

# Falmouth Digital Equity Plan

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## PROJECT KICKOFF MEETING

September 11, 2024  
Falmouth Town Hall

**MBI**  
MASSACHUSETTS  
BROADBAND INSTITUTE

  
at the MassTech  
Collaborative

  
CAPE COD  
COMMISSION



# INTRODUCTIONS

## Please share your:

- Name
- Organization
- Role
- First memory of using the internet or a device

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## AGENDA

- Introductions
- Project overview
- Defining key terms
- Existing conditions in Falmouth
- Community engagement exercises
- Wrap-up

# Project Overview

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# Background



*This project was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds.*

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## WHAT IS A DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN?

# Purpose of the plan

- 
- Understand current landscape of digital equity
  - Prepare for future funding opportunities
  - Equitable implementation: ensure that all benefit from infrastructural and programmatic investments
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## WHAT IS A DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN?

# Plan Elements

1

**Introduction & Town Vision for Digital Equity**

2

**Current State of Digital Equity**

*Existing conditions, knowledge gaps, challenges, and opportunities*

3

**Community Engagement Process**

*Who was engaged and how were they engaged*

4

**Key Findings**

*Discoveries from data collection and community engagement*

5

**Recommendations**

*Recommendations for driving solutions, funding, and evaluation*

# Tasks and Timeline





# Project Roles

## Commission staff:

- Project management
- Conduct stakeholder & community outreach
- Collect and compile data
- Facilitate community workshop
- Draft digital equity plan

## Town of Falmouth & Falmouth MLP:

- Inform a shared town vision & goals
- Local guidance & sounding board
- Support outreach
- Participate in community workshop
- Identify implementation roles for town & MLP
- Implement digital equity plan

## Community members:

- Contribute to town vision & goals
- Provide information that will inform plan: challenges, opportunities, recommendations
- Engage in community outreach activities
- Take the MBI survey
- Attend community workshop
- Review plan and submit public comments
- Support town implementation of digital equity plan

# What is Digital Equity?

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# Digital Equity: *The Goal*

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“A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.”

*National Digital Inclusion Alliance*

# Components of Digital Equity

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## Internet Connection

Affordable, fast, reliable,  
accessible.



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## Devices

Adequate, needs-  
appropriate, affordable,  
accessible.



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## Literacy/Skills

Ability to use technology,  
functionality, trust,  
privacy concerns.

# Covered Populations

## Digital Equity (DE) & Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)

### Covered Populations and Underrepresented Communities

*Identify groups and communities disproportionately impacted by digital inequity*



Low-income households



Indigenous and Native American persons



People with language barriers



Aging individuals



Members of ethnic and religious minorities



Racial and ethnic minorities



Incarcerated individuals



Women



Rural inhabitants



Veterans



LGBTQI+ persons



Persons adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality



Persons of color



Persons with disabilities



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## Demographics and Internet Connectivity

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Data Reviewed

## American Community Survey, 2022 5-year Estimate Tables

- **DP02**, Selected Social Characteristics In The United States
- **DP03**, Selected Economic Characteristics In The United States
- **DP04**, Selected Housing Characteristics
- **DP05**, ACS 5-Year Demographic and Housing Estimates
- **S0101**, Age And Sex
- **S1602**, Limited English Speaking Households
- **B16005**, Nativity By Language Spoken At Home By Ability To Speak English For The Population 5 Years And Over
- **S1701**, Poverty Status In The Past 12 Months
- **S1901**, Income In The Past 12 Months (In 2022 Inflation-adjusted Dollars)
- **S2802**, Types of Internet Subscriptions by Selected Characteristics
- **B25093**, Age of Householder by Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months
- **B25072**, Age of Householder by Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months
- **B01001A - B01001H**, Sex by Age and Race

- **B19037A** though **B19037H**, Age and Race of Householder by Household Income in the Past 12 Months

## 2020 Decennial Census Tables

- **DP1**, Profile Of General Population And Housing Characteristics

## MA Department of Secondary and Elementary Education

- **2023-24** School Attending Children
- **2023-24** Enrollment By Race/Gender Report

## Other

- **Affordable Connectivity Program** Enrollments And Claims, Through December 2023
- **FCC National Broadband Map Data**
- **Massachusetts Broadband Institute** Digital Equity Survey, Preliminary Falmouth Results

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

# General Demographics

2022 American  
Community Survey  
5-Year Estimates

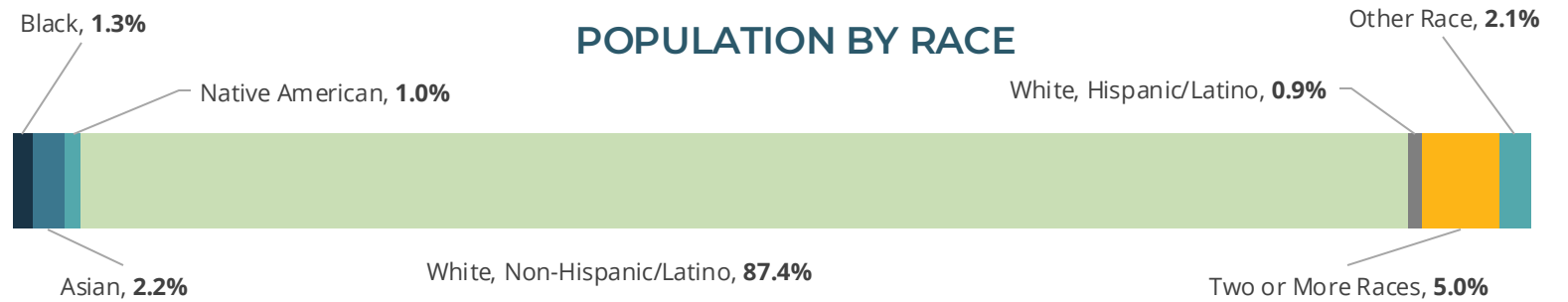
# Town of Falmouth

## KEY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

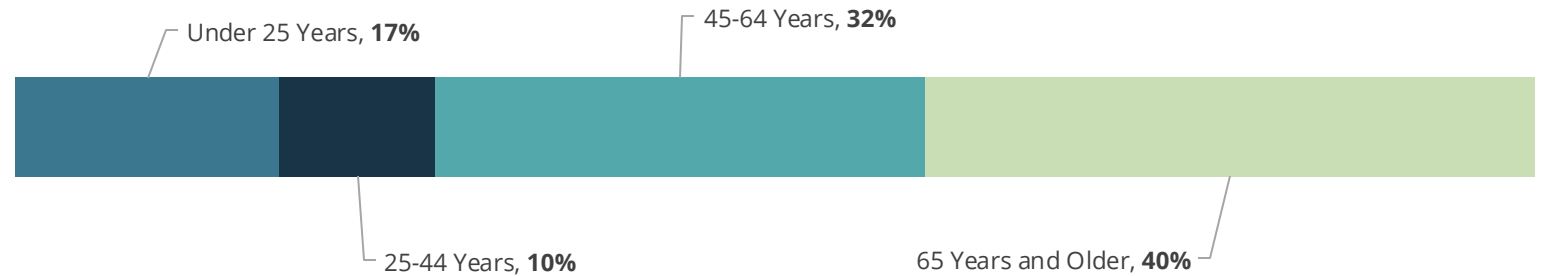
POPULATION <b>32,694</b>	HOUSING UNITS <b>22,138</b>	HOUSEHOLDS <b>14,237</b>	OWNERS <b>11,966</b> (84.0%)	BROADBAND <b>91.5%</b>	MEDIAN SALES PRICE <b>\$705,000</b> (2022 Home Sales)	HOUSEHOLD INCOME <b>\$89,809</b> Median
MEDIAN AGE <b>56.5</b>	SEASONAL <b>6,691</b> (30.2%)	HOUSEHOLD SIZE <b>2.27</b>	RENTERS <b>2,271</b> (16.0%)	NO COMPUTER <b>4.7%</b>		FAMILIES IN POVERTY <b>4.5%</b>

(Various Sources)

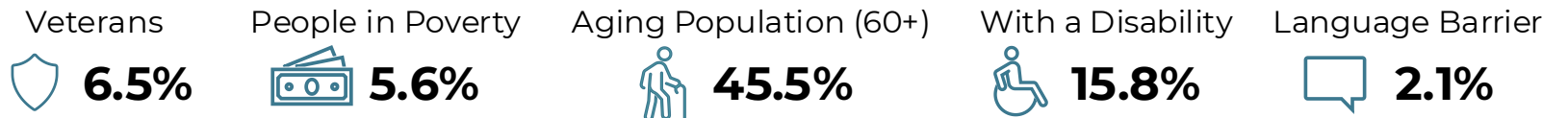
## POPULATION BY RACE



## AGE DIVERSITY



## COVERED POPULATIONS





# EXISTING CONDITIONS

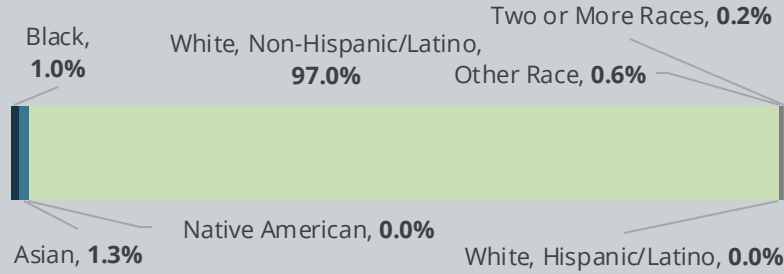
# General Demographics

2022 American Community Survey  
5-Year Estimates

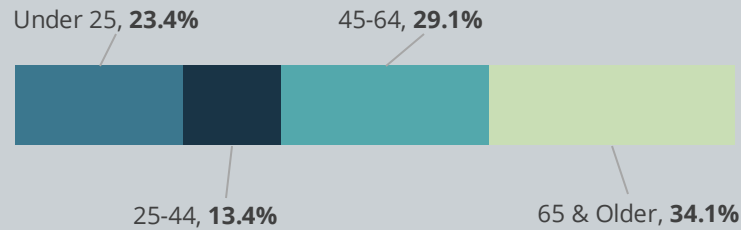
## Census Tract 143

West Falmouth

POPULATION: 3,748



MEDIAN AGE: 58.1



### HOUSING AND INCOME

HOUSING UNITS <b>3,627</b>	HOUSEHOLDS <b>1,541</b>	OWNER UNITS <b>1,491</b> (96.8%)	HOUSEHOLD INCOME <b>\$149,583</b>
SEASONAL UNITS <b>754</b> (25.3%)	HOUSEHOLD SIZE <b>2.87</b>	RENTER UNITS <b>50</b> (3.2%)	% HH POVERTY <b>2.9%</b>

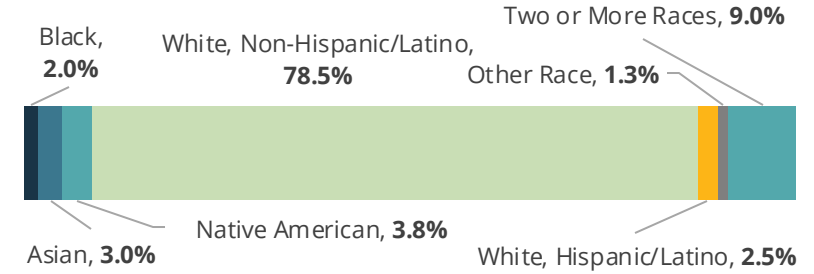
### CONNECTIVITY



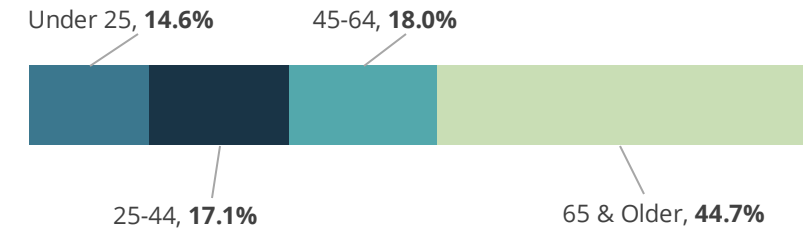
## Census Tract 148

Downtown/Falmouth Heights

POPULATION: 3,679



MEDIAN AGE: 62.5



### HOUSING AND INCOME

HOUSING UNITS <b>2,964</b>	HOUSEHOLDS <b>1,905</b>	OWNER UNITS <b>1,000</b> (52.5%)	HOUSEHOLD INCOME <b>\$50,594</b>
SEASONAL UNITS <b>250</b> (10.7%)	HOUSEHOLD SIZE <b>2.65</b>	RENTER UNITS <b>905</b> (47.5%)	% HH POVERTY <b>9.2%</b>

### CONNECTIVITY



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

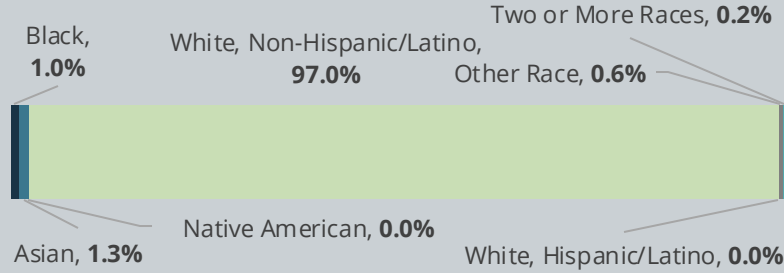
# Covered Populations

2022 American  
Community Survey  
5-Year Estimates

## Census Tract 143

West Falmouth

POPULATION: 3,748



Veterans  
**6.5%**



People in Poverty  
**5.6%**



Aging Population (60+)  
**45.5%**



With a Disability  
**15.8%**

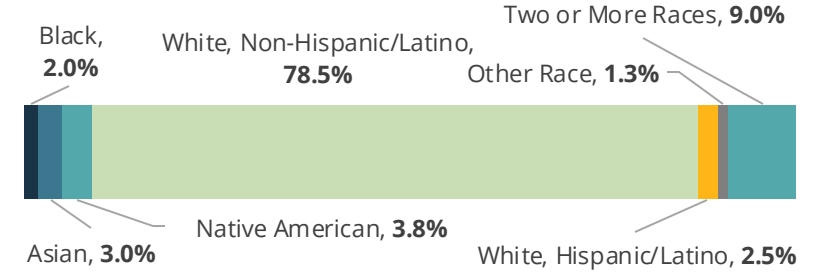


With Language Barrier  
**2.1%**

## Census Tract 148

Downtown/Falmouth Heights

POPULATION: 3,679



Veterans  
**8.5%**



People in Poverty  
**22.6%**



Aging Population (60+)  
**53.0%**



With a Disability  
**24.5%**



With Language Barrier  
**4.3%**

**EXISTING  
CONDITIONS**

**Falmouth  
Public Schools  
Student Population**

**Falmouth Public Schools**

	2013-14	2023-24
<b>Enrolled*</b>	3,541	2,892
<b>Race*</b>		
White	2,958 (83.5%)	2,153 (74.4%)
Black	150 (4.2%)	148 (5.1%)
Asian	92 (2.6%)	48 (1.7%)
Hispanic	124 (3.5%)	302 (10.4%)
Native American	43 (1.2%)	33 (1.1%)
Multi-Race	170 (4.8%)	203 (7.0%)
<b>Characteristics*</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
First Language Not English	122 (3.4%)	343 (11.9%)
English Language Learner	49 (1.4%)	218 (7.5%)
Students With Disabilities	674 (18.7%)	714 (24.4%)
Low Income	1,042 (29.4%)	1,141 (39.5%)
High Needs	1,458 (40.5%)	1,562 (53.3%)

\*Includes all students enrolled, regardless of hometown.

**SOURCE:** Mass. DESE 2023-24 Enrollment By Race/Gender Report

**Falmouth**

**School-Aged  
Children**

<b>Total</b>	<b>3,302</b>
<b>Local Public</b>	<b>2,644</b>
Vocational	200
Collaboratives	26
Charter	119
Other Districts	71
Private/Parochial	200
Home Schooled	42

*Total Public Schools 3,060*

**SOURCE:** Mass. DESE  
2023-24 School Attending  
Children Report

# Student Diversity

School	Grades	Enrolled	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Multi-Racial	Native American	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander
East Falmouth Elementary	K-4	298	69.5%	7.7%	9.7%	3.0%	9.1%	1.0%	0.0%
Teaticket Elementary	K-4	255	72.9%	5.5%	11.0%	1.6%	8.2%	0.8%	0.0%
Mullen-Hall Elementary	K-4	376	73.1%	1.6%	13.8%	2.7%	7.7%	1.1%	0.0%
North Falmouth Elementary	K-4	297	82.8%	1.3%	7.7%	1.3%	6.1%	0.7%	0.0%
Morse Pond School	5-6	480	72.5%	5.8%	12.1%	1.7%	7.3%	0.6%	0.0%
Lawrence	7-8	459	74.7%	4.8%	10.2%	0.9%	7.6%	1.7%	0.0%
Falmouth High	9-12	727	75.4%	7.0%	8.9%	1.2%	5.2%	1.5%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,892</b>	<b>74.4%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

•Includes all students enrolled, regardless of hometown.

 Townwide Student Population

**SOURCE:** Mass. DESE 2023-24 Enrollment By Selected Population Report

EXISTING  
CONDITIONS

# Falmouth Public Schools Student Population

EXISTING  
CONDITIONS

Falmouth  
Public Schools  
Student Population

## Selected Populations

School	Grades	Enrolled	First Language Not English	English Language Learner	Students With Disabilities	Low Income	High Needs
East Falmouth Elementary	K-4	298	13.1%	12.1%	41.6%	53.0%	74.5%
Teaticket Elementary	K-4	255	14.5%	11.8%	24.3%	53.7%	65.1%
Mullen-Hall Elementary	K-4	376	17.0%	13.6%	17.6%	39.9%	53.2%
North Falmouth Elementary	K-4	297	6.7%	4.4%	14.8%	22.9%	35.0%
Morse Pond School	5-6	480	10.4%	4.4%	21.0%	36.9%	48.8%
Lawrence	7-8	459	12.0%	6.5%	26.4%	41.8%	54.9%
Falmouth High	9-12	727	10.7%	5.1%	21.6%	35.6%	47.3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,892</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>

•Includes all students enrolled, regardless of hometown.

 Townwide Student Population | **RED** = 25% or above.

**SOURCE:** Mass. DESE 2023-24 Enrollment By Selected Population Report

# Devices in Use by Household

<b>More Than One Device</b>	West Falmouth Tract 143	Falmouth/ North Falmouth Tract 144.02	East Falmouth Tract 145	Davisville/ Seacoast Shores Tract 146	Teaticket Tract 147	Downtown/ Falmouth Heights Tract 148	Woods Hole Tract 149
<b>Desktop Or Laptop</b>	90.5%	89.0%	83.1%	90.2%	86.3%	<b>66.4%</b>	92.0%
<b>Other Computer</b>	0.0%	4.5%	0.5%	3.4%	1.9%	<b>3.1%</b>	1.7%
<b>Smartphone</b>	94.8%	94.3%	83.3%	90.6%	84.6%	<b>75.9%</b>	88.2%
<b>Tablet/Portable Wireless Computer</b>	67.4%	70.0%	70.4%	70.5%	61.5%	<b>58.7%</b>	67.8%
<b>Likely Multiple Connections</b>	86.5%	84.0%	83.7%	77.2%	85.4%	<b>69.6%</b>	76.6%
<b>One Device Only</b>							
<b>Desktop Or Laptop</b>	3.2%	1.6%	4.0%	3.4%	4.8%	<b>5.7%</b>	6.1%
<b>Other Computer</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>	0.0%
<b>Smartphone</b>	5.5%	3.5%	4.6%	3.7%	3.7%	<b>12.5%</b>	1.7%
<b>Tablet/Portable Wireless Computer</b>	1.0%	1.7%	0.7%	1.5%	0.0%	<b>5.8%</b>	0.3%
<b>No Computer</b>	1.0%	0.4%	8.3%	3.2%	7.4%	<b>10.7%</b>	2.9%

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Internet Coverage

## Internet Service Providers in Falmouth Marketing Speeds: Self-Reported to FCC

### FCC Methodology

- A census block is considered to have access if at least one broadband provider **advertises speeds of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload** of higher.
- Download and upload speed represent maximum advertised speeds providers report making available.
- A property is considered connected if a provider can install connections within 10 business days.

		<b>Download</b> (Max MBPS)	<b>Upload</b> (Max MBPS)	<b>Coverage</b>
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### Cable

Xfinity	1200	35	539	2.6%
Xfinity	2000	200	20,320	97.2%
<i>Combined Townwide Coverage</i>				<i>99.8%</i>

### Licensed Fixed Wireless

T-Mobile	100	20	2,039	9.8%
VERIZON	200	30	212	1.0%
VERIZON	300	20	2,426	11.6%

### Fiber-to-Premises

Xfinity	100	100	9	0.04%
Xfinity	200	200	6	0.03%
Xfinity	300	300	5	0.02%
Xfinity	500	500	12	0.06%
Xfinity	1000+	1000+	8	0.04%

**NOTE:** OpenCape and other similar services are not required to self-report advertised speeds to the FCC and are not included in the data.

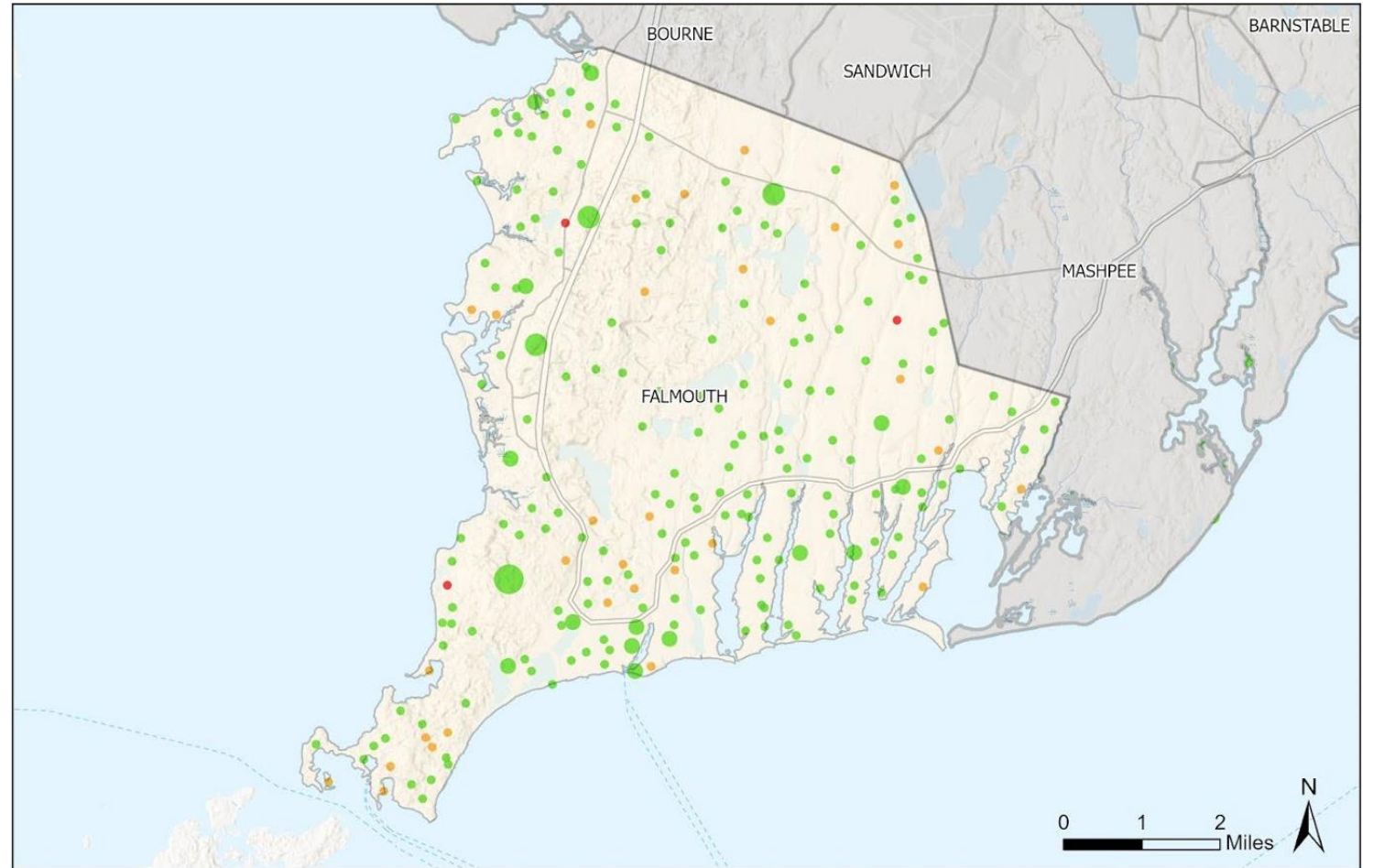
# Average Download Speeds

EXISTING  
CONDITIONS

## Internet Coverage

Fixed and Mobile  
Broadband Needs  
Assessment

CTC Technology and Energy  
Prepared for Barnstable County



Number of Speed Tests and  
Average Download Speed

Town of Falmouth  
Barnstable County  
Massachusetts

Speed (Mbps)

- Above 100
- 25 - 100
- Below 25

Tests Taken

- 100
- 200
- 300
- 400

Ookla speed tests by census block.

Created: February 7, 2024 by CTC Technology & Energy  
Basemap: ESRI World Terrain  
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 (2011) State Plane  
Massachusetts

Data Sources:  
- MassGIS Data: Municipalities  
- Ookla (2022)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Data from Expired Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

As of Feb. 1, 2024

### ACP Provided:

- Service discount up to \$30/month
- Service discount up to \$75/month on qualifying Tribal lands
- Device discount up to \$100 for a qualifying device

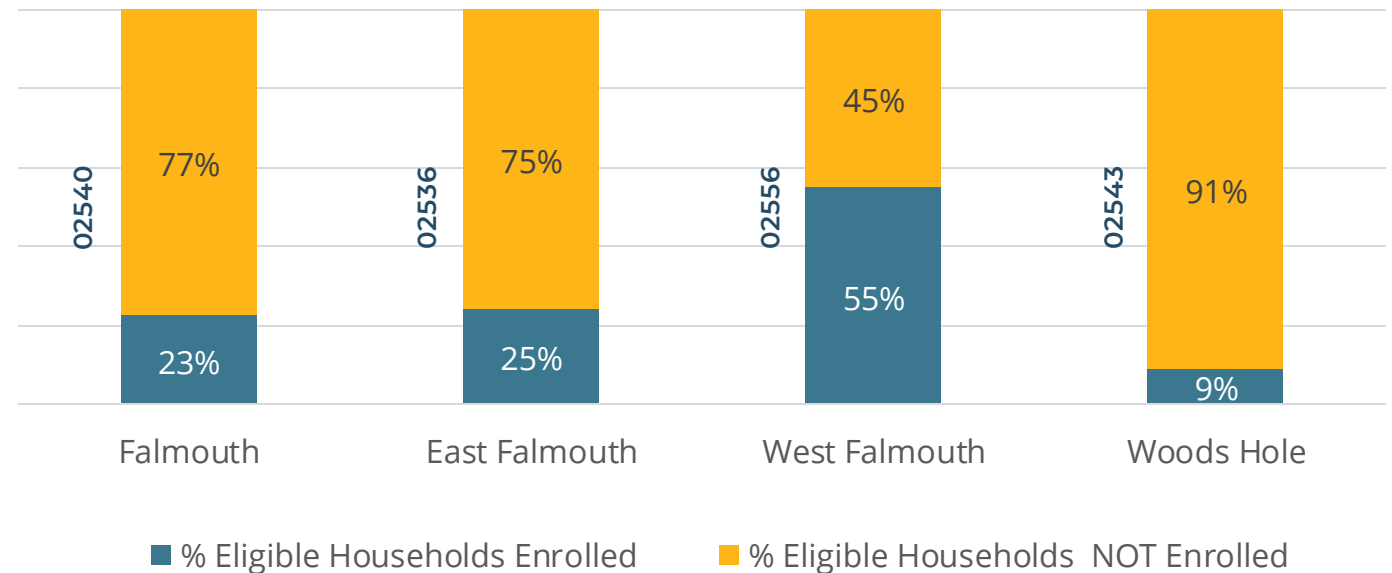
The **Affordable Connectivity Program** expired in April 2024. It was an FCC benefit program to assist households afford broadband connections for work, school, healthcare and more.



### Townwide:

- Eligible Households: **3,600** (Appx)  
11% of households
- Households Enrolled: **891** (25%)

### Missed Connections





# Community Engagement

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Overview & Group Brainstorm

# Community Engagement Overview

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Learn from **practitioners** and **community members** on **challenges** within the digital world and **opportunities** to advance digital inclusion.

- **Public participation** to inform which will be developed by the community for the community.
- Continued **collection of data**.
- **Outreach responsive to diverse needs** that yields equitable participation.
- Engagement with **populations most impacted** by the digital divide.



# Community Engagement Strategy

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## Digital Equity Survey (MBI)

- Targeted and broad distribution of survey by entities across town.
- Offered online and in paper, in multiple languages.

## Community Pop-Ups

- Multiple (approx. 3) pop-ups hosted at welcoming local spaces to meet people where they are at in the community.
- Informal, semi-structured conversations with residents to solicit authentic feedback.

## Stakeholder Interviews

- 1-to-1 and email-based communication between Commission staff and key stakeholders to inform final plan.

## Community Workshop

- Includes presentation of project, data, and ample time for community discussion and feedback.
- Attendees include municipal and community-based organization staff as well as the public broadly.



# Community Workshop

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- Hosted in welcoming community location, ideally with a connection to covered populations.
- Presentation: overview of plan, key definitions, and data.
- Exercises:
  - Asset mapping
  - Challenges and opportunities
  - Visioning and goal-setting
- Opportunities for feedback and questions.

# Digital Equity in Falmouth

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What does digital equity look like in Falmouth?

What challenges exist for Falmouth community members?

How does your organization or department contribute to digital equity? Do you offer services that support residents with the internet or technology?

What other entities support Falmouth community members with internet, technology, and other related needs? Who else is part of this landscape?

# Planning Questions

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## Pop Ups

Which populations should we target for pop ups? Which community organizations should we partner with to host? Select 3 venues.

## Community Workshop

Where should the community workshop take place? Other logistical considerations (date, time, other accommodations)?

## Vision and Goals

What would a successful digital equity plan look like for the Town of Falmouth? What would you like this process to achieve?



# Next Steps

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- Town project webpage and outreach toolkit.
- Share digital equity survey with community.
- Commission team will reach out individually to plan community engagement activities.
- Community workshop outreach and planning.