

RESOLUTION NO. 170097

Adopting a Digital Equity Strategic Plan to ensure all residents have equal access to the digital economy; and directing the City Manager to implement its six priorities and conduct annual reviews of the policy.

WHEREAS, digital equity is a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy and is necessary for access to essential services, civic and cultural participation, lifelong learning, employment, entrepreneurship, and economic mobility; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the City executed a development agreement with Google Fiber to deploy an experimental gigabit fiber to the home Internet service which included Google Fiber's commitment to serve economically distressed neighborhoods through the deployment of free Internet services to 300 schools, libraries, community centers and government buildings; and

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2011, Mayors Sylvester "Sly" James and Joe Reardon announced the Mayors Bistate Innovations Team Playbook and KC Digital Drive to highlight the importance of digital equity initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas City Coalition for Digital Inclusion, of which the City is a founding member, was established with the vision of ensuring every citizen and household in the Kansas City metropolitan area has computer equipment, access to the Internet and training; and

WHEREAS, according to the Google Fiber study "The State of Broadband Internet Access in Kansas City," published in June 2012, nearly one-quarter of Kansas Citians are not connected to the Internet at home and 70% of children in the Kansas City School District do not have Internet access at home; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the City Council adopted the Digital Roadmap, which states digital equity is an issue of social equity, and maximizing access to technology is a moral imperative in an increasingly digital age; and

WHEREAS, the Digital Roadmap charges the City with developing a Citywide digital equity policy aimed at bridging Kansas City's digital divide and a comprehensive strategy to increase public access to free Wi-Fi and/or broadband; and

WHEREAS, since 2015, the City has been recognized as a digital equity leader and has initiated local, or has been selected to pilot numerous national, digital equity initiatives, including:

1. selection for the White House/HUD ConnectHome Initiative aimed at creating opportunities for digital equity for student residents of public housing,

RESOLUTION NO. 170097

2. selection for the White House ConnectAll Community Connectivity Initiative aimed at creating opportunities for digital equity for students of public school systems,
3. adoption of the Kansas City Community Health Improvement Plan which identifies a greater need for internet access to increase public health outcomes, and
4. selection as a site for the inaugural national Net Inclusion Summit for digital equity; and

WHEREAS, the development and adoption of a City digital equity strategic plan is included in the Planning, Zoning, and Economic Development section of the City's 2017-2022 Citywide Business Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that while significant strides have and are being made throughout the City, ongoing work is necessary to attain digital equity; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF KANSAS CITY:

Section 1. That the City Council hereby adopts the Digital Equity Strategic Plan.

Section 2. That the City Council directs the City Manager to implement the six priorities of the Digital Equity Strategic Plan.

Section 3. That the City Manager shall conduct a policy review on digital equity annually to ensure the Digital Equity Strategic Plan is reflective of changing digital technologies.
