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# Data-Driven Digital Equity Planning and Implementation

**August 21, 2024**

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Director of Digital Equity

# Digital Equity Action Plan Strategy

Deep Research and Best Practice Review

+

Recruit a guiding team of digital equity champions

+

Create a community-based survey focused on resident voice

+

Community Conversations

+

Interviews with Stakeholders and Subject Matter Experts

+

Data Analysis and Synthesis

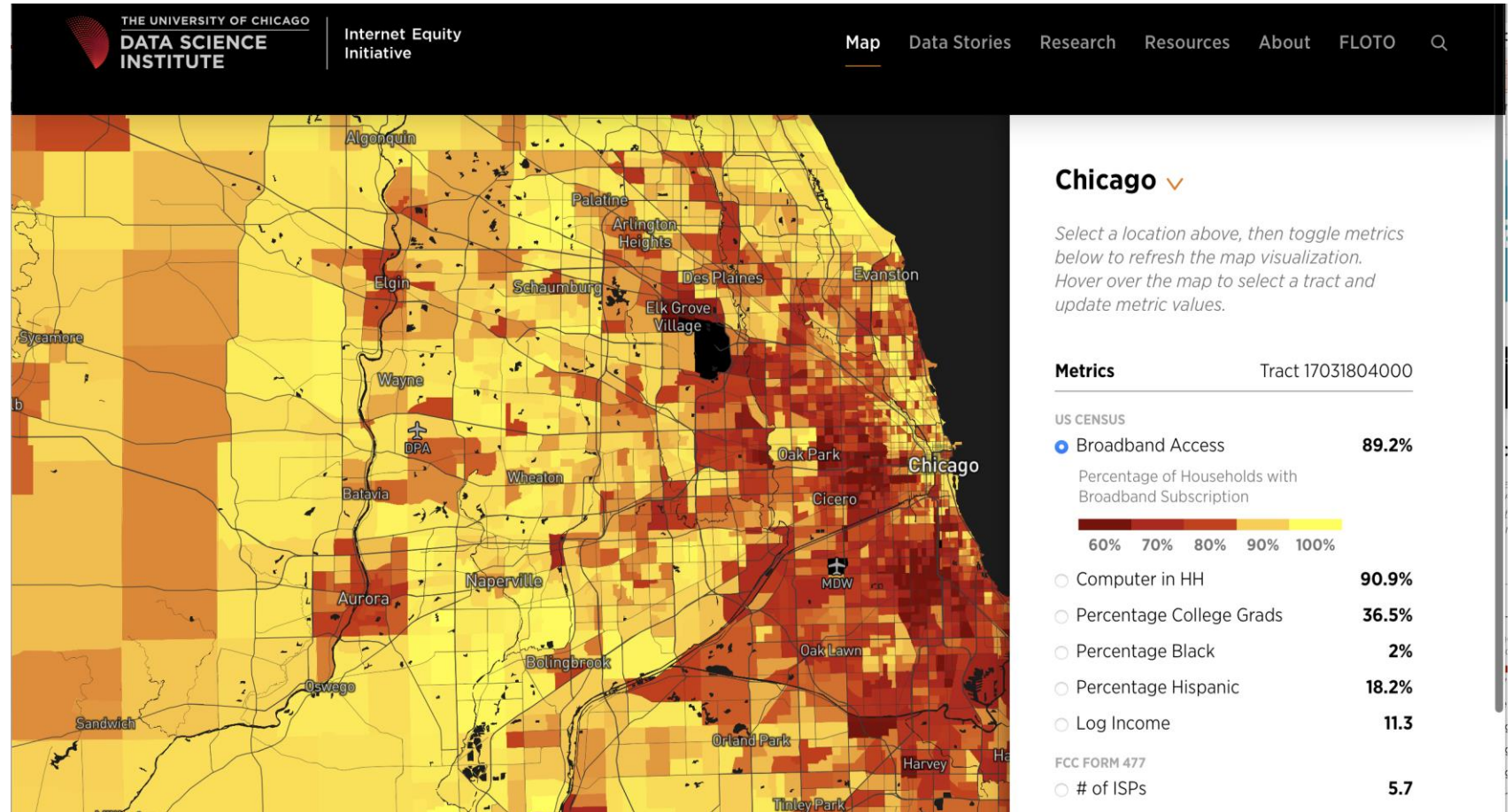
= The Inaugural Digital Equity Plan for Cook County



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# Internet Equity Initiative Map

More than half of the least connected communities in Cook County are in South Suburbs.





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# Digital Equity Guiding Team



Start near. Go far.





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# Hyper-Local and Equitable Approach





# Data Collection

## Survey Summary as of July 24th

Overall Surveys	12,587
Completed Surveys w/ Any Valid Zip Code	9,475
Cook County Surveys (including Chicago)	6,277
Suburban Cook County Surveys (excludes Chicago)	3,664
Cleaned Suburban Cook County Surveys	3,179
Suburban Cook County Priority Areas	1,412
All Suburban Cook County Spanish Language Surveys	311
Priority Area Suburban Cook County Spanish Survey	188

## Community Conversation Overview

- We hosted ten 2-hour, in-person sessions across suburban Cook County and 2 virtual
- We received 223 completed community conversation worksheets from participants
  - 62 in Spanish
  - 161 in English
- Host locations across the South, West, and Northwest sides of the County



# Resident Voice

"Internet access is becoming a necessity of citizenship. No one should be without it."

"There's a lot of uninformed changes to prices and they continue to get higher every time. It is a hassle to try to fix any issue because of time they take to answer and to listen to you if they do answer."

"We pay too much AND service is inconsistent / goes out frequently."

*"Que sea más accesible y si es posible gratis para todas las familias que sus hijos van a la escuela ."*

"The only reason I am lucky to have recently gotten access to internet, is because of the help I have received as a student. With school, job interviews, opportunity applications, etc being done mostly online, I am not sure what I would have done with out access to the internet"





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# Digital Equity Action Plan



*Toni Preckwinkle*  
**Toni Preckwinkle**  
Cook County Board President

## Cook County

DIGITAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN  
October 2023

### Structure of this Plan

The following sections of this plan comprise four **digital equity cornerstones** built from what we heard from Cook County residents in the summer 2023 engagement process.

#### Access

Ensure that all residents can afford high-quality internet and devices, and can access tools and support to use them.

#### Confidence

Ensure that residents have the skills and comfort to navigate and use the internet to meet their needs and improve quality of life.

#### Safety

Ensure residents feel safe and secure in digital environments and can protect themselves online.

#### Infrastructure

Ensure that Cook County has sufficient physical infrastructure (conduit, cables, towers, and data centers) to support healthy, robust internet service for all.

Cook County Digital Equity Plan

For each of these cornerstones, the plan proposes a set of **IMPACT** solutions to be undertaken through collaborations between Cook County government and regional partners. These solutions, programs, and ideas are drawn from everything we heard in our Community Conversations and surveys, as well as input from

leaders across the county. Each of these solutions is designed to be impactful right now and in the long term, to address the intersection of diverse community needs, and to lay the groundwork for long-term success. We look forward to hearing ideas for collaboration and partnership with you to make these proposals a reality.

Cook County Digital Equity Plan

### IMPACT SOLUTION

#### Innovative

Replication of a successful model or new model that meets the needs of County residents and builds equity.

#### Measurable

Defined metrics to track, qualify, quantify, and "storify" progress based on agreed-upon impact goals.

#### Purposeful

Activities that are intentional, useful, relevant, and specific, with a vision of the change we want to see.

#### Actionable

Mindset, attitude, or strategy focused on taking practical steps to change course or improve circumstances.

#### Collaborative

Joining forces and working collectively toward shared goals or objectives.

#### Timely

Activities meet current, demonstrated needs and create strategic pathways for bigger goals.





# Measuring Impact

## Solutions



### Accessibility

Low-Cost and Subsidized Internet Plans

Expand Public Wi-Fi

High-Quality Device Access

### Confidence

Digital Navigator Corps Partnership

Supporting the Workforce of the Future

Build the Learning Ecosystem

### Safety

Digital Safety Helplines and Community Helpdesks

Safety and Security Awareness

Digital Safety Threat Communications

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure Asset Mapping

Advocate for Accountability for Service Providers on Price and Performance

County-Wide Broadband Infrastructure Plan

## DEAC Dashboard: Through June 2024



### Accessibility



**571**  
Devices Distributed  
**6,742**  
Computer lab users

### Safety

**103**  
Training Workshop  
**985**  
Individuals trained

### Engagement

**3,179**  
Completed Surveys  
**803**  
Conversations with community members

### Confidence

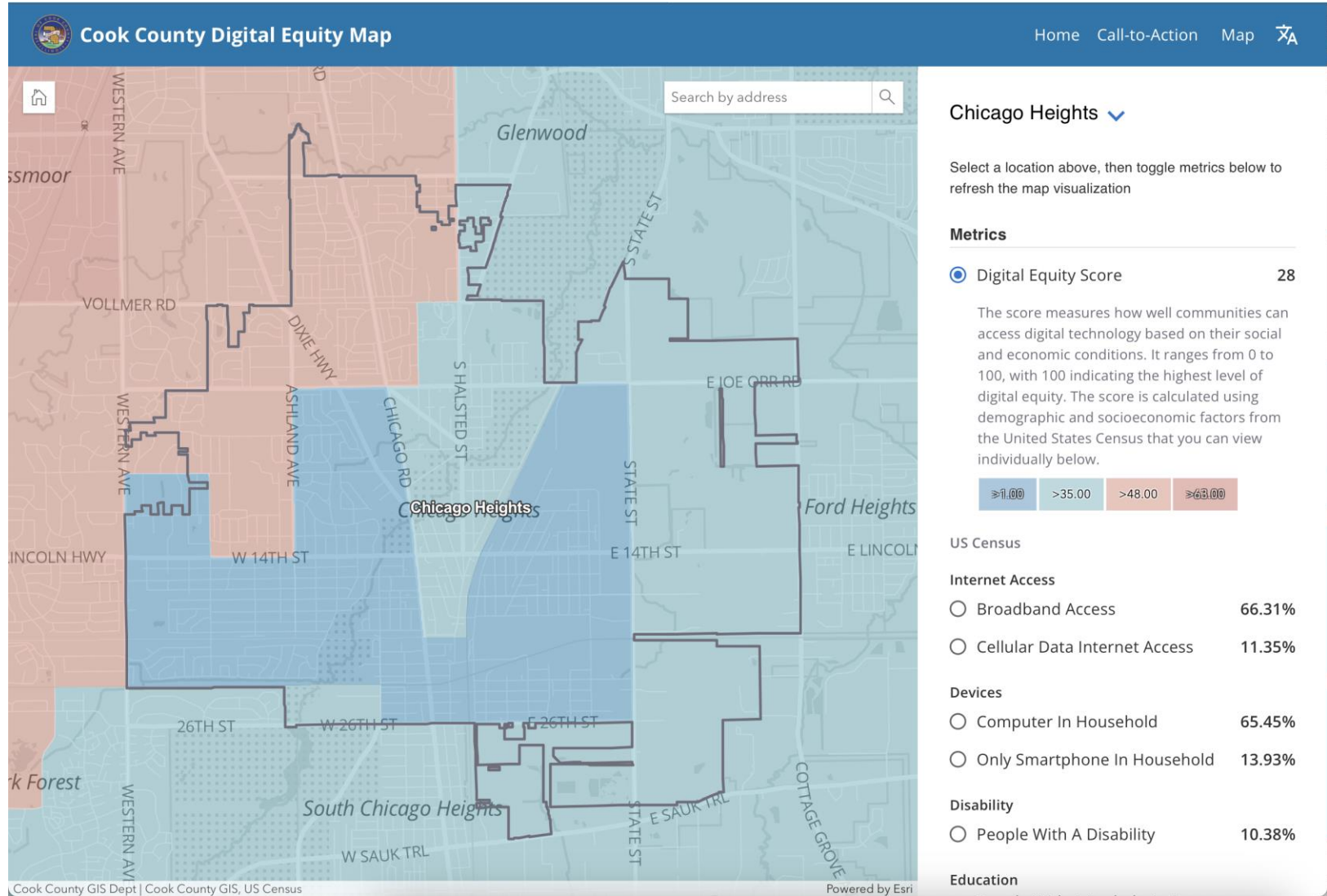
**110**  
Training Workshops  
**421**  
Individuals trained

### Infrastructure

**724** High-Touch BEAD Engagements  
**1,323** Light-Touch BEAD Engagements

**26**  
Outreach Events

# Cook County Digital Equity Map





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# Thank you!

Questions?

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