



Albemarle
Broadband
Authority

Broadband Status Report

2nd Quarter CY2025

June 30th, 2025

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) reviewed and is submitting the Broadband Status Report for the second quarter of calendar year 2025 (April 1, 2025 through June 30, 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 - Q2-2025

The Albemarle Broadband Authority met twice this quarter, on May 5 and June 25. As anticipated last quarter, Firefly has announced that a number of project areas for the VATI 2022 - Firefly RISE project have been delayed, in most cases by 3 months but in some by 6 months. There are two reasons for the delay, Firefly is waiting for the turnover of about 40 miles of dark fiber from Dominion to Firefly for Firefly's use. Firefly is also now looking for two additional locations to place "fiber huts" which will ultimately allow them to offer speed in excess of 1Gb/s.

The VATI 2021 project has finally been closed, scoped down slightly to account for locations that Brightspeed did not serve.

While the downscope of Brightspeed and the delay of Firefly are disappointing, we are still planning to have almost all of the County served by broadband by the end of this year. The BAAO is actively working on opportunities to ensure that every location in Albemarle has a broadband choice. The "end-of-the-line" customers who are just beyond the service boundaries of current offerings have always been expected to be the hardest to address, as almost each one will require individual attention that the BAAO is well suited to supply.

Bucky Walsh
ABBA Chair



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Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Funding

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) released updated guidance on the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program on June 6, 2025. The guidance removes regulatory requirements related to labor, fiscal capacity, environmental impact, and local engagement. The guidance also places fixed wireless and low-earth orbit satellite service providers on equal footing with wired internet service providers.

The Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Broadband Office had completed its initial selection process; applications were received for project areas in Albemarle County by Brightspeed and Comcast Xfinity, and ABBA submitted a letter of support to the Comcast application. DHCD has planned on announcing awards during this quarter.

NTIA guidance requires that DHCD complete an additional application round based on the updated guidance. DHCD has established an aggressive timeline for this round, having completed the Letter of Intent period and having begun the application period prior to the close of the quarter. Pending approval from NTIA, DHCD expects to announce awards in August.



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Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2022 Update

At the June stakeholders meeting, Gary Wood, CEO of the grant partner Firefly Fiber Broadband, announced the intention to request an extension on this project well into 2026. The need for an extension arises

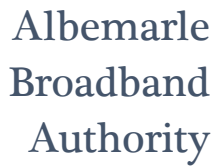
from delays in completion of the middle mile network. This is the first such request.

Construction timelines in Albemarle County have been updated, and while there are several areas that have been delayed, none have been delayed beyond the original grant term.

Two project areas were noted as potentially being delayed into the Fall of 2025 due to the need to locate fiber facilities in each of these sites. Those project areas are the Free Union/Earlsville/Waverly and Stony Point/Eastham portions. The need for additional facilities arose due to the decision to provide multi-gigabit service in the near future; that enhanced service will be available for all project areas.

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

Those two project areas account for approximately 1,000 passings, almost 1/5th of the total number of passings associated with this project. That still leaves thousands of passings expected to be completed in the upcoming quarter.





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Brightspeed's audit of the list of expected passings confirmed that 1,415 would be served by this effort; the remaining passings were forfeited. Funding from DHCD and ABBA was pro-rated against the planned passings, and Brightspeed submitted invoices reflecting those adjustments.

DHCD guidance states that a close-out audit should occur within one month of the submission of close-out materials. That audit has not yet been scheduled but all materials were submitted on June 16th.

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 May 5th and June 25th, 2025. The April and May meetings were consolidated due to a scheduling conflict in April and a lack of further business to justify a second May meeting.

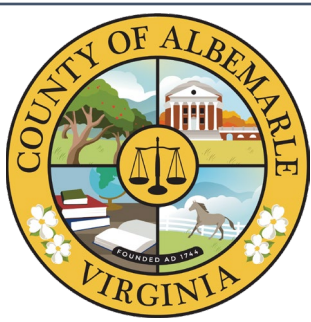
ABBA welcomed public comment at its meetings and invites the public to send questions, comments, and suggestions through email at broadband@albemarle.org. All public meetings held this quarter were recorded and are available for viewing through links on the County's website.

At the May meeting, the Authority agreed to pro-rate its contribution to the VATI 2021 grant based on the delivered passings; that figure was still under review at the time of the meeting.

At the June meeting, Supervisor Andrews participated remotely, though quorum was available in-person. The Authority discussed potential options for possible interventions to reinstate funding through the Digital Equity Act. No clear path was agreed upon, but the possibility for the County pursuing some action was considered.

BAAO Updates

Following a social media post by the President, the Department of Commerce issued a letter to DHCD cancelling funding for the Digital Skills,



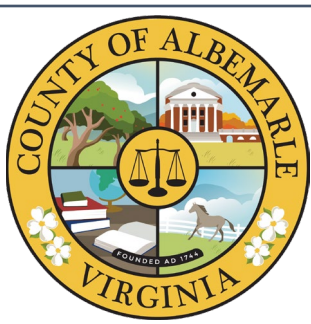
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Literacy, and Devices program, which BAAO had applied for. DHCD has not cancelled its program; it will continue application review while it awaits funding opportunities.

In the interim, BAAO continues its work to prepare a regional digital inclusion plan; a consultant has largely completed its engagement efforts and will prepare a report by the end of July. In conversation with DHCD and in light of no immediate funding opportunities towards implementation, BAAO will consider additional engagement opportunities to garner further insights in digital inclusion needs throughout the region and will consider a pilot design sprint to develop a tool partners can use to facilitate digital inclusion programming.



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Appendix A – ABBA Summary Budget Report

				Update: 06/23/2025
4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE)				
BROADBAND INCENTIVES>ALBEMARLE BROADBAND AUTHORITY				
	Original budget	Encumbrances	Expenditures	Balance
VATI 22	\$4,413,000.00	\$ 2,373,884.04	\$2,039,115.96	\$0.00
VATI 21	\$2,849,348.00	\$85,343.00	\$2,764,005.00	\$0.00
Total	\$7,262,348.00	\$2,459,227.04	\$4,803,120.96	\$0.00
Notes:				
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.				