



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 22-138, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 2/2/2022

TITLE:

Affordable Connectivity Program Bridge Benefit

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Update on efforts to achieve affordable broadband in Albemarle County

ITEM TYPE: Consent Information Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Henry, Culp, Inofuentes

PRESENTER (S): Mike Culp; Jason Inofuentes

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Albemarle Broadband Accessibility and Affordability Office (Broadband Office) was established in May 2021. One of the goals of the Broadband Office is, through teamwork and community involvement, develop programs to make broadband more affordable for all community members in Albemarle County. During 2021, the Broadband Office promoted community sign-ups for a temporary federal broadband affordability program named the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB). EBB is now being replaced by the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

ACP is a permanent federal benefit provided to qualifying community members. Community members who qualified for the temporary EBB program receive up to \$50 per month in federal funds. More information on ACP can be found at: <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>.

In this transition to ACP, the federal funds are reduced to up to \$30 per month. The Broadband Office and Departments of Finance & Budget and Social Services discussed the \$20 difference between EBB and ACP. The team agreed to utilize available funds provided to the Broadband Office to "bridge" the difference. The Albemarle County Affordable Connectivity Program Bridge Benefit (ACPBB) is proposed to add to the ACP benefit by \$20 per month, thereby achieving the original \$50 per month benefit provided by the EBB.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Infrastructure Investment - Prioritize, plan and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs.

DISCUSSION: The background is provided as an information only update to the Board. A future report will include exact budget impacts, the announcement of the launch of the ACPBB, and details on how community members can sign up to receive the benefit.

BUDGET IMPACT: Budget impact is to be determined and will be included in the Broadband Office budget as an ongoing expense.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board receive this report for information.

ATTACHMENTS: [Click here to enter text.](#)