

## Albemarle Broadband Authority

December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# Broadband Status Report

## 4th Quarter CY2025

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for the fourth quarter of calendar year 2025 (October 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025). 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*:

### *Note from the Chairman - Q4-2025*

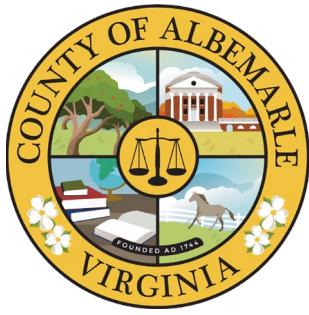
*The Albemarle Broadband Authority met once this quarter, on October 22. The planned consolidated November-December meeting was cancelled as there was no business for the agenda.*

*The VATI 2021 Brightspeed project has been scheduled for its final financial review by DHCD through December 12, other than some status reporting on this project next year that will finally close this project out from an administrative standpoint.*

*The Broadband Office is continuing in its role carrying most of the broadband issues for the County. ABBA's remaining focus is on achieving substantial completion of the VATI 2022 RISE project with Firefly which should begin connecting its final project areas by March of 2026.*

*The Proclamation from the Board of Supervisors on December 10 was very well received and much appreciated. We have come a long way with hard work, good fortune and County, State and Federal funds.*

*Bucky Walsh  
ABBA Chair*



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### **Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Funding**

That National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA) released its approval for Virginia's BEAD final proposal in November. The proposal saw some changes to its awards and cost, however those changes did not impact the award in Albemarle County to Comcast.

In total, 525 locations will be covered by this award, though BAAO believes that many of those locations should already be considered served based on existing data. This is part of a broader effort by Comcast to add nearly 13,000 locations across the Commonwealth. Comcast plans to provide fiber broadband rather than a hybrid-fiber coaxial cable solution; Comcast has confirmed that this reflects its plans to upgrade the entire market to a fiber to the home solution.

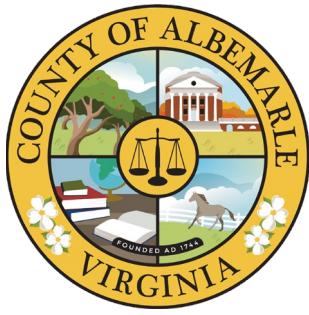
The Broadband Office will continue to monitor developments around BEAD. That National Institute for Standards and Technology must offer its approval prior to funds being expended; however, Comcast is moving forward with developing a construction timeline. BAAO has stated the County's desire for our few remaining locations to be connected well ahead of the 2030 deadline.

NTIA has yet to release guidance on non-deployment activities that can be funded through remaining BEAD allocations; Virginia intends to spend just \$600M of its \$1.48B on connections. It remains possible that NTIA will claw back all remaining funding, stymying digital inclusion and broadband adoption efforts.

### **Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2022 Update**

Firefly continues its construction work and has updated its timeline guidance, as necessary. The grant has received an extension through June of 2026, accommodating all remaining project areas throughout the RISE 15 county footprint.

All remaining project areas have been moved to Winter time frame; Firefly expects these to be short delays as infrastructure comes on-line just a



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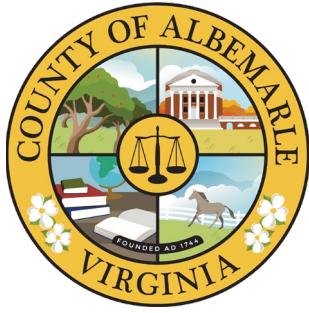
RISE PROJECTS	
Albemarle County	
Appalachian Power - Red Hill	In-Service
CARES - Albemarle	In-Service
REC - Stanardsville (Dyke)	In-Service
RISE (Beaver Dam Rd)	In-Service
RISE (St. John Rd)	In-Service
RISE (Decca Ln)	Connecting Now
RISE (Ivy Farms)	Connecting Now
RISE (Thurston)	Connecting Now
RISE (Ragged Mtn)	Connecting Now
Appalachian Power - Keene	Winter 2025-2026
REC - Preddy Creek (Advance Mills)	Winter 2025-2026
REC - Preddy Creek (Burnley)	Winter 2025-2026
REC - Preddy Creek (Vineyard Rd)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Afton-East)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Batesville)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Carters Mtn)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Free Union/Earlysville/Waverly)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Gordonsville Rd)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Louisa Rd)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Midway)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Rockfish Gap)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Stony Point/Eastham)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Sugar Hollow)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Turkey Sag)	Winter 2025-2026
RISE (Windrift)	Winter 2025-2026

few weeks later than expected. Three locations, Free Union, Stony Point, and Windrift had been awaiting fiber hut locations which have now been secured and are in progress. Fiber design is progressing for these areas and construction will commence ahead of hut placement to minimize delays.

The delays could mean that as many as half of the passings associated with this project will come on-line during the new year. This could tax installation timelines and create a backlog for service lines and installations. The Office will continue to monitor this issue to support Firefly in advancing these connections.

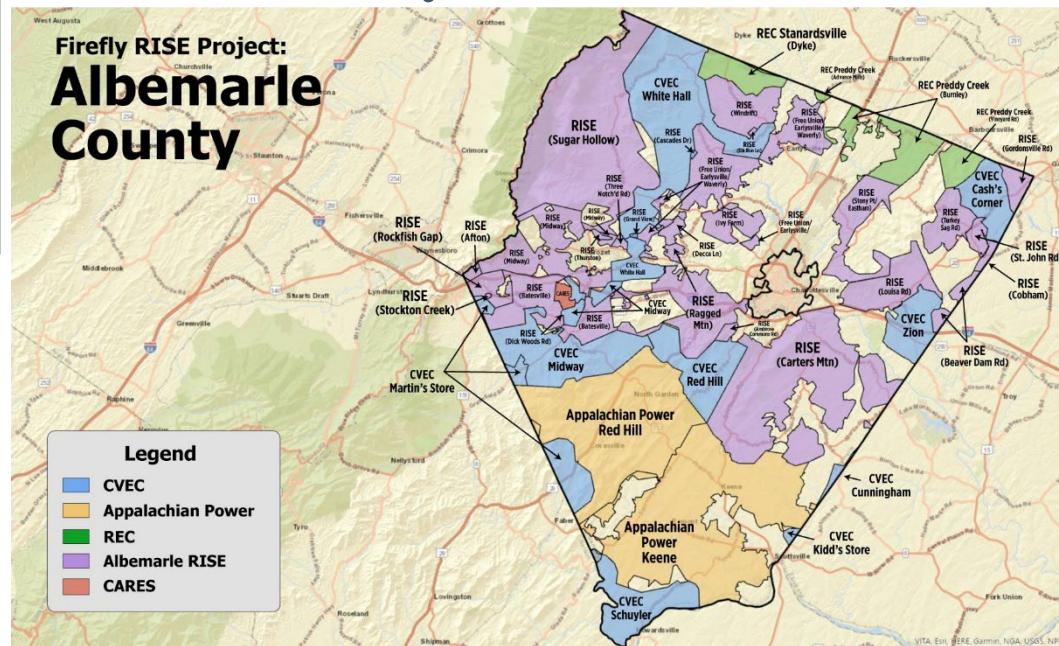
Dominion Energy's portion of the project is largely complete, though some components were different than designed requiring design changes for Firefly. Adjustments are being made as necessary and splicing will continue through the next quarter.

The Authority will continue to monitor Firefly's progress and will update the Board of Supervisors into the second half of the year as the project nears its end. Once completed, Albemarle County will have achieved 99.9% of universal broadband access.



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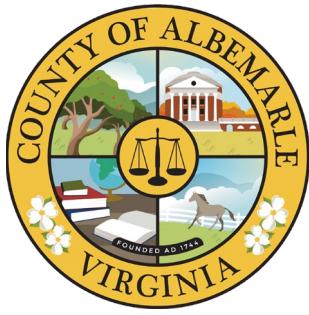
## Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2021 Update

Final Financial Review was completed on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 for this project, completing the last remaining major milestone. Through 2026 two additional reports will be submitted prior to grant completion.

## ABBA Public Meetings

The public had in-person and real time audio-visual access to ABBA regular meetings at the County Office Building and over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025. The November and December meetings were consolidated to December 2<sup>nd</sup> to avoid holiday conflicts and that meeting was cancelled due to lack of business.

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.



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### BAAO Updates

At its December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors adopted a proclamation recognizing the work of the Albemarle Broadband Authority and others to help achieve universal broadband access in the County. The proclamation was presented to former Vice Chair and Chief Administrative Officer Mike Culp (in absentia) and Chair Bucky Walsh.

The proclamation highlighted the decades long work and the extensive partnerships that were required to reach this point, while acknowledging the remaining work to be done to complete VATI 22 and BEAD construction.

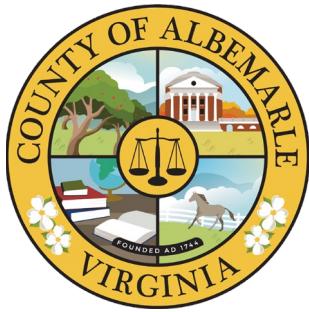
Additionally, the office continues to work with its consultant, locality, and internal partners to prepare a regional digital opportunity plan. The work continues with plans to have a draft available for public review by the end of next quarter.

### BAAO Updates

The Office has continued its work to develop digital inclusion programming to support digital equity throughout the County and region. The Office's Digital Navigators now hold office hours at Yancey Community Center, in addition to hours hosted at the Northside and Central branches of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library.

The Office's broadband affordability programming has had its first expansion into other localities with a pilot partnership with the City of Charlottesville to provide service to up to 12 Charlottesville City Schools' families. This pilot serves as a model for potential future opportunities. Affordability remains the primary barrier to digital access for residents in the County for whom access is not an issue.

Work on the Regional Digital Equity Plan continues, with hopes to see the plan adopted by localities in the second half of the fiscal year. This plan will focus on the need for coordinated approaches to address affordability, digital skills, device distribution and expanded digital navigator deployments.



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### Appendix A - ABBA Summary Budget Report

				Update: 11/05/2025
<b>4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE)</b>				
<b>BROADBAND INCENTIVES&gt;ALBEMARLE BROADBAND AUTHORITY</b>				
	Original budget	Encumbrances	Expenditures	Balance
VATI 22	\$4,413,000.00	\$ 1,509,475.36	\$2,903,524.64	\$0.00
VATI 21	\$2,849,348.00	\$85,343.00	\$2,764,005.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,262,348.00</b>	<b>\$1,594,818.36</b>	<b>\$5,667,529.64</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Notes:</b> VATI 21 original budget was adjusted to reflect the reduction in expected state funding that resulted from decreasing the number of served passings. VATI 22 original budget has been adjusted to reflect the transfer of \$87,000 towards the ARPA Grant. VATI 21 Encumbrances were also adjusted to reflect this reduction. Encumbrance and Expenditure calculations have been adjusted and will not match prior calculations. Previously encumbrance was the total encumbrance, it now reflects the remaining encumbrance. The balance has also been adjusted to reflect the the original budget less remaining encumbrances and expenditures. This results in a zero balance in all fields, however, ABBA's reduction in VATI 21 match will result in a surplus of \$85,343 in that account.				



## **PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE WORK TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL BROADBAND ACCESS**

**WHEREAS**, broadband access is an essential service for full participation in our economy, an important tool for building community and social connection, a lifeline for accessing public safety and telehealth services, and increasingly essential to access government services and educational opportunities, and that many rural areas of Albemarle County have never had adequate broadband access; and

**WHEREAS**, Albemarle County has been dedicated to achieving universal broadband access for two decades, pursuing opportunities to expand broadband through strategic investments and public-private partnerships; and

**WHEREAS**, the Broadband Office at the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development established and implemented the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative, which led to the creation of the Albemarle Broadband Authority and the development of Albemarle County's Broadband Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, through the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, County staff, and the Authority, and with the support of community organizations and elected and appointed officials, and in partnership with broadband providers, Albemarle County invested in \$1.3M of general fund appropriations in broadband expansion, and netted more than \$60M in state, federal, and private funding which will deliver broadband to nearly 11,000 locations by the end of this fiscal year; and

**WHEREAS**, the recently awarded federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program sets in motion a plan that will continue efforts to ensure the 500 unserved locations in Albemarle County not included in prior grant programs will ultimately be connected.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED**, that we, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, do here by commend all of the contributors to this decades-long effort, and recognize the tremendous accomplishments of our partners to bring the County to the doorstep of universal broadband access.

Signed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of December 2025.

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Jim H. Andrews, Chair  
Albemarle Board of County Supervisors