

Albemarle  
Broadband  
Authority

# Broadband Status Report

## 3rd Quarter CY2023

September 30th, 2023

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for the third quarter of calendar year 2023 (July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023). The report is provided to the County of Albemarle, VA Board of Supervisors as information. This report provides summary level information on all activities completed and underway by ABBA and the Broadband Accessibility and Affordability Office (BAAO). Here is this quarter's *From the Chair*:

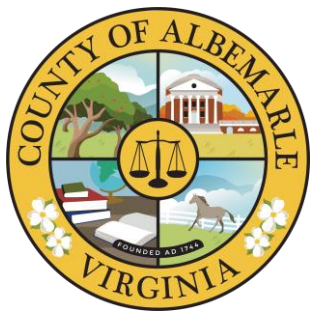
*During this reporting period work continued on the Firefly RISE project; ABBA issued a letter of support for the Dominion Energy middle mile fiber request heading to the SCC. The Dominion Energy middle mile fiber is an important piece of the puzzle for Firefly. Dominion Energy is providing access points which Firefly will utilize to connect Dominion Energy customers who want fiber internet at their homes and businesses as part of the RISE project.*

*ABBA reinstated its current slate of officers at the August meeting: .Bucky Walsh continues on as Chair, Waldo Jaquith as Vice Chair, Trevor Henry as Treasurer, and Bill Fritz as Secretary. In September, ABBA agreed to appropriate \$117,044 in funds to support an extension of the Firefly fiber build-out and by doing so, completely funds work to provide fiber availability in nearly every location of the County. This is the final piece of funding to commit to our goal of universal fiber access.*

*Bucky Walsh  
ABBA Chair*

### **Virginia Telecommunication Initiative 2022 Update**

Make-ready and construction operations continue in the VATI 22 project in partnership with Firefly Fiber Broadband. This project represents



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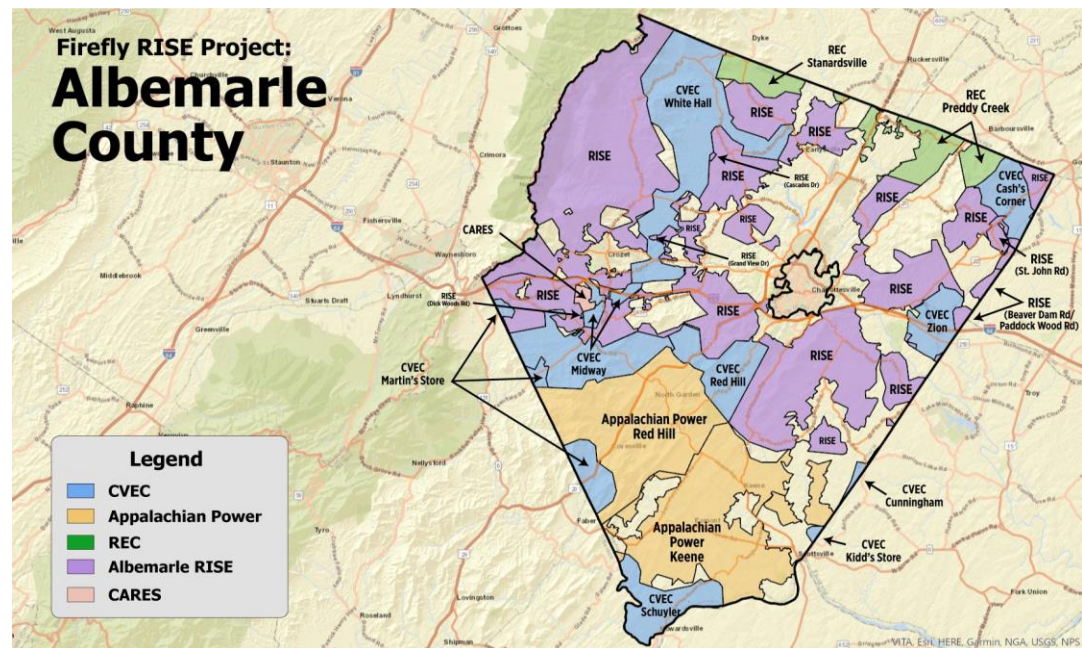
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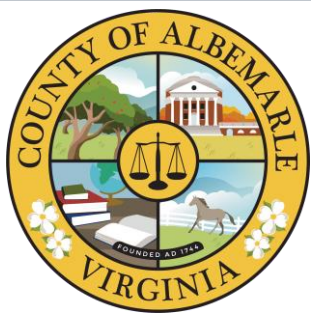
a partnership between Albemarle's four power providers to leverage utility infrastructure to deploy a fiber network that spans 13 counties.

Connections in Albemarle County have begun in areas served by Rappahannock Electric Cooperative and Appalachian Power.

Connections in the Dominion Energy portion of the build will benefit from the Dominion Middle Mile program. ABBA submitted a letter in support of this program for inclusion in Dominion's submission to the State Corporation Commission. A schedule for completion of Dominion's construction will be a component of this submission and should be available next quarter.



A quarterly call for VATI 2022 stakeholders was held on August 31<sup>st</sup> via Zoom. During the meeting, TJPDC updated stakeholders on the project progress. TJPDC noted plans to accelerate fiber construction and service delivery as make-ready and design work is completed.



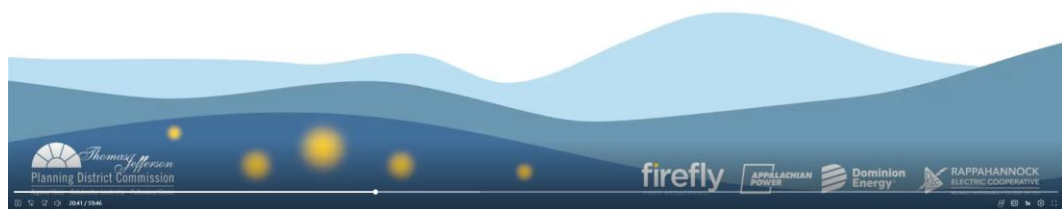
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### Overall Project Progress

- Data Collection and Design Work is on track
- Make Ready Construction progressing well
- Fiber construction pace increasing over next quarter (25 miles per week to 35 miles per week)
- Service Extension and Final Connection pace increasing over next quarter (150 per week to 250 per week)



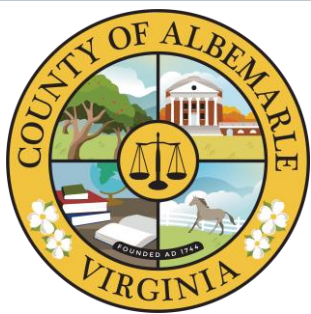
On that same call, Dominion Energy's representative shared that fiber design has been completed in Albemarle and 28 miles of construction have already been completed.

BAAO will continue to monitor the progress of this project and will provide guidance to residents interested in this project on how to register with Firefly to receive updates.

### Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2021 Update

ABBA, DHCD, and BAAO have engaged in discussions with Brightspeed in order to reach an agreement for completion of this project. Concerns persist regarding completion of installation work as reports continue to be presented of unburied fiber drops. BAAO will continue to monitor progress and report to ABBA.

### ABBA Public Meetings



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The public had in-person and real time audio-visual access to the July, August and September ABBA regular meetings at the County Office Building and over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone.

ABBA welcomed public comment at its meetings and invites the public to send questions, comments, and suggestions through email at [broadband@albemarle.org](mailto:broadband@albemarle.org). All public meetings held this quarter were recorded and are available for viewing through links on the County's website.

Among the topics discussed by the Authority during its meetings, but not otherwise covered in this document:

- Updates regarding BAAO's plans to address remaining unserved and underserved locations through an ARPA-funded grant process.
- Updates regarding the Regional Digital Equity Plan process and coalition.
- The reappointment of officers for the Authority and meeting schedule.

### **BAAO Updates**

The BAAO continues to serve as administrators of ABBA, while also developing and engaging programs to meet the County's digital inclusion goals.

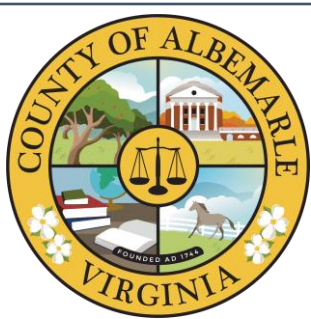
During this quarter, the BAAO continued its work to develop a digital equity plan for the region in partnership with a coalition of stakeholders including local organizations and leaders from the City of Charlottesville, University of Virginia and the Piedmont Virginia Community College.

Continued engagement opportunities included focus groups with Community Advisory Councils in Albemarle County, and staff from Albemarle County Fire and Rescue.

Pilot projects and the completion of the plan are expected to occur in the next quarter.

The Office has also continued preparations for implementation of its FCC ACP Outreach Grant. Grant activities will begin in the next quarter with the deployment of ACP Navigators in our community.

BAAO also engaged in an ARPA-funded grant process which was awarded to Firefly Fiber Broadband for the completion of all remaining



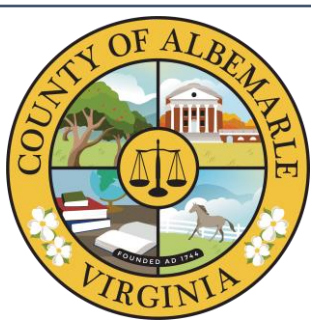
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unserved and underserved locations throughout Albemarle County. A grant agreement is expected to be completed early in the next quarter, with work to begin shortly after, and construction completion by the end of 2025.





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### Appendix A – ABBA Summary Budget Report

Update: 09/25/2023

**4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE) + ARPA 4301 Fund**

**BROADBAND INCENTIVES>ALBEMARLE BROADBAND AUTHORITY + ARPA Funding**

	Original budget	Encumbrances	Expenditures	Balance		
VATI 22	\$4,500,000.00	\$ 4,222,949.31	\$190,050.69	\$87,000.00		
VATI 21	\$2,916,110.00	\$2,916,110.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Broadband Incentives	\$30,044.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,044.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,446,154.00</b>	<b>\$7,139,059.31</b>	<b>\$190,050.69</b>	<b>\$117,044.00</b>		