CITY OF SOUTH BEND DIGITAL INCLUSION RESEARCH SUMMARY

In 2022, we have launched numerous forms of data collection and research to better understand and address the barriers our residents face to digital access. For the first time in our city, we will supplement existing Census data with high-quality, innovative, and granular data to inform meaningful insights for our digital equity efforts going forward. We outline 4 of these new data sources below.

1. Community Survey

   We at the City administer a survey to a minimum of 100 residents per council district every two years. For the first time in this survey's history, we are including questions about digital equity, including questions about device access and broadband affordability, in our 2022 Community Survey. We expect the results from this survey in the fall of 2022.

2. Mobile data project

   In partnership with the University of Notre Dame, we are currently deploying phones, equipped with speed testing and signal capacity-measuring apps, on solid waste vehicles which cover every corner of the city. These phones will measure the mobile data connection quality of major carriers throughout South Bend, showing the internet experience for those residents, particularly low-income residents, who rely exclusively on mobile data for internet access. We plan on mapping this data and hosting it on our Open Data Portal.

3. Crowdsourced speed test

   To generate high quality, highly localized data on internet speeds as experienced by end users, we are partnering with the Indiana Farm Bureau to administer a resident speed test with a question about internet cost. We will use these tests to produce maps of speeds and affordability to better target our broadband expansion efforts. We also plan on hosting these maps on our Open Data Portal.

4. Digital literacy survey

   Also for the first time in South Bend, we have launched a citywide survey to

[measure](#) [digital literacy among residents](#). This survey, which will be promoted online and through paper copies in libraries, community organizations, and assisted living facilities, will provide critical insights into the needs in our community for digital skills training.