

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

July 10, 2023

Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar and Via ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Duane Anderson, Paul Bolle (via Zoom), Mark Boeschen, Bruce DeBlieck, Jason Hulstein, Roger Imdieke, Tony Kirby (via Zoom), Michelle Marotzke, Ryan Nelson, Rollie Nissen, David Sisser and Chuck Stranberg

Excused: Kelsey Baker and Jesse Gislason

Staff: Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager (via Zoom)

Secretarial: Cathy Skindelien, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Mark Boeschen called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

AGENDA—St. Johns Township extended service was added to the agenda under New Business, item 3a.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Duane Anderson, to approve the Minutes of the June 5, 2023 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS—

St. Johns Township Extended Service. Chair Boeschen received a request from St. Johns Township that Kandiyohi County provide matching funds for Federated Telephone Cooperative (FTC) to extend service to 12 addresses that were excluded due to the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) reverse auction that named LTD Broadband provider for the area. The federal government is now allowing RDOF areas to be served by alternate providers in areas where projects did not materialize. St. Johns Township committed \$1,700 per address and asked that Kandiyohi County provide the same amount it contributed for other residents in St. Johns Township, which was \$2,192.85 per address. The 12 addresses are located in St. Johns Township, however one address, Life Science Innovations, is in the City of Willmar. All locations are adjacent to where work is currently being done. The project itself is too far along to make amendments, so grant funds cannot be used. Discussion ensued as to whether to include Life Science Innovations, since it is not technically part of St. Johns Township.

IT WAS MOVED BY David Sisser, SECONDED BY Duane Anderson, to recommend to the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners that it approve matching funds of \$2,192.85 for 11 addresses in St. Johns Township, contingent on Federated Telephone Cooperative's approval, for a total of \$24,121.35. MOTION CARRIED.

Further discussion regarding the Life Science Innovations property was conducted.

IT WAS MOVED BY Chuck Stranberg, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to amend the original motion to include the Life Science Innovations address, and recommend that the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners approve matching funds of \$2,192.85 for 12 addresses, contingent on Federated Telephone Cooperative's approval, for a total of \$26,314.16. MOTION CARRIED.

GRANTS—

ReConnect Loan and Grant Program Round 4. Chair Boeschon reported Vibrant Broadband was award \$19 million for the project which includes portions of Burbank, Roseville and Irving Townships. Because the ReConnect Grant program concentrates on low population density areas, there will be gaps in service in these townships. Additional projects will be needed to fill in the gaps.

March 2023 State Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Update. Vibrant Broadband was awarded two Border-to-Border Broadband Development grants, the first for Harrison Township with a 50% match, and the second for East Lake Lillian and Lake Elizabeth Townships with a 75% match as part of the Low-Density Pilot Program. Everyone who is unserved or underserved in the three townships will be covered. Vibrant has two years to complete the project, although actual timeline information is not available. Additional Vibrant Broadband projects are anticipated in southeast Kandiyohi County.

A monthly newsletter has been created to keep all townships informed of successful grants in the county. The newsletter is sent to township clerks for distribution and to township supervisors.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds. Chair Boeschon presented an update on ARPA funds (see attached). Three million dollars remain allocated to broadband with plans of using these funds on projects in the fall. The Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners approved \$35,000 in ARPA funds earmarked for broadband for New Vision Foundation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

Updates on Additional Potential Projects. While there are no specific updates at this time, Vibrant Broadband has been vocal about planning new projects. Chair Boeschon is soliciting projects from Charter, Arvig and Runestone Telecom Association. Mediacom is no longer interested in Norway Lake Township and Chair Boeschon anticipates FTC will extend service there. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) requested public comment on the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program for uniform guidance. Minnesota will receive \$652 million as part of the BEAD "Internet for All" initiative, which the committee hopes will be disbursed through the Office of Broadband Development (OBD) with Border-to-Border Broadband Development grants. One drawback is that the county is required to match 50% of Border-to-Border grants received, which will become more difficult when the ARPA funds are exhausted. Legislative approval is required to change the program. It was suggested that one comment could be to continue county funding from the state or reduce the match requirement. This comment should be directed to the OBD, which could in turn address comments to the national program. Roger Imdieke expressed concern about the timeframe of receiving funds, stating that if it is allocated too quickly providers may not be available.

REPORTS—

Digital Connection Task Committee. Michelle Marotzke reported the Digital Connection Task Committee's project officially ended on June 30, but the committee will continue until the end of the year, meeting as needed to take advantage of the momentum created. A report was submitted to the OBD that included 2 pages of narrative and 39 pages of supplemental materials. The report will be shared with this committee. The Digital Connection Committee met every two weeks with a variety of initiatives, including people with disabilities, those of color, refugees and the older population. One challenge was reaching out to new immigrant populations and finding out their needs beyond just getting service. Educational pieces on use of broadband are needed. Attendance was low at the community forums, but they were beneficial nonetheless. Woodland Centers contributed a front-page ad in the *Reminder*. Over 100 surveys have been submitted. Surveys will be made available at the last Rockin' Robbins concert and Woodland Center's county fair booth. A survey report will be created for use in meeting the goal of service to the entire county.

West FTTP—FTC. This project is under construction, with several rolls of conduit stored in Pennock. Although there have been a few delays, the plan is to finish by the end of the year.

City of Willmar. David Sisser reported the city is revising the contract with Hometown Fiber. An outside firm will develop the contract, which will be reviewed by Utopia Fiber, which has experience with this type of venture in Utah. A consultant will be retained to handle bond referendums and ensure everything from the state's standpoint is legal for the city to own the fiber system. Service will be provided at a speed of 100 gigabits. The contract will be in place soon, and the project will move forward next spring. Partnership commitments have been received from four internet service providers.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **10:00 a.m., Monday, August 7, 2023** at Room 2057, Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building, Willmar and via Zoom video conference.

Richard Heidecker
6455 7th Ave. NW
Willmar, MN 56201

Nathan Scharmer
6737 7th Ave. NW
Willmar, MN 56201

Michael Wold
689 75th Street NW
Pennock, MN 56279

Dennis Bredeson
738 75th Street SW
Pennock, MN 56279

Mailing address: 2008 20th Street
Willmar, MN 56201

Curtis Jacobson
900 75th Street SW
Pennock, MN 56279

Curtis Jacobson
850 75th Street SW
Pennock, MN 56279

Norman Kveene
7858 15th Ave. SW
Pennock, MN 56279

Corey Jerzak
8066 15th Ave. SW
Pennock, MN 56279

Kyle Wallentine
8081 45th Ave. SW
Raymond, MN 56282

William Caskey
9571 45th Ave. SW
Raymond, MN 56282

Glen Lotthammer
9833 45th Ave. SW
Raymond, MN 56282

Dean Youngren

922 CR 1 NW

Pennock, MN 56279

Mailing Address: 10121 120th Street NW

Pennock, MN 56279

Life Science Innovations Mailing Address: Life Science Innovations

2700 75th Street SW

Willmar, MN 56201

Attn: Jonathan Huisinga

1800 Technology Drive NE


Willmar, MN 56201

county funds

Randy Kveene <kveene@gmail.com>

Sun 7/9/2023 1:07 PM

To: Mark Boeschen <mark@firebytes.co>

 1 attachments (659 KB)

Line extension addresses.pdf;

Mark

I am writing on behalf of St John's township. We are working with Federated to extend service to 12 addresses along the broadband route that were originally excluded from the border to border grant because they were in the LTD area.

Federated has offered to hook them up for \$800 plus \$6 per foot from the junction in the ditch to their house. St John's has agreed to put the same money per residence towards this project as from our original grant. We are putting \$1700 per residence. We have decided to contribute as a total project contribution so if some are less money and some are more money we can still take care of them.

St John's is asking Kandiyohi County to also match the same dollars per residence as they did on the original project. This would allow these residents to also get broadband now instead of waiting for the next grant round. We also would ask for it to be a total project amount and not tied to each individual residence, again so if some cost more because of a long driveway we can still help them out.

I have attached a list of addresses to be included. The 850 75th st address will be torn down eventually so it can be excluded. There should be 12 addresses getting service.

Thanks

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Randy Kveene

	Cty Commitment	Tshp Commitment
3/4 ARPA	\$ 6,268,834.00	Std: \$200/passing

141st Ave	\$ 4,354.90	\$ 7,345.10
Riverwood	\$ 121,891.44	\$ 16,621.56
199th Ave	\$ 26,651.62	\$ 6,398.10
Prinsburg	\$ 330,000.00	\$ 220,000.00
30th Ave	\$ 46,300.19	\$ 4,480.40
West Project	\$ 1,314,386.00	\$ 1,132,115.75
N Long Lake	\$ 152,900.00	\$ 23,000.00
Hawick	\$ 89,700.00	\$ 12,000.00
S Long Lake	\$ 202,100.00	\$ 22,800.00
LAWYERS	\$ 7,043.00	\$ -
Harrison Project	\$ 251,600.00	\$ 44,400.00
SE Project	\$ 148,125.10	\$ 39,800.00
New Vision	\$ 35,000.00	\$ -
St Johns Add-ons	\$ 26,314.16	\$ 20,400.00
Lacolfax Project		
Blomkest		
Lake Lillian		
Line Extension	\$ 300,000.00	\$ -
Connie Contract	\$ 11,000.00	\$ -
Mark Contract	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -

TOTAL	\$ 3,082,366.41	
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Remaining	\$ 3,186,467.59	
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St Johns Add-ons	Match west project
12 Passings	1414386/645= \$ 2,192.85
12 x 2192.85 =	\$ 26,314.16

Kandiyohi County Digital Connection Committee Project Summary

Committee Information

Personal invitations were sent to local organizations and government agencies to convene a diverse collective for the Digital Connection Committee. Once assembled, there were 14 individuals representing People with Disabilities, People of Color, townships, immigrants and refugees, the local library system, and the private sector.

Six meetings were held at the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC office at 222 20th St SE, Willmar, MN. Meetings were held biweekly beginning on April 13th and concluding June 22nd. An average of eight people attended each meeting. Each person brought their own strengths and ideas to the meeting to create the program. It was decided at the June 22nd meeting that this committee will continue as a sub-committee of the Kandiyohi County Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee (upon approval of that board). Members feel there is more work to be done, especially in our New American communities.

Surveys

Two surveys were conducted. The first was to gauge the needs of the community and learn what type of needs were really a concern and to form the public survey. The second was a public survey intended to learn more about individual needs. The survey summaries and data can be found at the end of this update. The public survey was created in English, Spanish, and Somali. To ensure equitable access to the survey, there are meetings to be scheduled with Somali and Karen leaders that will go through the survey in a verbal format.

Surveys were conducted in person and online. Survey boxes were shared throughout the county and the survey link and QR code were shared via email. The Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce also shared the survey information via their weekly e-newsletter. An ad was placed in the Reminder, a free publication that reaches every Kandiyohi County resident. Thanks to Woodland Centers of Willmar for their donation of this front-page ad space.

Community meetings

Community meetings were held in every community throughout Kandiyohi County. Due to the timing of the Reminder ad, a second meeting was held in Kandiyohi and Atwater. While attendance of the meetings was low, the conversations were fruitful. We learned a lot from those who attended and shared their needs. Cost of service was a frequent conversation as well as the general need for reliable services in rural areas. These conversations were beneficial in providing people with updated information from the Broadband Committee and helped people understand what the Committee does and how we are working to create more broadband opportunities and infrastructure throughout the county.

Additional events

One member of the committee spent time at the Raymond summer festival and started this committee off with a bang. She was able to get many surveys done and share the work that we were doing.

Two committee members were able to share information about the Digital Connection Committee, community meetings, and public survey on a local radio station's Open Mic show.

A second opportunity arose with the Willmar Fest Block Party. This was held in downtown Willmar on June 22nd and we put a booth up with information about the Digital Connection Committee, local transportation work, and child care work. By sharing this booth with the child care and transportation experts, we were able to draw more people in and many completed surveys.

Future work

As the committee desired to continue past the June 30th date, we are planning the next steps. Woodland Centers has agreed to have a survey box at their booth in the Kandiyohi County Fair (in August). If time permits, we will try to attend more summer festivals and put the survey boxes out. In reviewing the results of the current public survey, we will likely shore that up to just 4 or 5 questions (it was 14) in anticipation of getting more completed surveys.

This work will be put into a document that the Broadband Committee can use to inform their work related to digital equity and providing resources for all digital users, regardless of their internet service availability or reliability.

Kandiyohi County Digital Connection Committee
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC
Thursday, April 13, 2023

Attended: Andrew Bregar (Willmar Public Library), Sharon Olson (Lake Andrew Township), Dave Sisser (West Central Technologies), Mickell Maloyd (Woodland Centers), Kim Madsen (Woodland Centers), Michelle Marotzke (MMDC), Hannah Buckland (MN OBD), Joel Johnson (Mamre Township)

The meeting started with introductions and Hannah explained the role of Office of Broadband Development. Michelle provided background information about the Kandiyohi County Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee. It was suggested that we include someone to represent people with disabilities, Michelle to follow up on that suggestion.

The purpose of this committee is to learn about the digital communication needs for people in Kandiyohi County and to report this information to the Office of Broadband Development for inclusion in the state's Digital Equity plan. These needs include more than just reliable access in the form of service, such as cost of monthly service, equipment costs/needs (tablets, etc.), and knowledge of how to use the service and equipment.

There was much discussion about how to engage people with understanding why broadband is important and how to create materials that will encourage them to share their voice. Some ideas include:

- Information sheet (visual)
 - What IS broadband?
 - Fiber, DSL, etc.
 - What does speed do and why does it matter?
 - Upload/Download speeds
 - Latency
 - Streaming vs. working vs. browsing, etc.
 - Why is this important?
 - How is your life changed by having access to the digital resources you need?
 - What do you use internet for?
 - Education, remote work, healthcare, etc.
 - Property valuation with not having access
 - EDC has a broadband flyer that we can “resurrect” and update
- Where to share the information
 - Use YouTube channel and/or WRAC for sharing information
 - Explaining DSL vs. Fiber
 - Disseminate in multiple languages
 - Reminder – top or bottom half of front page, about \$450
 - QR code and link for survey

- Open Mic, Radio ads, Facebook blasts
- Forums
 - County-wide, community centers, libraries, service clubs
 - Multi-family dwellings
- Surveys
 - Have printed surveys and drop boxes in communities
 - Survey teachers and pastor/faith leaders
 - They know their families and what kind of barriers they face with digital access

Next steps

- Michelle and Kim will work on creating the teacher survey and connect with the faith groups
- Dave will find the county's speed test information
- Andrew will talk with the other librarians in the county to see if they have space for forums
- Forums will be held in late May/early June, to be decided at 4/27 meeting
- Survey will be done at and after the forums. This gives a "built-in" group of people

Kandiyohi County Digital Connection Committee
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC
Thursday, April 27, 2023

Attended: Andrew Bregar (Willmar Public Library), Sharon Olson (Lake Andrew Township), Dave Sisser (West Central Technologies), Mickell Maloyd (Woodland Centers), Kim Madsen (Woodland Centers), Michelle Marotzke (MMDC), Debi Brandt, (UCAP), Jennifer Mendoza (CLUES), VaLoris Anderson (AIM), Renee Nolting (WCI), Pablo Obregon (City of Willmar), Joel Johnson (Mamre Township)

The meeting began with introductions as there were some new faces with us. The group pulled up the EDC Broadband flyer for the group to review it. Suggestions included:

- Translation to Karen, Somali, and Spanish
 - Michelle to check with Fadumo for doing this
- Use pictures instead of words in places that it makes sense
- Create a one-page flyer instead of a full brochure
 - Michelle can make that adjustment
- Add how to become a Broadband Champion and share clear expectations of the long-term commitment or other things a person would need to know about being one

Dave reviewed the information he put together for internet connectivity and taking a speed test (and what that means). He will update some of the information in the packet as it is a couple of years old. We could consolidate this information and have it translated into multiple languages.

Michelle shared the survey questions that she and Kim worked on. This survey is for to gather information about a “baseline” to see where our communities are at in their technology needs (not just broadband service or better speeds). Another survey for the general public will be done after the forums. According to Debi, 43% of people have extreme concern of not having access to internet hardware or software. The group explored the various organizations that could help provide the baseline information, including:

- Faith providers
- Teachers
- UCAP
- YMCA
- Pact for Families
- County social service workers
- Libraries
- Kandiyohi County Food Shelf
- Lutheran Social Services
- Bethesda
- United Way

- CLUES
- Ridgewater College
- Child care providers
- West Central Industries (WCI)
- AIM
- Willmar Community Center
- Riverview Dairy (Natasha)
- County parks department
- Lake Associations
- Retail locations that offer wifi, such as Wal-Mart, McDonald's

Other organizations and opportunities that can help with the general public survey include:

- Rockin' Robbins
- Farmers and Flea Markets
- Festivals throughout the county
- Willmar Fests (Block party, parade)
- Gas stations throughout the county
- Ridgewater – ag department
- Schools – FFA and ag teachers
- Township outreach (website, other outreach)
- Direct mail outreach (EDC perhaps?)
- Social media platforms
- City clerks/utility departments – send a notice in the utility bill, QR code
- Newspaper article/advertise in Reminder
- Open mic with Todd

Debi offered to work specifically in Raymond and Prinsburg as well as through UCAP.

The locations and times for forums were discussed. Andrew is working on connecting with the libraries in the county for space. Debi, Kim and Jennifer offered to help Michelle set up dates. It was suggested to set a full day with morning (8-9), afternoon (3-4), and evening (6-7) hours so as many people as possible can stop by. Debi also offered to have this as a discussion item at UCAP's Saturday morning meetings with people who speak Somali and Karen and may need or prefer translation services.

Michelle briefly mentioned the new Asset-Inventory for the Office of Broadband Development. This will need to be filled out during the project, but not something to do right away.

Michelle will work on updating the survey and get that to the group for approval by early next week so it can be shared and that evaluation can begin. She will also work with the small group for forum dates to be scheduled.

Kandiyohi County Digital Connection Committee
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC
Thursday, May 11, 2023

Attended: Sharon Oleson (Lake Andrew Township), Dave Sisser (West Central Technologies), Kim Madsen (Woodland Centers), Michelle Marotzke (MMDC), VaLoris Anderson (AIM), Fadumo Hussein (FAJ Translating)

The meeting opened with an introduction to Fadumo Hussein, who joined the meeting via Zoom from her family's home in Africa. Fadumo shared a short tour of her home and neighborhood and graciously answered several questions from the committee members. She introduced us to her grandpa, which was a fantastic way to start the morning. We look forward to her returning to Willmar and thanked her family for sharing her with us.

M. Marotzke reviewed the flyer with those in attendance. She will get this revised to a one-page flyer and shared with Fadumo to translate in Somali and Spanish. This flyer will be shared with people who attend the forums and in other outlets such as social media,

The first survey has been released and over 45 surveys have been completed. Interesting data is already emerging, including that digital equity and communication is a critical need throughout Kandiyohi County. This survey will close on May 23rd. Marotzke will share it again with the original distribution list and add some additional people.

The committee discussed the forums. It was decided that the forums will be a great opportunity to find broadband champions and volunteers for broadband efforts. Discussion was had about pairing forums with the local festivals, but it was decided that might not be the best way to engage people. While we would get a lot of people in one place, they may not be in the mindset to listen to a conversation about broadband. However, once the public survey is ready, we could use the festivals as a way to share the survey opportunity. It was agreed that Marotzke will choose dates, times, and locations for the surveys and work with a small group to finalize the forums. This group includes Debi, Kim, Jennifer, and Fadumo. We will promote the forums with the Chamber, service clubs, and other outlets.

The public survey was discussed, and it was agreed to keep it very short to maximize the completion rate. It was also agreed to include a question about familiarity with internet discount programs (such as the Affordable Connectivity Program).

The meeting concluded at 8:55 a.m. with everyone happy about the progress the committee is making toward the goals.

Kandiyohi County Digital Connection Committee
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC
Thursday, June 22, 2023

Attended: Sharon Oleson (Lake Andrew Township), Dave Sisser (West Central Technologies), Kim Madsen (Woodland Centers), Michelle Marotzke (MMDC), VaLoris Anderson (AIM), Pablo Obregon (City of Willmar), Jennifer Mendoza (CLUES)

1st survey – 60

2nd survey – 60ish+30 to enter+block party tonight

Willmar Fests Block Party – talk to Justice for HomeTown Fiber project

****Jennifer can be around, check with Fadumo**

Wrap up

Asset inventory – check with Sara Carlson at WCAF for list created during Covid

June 30 – submit data to OBD

August – fair booth?

****Put survey box at Woodland Centers booth, work with Kim on this**

October 30 – finalize report for county committee

Future – education? Needs?

****Get Spanish meeting scheduled – check in with Debi on Somali and Karen meetings**

****Know dates today?**

****Welcoming Week – September 9th**

****Continue to connect as a group bi-monthly**

****create action steps based on survey results**

****which organizations should be approached to support this work (collaborative)**

****Chamber, EDC, recruiting staff**

****use broadband as a tool to bring people back/here**

****education on fiber projects (FTTH, fiber “highways”, what do these projects mean?)**

****I’ve seen digging but they didn’t bring anything to my house, why not?**

Chamber – add to Tuesday newsletter (6/27)

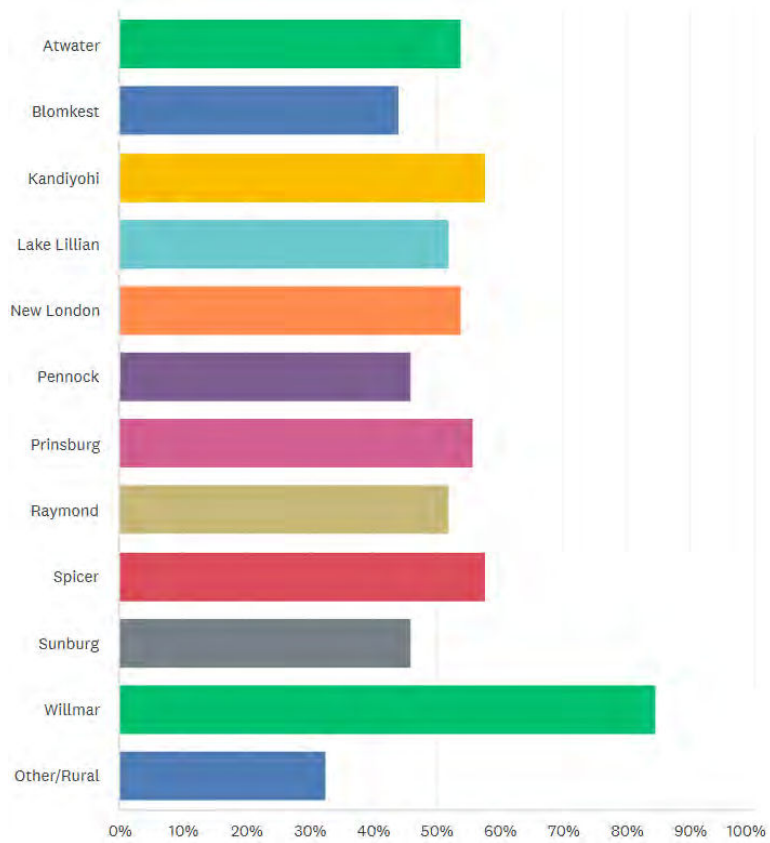
Targeted Broadband Survey

A 6-question survey was shared with a targeted group of organizations and individuals prior to the public survey. The survey was emailed to approximately 60 organizations including schools, townships, county staff, private businesses, and others. The results of this survey informed the questions included in the public survey. There were 60 responses.

- 70% of the respondents stated that their students, families, or clients have experienced trouble with internet services or lacked computer hardware or software needed to complete certain tasks.
- Of those respondents, the top two reasons were reliability and cost.
- 73.21% of respondents knew students, families, or clients who have increased challenges related to internet service or equipment access.
- Of those respondents, the challenges included:

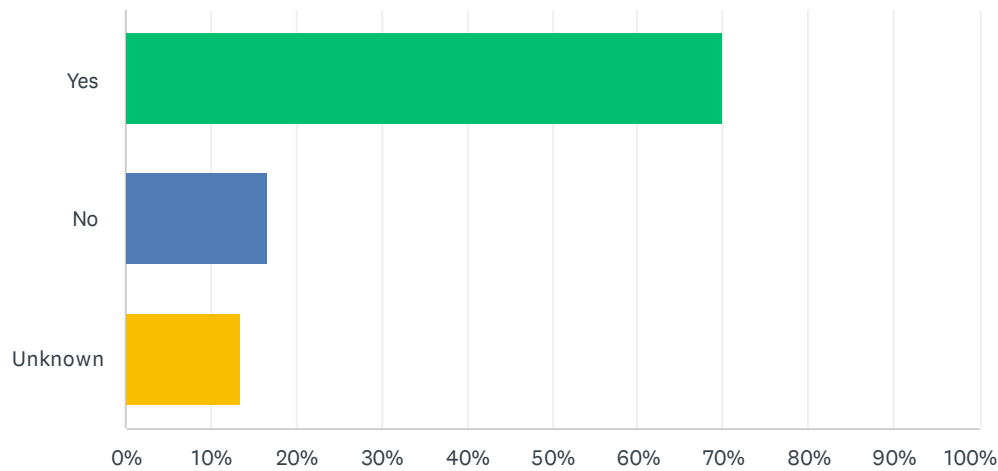
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accessing or submitting school or work assignments	63.16%	24
Job search or interview challenges	36.84%	14
Family connections (social media, email, etc.)	50.00%	19
Accessing online services (paying bills, retrieving medical information, banking, etc.)	73.68%	28
Entertainment (streaming television/movies, radio, etc.)	47.37%	18
Other (please specify)	Responses 10.53%	4
Total Respondents: 38		

- To the question of how often their facilities are used for the general public to access an internet connection, 40.38% of respondents said “Never” and 36.54% of said “Daily”.
- The final question was related to which communities the organization worked with/in. While Willmar was marked by 44 respondents, it was good to see that every community in Kandiyohi County was represented (see next page).



Q1 In the past six months, have any of your students, families, or clients experienced trouble with internet services or lacked computer hardware or software needed to complete certain tasks?

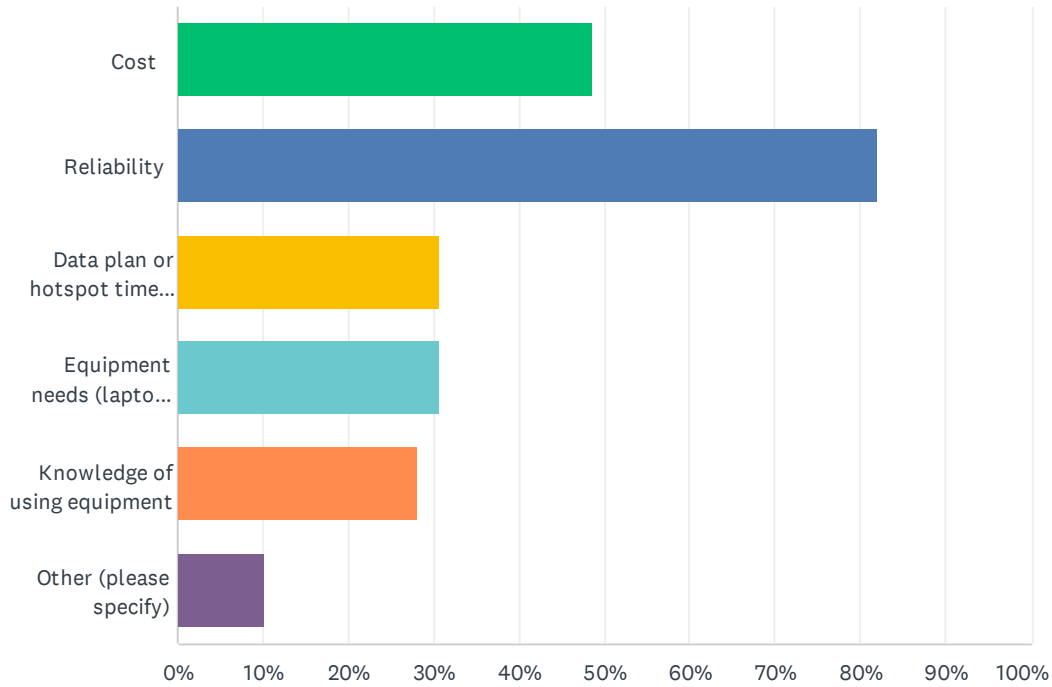
Answered: 60 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		70.00%	42
No		16.67%	10
Unknown		13.33%	8
TOTAL			60

Q2 If yes to question 1, what do you believe were the causes of this trouble? Choose all that apply.

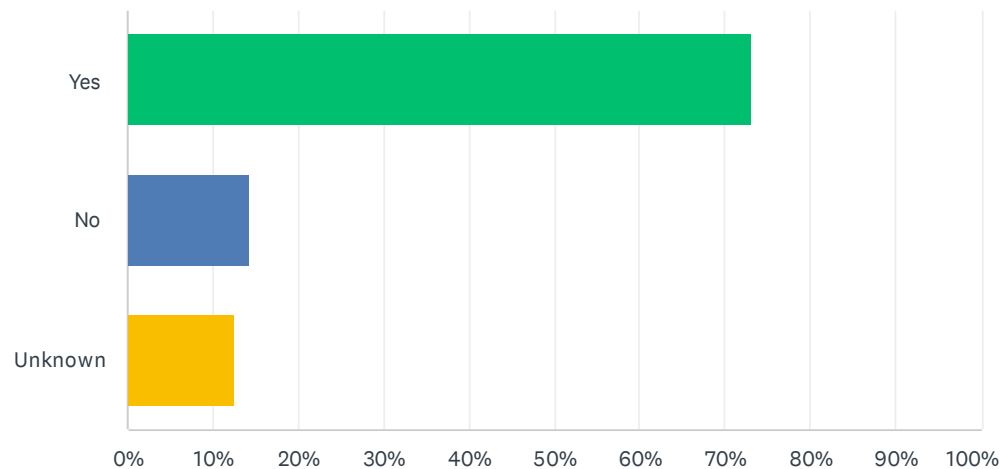
Answered: 39 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cost	48.72%	19
Reliability	82.05%	32
Data plan or hotspot time used up	30.77%	12
Equipment needs (laptop, tablet, etc.)	30.77%	12
Knowledge of using equipment	28.21%	11
Other (please specify)	10.26%	4
Total Respondents: 39		

Q3 Are you aware of students, families, or clients who have increased challenges related to internet service or equipment access?

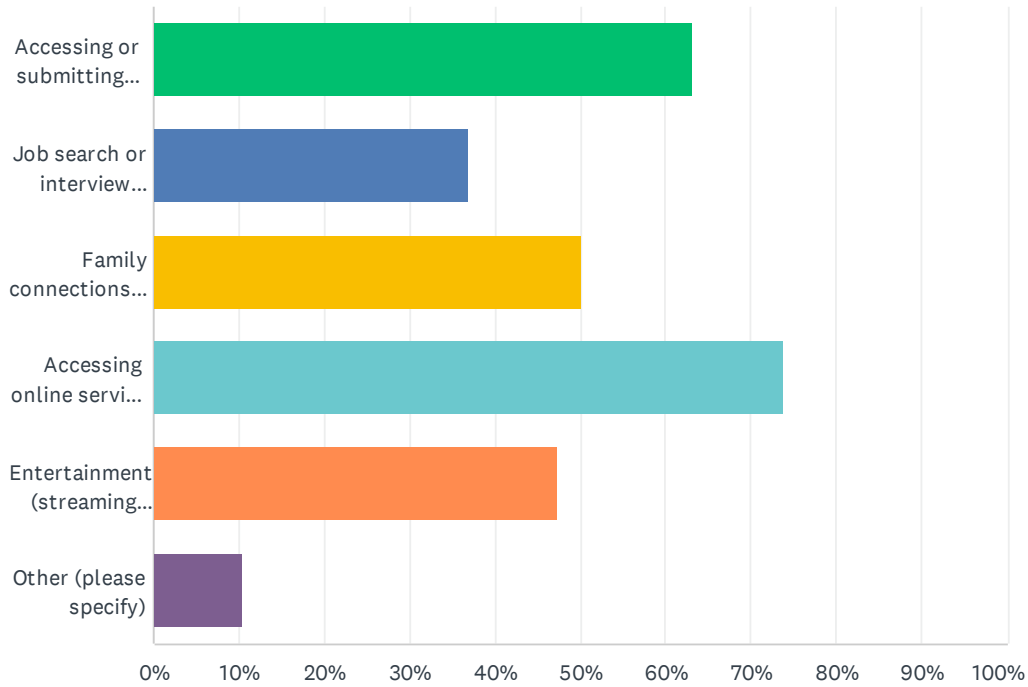
Answered: 56 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.21%	41
No	14.29%	8
Unknown	12.50%	7
TOTAL		56

Q4 If yes to question 3, what are some of the challenges those students or families face? Choose all that apply.

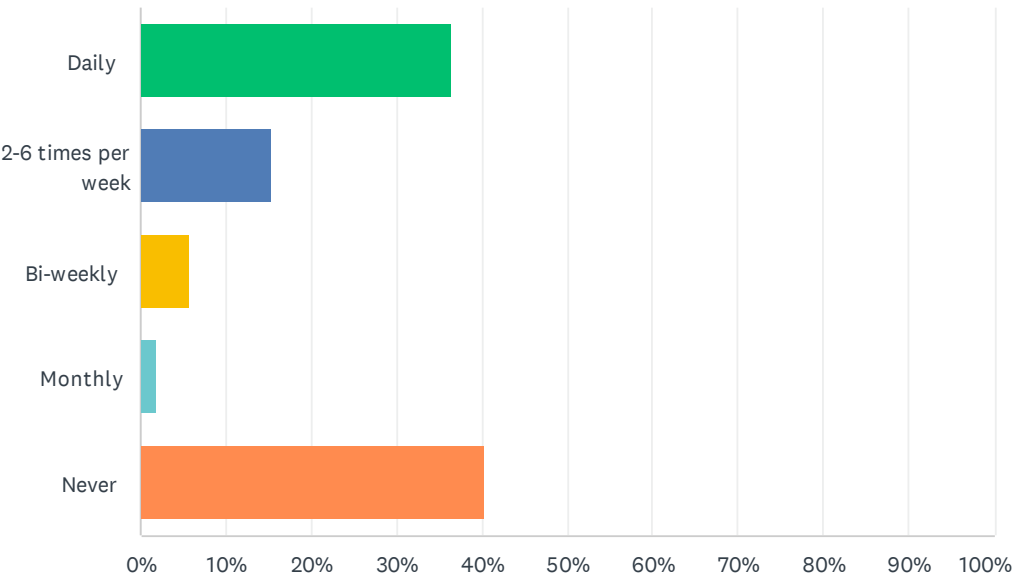
Answered: 38 Skipped: 22



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accessing or submitting school or work assignments	63.16%	24
Job search or interview challenges	36.84%	14
Family connections (social media, email, etc.)	50.00%	19
Accessing online services (paying bills, retrieving medical information, banking, etc.)	73.68%	28
Entertainment (streaming television/movies, radio, etc.)	47.37%	18
Other (please specify)	10.53%	4
Total Respondents: 38		

Q5 On average, how often is your facility used specifically for the general public to access an internet connection? This includes those who may come inside of your building or park/sit outside of the building during or after business hours. Please choose one answer.

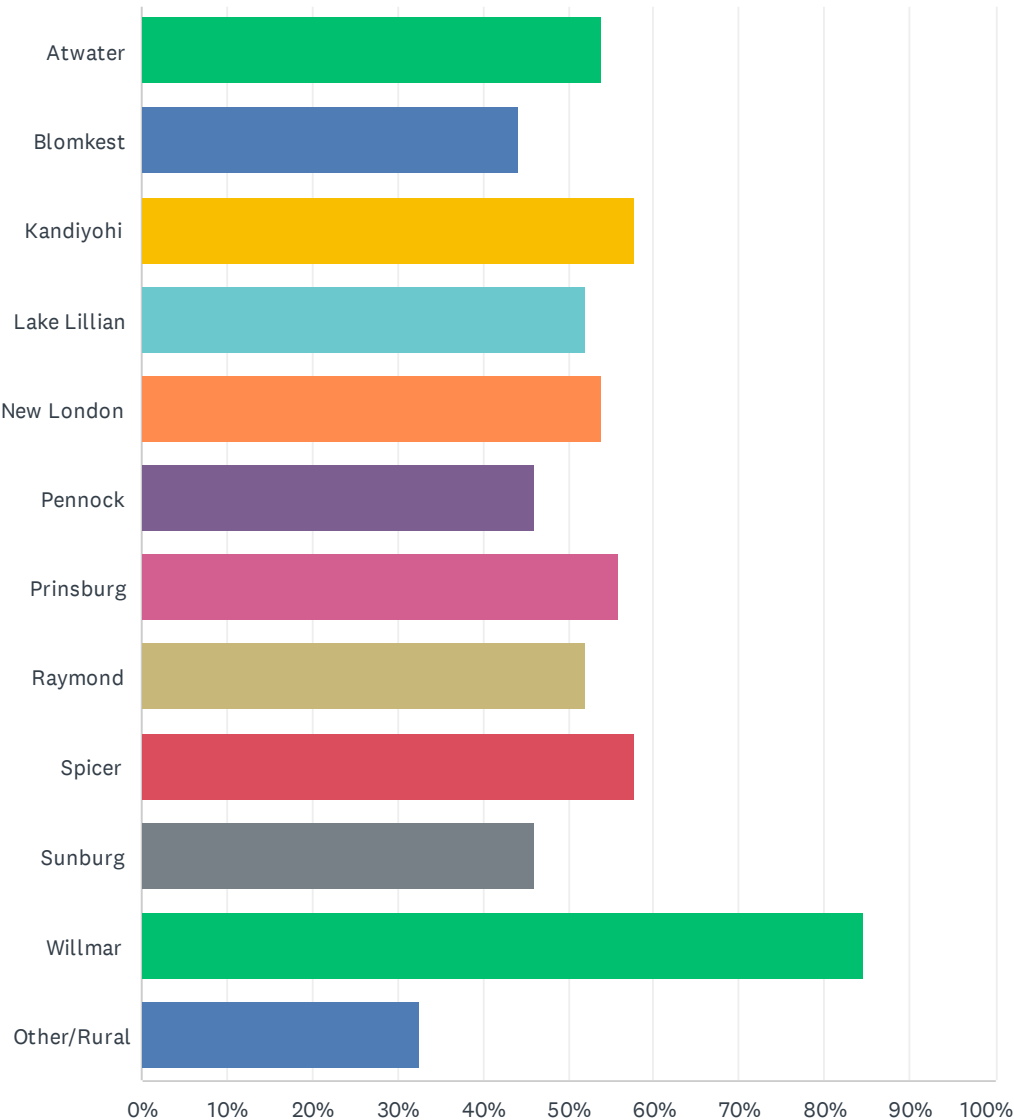
Answered: 52 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	36.54%	19
2-6 times per week	15.38%	8
Bi-weekly	5.77%	3
Monthly	1.92%	1
Never	40.38%	21
TOTAL		52

Q6 Which Kandiyohi County communities do you serve or work with?
Choose all that apply.

Answered: 52 Skipped: 8



Kandiyohi County Broadband Connection Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Atwater	53.85%	28
Blomkest	44.23%	23
Kandiyohi	57.69%	30
Lake Lillian	51.92%	27
New London	53.85%	28
Pennock	46.15%	24
Prinsburg	55.77%	29
Raymond	51.92%	27
Spicer	57.69%	30
Sunburg	46.15%	24
Willmar	84.62%	44
Other/Rural	32.69%	17
Total Respondents: 52		

Public Survey Summary

There were 146 surveys received from the general public. Surveys in Spanish and Somali were also created but are not included in this data. Additional meetings will be held to capture those surveys and discussions.

- All age groups were represented, with 37.67% being from the 60+ group.
- The top three cities where respondents live are Willmar (47.26%), Raymond (13.01%), and Rural Kandiyohi County (8.9%). It should be noted that every community in Kandiyohi County was represented by at least one survey.
- 39.73% of the respondents work outside of the home and 30.14% of the respondents are retired or do not work.
- When asked about reliability of their internet service, 32.19% said that it is “Pretty reliable” and 26.03% said “Very reliable”. This leaves 41.78% with “Just reliable enough” or lower. Nine respondents (6.16%) indicated they do not have internet access at home and of those, the reasons included cost, no provider in the area, and personal choice.
- Respondents indicated that they used the internet for a variety of purposes including:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Not Applicable	3.42%	5
▼ To do my job from home	42.47%	62
▼ To search and apply for jobs	17.12%	25
▼ To pay bills or make online purchases	69.86%	102
▼ To manage personal finances (like online banking)	66.44%	97
▼ To apply for government programs (such as SNAP benefits or Unemployment Insurance)	6.16%	9
▼ To receive or manage healthcare or therapeutic/support services for myself or a family member	43.15%	63
▼ To connect socially with friends and family	76.03%	111
▼ For entertainment (watching movies/television/etc.)	73.97%	108
▼ For other personal reasons (looking up recipes, Do-It-Yourself videos, finding directions, etc.)	75.34%	110
▼ To run a business (home-based or commercial location)	25.34%	37
▼ Agriculture/farming	7.53%	11
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 5.48%	8
Total Respondents: 146		

- When asked if they were satisfied with their internet speed at home or business, respondent answers were as follows:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes, it's really fast!	26.71%	39
▼ Sort of, it works for what I need it to but could be faster	51.37%	75
▼ No, it rarely works as fast as I need it to	13.70%	20
▼ Not at all, I send letters with my pet turtle instead of using the internet service at home	8.22%	12
TOTAL		146

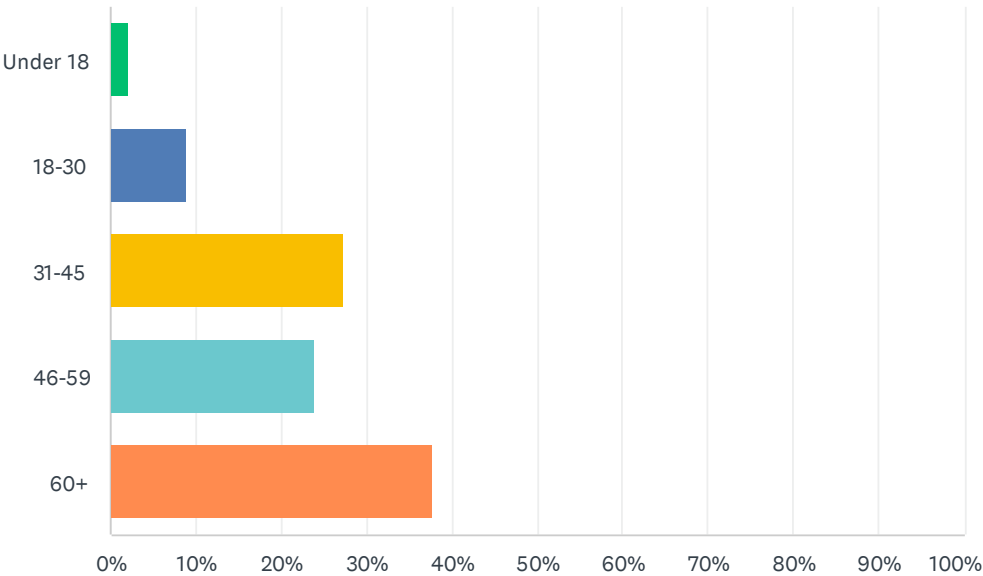
- The types of devices were varied, with the top three being cell/smartphone, desktop or laptop computer, and television streaming.
- To the question related to technical skills, 28 respondents shared that they wanted to use the internet but couldn't figure out how. Forty-one respondents shared that they asked a family member or friend to help them.
- When asked if they knew about discounts for lowering their monthly internet bill, only 29 respondents said yes. Of those who said no, only 63 shared their contact information for more information.
- There was a wide range of lived experiences.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ I live in rural Minnesota	81.69%	116
▼ I am Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color	2.11%	3
▼ I am a U.S. immigrant or refugee	2.11%	3
▼ I have one or more disabilities	7.75%	11
▼ I am not fluent in spoken or written English	0.70%	1
▼ I am experiencing poverty or homelessness	1.41%	2
▼ I am a veteran of the U.S. military or a veteran from a military outside the U.S.	6.34%	9
▼ I have experienced incarceration within the last two years	0.70%	1
▼ I am a college student who has received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year	1.41%	2
▼ I receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	4.23%	6
▼ I receive assistance program benefits (e.g., SNAP, Housing Assistance, Free or Reduced School Lunch program, Medicaid, WIC, or others)	4.93%	7
▼ I am a business owner	16.90%	24
▼ I am an agriculture operator	6.34%	9
▼ I prefer not to answer or these do not apply to me	11.27%	16
Total Respondents: 142		

- 64 individuals shared their contact information to be entered into the \$25 gift card drawing (there will be 4 names drawn).

Q1 What is your age?

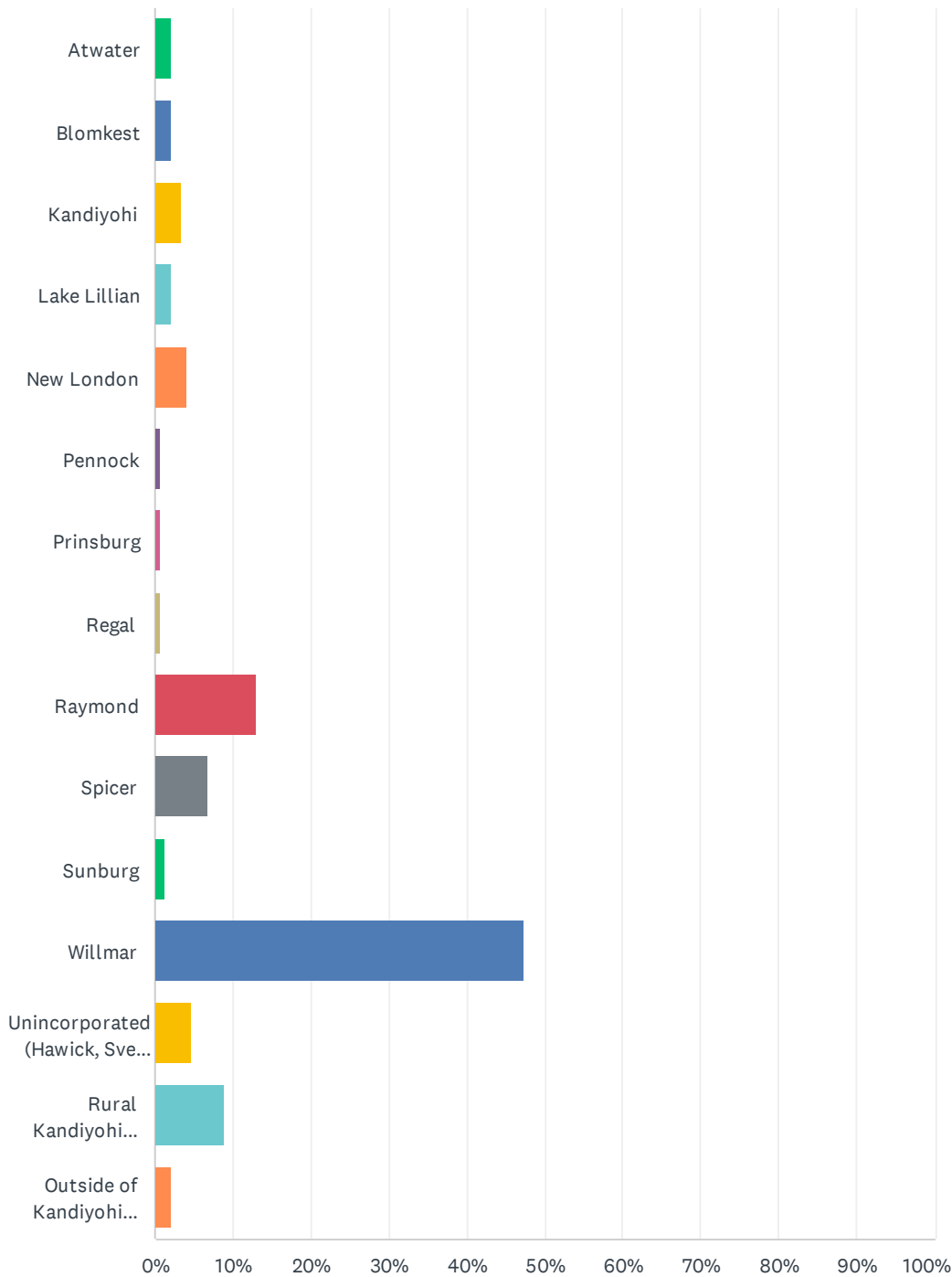
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	2.05%	3
18-30	8.90%	13
31-45	27.40%	40
46-59	23.97%	35
60+	37.67%	55
TOTAL		146

Q2 Where do you live?

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0

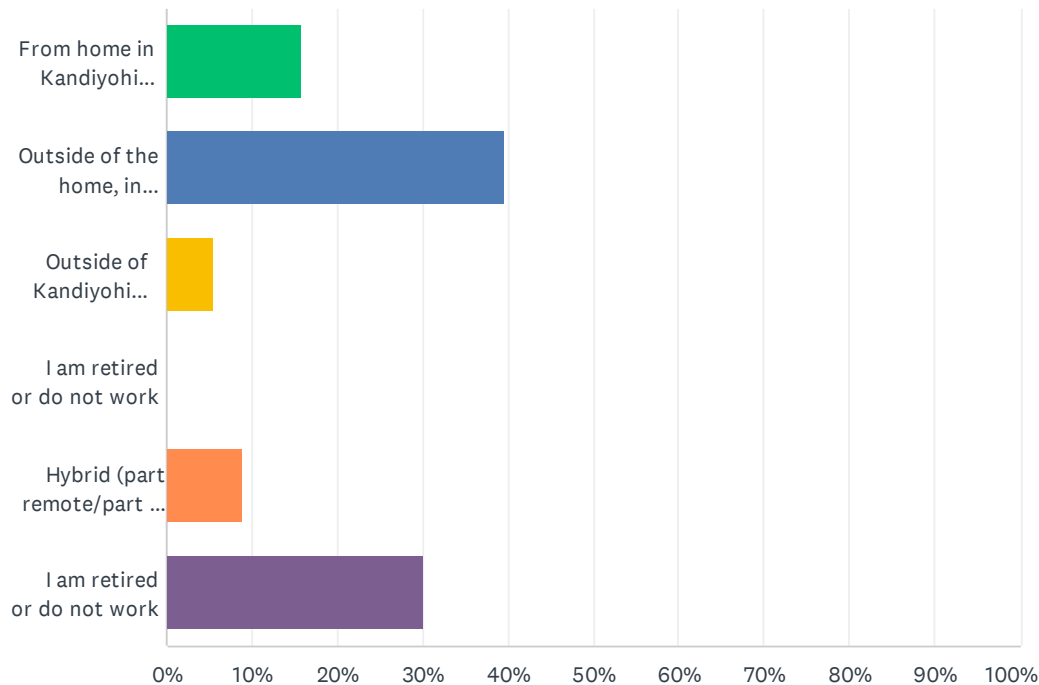


Digital Connection Committee - Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Atwater	2.05%	3
Blomkest	2.05%	3
Kandiyohi	3.42%	5
Lake Lillian	2.05%	3
New London	4.11%	6
Pennock	0.68%	1
Prinsburg	0.68%	1
Regal	0.68%	1
Raymond	13.01%	19
Spicer	6.85%	10
Sunburg	1.37%	2
Willmar	47.26%	69
Unincorporated (Hawick, Svea, Roseland)	4.79%	7
Rural Kandiyohi County (not within any city limits)	8.90%	13
Outside of Kandiyohi County	2.05%	3
TOTAL		146

Q3 Where do you work?

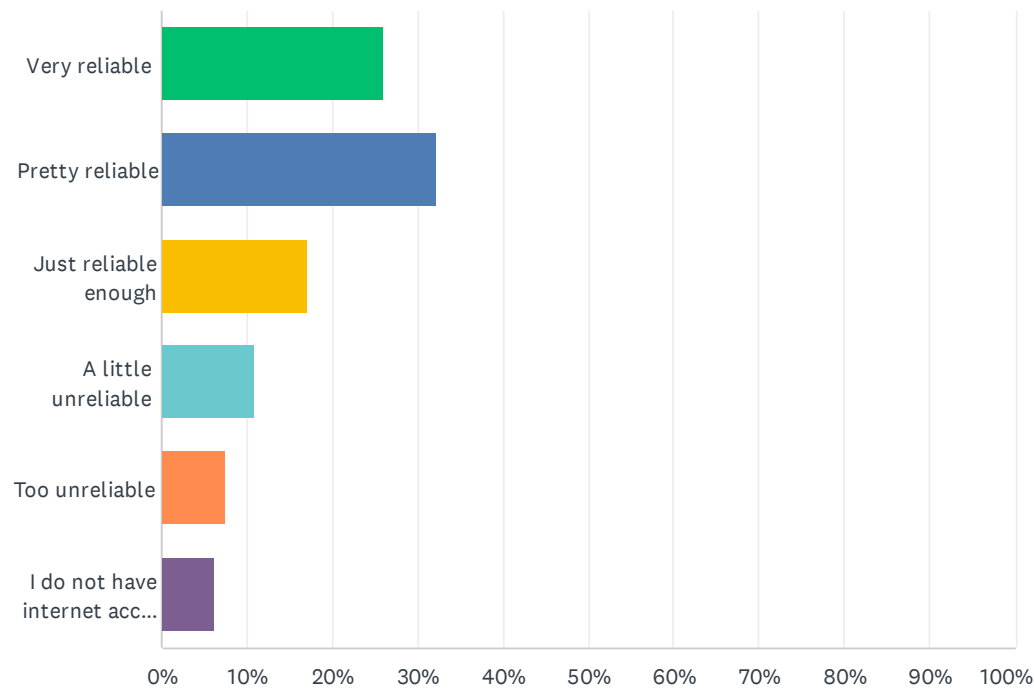
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
From home in Kandiyohi County	15.75%	23
Outside of the home, in Kandiyohi County	39.73%	58
Outside of Kandiyohi County	5.48%	8
I am retired or do not work	0.00%	0
Hybrid (part remote/part in office)	8.90%	13
I am retired or do not work	30.14%	44
TOTAL		146

Q4 On average, how reliable is your internet access at your home or business?

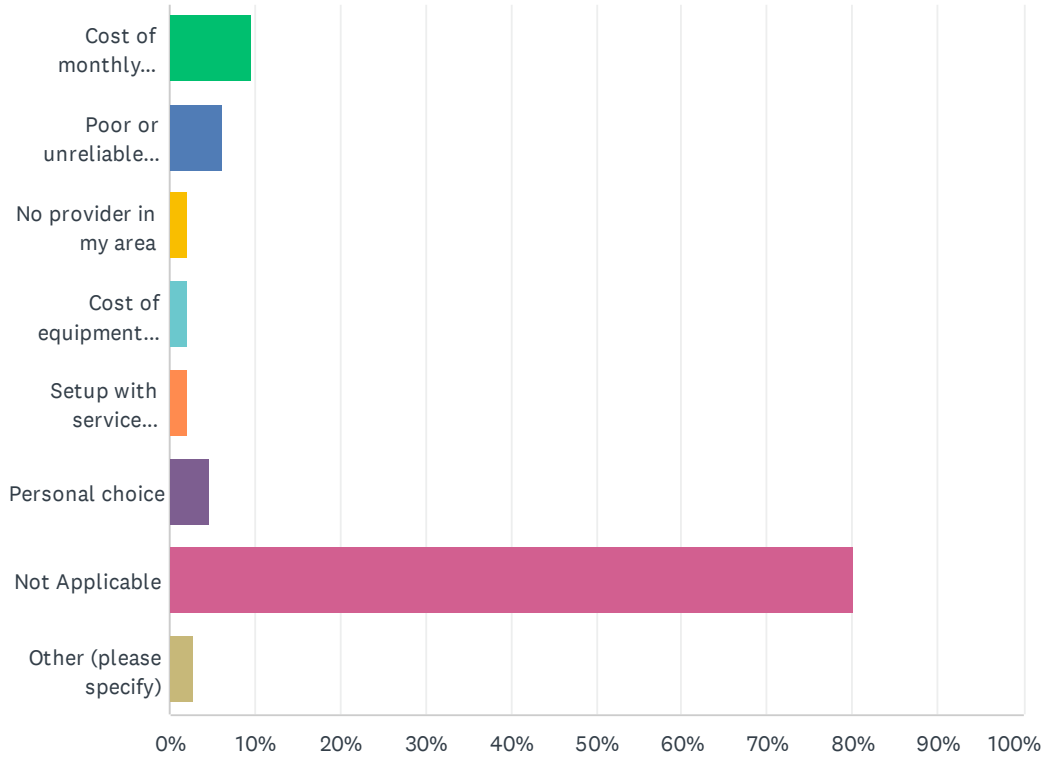
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very reliable	26.03%	38
Pretty reliable	32.19%	47
Just reliable enough	17.12%	25
A little unreliable	10.96%	16
Too unreliable	7.53%	11
I do not have internet access at home	6.16%	9
TOTAL		146

Q5 If you do not have internet access at your home or business, what is the reason? (Check all that apply)

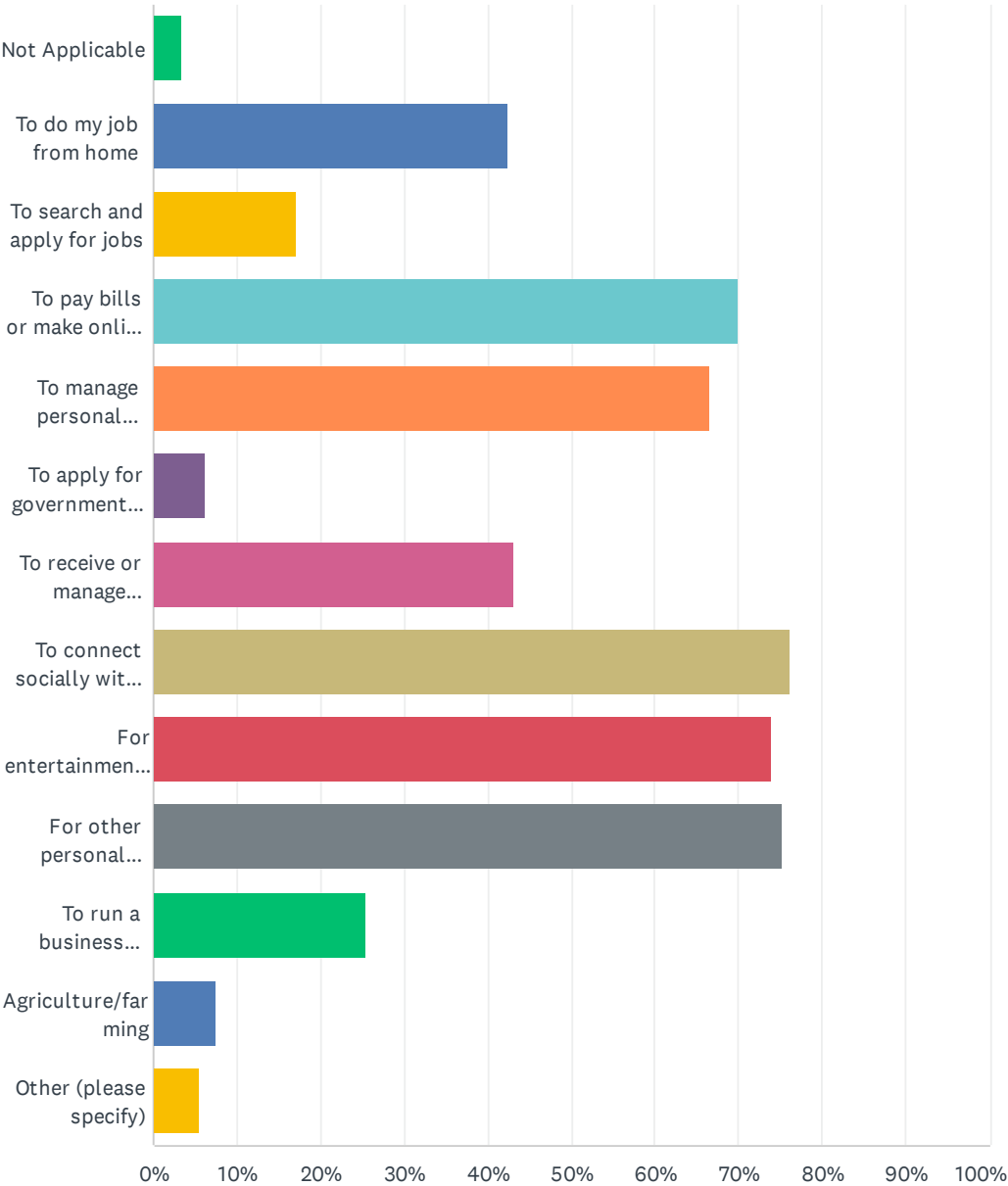
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cost of monthly internet service fee	9.59%	14
Poor or unreliable connection	6.16%	9
No provider in my area	2.05%	3
Cost of equipment (laptop, tablet, etc.)	2.05%	3
Setup with service provider is too difficult (no local customer service, language barriers, etc.)	2.05%	3
Personal choice	4.79%	7
Not Applicable	80.14%	117
Other (please specify)	2.74%	4
Total Respondents: 146		

Q6 What do you use the internet for? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0

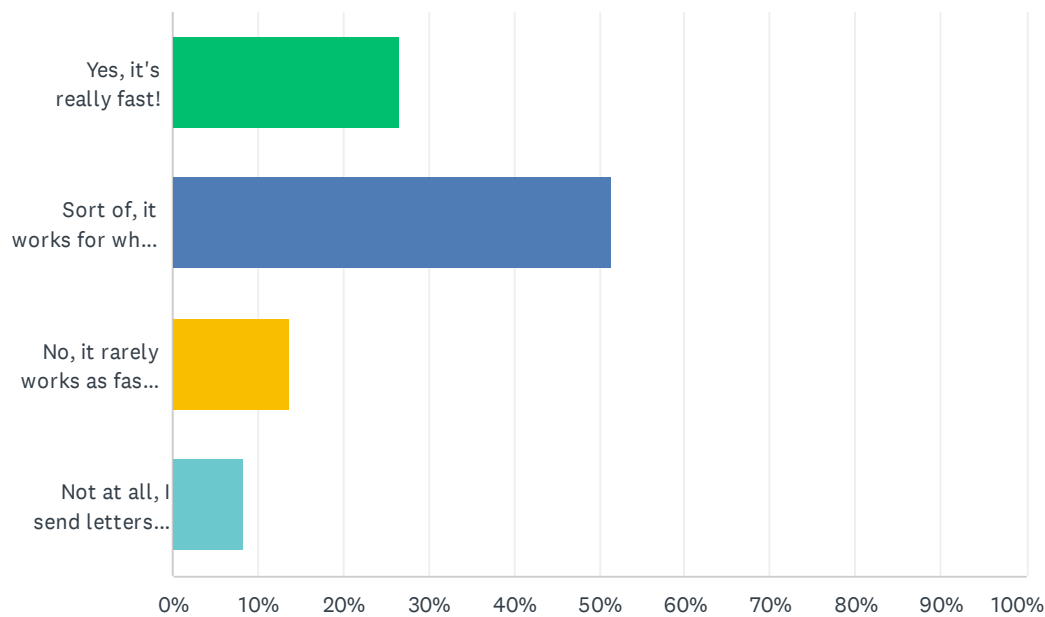


Digital Connection Committee - Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not Applicable	3.42%	5
To do my job from home	42.47%	62
To search and apply for jobs	17.12%	25
To pay bills or make online purchases	69.86%	102
To manage personal finances (like online banking)	66.44%	97
To apply for government programs (such as SNAP benefits or Unemployment Insurance)	6.16%	9
To receive or manage healthcare or therapeutic/support services for myself or a family member	43.15%	63
To connect socially with friends and family	76.03%	111
For entertainment (watching movies/television/etc.)	73.97%	108
For other personal reasons (looking up recipes, Do-It-Yourself videos, finding directions, etc.)	75.34%	110
To run a business (home-based or commercial location)	25.34%	37
Agriculture/farming	7.53%	11
Other (please specify)	5.48%	8
Total Respondents: 146		

Q7 Are you satisfied with your internet speed at your home or business?

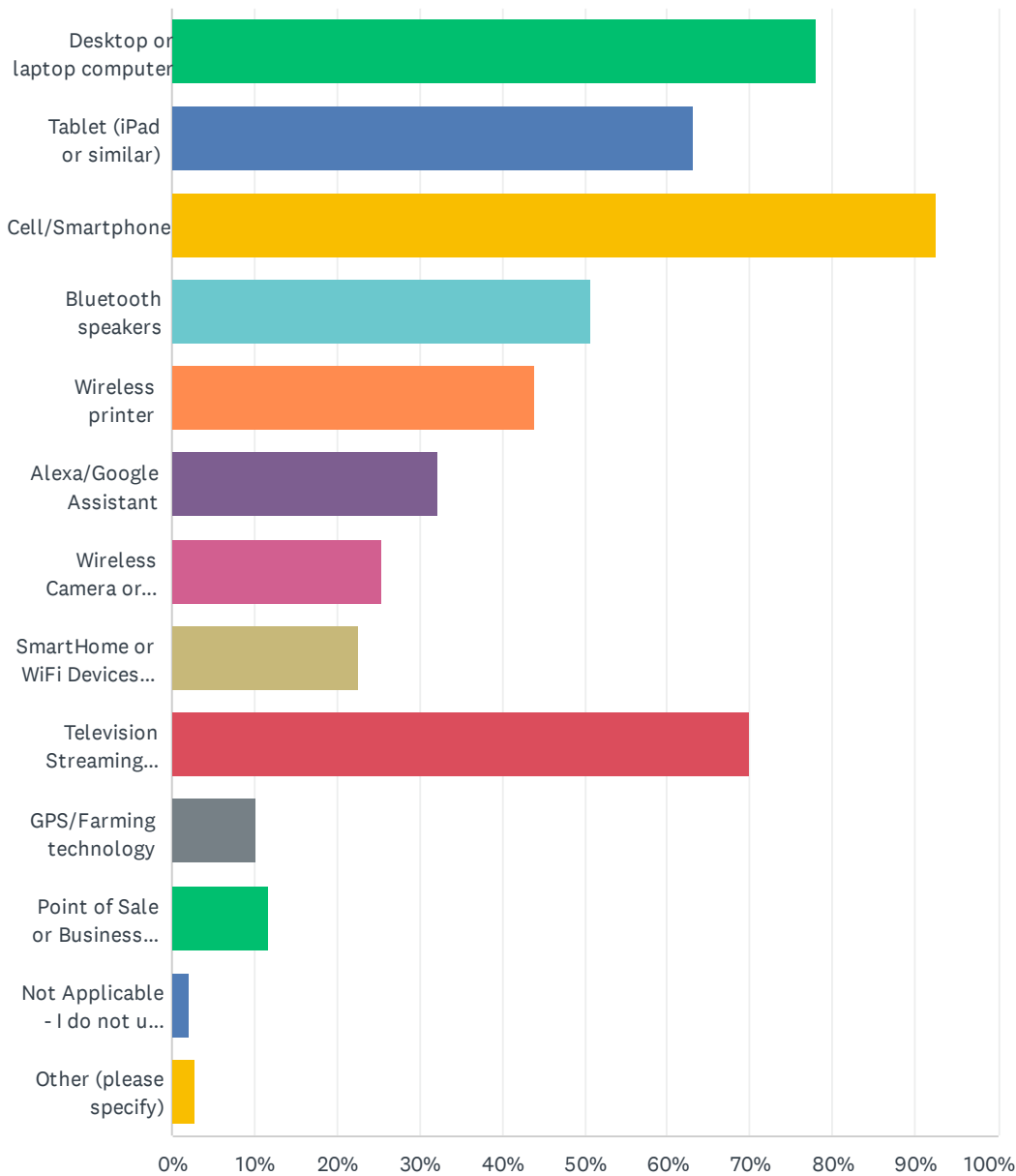
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes, it's really fast!		26.71%	39
Sort of, it works for what I need it to but could be faster		51.37%	75
No, it rarely works as fast as I need it to		13.70%	20
Not at all, I send letters with my pet turtle instead of using the internet service at home		8.22%	12
TOTAL			146

Q8 What kind of digital devices do you use? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0

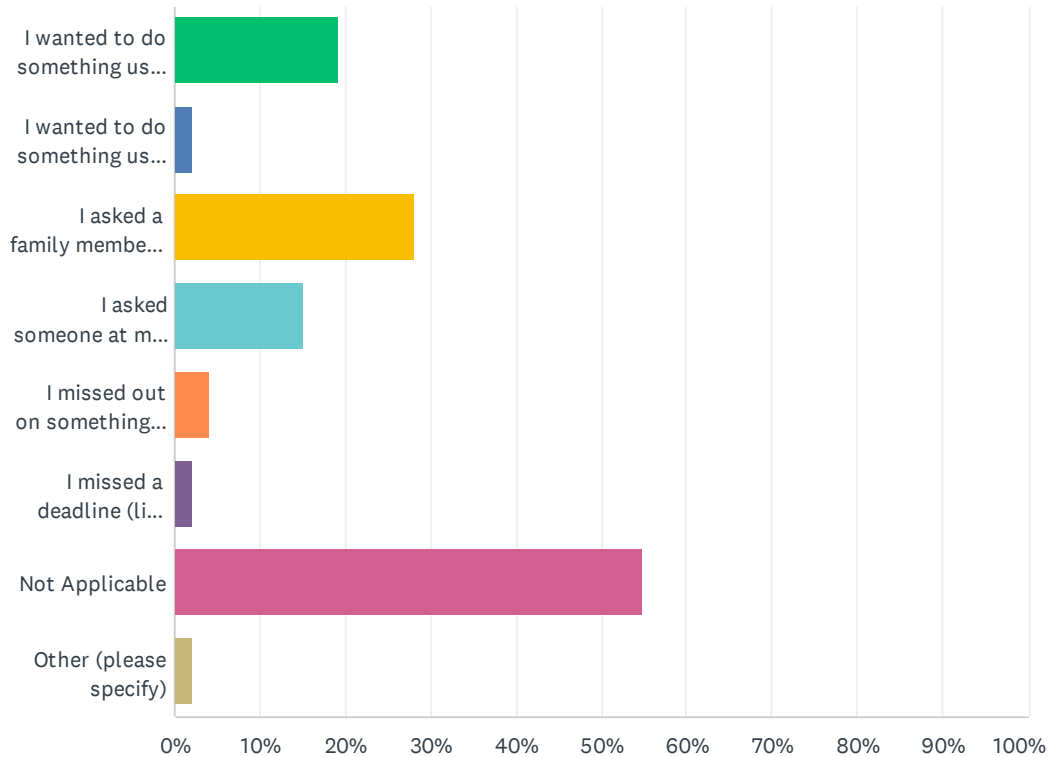


Digital Connection Committee - Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Desktop or laptop computer	78.08%	114
Tablet (iPad or similar)	63.01%	92
Cell/Smartphone	92.47%	135
Bluetooth speakers	50.68%	74
Wireless printer	43.84%	64
Alexa/Google Assistant	32.19%	47
Wireless Camera or Security System with Internet Access	25.34%	37
SmartHome or WiFi Devices (lights, water heater, refrigerator, thermostat, etc.)	22.60%	33
Television Streaming (Roku, Cable Provider, Netflix, Hulu, etc.)	69.86%	102
GPS/Farming technology	10.27%	15
Point of Sale or Business needs	11.64%	17
Not Applicable - I do not use any digital devices	2.05%	3
Other (please specify)	2.74%	4
Total Respondents: 146		

Q9 In the past six (6) months, have you experienced any of the following situations related to your technical skills? (Check all that apply)

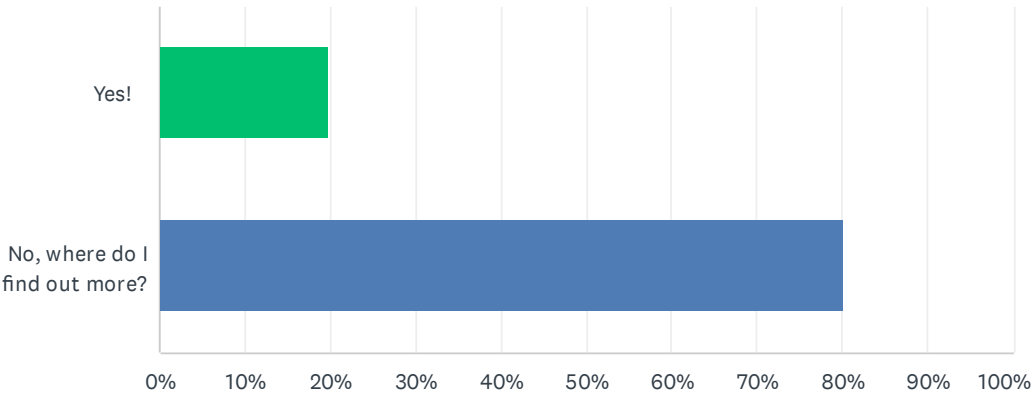
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I wanted to do something using the internet but couldn't figure out how	19.18%	28
I wanted to do something using the internet but couldn't find help in my native language	2.05%	3
I asked a family member or friend for help with the internet and technology	28.08%	41
I asked someone at my work, school or another place for help with the internet and technology	15.07%	22
I missed out on something (like attending an online appointment) because I didn't feel comfortable using digital technology	4.11%	6
I missed a deadline (like paying a bill online or submitting a job application) because I didn't know how to use digital technology	2.05%	3
Not Applicable	54.79%	80
Other (please specify)	2.05%	3
Total Respondents: 146		

Q10 Do you know about discounts that help lower your monthly internet service bill?

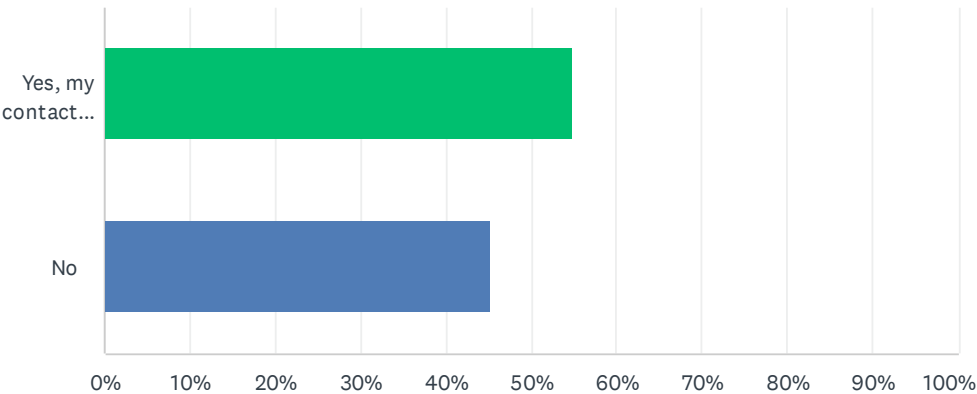
Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes!	19.86%	29
No, where do I find out more?	80.14%	117
TOTAL		146

Q11 Would you like to be contacted about resources such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (which offers a discount of up to \$30 per month for internet service)?

Answered: 115 Skipped: 31



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, my contact information is below	54.78%	63
No	45.22%	52
TOTAL		115

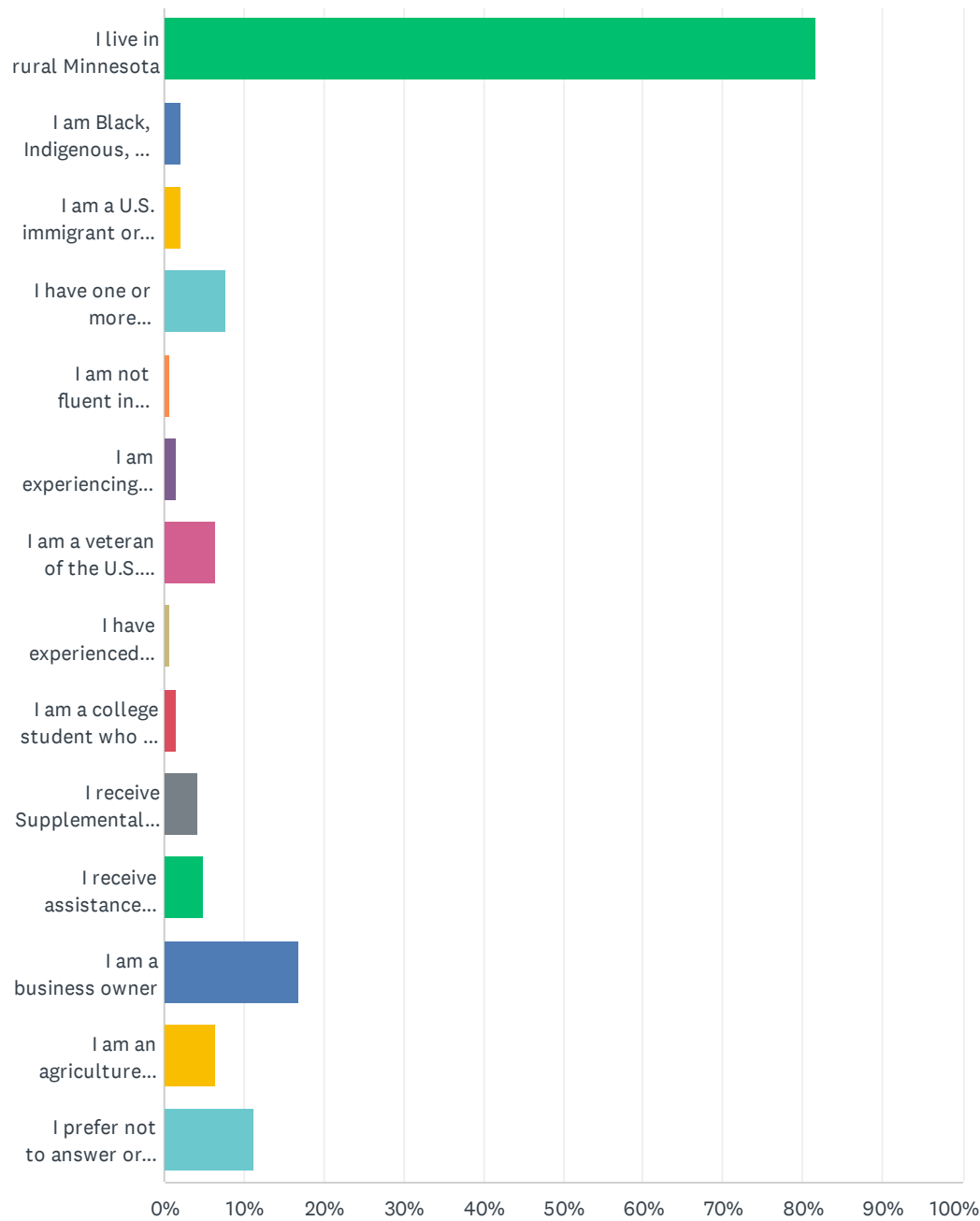
Q12 Contact information for more information about discounts for internet service.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 87

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
First Name	100.00%	59
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	96.61%	57
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	79.66%	47
Phone Number	93.22%	55

Q13 Do you relate to any of the following identities or experiences? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 142 Skipped: 4



Digital Connection Committee - Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in rural Minnesota	81.69%	116
I am Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color	2.11%	3
I am a U.S. immigrant or refugee	2.11%	3
I have one or more disabilities	7.75%	11
I am not fluent in spoken or written English	0.70%	1
I am experiencing poverty or homelessness	1.41%	2
I am a veteran of the U.S. military or a veteran from a military outside the U.S.	6.34%	9
I have experienced incarceration within the last two years	0.70%	1
I am a college student who has received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year	1.41%	2
I receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	4.23%	6
I receive assistance program benefits (e.g., SNAP, Housing Assistance, Free or Reduced School Lunch program, Medicaid, WIC, or others)	4.93%	7
I am a business owner	16.90%	24
I am an agriculture operator	6.34%	9
I prefer not to answer or these do not apply to me	11.27%	16
Total Respondents: 142		

Q14 If you would like to be entered to win a \$25 gift card, please list your contact information below. Winners will be contacted via telephone or email.

Answered: 65 Skipped: 81

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	98.46%	64
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	92.31%	60
Phone Number	93.85%	61

Digital Connection Committees: Asset Inventory List

NOTE: By default, you can only edit the empty white cells on this page.

Organization	Physical Location	Website	Helpers	Resources	Notes
Willmar Public Library	Willmar, MN	www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us	librarians	computer classes for seniors; robotics club for teens; public computers; free wifi; hotspot lending program; public meeting room	not open after 7pm
County townships	Kandiyohi County		Township clerks	Wifi hotspots	Limited hours and parking; not all townships have public wifi access after Covid money ran out
Spectrum	Serves Willmar and a few areas of the county	Charter Spectrum® Official	staff	Affordable Connectivity Program	Local customer service available in Willmar
TDS	Serves Spicer and New London area	Affordable Connectivity Program TDS (tdstelecom.com)	staff	Affordable Connectivity Program	No local customer service office; users need to use the FCC website to apply
LTD	Serves southern part of county in rural areas	LTD Broadband High Speed Internet BroadbandNow	staff		No local customer service office
MVTV	Serves rural areas throughout the county	Broadband Assistance Program - MVTV Wireless	staff	Broadband Assistance Program in partnership with United Way of West Central Minnesota	No local customer service office
Frontier	Serves small area in northwestern part of county	Affordable Connectivity Program Offer Frontier	staff	Affordable Connectivity Program	No local customer service office; users need to use FB Messenger or the FCC website to apply for ACP
Meeker Cooperative/VIBRANT Broadband Internet	Headquartered in Litchfield, MN; serves Meeker, Kandiyohi, Wright, Stearns, McLeod, and Renville counties	Home - Vibrant Broadband (vibrantbb.net)	CEO serves on the Kandiyohi County Broadband Committee		Building FTTH in northeastern townships with a ReConnect grant awarded in June 2023. Waiting to hear about a Border to Border grant award for southeastern townships.
Federated Telephone Cooperative	Headquartered in Chokio, MN with an office in Morris, MN	Federated Telephone Communications Wirevices Chokio & Morris MN (fedtel.net)	staff	Affordable Connectivity Program	Building FTTH in St. John's, Mamre, Arctander, and Dovre townships with a Border to Border grant. Project started in June 2023.
Kandiyohi Power Cooperative	Headquartered between Willmar and Spicer	Home Kandiyohi Power Cooperative (kpcoop.com)	CEO serves on the Kandiyohi County Broadband Committee		
Lake Lillian Library	Lake Lillian, MN	www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us	librarians	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
Atwater Library	Atwater, MN	www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us	librarians	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
Spicer Library	Spicer, MN	www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us	librarians	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
New London Library	New London, MN	www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us	librarians	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
Pennock Community Center	Pennock, MN	Community Center - Pennock, Minnesota - Willmar Lakes Area : Willmar Lakes Area	staff	Wifi hotspots	
Willmar Community Center	Willmar, MN	Community Center (willmarmn.gov)	staff	Wifi hotspots	
Atwater Community Center	Atwater, MN	Recreation & Community Center – City of Atwater	staff	Wifi hotspots	
Prinsburg Community Center	Prinsburg, MN	City of Prinsburg (prinsburgmn.org)	staff	Wifi hotspots	
Arvig	Serves Prinsburg	Assistance & Accessibility Programs My Arvig	staff	Affordable Connectivity Program	No local customer service office
United Community Action Partnership (UCAP)	Serves Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lincoln, Lyon, Meeker, McLeod, Renville, Redwood, Murray, Noles, Pipestone, and Rock counties	Home Page - UCAP (unitedcapmn.org)	UCAP staff	Works with non-English speaking communities	
CLUES	Offices in Minneapolis, Willmar and Austin, MN	Home - Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (clues.org)	CLUES staff	Works with Spanish-speaking residents	
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC	Willmar, MN	www.kandiyohi.com	staff	Technical assistance and host of the Kandiyohi County Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee	

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission Raymond Library Raymond Community Center	Willmar, MN Raymond, MN Raymond, MN	www.mmrdc.org www.pioneerland.lib.mn.us Raymond MN Civic & Commerce (raymond-minnesota.com)	staff librarians staff, volunteers	Technical assistance Wifi hotspots, technical assistance Wifi hotspots	
Kinetic by Windstream Southwest Initiative Foundation	Willmar, MN Serves Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties as well as the Lower Sioux and Upper Sioux Communities	www.windstream.com Who We Are - Southwest Initiative Foundation (swifoundation.org)	staff staff	Affordable Connectivity Program Resource funding	No local customer service office
Willmar Area Community Foundation	Serves the greater Willmar region	Willmar Area Community Foundation - CommunityGiving Welcome to Kandiyohi County, Minnesota (kcmn.us)	staff	Resource funding	
Kandiyohi County city offices		Willmar Public Schools - District 347 / Homepage	City staff	Wifi hotspots	
Willmar Public School		Atwater Cosmos Grove City School Home (acgc.k12.mn.us)	staff, teachers	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
ACGC Public School		KMS Public Schools School Community Christian School Willmar (willmarccs.com)	staff, teachers	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
KMS Public School Community Christian School - Willmar		Central Minnesota Christian School - Prinsburg, MN (cmcschool.org)	staff, teachers	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
Central Minnesota Christian School - Prinsburg		MACCRAY Public Schools / MACCRAY	staff, teachers	Wifi hotspots, technical assistance	
MACCRAY Public School					