

Albemarle  
Broadband  
Authority

# Broadband Status Report

## 1st Quarter CY2025

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for the third quarter of calendar year 2025 (January 1, 2025 through March 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*:

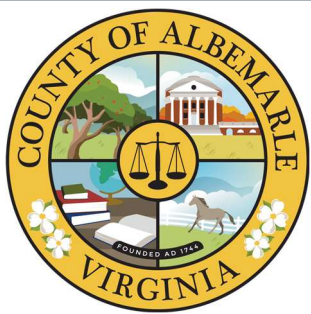
### *Note from the Chairman - Q1-2025*

*The Albemarle Broadband Authority met twice this quarter, on February 10 and March 20. We received progress reports from the VATI 2022 project, Firefly's RISE, indicating that work is moving on plan or close to plan on most fronts. Firefly is scheduled to make thousands of fiber to the home connections in 2025, and this will bring broadband capability to all but few homes in Albemarle. As Firefly gets closer to the finish line, it remains dependent on Dominion for dark fiber connections as well as on the citizens of Albemarle to permit right-of-way access for their services. I am expecting that between these two factors there will be some small delays in part of their project as the details take time to arrange.*

*It has become apparent that Brightspeed has not provided all of the connections they were contracted for in the VATI 2021 project - we are determining how many short of their commitment they have fallen. We will negotiate a close to this project as quickly as possible, as it is now years overdue.*

*With some delight, ABBA takes note of the BAAO continuing to step into our shoes as grant seekers and deal makers to ensure every last location in Albemarle has broadband access. I continue to look forward to the day when the Authority can consider itself done and close down its activities.*

*Bucky Walsh  
ABBA Chair*



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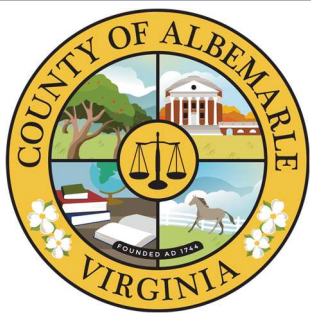
### **Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Funding**

The Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Broadband Office has completed its Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) application period. In Albemarle, two applications were submitted, from Brightspeed and Comcast, and ABBA offered a letter of support to the Comcast application.

The Commonwealth intends to announce awards during the second quarter of the year. Across the Commonwealth, 92% of eligible locations were included in applications.

After awards are announced all plans must be submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for final approval. There is no current timeline on that approval.

Prior to the application period, DHCD released a final list of eligible locations which included approximately 500 locations in Albemarle County. DHCD also released information regarding a de-obligation process that allows awarded applicants to remove locations that are deemed ineligible during the contract period. The Broadband Office remains confident in its estimate of 328 eligible locations and believes the de-obligation process will ultimately reflect that.



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### Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2022 Update

Make-ready and construction operations continue in the VATI 22 project in partnership with Firefly Fiber Broadband and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC). This project represents a

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

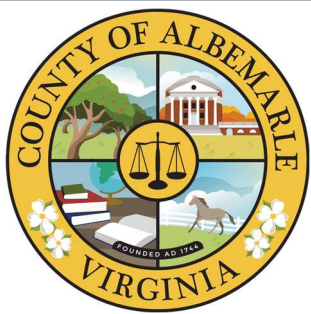
partnership between Albemarle's four power providers to leverage utility infrastructure to deploy a fiber network that spans 13 counties.

Construction timelines for all areas have been published, with several expected to be completed this quarter. The St. John Rd and Beaver Dam Rd project areas are connecting now.

The number of passings has now crossed 1,000, while construction activities advance. Fiber design and make-ready has progressed significantly since last year. And construction progress is expected to advance quickly this

quarter.

Several project areas have been hampered by difficulties obtaining easements along private roads. Firefly is reviewing options when easement issues provide barriers to completion of a project area and has consulted with County staff.



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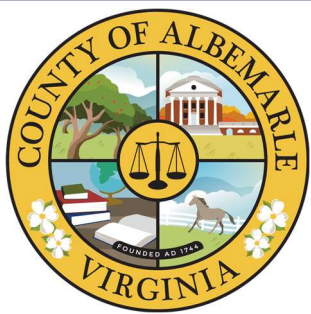
VATI 2022 Project Milestones	Progress as of April 2024	Progress as of February 2025	Progress as of April 2025	% Increase since last ABBA Update
Miles of Field Data Collection	118	430	430	0%
Miles of Fiber Design	107	270	276	2%
Miles of Make Ready Construction	87	94	104	10%
Miles of Aerial Fiber Placement	80	83	83	0%
Miles of Underground Fiber Placement	11	33	33	0%
Miles of Splicing	87	101	102	1%
Number of Passings	921	938	1019	8%

A quarterly call for VATI 2022 stakeholders was held on March 6<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. During the call Dominion Energy was able to provide updates on its progress in Albemarle. Fiber design has been completed, and three-quarters of construction has been completed.

	Progress as of June 2024	Progress as of September 2024	Progress as of December 2024	Progress as of March 2025	Progress as of April 2025	% Progress
Total Miles	215	211	211	211	211	--
Miles Designed	170	211	211	211	211	100%
Construction status	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress		--
Miles Completed	40	85.3	126	161		76%
Splicing % Complete	0%	0%	20%	35%		35%

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.





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January meeting was cancelled due to lack of business before the Authority and the other meetings were rescheduled due to conflicts with Board of Supervisors activities.

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.

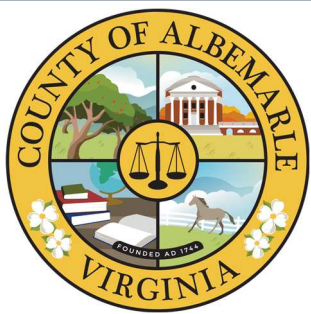
At the February meeting, the Authority considered issuing requests for letters of support from two providers, Amazon Kuiper and Xfinity Comcast. The Authority chose to issue a letter of support to Comcast's application.

At the March meeting, BAAO presented the Authority with its findings regarding Brightspeed's uncertain delivery of passings associated with the VATI 2021 project. Passings data submitted by Brightspeed did not align with the list of 1,433 locations agreed upon during the 2023 amendment to the agreement. Brightspeed agreed that some number of the agreed upon locations would not be served through this project, but did not as of that meeting know the scope of the shortfall. The Authority chose to hold off any discussions until Brightspeed could offer more guidance.

### **BAAO Updates**

The BAAO has been preparing to apply for Digital Equity Act State Capacity Grant funding by way of DHCD's Digital Skills, Literacy, and Devices (DSL D) program. The Office intends to apply for a regional effort that would incorporate the needs of Albemarle, Charlottesville, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson.

Additionally, the Office has expanded the role of its digital navigators to provide additional support during this time of transition following the retirement of the prior Director.



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Update: 03/13/2025

### Appendix A – ABBA Summary Budget Report

**4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE)**

**BROADBAND INCENTIVES>ALBEMARLE BROADBAND AUTHORITY**

	Original budget	Encumbrances	Expenditures	Balance
VATI 22	\$4,500,000.00	\$ 2,782,145.34	\$1,630,854.66	\$1,151,290.68
VATI 21	\$2,916,110.00	\$2,916,110.00	\$0.00	\$2,916,110.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,416,110.00</b>	<b>\$5,698,255.34</b>	<b>\$1,630,854.66</b>	<b>\$4,067,400.68</b>

**Notes:**

*VATI 2021: Brightspeed has submitted invoices totaling the agreed upon sum of \$2,568,117.14, including the ABBA share that is currently being processed. BAAO will submit to DHCD a reimbursement request for \$2,007,976.14, representing all but the 10% retainage which is to be held until final closeout. Final close out will occur 30 days after submitting a revised close out report.*

*VATI 2022 Expenditures include payment of 15 invoices to TJPDC totaling \$1,522,861.88 and the transfer of \$87,000 to the ARPA Grant Project (BAAO)*