

Broadband Status Report
2nd Quarter CY2020

June 30, 2020

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for second quarter calendar year 2020 (April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020). 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. The highlight of this report is the initiation activities and citizen contact for the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2020 grant funded project with CenturyLink. The project was initiated and teleconference calls with citizen groups are in process.

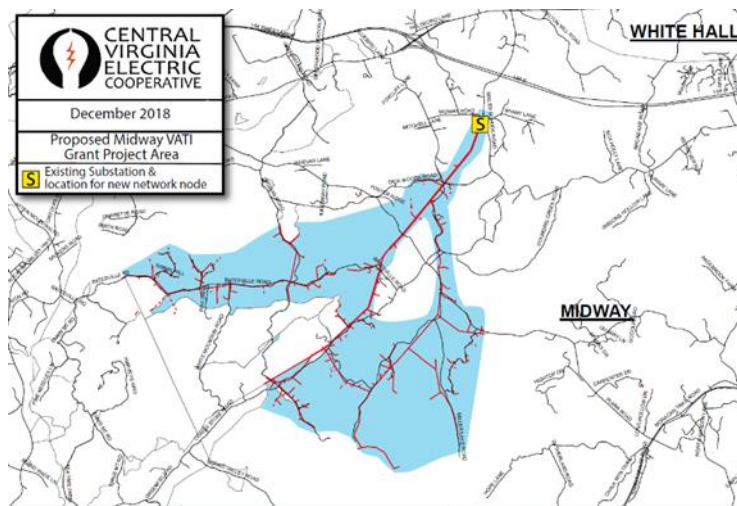
Because of the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the limitations on group gatherings imposed by the Governor’s Executive Orders, ABBA meetings during this reporting quarter were held by electronic communication means on either the Zoom platform or Teams platform. Authorized by the County’s April 15th and June 17th Continuity of Government Ordinances, the ABBA Resolution of April 22nd, and the Virginia statute signed into law on April 24th permitting ABBA to meet electronically to discuss and transact business necessary to continue its operations.

The public had real time audio-visual access to the April, May, June 2020 public meetings over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone, both as provided in the lawfully posted meeting notice. The public is always invited to send questions, comments, and suggestions to the Authority through the County’s Information Technology email broadband@albemarle.org . The May and June meetings were recorded and are available for viewing thru links on the County’s website.

ABBA worked on four projects this quarter. The first project is the continued monitoring of the VATI 2019 grant funded project with CVEC / Firefly Fiber Broadband at the CVEC Midway Electrical substation.

CVEC/FireFly Project

ABBA is now in process of close-out activities with the Firefly Fiber Broadband Project. This project was funded through VATI, CVEC, and \$71,500 from ABBA. The project is complete with an approved extension to file required paperwork with VATI. The new official close-out date is July 15, 2020. Of the 341 homes and businesses in the service area, 211 have registered for service.



CVEC/ABBA VATI 2019 Project Budget



Albemarle Broadband Authority "ABBA"

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Project Budget Information

Please enter your Total Request: \$

Revision #: AF00002 Original Budget

Cost/Activity Category	DHCD Request	Other Funding	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunications	\$301,748.00	\$1,152,975.00	\$1,454,723.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Construction	\$ 301,748.00	\$ 1,081,475.00	\$1,383,223.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text" value="ABBA Contribution"/>	\$ 0.00	\$ 71,500.00	\$71,500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text" value="Tax Grant in Out Years \$71,500"/>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$301,748.00	\$1,152,975.00	\$1,454,723.00

Budget Narrative:

The Albemarle County Broadband Authority (ABBA) is contributing \$71,500 as a direct cash contribution. In addition, Albemarle County is issuing Tax Grants of up to \$71,500 for the new construction costs and infrastructure after the project is complete and spread over the first five years of operation. While this form of support does not provide up front project funding it is additional support from the county to CVEC in support of the project. CVEC will invoice ABBA for the construction costs and equipment costs, ABBA will verify and submit requests for payments from DHCD for the \$301,748.00.

The second project is the VATI 2020 grant funded project with CenturyLink.

The project includes eight subprojects which will pass by 837 locations in various unserved areas of the County, offering up to gigabit internet speeds to residences and businesses along the routes. The project is scheduled to be complete by March 5, 2021.

CenturyLink VATI 2020 Budget Summary (from approved VATI 2020 Application)

Albemarle Broadband Authority
ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2020

Budget Information:

Cost/Activity Category	DHCD Request	Other Funding	Total
Telecommunications	\$291,300.00	\$1,650,700.00	\$1,942,000.00
Other: Electronics	\$21,750.00	\$123,250.00	\$145,000.00
Other: Fiber	\$269,550.00	\$1,527,450.00	\$1,797,000.00
Total:	\$291,300.00	\$1,650,700.00	\$1,942,000.00

Budget Narrative:

The total project cost is \$1,942,000. CenturyLink is contributing 70%, or \$1,359,400. ABBA is contributing 15% or \$291,300 for a combined "Other Funding" total of \$1,650,700. The remaining 15% or \$291,300 is being requested from DHCD. The ABBA Contribution of \$291,300 is included in the Other Funding column; ABBA will be invoiced by CenturyLink on a prescribed basis. The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors lists the expansion of Broadband to the rural areas as one of its Strategic Priorities. As such, the County has dedicated staff time to these efforts; the broadband work is considered part of the expected staff accomplishments. CenturyLink Costs include their 70% of the total cost including labor (network design, etc.); equipment, and approximately 45 miles of fiber cable. Enabling 940mbps up and 940mbps down for 8 sections of unserved areas of the County. The 8 sections are (1) Buffalo Hills, (2) Watts Passage, (3) Coles Rolling Road, (4) Scottsville Road, (5) Hatton, (6) Keene, (7) Howardsville, and (8) Green Creek Road. This project provides for the placement of six (6) FTTP/GPON switches, eleven (11) Fiber Distribution Huts, 435 Fiber Distribution Pedestals and approximately 45 miles of fiber cable in Albemarle County to bring fiber based broadband services to 837 serviceable units. With the ABBA contribution; our calculations indicate a cost to VATI of \$348 per serviceable unit. Customers will be able to get speeds up to 940Mb/s while uploading or downloading data in the unserved sections noted where approximately 62% of them have no broadband service at all today and 94% have no access to speeds greater than 10M.



Albemarle Broadband Authority “ABBA”

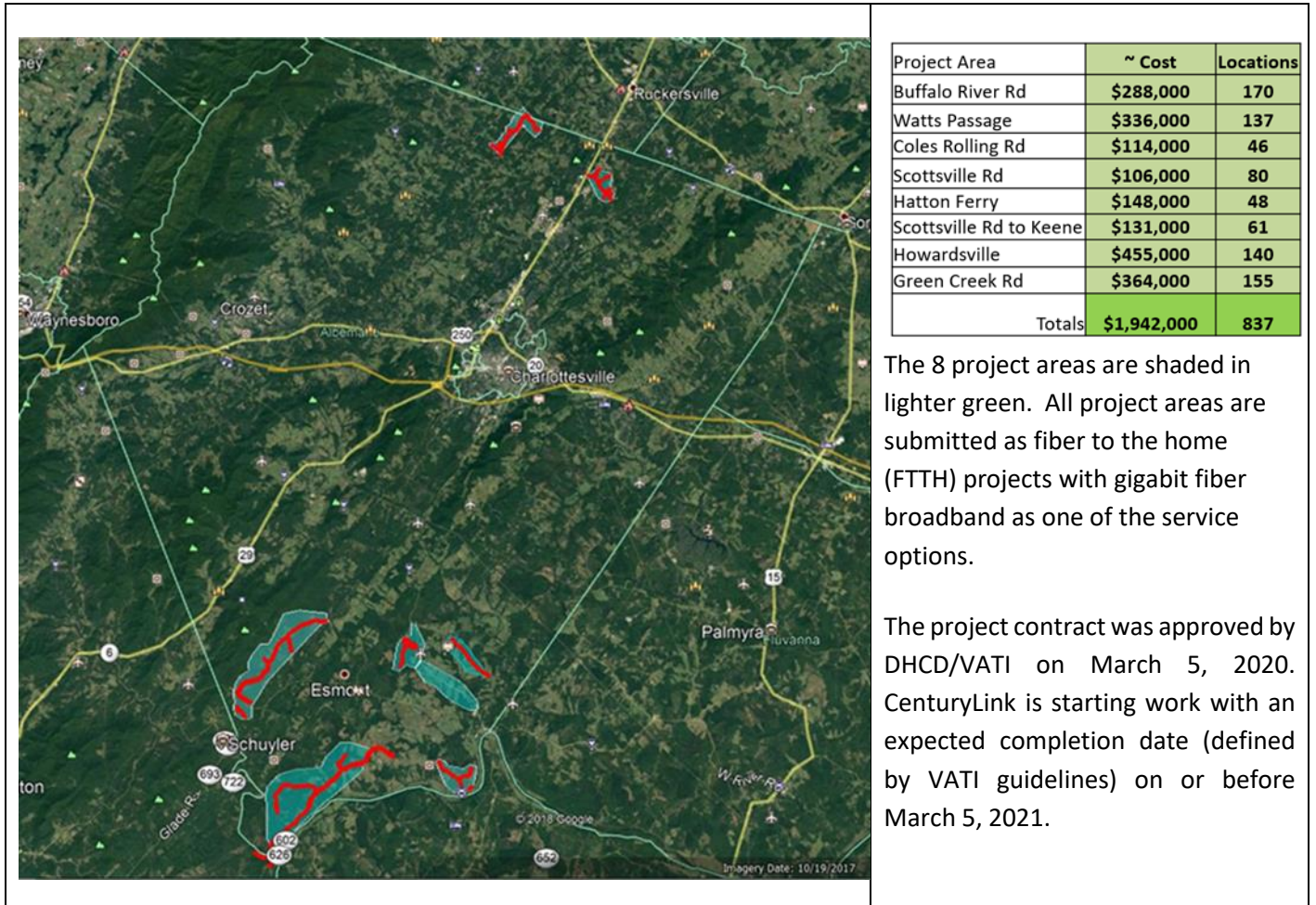
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In partnership with CenturyLink, ABBA developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list and posted it on the County website:

https://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Broadband/Forms/CLVATI2020FAQ.pdf

Next, ABBA and CenturyLink are hosting teleconference calls with residents and businesses in the project areas. The purpose of the calls is to introduce the project, go through the FAQ and respond to additional questions.

CenturyLink VATI 2020 Project Map



The third project is the work completed to post a Request for Proposals (RFP) for ABBA support toward broadband expansion. As part of this process a team from the Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) Technology Department and Albemarle County Local Government launched a new version of the County broadband survey. The new version automatically collects speed test data and has a Spanish language option. Staff developed an ESRI story map to depict the survey collection technique:

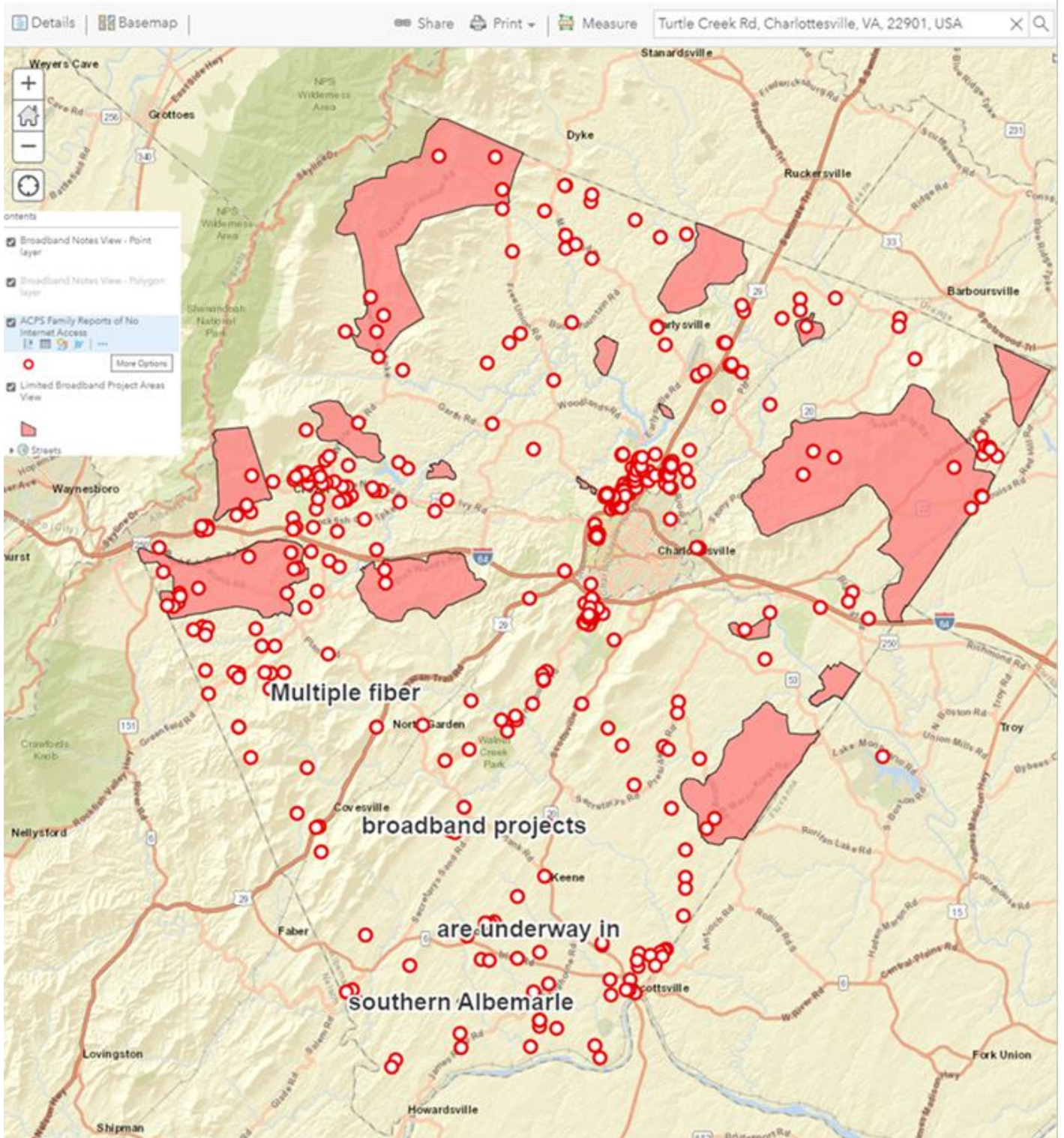
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0c7f3e1bd2944c77b04f25571ddabf5e>

Work continued and ACPS took the data collection one step further asking ACPS families to report broadband issues as part of the “Check and Connect” process. The data collected is depicted on a shared map provided as part of the RFP. One of the “layers” highlights the ACPS Family Reported Internet Access reports as red circles:

Albemarle Broadband Authority "ABBA" Formed by the County of Albemarle, VA Board of Supervisors

arcGIS v Broadband Map - Public View

Modify Map & Sign In



Note: Several CenturyLink Fiber projects are underway in Southern Albemarle; coupled with the work CVEC/FireFly is planning for the area; we may have fiber throughout Southern Albemarle in the coming years.



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Companies interested in bidding on the RFP as well as the public has access to this interactive map depicting the layers:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=5ef05b5abb3e4e4985d4b198153986d7>

A pre-bid proposal conference was conducted virtually and included fourteen participants representing nine private companies. Proposals were due June 30, 2020. As of submittal of this report, ABBA is expecting to have ranked the received proposals and is preparing for negotiations.

The fourth project is the ongoing work toward application for VATI 2021 funds. During the reporting period, ABBA submitted numerous edits for the preliminary VATI 2021 guidelines and several of these were incorporated in the final guidelines. ABBA attended the “How to Apply” VATI 2021 webinar and will continue its work to identify partners and project areas to submit as “Intent to Apply” projects. The “Intent to Apply” notice is due to VATI by July 13, 2020.

Plans for Next Quarter

ABBA is monitoring the deployment of FirstNet (the US wide public safety network), 5G, and SpaceX’s low earth orbit satellite efforts.

ABBA will continue work to identify ISPs willing to partner with us to address the unserved areas of Albemarle County. The ABBA mapping and data collection tool is frequently used and continues to help ABBA pinpoint unserved areas.

The primary project for next quarter is reviewing and scoring proposals from our RFP and if applicable, starting negotiations. VATI 2021 work is underway with a deadline of July 13, 2020 to submit “Intent to Apply” notices and an application deadline of August 17, 2020.

That’s it for this quarter. We hope you continue to find this broadband report useful and informative.