



Verbatim Responses:

Calgarians experiences with the digital divide

The comments included in this document have been pulled from meeting notes taken during one-on-one and small group conversations as well as engagement forms completed by Calgarians. These comments have not been edited and may include spelling and grammatical errors.

- Do you have easy access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet from your home? What sort of internet do you have? 1
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Do you have easy access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet from your home? What sort of internet do you have?

Responses without additional comments:

No: 4

Yes: 33

Responses with additional comments:

No internet at home

No internet at home, does not currently have a job and is looking for work

No internet at the DI

No internet

No internet

No internet, rough sleeper and doesn't trust the DI

No internet, too expensive

No, Only phone plan

No, cable only regular TV. Works 3 nights only, if I could afford it I would but one pay cheque away from being homeless

No, data plan on phone, sometimes it runs out

No, limited data access. Uses primarily data plan. Limited data. Runs out regularly

No, only uses data plan at home access. No home internet. Slow -freedom data plan just data

No, smart phone wifi

No, there is wifi everywhere. No internet. Actor who travels for work

No, Wifi

No. \$100 is not affordable, we rely on it for anything some people get a computer but no plan, no literacy.

No. Affordability - high price a challenge. Phone only.

No. Cellphone?

No. Have high speed internet but the price keeps going up and is less affordable

No. High speed with Telus

No. High speed

No. High speed

No. I want a faster connection, but I don't want to pay more. Keeps getting more expensive.

No. Just phone data

No. Only cell phone, uses wifi

No. Only have cell phone for calling

No. Phone plan only

No. Pricey but ppl pay

No. Public devices + internet

No. Unreliable at different times of the day

No. Use phone data and it uses a lot

No. Wifi is spotty a the mustard seed and clients arent supposed to have the password

Phone data. Internet is not affordable as prices go up. Phone is good but has to use wifi

Yes . Also use phone plan. Most frequent use.

Yes. Only because I feel I have to have it

Yes but its pricey. Has a data plan through a friends company

Yes Limited data necessitates. Accessing open wifi when away from home

Yes, affordability is just within range of current budget

Yes, primary resource expensive

Yes, RV wifi.

Yes, so far its reliable but sometimes the internet drops out

Yes. Affordability is an issue

Yes. But not all my family does

Yes. Not sure

Yes. Some people do notice price has gone up. My house is wired, but I know ppl with limited wifi

Do you go somewhere else to access the internet?

Responses without additional comments:

No: 7

Yes: 1

Library: 5

N/A: 3

Responses with additional comments:

Accesses at the library regularly

Family comes to me to use internet

grandchildren help out

I can use internet at school, but that's not where I want to do movies and games

I had internet but with rising prices I cancelled it to save money

I have access at work if I need it.

Library - easy access at library. Great resource for people who are unhoused. Library both device and internet

Library + Rec centre

Library and CBA for admin

Library and church to see if they can assist me in getting the information I need

Library and hotspots at mcdonalds or starbucks

Library and mall

Library but only with family

library, 4th floor of Y has a computer for residence

Library, shaw open or restaurants

library. Primarily uses phone

Malls - idea have at train stations

My parents go to the library

My wife uses the computer. I don't have a phone. I only have a phone for emergency. No plan

Need an advocate to further the connections -> follow through.

No. Wish that shaw to go had more access different places. Don't go to school or use the library, so don't always have access.

Only access minimally for news/current events

Portable wifi device, travelable

salvation army has free wifi

School, Shaw free at establishments, malls

The library

University

uses library and vancouver library

When they first moved to Calgary they didn't have wifi and their neighbours wifi

Wifi on the train, Tim Hortons, Wendys

Do you have the right device to connect the way you need/want to?

If no, what do you need?

Responses without additional comments:

No: 1

Yes: 24

Responses with additional comments:

No has a D8:D83 used for texts and calls. Doesn't want it.

No, Any cell phone

No, as the youngest they have more resources and tools that work better. They end up getting the less efficient tools in the family.

No, can't afford a computer, owns a flip phone on buy your own minute. Does everything in person

No, Need it for connections. No phone booths for emergency. So many new interations it's hard to start at the bottom

No, not sure how to use all the features on my phone, not easy to book registrations, other options. Comfortable with a laptop.

No, right now I have access under the umbrella of someone else

No, smartphone is like a mini computer and easy to travel with

No, wife uses cell phone for bus pass

No, would like an android with freedom, \$40 bucks a night

No. 1 computer does not work well. Come to library to use computers

No. Borrows laptop from the library as needed

No. Colour printing as does not have access to a printer at home

No. Do not use technology regularly beyond have computer (?)

No. Education and subsidy

No. Have devices to connect online, but don't have a printer or ink. Use a Chromebook, so not sure even about connecting to printer

No. I don't have a phone. I only have a phone for emergencies, no plan. No phone booths for emergency

No. I have an ipad that my daughter set up. I'm not familiar with using it. I use for email.

No. I have an old laptop that doesn't work well. I don't use it. I only use my phone

No. Just got a phone yesterday. Needs a computer, lending programs don't work because people steal. When they can't get a computer they steal one

No. Laptop

No. Laptop/computer - have no devices currently

No. Laptop/desktop. That is why I come to the library

No. Most family has outdated devices + app's don't work

No. My english is not good

No. My family had to spend additional money (each personally) to get wifi extenders

No. Need better access to a printer

No. Needs a computer at home

No. Needs a phone now. I realize the phone is the CPU

No. Needs a phone, mine was stolen/taken by the police when reporting a drunk driver. Was told I was too frequent a reporter.

No. No computer, just a smart phone

No. Old computer, not adequate for current school work

No. Only a smart phone, needs a computer

No. Only one computer at home to share

No. Phone is crappy, no computer.

No. printer usage, do not have printer at home.

No. Printer, utilizes library for printing

No. Use phone for everything. Old phone, mobile version, memory on phone. 311 app

No. Uses library laptops, computers.

No. Wish my mobile devices was better with the transit app.

No. Would like a laptop for school.

Yes, do not need device beyond phone for current needs

Yes, don't need a computer

Yes, Only access limited online

Yes, Only because I need them for same services

Yes, phone, tablet, laptop

Yes, wifi router, mobile data

Yes. Any use for for communication (phone/text)

Yes. laptop and phone

Yes. Phone works fine for what I need

Yes. We have lots of different devices

Yes. Well, my parents don't. Can you focus this work on seniors?

Are there enough devices for everyone in your household?

Responses without comments:

No: 8

Yes: 23

Responses with comments:

Have devices but not access to wifi

Have one computer that is shared. Able to "make do" with that computer

homeless no devices

I have lots and it's just me. Phone, computer, console, all do internet.

I only use my phone

I think so

Just me. I'm good

No cell phone or computer. Would like an affordable phone with a screen protector

No computers at MS

No devices at home

No devices currently

No- elders intimidated or do not have English

No interest in accessing service/info online. Recent immigrant and don't use technology

No landline

No, just my ipad

No, one computer

No. Only has phone

No. Wife has cell phone

No. Wife uses the computer. Husbands phone is only for emergency with no plan. Needs it for connections

Not enough and outdated

Not enough computers or \$ for cell plan. Also out of date

Only me

Only one in household

Relies on library lending

Right now, but previously no. Not able to afford it

solo household

Transitional housing only has one computer for all residence

We all have devices, but have issues with access to wifi.

We have phones so I think so

Yes but cannot do it on my own

Yes laptops

Yes, travel can be dangerous

Yes, uses it and helps her husband. He doesn't use the internet

Yes. However if both self and spouse get jobs that will change as there is only one computer. Trade off job hunting

Yes. Plenty of devices for everyone @ home

Do you feel like you have the information and skills you need to connect and do what you need/want to be able to do online? If no, what are you missing?

Responses without additional comments:

No: 1

Yes: 23

Responses with additional comments:

No, Cannot download bus pass. Has tried to on many occasions and still has not been able to connect. Needs help. Where does one go to get it?

No, computer illiterate, missing everything

No, doesn't want it. Has a physical bus pass, no app

No, Grandchildren help upload music

No, mom and dad don't use it

No, struggle with government sites. City site is difficult to access

No, would like to know how to use device at seniors home. Drop in sessions of how to use device at library

No, you need wifi to connect

No. Concern for older persons or other who have difficulty w/ knowledge. Prefer personal interaction and recent services in person. Negative environment. Overall prefer person to person. Feel pressured to engage online

No. Difficult with eye sight to see computers. No knowledge of how to use computers. "I am an old man. Hard for me to remember new things"

No. Doesn't everyone have access to the internet already?

No. Education - Bow Valley- submitting assignments is difficult. Hardware not adequate. Knowledge + skills (new to school) Not enough to submit assignments

No. Frustrated with City myID, locked out and needed to reset

No. Good with computers but people are limiting me now when it comes to accessing church and adoption records that pertain to me (like baptism and cradle rights information). Having a hard time accessing my own information right now as the church online process doesn't work.

No. I would like to do more searching and accessing internet but not familiar

No. Indian populations, especially elders, need accessible in person education

No. Interface between apps is poor. Transit App. New use not easy to navigate (training?) Bus schedules. Accuracy. Security of public networks a concern. Older adults more difficult to access technology based on home experience

No. Internet security. Was hacked and now can't get anything.

No. Intimidated by using technology

No. Knowledge, confidence and access

No. Library is a resource that should be used as much as possible

No. Library staff are IT support. Lack of foundational skills. Chromebooks are harder to use than desktops. Need other capture points and peripherals knowledge.

No. Literacy of skills are low. "computer illiterate". Need to advertise to let people know, Internet for beginners. SAIT. Chinook

No. Mostly

No. Mostly. Library staff assist when I'm not sure. Very Helpful

No. Need to know more about downloading and get lost quickly online and can make poor decisions

No. Needs some help. Computer illiterate

No. Not my older relatives. Privacy education

No. Only because of my family- confidence but I am old.

No. Parents often rely on the kids to get support. Kids have more digital literacy so parents rely on them.

No. Police can trace the landline

No. Police can trace the landline

No. Straight forward. Do not experience challenges with apps I use

No. Terminology / language, I don't understand the terms used. Complex multi-task process

No. They call for support to get support

No. Trust, false information. Not sure what I can trust. How do I know if information is reliable?

No. We have access to good internet and enough devices, but don't always feel like we know or trust what we are doing online. Need to be careful with banking as there are different scams.

Yes , just need to know how to connect with community networks, new to the city

Yes . I am comfortable but many are not (other seniors)

Yes . Went to CDI college to learn about computers. More people should do this

Yes Google. Nothing

Yes, able to do what I need to do just don't have home access

Yes, but I need to teach my parents to that takes time. More direct, in person community programming

Yes, I have all skills, but not older relatives. Struggle with apps and outdated devices

Yes, only use for basic things. That is enough

Yes, wanted to be an IT Tech but can see many people don't have the education. Even in school the education isn't being given. People should be learning not to book mark

Yes. Buy nothing by phone, just uses it for work contracts. Rather go to the store as lack of trust in online shopping.

Yes. Don't have much I need to do

Yes. Hear lots about scammers and things not being safe online.

Yes. I have skills to navigate but some sites are not user friendly

Yes. I just browse for information + I have enough skills for that purpose

Yes. Maybe I don't know what I'm missing. I learn online about things if I don't know about how to do them.

Yes. Understanding words- huge barriers- English not first language

Yes. Uses google at library

What is something you do regularly with technology and why?

Music

watch youtube and youtube premium

can't so anything with fancy phones or computers. Calls the foodbank with the flip phone

work, entertainment, netflix

Youtube, google, etc

Phone, text, photography. Is a student in journalism/photography. Using it to get work

Watch videos

Google, facebook, phone to find a job

searching for homework, social media, videos

Work, stream netflix/prime/disney plus

Music, sports, history, computer, record music

check email, google, listen to music in the library, apply for jobs.

Global news, pay bills, family (mom lives in TO), text messaging, facebook messenger (lag is horrible)

Work, netflix, shopping, gaming

Take classes. Too much is on a smartphone, do not trust online banking.

Everything stops without a smartphone. This tool is needed for government 2 part authentication

Netflix and math problems

I do what I can but I need help

Online courses mostly for free w/ student aid.

I do everything. Banking is just online

Finding work and contracts

Research, going to school to be a minister. Recently CSTS through youracts and whimsis

Job hunting and upscaling education. Huge TED fan.

Job hunting and admin work

Everywhere I use data. Maps, transit, calling relatives, college schedules

School, video calls, transit app's

Video calls, transit app, maps, Youtube

House listings

Research, apps, entertainments, maps

Use for school

Email. Youtube

Social media- family + friends

Research, apps, entertainments, maps

Transit app. Use it frequently. Pass/purchase. Schedules

Look up- Google - search information. Kijiji buy and sell items. Youtube - entertainment

Train came :)

Search information on Google. Entertainment (Youtube)

School/homework. Event planning/searches. Email for social purposes

Banking- but I feel pressured to have to do banking online. Preference is person to person

News and current events

News. Email

Only use cell phone

Rec activities, face time, social media, online banking, online shopping, grocery delivery

Work from home, home schooling

Online shopping, accessing government website for info

Shopping, connecting with family

Video calls, employment/work meeting

Banking- read my books online - order your groceries online - deliveries online

Connecting with family in home country. Employment

Connect with friends. Everything is online. QR codes at work to link to schedules, time sheets + insurance. Not everyone is comfortable, inaccessible

Bank, email, info searching, booking meetings

use email to communicate with family, business. Register for programs (City/SAIT)

pay bills, work, connect with family, parenting advice, maps

Work online. Medieval actor. Professor at Athabasca. Students are online

Friends online to talk to, laptops for school use, access to school schedule, etc.

I use technology almost everyday for school. Most of my teachers post our stuff on d2l where we would have to be on a computer or our phone.

" Every day I use my phone for social media, to connect with my friends and text

my mom for pick up times and practices."

I use a laptop to do school work at home and at school

I check powerschool everyday and do all my work on my laptop

" I feel I need access to my laptop in order to catch up on my work I've missed or hand work in on days I'm not at school. I use technology to progress and keep consistent on my homework when I'm not at school"

Mom works and cannot drop them off and so they heavily rely on phone to access transit services. Doesn't have data on phone and find that the Shaw free wifi and the City of Calgary wifi isn't great and there seems to be a wall to usage but uses City of Calgary more. Finds themselves very anxious when they don't have access to wifi and tries to memorizes the info.

Also uses it for fun to play games and go on social media tools to connect with friends and family

Use my earbuds every day to listen to music

Actively seeking employment. Applying to volunteer

If all your barriers to technology were removed, is there something else that would open for you?

No barriers

affordable phone plans

I'd need a..... Library is the main source - need help

affordable internet

everyone should have access to a phone to call 911

Photography. Computer and a camera, programs are not affordable

Would like a laptop for school. My aunt pays full one?

Would like to be able to access everything from home

Yes affordable phone plan, more reliable in public eg c-train bus stop

should be available to everyone

No barriers

I love coming to the library because it's the only place, for now, where I can listen to music therapy

Connect to family overseas, missing out on youtube, applications (there are too many platforms)

Low priced plans to start with and then they hike the price and its unaffordable

Work from a computer anywhere and learn as much as possible

build an app to help people

I would do everything, I can't facebook to connect with family. I'm the only one in the country.

More courses and journaling for ease of organizing thoughts

needs help getting ID as a priority over technology.

No barriers

Spread awareness. The awareness on homeless brought forward through technology has led to more donations. There should be programs funded by the province for homeless to enable more people to get certifications and get out of poverty.

Happy with what I have right now but I haven't thought much about what might be possible

I would take more online courses that are interesting

Can't think of anything

Can't think of anything

Maybe I'd have more time if I had stronger skillset, but I don't think I have many barriers

I'd find a better living situation

I think you need more responsible ownership and citizenship programs aimed at kids

Not enough time, train came :)

No

More research, more trustful. Currently use book as opposed

Train arrived, ran out of time :)

Use for accessing employment (both search and for work). More entertainment options

Train came :)

Did not have time. Train arrived.

I might engage in more entertainment/social media if I trusted things more. Feel the internet is a negative place.

More services. More information. Specific

Nothing

Nothing. Doesn't feel confident to learn new skills

wish not so reliant as barrier for others

With more knowledge would register for more programs and services online

Could use more services online currently do not as nervous to use

works with clients who have lost a child and are low income and do not have access

One gentleman doesn't have a phone

I would make more digital art, right now I don't have funds or access to technology that I would want to do that.

I would do a lot more work from home with better wifi/ more affordable wifi

" D&D builds social skills- create maps, expand on it (chance to make money for it) &I've always wanted to renovate a bus and there are a lot of like ""how to build a van"" courses online, same with tiny houses"

i love to do interior design but don't really have the access to technology in order to do it

"if I could have access to online realtor courses I would proceed in my passion to be a realtor. It would be easier to be ready to be one if I had experience from home online."

"I would say better online courses for culinary theory because I wanna go to school for culinary"

Would have less stress and frustration if tools worked fast or well. If I had a faster computer I would not be that frustrated and annoyed. It makes me just want to smash the computer.

My quality of school work would be better because I wouldn't have to spend so much time troubleshooting issues. The stress that I accumulate from these experiences compounds and leads to a cycle of stress and bad feelings in their general life.

Not having access to good wifi creates FOMO (fear of missing out) and feelings of upset especially when they cant connect to social media apps like Instagram to talk with friends. The anger and anxiety is hard to deal with or move on because its hard to calm down when you're that upset. "I would get more stressed than other people from not being able to connect" they feel very dependent to social media and technology. Feels helpless when they cant connect because they shared that using technology and social media is their main form of connection to their friends. Shared that in real life requires more planning to interact with friends

We want to make access as easy as possible. Is there somewhere you already go that you can easily get support or that you would like to be able to access services or support through?

University has. Need to submit everything online. University has advocates to help with those who may not understand how to use computers/internet

starbucks or tim hortons for wifi access. U of C student, business admin

30th year as a guard, having trouble applying as everyone wants resumes submitted online. Very difficult

none, print at library

I have a milenial son who helps me out with issues I might encounter

If not using stepmothers company wouldn't be able to a fford to have access. Everything is subscription based. So expensive

Two phones to connect to school. Would be so much easier to do on a laptop but cannot afford one
library to print and research, mall, café, event centers, saddledome, gov offices
some businesses make it difficult to access. Some classes are rubbish. Generational thing
the library

Will go over to family when I don't have the internet. Libraries are the best.
work

Most libraries are very helpful and professional
pop-up communities that already happen. Homeless beds went from 98 - 142 thousand
Library

The DI, they have a place to help with other things
Homeless shelters they know and see the need for this sort of thing and new comers.
I like the library, it's safe here.

Likes coming to the library when in YYC

Places like this (library)

As a new comer the library is obvious. Calgary is great for supports, once you are connected with one
support they help you connect with others.

CVA they are very good

Parks + outdoor spaces where people can go and be comfortable

Outreach for elders at libraries, faith centres and parks. Education is very important

Library. I like that you are here talking to people today. Maybe come out and teach people to use the
transit app

I like that you are at the transit station today

Library

Offer course through existing institutions (SAIT, Chinook)

Coffee shops, CLP, Winsport

CLP, City owned placed where people can access internet. City providing modems that 25% of internet
public (Spain has done that)

Easier for seniors to access. Kerby Centre for help. Family members for help. Those w/o pension cannot
afford. Well versed in security

Internet access at agencies like CPL, internet access for newcomers

Local libraries would be most convenient

babysiter is 80, takes cheques, is scared to use the internet. A safe place where seniors could play on a computer

Hard to connect w/ spouse. Will ask counter staff for help/use phone. Technology has moved so fast. Mustard Seed. Actor at UofC. Medical access to sharepoint jobs. Don't want to pay for extra streaming

I think the library is a good place to use, but you have to have a card to get in and what if you don't have an address? City owned pools that have free wifi would be good, or YMCA's

For computers, our schools have helped us get some, which aren't great, but they work. Jordan's principle is sometimes helpful with nicer computers. City owned pools that have free wifi would be good, or YMCA's

My nation's Elders. Tsuut'ina has really good available resources for our people that me and my family attend to show support or just to attend. Honestly my people referring to relatives are very supportive already and having them running these programs makes me all the more comfortable

The only place I can really think of is actually USAY because USAY helps out my family a lot and does make me feel comfortable and helps me connect with other youth which is hard for me

USAY because all the staff are so friendly and make it feel like a second home. I enjoy all their programs too

I can't think of a place

Schools is the number one way to reach to their students and even their parents. Currently, there is too much of a process because sometimes you have to be referred to a school counsellor who then can explain how to get resources --- it has too many barriers and this information should be just available to all so everyone just knows and not designated to a special service in the school.

Youth shared that Library chromebooks and resources was something they had researched a lot to find out about these resources. Wished that the schools did a better and more intensive about explaining the library card and how it offers connection to resources. Even just generally telling students how to use these services and incorporating them into their learning and school work – help them learn it as a skill (for example even learning how to use digital tools (class on how to be discerning on sources and information).

Mentioned that they can use tools at the Public Libraries and borrow chromebooks or even book rooms there so they have more consistent wifi however to book rooms you need to have access to wifi which can be barrier

Their school and others they know rely heavily on google services because so many people use google and the many variety of google tools limits lagging or need to convert as their apps work well together. The lagging etc. makes things very very difficult.

Another youth shared that their family is from China and they banned google and they use another app that isn't as great

More awareness and how to's use the library. It has soo many tools and as a student they found that others weren't really aware of how to study there and use the place effectively. Maybe getting people to offer a suggestion to use the library spaces as meaningful study space. They shared access wasn't an issue for them because their bus route stopped right in front of the library but some students actively avoid places their parents cant drive and pick them up from. Transport is a big barrier.

Can other forms of communication can be used to share information about services depending on the tools relevant to them. For their age group social media is a good tool but the ads need to be well done so they are appealing to youth so they pay attention to it.

Youth drop in session question: If you could pick one thing that would make connecting through technology easier or better for you, what would that thing be?

better internet at school

I would say faster internet, just to have everything I need done right away, that would make everything way easier for me

Better wifi connection at home. It takes a long time to download images or assignments at home, for school, or even for fun. And we have a lot of people at home, sharing one wifi connection, it can be spotty and slow, which is annoying

Better wifi around home and schools

I would pick laptop because I've constructed my laptop to already really accessible to me when I need it so I would bring it to school to do work on breaks or for a presentation because my laptop has everything home workwise on it

" Both Phone and computer for homework and access school things like schedule, classes, etc"

In school setting internet isn't as necessary but not there they need it more. Especially when covid restrictions were very strong and had to go on google meets for school. But the school offered resources like lending chromebooks. But it wasn't obvious that these resources weren't available

Wishes there was more awareness on these resources and it can be embarrassing to reach out to the teacher especially during classes to say they need these resources

Has a really old laptop and says it sucks so they cant download any apps. Apps need to be updated but if its old you can't. Was too slow.

Other youth had to borrow a chromebook because even though they had a laptop was because it was too slow. Had to because they couldn't do homework and the teachers would still penalize them if they

Parents stress about us being later to google classroom but sometimes outside of my control