VISION: DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

The purpose of this administrative directive is to ensure that Provo City government envisions a city where every resident has opportunities to easily, safely, affordably, and reliably access and use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the ways that best serve their individual needs. In a digitally equitable Provo, communities will be connected - not divided - by technology.

Digital equity encompasses not only equal access to the internet, but also the widespread accessibility of current, innovative hardware and software; relevant content and services; and trainings to develop digital literacy skills necessary for the effective use of information and communication technologies. Access to these equipment, information, and education opportunities should be equitably available in all Provo neighborhoods, and adaptive to residents' diverse needs, skills, identities, languages, disabilities and abilities, life stages, and experiences. Without digital equity, full participation in nearly every aspect of American society including employment, education, health, civic engagement, and democracy is compromised along with the ability to access essential services.

Provo's digital equity policy ensures inclusive access to technology, allowing all residents to fully engage in today's digital society. This policy is directly in line with the City's mission statement for social equity, education, economic opportunity, and community resilience. The policy also aligns with Vision 2050, a strategy that combined the city's General Plan and Vision 2030 into one, unified vision document in 2016. By working to promote digital equity and community connectivity citywide, Provo is preparing all residents, communities, and social groups to grow, develop, and thrive in tandem with the city and region's projected growth.

Statement of Purpose

The Provo digital equity policy will serve communities and individual residents in Provo by assessing current access to information and communication technologies throughout Provo and within key demographics, geographic areas, and social groups; assessing, creating, promoting, and spreading digital literacy tools and education initiatives; and identifying community leaders in all industries who may help to narrow the digital divide in Provo and promote the City's vision for a more equitable digital landscape.

Definitions

Digital Equity: Providing reasonable resources to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the

most disadvantaged, have access to and use of information and communication technologies. This includes five elements:

1) Affordable, robust broadband internet service;
2) Internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user;
3) Access to digital literacy training;
4) Quality technical support; and
5) Applications and online content designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, participation and collaboration.

Digital equity work must evolve as technology advances and communities change. Digital equity requires intentional strategies and investments to reduce and eliminate historical, institutional and structural barriers to access and use technology. (Definition modeled after the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) definition)

Guiding Principles for Digital Equity Policymaking and Partnership Development

Groups who center their work on the following guiding principles of Provo's first formal digital equity policy will be essential partners in implementation by carrying out policy objectives in communities. Tasks related to each focus area are also listed below, and their completion will necessarily be a collaborative effort between Provo government and community partners.

- Leadership: Maintaining a current inventory of local actors who are involved with the issue of digital equity. Networking and building relationships with these stakeholders.
- Research and assessment: Gathering and analyzing data on information and communication technology access in Provo and the region
- Device access: Assessment of the types of information and communication technology devices used in Provo, and access to key hardware and software across city demographics
- Internet access: Data for the presence and strength of internet connectivity in Provo with comparison to the surrounding region and national averages
- Digital literacy training: Capacity, reach, accessibility, and quality of education about digital tools available to residents
- Safety: Information and education opportunities made widely available to residents - especially members of vulnerable communities - about staying safe on the internet, including: using public computers, sharing personal information online, protecting against identity theft, and recognizing scams or other criminal activities

Goals: Targeted Action Strategies

As Provo develops a formal digital equity policy, the following strategies must be incorporated into policymaking:

1. Connect the Three Pillars: Relevant Content & Services, Hardware, Digital Literacy

- Increase usage and understanding of digital and communications technology
- Address potential barriers to digital inclusion
- Address the need for digital literacy training
- Address the need for access via reliable and affordable devices
- Address the need for language & disability accommodations
- Develop relevancy and advocacy campaigns within specific communities and populations

2. Engage and Include the Community

- Ongoing stakeholder engagement
- Local government involvement and leadership
- Develop an interactive community dashboard or website to access information from the community and city government

3. Build Digital Equity and Community

Collaboration with partners, city leaders, community members, and organizations such as: nonprofits, entrepreneurs, education, public safety, libraries, and healthcare to ensure access and foster opportunities for all citizens to be fully engaged in a digital society.

- Multi-sector partnerships for implementation of digital equity strategies
- Develop funding to support digital equity programs

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Mayor

Attest:

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City Recorder