

# Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Update

Community Technology Advisory Board Meeting  
March 12, 2024

# Affordable Connectivity Program Background



- In 2021, the Bipartisan Infrastructure law, Congress tasked the FCC to develop and maintain **the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)**—a federal program that offers eligible households a \$30 discount on their monthly internet bill and a one-time discount off the purchase of a laptop, desktop or tablet computers.
- Since launching, over **23 million** households have enrolled

# ACP Program Wind-Down

- The ACP is running out of funds due to lack of additional investment from Congress.
- January 11<sup>th</sup> the FCC issued formal Order to wind-down the ACP.
- February 7<sup>th</sup> the ACP stopped accepting new applications and enrollments.
- March 4<sup>th</sup> the FCC announced April to be the last fully funded month for the ACP. It will only provide a partial reimbursement in May.
- June, 2024, the ACP will no longer support any benefits to enrolled households.

# Impact on Seattle

- **38,248** Seattle households have enrolled in the ACP, which is **44.35%** of all those eligible for the benefit.
- The zip codes with the most families affected are:
  - **Downtown Seattle** (98104) with 3,722 enrolled
  - **Southeast Seattle** (98118) with 3,733 enrolled, and
  - **Beacon Hill** (98144) 3,070 enrolled.
- Internet costs will increase for our most vulnerable residents
- Residents may be forced to move to slower speed plans due to cost.
- We are losing a key component of our strategy to bridge the affordability gap in Seattle.

# Seattle IT Response

- **Inform** the public about consumer protections for ACP households
  - Ability to opt-out, report issues FCC consumer complaint center
- **Conduct outreach** to build awareness about low-cost internet alternatives.
  - Xfinity Internet Essentials \$9.95/mo, up to 50 Mbps
  - Xfinity Internet Essentials Plus, \$29.95/mo., up to 100 Mbps
  - Astound, Simply Internet, \$9.95/mo., up to 50 Mbps
  - InterConnection, Mobile Citizen Hotspot & Internet Subscription bundles
- **Collaborate** with our community partners to assist residents and share resources.
  - Digital Navigators, Tech Matching Fund recipients, other partners
- **Encourage** ISPs to offer and improve low-cost options.



# Future of ACP

- Continue to advocate for the **Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act of 2024** to provide \$7 billion to continue ACP through the end of the year.
  - The bill has 170 cosponsors, Republican, Democratic, House, Senate, Urban, Rural support.
  - Mayor Harrell has been a leader to urge continued funding.
  - [Don't Disconnect US \(dontdisconnectus.org\)](https://dontdisconnectus.org)
- Long-term solution could be the Universal Service Fund (Lifeline)
- Explore other models i.e.) Local internet subsidy in Albemarle County, VA [White Paper](#)

# Stay Tuned....

- Updates on Tech Talk Blog [www.techTalk.seattle.gov](http://www.techTalk.seattle.gov) and website [Free Discounted Internet - Tech | seattle.gov](http://Free Discounted Internet - Tech | seattle.gov)
- **March 13<sup>th</sup> @ 1pm** , FCC Webinar “[Consumer Webinar: Affordable Connectivity Program Wind-Down | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](http://Consumer Webinar: Affordable Connectivity Program Wind-Down | Federal Communications Commission (fcc.gov))
- **March 21<sup>st</sup> @ 12:00pm** DELN, “ACP Ending, What Can We Do?” [digitalequitykc.org/upcoming-meetings](http://digitalequitykc.org/upcoming-meetings) Digital Equity Learning Network (DELN) of King County hosting a panel of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) presenting their low-cost internet plans and process when ACP ends.