



Broadband Action Plan

Rural Bonneville County 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Vision, Values, & Priorities	11
Community Needs & Gaps Assessment	15
Infrastructure Deployment Plan	21
Financial Plan	24
Strategic Impact	27
Appendix: Service Area Maps	29

The City of Ammon chose to set up an Open Access Fiberoptic Network. The term "Open Access" typically means access to the fiber network is given to multiple service providers and wholesale services on one physical network infrastructure. This shared system enables service providers to reach their subscribers without the need to install a new fiber network themselves.

Ammon approved a city-owned and -operated open access fiber optic network. This network allows any service provider to enter the market without incurring the burdensome costs of infrastructure deployment, which is the biggest cost for a new entrant.

Another element of Ammon's success is the flexibility residents enjoy in signing up for broadband service. None of the plans that we looked at in Ammon specified contract length requirements

Ammon's fiber optic utility runs an exclusive portal for residents where they can browse, subscribe, and unsubscribe from all available internet service providers on the network from one central webpage. This portal provides a convenience to customers—the ability to switch providers in seconds with one simple click—that promotes competition.

- **PUBLIC UTILITY**: The city of Ammon manages the network the same way it handles water services or road maintenance.
- **CHOICE**: There are 5 local ISPs, and users can switch among them instantly without requiring a "truck roll" (a visit from the ISP to adapt hardware at the customer's location), because Ammon uses software to "virtualize" the network.
- MORE FOR LESS: The Ammon network has reduced the cost of a 1 Gbps connection available via one of the ISPs from \$99 a month (with a minimum three-year contract) to \$14 a month with no contractual obligation. Whether choosing a 15 Mbps option or 1 Gbps, participants receive guaranteed throughput.
- SMARTER CITY: Ammon network participants are connected to a smart grid that offers access to a variety of municipal services, including public safety and utility services, with more planned.

Executive Summary

The City of Ammon in collaboration with its partners is proud to present its Broadband Action Plan, a comprehensive strategy to bridge connectivity gaps, foster economic growth, and promote digital inclusion across its diverse communities. This collaborative effort brings together local governments, community leaders, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), and state and federal agencies to ensure every resident, business, and community institution has access to reliable, high-speed broadband.

Infrastructure & Technology

Prioritizing the deployment of fiber-optic and fixed wireless technologies to connect un/underserved areas, focusing on communities such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ririe, and Ucon. Strategic investments in scalable infrastructure will ensure reliability and adaptability for future needs.

Educational Access

Expanding broadband will address connectivity gaps for schools, libraries, and underserved students in the very rural parts of the county, ensuring equitable access to online learning and digital literacy resources. The plan also supports funding for digital infrastructure in educational and community hubs.

Economic Development

Fostering partnerships with community members supports broadband expansion that aligns with local priorities for economic growth. High-speed internet ensures small business growth, precision agriculture, and supports workforce development throughout the county.

Public Safety & Health

Improving connectivity for emergency services and healthcare facilities will enhance public safety coordination and expand access to telehealth services in the most rural parts of the county. Investments in resilient and redundant networks will ensure reliable service during critical events.

Digital Equity & Inclusion Initiatives to promote affordable broadband, deliver digital literacy training, and provide low-cost devices will empower residents across all communities to participate in the digital economy, access education, and benefit from telehealth services.

Bonneville County extends its gratitude to the Idaho Office of Broadband, ISPs, Public Solutions Northwest, and the many community leaders and residents who contributed to this plan. Their vision and collaboration have created a strong foundation for digital equity and long-term prosperity.

The City of Ammon is committed to bringing this plan to life, ensuring all residents and businesses can thrive in a digitally connected future. For more information or to explore partnership opportunities, contact Dan Tracy, Ammon Fiber, Director of Technology at <u>dtracy@cityofammon.us</u>.

Project Overview

The City of Ammon embarked on a collaborative effort to address broadband connectivity gaps within the region. The project began with formal outreach and coordination with City leadership, facilitated by Public Solutions Northwest (PSNW), a consulting team selected to support broadband planning efforts.

Ammon strategically expanded the project's scope to include neighboring communities including **Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Iona,** and **Ririe**. This regional focus ensured that the broadband strategy would address both urban and rural connectivity challenges while fostering economic development across the area.

Recruitment of the Broadband Action Team (BAT)

The city formed a Broadband Action Team (BAT) composed of community leaders, government officials, and regional stakeholders. The recruitment process aimed to balance representation, ensuring that the BAT included voices from business, education, public services, and community organizations.

The BAT's goals included:

- Identifying unserved and underserved broadband areas.
- Prioritizing infrastructure needs in industrial and agricultural corridors.
- Assessing opportunities to leverage middle-mile fiber projects.

The following approaches were employed:

- **Direct Outreach**: Emails and invitations were sent to municipal leaders, community organizations, and business owners, targeting individuals with relevant expertise or vested interests in broadband expansion.
- **Community Partnerships**: Local organizations, such as the Bonneville County Library District and Bonneville School District, were engaged to identify stakeholders and leverage their networks for recruitment.
- Alignment with Regional Goals: Recruitment efforts were informed by Idaho's statewide broadband strategy and regional models, focusing on individuals and organizations positioned to align local projects with broader goals.
- Flexible Participation Options: Virtual meetings and a one-day workshop were considered to accommodate busy schedules and encourage broader participation from rural areas.

Community Engagement

The Rural Bonneville County Broadband Action Team (BAT) held a virtual kickoff session to align objectives and strategies for broadband deployment across Ammon, Iona, Irwin, Ririe, Swan Valley, Ucon. This session brought together stakeholders from local government, education, healthcare, and business sectors to create a shared vision for expanding high-speed internet access. The kickoff meeting introduced the strategy planning process, enabling broad participation and setting the foundation for identifying priorities to address broadband gaps in the region.

Following the kickoff, one-on-one discussions with BAT members were conducted to gather targeted feedback and address the specific needs of the communities. These individual meetings allowed stakeholders to provide detailed input about economic development, educational access, telehealth capabilities, and public safety improvements.

ISP Roundtables

To engage private-sector partners, PSNW hosted roundtable discussions with Internet Service Providers (ISPs), including regional and local providers. These meetings allowed ISPs to share insights into infrastructure challenges, existing coverage, and opportunities to collaborate on funding applications.

Community Surveys & Interviews

The Bonneville County Broadband Action Team (BAT) is tasked with executing the community survey developed by PSNW to enhance the broadband needs assessment. A finalized, tested survey in both digital and paper formats, accompanied by a comprehensive communication plan that includes ready-to-use social media posts, email templates, and outreach strategies was provided to the BAT. The BAT's role involves implementing this plan by distributing the survey through recommended channels, encouraging participation across all communities, and ensuring the collection of valuable feedback on broadband service quality, affordability, and speed requirements.

Interviews with stakeholders across Bonneville County further emphasized critical broadband challenges and priorities. Participants consistently highlighted service gaps in rural communities such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Ammon, Iona, and Ririe, where unreliable or nonexistent internet access limits opportunities for remote work, telehealth, and education. Affordability was another recurring concern, with low-income households struggling to subscribe to available services.

Community members stressed the pivotal role broadband plays in fostering economic development and public safety. Rural business owners, particularly in agriculture and small enterprises, expressed frustration over limited connectivity, which hampers growth and reduces competitiveness as digital tools become essential. Public safety representatives underscored the need for resilient and redundant networks to enhance emergency communication. Across all sectors, there was strong agreement that broadband expansion efforts must prioritize long-term scalability, ensuring infrastructure investments can support future demands. This collective

feedback provides a clear mandate for the BAT to focus on solutions that address affordability, extend coverage, and promote digital literacy, bridging the digital divide in Bonneville County.

Research & Data Analysis

The project team conducted extensive research on broadband feasibility, best practices, and funding opportunities to address connectivity challenges in Bonneville County:

- Middle-mile infrastructure plans, including NTIA-funded routes and their potential to support last-mile expansion in rural communities such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Ammon, Iona, and Ririe.
- Community anchor institution (CAI) connectivity gaps, focusing on schools, libraries, healthcare facilities, and emergency services in underserved areas.
- Idaho BEAD funding priorities and regional grant opportunities, ensuring alignment with state and federal broadband goals to maximize funding potential.

Mapping tools and technical assessments were employed to identify opportunities for closing broadband loops and enhancing network resiliency. These tools helped pinpoint unserved and underserved areas, ensuring that planned infrastructure investments target the greatest needs.

The engagement process culminated in a broadband action plan that reflects the priorities of Bonneville County's communities, technical feasibility, and alignment with funding opportunities. Through collaboration with stakeholders from Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Ammon, Iona, and Ririe, Bonneville County is now well-positioned to pursue BEAD construction grants and advance broadband deployment efforts by 2025.

Key Stakeholders & Future Partners

The success of Bonneville County's broadband expansion initiative depends on strong collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders and future partners. These entities bring critical expertise, resources, and local knowledge to ensure effective planning and implementation.

Local Governments

Municipalities such as Ammon, Iona, Irwin, Ririe, Swan Valley, and Ucon play a vital role in facilitating permits, aligning infrastructure projects with local development goals, and engaging their communities. Their leadership ensures that broadband deployment addresses specific local needs and integrates seamlessly with ongoing economic and land-use planning.

Dan Tracy Technology Director City of Ammon <u>dtracy@cityofammon.us</u> Corrin Wilde City Clerk City of Idaho Falls IFClerk@idahofallsidaho.gov Keri West City Clerk City of Iona cityclerk@cityofiona.org

Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)

Schools, libraries, healthcare facilities, and emergency services serve as essential connectivity hubs. By prioritizing broadband expansion to CAIs, Bonneville County ensures that critical services benefit from reliable, high-speed internet.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Partners such as the Bonneville School District, the College of Eastern Idaho, and the University of Idaho play a dual role in identifying connectivity gaps and leveraging broadband to expand educational access and workforce training programs. Their involvement ensures that broadband infrastructure supports long-term educational and economic goals.

Gordon Howard Technology & Safe Schools Director Bonneville School District howardg@d93.k12.id.us Trevor Elordi VP of Workforce & Continuing Education College of Eastern Idaho <u>trevor.elordi@cei.edu</u> Monica Hampton Instructional Coordinator

University of Idaho mhampton@uidaho.edu

LIBRARIES

The Bonneville County Library District is a crucial partner for enhancing digital literacy and providing internet access to underserved populations. Libraries also serve as focal points for community outreach and education on broadband adoption.

Michelle Tolman Librarian Director Bonneville County Library District <u>director@bcld.org</u>

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Organizations such as Power County Hospital are key partners in expanding telehealth capabilities and ensuring that rural residents have access to critical healthcare services through improved connectivity.

Jason Povey Chief Information Officer Power County Hospital jason_povey@hotmail.com Stacy Hyde Fire Chief Bonneville County Fire Protection <u>shyde@bcfd1.us</u>

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): Collaboration with ISPs is essential for deploying middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure. Partners like Altitude Fiber, and Fybercom will bring technical expertise, leverage existing assets, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of broadband services. These providers are also critical in delivering affordable service plans to residents and businesses.

Dave Thompson Technical Consultant <u>1nettech4u@gmail.com</u>

STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

Rural Bonneville County's broadband strategy aligns with the goals and funding opportunities of agencies such as the Idaho Office of Broadband, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and the USDA ReConnect Program. These agencies provide funding, oversight, and technical support, ensuring compliance with federal and state broadband initiatives.

LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Business owners and organizations, including the Regional Economic Development for Eastern Idaho (REDI), are instrumental in identifying broadband needs for small businesses, agriculture, and key industries. Their input ensures that broadband expansion supports economic growth and fosters competitiveness in rural areas.

Teresa McKnight Regional Economic Development for Eastern Idaho (REDI) <u>tmcknight@rediconnects.org</u> Tom Tolman Business Owner

Future BAT Partners

To ensure the Broadband Action Team (BAT) represents the diverse needs of Bonneville County, it is essential to engage additional partners who can provide valuable perspectives and expertise. Expanding the BAT to include stakeholders from underrepresented sectors and representatives from target communities will strengthen the team's ability to address broadband challenges and develop comprehensive solutions.

Representatives from Target Communities: Bringing representatives from each of the target communities—**Ammon, Iona, Irwin, Ririe, Swan Valley, and Ucon**—will ensure that local needs and priorities are fully understood. These representatives can provide insights into:

- Connectivity barriers specific to their areas.
- Economic, educational, and public safety challenges caused by limited broadband.
- Community-driven ideas for expanding access and adoption.

Agriculture and Rural Economy: Engaging agricultural stakeholders is essential given the county's reliance on farming and ranching. Precision agriculture, automated irrigation systems, and data-driven farming depend on reliable broadband, which remains limited in many rural areas. Potential partners include:

- Local Farmers and Ranchers: Representatives from prominent agricultural operations.
- **Bonneville County Farm Bureau**: Advocating for broadband to support agricultural technologies.
- Agricultural Cooperatives and Equipment Providers: Offering insights into the connectivity needs of farmers.

Underrepresented Communities: Broadband planning must include the perspectives of lowincome households, seniors, and non-English-speaking residents who face unique adoption barriers. Suggested partners include:

- **Nonprofits and Social Service Organizations**: Groups working with underserved populations, such as Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership.
- **Senior Advocacy Groups**: Ensuring the needs of elderly residents, particularly for telehealth, are addressed.
- **Faith-Based Organizations**: Trusted voices that can help build trust and awareness within marginalized communities.

Business and Technology: The needs of small businesses, regional economic leaders, and technology companies are critical for fostering growth and innovation. Future partners could include:

- Small Business Associations: Such as the Bonneville County Chamber of Commerce.
- **Technology Companies**: Businesses specializing in IT services, software, or network infrastructure.
- Entrepreneurs and Startups: Identifying connectivity barriers that hinder growth.

Local Internet Service Providers (ISPs): Expanding partnerships with regional ISPs will strengthen the technical capacity of the BAT and ensure that infrastructure plans are feasible and aligned with market conditions. Suggested partners include:

- Emerging Wireless ISPs: Providing innovative solutions for hard-to-reach areas.
- **Utility Providers**: Such as Idaho Power, which may integrate broadband into their infrastructure projects.

By incorporating representatives from each target community and expanding partnerships with key sectors, Bonneville County will ensure its broadband strategy is inclusive, actionable, and aligned with the diverse needs of its residents and industries.

Funding Overview

Expanding high-speed broadband access and achieving digital equity are critical priorities for Idaho, particularly as the state seeks to bridge the digital divide for its residents and businesses. The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program and the Digital Equity Act (DEA) provide foundational resources to address both infrastructure gaps and digital inclusion challenges. These federal programs are further supported by regional funding opportunities such as the USDA ReConnect Program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), creating a robust funding ecosystem to ensure connectivity reaches even the most remote and underserved areas of the state. With a coordinated, strategic approach, Bonneville County can leverage these resources to provide reliable, affordable broadband and empower residents with the tools and skills needed to thrive in a connected world.

The **BEAD Program**, a cornerstone of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), allocates \$583 million to Idaho to expand high-speed broadband by infrastructure. Administered the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in partnership with the Idaho Commerce Office of Broadband, this funding prioritizes projects that connect 85,902 unserved and 52,094 underserved locations, including essential Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) such as schools, libraries, and healthcare facilities. In Bonneville County, which has a population of 123,964 and a total of 43,875 broadband serviceable locations (BSLs), approximately 3.63% of locations (1,559) remain unserved or underserved. These include 450 underserved and 1,109 unserved



locations, with gaps concentrated in rural areas such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Ammon, Iona, and Ririe. These connectivity challenges underscore the need for targeted investments that balance the needs of rural agricultural areas with those of urban centers like Idaho Falls.

The **Digital Equity Act** (DEA) complements BEAD funding by addressing barriers beyond infrastructure, ensuring Idahoans can fully utilize broadband access. Idaho received an initial \$567,000 to launch the Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) planning process, managed by the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL). This initiative focuses on enhancing digital literacy, expanding access to devices, and ensuring broadband affordability. By prioritizing underserved and disadvantaged populations, the DEA fosters digital inclusion, empowering residents to participate fully in education, the workforce, and essential services. Aligned with BEAD-funded infrastructure investments, DEA initiatives offer a holistic approach to overcoming digital equity challenges across the state and within Bonneville County.

Additional regional funding sources, such as the **USDA ReConnect Program** and **Community Development Block Grants** (CDBG), provide critical support for Idaho's broadband goals. Bonneville County, with its 4,922 square kilometers of area and diverse mix of urban and rural



populations, is uniquely positioned to leverage these programs. Investments will focus on ensuring connectivity for the 1,559 unserved and underserved locations, prioritizing areas where the digital divide has the greatest economic and social impact. By combining BEAD, DEA, and regional funding opportunities, Bonneville County can create targeted solutions that bridge the digital divide for both urban and rural communities, fostering economic growth and ensuring long-term digital equity.

Vision, Values, & Priorities

By 2027, rural Bonneville County will achieve affordable, reliable, and high-speed broadband for all residents, businesses, and institutions. Digital connectivity will bridge divides, drive workforce development, expand education, enhance public safety, and improve quality of life while preserving the county's rural character and values. Provide unrestricted access and no data limits, enabling residents to fully participate in the digital economy while preserving the county's rural character and values.

This Broadband Strategic Plan outlines a roadmap to expand broadband infrastructure, address barriers to access, and empower community-led initiatives. Rooted in collaboration and datadriven decision-making, this plan prioritizes connecting underserved and unserved areas while fostering sustainable growth and innovation in alignment with rural Bonneville County's needs and goals.

Guiding Principles

Bonneville County's broadband strategy is rooted in a set of guiding principles designed to ensure equitable, efficient, and sustainable connectivity solutions for all residents. These principles align with Idaho's statewide goals and reflect the unique needs of the county's communities.

- Access: Bonneville County is committed to ensuring broadband availability for underserved and unserved areas. Priority will be given to closing gaps in rural communities such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Ammon, Iona, and Ririe, where limited connectivity hinders access to essential services like education, telehealth, and economic opportunities.
- Affordability: To make broadband services accessible for all residents, the county will promote competition among Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and seek innovative funding solutions. Leveraging federal programs such as BEAD and DEA, as well as state and

regional grants, will help reduce costs for households and businesses while fostering equitable access.

- **Collaboration:** Broadband deployment requires strong partnerships. Bonneville County will align efforts across government entities, community organizations, ISPs, and local businesses to create a unified approach to planning and implementation. This collaborative framework ensures that all stakeholders have a voice in shaping solutions tailored to the county's needs.
- **Sustainability**: The county will prioritize scalable and maintainable broadband solutions that meet current needs while accommodating future growth. Investments will focus on resilient infrastructure, such as fiber-optic networks, to ensure long-term reliability and adaptability to evolving technologies.
- **Data-Driven**: Bonneville County's broadband strategy will be guided by data and metrics. Mapping tools and regular progress assessments will inform decision-making, track deployment efforts, and ensure accountability. This approach guarantees that resources are directed where they will have the greatest impact.

These guiding principles will serve as the foundation for Bonneville County's broadband initiatives, driving equitable access, economic development, and digital inclusion while ensuring the strategy remains responsive to the needs of its residents and communities.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities for Bonneville County are structured around four key focus areas: Infrastructure and Technology, Community Engagement and Economic Development, Educational Access, and Public Safety and Health. These priorities aim to address the county's unique connectivity challenges while aligning with state and federal goals for broadband expansion.



Infrastructure and Technology

Expand broadband infrastructure to connect unserved and underserved areas across rural Bonneville County. Investments in reliable, scalable, and future-proof technology will ensure long-term connectivity for residents and businesses.

Key Initiatives:

- **Deploy Fiber-Optic Infrastructure**: Prioritize fiber as the backbone of broadband expansion to ensure reliability and scalability.
- Leverage Public-Private Partnerships: Collaborate with ISPs and other stakeholders to address deployment challenges and reduce costs.
- **Implement "Dig Once" Policies**: Integrate broadband infrastructure deployment with utility upgrades to streamline construction and minimize disruption.
- **Develop Phased Technical Plans**: Use mapping tools to identify underserved areas and create phased deployment plans to address priority gaps.

Community Engagement and Economic Development

Foster local partnerships and community involvement to guide broadband expansion and promote economic growth. Reliable broadband will unlock opportunities for small businesses, agriculture, and regional development.

Key Initiatives:

- **Engage Stakeholders**: Involve local governments, businesses, and residents in shaping broadband priorities through surveys, forums, and workshops.
- **Facilitate Community Discussions**: Host public events to gather feedback and keep the community informed about progress and plans.
- **Promote Workforce Development**: Use broadband to support training programs, enabling local workers to take advantage of new economic opportunities.
- **Encourage Competition**: Foster competition among providers to improve affordability and enhance service options for residents and businesses.

Educational Access

Improve broadband access and digital literacy for students, families, and educators, ensuring that underserved communities can fully participate in digital learning and workforce training.

Key Initiatives:

- Integrate Broadband in Education: Support schools and community learning centers by incorporating broadband into educational programs.
- Address Connectivity Gaps: Expand access for remote learning and workforce development, particularly in rural communities like Swan Valley, Irwin, and Ririe.
- **Support Funding for Digital Tools**: Help schools and community hubs secure funding for broadband infrastructure, devices, and tools.
- **Develop Lending Programs**: Provide temporary internet solutions, such as hotspot lending through libraries or schools, to support families without reliable access.

Public Safety and Health

Enhance broadband connectivity to support emergency services and telehealth access, ensuring critical services are resilient and accessible across Bonneville County.

Key Initiatives:

- **Expand Emergency Connectivity**: Improve broadband for emergency responders and public utilities to enhance coordination during emergencies.
- **Establish Redundant Systems**: Build redundant networks to ensure uninterrupted communication in critical situations.
- **Connect Healthcare Facilities**: Extend reliable broadband to hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare providers to enable telehealth services and support community health programs.

By focusing on these priorities, Bonneville County can bridge the digital divide, promote economic resilience, and improve quality of life for residents and businesses. These initiatives ensure that broadband investments address both current gaps and future demands, creating a strong foundation for long-term growth.

Community Needs & Gaps Assessment

Current Broadband Landscape

Bonneville County's broadband landscape reflects a mix of urban and rural dynamics, with substantial disparities in connectivity between its urban centers and outlying communities. While cities like Idaho Falls and Ammon benefit from relatively robust broadband infrastructure, rural areas such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ucon, Iona, and Ririe face significant gaps in access, reliability, and affordability.

Bonneville County



Demographics and Economic Factors

Bonneville County is home to 123,964 residents, with a population that is primarily concentrated in urban centers such as Idaho Falls and suburban areas like Ammon and Ucon. These areas benefit from higher population densities, which make broadband deployment more feasible. However, smaller rural communities such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Iona, and Ririe face significant connectivity challenges due to their lower population densities and geographic isolation. The county's steady population growth, driven by economic opportunities and a desirable quality of life, has further increased the demand for robust broadband infrastructure.

Economically, Bonneville County has a diverse mix of industries, including energy, agriculture, and small businesses. The Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is a major driver of economic activity, contributing to the county's reputation as a hub for innovation in science and technology.

Agriculture remains vital in rural areas, where farmers and ranchers increasingly rely on broadband for precision agriculture, automated systems, and access to real-time data. Meanwhile, small businesses, particularly those in rural areas, require reliable connectivity for e-commerce, remote work, and digital marketing to remain competitive in a growing digital economy.

Income disparities across Bonneville County create additional challenges for broadband adoption. Urban areas generally have higher median incomes, allowing for greater affordability of broadband services. In contrast, rural areas often have lower average incomes, making cost a significant barrier to access. These economic challenges are compounded by limited competition among Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in rural regions, which drives up prices and limits service options. Addressing these demographic and economic factors is essential for achieving equitable broadband access across the county.

Area	Un	Under	Served	Total BSLs	Eligible Locations	Sq Mi	City
1030	179	3	337	519	182	28.27	Ucon
1032	34	1	42	77	35	46	Ririe to Swan Valley
1033	109	0	3	110	107	19	Ririe to Swan Valley
1084	52	1	16	69	53	81	South
1085	243	214	573	1030	457	374	Ammon

Project Areas & Broadband Gaps

Bonneville County's broadband deployment strategy is shaped by the unique challenges and opportunities presented by its project areas. These areas, defined by census blocks, reveal substantial disparities in service availability, particularly in rural regions with large land areas and scattered populations. Addressing these gaps will require strategic investments that balance cost-efficiency with equitable access.

Areas with Significant Unserved Populations

Area 1085: Covering a vast 374 square miles, this block has the largest gap in Bonneville County, with 573 unserved and 214 underserved locations out of 1,030 total broadband serviceable locations (BSLs). The wide geographic spread of these locations significantly increases the cost of last-mile infrastructure, but with 457 eligible locations, addressing this block will have a substantial impact on the community. Investments here will prioritize fiber-optic infrastructure to ensure reliable, future-proof connectivity.

Area 1030: Spanning 28.27 square miles, Ucon contains 337 unserved and 3 underserved locations out of 519 total BSLs. This area is home to 182 eligible locations, making it a priority for broadband expansion. Despite its smaller size compared to Ammon, the dispersed nature of households in this block drives up per-connection costs, necessitating strategic partnerships and phased investments to address connectivity gaps.

Moderate Connectivity Gaps

Area 1032: This block covers 46 square miles and includes 42 unserved and 1 underserved locations out of 77 total BSLs, with 35 eligible locations. While the gap here is smaller in scale, the low population density makes infrastructure deployment challenging. Targeted investments in hybrid solutions, such as fiber-to-the-node or fixed wireless, could provide cost-effective connectivity improvements.

Smaller, Targeted Gaps

Area 1033: This block is almost fully served, with only 3 unserved locations out of 110 total BSLs. Covering 19 square miles and with 107 eligible locations, this block presents a low-cost opportunity to achieve full connectivity and close remaining gaps quickly.

Area 1084: Spanning 81 square miles, this area includes 16 unserved and 1 underserved locations out of 69 total BSLs, with 53 eligible locations. Though smaller in scale, addressing these gaps is crucial for ensuring equitable access to broadband for rural residents.

The large land areas in rural Bonneville County, such as Ammon and the Ririe to Swan Valley corridor, present unique challenges for broadband deployment. Low population density and dispersed households increase the cost of building last-mile infrastructure, often requiring a combination of public funding, private investment, and innovative solutions to close gaps. Hybrid technologies like fixed wireless or phased fiber deployment can help balance cost-efficiency and service quality in these regions.

Bonneville County's broadband strategy will focus on addressing significant gaps in areas like south of Ammon and Ucon while tackling smaller gaps in rural regions to ensure every resident and business has access to reliable, high-speed internet. By prioritizing investments in these project areas, the county can bridge the digital divide and create a strong foundation for economic growth and digital inclusion.

Current Broadband Efforts

Efforts to address broadband gaps in Bonneville County are taking shape through public-private partnerships, regional infrastructure investments, and innovative local initiatives. Existing middlemile infrastructure, such as routes developed by Syringa Networks, offers a strong foundation for extending connectivity to unserved and underserved areas. However, challenges remain in reaching scattered homes, farms, and businesses, particularly in rural regions like Swan Valley, Irwin, and Ririe. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) like Altitude Fiber have made progress in areas near Idaho Falls and Ammon, focusing on deploying high-speed broadband for residential and small business customers. Additionally, regional providers and emerging wireless ISPs have shown interest in serving rural areas but face deployment challenges due to the high costs and low population density typical of Bonneville County's expansive rural landscape.

Bonneville County benefits from the pioneering efforts of the Ammon Fiber Network, a municipal open-access broadband model that has garnered national recognition. Ammon's innovative approach allows residents to select from multiple ISPs, driving competition and affordability while

providing a scalable and future-proof infrastructure. The Ammon model demonstrates how local leadership can play a transformative role in addressing connectivity challenges. While currently centered in the urban core of Ammon, this initiative offers a potential roadmap for replication or adaptation in other parts of Bonneville County.

Local initiatives and partnerships have also contributed to advancing broadband planning in Bonneville County. Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs), such as schools, libraries, and healthcare facilities, have prioritized improved connectivity to support telehealth, remote learning, and workforce development. These efforts are complemented by collaborations with state and federal programs, including BEAD and USDA ReConnect, to secure funding for last-mile infrastructure projects. While these efforts have laid critical groundwork, the task of bridging the digital divide in Bonneville County's rural areas remains substantial, requiring ongoing collaboration and innovative funding solutions.

The rural regions of Bonneville County, particularly areas like Swan Valley and Ririe, face significant broadband connectivity challenges that impact residents, businesses, and essential services. Despite the progress made through middle-mile expansions and local partnerships, geographic and economic barriers continue to hinder widespread broadband deployment. Expanding reliable, affordable broadband in Bonneville County is essential to fostering economic growth, supporting precision agriculture, enhancing educational access, and ensuring digital inclusion for all residents.

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated approach that includes targeted investments in infrastructure, strengthened partnerships with ISPs, and innovative public-private funding models. By building on the success of the Ammon Fiber Network and aligning resources with strategic broadband goals, Bonneville County is positioned to create a connected, resilient future where digital access drives opportunity, innovation, and quality of life across the region.

Needs Assessment

The broadband needs assessment for rural Bonneville County is grounded in findings from stakeholder consultations, ISP meetings, and data gathered. This assessment identifies specific broadband requirements, adoption trends, infrastructure gaps, and digital access disparities that must be addressed to meet the region's connectivity goals.

BROADBAND SPEEDS NEEDED

As digital demands grow, Bonneville County requires broadband speeds that meet the needs of its residents, businesses, and community anchor institutions (CAIs). Current connectivity gaps in unserved and underserved areas highlight the need for investments in infrastructure capable of delivering reliable, scalable, and future-proof speeds to support a wide range of activities.

Baseline Speed Standards: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently updated their definition of broadband as a minimum of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload to ensure alignment with programs like the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) to ensure high-quality access for residential, educational, healthcare, and business use.

RESIDENTIAL NEEDS

Households in Bonneville County require high-speed broadband connections to support everyday activities such as streaming, telecommuting, online education, and gaming. Speeds of at least 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload are critical to handle multiple users simultaneously engaging in these activities. Students in rural areas like Swan Valley, Irwin, and Ririe face significant challenges with online learning due to slow and unreliable internet, limiting educational opportunities. Additionally, younger residents and families rely on fast and stable broadband for gaming, interactive entertainment, and social media, which often require strong upload speeds for seamless experiences.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC NEEDS

Businesses and economic sectors across Bonneville County depend on broadband for growth and innovation. Small businesses in Ucon and Ammon require speeds exceeding 250 Mbps to manage digital marketing, e-commerce, and cloud-based operations efficiently. Precision agriculture in rural areas like Swan Valley relies on broadband to optimize irrigation, monitor crops, and manage livestock, where low-latency connections are essential for real-time data usage. Furthermore, workforce development programs offered by institutions like the College of Eastern Idaho depend on high-speed internet to deliver virtual training and certifications, ensuring the local workforce can meet the demands of a digital economy.

COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS (CAIs)

Schools, libraries, healthcare facilities, and public safety organizations are critical anchor institutions that rely on robust broadband. Schools and libraries in Bonneville County require speeds of 1 Gbps or higher to support digital learning, public internet access, and video streaming for education. Healthcare facilities increasingly depend on telehealth services, which need upload speeds of at least 50 Mbps to enable video consultations, remote diagnostics, and secure sharing of electronic health records. Public safety operations, such as emergency response and disaster coordination, require reliable and redundant broadband connections with speeds of 100/100 Mbps or higher to ensure seamless communication and preparedness in critical situations.

EMERGING NEEDS AND FUTURE-PROOFING

As technology evolves, Bonneville County will need to prioritize scalable infrastructure capable of delivering gigabit speeds. Future applications, such as augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR), artificial intelligence (AI), and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, will place even greater demands on broadband networks. Investing in fiber-optic infrastructure is critical to ensuring Bonneville County's broadband network can adapt to these needs and remain competitive in the digital age.

By targeting broadband speeds that exceed current FCC standards and align with BEAD program benchmarks, Bonneville County can ensure residents, businesses, and institutions have the

connectivity needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Let me know if you'd like to expand this section further!

CURRENT ADOPTION RATE

Broadband adoption rates in Bonneville County highlight a persistent gap between the availability of high-speed internet and its use by residents and businesses. While much of the county's urban and suburban areas, such as Idaho Falls and Ammon, have access to reliable broadband, adoption rates in rural regions remain lower due to affordability challenges, lack of digital literacy, and infrastructure gaps in unserved and underserved areas.

Affordability remains a significant barrier to broadband adoption, particularly in rural areas like Swan Valley, Irwin, and Ririe, where low-income households struggle with the cost of broadband subscriptions. Without financial assistance programs, many residents are left unable to afford consistent access. To better understand the affordability challenges faced by the community, Bonneville County plans to implement a community survey to gather data on the financial obstacles preventing residents from adopting broadband. This survey will play a critical role in identifying targeted solutions to make broadband more accessible to underserved populations.

Digital literacy is another key factor influencing broadband adoption rates. Many residents, particularly seniors and underserved populations, lack the skills necessary to effectively use online tools and platforms, which limits their incentive to subscribe to broadband services. Local schools, libraries, and community organizations can play a pivotal role in addressing this gap through digital literacy workshops and training programs, empowering residents to access essential online services such as telehealth, remote education, and workforce development.

Adoption rates are also influenced by the quality and reliability of available broadband services. In areas where speeds fall below acceptable standards for modern internet use, residents and businesses may hesitate to subscribe due to poor service experiences. Addressing infrastructure gaps and ensuring high-speed, reliable connections in underserved and unserved areas is critical to improving adoption and maximizing the impact of broadband expansion efforts.

Efforts to increase broadband adoption in Bonneville County must focus on understanding and addressing affordability challenges, improving digital literacy, and ensuring reliable service in rural areas. By tackling these issues, the county can empower residents and businesses to fully benefit from the opportunities provided by a digitally connected world.

The data underscores the need for not only improved infrastructure but also targeted affordability programs and digital literacy initiatives to boost broadband adoption.

INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS

Infrastructure gaps in Bonneville County present significant challenges to achieving universal broadband access, particularly in rural and sparsely populated areas. While urban and suburban communities like Idaho Falls and Ammon benefit from relatively robust broadband networks, rural regions such as Swan Valley, Irwin, Ririe, and parts of Ucon face persistent connectivity issues that hinder access to essential services like telehealth, education, and economic opportunities.

One of the key challenges in addressing infrastructure gaps is the high cost of deploying broadband in rural areas. The low population density in regions like Swan Valley and Irwin increases the cost per connection, making these areas less attractive for private investment by Internet Service Providers (ISPs). Without significant public funding or incentives, extending middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure into these regions remains financially unfeasible for many providers. This has left residents and businesses reliant on outdated or unreliable options like DSL or satellite services, which often fail to meet the speed and reliability demands of modern internet use.

Another major barrier is the lack of middle-mile infrastructure in rural parts of the county. While existing assets, such as those developed by Syringa Networks, provide a strong foundation for broadband expansion, additional investments are needed to extend these routes to unserved and underserved areas. Gaps in middle-mile connectivity limit the feasibility of deploying last-mile solutions, further exacerbating the digital divide.

Geographic and environmental factors also contribute to infrastructure challenges. The rugged terrain and large land areas of Bonneville County increase the complexity and cost of broadband deployment. For example, census blocks like those covering the Ririe to Swan Valley corridor and rural Ucon require extensive infrastructure to reach scattered households and businesses. Implementing "dig once" policies and integrating broadband deployment with other infrastructure projects, such as road and utility upgrades, can help reduce costs and improve efficiency.

Addressing these infrastructure gaps will require a combination of public and private investments, innovative funding models, and collaboration with ISPs. Programs such as BEAD and USDA ReConnect offer critical funding opportunities to bridge the digital divide in Bonneville County. By prioritizing scalable and future-proof technologies like fiber-optic networks and leveraging existing assets, the county can make significant progress in connecting unserved and underserved communities while ensuring long-term broadband resiliency and reliability.

Infrastructure Deployment Plan

Technology Selection

Bonneville County's broadband strategy leverages a mix of technologies to balance performance, cost, and scalability, addressing the diverse needs of urban centers and rural areas.

Fiber is the cornerstone of the county's broadband plan, offering unmatched speed, reliability, and scalability. It is ideal for high-density areas like Idaho Falls and Ammon, as well as key corridors connecting rural communities. Fiber ensures future-proof connectivity for telehealth, remote work, and IoT applications.

Fixed wireless provides a cost-effective solution for extending broadband to sparsely populated areas like Swan Valley and Irwin. With lower deployment costs and faster timelines than fiber, it is a practical choice for remote regions with challenging terrain.

Hybrid models, such as combining fiber-to-the-node with fixed wireless, bridge service gaps and provide scalable options for transitioning areas. These solutions enable quicker deployments while maintaining flexibility for future fiber expansion.

Satellite is a temporary option for the most remote locations where fiber or fixed wireless is impractical. Recent advancements in low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite technology offer improved speeds and lower latency, serving as an interim solution during infrastructure build-outs.

Bonneville County's targeted approach ensures fiber in high-demand areas, cost-effective fixed wireless in rural regions, and hybrid models for flexibility, enabling reliable, scalable broadband for all residents and businesses.

Incorporating Technical & Community Feedback

This deployment plan integrates feedback and priorities from technical experts, ISPs, and community stakeholders to address Bonneville County's broadband needs effectively:

- **Closing the Loop**: Extensions of middle-mile fiber to connect underserved areas in Swan Valley, Ririe, Ucon, and Irwin. These extensions will ensure resiliency and redundancy for broadband services while enhancing connectivity for rural residents and businesses.
- **Economic Corridors**: Fiber deployment along key routes, such as Highway 26 and the Ririe-Swan Valley corridor, will support agricultural and industrial growth. Improved broadband will enable precision farming, expand access to digital tools for small businesses, and serve growing residential areas in these economic hubs.
- **Conduit Integration**: Recommendations from technical advisors emphasize including multiple conduits in all infrastructure projects, such as road and utility upgrades. This future-proofing measure will lower costs for future broadband expansion while ensuring flexibility to accommodate evolving technologies.

The Infrastructure Deployment Plan leverages fiber-optic technology as the backbone for scalable, reliable broadband expansion. Supplementary fixed wireless solutions and conduit integration provide the flexibility needed to serve Bonneville County's diverse urban and rural regions. By aligning investments with middle-mile assets, prioritizing underserved areas, and integrating community and technical insights, this plan lays the foundation for a digitally connected future that supports economic growth, education, and public safety.

Application Project Areas

The deployment plan targets the following areas for broadband expansion based on identified needs and gaps in service:

Area	Community	Un	Under	Eligible Locations	Land Area
1030	Ucon	179	3	182	28.27
1032	Ririe to Swan Valley	34	1	35	46
1033	Ririe to Swan Valley	109	0	107	19
1084	Rural	52	1	53	81
1085	Ammon	243	214	457	374
			Total	834	

Addressing Fiber Connectivity for Ammon LIDs

Ammon's Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) have been instrumental in expanding the city's innovative fiber network. However, several challenges remain, including reducing costs for LID 6 neighborhoods, providing access to homes in LIDs 1–5 that did not originally participate, and designating LID 7 to complete fiber deployment citywide. To ensure equitable access to broadband for all residents, the city must pursue targeted strategies that prioritize affordability, outreach, and funding.

For LID 6, which includes the neighborhoods of Hillview, Hillsdale, Ammon Townsite, Quail Ridge, Granite Creek, and Trailwood Village, funding support is critical to reducing the average buy-in cost of \$4,000. While this cost is financed over 15 to 20 years with low-interest rates, securing external funding could further increase participation rates. The city can apply for federal and state grants, such as BEAD or USDA ReConnect, to subsidize deployment costs. Additionally, partnerships with local businesses and organizations that benefit from expanded broadband access in LID 6 could provide shared investment opportunities. Exploring municipal subsidies or reallocating surplus revenue from existing fiber connections are further options to help offset costs.

In LIDs 1–5, many homes that did not participate in the original fiber build-out are now interested in connecting to the city network. Providing these homes with access is essential to addressing inequities within connected neighborhoods. The city could offer retroactive buy-in options with flexible financing similar to those available during the initial deployment. Securing external funding to lower these retroactive costs would make participation more feasible. Targeted outreach campaigns highlighting the benefits of the fiber network and showcasing success stories from participating households can further drive adoption. Group discounts for collective buy-ins within neighborhoods could also reduce costs and streamline deployment efforts.

To achieve universal fiber access, Ammon will designate LID 7 to include neighborhoods that have not yet been part of previous LIDs. This new district would complete the citywide fiber build-

out, ensuring every resident has access to high-speed, reliable broadband. Outreach efforts will be key to engaging residents in LID 7, particularly in neighborhoods with higher concentrations of underserved or low-income households. Funding strategies, including federal grants and community partnerships, will be essential to minimize buy-in costs and encourage participation. The city should prioritize equity in LID 7 by focusing on neighborhoods that have faced the greatest digital divides.

To implement these strategies, Ammon must actively pursue funding, develop effective communication plans tailored to each LID, and begin technical and financial planning for LID 7. By addressing the needs of LIDs 1–6 and prioritizing the creation of LID 7, Ammon can achieve its goal of universal fiber access, ensuring all residents benefit from the city's innovative broadband network.

Financial Plan

A robust financial plan ensures that broadband deployment in rural BonnevilleCounty is feasible, sustainable, and scalable. This plan highlights key cost categories, funding strategies, long-term maintenance considerations, and risk management, while also identifying opportunities to leverage private sector partnerships to meet funding requirements, such as the 25% match requirement for BEAD funding.

Budget Overview

The financial strategy accounts for the essential components of broadband deployment and associated initiatives:

- **Infrastructure Costs**: Deployment of fiber-optic and fixed wireless solutions, including equipment, construction, and materials for middle-mile and last-mile connections.
- **Permitting and Right-of-Way**: Fees and approvals for construction projects in collaboration with local governments and utility providers.
- **Labor and Construction**: Engineering design, installation, and quality assurance testing for network deployment.
- **Digital Equity and Outreach**: Programs for digital literacy, affordable device distribution, and community engagement to increase adoption.
- **Contingency Fund**: A reserve to address unforeseen challenges such as price escalations or environmental permitting delays.

Leveraging Private Sector Partnerships

To meet the 25% match requirement for BEAD funding and reduce the financial burden on local governments, Bonneville County's broadband plan emphasizes leveraging partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISPs), developers, and regional stakeholders. These partnerships

bring critical financial resources, technical expertise, and infrastructure assets to accelerate deployment and ensure alignment with long-term community and economic goals.

Internet Service Providers

Bonneville County is served by a diverse range of ISPs, including regional operators such as Fybercom, Silver Star, Quantum Fiber, and CenturyLink, which provide fiber-optic services to various parts of the county. Cable providers like Cable One (Sparklight) and fixed wireless operators such as T-Mobile Home Internet, Verizon, and Anthem Broadband extend coverage to rural and underserved areas. These ISPs can play a key role in meeting match requirements through funding contributions, in-kind services, or infrastructure support, such as leveraging existing middle-mile assets to expand last-mile deployment. Aligning ISP investments with BEAD-funded projects ensures cost-efficiency while supporting the providers' long-term business goals.

Developers and Economic Stakeholders

Collaborating with housing and commercial developers offers opportunities to integrate broadband-ready infrastructure, such as conduit and fiber pathways, into new developments. This approach reduces construction costs for broadband deployment while contributing to the BEAD match requirements. Partnerships along key growth corridors, such as the Ririe-Swan Valley and Ucon areas, will support economic growth by enhancing connectivity for businesses, agricultural operations, and expanding residential areas. By combining resources from public and private stakeholders, Bonneville County can achieve cost-sharing efficiencies and meet connectivity goals in strategic locations.

Innovative Financing Models

Bonneville County can explore public-private partnership (P3) models where ISPs and other private entities provide upfront investments in broadband infrastructure in exchange for long-term operational agreements or revenue-sharing structures. Providers such as Cable One, Quantum Fiber, and Silver Star can contribute funding or services to maximize the impact of federal funding while ensuring sustainable deployment. Matching investments from ISPs, particularly in underserved areas, will enable Bonneville County to stretch federal funds further and improve return on investment.

By leveraging the resources, expertise, and infrastructure of private sector partners, Bonneville County can efficiently meet BEAD match requirements, accelerate broadband deployment, and reduce dependence on limited public funds. These partnerships are essential for closing infrastructure gaps, promoting economic growth, and ensuring all residents and businesses have access to reliable, high-speed internet.

Sustainability and Long-Term Maintenance

The long-term success of Bonneville County's broadband network depends on clear operational and funding strategies that ensure reliability, scalability, and sustainability.

Ongoing Network Maintenance: Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will play a central role in maintaining the broadband infrastructure, ensuring high reliability and consistent service delivery. Long-term agreements with ISPs will clearly define maintenance responsibilities, operational costs, and service quality standards to guarantee network performance. These agreements will also include provisions for rapid issue resolution and regular updates to meet evolving technology needs.

Revenue from Service Subscriptions: Revenue generated from service subscriptions paid by households, businesses, and community anchor institutions may provide a steady funding stream to support network operations, maintenance, and future upgrades. This sustainable model ensures that the network remains financially viable while enabling investments in expanding coverage and enhancing service quality over time.

Scalability: Bonneville County's broadband infrastructure will be designed with scalability in mind, capable of accommodating future demand for higher speeds, greater capacity, and emerging technologies without requiring costly retrofits. Fiber-optic technology, in particular, ensures that the network can adapt to the growing needs of residents and businesses for decades to come.

State and Federal Support: Local governments can continue to leverage opportunities through programs such as the Idaho Office of Broadband and future USDA grants to support system maintenance and periodic upgrades. By aligning with state and federal priorities, Bonneville County can secure additional funding to enhance network resiliency and ensure the system evolves alongside advancements in broadband technology.

These strategies position Bonneville County's broadband network for long-term success, ensuring that it remains reliable, financially sustainable, and capable of meeting the community's needs well into the future.

Risk Management

Proactive risk management ensures project success by addressing potential challenges and implementing mitigation strategies:

Risk	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Supply Chain	Delays in obtaining	Diversify suppliers and order materials early
Disruptions	equipment.	to avoid delays.
Labor	Lack of skilled technicians.	Partner with workforce development
Shortages		programs to train local workers.
Permitting	Regulatory approval delays.	Work closely with local governments to
Delays		streamline processes.

Insufficient	Inability to meet BEAD	Leverage private partners, ISPs, and
Match Funding	requirements.	developers to provide contributions.
Affordability	Low adoption due to cost	Promote ISP affordability programs and
Challenges	barriers.	outreach initiatives.

By aligning public funding opportunities with private sector investments, the project can effectively manage risks, meet federal requirements, and ensure efficient deployment.

Strategic Impact

The successful implementation of Bonneville County's broadband strategy will have far-reaching impacts on economic growth, digital equity, and quality of life for residents and businesses. By addressing connectivity gaps, fostering partnerships, and leveraging federal and state funding opportunities, the county is well-positioned to build a robust and scalable broadband infrastructure that serves its diverse communities.

Economic Growth: Expanded broadband access will enhance competitiveness for small businesses and agricultural operations by enabling them to leverage digital tools, participate in e-commerce, and access global markets. Improved connectivity will attract new businesses and residents, driving local economic development in both urban centers like Ammon and rural areas such as Swan Valley and Ririe.

Education and Workforce Development: Reliable broadband will support remote learning, digital literacy, and workforce training programs, helping to prepare residents for high-demand careers in a digital economy. Schools, libraries, and higher education institutions will serve as connectivity hubs, providing essential resources for students and educators.

Public Safety and Health: Enhanced broadband infrastructure will strengthen public safety by improving emergency communication and enabling redundancy in critical networks. Expanded access to telehealth services will improve healthcare outcomes for rural residents by connecting them to specialists and reducing travel time.

Digital Inclusion: Focused efforts on affordability and digital literacy will bridge the digital divide, ensuring that all residents can benefit from the economic and social opportunities provided by broadband.

Next Steps

1. Implementation of Infrastructure Deployment

- Begin phased deployment of fiber and fixed wireless technologies in prioritized areas such as Ammon, Ucon, and the Ririe-Swan Valley corridor.
- Collaborate with ISPs to finalize plans for leveraging middle-mile assets and extending last-mile connections.

2. Community Engagement and Feedback

- Launch community outreach efforts to ensure residents are informed about the deployment timeline, affordability programs, and digital literacy resources.
- Conduct additional listening sessions in rural areas to gather feedback and address community-specific concerns.

3. Secure Additional Funding

- Pursue BEAD and USDA ReConnect funding to support infrastructure build-out and digital equity programs.
- Leverage private sector partnerships to meet match requirements and enhance project scalability.

4. Monitor and Adjust

- Establish a data-driven framework to track project progress, identify barriers, and adapt strategies as needed.
- Incorporate lessons learned from early deployment phases into subsequent implementation efforts.

By taking these strategic steps, Bonneville County can ensure the long-term success of its broadband initiative, creating a connected, resilient future where all residents and businesses thrive in a digitally enabled world.

Appendix: Service Area Maps

1030













