



Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

Re: Latah County Dark Fiber Network
Capital Projects Fund Application
Challenge Rebuttal

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the challenge from Ziplly regarding service in the City of Potlatch.

When we were successful in receiving grant funding in 2020 through the CARES Act, we were thrilled. We had been working for years with CEDA and First Step Internet to bring fiber to Potlatch, well before the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in the funding. We conducted a feasibility study, gathered community support, and established a community plan – these steps prepared us to be successful when CARES Act funding was released. And we were confident that *with the right partner* our plan for open access fiber in Potlatch would become a reality.

However, this did not end up being the case. When our chosen partner was honest in recognizing the build could not be complete in three months, we were left to decide whether to give up the funds or choose another ISP. We did not want to give up the money, so we went with the company recommended by Idaho Commerce: Ziplly Fiber.

We deeply regret issuing grant funds to Ziplly.

Not only did they take half a million dollars more than was required to complete their version of the project but they have monopolized fiber broadband infrastructure in our City.

Please do not remove our citizens from the Capital Projects Fund grant application.

Sincerely,


David Brown, Mayor
City of Potlatch

Member of the [Latah County Broadband Coalition](#): City of Potlatch, City of Bovill, City of Genesee, City of Kendrick, City of Juliaetta, City of Deary, City of Troy, City of Moscow, Latah County Library District, Moscow School District, Kendrick Joint School District, Genesee Joint School District, Potlatch School District, Troy School District, University of Idaho, Gritman Medical Center, Latah County, Highway Districts