

Digital Equity Forum at-large meeting September 15, 2022

OFFICE OF
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Washington State
EQUITY and JUSTICE for ALL



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

DRAFT

Today's Meeting Goals

- Update members on the July and August small group workshops.
- Report to Forum members on what we have heard from the Digital Equity Forum Community Survey and Digital Navigator focus groups to date.
- Communicate the process for how the work from the July and August small group workshops will be used for (a) the post-meeting recommendations workgroups and (b) the development of the final report for the Washington State Legislature.

Welcome and Acknowledgments

Dr. Karen A. Johnson (she/her/Beloved), Co-chair, Director,
Washington State Office of Equity

Mark Vasconi (he/him), Co-chair, Director,
Washington State Broadband Office

Introductions

Digital Equity Forum Members

Staff from the Washington State Office of Equity

Staff from the Washington State Broadband Office

Consultants from The Athena Group

Public Comment

To ensure everyone's voice is heard today:

- Please use the “raise hand” tool in Zoom if you would like to speak. Our moderators will recognize you.
- We will pause and open the floor to participants joining by telephone and ASL users to provide comments.
- A diversity of opinions and voices is encouraged. Please allow others to speak without interruption.
- Please focus on your own experiences and do not speak for others unless they have given you permission.

Community Engagement Updates

Digital Navigator Focus Groups

Community Survey

Digital Navigator Focus Groups

- Digital Equity Forum members emphasized and encouraged further engagement with hard-to-reach populations during the last At-Large meeting (06/09/2022).
- Washington State Broadband Office staff worked directly with Digital Navigators – “trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices” – to design an engagement strategy in their communities.
- Three focus groups have been held, two with the Equity in Education Coalition (Ephrata and Seattle) and one with Goodwill (Tacoma). The final focus group with Goodwill will be held on September 21 in Pasco.

Community Survey

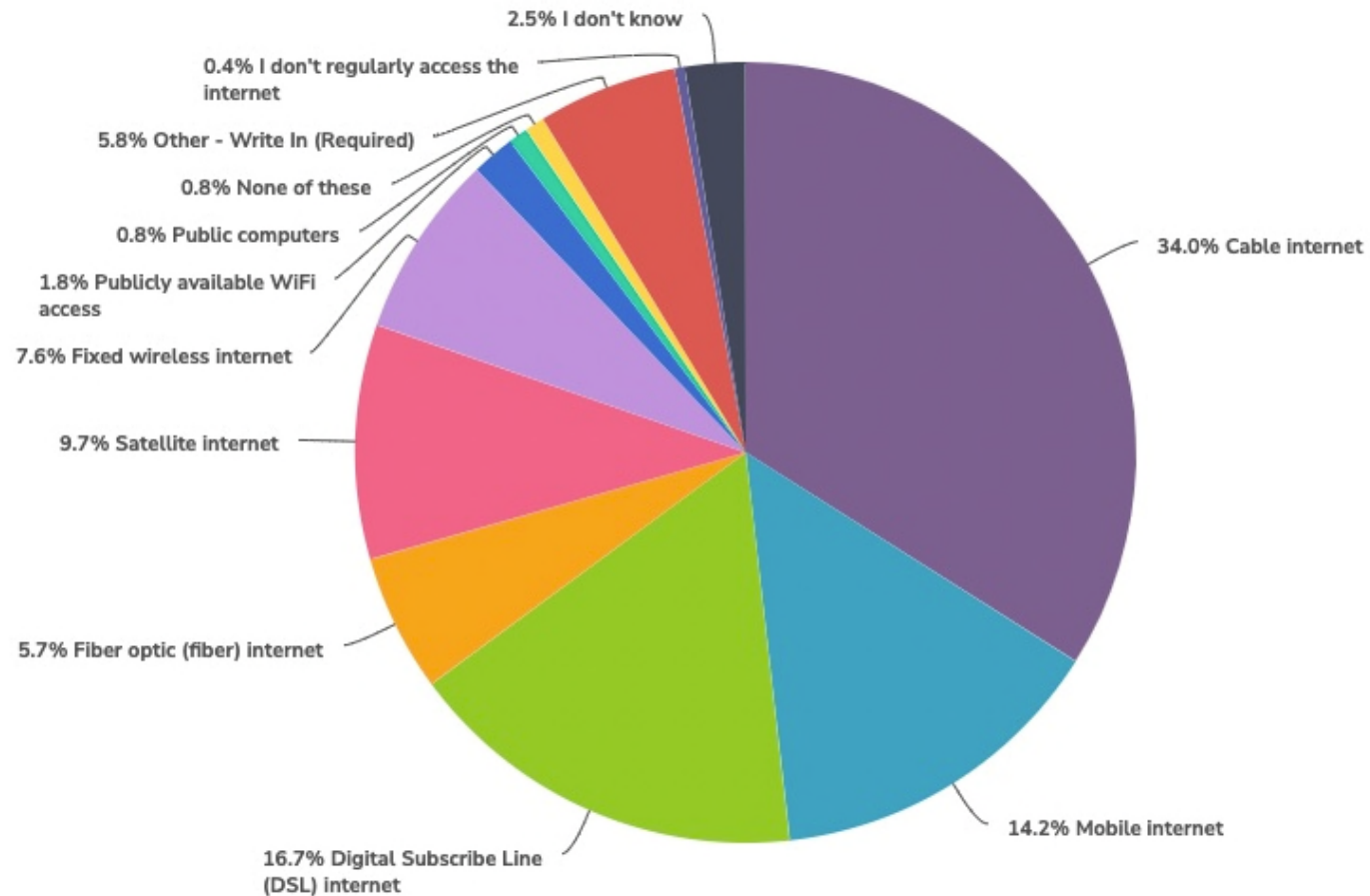
Overview

- Open from June 30 – August 14
- Online survey with 2,711 responses from Washington residents.
- Questions were the same as those used for listening sessions.
- Survey respondent demographics were reasonably close to those of Washington State as a whole, apart from higher rates among seniors and people with disabilities.

Community Survey – Who Took the Survey?

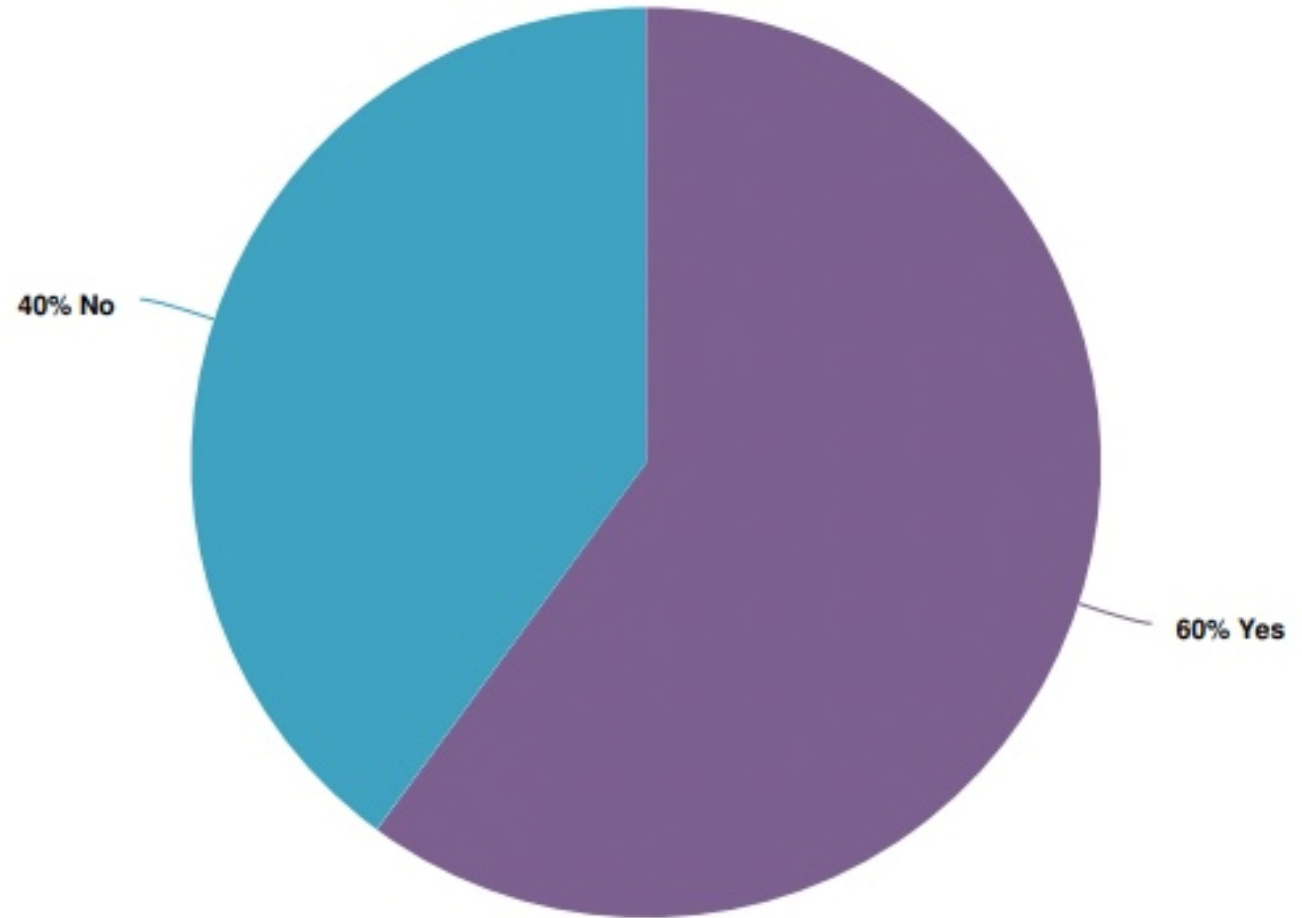
Internet Connection Type

- Cable Internet (34%)
- DSL (16.7%)
- Mobile internet (14.2%)
- Satellite internet (9.7%)
- I don't know (2.5%)
- Publicly-available Wi-Fi (1.8%)



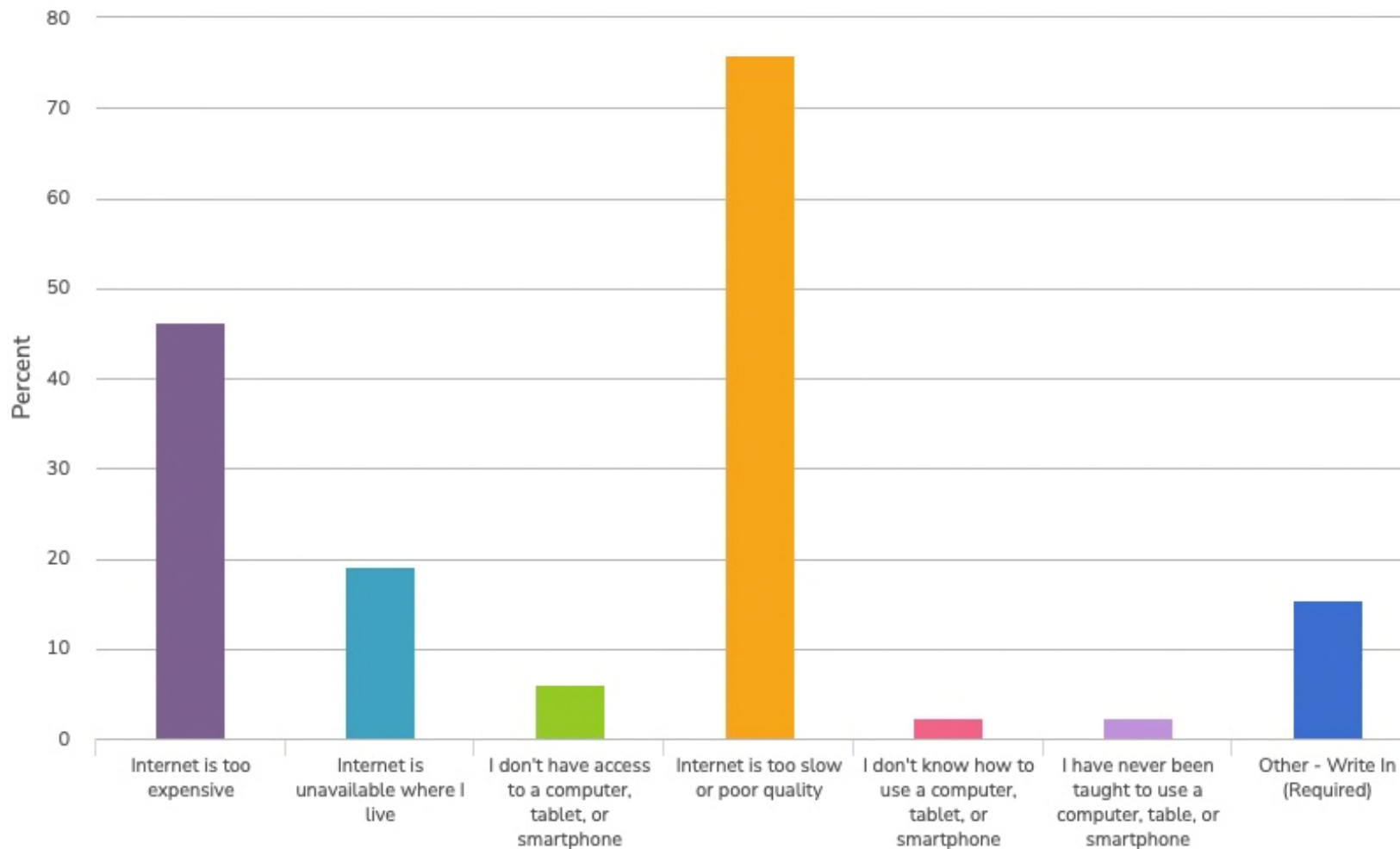
Community Survey – What We Heard

Q1 - Have you experienced any barriers or challenges connecting to the internet?



Community Survey – What We Heard

Q1.1 - Since you selected "yes" for the previous question, what are the challenges you have experienced? (choose as many as apply)



Community Survey – What We Heard

Q2 – What do you need to be able to use the internet for your personal life?

- Affordable internet service
 - (\$50-\$80 per month)
- Fast service
- Reliable service
- Skills training
- More options
- More affordable equipment

Older respondents and non-White respondents most often discussed affordability.

Younger respondents and White respondents most often discussed the need for higher quality connections that are faster and more reliable (consistent connection and speed).

Non-White respondents and respondents with DSL access most often discussed training.

Community Survey – What We Heard

Q3 – What do you need to be able to use the internet for your job?

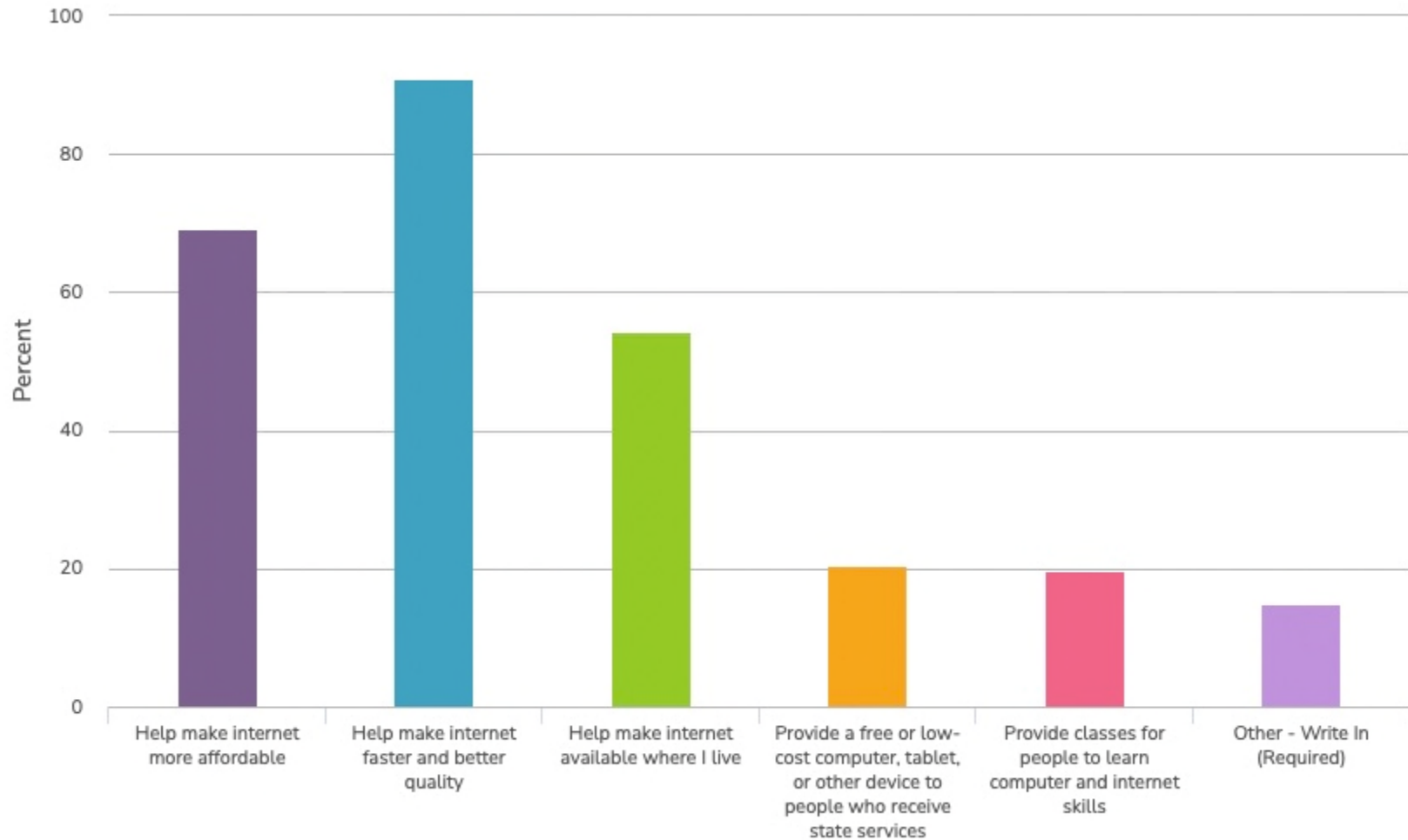
- Fast service
- Reliable service
- More options
- *Shifts in employer's policies.*

Older respondents most often discussed the need for more options.

Younger respondents and respondents with fiber access most often discussed the need for employers and organizations to shift their perspectives and policies towards remote work.

Community Survey – What We Heard

Q4 – What can WA state government do to help you improve your access to the internet? (choose as many as apply)



Community Survey – What We Heard

Q4 – What can Washington state government do to help you improve your access to the internet? (choose as many as apply)

Other

- Expanding who can provide access to the internet.
- More government regulation of internet service providers.
- Government subsidies for internet access costs, up to and including free internet for certain groups.

Community Survey – What We Heard

Q5 – Do you have anything else that you would like to say to help us make accessing the internet better for all people in Washington?

- Appreciation/Hopefulness
- Importance of education/training
- Excitement for new technologies
- Importance of recognizing rural-urban differences.

Older respondents and non-White respondents most often discussed the importance of education and training.

Younger respondents most often discussed the importance of embracing/supporting new technologies to address digital equity.

Respondents aged 45-54 most often discussed the importance of rural-urban differences.

Community Survey – Final Thoughts

Limitation

- Conducted mostly online, meaning respondents generally have internet access currently. We may not have an accurate picture of the true disparity.

Recommendation

- Future surveys and other data collection strategies need to include in-person and paper-based options for responses.

Recommendation Development Next Steps

Recap of Summer Small Group Workshops

July

- 20 Digital Equity Forum members participated in the recommendations development small group workshops that were held on July 14 (Team A) and July 21 (Team B).
- Members created initial recommendations in response to the barriers that had been created based on what was heard from listening session participants.

August

- 17 members participated in the recommendations refinement small group workshops that were held on August 10 (Team A) and August 17 (Team B).
- Members reacted to “next step” synthesized recommendations, providing guidance on what recommendations should be kept, edited, and possibly removed.

Finalizing Recommendations Workshops

Today's Post-Meeting Workshop

- Members have been assigned to one of two groups, unless a member registered for a specific group before today.
- Members will work to develop final recommendations based on their experiences, expertise, and feedback received from the recommendations poll.
- Group 1
 - Accessibility, Internet Service Providers, Policy, and Quality of Equipment
- Group 2
 - Affordability, Digital Literacy and Training, Mapping, and Small Businesses and Nonprofits

September 20

- Members will work to develop final recommendations related to New Programs and Initiatives.

Next Steps

Modified “Fist to Five” Online Poll

- Using the finalized recommendations from the September workshops, an online poll will be created.
- Members will access that poll and select one of the following reactions to each finalized recommendation.
 - Extremely Satisfied
 - Very Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Slightly Satisfied
 - Not At All Satisfied
- Members’ reactions will be reviewed, and a grouped list of recommendations will be prepared for presentation on October 20.

Next Steps

October 20 At-Large Meeting

- Present finalized recommendations
- Discuss next steps
- Celebrate our work

Statewide Digital Equity Planning Process

- The recommendations and barriers identified by this group comprise a vital early input to the five-year statewide broadband digital equity planning process.
- The report to the Legislature marks the first step, not the last step, in the planning process.
- There will be future opportunities for members to participate.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Dr. Karen A. Johnson(she/her/Beloved), Co-chair, Director,
Washington State Office of Equity

Mark Vasconi (he/him), Co-chair, Director,
Washington State Broadband Office

Community Survey – Who Took the Survey?

Survey Respondents

35.8% 62 or older

- 20.2% 45-54
- 17.6% 35-44
- 14.6% 55-61

75.9% White

- 3.2% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 3.2% Asian
- 3.1% Black
- 7.8% Two or More Races

90.8% Not Hispanic of Latino/Latina

68.9% No Disability

- 25.2% with a Disability
- 5.9% not sure of about a Disability

Washington State Population Data

18.55% 62 or older

- 12.4% 45-54
- 13.4% 35-44
- 9.6% 55-61

73.5% White

- 1.2% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 8.8% Asian
- 3.9% Black
- 7.1% Two or More Races

87.1% Not Hispanic or Latino/Latina

87.1% No Disability

- 12.9% with a Disability