

Spring 2022

County Focus

A PUBLICATION OF THE IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

2022

Infrastructure Funding

IN THIS ISSUE

**County Infrastructure
Funding Opportunities**

**Broadband Access:
A Priority for Counties**

**Historic Change for Idaho
Crisis & Suicide Hotline**



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Spring 2022

2

From the Executive Director

County Officials Lead in Finding Solutions

4

President's Podium

End of Session Reflection & Gratitude

5

Risk Management Corner

Terminations: Classic Mistakes to Avoid

6

Policy Highlights

County Infrastructure Funding Opportunities

7

From the Office of the Governor

Leading Idaho: Paving the Way Forward

8

Research Nook

Major Transportation Funding Increases on Tap

9

Upcoming Events

10

Cover Story

Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline: Historic Change

12

Cover Story

Broadband Access: A Priority for Counties

14

Feature Story

LHTAC: Bridge Preservation & Replacement

16

National Perspective

Focus on the Bipartisan & Infrastructure Law

18

County Center Stage

Nez Perce County

20

IAC Feature Story

Midwinter Legislative Conference Recap

22

County Center Stage

Oneida County

25

IAC Member Spotlight

Bill Thompson, Latah County Prosecutor



6



4



8



20



County Officials Lead in Finding Solutions

Seth Grigg
IAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Several years ago, the IAC Board undertook the process of updating IAC's strategic plan. In updating IAC's strategic plan, the Board laid out a vision to "Become the most trusted source for county government policy information and the leading source of knowledge for county officials." Over the last two years, I have seen the fruits of IAC's strategic planning efforts as more legislators frequently turn to IAC for leadership in finding policy solutions to address the needs of a growing state. Over the last two legislative sessions, legislators and the Governor's Office have looked to IAC to help with efforts to:

- Reform the county medically indigent and CAT programs,
- Revamp the involuntary commitment process,
- Fund Medicaid and public health districts,
- Fund indigent public defense,
- Provide meaningful local property tax relief, and
- Identify transportation funding enhancements.

The recently completed 2022 Legislative Session will be remembered as one of the most important sessions for counties in recent history. Idaho counties scored major wins that reform public defense delivery (Ho735), repeal the county medically indigent program (Ho735), increase transportation funding (Ho772, S1359), transfer funding responsibility for involuntary commitment expenditures to the state (S1327), and reduce county property taxes (Ho735). IAC staff have relied on the IAC Legislative Committee and membership to review and provide direction on legislation to help staff in securing the best possible outcome on behalf of counties. Without the efforts of the membership, the gains IAC has made on behalf of counties would not have been possible.

Despite the progress made, there is still plenty of work to be done to further reform public defense delivery in Idaho and to collaborate on ways to continue providing meaningful property tax relief without reducing the ability of counties to provide essential state mandated services. To that end, IAC plans on working with county elected officials, the Legislature, and the Governor's Office to find solutions to provide for an alternative public defense model and collaborate on efforts to reduce property taxes.

IAC STAFF

Seth Grigg
Executive Director

Kristin Cundiff
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Amanda Steinmetz
Sr. Financial Officer/Staff Accountant

Mindy Linn
Member Services Coordinator

Jessica Roth
Communications & Marketing Specialist

Sara Westbrook
Policy Director

Kelli Brassfield
Policy Analyst

Carolyn Carder
CAT Case Manager

I'm hopeful that IAC can take the lead in the formation of two working groups; the first will be dedicated to exploring alternative public defense models with the goal of making recommendations to the Legislature in 2023. IAC will partner with the Governor's Office to make sure county commissioners, legislators, prosecuting attorneys, and defense attorneys have a voice in what the next public defense model will be.

There will be a lot of ground to cover, but I'm confident the IAC membership will be up to the task. The primary discussion will revolve around what the next public defense model will be, which likely will be either a regional based model or a state model (or a hybrid of the two). These discussions come at a critical time in which counties are increasingly finding it difficult to recruit and hire public defenders.

The second working group will focus on ways to further reduce property taxes on Idahoans. Legislators have indicated a desire to revive efforts to raise the sales tax to reduce property taxes. County officials will have the summer to collect and analyze data and find potential alternatives. Other legislators have expressed an interest in identifying dedicated state revenues to fund judiciary services to relieve local property taxpayers.

As an example, were the Legislature to dedicate an additional \$80 million in sales tax revenues and index the funds annually to growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), legislators could provide \$80 million in ongoing property tax relief without reducing county service obligations or increasing the sales tax.

Another alternative that has been floated is to grant counties broader local option taxing authority to be used as property tax replacement. IAC plans to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders including county officials, legislators, and business leaders to find a path forward on rising property taxes.

Let's not forget that county officials are Idaho thought leaders. Legislators are searching for solutions. County officials have provided solutions in the past and will be looked at to provide solutions going into 2023. I want to thank everyone for your efforts over the last few years and encourage you to stay engaged in the interim. 🙌



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2022 START DATES

April 25th • August 1st • September 12th

End of the Session: Time for Reflection & Gratitude

Chris Goetz

IAC PRESIDENT & CLEARWATER COUNTY SHERIFF



As we come the end of another legislative session, it is important to evaluate how we performed as an association and as county elected officials and to reflect on what we've achieved. Like every year, we had a list of legislative priorities as set by the membership that we aimed to accomplish during the session.

At the time of writing this article, the legislature is still in session, but it appears that we will see some of our priorities move forward. Some of our noteworthy success has been in stopping legislation that would be harmful to counties. This is the task that IAC's executive director, policy staff and Legislative Committee take on every year.

It takes an enormous amount of time and effort from the IAC staff and the Legislative Committee members to be successful during the session. Having been on the Legislative Committee in the past, I can attest to the tedious process and countless hours that are required to keep track of all the legislative bills each week

of the session. When you have a moment, please be sure to thank your Legislative Committee members for all the hours they spent to look out for the best interest of counties and the state of Idaho as a whole.

Now that the redistricting in Idaho has been completed, some of you may find yourself in a new legislative district. We have also seen several longtime legislators decide to retire this year. Please take the time to get to know your new House or Senate member once the elections are over. Let them know your concerns as a County Elected Official, because you are the expert for things related to your elected office.

If we don't provide information to our legislators, someone else will. Taking the time to connect with our legislators allows for a strong foundation of trust and communication, and it helps us to control the narrative as we will serve as a resource when legislators have questions about issues impacting counties.

To find your legislator and see their contact information, visit:
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Terminations – Classic Mistakes to Avoid

Tammy Middleton
HR RISK MANAGER, ICRMP

Idaho is an “employment-at-will” state. Does that mean you can fire anyone at any time without a problem? Of course not. The reality is that no termination is without risk. There are still several laws that regulate terminations. And, even if the termination is justified, you may still get sued. So, to help reduce the risk of litigation, I want to encourage you to pause and give consideration to the following:

- Avoid snap decisions and confrontations. Give yourself a moment to consult with experts: ICRMP, peers, or your attorney.
- Ask yourself, will my employee be surprised they are getting fired? If so, then termination may not be the appropriate next step. Employees should never really be completely blindsided by a termination. They should be receiving regular feedback on their performance and behaviors. You should be coaching them on ways to improve, expectations and consequences. If this has been happening, they might be upset, but they shouldn't be surprised. Coaching and disciplinary action prior to termination tell the story of how we got here to the court. If you go from hire to fire with nothing in between, it creates questions like “why now?” and “what else might be motivating this?” Keep in mind, it's not always about what you have done, but what you can prove that you have done, so look at what you have in writing. Does your documentation support your termination action today?
- Are you following your own rules? More and more cases are being lost because employers don't follow their own rules and policies. If you have a “for cause” policy, then you need to follow it. If your handbook says that you will provide a verbal warning, then you need to do that. If your policy states you will hold a name clearing hearing, ensure that happens before you move forward. Failure to follow your own policy can look like discrimination, retaliation, or a hostile work environment, and will distract from valid reasons to terminate an employee.

*If you are feeling frustrated
or like you have had enough,
chances are you may be
reacting emotionally.*

- Be mindful of what you say both the day of and the weeks prior to termination. Any promises you make or statements that could be construed as discriminatory, threatening, or retaliatory will be remembered in the worst possible way. While you don't want to say things that may be taken wrong, you also don't want to be overly nice. If the employee is being terminated for poor work product, don't start complimenting them on their great attendance or telling them how fun they are to work with, it will make the termination seem like a betrayal. Nothing inspires litigation like being blindsided.
- Also, don't discuss the termination with anyone who doesn't need to know. It's important to be respectful to employees even if they are leaving the agency. No one wants to feel talked about or like they are the last to know about their own termination. Things like this inspire employees to sue. Before you have the final conversation, do your homework. Review the last 6-8 months of the employee's tenure. Have they made any complaints? Have they reported any wrongdoing? Have they filed for FMLA, ADA, or had a workplace injury? Employees frequently believe that their termination is because of retaliation. If the employee has engaged in any of these activities, it is important to proceed with caution, and consult your attorney or call ICRMP. 📞





County Infrastructure Funding Opportunities Abound

Sara Westbrook
IAC POLICY DIRECTOR

Infrastructure is having a bit of a renaissance. Whether it is new funding at the state or federal level, policymakers are finally recognizing the importance of infrastructure and the consequences of neglecting infrastructure funding. New state funding (H772 & S1359), the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), formerly known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, are all available for counties to access additional funding for much needed infrastructure, including transportation. Here are a few highlights and a preview of what funds counties can anticipate and apply for in the months to come:

State Transportation Funding

During Governor Little's State of the State Address, he emphasized transportation infrastructure as a major priority for moving Idaho forward. The Legislature joined Governor Little in recognizing that the record state surplus provided opportunities to invest strategically in transportation.

House bill 772 ensures that \$80 million will be distributed through the Local Highway Distribution Account starting on July 1, 2022, to be used for road maintenance and improvements. Senate Bill 1359 provides \$210 million for local bridge maintenance and pedestrian safety projects with off-system bridges posted for load and in poor condition taking priority. These dollars will be administered as grants through the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC).

American Rescue Plan Act

In January 2022, The U.S. Treasury released the Final Rule for the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (Recovery Fund) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This Rule provides much needed flexibility regarding how ARPA Funds can be used. One of the key changes in the updated Final Rule is that counties can claim up to \$10 million in lost revenue as a "standard allowance."

Lost revenue dollars may be spent on government services through December 31, 2026, with a few restrictions in place. Other key changes include new flexibility regarding investing in broadband infrastructure and capital investments in public facilities (Source: www.NACo.org/resources/featured/naco-recovery-fund-faqs).

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. BIL has some major provisions in place for counties. Some highlights include:

- Extends Secure Rural Schools Program for three years
- Provides \$1 billion for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program
- Fully funds the Safeguarding Tomorrow Through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) Act allowing state and local governments to utilize low interest loans for pre-disaster mitigation activities
- Establishes new competitive grant program for local governments to address and eliminate at-grade rail crossings
- Establishes a new State and Local Cybersecurity grant program
- Creates new Bridge Investment Program that prioritizes off-systems bridges for repair, replacement and rehabilitation

For more information about these highlights and more including an interactive table with information about all of the funding opportunities available to counties visit NACo's website www.NACo.org/resources/legislative-analysis-counties-bipartisan-infrastructure-law. 📖

Leading Idaho: Paving the Way Forward

GOVERNOR BRAD LITTLE

Here in Idaho, we truly have a once in a lifetime opportunity before us.

Idaho's red-hot economy combined with years of fiscal conservatism have positioned Idaho for yet another record budget surplus – the highest it's ever been at \$1.9 billion and counting.

I outlined my priorities in providing Idahoans historic tax relief, making the biggest investment ever in Idaho education, and committing to finding new solutions to fully meet our transportation needs in the years ahead. My plan is called “Leading Idaho.”

I know you all have a keen interest in what we'll achieve on transportation funding. Last year, we championed historic investments in transportation infrastructure without raising taxes or fees. I pushed for, and together we secured, up to \$1.6 billion for needed transportation projects across the state!

Building on that success, this year I proposed continued investments in roads and bridges to keep up with growth, keep Idahoans safe, facilitate commerce, and save Idahoans' time on the road. My plan includes \$200 million in one-time funding to clear out one-third of the backlog for local bridges and \$200 million in ongoing funding to fully fund known maintenance gaps with no new taxes.

I am also seeking to make investments in our airports, rail, port, and pedestrian safety to ensure the sovereignty of our state's supply chain. I also want to leverage federal funds to cover one-time transportation projects without

defraying the known long-term maintenance costs for the state.

In all, my plan makes sure our state's transportation infrastructure is sustainable over time, so we are not dependent on future congressional action.

My Leading Idaho plan also makes the biggest investment ever in agriculture and natural resources, with \$850 million to improve the quality and quantity of water throughout Idaho.

My Leading Idaho plan also laid down the marker on continued investments in education (especially literacy), broadband, water, outdoor recreation, behavioral health, public safety, fire, workforce development, energy, healthcare, and several other key areas while ensuring we manage a balanced budget, leave a larger than usual surplus, and bring our rainy-day funds to a record level to guard against future downturns.

I frequently talk about the “trifecta” – I never thought we would achieve record tax relief, record investments in transportation, and record investments in education in a single year.

Our success is due in part to the great work you all do to serve the people of Idaho at the county level.

Thank you so much for the instrumental role you all play in our state's success. I appreciate your support in helping me keep our state headed in the right direction. 📌

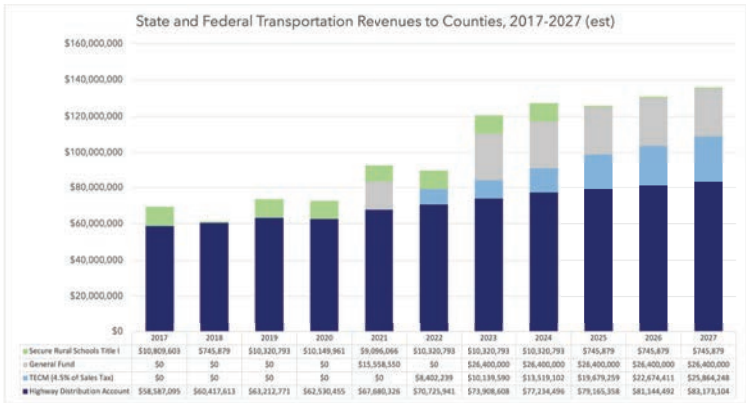


Major Transportation Funding Increases on Tap for Counties

Seth Grigg
IAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Over the last two years, the Idaho Legislature and US Congress have enacted legislation to boost ongoing transportation revenues to counties by nearly 40%. The ongoing infusion of transportation funds to counties is in addition to one-time state surplus funds for local bridges and Federal Aid from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL), formerly called the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The much needed ongoing and one-time revenues will aid counties and other local highway jurisdictions in replacing aging bridges and catching up with highway maintenance backlogs.

For fiscal year 2023, counties can expect an estimated \$31.3 million increase in ongoing transportation funding from the state and federal government. These ongoing funds do not include the \$200 million in one-time money for local bridge replacement or the Federal Aid grant funds made available through BIL. The chart below visualizes estimated ongoing state and federal transportation revenues to counties through 2027. The influx in funds will go a long way in assisting counties in keeping up with inflation as well as maintenance backlogs.



So where do the funding increases come from? In 2021, the Idaho Legislature enacted House Bill 362. House Bill 362 dedicates 4.5% of state sales tax collections to transportation projects. The first \$80 million in collections is annually distributed to the state Transportation Expansion and Congestion Mitigation Fund (TECM). Any distribution above \$80 million will be distributed annually to cities, counties, and highway districts pursuant to the highway

distribution formula which allocates 30% of funds to cities by population and 70% of funds to counties and highway districts (50% based on improved lane miles and 50% based on vehicle registrations). In the current fiscal year, IAC estimates counties will receive a distribution in July of \$8.4 million. Within five years, IAC estimates the distribution to counties will increase to nearly \$26 million annually. Table 1 below shows the forecasted distributions from the fund to counties over the next five years.

Table 1: Estimated 4.5% sales tax transportation distributions to counties, 2022-2027.

2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
\$8.4m	\$10.1m	\$13.5m	\$19.7m	\$22.7m	\$25.9m

During the 2022 Legislative Session, the Idaho Legislature enacted House Bill 772 and Senate Bill 1359. House Bill 772 dedicates \$80 million in state general funds to maintenance of local highways. IAC estimates the county share of the \$80 million distribution to be \$26.4 million. The intent of the appropriation is for the funds to be ongoing. Senate Bill 1359 dedicates \$200 million in one-time state general fund surplus money to replacement of aging local bridges. The \$200 million will be administered by LHTAC through a competitive grant application process with bridges selected based on bridge condition.

Additionally, Congress recently approved the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. BIL not only provides additional Federal Aid grant money for local highway and off system bridge projects but also provides for three years of Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding. Secure Rural Schools funding will increase to 2017 funding levels for each of the next three years, resulting in a 13% increase in SRS funds compared to 2020 funding allocations (received in county fiscal year 2021).

In 2020, a Boise State University Public Policy Institute Study found that an additional \$109.9 million in ongoing transportation funding was needed to keep up with maintenance backlogs on local highway systems. Between House Bill 362 and House Bill 772, locals will receive \$105 million in ongoing transportation funds and \$200 million in one-time money for highway and bridge maintenance. These much-needed funding enhancements will assist counties and other local highway jurisdictions in maintaining and expanding Idaho's essential local highway system.📌

MAY 2022						
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JULY 2022						
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AUGUST 2022						
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28	29	30	31			

2022 Upcoming Events

May 3

Spring County Officials Institute
Riverside Hotel // Boise, Idaho

May 10

Spring County Officials Institute
Best Western Coeur d'Alene Inn // Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

May 18-20

WIR Annual Conference
Anchorage, AK

May 24

Spring County Officials Institute
Canyon Crest Event Center // Twin Falls, Idaho

May 25

Spring County Officials Institute
Residence Inn // Idaho Falls, Idaho

June 7-9

IACC Annual Conference
Best Western Burley Inn // Burley, Idaho

July 21-24

NACo Annual Conference
Gaylord Rockies Resort // Aurora, CO

August 8-11

IACCT Annual Conference
Kootenai River Inn // Bonners Ferry, ID

August 16-18

IACRC Annual Conference
Schweitzer Mountain Resort // Sandpoint, ID

August 23-25

IACA Annual Conference
Canyon Crest Event Center // Twin Falls, ID

Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline Prepares for Historic Change

Lee Flinn, Director
IDAHO CRISIS & SUICIDE HOTLINE

Since the phone lines started ringing in November 2012, Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline (ICSH) has been a critical lifeline for Idahoans in crisis and an entry point into our state's behavioral health care system.

Whether a person is experiencing suicidal thoughts, mental health challenges, or is calling on behalf of a loved one – a trained crisis responder is always ready to listen, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. ICSH provides free and confidential suicide and behavioral health crisis support.

Idaho's suicide rate exceeds the national average by over 50 percent and historically ranks in the top ten states. Making matters worse, every county is federally designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area for mental health services. The majority of Idaho communities do not have enough mental health providers to serve residents, especially in rural and frontier areas.

Idaho's suicide rate exceeds the national average by **over 50%** & historically ranks in the **top 10** states.

Historic Change is Coming

The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020, 988 was intended to be the mental health equivalent of 911. Senator Mike Crapo was a co-sponsor of this important legislation.

988 will go live on July 16, 2022 as the universal phone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, replacing the current phone number (800) 273-8255. As part of the Lifeline's network of over 180 local crisis call centers,

ICSH already takes these phone calls and provides the specialized care of our local community – with the support of the national network. When 988 goes live, call and text volume to ICSH is expected to double (or more) in year one.

What This Means for Counties

When 988 goes live in July 2022, the Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline will become an entry point for Idahoans who may not have access to mental health support. As ICSH receives more calls, texts, and chat messages from

Idahoans, we expect to provide more referrals to Mobile Crisis Teams and community crisis centers. Though ICSH crisis responders are able to help individuals deescalate and stay safe approximately 85% or more of the time, sometimes a higher level of support is needed.

By keeping Idahoans safe and connecting them to local resources, ICSH is a critical partner in the state's crisis care and suicide prevention system. By providing support at the moment of crisis, ICSH helps reduce emergency department visits and welfare checks by local law enforcement.

ICSH can provide a Zoom update for your team or provide 988 materials such as wallet cards. Please let us know what may be helpful. We hope to be a resource for you.

Contact ICSH director Lee Flinn at lflinn@jannus.org or by phone at (208) 258-6991 with questions or concerns. 📍



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*2001-2015 Gallup Economy and Personal Finance Polls

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Why Should Broadband Access be a County Priority?

As county leaders, you have several things demanding your attention, and oversight of broadband access most likely isn't your main concern. To simplify the process, let's examine the standards of broadband access, trends in counties with higher broadband access, and possible broadband solutions.

Standards in Broadband Access Nationwide

According to the latest broadband deployment report from the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC), more than 21 million people in America lack advanced broadband internet access. The FCC defines "advanced" broadband as download speeds of at least 25 megabits per second with upload speeds of 3 Mbps, a baseline that experts call "25-3" for short.

This is only a baseline. Many consider optimal speeds for a household to be in the 150 Mbps range. This would allow for schooling from home or video conferencing with multiple connections.

Research commissioned by Fiber Broadband Association (FBA) and conducted by RVA LLC Market Research and Consulting found "...a four-person household today needs a connection offering download speeds of 131 Mbps and upload

speeds of 73 Mbps. By the start of the next decade, this is projected to rise to 2.4 Gbps for the downlink and 2.04 Gbps for the uplink." FBA also noted data from Ookla which showed, "average fixed broadband speeds have increased at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27% over the past five years."

Trends in Areas with Increased Broadband

According to James Taylor, isemag.com, "When technology comes to town, one noticeable benefit is the ability to get a signal from the comforts of home... connectivity creates measurable results in three areas: Rural Healthcare, Quality of Education, and Growth Opportunities."

Digital transformation is opening doors to many new opportunities in the health-care world. One of those opportunities is telehealth. Some clinics provide virtual appointments that enable you to see your doctor or a nurse via online video conferencing. These appointments enable you to receive ongoing care from your regular doctor when an in-person visit isn't required or possible.

Taylor goes on to say "Teachers need connected laptops to enable video lectures and e-learning that can be shared across the world. Students can follow individualized learning paths to develop their strengths.



That said, students must also have access to internet at home to complete homework and extend their learning experiences.”

Companies are increasingly moving into rural communities that provide and offer a solid technology infrastructure, bringing jobs and a renewed path for local economies.

In a recent survey by Gallup, nearly half of U.S. adults said they'd prefer to live in a small town or rural area in 2020. This is a 9% point increase from 2018 when just 39% of respondents said the same. It is thought that this increase is fueled by the new “work from home” opportunities.

According to Seven Days Vermont (Picard, 2016) “Those in the real estate business say that, depending on a property’s location, broadband access can make or break the deal.” Though Streeter can’t put a dollar figure on the value of high-speed internet, she says, “Basically, if the house doesn’t have it, in my opinion, it is unlikely to sell.”

While your county’s network might be able to sustain the current network traffic, are you sure it could sustain a significant increase? What happens when you add more users, more devices, and a higher broadband usage through video conferencing and video streaming?

How Can a Public-Private Partnership Help?

Many local communities work to develop public-private broadband collaborations because they believe that very-high-speed broadband internet is vital for all their residents. More critically, most American communities fully recognize that broadband has joined the ranks of essential services.

The Benton institute for Broadband & Society reported, “It comes as no surprise that private ISPs seek engagement with public entities during a time of unprecedented public investment. What comes as more of a surprise is the breadth of companies that are open to more innovative, shared-risk public-private collaboration than the standard public grant to a private ISP.”

BroadbandUSA said, “Many small communities across the country struggle to bring advanced broadband to their residents. What they lack in size, they often make up with diversity of their economies, populations, geography, and technology providers. Public-private partnerships (PPP) can help local governments and businesses pool their resources and technical expertise to deliver cutting-edge services to citizens.

Private ISPs are eager to collaborate on creative solutions that create long-term solutions for both themselves and the communities in which they serve. 📶



Bridge Preservation, Rehabilitation, & Replacement

Scott Wood, P.E. & Amanda LaMott, P.E., LHTAC

Bridges are one of the most expensive assets on the transportation system. In order to prolong the life of Idaho bridges, it is important that our bridges remain in good condition, repairs are done promptly, and replacements occur when the bridge exceeds its design life and can no longer safely handle the traveling public. With limited funding available for bridge replacement, a balanced approach prioritizing bridge preservation is necessary, and a “worst-first” approach focusing on the bridge assets in the worst condition is not always best.

Think of a bridge as an asset to invest in over time similar to regular maintenance of your vehicle. To keep a vehicle running smoothly, routine maintenance such as changing the oil, rotating the tires, and washing it when dirty is necessary. Actively applying intentional, small investments over time keeps your asset in good shape in the long run.

Today, bridges have a 75-year design life; however, prior to the early 2000's, bridges were designed with a 50-year design life. Within five years, nearly half of Idaho's local bridges will be 50 years old or older. Currently, 966 of Idaho's 2,474 local bridges are over fifty years old. With limited funding to replace deficient bridges across the state, bridge preservation and maintenance is critical in maintaining our bridge assets. Proper preservation, maintenance, and repair of bridges in good to fair condition is an important part of bridge asset management and to the local road connectivity across the State.

Bridge Preservation & Maintenance

Bridge preservation activities are actions or strategies that prevent, delay, or reduce deterioration of bridges and bridge elements. This keeps bridges in good to fair condition and extends the service life with little cost. Proper maintenance will restore a deteriorated bridge to a functional state.

Routine maintenance occurs as a result of an event, season, or activity. Examples of this include litter removal, snow removal, asphalt patch, accident damage, or storm damage. This work requires regular occurring attention. This should be performed as needed based on visual inspection.

Cyclical maintenance is performed at predetermined intervals that will preserve and delay deterioration. Bridge cleaning, every year, will slow the deterioration of concrete

and steel components and extend the life of the bridge. Some other examples of regular cyclical maintenance include joint cleaning, flushing drains, and sealing asphalt or concrete cracks. This maintenance will help prevent moisture from seeping through cracks and oxidizing steel in the deck and girders. Bridge inspectors will often report cracks and other issues that may need repair in the notes section of the bridge inspection report; however, a visual inspection performed by maintenance crews on a cyclical basis can identify most of these issues earlier.

Condition-based maintenance is the process of repairing or replacing certain bridge components in response to a known defect. These repair conditions are typically determined during the inspection process. Examples of this include joint replacement, deck overlays, patch/repair substructure elements, and scour repair/countermeasures. Road and bridge crew may be able to perform some of the repairs; however, some maintenance activities may require a contractor with experience and specialized equipment to do the work.

Bridge Rehabilitation

Bridge rehabilitation projects provide nearly complete restoration of a bridge to a good to fair condition. These types of projects require significant engineering design, long construction schedules, and considerable cost. Examples include deck replacement, girder replacement, and substructure strengthening. Bridge rehabilitation projects require a licensed engineer to design and stamp the rehabilitation plans, and the work will need to be done by a licensed contractor.

Bridge Replacement

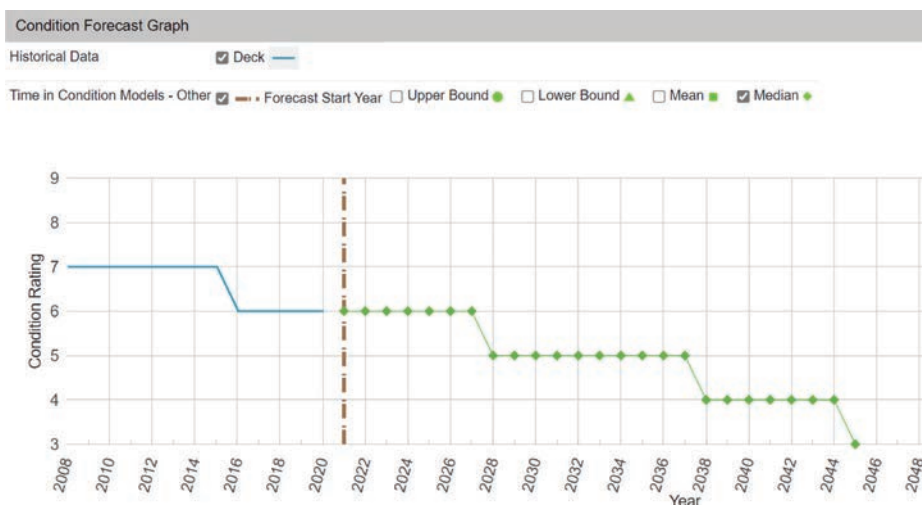
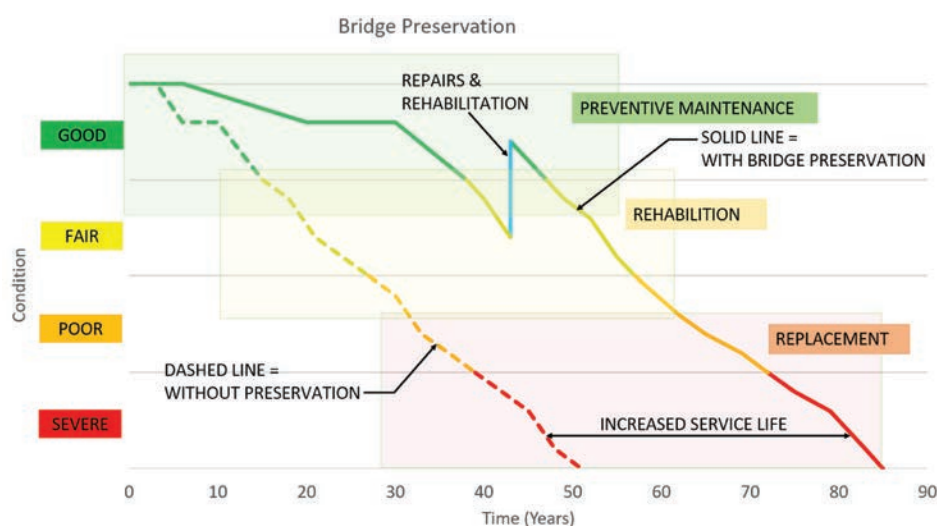
When a life-cycle cost analysis determines that rehabilitation is not cost effective or a bridge does not meet certain current standards or geometric requirements, then a complete replacement is necessary. When determining the cost of bridge replacement, also it is important to consider the approach work as this is another significant project expense.

Data

The Bridge Preservation graph to the right shows how timely investments in bridge assets through preservation and maintenance activities can substantially extend the life of the structure.

If you are interested in additional information and guidance on expected service life visit the FHWA InfoBridge website at <https://infobridge.fhwa.dot.gov/Data>. The Condition Forecast graph to the right shows an example of an Idaho bridge representing deck conditions from previous ratings along with the anticipated deck condition rating.

This article is a summary of the FHWA Bridge Preservation Guide, Spring 2018 which can be found online at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/preservation/guide/guide.pdf>. 📖



NACo Focuses on Implementing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

Mark Ritacco

NACO DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Counties are the backbone of our nation's infrastructure. Counties own and operate 44 percent of all public roads, 38 percent of bridges, and directly support 40 percent of all public transportation systems and 34 percent of public airports. Counties also invest \$134 billion annually in maintaining and operating public works, including transportation, water systems, ports, dams, hospitals, schools, libraries, and courthouses.

The decisions that county leaders make every day about transportation, infrastructure, land use, and economic development policies and investments influence local and national economic opportunities, shape how communities grow and change, and contribute to Americans' quality of life.

Last November, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58), officially enacting the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The BIL provides \$973 billion over five years from FY 2022 through FY 2026, including \$550 billion in new investments for all modes of transportation, water, power and energy, environmental remediation, public lands, broadband, and resilience. The passage of this comprehensive legislation is a recognition of the

important role counties play in the construction and maintenance of our nation's infrastructure, and it helps preserve local decision-making.

In addition to BIL, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced additional (FY) 2022 funding opportunities for counties made available by the BIL, including \$1 billion for the new Airport Terminal

Program and \$450 million for the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP). In addition, RAISE grants, CRISI grants, and Capital Investment grants – all important programs that provide direct investments to

counties – received additional funding in the (FY) 2022 appropriations package.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is focused on the implementation of this historic law. Effective implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law this year will require meaningful and ongoing engagement between officials at all levels of government. NACo will continue to monitor legislation that will impact infrastructure investments and promote counties as an essential intergovernmental partner. To learn more about NACo's advocacy priorities for 2022, visit <https://www.naco.org/advocacy>.

“
Counties are the backbone of our nation's infrastructure.”



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Nez Perce County

Hells Canyon | Photo Submitted by Nez Perce County



What is your county especially known for?

Nez Perce County is known as the gateway to Hells Canyon, North America's deepest river gorge. Located at the confluence of the Snake & Clearwater Rivers, recreational opportunities for jet boating, white-water rafting, swimming, fishing, hunting, hiking, and camping are limitless.

What are some hidden gems that people might not know about in your county?

Lewiston has the only active seaport facility in Idaho which is 465 miles to the Pacific Ocean. The Lewis-Clark Valley earned the name "Banana Belt" due to the mild winter climate. While most of the Inland Northwest is covered in snow and frost, golf courses in the valley are open for business. You can play golf every month of the year.

Up in the North Wine region of Idaho, Lewiston has been quietly producing some of the state's most sought-after bottles. You may not know it, but in 1864 Lewiston boasted some of the first vineyards to be found in the Pacific Northwest. These vineyards had their operations abolished in 1916 due to the state

prohibition, but after a 54-year stall, the wine industry found life again in the Snake River Valley in 1970. Since then, the industry has exploded throughout the state, boasting more than 50 wineries and 1,300 acres of vinifera grapes. To this day, Lewiston offers some of the best growing conditions in the Northwest with cold winters that allow the vines to rid themselves of disease and bugs while hot days and chilly nights during the spring and summer help balance sugars and acids.

When was your county founded and how did it get its name?

Nez Perce County was formed on December 20, 1861 by the Territorial Legislature of Washington. It was one of seven counties



Rivaura Winery | Photo Submitted by Nez Perce County

Lewiston Roundup | Photo Submitted by Nez Perce County



NAIA | Photo Submitted by Nez Perce County

in 1864 from which all of the present counties of Idaho were created. Nez Perce County was named for the Nez Perce Indian Tribe. The Tribal Council and the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters are currently located at Lapwai.

What is it about your county that draws people to the area (either to live or recreate or both)?

The Lewiston Roundup has brought high-quality and unsurpassed energy in rodeo entertainment to North-Central Idaho for 86 years. The Roundup donates a large portion of event proceeds to charitable organizations throughout the year. Commercial jet boat outfitters and river guides are also popular, as they will

safely take you on river trips through some of the most exciting whitewater rapids to be found. You can enjoy the spectacular scenery as your guide narrates the legends and lore of the canyon. Hells Canyon attracts whitewater rafters, jetboaters, hikers, campers and outdoor adventurers worldwide.

The Idaho History Tours are Ghost/Walking/Trolley Tours of historic downtown Lewiston. The well-known attraction allows participants to explore beneath the sidewalks and feel the presence of the 'spirits' that traveled under the sidewalks and worked in the unmentionable side of society in the 1930s. Each historic building entered is documented with paranormal activity, and their canyons present visitors with challenging and extraordinary experiences.

What are three fun historic facts about your county?

- 1. Walt Disney & his wife Lillian Bounds were married on July 13, 1925 in Lewiston, Idaho. Lillian was born in Spalding and was raised on the Lapwai Nez Perce Indian Reservation.
- 2. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark reached Lewiston on October 10, 1805. Lewiston, Idaho and Clarkston, Washington are named after them.
- 3. The earliest settlers to the area came to seek their fortunes in gold.

Do you have any specific programs or services that may be unique to your county?

Since 2000 the NAIA Baseball World Series has been held at Harris Field on the campus of Lewis Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho, having previously hosted from 1984 to 1991. 📌

NEZ PERCE COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Dan Anderson
Assessor

Patty Weeks
Clerk

Don Beck
Commissioner

Doug Havens
Commissioner

Doug Zenner
Commissioner

Joshua Hall
Coroner

Justin Coleman
Prosecuting Attorney

Bryce Scrimsher
Sheriff

Missy McLaughlin
Treasurer

2022 Midwinter Legislative Conference Recap

Jessica Roth

IAC COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING SPECIALIST



The Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) hosted its 2022 Midwinter Legislative Conference at the Riverside Hotel in Boise at the beginning of February. The four-day conference brought Idaho's county elected officials and staff together for workshops, district and committee meetings, award announcements, a tour of the Idaho State Capitol, and the opportunity to connect with Idaho's legislators during the Legislative Reception.

"The Midwinter Legislative Conference is where we put our legislative positions into action," said IAC President Chris Goetz. "I'm proud of the important work we did as a membership at this conference."

This conference is unique in that Idaho's Legislature is concurrently in session, so the conference provides a valuable opportunity for IAC members to connect directly with their legislators. The Legislative Reception held at the Riverside Hotel brought county elected officials and legislators together for dinner, drinks, and lively discussion on issues impacting counties. These networking events are important because they foster long-lasting relationships between local government and state policy makers.

Another notable component of the Midwinter Legislative Conference is the annual awards ceremony where distinguished officials from various affiliate associations are recognized by peers for their dedication and significant contributions to

their counties. The Mills-Adler Award is named in honor of two distinguished county elected officials: the late Darwin Mills, Lincoln County Sheriff, and the late Betty Adler, Payette County Treasurer. Both exemplified the qualities all county elected officials strive for.

Recipients of the Mills-Adler Award for 2021:

- Dwight Davis, Cassia County Assessor
- Phil McGrane, Ada County Clerk
- Skip Brandt, Idaho County Commissioner
- Vic Pearson, Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney
- Tracie Lloyd, Canyon County Treasurer

The second distinction presented at the conference was the H. Sydney Duncombe Award, which is IAC's highest honor given to individuals that have greatly contributed to furthering county government through development and education in Idaho. The award was created in 1988 in honor of the late Dr. H. Sydney Duncombe, who taught and trained numerous county officials in their roles and responsibilities.

The recipient of the H. Sydney Duncombe Award for Excellence in County Government is Kathy Ackerman, Idaho County Clerk and IAC Immediate Past President. "Her uncompromising level of integrity and dedication to serve sets Kathy apart as a true leader," said Goetz, who presented the award to an awestruck Ackerman. Ackerman expressed her gratitude and love for what she does while accepting the honor.

“

The Midwinter Legislative Conference is where we put our legislative positions into action.

In addition to the ceremony, the conference's general sessions provided educational opportunities for the IAC membership. Larry Johnson, the National Association of Counties' (NACo) president, attended the event as a keynote speaker and addressed the membership during Tuesday's general session. He commended counties on their resilience during times of duress and encouraged them to continue their path of leadership and strength.

Governor Brad Little also spoke at the conference and took questions from the membership during Tuesday's general session. He provided an update on timely issues pertinent to counties, and he illustrated how Idaho is well-positioned for economic prosperity. Motivational speaker Derrick Boles presented the Leadership to Lead during Wednesday's general session and shared his story of perseverance after surviving multiple strokes.

In addition to keynote speakers, there was a Legislative Leadership Panel Discussion moderated by Boise State University Professor Dr. Stephanie Witt. Dr. Witt is Director of Training for the School of Public Service and a Professor in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Political Science programs. Panelists from Idaho's Legislature included Senator Chuck Winder, President Pro Tem, Senator Michelle Stennett, Minority Leader, Representative Scott Bedke, Speaker of the House, and Representative Ilana Rubel, Minority Leader. The discussions were thoughtful and relevant as counties worked toward advancing their annual legislative priorities as set by the IAC membership at the Annual Conference in September.

Updates were also given by IAC staff members Seth Grigg, Sara Westbrook, and Kelli Brassfield on important topics impacting counties such as the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Final Rule. Smaller breakout sessions, committee meetings and roundtables facilitated deeper discussion on topics such as property taxes, broadband, capital infrastructure, public safety and ARPA. There was also time scheduled for affiliate groups to meet and enter executive session as needed.

"The conference was fun, productive and informative," said Goetz. "It's heartening to see what we can accomplish when we come together as a membership."

Visit IAC's Flickr page to view and download photos of the conference for free: www.flickr.com/photos/idcounties/albums. 📍



Oneida County



Photo Courtesy of Ken Timothy of Oneida County

Photo Courtesy of Ken Timothy of Oneida County



What is your county especially known for?

Oneida County is known for its hospitality; we're a friendly little oasis for those travelers running up and down Interstate 15. We're also known for our great outdoor recreation including hunting and fishing. With seven reservoirs throughout the county, there is ample opportunity to fish year-round with an ice-fishing tournament held annually on Devils Creek Reservoir.

The leisure outdoors lover will enjoy camping in the surrounding mountains and for daytime activities will find miles upon miles of off-road trails and back country roads to occupy their need to explore on foot, horseback, motorbike or snowmobile.

What are some hidden gems in your county?

Oneida County is host to the best Welsh festival around. Beginning around 1860, when the valley was settled, Welsh pioneers would hold an annual eisteddfod or festival similar to those held in the homeland. This tradition

continued until 1916 and World War I. In 2005, after a 90-year break, the festival was reintroduced and has become a great tradition for all. Oneida County also has the best white pumice mine in the world and is home to Hess Pumice Products.

When was your county founded and how did it get its name?

Oneida County was established January 22, 1864, just 11 months after Idaho became a territory.

The county seat was located at Soda Springs but was later moved to Malad City because of the growth and its location on the stagecoach line and freight road between Corinne, Utah and Butte, Montana.

The name, an Indian word for a member of the Iroquoian tribe once in New York State, was chosen by the legislature because some of the early settlers were from Oneida, New York. Originally Oneida County encompassed much of the eastern and southeastern portion of the state as well as portions of what is now Wyoming.

What is it about your county that draws people to the area (either to live or to recreate or both)?

Most of those living in Oneida County do so because of the small town feeling where neighbors look out for each other, and residents have a real sense of community. Although we don't have all the conveniences that some citizens desire, we are only a short 45-minute drive to three major cities with all the conveniences one could want. Citizens love the choice of a slower paced life where you can visit at the hardware store or even stop in the middle of the county road to say howdy to family and friends.

Those who can forgo big box stores and opt to avoid the chaos of big-city traffic congestion will feel right at home in Oneida County.

What are three fun historic facts about your county?

- 1. A study conducted by Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo Utah, found that Oneida County has the largest per-capita concentration of people of Welsh ancestry outside of the country of Wales.
- 2. Rumor has it that when the county seat was moved to Malad City, Soda Springs didn't want to give up the records, so they were obtained/confiscated in the middle of the night.
- 3. Malad City, the only remaining incorporated city in the county, got its name from French trappers associated with the Northwest Company around 1818 to 1821. The word Malad is derived from the French word "Malade" meaning bad water or sickness. It is believed that some of the trappers got sick by either drinking the alkaline water in one of the small streams or eating food that was tainted by the water. 🇧🇷



Photo Courtesy of Ken Timothy of Oneida County



Winners of the Devils Creek Big Dog Ice Fishing Tournament | Photo Courtesy of Oneida County

**ONEIDA COUNTY
ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Kathleen Atkinson
Assessor

Lon Colton
Clerk

Bill Lewis
Commissioner

Ken Eliason
Commissioner

Robert Christophersen
Commissioner

Brad Horsley
Coroner

Cody Brower
Prosecuting Attorney

Arne Jones
Sheriff

Leigh Anne Love
Treasurer

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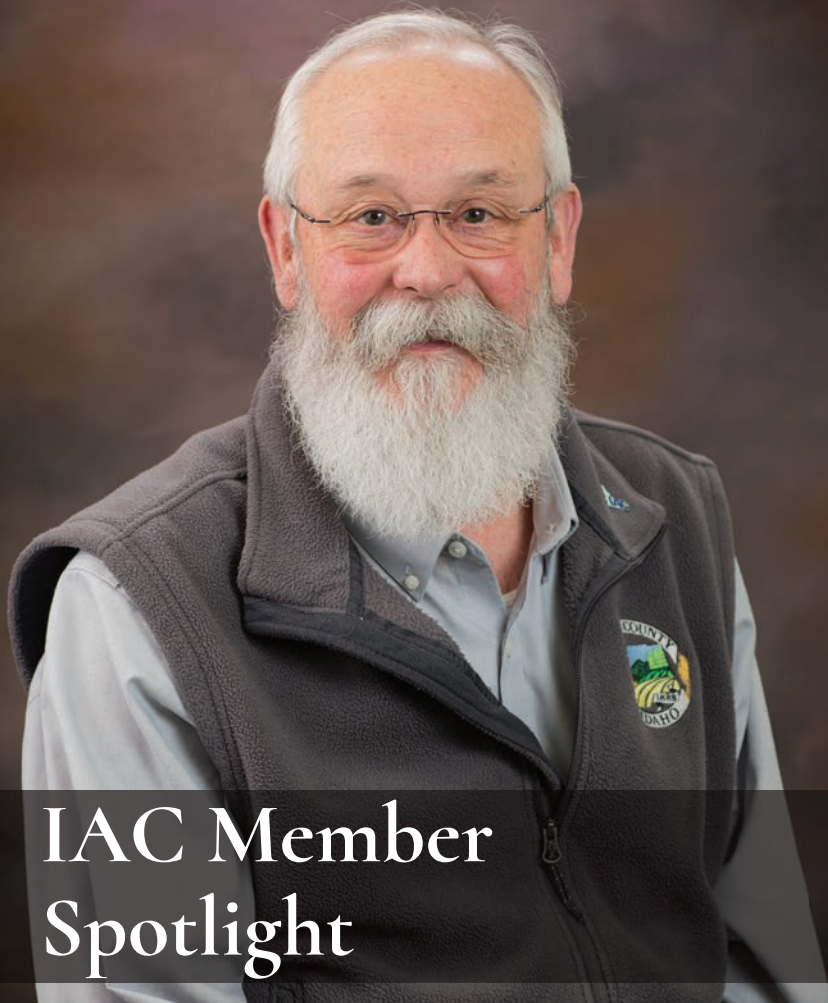


Gold Partners



Silver Partners





IAC Member Spotlight

Bill Thompson Latah County Prosecutor

Why did you decide to run for county office?

I had been in private practice for about 12 years doing all the things small town lawyers do: wills and probates, contracts, real estate, domestic relations, and private and public defense work. In early 1992, the incumbent prosecutor announced that he was not going to seek re-election. Apparently, something in the back of my mind was interested, and my wife said to either run for prosecutor or stop thinking about it (she's a real mind-reader). I decided to give it a shot and, after both contested primary and general elections, I was elected Latah County Prosecuting Attorney. Ever since then I have been privileged to enjoy the best lawyer job I could ever imagine. Being able to make a real difference is truly unique to being a prosecutor.

What is the best gift you've ever received?

My wife's love.

If you could go back in time, what year would you travel to and why?

I'd prefer not to go back in time for fear that I'd do something to mess up the future (which is currently the present – sort of like “today is yesterday's tomorrow”).

What's one of your favorite family traditions?

Coffee and “kitchen sink” omelets on weekends.

Would you rather ride a bike, ride a horse or drive a car?

That all depends on where I'm going and the weather.

What is your favorite “hidden gem” in your county?

I love pretty much all of Latah County – it is so beautifully diverse running from the rolling hills of the Palouse east to mountains and forests.

If you could share a meal with any three individuals (excluding family), living or dead, who would they be?

I prefer to eat alone.

What are three items on your bucket list?

I don't have a bucket list. I have already been blessed with a full and diverse life – growing up and traveling as a “military brat,” enjoying the outdoors (years with the National Ski Patrol and as a bicycle official, hunting, fishing, backpacking, camping), making music, finding my life mate more than 40 years ago, and enjoying each other and our family every day). 🇺🇸



**What is the County Officials Institute?**

The County Officials Institute (COI) is a training program designed to provide the skills and knowledge to be an effective leader in county government. County elected officials and county staff are encouraged to participate in the program.

Why do I want to sign up for the County Officials Institute?

In addition to receiving valuable education and tools for you to be a better public servant, you will also receive a certificate upon graduation at the IAC Annual Conference. All graduates will receive a digital logo to include in your email signature, a lapel pin, and recognition with a name badge ribbon at all IAC conferences. Oh, and did we mention bragging rights?

How do I earn a County Officials Institute Certificate?

All participants must complete 14 core courses (18 total credit hours) and 12 credit hours of electives. Commissioners must complete an additional 8 credit hours of commissioner core courses. Commissioner core courses may count for electives for all other elected officials. Credits must be completed within 4 years. To view the course catalog, visit idcounties.org/events-training/.

How much does it cost to participate in the County Officials Institute?

COI courses are offered throughout the year at the Fall and Spring COIs, IAC Midwinter Legislative Conference, IACC Annual Conference, IAC Annual Conference, and as webinars. The in-person events have a registration cost but there is no additional cost to enroll in the COI.

I'm in! How do I enroll in the County Officials Institute?

All participants that register for the Fall or Spring COIs are automatically enrolled in the program. Participants are responsible for signing the attendance sheet at in-person courses. IAC will track progress of all participants.

Questions?

If you have any questions about COI, please contact any of the IAC Operations Team (Kristin Cundiff, Mindy Linn, Amanda Steinmetz, or Jessica Roth) at 208.345.9126. We can assist with registration, upcoming course opportunities, or invoices.





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Let's start a conversation

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timm@mutualid.com

