

White Earth Blandin Broadband Community

Pre-Registration Survey Results

Final 9/16/20

Please describe how your home or business Internet [Broadband] connection supports or hinders your online world.

1. Home - No DSL Only option is Satellite (Hughes Net) which doesn't work well for students doing online courses or Zoom
2. My connection is slow quite often and lately, it has been going down more often than it ever has before.
3. we have fairly good internet connection I would be lost without it. I do a lot of my paperwork online.
4. Internet is very spotty, expensive monthly utility costs, expensive install costs
5. Works fine
6. In this time of distance learning, schools are finding that our rural and village areas cannot support a good internet link for school kids. We rely on the internet to educate our young learners and it is hard to give them equal education when they live in an area where families either cannot afford it or the area doesn't support a good connection. Schools are supplying the laptops but it does help when they cannot connect to their school and teachers. Creates gaps that is certainly not fair for anyone.
7. I need the internet to continue working. It is the way I get the support I need to do my job
8. Internet is expensive
9. I am connected through Hugh's Net at home. I am connected to the internet at work.
10. I live on a farm and the Internet is my connection to the world. I need the internet in order to do my job.
11. These days internet is a huge deal, I work from home, my kids are attending school through online resources and majority of the word operates with internet to complete any paperwork needed.
- 12.
13. Since the pandemic, I do almost all my meetings online via zoom, skype, etc. Without the internet, I would not be able to conduct business on daily basis. I utilize the internet for email, program tracking, and so much more. When I have a slow connection I am unable to work at my full potential. When the connection is down I am unable to work. At home I utilize the internet for online schooling, to pay bills, banking. I also use the internet to read ebooks for school and personal use. We only have smart TV's so we use the internet to watch tv - which I seldomly do. However, without the internet, I would not be able to do many things at home either. And my teenager would act like it is the end of the world.
14. My business internet appears more than adequate for work, however, my home internet is another thing. Sometimes the connection goes down for hours, or is sporadic.
15. The White Earth website is a network so at times it hinders progress because we have to have administrative permission to access and use different sites.

16. As a librarian, my internet connect is vital to gathering information and resources for myself and for my patrons/students.
17. I have home internet services
18. The internet connection for both my home and work are very important to me. Since I'm in my last year of master's school, my whole program is online so it's very important that I have good Wi-Fi so that I can participate in class.
19. It supports my online work
- 20.
21. Much of my business is reliant on quality internet connection as most daily operations are completed through online mechanism and communication. (email, virtual classrooms/meetings, etc.)
22. Internet is slow
- 23.
24. The COVID-19 has resulted in schools shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. Unfortunately, many of Circle of Life Academy's students, families and some staff are without reliable internet access. This means that they struggle to participate in digital learning, which in turn negatively impacts the effectiveness and overall success of learning and teaching; this gap is also seen across countries and between income brackets within countries.
25. We have very limited broadband service on the Reservation
26. NA
- 27.
28. Arvig does not have fiber optics so we cannot get high speed internet. Satellite internet is expensive, disconnects. Limited data for a high rate vs. unlimited.
29. poor
30. Have satellite internet which is limited gigs and very expensive.
31. I have internet in my home. I use the internet through my laptop to access work at home, to watch movies, news stations, YouTube. The internet is my access to the outside world. The hindrance is the cost of access the internet.
32. We live 1 mile out of Mahnomen and still do not have access to quality wireless internet. It was hard during the lock down and my dad couldn't even zoom for his meetings with our home network.
33. Slow internet connection at times at work. Additionally, I don't have WIFI at home and have to rely on my personal hotspot to work from home. I run out of data (with the largest plan available) halfway through the month and then have extremely slow internet service.
34. My access to internet supports my online presence both personally and professionally. In both settings I have enough bandwidth to fully accomplish any necessary task.
35. Our home internet drastically and negatively impacted all 8 (prek-11th grade and post-secondary) learners in our home last spring. Our internet bill rose due to additional charges for added "gigs" of power, but never truly met our needs. Luckily I could "afford" to budget for it, but it caused stress, issues with connecting to teachers and submitting work, and cut some

learning opportunities, entirely. For our work - we listened and watched and attempted to support schools and families of learners navigate the emergency school closures. A majority of our students did not have access or the funds to purchase access, or local access available within their community. It was a learning nightmare and will cause almost all of those same learners to begin their 2020-21 academic year well behind their peers who had/have access to high-speed, quality internet. In addition, it exacerbated and created a new mental health issues for learners, and negatively impacted special education strides having been made with learners prior to school closure. In my opinion, almost every learner slid backwards and with school coming up so quickly - they don't have any real chance to get their feet under them, let alone catch up. The same "dis" connectivity issues remain. We aren't going to pick up our homes and move them. Broadband and towers and satellite access - all must come to us. Our learners, our people, are worth more than any cost or distance barrier provided. It begins to feel like just another form of institutional racism.

36. Connection allows for access to medical resources such as provider visits, charts, and communication, banking abilities, and online resources/tools for both home and business needs such as document sharing, research, eCommerce/shopping, and more. Additionally, connection allows for access and use for multiple devices.
37. While on or near White Earth Reservation, connectivity is often very poor, both cell phone and internet. I have a Cellular I-pad and the signal is often too poor to be useful. Making client and collateral contacts, while in the field is often a hurdle to get necessary services. This may also be a safety issue, for clients or staff. There are several known areas that I have no connection and I plan ahead of time to get communications done, before I am in those zones.
38. I have one of the only service providers in our area. It lags and will go without Wi-Fi when needed.
39. Our MH Program provides telehealth services to clients on reservation and urban sites. Our provider's biggest hurdle is poor internet service and dead zones.
40. We do not have an internet connection at home. Cell phone only
41. Vital to research and consulting.
42. We have internet but it is very slow, We need better broadband/internet installed south of Pinehurst Resort near the County Road 4 and County Road 6 Intersection south of NayTahWaush.
43. Keeping in touch with family residing off the reservation
44. We hope our online connection will now be improved. After years of waiting our provider has installed fiber optics to our home. It is not yet hooked up to our home...hopefully soon.
45. I have no access to internet. The only internet provider where I'm at is Arvig and I've been trying to establish service for months. In the winter they told me I needed to wait until the ground unthawed, by March the pandemic had caused a delay and now I've put in several requests for Wi-Fi with no response.
46. I am able to work comfortably and efficiently with internet at home.
47. Poor internet connection prevents me from having a website to sell my beadwork
48. I almost all of my commutation with staff/ Advisory board using text, email and zoom.

Please share your thoughts on how the White Earth Nation is positioned to provide the high-quality [knowledge] workforce.

1. Main buildings are equipped but some of the outer offices in remote locations have next to nothing for internet connections
2. There are many educated and forward-thinking individuals who reside on the Rez. The Tribal and Community College does a great job in making sure that students are prepared for our work force.
3. They've done a very good job of providing a high quality workforce.
4. Much of our tribal business is done by email, phone, and video due to recent trends. We have many people who have a basic understanding of why this communication is needed and know how to use it
5. They are not. Lots of internal changes need to take place before this will happen
6. I believe they need to be more supportive of local public schools, they create the work force that that they employ to meet the needs of the people. By supportive I mean, create educational priorities of all children of this reservation. Together with the public schools to create programs like school to work, mentor ships, boys and girls club, find funding that local public schools are not eligible to apply for, but the tribe is able to. Show the children of this great nation what the tribes future can be for them.
7. A more evenly supplied internet access would prevent the pockets of unemployment. It would also bring training seminars to these spots
- 8.
9. Since the COVID epidemic, people have severely fallen into a depression. People are trying drugs. With the loss of employment, people are falling deeper into debt. These programs on the White Earth Reservation need to assist the community in finding resources for food, shelter, employment, etc.
10. I don't know
11. We serve a large population and we need to stay up and running to ensure our families are taken care of. Some of these duties cannot be completed at home but when a nurse is in a home, they can complete their visits with the resources they need if internet is available. Having the ability to work from home during this pandemic is saving our families from exposure and allowing parents to help their children with their hybrid classes.
- 12.
- 13.
14. White Earth Nation has several qualified people to maintain the internet at work. White Earth could support its own internet connection without going through the current local company.
15. I believe that the Technical people do a good job assisting the work force once contact and work tickets are initiated.
16. The White Earth Tribal and Community College assists students to prepare for being successful in the workplace.
17. work closely with the WETCC to provided needed trainings for quality employees

18. I think at the moment, White Earth Nation should pursue better technology because we don't know how long COVID could last. I think that providing better technology, some jobs could be started again for the tribe.
19. White Earth Nation needs to set up towers to allow for high speed internet in each of our villages and the surrounding communities.
- 20.
21. White Earth Nation houses numerous locations, offices, and personnel available to these efforts.
22. They do surveys
- 23.
24. Without a positive unified support from the majority White Earth Nation stakeholders, especially those in elected and appointed business center leadership positions, I do not see success in the ability to provide a long-term high-quality workforce.
25. We have many people on unemployment so the need for people to access employment opportunities is great.
26. NA
- 27.
28. rural area, people need work/jobs. If white earth provides opportunity for training with funding they receive, they can have a great workforce. If they train people in carpentry, construction, then create their own construction company that would benefit the people. Hire those ppl to fix local houses through housing.
29. excellent
30. ?
31. White Earth Nation has a high rate of unemployment and a lot of members who need jobs. Training is the key. Not all people are interested in college, so teaching to earn certification in a trade or a skill is the most important direction in which the Tribe should be moving. Start to train a workforce that can be employed in the future Economic Development plans the tribe has. If the tribe is moving towards the hemp industry, find out what jobs are going to be needed and train to fill those jobs; gardening (soil, growing and harvesting crops), production and manufacturing, distribution, building maintenance, big machine operation and maintenance, CDL licensing for trucking. What other industry is the tribe looking in to? The tribe needs a car wash for all the fleet vehicles, maybe build an amazon or Walmart distribution center. Start growing the workforce by designing knowledge-based and skill certification programs held in the communities, at the Community Centers and on-line, not just at the Tribal College.
32. In my opinion The WEN should build a tribal owned grocery store, and any other essential services that people pay for. Local grocery stores have made millions of dollars off of the Tribal members for years. I would rather my money go back to the tribe. It will also create more jobs for the tribal members.
33. Not sure what this question is asking...
34. White Earth RBC offices, both on and off the reservation, along with their casino sites have access to the necessary internet connections to perform at a high level. However, internet access to our communities and non-tribally owned properties deal with limited to no internet connectivity.

35. We are, but we could do better. I am unsure I understand your question, because I don't feel that WEN provides the workforce. If you mean OJT training, it really doesn't exist much to build each department. We have outside, limited, and only-accessible-via web seminars and professional development at present. I don't feel we are producing the workforce here. It comes from within the individual and they must seek outside entities in order to meet those needs for personal and professional growth.
36. White Earth has a large and strong membership, in many villages and locations on the reservation. The ownership of buildings and spaces allows for access to each of these areas.
37. White Earth has departments and staff prepared to add additional professionals to an already exceptional workforce. they encourage higher education and support the current employees, with time to study and attend classes, or financial support towards tuition, etc. Briefly, they invest in their employees.
38. WE RBC is the "cutting edge" when it comes to providing the latest technology for its staff. Grants & general funding assist in purchasing the necessary computers.
39. With the recent events of COVID WEN has a great opportunity to reassess service delivery and evaluate programmatic structures.
40. Cell service in our rural area is very poor to nonexistent.
41. High towers our stationed in several location key to Tribal communities.
42. White Earth offers many jobs through the Tribal Government, Casino, and its entities.
43. Providing more training for enrolled members to succeed for portions on our reservation. More opportunities for better futures!!
44. There are definitely people here that are highly qualified, however I don't feel there are many opportunities for this workforce at this time (even pre-pandemic). I am hoping that something positive will happen during these hard times. We are learning that many jobs can be performed remotely. I am hoping that this will lead to innovative employment opportunities.
45. We have all of the tools. We are encouraging the next generation to get training and education... but we lack follow through and steady employment. Our programs are run by people with little education, our workforce has a very fast turnaround and there are few incentives for longevity or quality work output.
46. I am not sure what they have planned. It would be nice to be involved from the beginning process to the end with their ideas and what they expect for an outcome.
47. Unknown
48. Getting our people working, training those who want to work or need help to work. Working and earning your pay provide pride and increases self-esteem.

How do you think businesses and industries in the White Earth Reservation are using technology in an innovative way?

1. The attempt is there, just not the reliable equipment and connections
2. With the COVID 19 epidemic, it has become essential for local entrepreneurs and customers to have an adequate technology system to allow them to stay in business and sometimes even to expand.
- 3.

4. We are working on GIS to support our land and geography. Data entry and tracking. Digital records and inventory
5. Just scratching the surface need to do more to utilize technology
6. This pandemic has shown that schools and businesses needed to evolve to a support an online presence they have never had before to communicate with parents and children. It is our new normal ...
7. Not sure
- 8.
9. Informing the community what services are being offered. The schools are doing Home-school, need internet to participate.
10. I don't think you can exist in today's world without being fully connected
11. allowing our staff to work from home and for nurses to complete their charting in homes or vehicles so they are not having to go back and forth to the office to client's homes. It allows them to be more efficient.
- 12.
13. Within the Shooting Star Casino, the Surveillance Dept. has upgraded all the cameras to better quality. The tribe utilizes Smartboards, laptops, tablets, etc. to stay connected. The college has made changes to stay connected in these ever-changing times. They are able to offer the students a Hybrid class that records the instructor as the lesson is being taught in the classroom. Can the tribe do more? Technology is constantly changing, one would need to look at the SWOT analysis to see what and where improvements would be most beneficial.
14. As a staff member of the local Tribal college, and with COVID happening, we are utilizing technology to conduct school through Zoom, online classes, using televised classes in our expanded classrooms. When we could not be on campus, we had Zoom meetings, I was able to 'answer' phones from home and forward messages via email.
15. White Earth has many data bases and programs that all run through technology from White Earth. As far as communities and individuals working out in the community there are many challenges with connections and data available to assist clients in the community. Example if I am traveling to a new home and I need to use google maps to locate the home there are many dead zones throughout the reservation where I would be left with no service. This no connection can also be dangerous for workers who are doing home visiting because if anything happened with clients or during traveling in the winter there is no way to call for help.
16. Technology and good internet connection helps businesses on the WE Reservation to provide more accessibility and resources to people who live and work on the reservation.
17. With the pandemic everyone had to get comfortable using Zoom to visit and work from home
18. I think most businesses on the reservation and off the reservation are using technology in an innovative way currently. Some ways businesses and industries are using technology is Zoom, SharePoint, etc.
19. By having online classes
- 20.
21. Mobile applications
22. They do what they can online

23.

24. I can only speak for Circe of Life Academy (i.e., COLA) and I do so with the deepest sense of pride. As a staff of education professionals, we place a deep love for our COLA students and the families that support them in their learning. We recognize that it is critical to maintain strong relationships with our students and their families in the absence of face-to-face interactions; therefore, as teachers and support staff there has been a lot of thought, conversations, and brainstorming about how to create a scaffold of support for all COLA students. We recognize that there are areas that could potentially be challenging in a Distance Learning Model of education. However, we are ready to walk with our students through these uncertain times, to support them in their learning, and to grow with them as we face a world filled with COVID-19 unknowns. Therefore, after a considerable amount of conversation as a team, we have implemented the following: First, we supplied each COLA student with a school owned Chromebook and WIFI hotspot. Second, Superintendent Leadbetter applied for and received a federally funded pilot study of school bus WIFI. COLA has since purchased and is in process of installing WIFI on all of our COLA school vehicles in an effort to bring "COLA Rolling WIFI" to all of our student's villages. Third, COLA supplied all COLA teachers with a school owned laptop capable of meeting all virtual learning demands of the distance and hybrid learning model. Fourth, COLA is tracking data that details how many COLA students have logged into their computers, have signed on to ZOOM meetings, have logged into their GOOGLE Classrooms, and/or have reached out to their teachers. Even though classes were recently postponed through September 16, the following data indicates that our learners are ready to engage in classes: High School: 7th Grade: 100% of those with complete enrollments 8th Grade: 100% of those with complete enrollments 9th Grade: 77% 10th Grade: 45% 11th Grade: 57% 12th Grade: 31% of those with complete enrollments Elementary: Kindergarten: 100% for those with complete enrollments First Grade: 65% Second Grade: 70% Third Grade: 70% Fourth Grade: 86% Fifth Grade: 40% Sixth Grade: 50% Fifth, an active intervention process that may include face-to-face meetings will be initiated by days end on Friday, September 18th. IF any COLA student has not logged in and/or communicated with any of their teachers, the process will begin. The COLA teacher/advisor will make a phone call and establish a time for us to casually come and meet with them in person to help get logged in. This will be a positive interaction with the only goal being to provide connection and support. A COLA team will go out. We will take the family waiver form for signatures and return that form to COLA. By Wednesday, September 23rd, our goal is ultimately to connect with 100% of our students and/or their families. COLA has identified teams that are set up to travel out to the villages.

25. Trying to build better access

26. NA

27.

28. due to covid, meetings, medical appts, live stream for RBC meetings which is great.

29. sales and info

30. IHS patient website to interact with Drs. and read test results.

31. To enable employees to work from home. If working from home continues to be an option after COVID19, this will open up office space that can be utilized for other things. Working from home should be an option for those who can do their jobs off site and check in for supplies and meetings. Team and Zoom are being utilized to keep employees informed and for training also. I think they are a great format for working from home.

32. Without technology, nothing strives!!
33. An example is that all WE RBC employees have access to Microsoft Teams, which allows for employees to connect with co-workers as well as with other program employees.
34. Pre-COVID, White Earth RBC offices and the Shooting Star casinos had begun utilizing Microsoft TEAMS for virtual meetings and file sharing. This endeavor prepared the organizations to work remotely during the unexpected pandemic.
35. Believe it or not, social media has come to the aid of many of our cottage industry entrepreneurs. Again, though, we have the cost involved - even if it's to get to town to buy a card for their phone, it can be so much more difficult for someone who does not have their "normal" business income. Also, it can be unsafe. I believe we could do better to support them - by offering a venue for people to post what they have to sell, or what they are looking for - without any ties or responsibilities falling on our Nation. We put so much energy toward helping those suffering from addiction (I almost said addition - some of us suffer from that, too) and homelessness and I just wonder about the changes that could have been made in education (institutional racism abounds here, too) and lived by our greater community (i.e., we have the population to back up changes like having our language every public place within our boundaries, we have the resources to impact our local schools and business in a GOOD way toward understanding - even if it has to begin with a conversation about tolerance, first). We could use our website and links to expand the lives, thoughts and minds of our people. Why can't we offer or link to learning opportunities, rather than allow all the festering negativity to impede the mino-bimaadiziwin for our people? Why do we have to wait, or hope, or not care about whether our people have these opportunities? Or think that if we pull ourselves up by our bootstraps everyone else should be able to do this, as well? Aren't we falling into "their (wider society)" trap? It does not, should not be in perpetuity. Every day, every moment, we have an opportunity. Let's take all the good ones.
36. I believe some entities are utilizing technology well to provide ease of access for consumers, employees, general members, etc. Additionally, the use of technology and tools to outreach and engage is evident within the reservation.
37. Technology is an ever growing field and many businesses are changing how they conduct business every day. With COVID-19 crisis, many departments had to figure out technological ways to conduct business remotely and seamlessly. Each department devised a plan to continue to safely deliver services to the populous.
38. I've often used online shopping and zoom mtgs to assist in my work. Weekly my dept meets with our staff on the reservation, in the twin cities and in Duluth via Team mtgs.
39. For our program, using telehealth so clients can continue to receive needed mental health services.
40. Our poor IT department is working overtime to get us connected during this pandemic
41. Currently Cell towers, local tele communications companies' services. Website interface.
42. Unsure
43. Unsure not employed by my tribe. I'm employed by the state of MN
44. I am unaware of any...
45. We possess quality technology and have a great IT department to look after those resources. We offer functional on the job training for technology and software, but because we have such a

quick turnaround a lot of that training goes to waste, and most people cannot develop a personal relationship and familiarity with the technology.

46. Again... I believe we have very little knowledge on what the tribe has plans for. Community is not very involved, and I think it's important that the community voice their concerns and ideas.
47. During pandemic they have used zoom meetings, provided tablets for children, but didn't make sure the parents had access to internet
48. I am not sure how they are being used. Don't see it or even hear how any are being explored.

How do you see **unequal access [digital equity] to technology and the internet creating a divide in the White Earth Reservation? If you have an example either from your family or someone you know, please share it.**

1. Students in my household are very limited to do the online classes or zoom meetings because of internet connections. Satellite internet isn't working well for any of this. No DSL available. Unfair for the students living out this way because of the high cost (\$80 per month) for internet only. Making DSL available would bring the cost down and allow students to have equal ability to do classes.
2. Some areas on the Rez have little or limited access to the internet and other advanced technology which makes it difficult to respond to community needs especially now when education and classes are being done zoom. Kids in Naytahwaush, for example, will suffer because the technology doesn't exist for them and if it did it would be cost prohibitive.
3. my daughter has very poor internet connection where she lives makes it hard for at home learning for the kids when cannot be in school.
4. I grew up in a very rural area where internet with slow dial up using our home phone line. With land lines becoming extinct, it's not easy for my sister who just started college to complete her schoolwork by using her cell phone hot spot
5. Poor to non-existent services. The Verizon man got lost on the reservation and we cannot hear him anymore
6. My sister has a 15 year old child that learns better by sight and verbal communication, due to where they move they do not have access to a good connection nor are they in a position to buy the expensive satellite providers. She is already behind her peers in learning and this creates a bigger gap. Our potential work force ilote rial is decreased significantly by this and this is just one, there are so many more exactly like this. The kids have to do paper packets and no communication that other students get.
7. Losses of opportunity always creates divisions
- 8.
9. Different areas of the reservation, depending on location, will depend on how much service a person will receive.
10. children and teachers can't do distant learning.
11. Well we have a lot of wooded area and the altitude is so different in so many different places that it is a hit or miss if you get good service. we need more towers or underground lines which ever runs it. I just currently moved from in town in Ogema to two miles out of town and the strength is get here was cut in half from what I was getting in town but my price doesn't drop.
- 12.

13. Everyone does not have the same access to technology. Dead spots where no connectivity can be made. The cost of some internet providers in rural areas. Even more so now that more courses are being instructed online, there are people that do not own a computer, laptop, tablet.
14. In the remote areas of the reservation where there is no access, people do not have the opportunity to do tele-medicine, continue working, get groceries, keep in touch with family and friends.
15. I work in the homes of clients and many times we have no way of connecting to the internet in the communities we provide.
16. The WE Reservation is located in a rural area, and as such, Wi-Fi and basic internet connection can be challenging for residents who live outside of town, or residents who struggle economically.
17. Several areas on the reservation do not have access to internet even with hot spots
18. I believe that having unequal access does create a divide on the reservation right now. I believe that the internet could provide jobs, education, and social media interactions for the reservation.
19. My parents cannot get good reception to use their phones or computers. They do not have access to ARVIG as there are no internet lines by their road
- 20.
21. In an age of distance or remote learning, unequal access to both technology and connectivity create multiple barriers to families.
22. Not enough cell service in many parts of reservation, internet that is slow to allow multiple devices to do online schoolwork
- 23.
24. Before the pandemic, it was called “the homework gap” because of the growing number of teachers who assigned homework that required Internet access. Now, as the pandemic forces many schools to switch to remote learning, disconnected students will miss more than homework. They’ll miss all of school. For all the talk of Generation Z’s Internet savvy, many young people are locked out of virtual classes because they lack high-speed Internet service at home. In 2018, nearly 17 million children lived in homes without high-speed Internet access, and more than 7 million did not have computers at home, according to a report prepared by a coalition of civil rights and education groups that analyzed census data for that year. The issue affects a disproportionately high percentage of Black, Latino and Native American households — with nearly one-third of students lacking high-speed Internet at home. Internet access is so central to children’s education that allowing students to go without it is like sending them to classrooms without textbooks. Educators have long seen access to high-speed Internet as essential — not optional — for students. Now, the pandemic has led many schools to start classes remotely, and the problem has taken on new urgency. Because the Internet is essential to gaining access to virtual instruction, the act of not providing the service to students is akin to barring them from school altogether.
25. Some communities are able to access technology, others are not.
26. NA
- 27.

28. some people have no problem accessing internet and some struggle because service is not provided due to the location, wooded areas. some people can connect more than others, while others miss out on certain things/events
29. loss of info
30. I need high speed internet with unlimited gigs where I live.
31. Unequal access has been and continues to be an obstacle for communities on the reservation. Phone service and internet service is non-existent or spotty in many areas on the reservation. White Earth needs a few towers throughout the reservation to provide equal access and not at a higher rate than the surrounding towns and communities. Arvig is known to charge higher rates to certain communities such as Callaway. What does the internet providers charge for terrible reception in those communities with poor internet and phone service??
32. Internet and sometimes just phone service isn't always available in the rural areas. I have family in Naytahwaush who need to go outside just to make a phone call.
33. As an employee of the mental health program, we rely solely on technology for telehealth with clients-- several clients across the reservation didn't have phones or enough phone minutes to participate in telehealth services, until we provided them.
34. The sharing of information. Historically, White Earth shared information with its members via the monthly newspaper. As access to internet connectivity increased, so did the need to communicate electronically. Those with access to an internet connection are able to receive live updates via social media and the website. Those without receive information monthly via the newspaper.
35. I shared it earlier, but let me add that for our gichi-aya'aag raising our young ones, those adults in the household need our support, too. Think of how many of us were thrown into becoming home-school teachers in March? How many of us have had our own institutional and other trauma? Further, we cannot kid ourselves and think everyone can just log onto their wi-fi to do roll call with their teachers, music, band, choir, PE, special ed, mental health/counselors (how many does a teenager have to check in with, each day)? What if there are multiple teens and adults and elementary and pre-schoolers all in the same home, all being required to be logged on almost completely simultaneously, because they're all learners? I know of a grandma who remained working essentially. She is raising five young children. After physical work all day, she would need to ensure she had enough zhooniyaa to get more minutes and data for her track phone so that the children's teachers would be satisfied. She would spend her whole evening helping with schoolwork, because her children could not log on during the day - she had to have her phone with her at work. Her phone would heat up during internet learning sessions when she was able to link up to teachers (some only offered daytime access for students/families to ask questions or watch a virtual lesson) and she would have to leave it off without finishing up that day's school workload. We have a school district that states they did a survey and found that only 25% of their district (which has a huge population of indigenous children) had internet access so they did their distance learning via paper packets for everyone. But, they would include links to lessons or info that broadened and deepened the learning of those learners that had access. No effort was made to get internet for any of the children without it. If a learner had a question, they could contact the teacher or tutors during the day. What if grandma has their only phone and she is at work? What if that family had adults laid off by the casino and could not afford minutes or even gas to go get minutes on their phone? Some districts though it good enough to tell families where they could either purchase or get free cable internet. That's great if you have a job to pay the bill you already owe that company (you choose -

internet or getting to work or feeding your family. Which would get done?) Even if you don't already owe them, we had some families told they would need to pay part of the \$2k bill to dig a whole to their residence. And can that even be done if they reside in tribal housing? Or, the free internet was only through the end of the academic year and so that bill is piling up again. If it isn't paid in full by school start dates in August or September, that family is back to no internet connectivity and now they have another bill to pay. Our people, most of our learners learn through interaction with learning materials, peers and their teachers. We do not learn well with paper and pencil packets. "Period." As my teens would say. A school district charged families rent during the school closure. \$40 for the first laptop, and if you need two, you save \$10 on that one. If the families could pay it - they did. But that was wrong. If they couldn't pay it, the school offered them a payment plan. If they still couldn't do it, the school offered a "scholarship". The school stated they didn't want everyone using the "scholarship", so they apparently attempted to weed out those who could pay, even though it took food or gas from that family. This was wrong and done inappropriately. We had to work with MDE to get it reversed. That same grandma I told you about, who kept getting data to use her phone as a hotspot, was charged the initial \$40 and then three weeks before school let out, the school provided her with another one at no charge. Five kids had to share one before that, and she was charged for it, and she had to teach them herself, too! I'm fairly certain that unequal access for her babies will negatively impact their transition to the next grade level at school. As far as connecting to other human beings, many people took to the internet to do so, for safety reasons. Hundreds of people that work for WERBC entities were laid off. Mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence were already an issue. Could telehealth been an alternative to help our people be safe and healthy? Yes. But for those who did not have that access, telehealth is a moot offering. There is so much more.

36. From an educational standpoint, especially during the recent and current effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the accessibility and ease of access to technology (devices) and either wired or direct internet connectivity was significantly poor in our district-the largest district on the reservation. This created many issues for students and families. Especially so for those with students in multiple districts who had different requirements during distance learning and home-to-school communication.
37. In Indian Child Welfare Department, many parents cannot afford to connect to local providers and are hindered in their communication efforts to work a case plan, access housing, job employment, food support, etc. These are critical areas that add to child/parent reunification. Parents do so much better when they have support to overcome such hurdles and it would be beneficial for the Reservation to assist with providing broadband access to all the population.
38. Children and many families in our community do not have simple access to the internet. They are unable to attend online medical appointments. They cannot apply for jobs online. They have to sit outside buildings in order to submit class assignments. If our community members do not have access to decent wi-fi, how are we to go forward?
39. Lack of resources, lack of internet providers, lack of internet services vary from community to community.
40. For those who are working it is hard to pay 200 plus dollars each month for cell service on top of rent, car payments, electric etc.
41. Raul locations lack acquitted connection and would require. There is not a uniform technical platform to cover all of the reservations.
42. We live down the road from our family who has access to Better internet speeds.

43. A lot of enrolled member and descents do not have internet access.
44. Many people have little to no access to technology and/or internet due to economic, environmental and education shortfalls. We are lucky to have some internet connection. If we didn't we would have been completely cut off from any kind of information. Even with what we have we feel pretty isolated. Those that are not as fortunate as us have no way to seek help such as banking, education, shopping, keeping informed on important news or even staying in touch with family and friends.
45. Internet access and quality computers are not available to every member of the tribe, or even the RBC. This limits our ability to learn and grow in a technological era.
46. How will this affect Elders? How will the community be able to afford this? Will this be available in their areas?
47. High speed internet was just not available at my previous location, no option but Hughes net, which works sporadically
48. Internet is not too good for any of our communities. We are working on revising our program to deliver to families on zoom, as I stated we are going to have issues with the internet.

What assets should we emphasize in our [advocacy] efforts to attract people and investment to the area? What else should we be doing to strengthen the White Earth Reservation to make it more attractive for development and to improve the quality of life?

- 1.
2. Bringing broadband to the remote areas would make it easier for Mom & Pop enterprises to market their products without having to go through a middleman process as well as encourage others to try out new ideas for sharing markets and viewpoints. It would definitely reduce the isolation that prohibits growth.
- 3.
4. With our major employers being the casino and the RBC, we need more jobs that are entry level and have opportunities for advancement. Too often have good hard working people been by past by someone who was able to afford college get better positions then staff who have been with the company. On the job training and work experience matter
5. Let's take care of what we have here at home before we try to bring anything here. Our people need help to live better life's
6. Provide good education accesses and work with the all area schools. It creates small business entrepreneurs. Housing is another, rent controlled where it is actually livable. Local businesses cannot pay the higher wages needed to just make ends meet. Internet is a luxury yet is most areas.
7. Definitely develop a huge pool of trained people to fill the position that come with the outside or inside expansions. Our greatest asset is the loyalty and energy of our people
- 8.
9. Due to the drug/alcohol epidemic, I believe more structures need to be built in order for services to start in assisting the people.
10. The beauty of our area.
11. more towers or underground wires to strengthen the connection.

- 12.
- 13.
14. We need more grocery stores, more laundromats, more clothing stores, more small businesses, more areas for sports, like baseball, softball, etc., family gatherings. Have more community gardens and teach people how to garden and maintain the soil.
15. White Earth is rich in woods, forest, lakes and rivers. We have trails for snowmobiling and walking. I think that having a grocery/department store would be helpful.
16. The City of Mahanomen, for example, on the WE Reservation has a Tribal/Community College that attracts students for learning. We also have a Casino with hotel and restaurants which attracts people from outside of the area.
17. We need to share what our area has to offer with prospective employee that are considering living here
18. I would suggest investing in more fitness centers or gyms. By providing a place where people can go workout, lift weights, and play basketball you provide people to interact and decrease stress or depression.
19. Right now the RBC does not have any good businesses for investments.
- 20.
21. An asset to emphasize would be the various communities and locations. A stronger sense of one community, unified leadership in areas of effort, updated spaces such as buildings. Cleanliness, playgrounds, park areas, etc. to attract families willing to relocate for work, etc.
22. Rural people use internet too!
- 23.
24. I feel this answer is better discussed in person or from a round table approach. It would be interesting to see how my "outsider lens" aligns with long standing community members.
25. ?
26. NA
- 27.
28. Casino - outdoor concerts used to attract lots of people. need to grow more trees- fruit trees - vegetables - tribe could have their own produce store- use EBT cards vs ppl going to big corporations like Walmart.
29. free wi-fi, online schooling
30. ?
31. White Earth should start and build our own businesses, not attract other businesses here. We need to support what is here, not bring in competition or draw business away from those that are already established. An example is that Neusser wanted to bring a small manufacturing group into Callaway, that may have employed a few locals, and give them a lot of incentives, but they also wanted to build their own cafe to "feed their employees". This would draw business away from the Tribal member convenience store in Callaway, and that was not a good idea. So be sure to include the community in the decision making, and ask the communities via community surveys, and meetings about what the strengths are in their community, and they think would work in their community. Throw some ideas out there and see if the communities

are interested. It's important to get community involvement, ideas, and buy-in before designing/planning something.

32. Becoming as self-sufficient as possible. Create essential businesses that the people already pay for, make money, create jobs. Even if you're only making enough profit to create jobs that is still a positive thing for the Tribe.
33. Emphasize the importance of education to strengthen the WE Reservation. Add more Small businesses.
34. Due to historical inequities, tribal lands have acquired economic incentives to encourage growth and economic stimulus. These include special depreciation rules, tax exemptions, 8(a) and HUB Zone preferences, employment tax credits, and new market tax credits. Entrepreneurs can use these incentives to lower the costs of starting businesses on reservations.
35. The beauty of our people and how we live in a good way. We are consumers, every one. Business start-up support that everyone knows about and can access safely. Monetary and tax support for new, indigenous or other-owned business. Infrastructure funds to renovate existing buildings, or to use our common, shared space to provide a safe spot for cottage industry businesses. Free advertising, web support and web-design training for those who sell or want to expand to online sales.
36. Tribal programming Community organizations and partnerships Region/Location in relation to larger cities (Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, Bemidji, etc.) Renovation projects to buildings, community spaces, such as parks, open spaces, etc., The addition of grocery options for the community would be interesting, Stronger opportunities for communities such as structured and organized recreational programs or community education services. Currently, programs are individual or ran by various programs but a dedicated program or department could significantly improve quality of life.
37. .
38. We need to work hand in hand with the city councils in our community. We need to be a voice at the county level. There are plenty of development options in our community so we need to not be afraid to invest in our community.
39. Having internet access throughout the reservation will help many who do not have this option. Telehealth services, educational services are not able to be accessed due to lack of internet. This creates a hardship for many of our people on the reservation.
40. Our people are our best asset.
- 41.
42. We need more band/tribally owned businesses like Gas Stations/Convenience Stores in each community or a Tribal owned Grocery Store in Mahnommen would be nice.
43. Helping provide internet access that is affordable for our people. Providing the training and tools for our people to Work for their tribe. Allowing them to work for their tribe. A lot of non natives running our businesses.
44. Our people are our assets. we have under utilized great minds here. We need to change how we are doing, or not doing things. We need to look at what we have and use what we have in a new way. "New development" means destruction of something that is there and replacing it. We need to be more mindful of this.

45. More connectivity. More access to technology for all members (i.e.: a public computer lab)
More accessibility for RBC employees to develop a personal relationship with their technology and check out devices to take home (to foster familiarity with the devices).
46. Getting the community involved. Maintenance is a huge issue around here.
47. Access to internet for all, low cost options for elders or those in a fixed income
48. Treat all people with respect, I had issues with some supervisors treating their staff like they were stupid instead of explaining better or training to how they wanted it done. Hire those who want to want to work not just a friend or friend of relative. That happens way too much with every new Council elected.

Sustainability initiatives strive to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. They can also help businesses become more competitive as they use materials, water and energy more efficiently in their production cycle. How are people and organizations in the White Earth Nation adopting sustainable practices in their operations? What barriers to sustainable practices exist?

1. Cleaner water supply, community gardens, solar energy use are being done. Some barriers may be lack of financial resources, lack of following through, etc.
2. Size is one barrier as is isolation and poverty. Increasing the ability to reach out without having to relocate would be a progressive step to making the people more independent and forward-seeking if they have the technical resources and training to accomplish this from the safety of "home".
- 3.
4. Cost, everything costs money. Having the budget to build on something and grow. It takes time and is not going to happen overnight, have a plan in place and anticipate what's next.
5. Lol. Have you been on the reservation come look at how we live. So much needs to improve lots of teaching for our people could happen. Come look and see for yourself
6. I am not sure how to answer this one, Most non corporate owned businesses that I am aware of are adjusting from pandemic drops in customers and are in jeopardy. Barriers are the ease of online shopping and delivery and fears of a health crisis. Local businesses including tribal are not adapting quick enough to that market. So corporations are profiting the most.
7. do not know
- 8.
9. The doors to achieving these goals in expanding the businesses on the reservation depend on the community involvement, the needs of the people and the funding.
10. I don't know
11. ?
- 12.
- 13.
14. I think there is a need for more wind turbines, solar power, to utilize the natural resources. Here at WETCC we have community gardens that could be used more, if people had transportation to care for their plots. Barriers would be transportation, lack of knowledge.

15. I think that leadership is a barrier. There is always turn over in leadership and that makes it hard to be productive in moving forward to the action stages of such plans.
- 16.
17. WETCC will be receiving a solar power unit to help supply electricity to the campus
18. I would say that technology and the capability to be more efficient is improving every day in today's world. As for the reservation, it will be very important to keep up on being sustainable in a lot of aspects and a big one being technology.
19. Not sure
- 20.
21. Cost
22. No clue
- 23.
24. I feel this answer is better discussed in person or from a round table approach. It would be interesting to see how my "outsider lens" aligns with long standing community members.
25. We are working on some solar projects
26. NA
- 27.
28. lack of knowledge/education is a barrier. If people were well informed, it would help. Need an employee dedicated to work with RBC programs to implement sustainable practices. - always lots of talk -- no follow through---- hemp - lots of talk- need employees dedicated to focus on plan and make it happen.
- 29.
30. ?
31. Provide training in the concept of sustainability to all community members in each community. Provide local community awareness training, be inclusive, and tie in cultural teachings and practices.
32. The tribe should provide policies in the workplace for our people to learn and follow. It's easier to practice these initiatives at home when we become accustomed at work or school.
33. Not sure...
34. There has been a big push recently for sustainability at White Earth through economic diversity. One of the main pushes has been renewable energies. Multiple projects are in the works for bringing these energies to the reservation.
35. Sustainability isn't taught. What does that mean to each type of small business? What does it offer to them? Outline that and then help businesses adopt these practices better for and through extended use of our environment We don't recycle at WERBC buildings, so I feel that environmental sustainability hasn't been on the radar. Bring in fellows who have this within their realm of expertise. Get them out into the communities, not expecting everyone to jump on a Zoom presentation or to be able to drive (internet connectivity, car? gas funds? child care?) to a seminar.
36. cost, education, access ability to materials,
37. .

38. I don't believe we are practicing sustainable initiatives. We built windmills, yet they don't appear to benefit us. We haven't invested in solar energy although there are plenty of grants available.
- 39.
40. Division between communities
41. N/A
42. We need more renewable energy resources on the reservation
43. More training opportunities for us to be successful to be in positions to work for our tribe.
44. I am unaware of how people/organizations are adopting sustainable practices. I feel mindset is a great barrier for sustainable practices. I feel that people see there is a need for change, but are not willing to live the change themselves.
45. We are definitely worlds behind in terms of sustainability. We should try to make sure we spend the top dollar on our technology and buy products that will last, that way we do not have to replace technology as frequently.
46. Again... the RBC is non-transparent with their ideas, future plans, or their funding. They do not let the communities needs be heard.
47. There is more use of solar power, but it could be expanded in a way that the initial costs don't prohibit one from using it.
48. We need do what we can to help those who are trying to make a difference by supporting and encourage them. I believe transportation is always a barrier for both business and employees I am thankful for the the buses, helpful to many.