

**Josephine County
Technology and Telecommunications Plan**



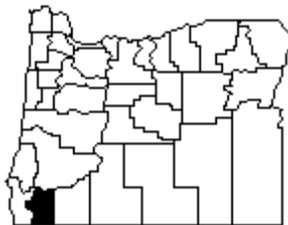
Prepared by:

Josephine County Ad Hoc Technology and Telecommunications Committee

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Josephine County Oregon

Executive Summary

Residents, institutions, organizations and businesses of Josephine County will benefit from a comprehensive and insightful Technology and Telecommunications Plan (T&TP). Implementation of an infrastructure that is consistent with and builds upon regional and statewide technology and telecommunication plans will provide maximum benefit.

Evidence exists that businesses pass over Josephine County due to the lack of a competitive telecommunications and technology infrastructure. This lack of a viable infrastructure also results in the inability to take advantage of available online learning to improve skills of the population necessary to support the infrastructure; to access telemedicine applications; and to take advantage of other rapidly emerging online resources to improve the quality of life for individuals.

The Ad Hoc T&TP Committee identified five goals, objectives, and immediate recommendations to establish a high-speed telecommunications and technology infrastructure for Josephine County that will:

1. Be accessible, reliable, and affordable for all residents of the county, regardless of location.
2. Have standard communications capabilities, use scalable solutions to accommodate growth in demand; and be adaptable to new applications and opportunities.
3. Provide access to quality services at a reasonable cost by creating partnerships and aggregating demand to reduce operating costs to the benefit of the Josephine County users.
4. Provide highspeed access to technology and information so that employees can be as efficient as possible, businesses can be competitive in the world of electronic commerce, and residents can have easy access to information and services.
5. Provide low cost training, distance learning and in-service options and common technical support to reduce costs to Josephine County users.

The goals and objectives are to be supported with a comprehensive list of actions developed by the Ad Hoc Committee, and forms the basis of the TT&P submitted to the Board of Directors for their consideration.

The Ad Hoc Committee strongly recommends that in the interest of developing and maintaining a strong economic base and quality of life for Josephine County that the recommendations are acted upon without delay. The Ad Hoc Committee also recognizes that this is an ambitious undertaking that needs careful planning and sustained implementation over a period of time to ensure success.

Recommendations

The Josephine County Ad Hoc Technology and Telecommunications Committee makes the recommendations that follow to the elected officials in the county. The Committee members recognize that carrying out these recommendations will require drawing on limited personnel and financial resources, but we believe the results will justify the effort.

- Immediately establish a permanent T&T committee to work with elected officials to fully develop and implement a T&TP for the county, using the Ad Hoc Committee's plan as a basis for their activities (3-c under Action Plan).
- Under the direction of the permanent T&T committee create an open forum for ongoing telecommunications and technology knowledge sharing (2-f under Action Plan).
- Collaborate with the Southern Oregon Telecommunications and Technology Committee (3-a under Action Plan).
- Work with the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department to create viable shared statewide telecommunications infrastructures (3-b under Action Plan).

The Ad Hoc Committee strongly recommends that in the interest of developing and maintaining a strong economic base and quality of life for Josephine County that the recommendations are acted upon without delay. The Ad Hoc Committee also recognizes that this is an ambitious undertaking that needs careful planning and sustained implementation over a reasonable amount of time to ensure success.

Taking action on the elements of this draft plan will result in positive impacts to the economic climate in Josephine County and will consequently positively impact the quality of life for Josephine County residents.

Vision and Mission Statement

Vision 2005

Josephine County is a place thriving with business and industrial activity of a very diverse nature. Cottage industries, secondary wood products, entrepreneurial activities, business expansions and tourism drive this diverse economy. The business climate of Josephine County and the incorporated cities, and the attitude of business leaders in our county are such that recruitment becomes an automatic process. Our children, after whatever level of education they achieve, can come home and find good paying jobs. Our unemployment levels, equal those of the state and county wages, are equivalent to the state average wage. Our prosperous citizenry supports needed governmental programs, civic activities, and charitable works.

The communities of the Rogue Valley are working together to take advantage of the opportunities created by the new, information age infrastructure. Our businesses are competing in the new economy, our workforce is ready to use the new tools and build better ones, our public services are convenient and responsive, and everyone has access regardless of location or income. Our telecommunication services providers are upgrading their facilities and services. They all have high-speed connections that are always on and able to support home businesses, telecommuting, distance learning, electronic commerce, telemedicine, and new forms of entertainment.

Mission

The Josephine County TT&P Ad Hoc Committee will be a catalyst and provide leadership to creating a positive business climate and increased opportunities for organizations and individuals within the County. To that end, the TT&P Ad Hoc Committee will work to continuously improve telecommunications infrastructure through route diversity, increased connectivity for the more rural areas, and advanced telecommunications services throughout the region. It is extremely important for us to link with current and previous efforts to eliminate duplication. Strong alliances will be forged with the regional partnerships.

Goals/Objectives

Residents, institutions, organizations and businesses of Josephine County will benefit from a comprehensive and insightful Technology and Telecommunications Plan (T&TP). Implementation of an infrastructure that is consistent with and builds upon regional and statewide technology and telecommunication plans will provide maximum benefit. The telecommunications and technology infrastructure will:

1. Be accessible, reliable, and affordable for all residents of the county, regardless of location.
2. Have standard communications capabilities, use scalable solutions to accommodate growth in demand; and be adaptable to new applications and opportunities.
3. Provide access to quality services at a reasonable cost by creating partnerships and aggregating demand to reduce operating costs benefiting Josephine County users.
4. Provide highspeed access to technology and information so that employees can be as efficient as possible, businesses can be competitive in the world of electronic commerce, and residents can have easy access to information and services.
5. Provide low cost training, distance learning, in-service options and common technical support to reduce costs to Josephine County users.

Action Plan

Josephine County's Technology and Telecommunications Plan (T&TP) is a work-in-progress and subject to frequent review and updating. Updating the plan by collecting, collating, and considering new information and data is the responsibility of the Technology and Telecommunications Committee (T&TC), in partnership with elected officials and other regional planning groups. Specific recommendations submitted to the Board of County Commissioners and elected city officials by the Ad Hoc Technology and Telecommunications Committee for their consideration and action follow:

1. Be accessible, reliable and affordable for all residents of the county, regardless of location.

- a) Josephine County will support and encourage countywide access to all forms of telecommunications including “Lifeline” telephone service, Community Communications Centers, and affordable broadband service to all.
 - i) In order to determine the needs of all areas of Josephine County, a survey or series of surveys will be required. These will seek to determine the approximate number of residents that need service and what kinds of service they need.
 - ii) A current resource list of available services and fees for all areas of Josephine County should be made available and widely disseminated. This could be done as part of the survey in part 1-a-i and could be sponsored by service providers as part of a countywide mailing.
- b) Josephine County will promote the creation of a sustainable telecommunications and technology infrastructure by identifying countywide needs through:
 - i) Critical User surveys.
 - ii) Open hearings.
 - iii) Utilization of any other available surveys or sources of pertinent information.
- c) System solutions will be matched to needs and driven by a common vision.

2. Have standard communications capabilities, use scalable solutions to accommodate growth in demand and be adaptable to new applications and opportunities.

- a) A telecommunication systems inventory will be developed and maintained.
 - i) Inventory of current systems and capabilities.
 - ii) Establish a database for countywide planning purposes.

- iii) Maintain and make publicly available the contents of the database.
- b) The communications systems of Josephine County should be versatile and compatible with existing and future technology.
 - i) Analyze existing systems and any deficiencies or limitations that may be present.
 - ii) Determine the most efficient and cost-effective way of correcting current deficiencies.
- c) The communications systems of Josephine County should be compatible with technology used by other entities outside the direct control of Josephine County (e.g., state and federal systems).
 - i) Identify current and potential system interfaces.
 - ii) Develop collaborative approaches to creation of system interfaces.
 - iii) Determine the most efficient and cost-effective way of ensuring compatibility among systems.
- d) Telecommunications is growing at a rapid pace and is having ever greater impact on community and economic development, not to mention on an individual's quality of life. The rapid advancements in telecommunications and evolving technology demands that growth and versatility be a major part of any T&TP.
 - i) Ensure that any significant changes or additions to existing or planned technology infrastructure be able to accommodate anticipated demands at least three years into the future.
 - ii) Determine current technology and infrastructure needs and best estimates of future needs.
 - iii) Anticipate future needs and economies of incorporating them into current planning activities.
- e) Support open source and open system architectures
 - i) Select alternatives that support standardization of protocols, equipment, software and expertise.
- f) Create an open forum for ongoing telecommunications and technology knowledge sharing.
 - i) Ensure availability and currency of T&T knowledge.

- ii) Regular presentations to the T&TC by educators, technologists and community development experts.
- iii) Website, open access TV and other ways of sharing of knowledge.

3. Provide access to quality services at a reasonable cost by creating partnerships and aggregating demand to reduce operating costs to the benefit of the Josephine County users.

- a) Collaborate with the Southern Oregon Telecommunications and Technology Committee.
 - i) Ensure regular communications and participation in planning efforts between the SOTTC and the TTC.
- b) Work with the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department to create viable shared statewide telecommunications infrastructures.
 - i) Create Telecommunication Utility Districts to aggregate buying power and influence decision-making.
 - (1) Government policy.
 - (2) Corporate strategies.
- c) In order to ensure that Josephine County is using the technical expertise and knowledge of all segments of the population, a permanent T&TC should be established.
 - i) Membership of the T&TC should be open to all that are interested and qualified to participate. Special efforts to include:
 - (1) Critical Users
 - (2) Education
 - (3) Government (federal, state & local)
 - (4) Telecommunications Services and Providers
 - (5) Healthcare providers
 - (6) Residents
 - ii) Conduct an active outreach program to promote Josephine County as a favorable place to do business.
- d) Ensure that telecommunication technologies take advantage of economies of scale available through using a shared infrastructure.
 - i) Identify all potential users of a common countywide communications infrastructure (e.g., education, business, health, law or private use).
 - ii) Develop a coordinated plan to create a common shared infrastructure.

- (1) Business model
- (2) Capital budget
- (3) Project plan
- (4) Economic sustainability

4. Provide high-speed access to technology and information so that employees can be as efficient as possible, businesses can be competitive in the world of electronic commerce, and residents can have easy access to information and services.

- a) Encourage maximum use of current technology resources and develop ways to promote access to all county areas.
 - i) Establish partnerships with business, government and education to utilize excess or surplus resources for rural needs.
 - ii) Establish a visible and permanent plan to acquire surplus equipment and resources from business and government, and recondition or upgrade through school training programs to make available to business and public service facilities.
- b) Evaluate funding alternatives to subsidize or otherwise assist in the acquisition of telecommunication access and equipment necessary to utilize the infrastructure.
 - i) Corporate grants
 - ii) Private donations
 - iii) Government grants
 - iv) Tax benefits

5. Provide low cost training, distance learning, in-service options and common technical support to reduce costs to Josephine County users.

- a) A well-trained workforce that encourages business to locate here will help drive the Josephine County economy.
 - i) Develop partnerships between Distance Learning providers and consolidate all course offerings in the region under an open and publicized website. Include PSU, OIT, RCC, SOU, etc.
 - ii) Provide information on programs and funding resources for training within that same website.
- b) Work with the County Economic Development Department to create campaigns to promote the region touting telecommunication and technology capabilities.
- c) Work with business to encourage internships in technology and telecommunications capabilities.

- d) Provide opportunities for county residents to participate in a wide variety of learning opportunities available through educational institutions in larger metropolitan areas.
 - i) Online
 - ii) Self-paced or guided courses
 - iii) Use expanded bandwidth for video courses online
- e) Encourage development of advanced degrees or technical skills training.
 - i) Improve overall technical competency of the county's workforce.

Background

The Josephine County Ad Hoc Technology and Telecommunications Committee (hereinafter “The Committee”) formed in spring 2000 by concerned residents from Josephine and Jackson County. These residents were a cross-section of the population and represented the interests of education, healthcare, business, government, telecommunications service providers, and private residents.

The committee's purpose is to:

- ❖ Provide a forum for collaboration in developing countywide plans with ties to regional planning efforts.
- ❖ Engage all segments of the community in committee activities.
- ❖ Collect input on issues about the importance of technology and telecommunications necessary for ensuring a healthy, vital economy and promoting a high quality of life for all Josephine County residents.
- ❖ Develop a draft Telecommunications Plan for consideration and approval by the Josephine County Board of Supervisors.
- ❖ Support the carrying out of actions to promote improvements to telecommunications services and infrastructure available in Josephine County.

Committee efforts to date resulted in:

- A series of ongoing community meetings to discuss telecommunications issues and needs.

Since Early spring of 2000 a series of open meetings provided opportunity for a wide variety of interested community participants to voice their concerns and possibilities for solutions to the telecommunications issues facing the area. The meetings were held on the RCC campus, at a public meeting room in a local financial institution, and on the Washington campus of Three Rivers Hospital. Participants represented residents, businesses, government, education, and healthcare. In June a core group took on the assignment of creating a draft plan. This core group met on several occasions to develop this draft plan in June and July. The final draft product was available for review in August 2000.

- Reviewing and incorporating information gained from the completion of a Josephine County community technology and telecommunications Critical Users survey as well as input from other key meetings as a result of the SB622 administrative processes during the spring of 2000.

The TT&P is consistent with and reflective of the results reported by the *Senate Bill 622, Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. and Southern Oregon Telecommunication & Technology Council Final Report*. The following is excerpted from that report:

Introduction:

Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SOREDI) and Southern Oregon Telecommunications & Technology Council (SOTTC), in conjunction with Josephine County Economic Development, have completed a regional assessment of telecommunications use and needs in response to Senate Bill 622's prioritization process. Results of this assessment helped determine the current status of telecommunications throughout our region, and will contribute to statewide Telecommunications Infrastructure Account project planning.

Significant Survey Findings:

Survey results varied by county. Following is a brief summary of county findings:

Josephine County: Josephine County had the lowest response rate for Critical Users (50%) and highest for Communities (100%). Josephine County Critical Users reported the lowest anticipated business expansion (73% said they planned for expansion), but the largest phone line growth (92% plan for line growth).

Josephine County respondents had a slightly lower percentage of videoconference use (17%) and lower ownership of videoconference equipment (15%). Internet connection speeds on average were slowest in Josephine County, with 100% connecting at 56Kbps or slower. Josephine County Critical Users placed a higher importance on current and future use of Internet applications (such as email 96%) and providing information to customers via the Internet. However, quality in an Internet Service Provider (ISP) was also most important to Josephine County Critical Users. Sixty six percent of Josephine County respondents are satisfied with their Internet Service Provider, and 62% maintain web pages. Josephine County Communities report the lowest satisfaction (66%) with Internet services as well.

The results of these surveys indicate that Josephine County is the most under-served county in Southern Oregon in terms of telecommunications services. With that said, Josephine County respondents were somewhat satisfied with the current level of services. The county businesses and communities would like to see more advanced services, at lower more competitive costs covering a wider area of the county. Concerns around availability and affordability of broadband services and LAN/WAN networks were voiced in the Josephine County meeting.

County Meetings:

A separate Josephine County meeting was held the week of April 10th to announce survey findings and to determine county telecommunications priorities (needs). Interested persons from each county participated in these meetings. The meetings yielded a broad list of telecommunications needs, many not related to the scope of the Senate Bill 622 Infrastructure Account guidelines.

Below is a listing of priorities/needs identified in each meeting, followed by the appropriate priority category taken from the Draft Administrative Rules.

Josephine County

Identified Need	Priority Category
Affordability	Improved Connectivity, Route Diversity, & Advance Telecommunications Services
Broad Band Connectivity	Advanced Telecommunications Services
Education - ensure that everyone is on the same page	Education & Training
Ongoing Technical Support & Training	Advanced Telecommunications Services
Sustainability	Improved Connectivity, Route Diversity, & Advance Telecommunications Services
Stability, Reliability & Security	Improved Connectivity
Diversity	Route Diversity
Information From Providers & Government	Improved Connectivity
Workforce Development	Education & Training
E-Commerce	Improved Connectivity
Increased Speed & Bandwidth	Advanced Telecommunication Services
Regional Solutions	Improved Connectivity, Route Diversity, & Advance Telecommunications Services

Regional Meeting:

The priorities needs and issues identified through the regional meetings were grouped into the following broad categories.

1. Greater Route Diversity Between Communities Within Our Region.

The importance of greater route diversity is most evident in needs of the medical field (linking regional clinics and hospitals for telemedicine applications). Route reliability and diversity is critical to existing businesses as well as future businesses. The importance is significant for business and distance learning applications as well. Affordability of intra-region redundancy was included in this priority.

2. Increased Capacity and Security; Greater Overall Regional Bandwidth

The support for this broad priority stems from recognition that our region will continue to grow, and to sustain current business, education, and government telecommunication needs, as well as to attract new industry, our region must prepare for this growth. Security is an issue faced by large and small businesses whether existing or future.

3. Increased Routes Out of Region

There is currently one Qwest owned fiber path out of Southern Oregon that connects to Portland/Willamette Valley. A second fiber, QWEST, transverses the valley but has only a single connection in Ashland and does not allow switching between US West and QWEST. Supporters of this priority feel that Southern Oregon is vulnerable to repeated service disruptions caused by Backhoe Induced Fiber Failure (BIFF's). A second route would virtually eliminate this problem.

4. (Tie) Fiber/High-Speed Connections to Under-served Communities

Numerous Southern Oregon Communities lack services critical for business, education, and health care. Cave Junction, Butte Falls, Shady Cove, Eagle Point, Rogue River, Gold Hill, Talent, Phoenix and Central Point have either no access to T-1 technology due to cost considerations or lack bandwidth necessary for high levels of data/voice/video transmission, and lack advanced phone services. Deployment of these basic services is not planned (or the timeframe for deployment is too distant) due to isolation and insufficient demand (to merit carrier investment).

5. (Tie) Increased Regional Access to DSL, T-1, Video Conferencing

This priority originated in part through discussions on telecommuting (telecommuters accessing databases and corporate networks). Video conferencing bandwidth is an issue in some areas. Overall deployment of these technologies (as well as cable modem hookups) was a common discussion point in the regional meeting.

SB622 Assessment Conclusions:

Our region plans to access funds through the Senate Bill 622 Infrastructure Account to improve local telecommunications systems. This assessment process, along with the SOTTC Readiness Assessment, helps define Southern Oregon's telecommunications needs.

Numerous local issues were identified through the assessment process. Several of them are too narrow and specific community-focused to be considered as

regional projects and eligible for funds from the Infrastructure Account. Examples of community needs are:

- Expanded local calling areas (particularly in Josephine County, but basic to both counties).
- Increased access to higher bandwidth network services (DSL, T-1, ISDN, Cable Modems, etc.) in under-served/lower populated areas.
- Improved cellular coverage areas.

Issues of increased bandwidth are important to all communities, critical users, and meeting participants. Most communities and critical users anticipate growth in population, telephone lines, wireless use, and Internet use. Efforts to increase regional bandwidth would substantially benefit critical users, specifically efforts with a regional focus rather than a local focus. Increased bandwidth would help drive advanced services into under-served communities such as Cave Junction, Eagle Point and Shady Cove.

Needs relating to route diversity were not clearly identified through the surveys, but were found to be of importance through the meeting and prioritization process. The Critical User Survey did not focus on issues of route diversity, and community respondents typically did not have the technical knowledge to assess community route diversity.

A common theme throughout the assessment and meeting process is the need for *affordable* advancement in regional telecommunications development. Lower cost is a common need in phone services, and any increases in regional bandwidth and route diversity will not be successful if costs rise significantly. A major point of discussion in the county and regional meeting was that whatever the outcomes of SB 622 funded improvements, affordability will be a key in determining if the product can effectively address the region's needs.

The top priority identified through the county and regional meeting process turned out to be route diversity between communities. As summarized earlier, affordable intra-regional redundancy benefits current telecommunications users by providing increased system reliability, increased intra-region bandwidth, and helps provide for greater capacity for future increases in demand on the telecommunications infrastructure. If "Global" infrastructure projects are selected for SB 622 funding, the outcomes must increase affordable intra-regional redundancy and bandwidth throughout Southern Oregon and improve telecommunication infrastructure in Southern Oregon communities.

- The creation of an Internet-based forum to support the exchange of ideas and to provide communications among participants in the process.

The Josephine County Telecommunications & Technology Committee listserv (JCECTT@egroups.com) was established on April 8, 2000, as a result of a T&T meeting in Wolf Creek that included about thirty interested persons from Josephine County, industry representatives, and state and federal agencies

involved in telecommunications. Our current active membership is 44 and includes business, health industry, education, government, service providers and interested residents. The listserve allows the posting of messages between members as well as database and file storage, calendar, a polling function, chat room and links.

Members include the following individuals and represent a wide variety of interests:

Name	Representing	email
Aaron Cooke	Illinois Valley CRT	aaronofiv@hotmail.com
Al Koski	Josephine County	akoski@co.josephine.or.us
Robert Loeser	Valley Software	bob@valleysoft.net
Brad Crew	Art, Inc.	brad@artinstruments.com
Bruce Doneley	Illinois Valley CRT	build@internetcds.com
Curtis Summerfield	RCC	curt@rogue.cc.or.us
Doug Beck	Josephine County Planning	dbeck@valleysoftisp.net
Jim Williams	DCF	dcfoundation@www.com
Dennis Stillwaggon	NYBX	dennis@peak.org
Will Kay	Greater Applegate CDC	gacdc@rvi.net
Greg Collver	USFS	gcollver@iname.com
Guy Alvis	OECD	guy.alvis@state.or.us
Winfred Danke	Illinois Valley CRT	ivcrt@cdsnet.net
Jack Ware	Rural Utilities Service	jack.ware@or.usda.gov
Jacques LeComte	ECS Composites	jacques@ecscase.com
Joan Hudson	Pathways To Care	jhudson@mripa.org
John Irwin	Consultant/AHEC	jirwin@mind.net
John Rickert	Williams	jrickert@rvi.net
J. Rothstein		jrothstein@worldnetdaily.com
Julie Rubenstein	Senator Wyden's Office	julie_Rubenstein@wyden.senate.gov
Kate LeComte	Echo Web Internet	kel@echoweb.net
Kenny Houck	Illinois Valley CRT	kmnt@cavenet.com
K. Peterson	USFS	krpeterson@fs.fed.us
Joanne Leeke	Highspeed.com	jleeke@highspeed.com
Mary O'Kief	SOWAC	mokief@sowac.org
Kristen Carter	Oregon Patient Care	opc@echoweb.net
Ric Webb	Wizards Magic Net	ricwebb@wmni.net
Rob Geiser	Oregon Youth Authority	rob.geiser@oya.state.or.us
Bob Hodgson	Productivity Solutions	roberth@psolution.com
Roi Crouch	SOTTC	roic@mind.net
Meadow Martel	Syskiyou Comm Health	schc@cdsnet.net
Scott Kasaih	Fire Mountain Gems	scott@firemtn.com
Sandra Olson	Asante	solson@asante.org
Joanne Stumpf	City of Grants Pass	stumpf@cdsnet.net

Loiuse Dix	SW CRT	swcrt@echoweb.net
Tom Coleman	Charter Communications	tcoleman@chartercom.com
Tom Horn	Consultant	tomhorn@cpros.com
Tyler Wilhelm	Josephine County	twilhelm@co.josephine.or.us
William Daniel	USDA	william.daniel@or.usda.gov
N. Winlund	NYBX	winlundn@grawk.net

- Creation of a draft Telecommunications Plan

After a number of meetings, it was determined that a core group would form to work on a draft plan. This group consisted of the following:

Doug Beck, Josephine County
 Bob Hodgson, Productivity Solutions
 John Irwin, Area Health Education Center of SW Oregon, Chair
 Al Koski, Josephine County
 Robert Loeser, Valley Software Company
 Sandy Olson, Asante
 Jack Ware, USDA

The group took written input from several sources, in particular the draft plan developed by Union County. During several meetings of the core planning group in June and July of 2000 the planning discussions resulted in the development of a plan unique to Josephine County.

To date the draft plan has been shared with Guy Alvis, Telecommunications Coordinator, Oregon Economic & Community Development Department. Mr. Alvis was seeking examples of planning documents to share with other entities in the State.

Posting of the draft plan to the JCCETT listserv in early August provided opportunity for comment and additional input from the full group of concerned parties.

Upon completion of the draft plan, the plan was submitted to the Board of Supervisors for further action. The T&TP was reviewed for spelling and grammar on November 30, 2000. The document was re-released on January 12, 2001, with minor spelling and punctuation errors corrected. With this release of the T&TP the word "draft" was removed and the county logo was added to the cover.

- Discussions of how to promote these common interests and needs led to the adoption of the following guiding policies:

1. Compliance with Federal and State Laws and Regulation:

Josephine County supports efforts that advocate the provision of telecommunications services on a competitively neutral and non-

discriminatory basis. When necessary to ensure access, local government should invest in telecommunications enhancements and should serve as a provider of last resort when the private sector will not deliver advanced telecommunications services.

2. Encouragement of Competition:

The Josephine Board of County Commissioners will encourage and promote competition in the local telecommunications marketplace. All avenues will be used to pursue an increase in the number and diversity of telecommunications services available in the county, including advocacy of beneficial initiatives at the regional, state, and federal levels. The commission will make Josephine County citizens aware of efforts to promote competition through public reporting mechanisms, including electronic means.

3. Cooperation and Collaboration:

Josephine County will continue to explore and enter synergistic and efficient relationships with other government agencies, school districts, and nonprofit organizations that provide significant and cost-effective resources to the county for the benefit of its citizens. Every effort will be made to foster improved communications, cooperation, and collaboration to ensure delays in acquiring and providing improved access to services are minimized. Options for promoting public-private partnerships in bringing improved telecommunications services to the county will be explored where there is a danger of being "penny wise and pound foolish" in achieving short-term cost savings for government agencies at the expense of the business and residential sectors.

4. Broadband Connections:

The Josephine Board of County Commissioners will use all avenues to promote upgrading and improved access to the legacy backbone network operated by Independent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs) to improve connections and linkages between Josephine County and other communities in the region and state. All avenues will also be explored with neighboring communities through collaborative planning.

5. Public Involvement:

The Josephine Board of County Commissioners, working with and through the Ad Hoc Technology and Telecommunications Committee, will continue to inform, involve, and receive input from citizens in both the implementation of the Telecommunications Plan, as well as proceedings concerning future policy and plan reviews and changes. The Commissioners will work to provide an increasing amount of government information and services electronically, while striving to protect the privacy of information provided by citizens or obtained from them electronically.