

## 3.2 Partnerships

The Indiana Broadband Office understands that this work cannot be completed in a silo and that its partners – other state agencies, local governments, private companies, associations, community-based organizations, and ISPs – are all going to play an instrumental role in ensuring every Hoosier is served.

**Table 5: Partners**

Partners	Description of Current or Planned Role in Broadband Deployment and Adoption
<b>Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)</b>	OCRA will aid in the deployment and adoption of the State's BEAD plan through their prior experience in developing and deploying the Broadband Readiness Pilot Program and their grant programs, Next Level Connections Program and the Indiana Connectivity Program.
<b>Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD)</b>	Due to the interconnectedness of the Digital Equity Plan and the BEAD Deployment Plan, the Indiana Broadband Team intends to collaborate closely with PCRD. The integrated approach should help develop continuity between the Digital Equity Plan and the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan.
<b>Indiana Farm Bureau (IFB)</b>	Indiana Farm Bureau is working to help bring reliable broadband through promotion of the Indiana Speed Test. The Indiana Broadband Team will work closely with IFB to continue and expand the speed test throughout the most unserved and underserved communities throughout the State.
<b>Indiana Electric Cooperative (IEC)</b>	IEC is a non-profit organization made up of rural electric companies. IEC was formed to provide electricity to rural areas that were otherwise unserved. Having expanded into 82 of the 92 counties throughout the State, IEC is the second largest utility company in Indiana. Two main goals of the IEC are prioritizing fiber over other technology and ensuring higher speeds to its members. IEC will be a strong partner of the State in providing broadband to rural communities.
<b>Indiana Broadband Technology Association (IBTA)</b>	The Indiana Broadband Technology Association (IBTA) has a century-long legacy as a telephone association, representing more than 29 companies that span Indiana's entire land mass, including major players like ATT and Terry Spencer Telephone. Given their extensive experience, IBTA's insights will be valuable in formulating the policy framework for deploying new broadband infrastructure. By understanding the needs and constraints of ISPs, IBTA will play a crucial role in assisting the State. Moreover, as a strategic partner, IBTA will actively contribute to educating and raising awareness among ISPs about the State's plans to deploy new infrastructure, fostering a collaborative and informed approach to achieving enhanced broadband accessibility for all.
<b>Department of Workforce Development</b>	The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) will be a crucial partner for broadband deployment due to its expertise in understanding the workforce needs and employment landscape throughout the state. As broadband infrastructure expands, there will be an increased demand for skilled workers capable of supporting and maintaining the network. The DWD can play a pivotal role in identifying workforce development opportunities related to broadband technology, offering training programs, and aligning educational initiatives to meet the industry's needs.
<b>Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)</b>	The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will be a vital partner for broadband deployment due to its extensive infrastructure and network planning experience. As INDOT oversees the state's transportation systems, it has an in-depth understanding of the existing infrastructure and access points that can be leveraged for broadband expansion. By collaborating with INDOT, broadband initiatives can benefit from shared resources, such as utility corridors, rights-of-way, and existing fiber optic cables, which can significantly reduce deployment costs and accelerate the expansion process. Additionally, INDOT's expertise in project management and coordination will ensure

	efficient and well-planned broadband deployment, leading to a more cohesive and integrated broadband network across Indiana.
<b>Indiana Office of Technology (IOT)</b>	The Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) is a critical IT partner for all government agencies throughout the State, ensuring secure computing and communication environments to deliver optimal services. By implementing cutting-edge tools, policies, and practices, IOT plays a vital role in safeguarding the State's data and technology assets, thereby maintaining public trust. Notably, IOT is actively addressing cybersecurity concerns at the local level, demonstrating its commitment to protecting the entire state's digital infrastructure. With IOT's expertise and proactive approach to cybersecurity, government agencies can confidently focus on their essential missions, knowing their information is secure and their services are delivered efficiently and reliably to the citizens of Indiana.
<b>Indiana Laborers Council</b>	The Indiana Laborers Council will be a crucial partner for broadband deployment due to its skilled workforce and expertise in construction and infrastructure development. As a representative body for laborers, the council can provide a pool of trained workers who possess the necessary skills for deploying and maintaining broadband networks. Their experience in construction and groundwork will be invaluable in facilitating the physical installation of broadband infrastructure across the state. Moreover, by collaborating with the Indiana Laborers Council, broadband deployment projects can understand the number of available skilled laborers and if there is a need for additional training and apprenticeship.
<b>Indiana Building &amp; Construction Trades Council</b>	Due to the importance of workforce development for the installation and implementation of fiber infrastructure, along with the shortage of workforce throughout the State, the Indiana Broadband Team intends to collaborate with the Indiana Building & Construction Trades Council. Collaboration will focus on ensuring stability and increases in the workforce.
<b>Indiana Cable and Broadband Association</b>	The Indiana Cable and Broadband Association (ICBA) represents Indiana's largest and fastest broadband providers with networks reaching over 2 million Hoosier homes, offering gig speeds in urban and rural communities. ICBA members work every day to expand broadband access for unserved Hoosiers and are committed to closing the digital divide by offering resources that help Hoosier families overcome barriers to adoption. ICBA has a strong history of public-private partnerships in Indiana, currently partnering on over \$115,827,209 in rural broadband projects. ICBA is proud to be a strategic partner to the Indiana Broadband Office and is excited to play a key role in transforming the state of Indiana and ensuring that all residents are connected to the world.
<b>Indiana Rural Broadband Association</b>	The Indiana Rural Broadband Association (INRBA) represents all traditional small rural telephone companies that have evolved into broadband providers. Experience and knowledge of small company operations make INRBA a strategic partner in advising and encouraging members on Indiana broadband grants. Understanding the elements of providing broadband service in rural communities makes INRBA a critical resource for both INRBA members and Indiana policy makers developing broadband programs.