

IDAHO COUNTY, IDAHO

Broadband Coalition



Request for Information ("RFI")

High-Speed Internet/Broadband Service Expansion, Delivery or Deployment

Idaho County, Idaho received a State of Idaho Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) planning grant to address high-speed internet service in unserved and under-served Project Areas in the County. The result was the development of a plan that seeks to advance digital infrastructure and improve internet service delivery across the County and in the surrounding region.

Therefore, Idaho County, has issued a Request for Information ("RFI") to identify Internet Service Providers that wish to partner with the County in the development and deployment of high-speed broadband, open access internet services for constituents across the County and the surrounding Region. The complete RFI is available at www.idahocounty.org.

Please direct all inquiries to Jerry Zumalt, Idaho County Disaster Management Coordinator, (208) 983-3074, or e-mail jzumalt@idahocounty.org.

Clarifications or changes to the RFI document, if needed, will be addressed in a written addendum and will be posted on the Idaho County website at www.IdahoCounty.org no later than May 28, 2025. Respondents are responsible for obtaining all RFI updates.

RESPONSES are due on or before 4:00 PM (PDT), June 6, 2025, and must contain the name, address, and daytime telephone number for the designated contact to whom any correspondence or requests can be communicated. Submittals must be clearly labeled: "RFI for High-Speed Internet/Broadband Service Expansion, Deployment or Delivery". Please include Attachment A (p.5). No Electronic submittals will be accepted.

Address SUBMITTALS to: Kathy M. Ackerman, Idaho County Clerk, 320 West Main Street, Room 5, Grangeville, ID 83530.

OVERVIEW

Idaho County, Idaho received a State of Idaho Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) planning grant to address high-speed internet service in unserved and under-served Project Areas in the county. The Board of County Commissioners retained planners, appointed countywide representatives to a Broadband Coalition and approved a 5-year Broadband Strategic Action Plan (Plan). The Plan seeks to advance digital infrastructure and improve internet service delivery across the county and in the surrounding region.

The County recognizes the importance of access to high-speed internet service and is specifically targeting the technology and the deployment of middle and last mile architecture. Formalizing the Broadband Coalition and the Broadband Strategic Plan underscores the commitment to delivering open-access broadband for education and distance learning, healthcare delivery, economic development, public safety and community well-being. The following goals are specified in the Plan.

1. Provide county-wide, redundant, middle mile fiber
2. Offer community level training and support
3. Prioritize the operation, management, and maintenance of open access networks
4. Establish and update maps of existing and planned fiber assets- routes, points of presence [PoPs], and community anchor institution locations (CAIs)
5. Identify, pursue and support capital improvement projects in specific areas
6. Reach remote County areas affordably with the most reliable medium available

The Coalition also identified a 3-Tier methodology to prioritize where and how to implement future capital improvement projects.

1. **Tier 1: High Priority Projects.** This tier focuses on broadband fiber deployment in incorporated cities and within a 1/2-mile buffer thereof. It also includes CAIs in the vicinity, even if they are outside the 1/2-mile buffer.
2. **Tier 2: Moderate Priority Projects.** In this tier, the focus shifts to unincorporated communities with a 1/2-mile buffer and CAIs in the vicinity, even if they are outside the 1/2-mile buffer.
3. **Tier 3: Long-term Projects.** This tier addresses the remaining areas of Idaho County. These areas primarily consist of rural and remote Broadband Service Locations (BSLs) where residential, business, agricultural, and forestry uses exist and locations are accessible by roads.

These tiers are designed to prioritize broadband service locations that will maximize benefits to the economy, enhance public well-being and improve population health and safety. They accept the most efficient methods available and capitalize on ISP's willingness to embrace open access connectivity as a viable and desirable delivery model. The tiers also ensure that no area in the County is excluded from consideration if located outside of prioritized areas; nor preclude their inclusion in a Project Area if there is an opportunity for integration into an existing or planned project. The County and the Coalition will support service expansion in any area that can benefit and be reached with other service efforts that may occur.

The County believes that forming partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) is the most effective and efficient way to achieve these objectives. Consequently, Idaho County is issuing this Request for Information ("RFI") to identify those providers that wish to partner with the County in the development and deployment of high-speed broadband, open access internet services for constituents across the County and the surrounding Region.

The County seeks ideas and interest from respondents on how to achieve and provide high-speed internet/broadband service in unserved areas (those without any broadband service or with broadband service offering speeds below 25 megabits per second download/3Mbps upload) and underserved locations (those without broadband service offering speeds of 100 Mbps download/20 Mbps upload). High-speed internet/broadband service can include, but is not limited to, the deployment of a fiber-to-the-home solution, fixed wireless solution, or some other type of last-mile solution. Interested parties should provide information on how its services can meet, or exceed the FCC's broadband benchmarks. Please see (https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-331760A1.pdf), and (<https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/guides/broadband-speed-guide>).

The County defines Open Access Network as defined in the Idaho Broadband Strategic Plan: a physical broadband network infrastructure that provides dark fiber to municipalities, rural cooperatives and nonprofit and communications companies utilizing a cost recovery-based model of operations and maintenance.

Note: The County welcomes responses to this RFI from ALL interested or potentially interested parties. Further, since this is **only** to solicit preliminary interest and ideas, this RFI **should not** be interpreted as an invitation for bids or request for proposals.

Idaho County will evaluate the information gathered through this RFI process and determine whether to proceed with a formal request for proposals (RFP).

Any amendment or addendum to this RFI is valid only if issued in writing by County.

REQUESTED INFORMATION

A. Cover Sheet (Attachment A)

1. Provide the full legal name of the Provider and the type of entity.
2. The cover sheet must be signed by an owner, corporate officer, or agent authorized by the Provider.
3. The names of all principals of the Provider must be disclosed on the cover sheet; specifically, all persons who have an equity interest and/or hold a senior leadership position in the Provider organization.
4. Indicate which BEAD Project Areas your firm pre-qualified for in Idaho County.

B. Previous Experience

1. Identify previous experience in providing internet services in other markets.
2. Identify customer segments served.

3. Outline services offered.
4. Provide customer service capabilities, technical support, and service standards.
5. Identify three references (names and contact information) who are familiar with your previous experience as a service provider.

C. Preliminary proposal for internet service your firm would consider offering

1. Provide a description of the broadband services you would propose to offer.
2. Is your firm interested in forming a public-private partnership with Idaho County?
3. Describe the customer service and technical support that could be provided.
4. How and where would support staff be located?
5. What service standards would be offered?
6. Identify any other firms that you would subcontract with to provide services.

D. Any Other information, advice, or counsel you would offer

1. Please list ways that Idaho County and the Idaho County Broadband Coalition might be able to support your efforts to expand and improve high speed broadband services in Idaho County.

POTENTIAL AREAS OF COOPERATION

To the extent not covered previously, highlight ways in which the County could cooperate with respondents to improve the business case for proposed solutions.

A. Contracting issues: Explanation of any material considerations or expectations that respondents have with respect to any of the following issues likely to be negotiated during any future Requests for Proposals:

1. Intellectual property
2. Insurance
3. Indemnities
4. Warranties
5. Issues not specifically referenced above.

B. Other partnership or revenue opportunities: Discuss any other types of partnerships or working relationships which could improve the business case for respondents to partner with the County or other entities. For example, a company may work with surrounding communities to develop partnerships that allow the company to deliver voice, video and data services, and/or to pilot cutting-edge new products, recruit new employees, or enter marketing agreements.

TERMS, CONDITIONS AND DISCLAIMERS FOR RFI

Responses to this RFI shall become the exclusive property of the County. All documents submitted in response to this RFI may be regarded as public records and may be subject to disclosure. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. No material submitted in response to this RFI will be returned. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI.

ATTACHMENT A: COVER SHEET
For
Idaho County - Broadband Coalition

RFI for High-Speed Internet/Broadband Service Expansion, Deployment or Delivery

Name of Person, Business or Organization:	
Type of Entity: (e.g. Sole-Proprietorship, Partnership, Corp., Non-Profit, Public Agency)	
Federal Tax ID Number:	
Contact Person – Name	
Contact Person – Address	
Contact Person – Phone Number (s)	
Contact Person – e-mail address	
Idaho County Pre-Qualified Bead Project Areas:	
Ways the Idaho County Broadband Coalition might support your effort(s)	

By signing this ***Cover Sheet*** I hereby attest that I have read and understood all the terms listed in this RFI and all terms listed in this request.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Printed Name of Authorized Representative

Date

Printed Title of Authorized Representative