Idaho Broadband
Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Agenda

- **10:00 am Call to Order**

  Roll Call

  Approval of 6/30/2025 Meeting Minutes

- **10:05 am Idaho BEAD Program**
  - Application Process
  - Evaluation Process
  - Provisional Awards
  - Final Proposal
  - Subgrantee Agreement

- **11:45 Next IBAB Meeting/Any New Business**

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Timeline Overview

June 30th IBAB Meeting

BoB Round 1: Tuesday, 7/15 to Tuesday, 7/29

BoB Round 2: Tuesday, 8/26 to Tuesday, 9/2

NTIA SAC Meeting 8/12

Public Comments: Mon. 9/15 to Mon. 9/22

Brief Recap

- Idaho's BEAD allocation: $583M/$570M in awards
- 588 Application Project Areas (APAs)
- Approx. 92,000 Eligible Broadband Service Locations (BSLs)

BoB Round 1:

- 156 applications received

- 283 APAs with preliminary awards

- The BoB application window was shorted from 45 days to 14 to meet NTIA mandated timeline
  - Of 40 prequalified applicants, only 23 submitted (57.5%)
  - More than half (305) of Idaho's 589 APAs received bids from only one type of technology
  - Northern Idaho APAs were particularly lacking in competition

- To stimulate participation, IBAB/IOB sought and was granted a 21-day extension from NTIA to run *BoB Round 2* for the 305 low participation APAs

BoB Round 2:

- 56 applications received

- 305 APAs with preliminary awards

- 7-day application window

- 2 new prequalified applicants submitted proposals (in addition to some applicants from Round 1)

- This targeted "second" round accomplished:
  - Narrowing coverage gaps to ensure universal broadband access across all un/underserved locations in Idaho.
  - Improving the quality, sustainability, and affordability of broadband deployments through competition and participation
  - Supporting a healthy mix of ALL technology types

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Application Materials & Evaluation Overview

Performance-Based & Technology-Neutral Approach
IOB employed a consistent, cost-focused methodology aligned with NTIA's June 6, 2025 RPN and the Infrastructure Act.

Strict Priority Project Criteria
Projects must provide ≥100 Mbps download / 20 Mbps upload, ≤100 ms latency, and be scalable for 5G and future demands.

Independent Evaluation by Third-Party Consultant
All applications underwent rigorous review regardless of applicant's self-reported Priority status.

Comprehensive Documentation Required
Applicants submitted technical narratives, data, and designs using IOB-supplied templates.

Key Evaluation Documents
Included workplans, committed speeds, network diagrams, resiliency plans, and milestone timelines.

Detailed Network Design Requirements
Required geospatial route maps, logical diagrams, scalability forecasts, and interconnection methods.

Professional Engineering Certification
A licensed P.E. was required to certify that the network meets BEAD performance standards.

Technology-Specific Disclosures
Tailored requirements for FTTP, Fixed Wireless, Coaxial/HFC (not proposed), and LEO Satellite deployments.

Evaluation Focus Areas
Assessed eligibility, speed, latency, scalability, resiliency, and alignment with BEAD goals.

Consistent, Application-Level Analysis
Applied NTIA RPN criteria on an Application-level and verified at the APA level—evaluating technical merit, inclusivity, compliance, and location accuracy.

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Process: Financial & Compliance Reviews

Project Budget, Funding Needs, Applicant's Financial Capability:

- Comprehensive Budget Check
- Cost Reasonableness
- Financial Capability & Sustainability
- Documentation of Financial Health
- Viability of Business Model

Ensure the applicant followed all instructions and meets all baseline eligibility criteria. Key points:

- Required Information Included
- Certifications & Acknowledgments
- Attachments & Documentation
- Policy Compliance
- Completeness

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Determining Priority Broadband Project (PBP) Status

States Must Consider "Priority Broadband Projects" (PBP) first.

The term "Priority Broadband Project" is restored to the IIJA definition with no preference for any specific technology:

1. Provide broadband service at speeds of <u>no less than 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload</u>.
2. Has latency less than or <u>equal to 100 ms</u>.
3. Can <u>easily scale speeds over time</u> to meet the evolving connectivity needs of households and businesses.
4. <u>Supports the deployment of 5G</u>, successor wireless technologies, and other advanced services.

All technology types that meet BEAD technical standards can apply on the same terms to serve any BEAD-eligible BSL

Scoring rubric criteria must focus on minimizing BEAD costs (NOFO Sec IV.B.&.2.i-iii eliminated)

States directed on how to select among competing proposals and establish the required subgrantee rubric criteria (IV.B.7.2.i-iii)

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Process: Technical Review

Validates proposed network meets or exceeds technical requirements. Including:

- Speed (100Mbps/20Mbps +)
- Latency (under 100ms)
- Network design (future scalability)
- Technology type
- Implementation timeline (within 4 years)
- Risk mitigation (redundancy, resiliency, and disaster recovery)
- Cost (makes sense per proposed scope & coverage area)

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Scoring: Primary Criteria | Lowest Cost

Idaho's Matrix

	Criterion	Description	Maximum Points
Primary Criteria Applications will be evaluated based on the minimal BEAD outlay for APAs in the applicant's proposal. The minimal BEAD outlay is based on the lowest subsidy requested for each APA divided by the number of BSLs proposed to be served in that APA.	Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	Lowest average cost per location in proposed application service area after match	55

2025 Policy Notice

3.6 **The Primary Criteria to choose a BEAD subgrantee is "... the option with the lowest cost based on minimal program outlay" (RPN, 3.4, p.12). However, Secondary Criteria are provided. Can you explain this?**

Scoring subgrantee applications may consist of a two-part process.

First, the Eligible Entity must determine which Priority Broadband Projects (PBP) proposal costs the least according to the minimal BEAD program outlay definition (see RPN, 3.4, p. 12). (Note: If PBP proposals are too expensive, an Eligible Entity can move to less expensive non-PBPs.) If there are no proposals within 15% of the lowest cost proposal, and costs aren't excessive, that proposal wins.

Second, if there are other proposals for the same project area that are within 15% of the lowest cost proposal, the Eligible Entity then goes on to consider Secondary Criteria in order to determine a winner (RPN, 3.4, p. 12).

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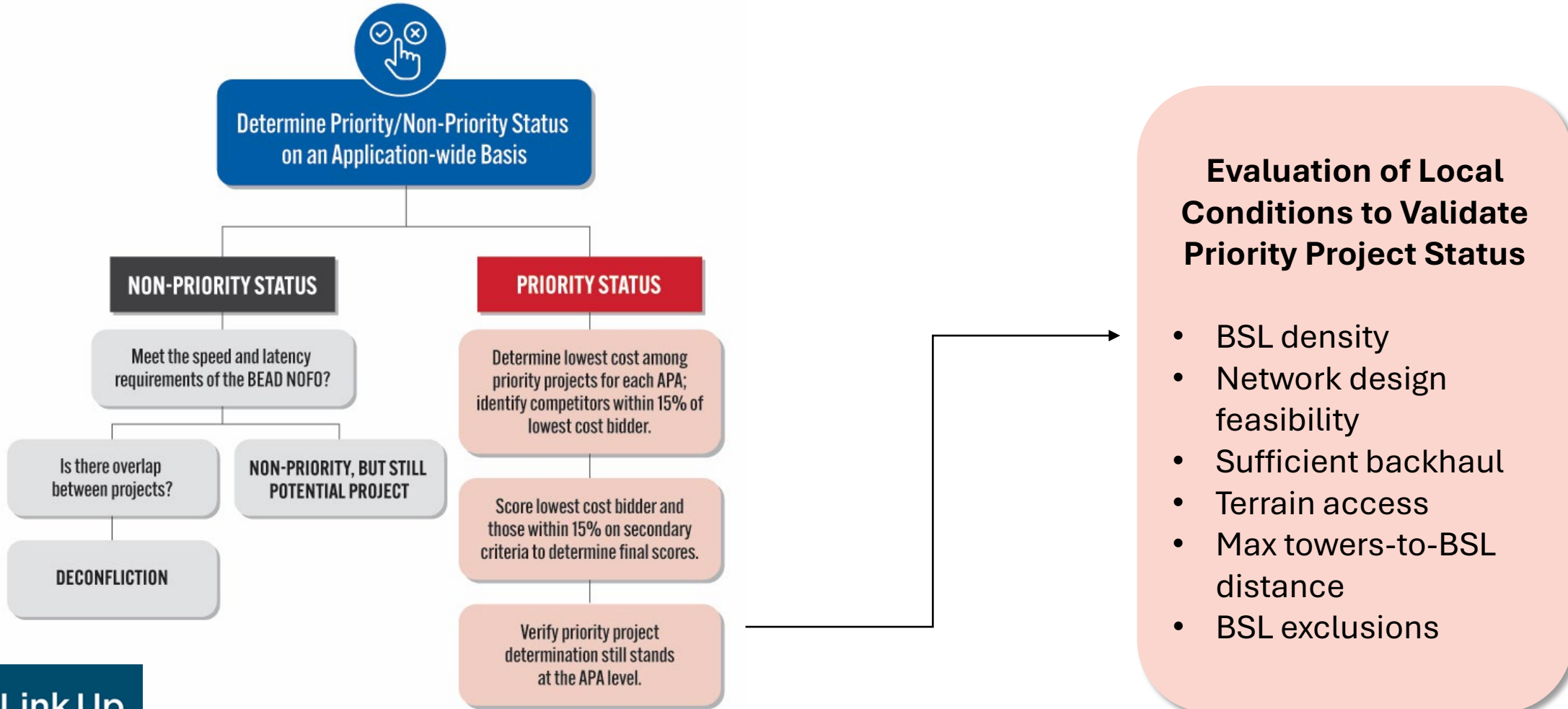# Secondary Criteria | Speed & Performance

Speed to Deployment
The prospective subgrantee's binding commitment to provide service by a date certain that is earlier than four years after the date on which the subgrantee will receive the subgrant from the State. Failure to comply with this commitment will result in contractual penalties. Greater consideration can be awarded to prospective subgrantees promising an earlier service provision date.

Important note: Secondary Scoring Criteria, which can only consist of criteria related to "Speed to Deployment" and "Speed of Network and other Technical Capabilities," is only triggered when there are multiple applications proposing to serve the same project area(s) and those applications propose per-BSL costs within 15% of each other.

Idaho's Matrix

Description	Maximum Points
Deployment schedule commitment < 24 months	5
Deployment schedule commitment 25-35 months	4
Deployment schedule commitment 36-41 months	3
Deployment schedule commitment 42-47 months	2
Deployment schedule commitment = 48 months	0
Download Speed:	
> 5G	10
2G -5G	8
1G - 2G	5
700-999 Mbps	4
401-699 Mbps	3
250-400 Mbps	2
101-249 Mbps	1
Upload Speed:	
>5G	10
2G-5G	8
1G - 2G	5
650-999 Mbps	4
250-649 Mbps	3
100-249 Mbps	2
21-99 Mbps	1
Latency	
Less than 10 ms	10
10-20 ms	7
21-35 ms	5
36-50 ms	3
51-65 ms	1
Scalability	
≥ 5G	10
2G-4G	8
2G/2G	5
Scalability Stated to 1G/1G	3
Scalability Stated to 500/500 Mbps	1

Reconfirm Priority Broadband Project Status

Evaluation of Local Conditions to Validate Priority Project Status

- BSL density
- Network design feasibility
- Sufficient backhaul
- Terrain access
- Max towers-to-BSL distance
- BSL exclusions

Excessive Cost

Multiple methods to calculate excessive cost were considered. Such as:

Analysis of BEAD applicants' requests to exclude BSLs due to high-cost.

NTIA's investment cost per BSL in extremely high-cost (EHC) Census Block Groups (CBGs).

Idaho's in-house cost model, based on Idaho CPF application data.

NTIA's investment cost per BSL in EHC CBGs was selected, because it includes no data points outside of what NTIA provided, and analyzed locations that NTIA predetermined and identified as high-cost. The results were an **excessive cost threshold of $24,200**.

Deconfliction

A **mapping platform** developed by the IOB GIS team was utilized to determine the level and nature of project overlap in each APA for all competing applications; enabled quick visualization of:

- Overlapping applications

- BSL exclusions

- BSLs in high-cost areas or areas with difficult terrain

- "Islands" where most of an area is preliminarily awarded to one applicant, with a small central area awarded to another
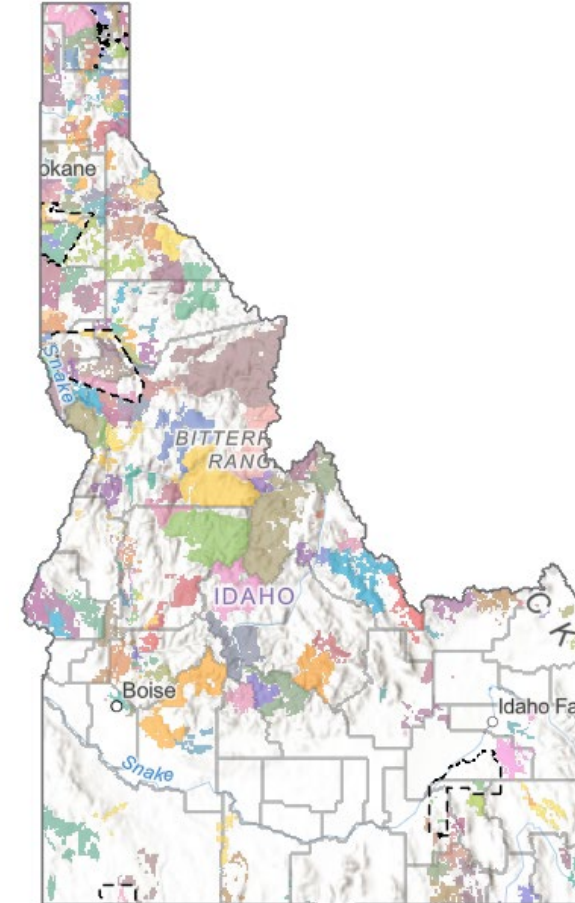
Severability

Following preliminary scoring and **deconfliction** of applications and APAs, applicants were informed that:

Their overall applications and each individual APA were evaluated.

Some APAs scored higher than others.

In cases of overlapping APAs, higher-scoring proposals may take priority.

Applicants were asked to review their lower-scoring APAs and confirm whether these can be **severed** (i.e., removed) from their application **without:**

- Making the remaining project unviable,
- Substantially impairing functionality,
- Significantly affecting cost-efficiency or expected outcomes.

Most agreed to sever all lower scoring APAs in their applications

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Provisional Awards

See **Link Up Idaho**

BEAD Provisional Award Overview

Provisional Awards by APA & ISP

Dashboards/Maps

Final Proposal policies and attachments/files

Overview of Preliminary Awards –
Total Program Cost

Total Deployment Cost	$453,357,358
EE Average Cost per BSL	$4,950
Lowest Cost per BSL for a project	$691
Highest Cost per BSL for a project	$37,302
Total Match Provided	$192,604,306

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Overview of Preliminary Awards –
Highest Cost per BSL Projects (Top 11)

Awardee	BEAD Cost Per BSL	Number of BSLs Served	Technology Type
FyberCom LLC (APP-007158)	$44,492	37	Fiber to the Premises
ETS Management LLC (APP-007322)	$37,302	99	Mixed
Direct Communications Rockland Inc. (APP-007123)	$27,986	434	Fiber to the Premises
FyberCom LLC (APP-007131)	$21,218	41	Fiber to the Premises
Custer Telephone Cooperative Inc (APP-007308)	$21,167	39	Fiber to the Premises
Concept Communications, LLC (APP-007151)	$20,884	237	Fiber to the Premises
Direct Communications Rockland Inc. (APP-007122)	$20,227	24	Fiber to the Premises
Direct Communications Rockland Inc. (APP-007124)	$20,185	83	Fiber to the Premises
ETS Management LLC (APP-007325)	$18,017	803	Mixed
Newmax LLC dba Intermax Networks (APP-007184)	$16,276	141	Fiber to the Premises
Direct Communications Rockland Inc. (APP-007121)	$16,183	322	Fiber to the Premises

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Overview of Top Preliminary Awards –
BSLs Served (Top 5)

Awardee	Number of BSLs Served	BEAD Award Amount
SpaceX	22,579	$33,895,500
FyberCom LLC	15,200	$87,449,026
Wi-Fiber	7,946	$58,618,679
ETS Management, LLC	6,369	$66,860,093
White Cloud Communications, Inc.	5,770	$11,499,546

Overview of Preliminary Awards –
Overall Mix of Technology Types

Technology Type	% of Total BEAD Investment	% of BSLs Covered
Other (0) *Mixed*	22% 　　FW 31.25% 　　Fiber 65.54% 　　LEO 3.21%	16% 　　FW 49.21% 　　Fiber 42.3% 　　LEO 8.49%
Copper Wire (10)	0	0
Coaxial Cable/ HFC (40)	0	0
Optical Carrier/ Fiber to the Premises (50)	65%	42%
Non-Geostationary Satellite (60)	7%	25%
Unlicensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless (70) *(see Other)*	0	0
Licensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless (71)	1%	3%
Licensed by-Rule Terrestrial Fixed Wireless (72)	5%	14%

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Overview of Preliminary Awards –
NTIA Reason Code Exclusions

Reason Code	Number of BSLs
1: Location should not have a broadband connection	310
2: Location does not need mass-market broadband service due to the nature of use	257
3: Location has been removed from Version 6 of the Fabric by the FCC	16
4: Location is already served by an enforceable commitment	0
5: Location is already served by non-subsidized service (privately funded network). Cannot be used for service by low-earth orbit satellite	4
6: Other	0
7: The Eligible Entity is financially incapable of serving an unserved or underserved location	0

Final Proposal

- **Demonstrate readiness to administer BEAD funds** in alignment with federal goals and program requirements.

- **Present a finalized strategy** for closing the broadband availability gap—particularly for unserved and underserved locations.

- **Outline how the state will select subgrantees**, including final scoring criteria, selection processes, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

- **Confirm that stakeholder engagement and public comment processes** have been completed and incorporated.

- **Report on challenge process results** and how they influenced final eligible locations and project areas.

- **Include mapping and data** used to define eligible areas, project areas, and funding priorities.

- **Establish program timelines, budgets, and accountability measures** to ensure transparency and effective use of BEAD funds.

Key Elements of the Final Proposal

- **Requirement 1:** Overview of subgrantee selection process and changes made for the Benefit of the Bargain round(s)

- **Requirement 7:** Does your subgrantee selection outcomes include 100% coverage to all unserved and underserved locations & did you determine applications deemed to be "excessive cost"?

- **Requirement 12:** What was the methodology by which the Eligible Entity deemed an application "priority broadband"?

- **Requirement 13:** How did you apply the scoring criteria and framework from the Restructuring Policy Notice?

- **Final Proposal Data Submission:** Presentation of Subgrantee Selection Data

- **Waiver Requests:** Description of match waiver requests and Tribal Consent Resolution extensions

Final Proposal Public Comments

- **43 Public Comments Received**
  - Accolades/kudos - excited to see their area will receive service **(1)**

  - Suggestion to use remaining funds for non-deployment purposes **(3)**

  - Comments that LEO Satellite service is not optimal **(7)**

  - Applicant responses to *Provisional* Awards **(32)**

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Subgrantee Agreement

Final Proposal

Provisional Subgrant Awards

Grant Agreement

- Program Monitoring & Compliance Plan

- Reporting Requirements

- Environmental/Permitting
  - NTIA's Environmental Screening & Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT)
  - Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) Memo

- LEOs
  - See Addendum #1: LEO Satellite Capacity Grant

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Next Steps

Transparent & Objective Selection of Preliminary Awardee Recommendations

NTIA Special Award Condition (SAC) Meeting

September 12th

Final Proposal and provisional subgrantee list posted for public comment for 7 days

IBAB reviews recommendations and approves provisional subgrant awards

Final Proposal including provisional subgrantee list submitted to NTIA by September 25th

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QUESTIONS?
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