we currently have, what is needed and incorporate data models from ROI on county metrics.



Strategy 4g) 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.

Survey remote workers on needs, businesses on needs around this area of focus for AI.

Strategy 4h) provide resources to farmers to adopt digital agriculture strategies (e.g., precision agriculture) and encourage and support farm-to-table programs

Have a county forum for local farmers to see how the digital infrastructure affects their Ag business. Gather data on the IT used on machines and Crop data.

Goal 5: 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).

Strategy 5a) 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.

Expand the digital advisory team in Martin County to have a champion person as a point of contact with the Alliance office.

Strategy 5b) constantly update inventory of a) facilities conducive to digital literacy workshops; b) businesses and organization donating devices; c) existing digital literacy workshops and topics available.

Champion would be the point of contact with all local organizations and businesses.

Strategy 5c) formalize tech savvy volunteer corps by establishing a recruiting, management, and mentorship system as well as providing continuous funding.

Market these efforts to find a solid volunteer base for these efforts. Look into a program with retired Crane employees as we have several in our region.

Strategy 5d) 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.



Have Champion gather this data for up to date information.

Strategy 5e) ensure that digital inclusion is a community and economic development priority in addition to a social justice issue.

Market this program to let not only the business know that this is an area that we must get caught up on but also to the citizens in the county that work from home, their families attend classes online and for social contact. All parties must know that this is an important focus area over the next few years to obtain the leadership presence in our region.

If you have any questions at any time, feel free to contact:

- Lisa Abbott, Vice President of Economic and Community Development (lisaabbott@regionalopportunityinc.org / (812)345-3780)
- Maren Witte, Regional Opportunity Fund Project Manager (marenwitte@regionalopportunityinc.org / (812)459-6851)

