



## **Albemarle Broadband Authority “ABBA”**

***Formed by the County of Albemarle, VA Board of Supervisors***

### **Broadband Status Report** **3rd Quarter CY2020**

**September 30, 2020**

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for third quarter calendar year 2020 (July 1, 2020 through September 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 ABBA and CenturyLink application submittal for Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) funds in the amount of \$3,676,566.00 with an ABBA Contribution of \$640,000.00 and CenturyLink providing another \$1,392,224.00 for a total project cost of \$5,708,790.00. The details of the application are available to the public at this link:

<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/sites/default/files/Docx/vati/2021/applications/abba-application.pdf>

If awarded, at present, and if no changes are requested and made to the plans; the project is estimated to provide fiber broadband service as an option for 2,322 locations in Albemarle County. In size, scope, and funding; this is the largest application for state funds submitted by Albemarle County or ABBA to date. Details about all of the VATI funded projects in Albemarle County are included in Appendix A – VATI Funded Projects in Albemarle County.

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 July, August, and September 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](mailto:broadband@albemarle.org) . All public meetings during this reporting period were recorded and are available for viewing thru links on the County’s website.

As part of the August Annual Meeting Bucky Walsh, Waldo Jaquith, and Bill Fritz were reelected to their respective officer roles: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Trevor Henry was elected as Treasurer. ABBA also approved an update to the Rules of Procedures. A link to the updated Rules of Procedures is on the County’s website:

<https://www.albemarle.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=3216>

In addition to the effort to submit the VATI 2021 Application for funds; ABBA worked on many other projects this quarter. One project is the continued monitoring of the [VATI 2020 Project funded with CenturyLink](#).



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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
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$291,300.00</b>	<b>\$1,650,700.00</b>	<b>\$1,942,000.00</b>

#### 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.

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

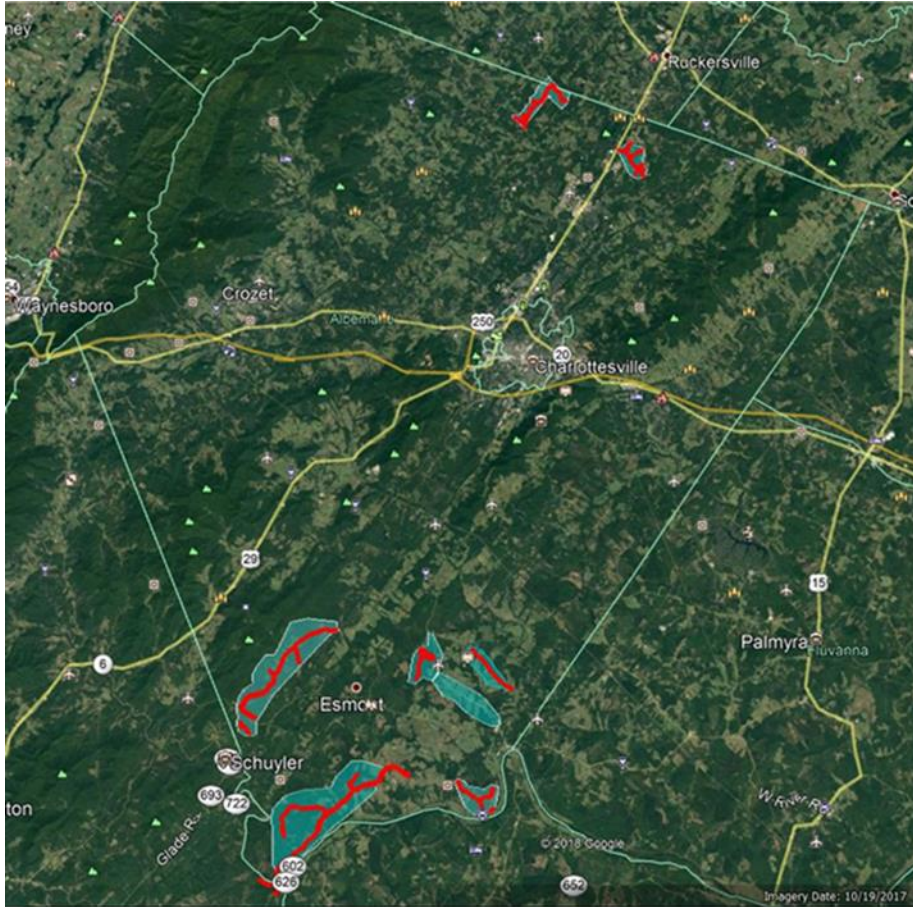
<https://www.albemarle.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=3220>

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

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CenturyLink VATI 2020 Project Map



Project Area	~ Cost	Locations
Buffalo River Rd	\$288,000	170
Watts Passage	\$336,000	137
Coles Rolling Rd	\$114,000	46
Scottsville Rd	\$106,000	80
Hatton Ferry	\$148,000	48
Scottsville Rd to Keene	\$131,000	61
Howardsville	\$455,000	140
Green Creek Rd	\$364,000	155
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,942,000</b>	<b>837</b>

The 8 project areas are shaded in lighter green. All project areas are submitted as fiber to the home (FTTH) projects with gigabit fiber broadband as one of the service options.

The project contract was approved by DHCD/VATI on March 5, 2020. CenturyLink is starting work with an expected completion date (defined by VATI guidelines) on or before March 5, 2021.

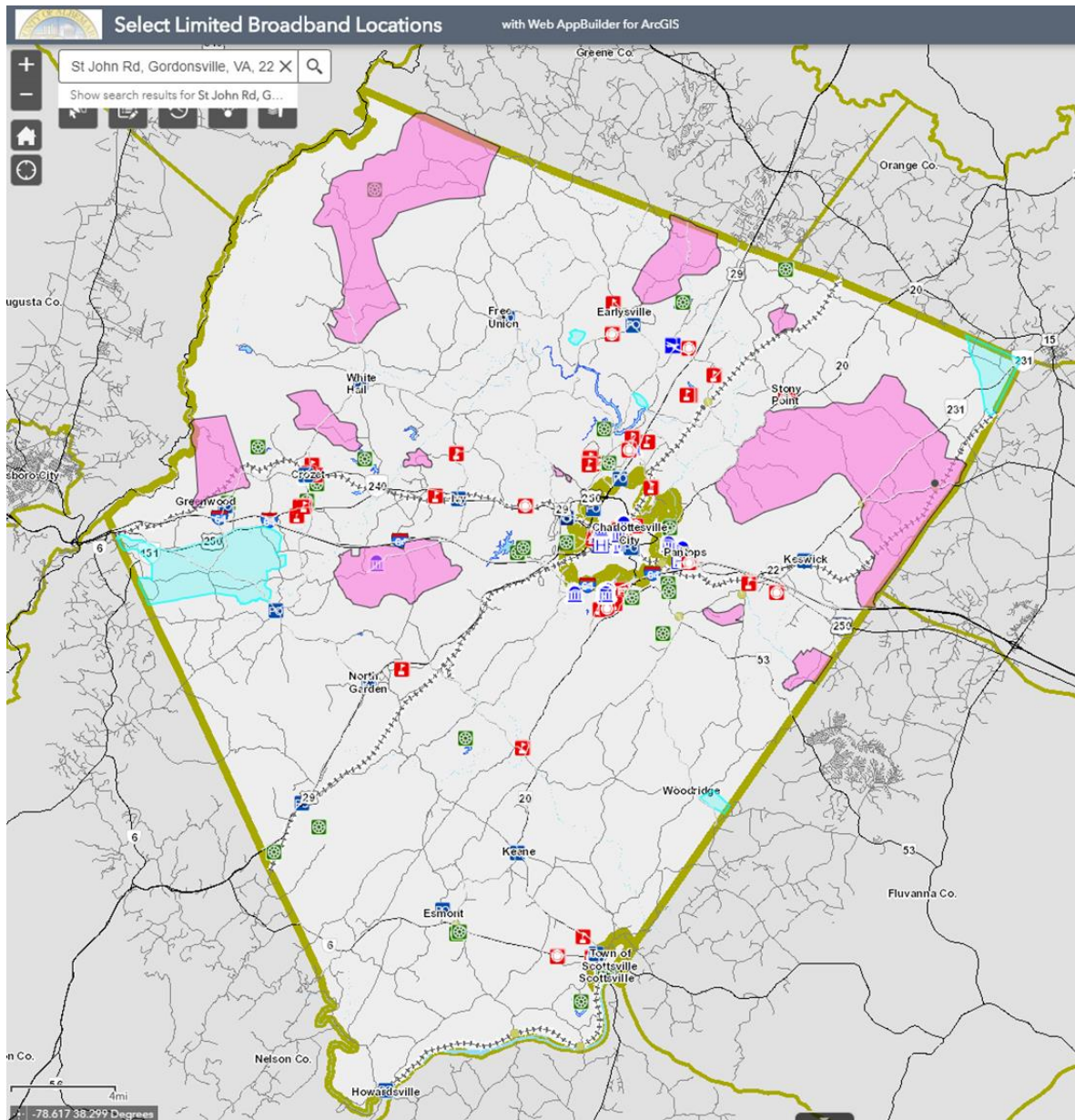
When combining the potential of another award in 2021, the areas above with CenturyLink may be increased to include 11 additional areas defined in the VATI 2021 application and depicted in the images on the following page.



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## ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2021 Application Summary Map



*Map is not to scale and representative of the selected project areas*

*Only the Pink Polygons are part of the application and details on each of the 11 areas are included in the submitted application. Questions about inclusion and how the project areas were selected can be sent via email to [mculp@albemarle.org](mailto:mculp@albemarle.org) or by calling Mike Culp on (434) 296-5891*



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The work ABBA completed to submit the VATI 2021 application included an update to the ABBA Strategic Plan. A link to the update is available on the County Website:

<https://www.albemarle.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=3218>

The next project entailed the work completed to rank responses to the ABBA RFP for Broadband Expansion resulting in a notice of intent to award to Shentel. Shentel was selected as the most qualified vendor submitting a bid with a notice of intent to award provided and contract negotiations completed. The project is underway, and Shentel is working together with ABBA, the County, and Albemarle County Public Schools to strategize announcements of service offering and availability.

ABBA is supporting several efforts to use CARES funds to support broadband projects throughout the County. The proposed projects are part of \$2,000,000 of CARES funding appropriated by the BOS. These projects are to be CARES and Procurement compliant and must provide services in support of the Public Health Emergency prior to December 30, 2020. As part of the CARES funds, the Information Technology Department was able to hire a part time employee, John Norin. John is providing CARES related support for the Broadband CARES related projects.

#### **Plans for Next Quarter**

ABBA and CenturyLink continue to work on ways to improve response to resident concerns over existing phone and DSL service. A plan to address ongoing issues is under development.

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.

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

Appendix A – VATI Funded Projects in Albemarle County follows on the next page.



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Appendix A – VATI Funded Projects in Albemarle County

VATI Project	Partner	Technology	VATI Funds	Partner Funds	ABBA/ County Funds	Total Project Cost	Serviceable Units (SU)	Avg. cost per SU	VATI % of Project	Partner % of Project	ABBA/ County % of Project
Albemarle 2017	CenturyLink	DSL	\$118,400	\$24,600	\$10,000	\$153,000	284	\$539	77.4%	16.1%	6.5%
Albemarle 2018*	Comcast	DOCSIS Hybrid Fiber-Coax	\$473,366	\$202,817	\$0	\$676,183	178	\$3,799	70.0%	30.0%	0.0%
Albemarle 2019	CVEC	Fiber to the Home	\$301,748	\$1,081,475	\$71,500	\$1,454,723	341	\$4,266	20.7%	74.3%	4.9%
Albemarle 2020	CenturyLink	Fiber to the Home	\$291,300	\$1,359,400	\$291,300	\$1,942,000	852	\$2,279	15.0%	70.0%	15.0%
Albemarle 2021**	CenturyLink	Fiber to the Home	\$3,676,566	\$1,740,925	\$640,000	\$5,708,791	2322	\$2,459	64.4%	24.4%	11.2%
Totals			\$4,861,380	\$4,409,217	\$1,012,800	\$9,934,697	3977	\$2,498	48.9%	40.9%	10.2%

\* The 2018 VATI project with Comcast was delivered under budget resulting in the return of \$142,106 to VATI.

\*\* The 2021 VATI project with CenturyLink is in the submitted application phase; awards will not be known until end of 2020 or early 2021.

*End of Report*