

# CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

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## Group of Cleveland businesses, organizations team up to provide internet to Fairfax residents

LYDIA COUTRÉ  

File photo

Installation to provide Fairfax residents with affordable, high-speed internet should be complete by the second quarter of 2021.

Cleveland Clinic, DigitalC, TransDigm Group Inc. and the Lubrizol Foundation are partnering in an effort to address disparities in internet coverage. Installation should be completed for Fairfax residents by the second quarter of 2021.

Cleveland Clinic, DigitalC, TransDigm Group Inc. (NYSE: TDG) and the Lubrizol Foundation are partnering to provide affordable high-speed internet to residents of the Fairfax neighborhood in order to address disparities in internet coverage, according to [a news release](#).

These disparities can affect access to education, health care, economic opportunities and more — which are all especially critical during the ongoing pandemic as people search for jobs, use telehealth services, participate in remote education and connect with loved ones virtually.

2019 Census Bureau data show nearly 50,000 households don't have reliable broadband, making Cleveland the worst-connected large city, according to the release.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has further illuminated the crucial role internet access plays in the overall health and well-being of a population, and it is critical that we work to overcome digital inequities," said Dr. Tom Mihaljevic, president and CEO of Cleveland Clinic, in a provided statement. "Cleveland Clinic is proud to be part of this initiative and to have partners who will help support our community to deliver the tools, resources and services needed to foster growth and education for our closest neighbors for years to come."

EmpowerCLE — a wireless internet service provider (WISP) founded by and operating within DigitalC — will provide broadband for households covered in the program and has installed equipment on the rooftops of two buildings on the Clinic's main campus to expand coverage in Fairfax, according to the release. DigitalC is a nonprofit focused on improving digital equity in Cleveland and providing residents with affordable, high-speed internet connections. EmpowerCLE technicians will visit households to offer connection and installation of the necessary equipment to begin service.

Installation should be completed for Fairfax residents by the second quarter of 2021, according to the release.

To further lower the cost of the services from DigitalC and EmpowerCLE, the Clinic has brought together other partners. TransDigm and the Lubrizol Foundation have agreed to contribute "significant funds" to further reduce the monthly subscription fee and help subsidize equipment costs, according to the release.

"By identifying areas we can help, such as providing broadband connection, and engaging with like-minded partners, we can make a difference in creating a better, healthier community for everyone," said Dr. Adam Myers, director of Cleveland Clinic Community Care, in a provided statement.

Earlier this year, the Clinic signed on to the [American Connection Project Broadband Coalition](#). The coalition advocates bringing high speed internet to rural and underconnected areas, which can help address social determinants of health, such as food security, housing, infant mortality, chronic diseases, education quality and access and economic opportunity. The National Academy of Medicine estimates that medical care accounts for 20% of a person's health, while social determinants of health make up the rest, according to the release.

Inline Play

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