



Rural Broadband Task Force

June 28, 2022

Deborah E. Hall, CPA, Deputy County Administrator
Evelyn Jacobson, Chief Information Officer

Rural Broadband Task Force Members

- ▶ Deborah Hall & Erica Rizor, County Administration
- ▶ Evelyn Jacobson, Matt Jacobson & Alexa Steen, IT
- ▶ Renesha Miles, Chief Equity Officer
- ▶ Jeffrey Clements, Department of Emergency Services
- ▶ Marcia Keeth & Michelle DeSoto, Economic Development
- ▶ Gina Markovich, Planning & Growth Management
- ▶ Steve Andritz, Charles County Board of Education
- ▶ Thomas Dennison, SMECO
- ▶ Kevin Warring, District 1 Resident
- ▶ Katie Stickle, District 2 Resident



Rural Broadband Task Force

Agenda

- ▶ Categories & Definitions
- ▶ Connect Maryland - FY22 Network Infrastructure Grant
- ▶ Summary of Grants Awarded & Overall Progress to Date
- ▶ Potential State Grant - Category 3
- ▶ Current Projects
 - ▶ Nanjemoy/Cobb Neck (NCN) Broadband Buildout (Category 1)
 - ▶ Neighborhood Broadband Expansion (NBE-Cat2) (Category 2)

Categories of Unserved

Definitions

- ▶ **Category 1:** Contiguous areas where no infrastructure exists capable of delivering broadband
- ▶ **Category 2:** Isolated pockets and roads that don't have broadband infrastructure that are located within otherwise-served areas
- ▶ **Category 3:** Locations at the end of long setbacks/driveways requiring customers to contribute to the cost of installation of the “service drop”

FY 22 Network Infrastructure Grant

Program Update

- ▶ Connect Maryland program through the Office of Statewide Broadband
- ▶ Funding available to address Category 1 and Category 2 areas
- ▶ Applications submitted in January 2022
 - ▶ County partnered with ThinkBig Networks and Comcast
- ▶ Awards recently announced

FY 22 Network Infrastructure Grant

ThinkBig

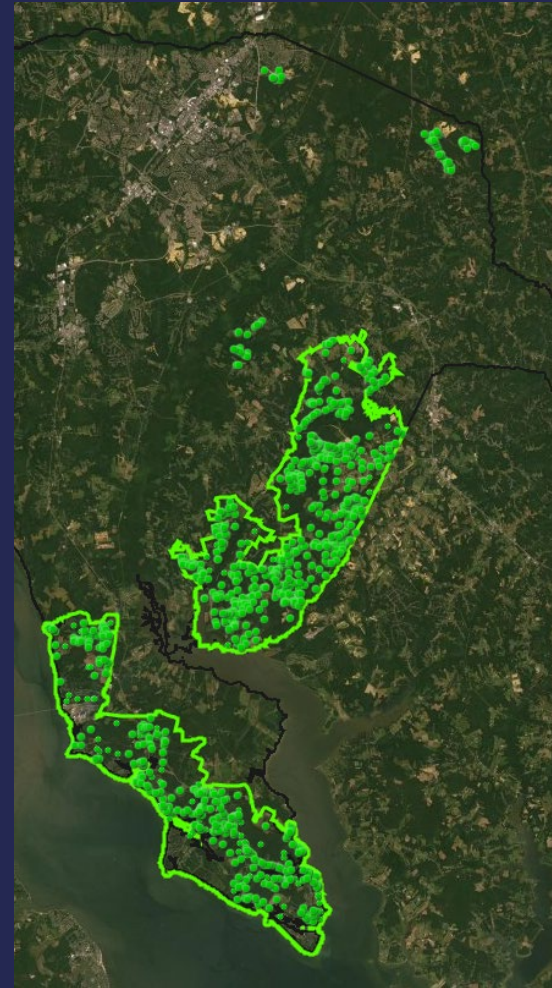
- ▶ North Nanjemoy area
- ▶ Category 1
- ▶ Value of the award - \$884,631
- ▶ Approximate number of properties to be served - 350
- ▶ Requires a 30% match from the County
- ▶ The cost of long driveways is included in the grant



FY 22 Network Infrastructure Grant

Comcast

- ▶ Dentsville/Charlotte Hall area
- ▶ Category 1 and Category 2
- ▶ Value of the award - \$9,664,808
- ▶ Approximate number of properties to be served - 996
- ▶ Requires a 1% match from the County
 - ▶ Comcast is matching 17% of the grant
- ▶ The cost of long driveways is included in the grant



FY 22 Network Infrastructure Grant

Next Steps

- ▶ Work out remaining financial details
 - ▶ Budget transfers for County's match
- ▶ County staff will negotiate and execute Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Comcast and ThinkBig Networks
- ▶ State and each provider must also execute a Grant Agreement

Summary of Grants Awarded

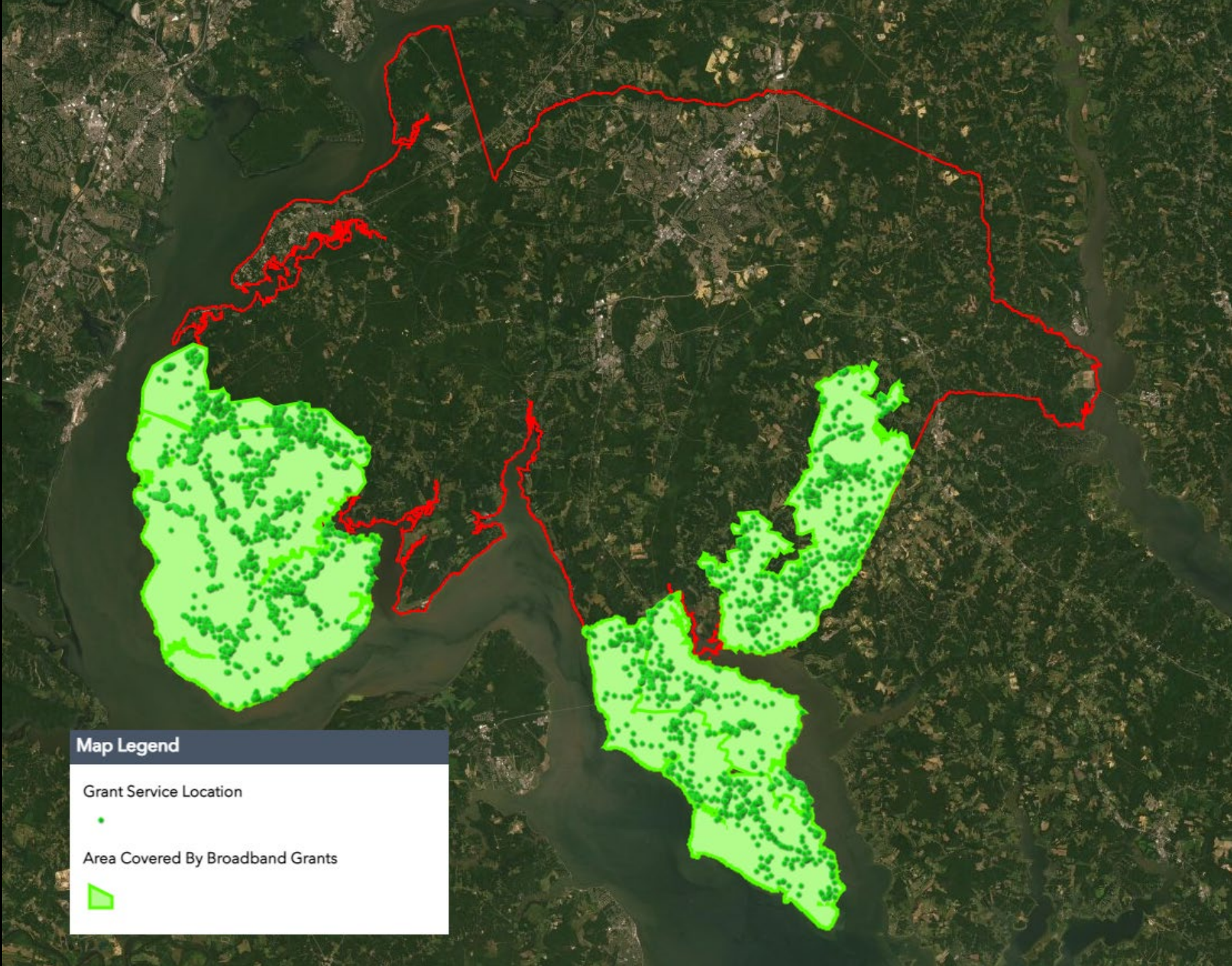
Project Name	Category	State Grant	Funding Awarded	Total Project Cost	Properties in FSA*
Dentsville/ Charlotte Hall (name TBD)	1 & 2	Connect Maryland Network Infrastructure Grant	\$9,664,808	\$11,466,883	996
North Nanjemoy (name TBD)	1		\$884,643	\$1,263,769	350
NBE - Cat 2	2	Expansion of Existing Broadband Networks	\$617,294	\$1,028,825	151
NCN Broadband Buildout	1	Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program	\$2,924,083	\$5,848,166	1,408
		TOTAL:	\$14,090,816	\$19,607,643	2,905

* approximate

Overall Progress to Date

- ▶ CTC Technology & Energy prepared a Broadband Strategic Plan for the County, which was presented to the Commissioners in early 2020.
- ▶ As outlined in this report, CTC identified the approximate number of unserved properties throughout the County:

Category	Unserved Properties (est)
1	2,300
2	1,000
3	1,500
TOTAL:	4,800



Map Legend

Grant Service Location
•

Area Covered By Broadband Grants
■

June 28, 2022

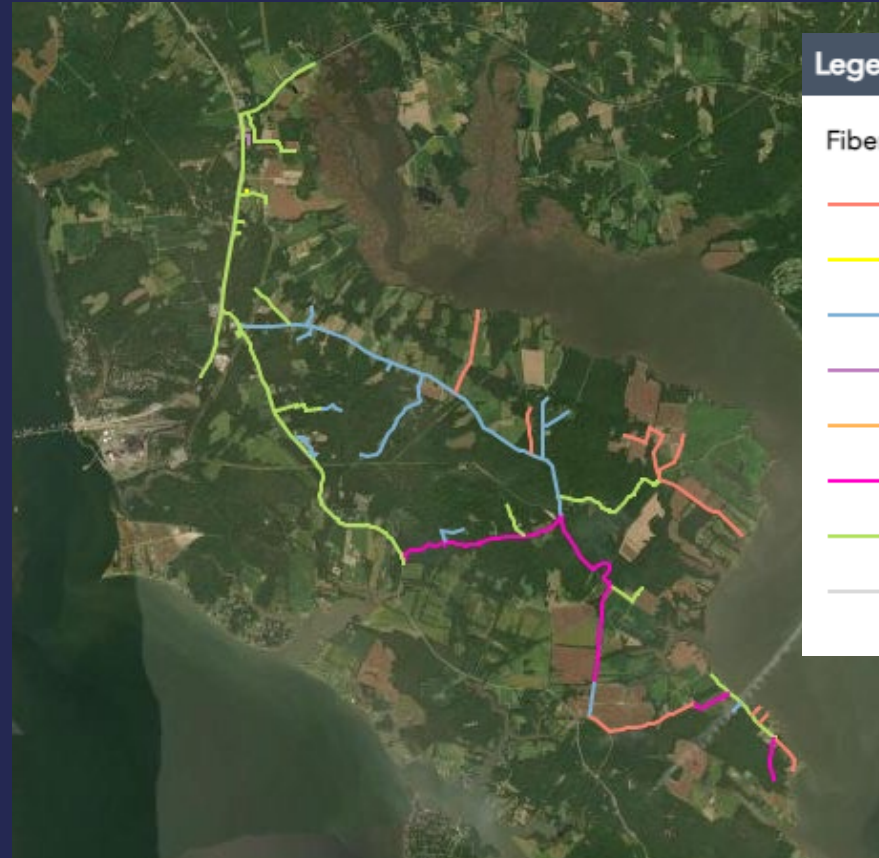
Potential Projects

State Grant for Category 3

- ▶ The State will be releasing another grant program in July/August that will provide funding for long driveways (Category 3)
- ▶ The County has a program in process to identify Category 3 properties and the funding amount needed to serve
 - ▶ 112 responses received
 - ▶ Subcommittee of the Task Force is working on the award criteria
- ▶ More to come - need to weigh what we can do now versus what the State may be able to provide

NCN Broadband Buildout

Build Progress - Maps



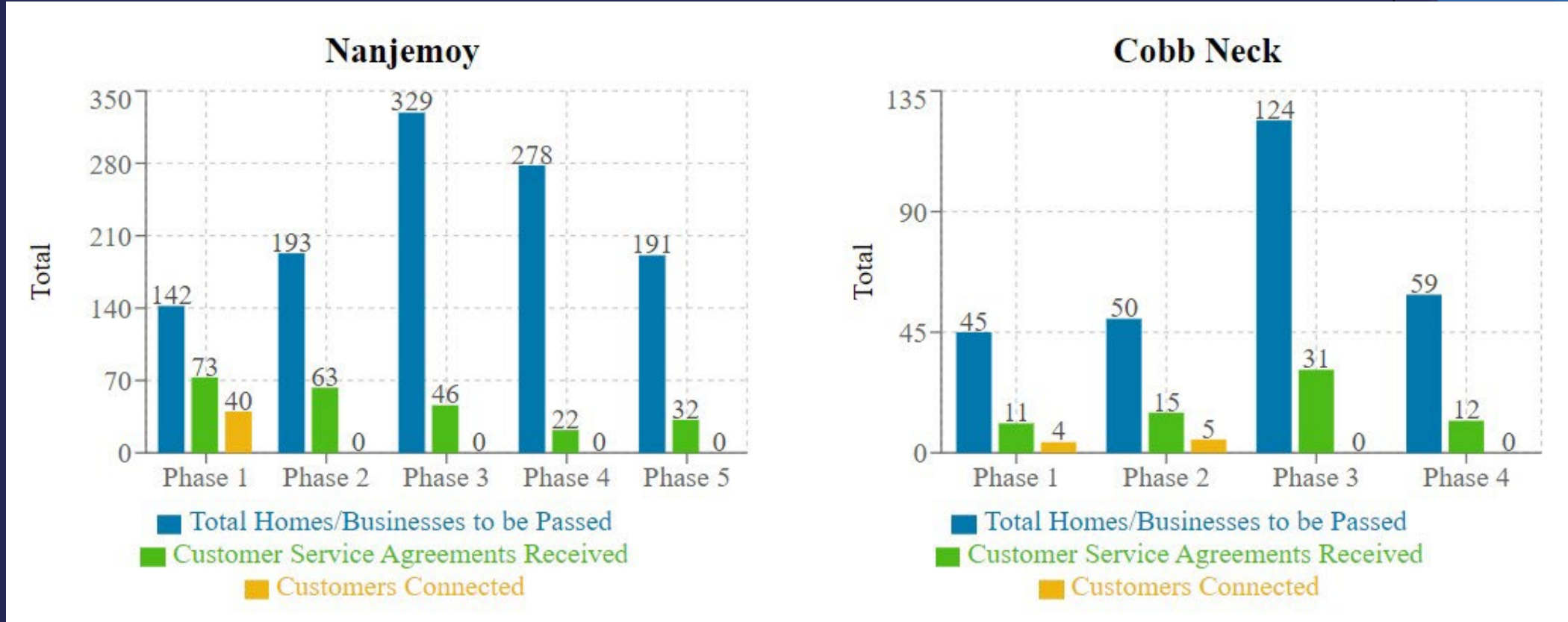
Legend

Fiber Segments

- Not Started Yet
- Surveying
- Engineering
- Permitting
- Material Order
- Construction
- Segment Completed
- Segment Under Review

NCN Broadband Buildout

Project Update (as of 6/23/22)



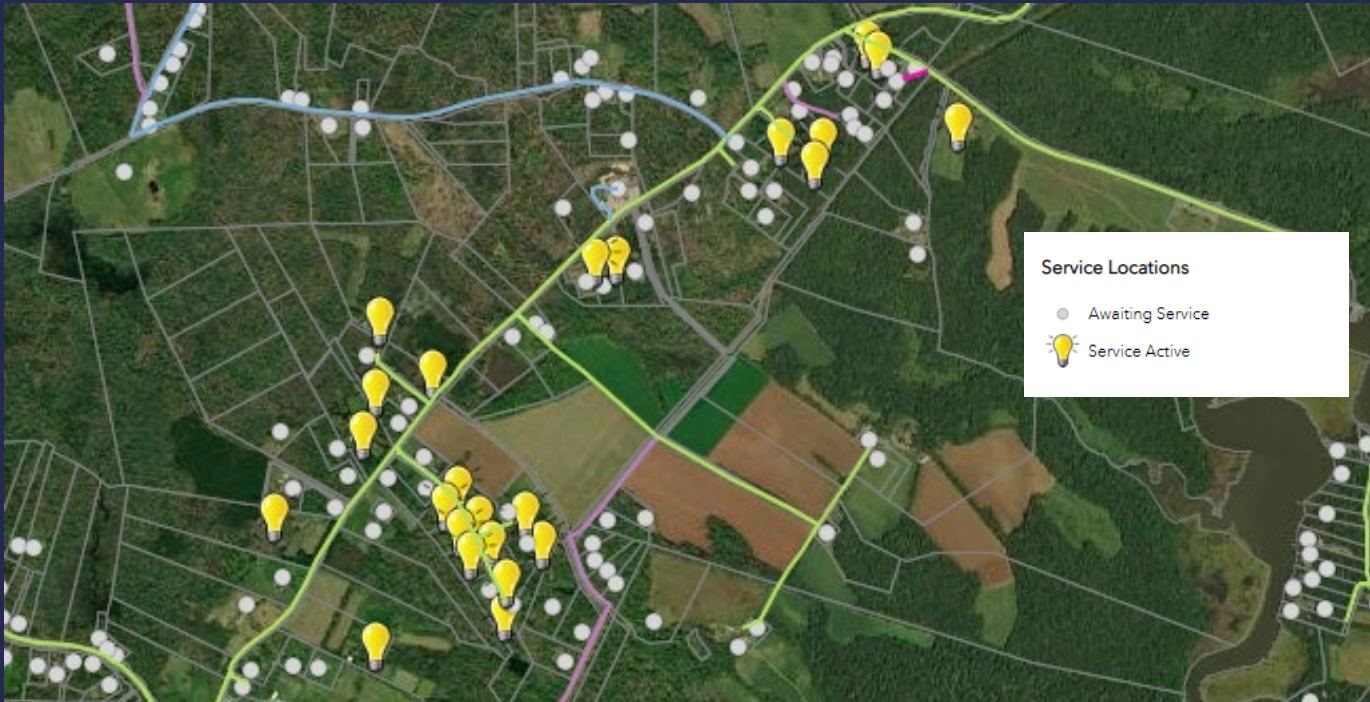
NCN Broadband Buildout

Easements

- ▶ The County continues to encourage residents to grant ThinkBig an easement (where needed), so that ThinkBig may bury the broadband fiber underground.
- ▶ Burying fiber underground is preferred over pole installation due to:
 - ▶ Faster installation, and
 - ▶ Better protection for the fiber requiring less maintenance and resulting in less down time.
- ▶ ThinkBig has received 119 easements in Nanjemoy and 48 easements in Cobb Neck to date.

NCN Broadband Buildout Project Update

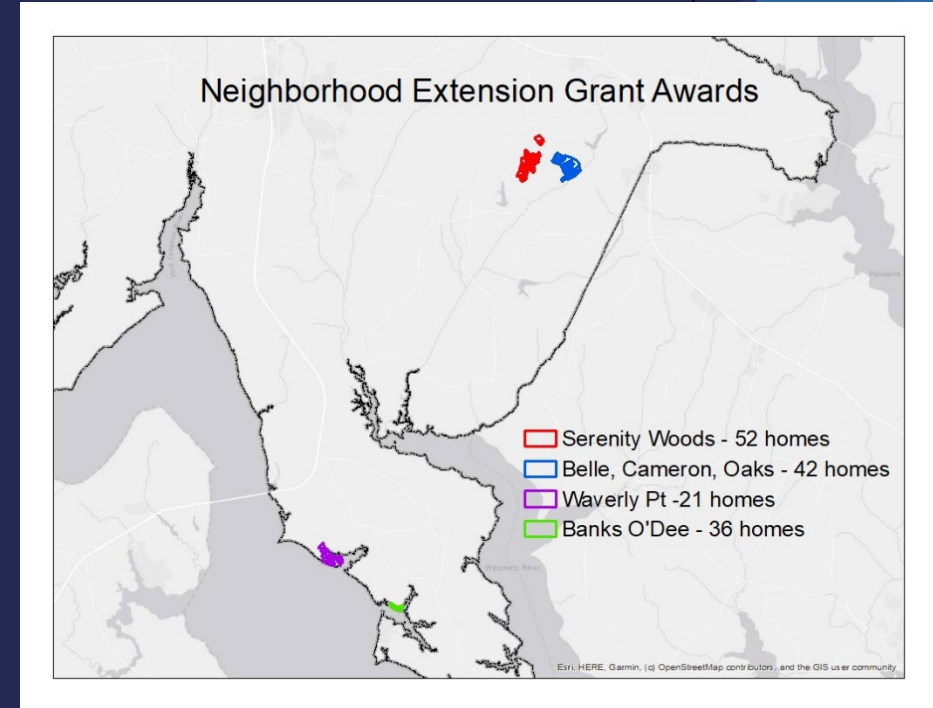
- ▶ Follow the progress on our website, including the [Interactive Map!](#)



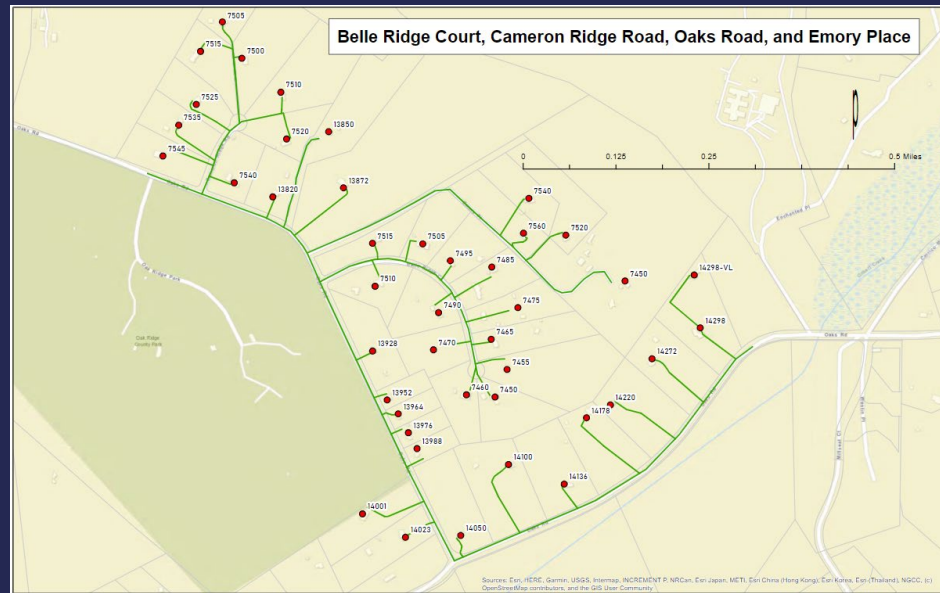
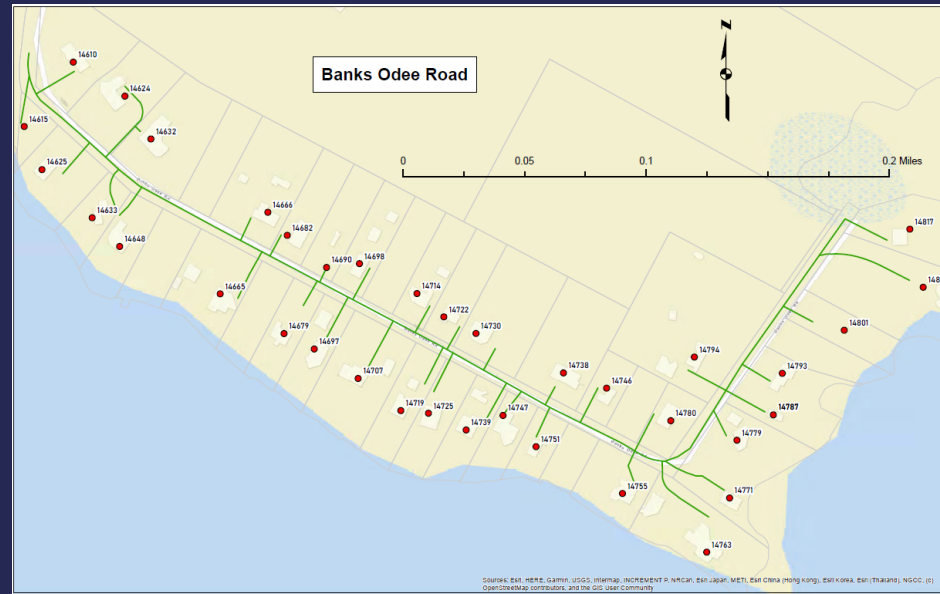
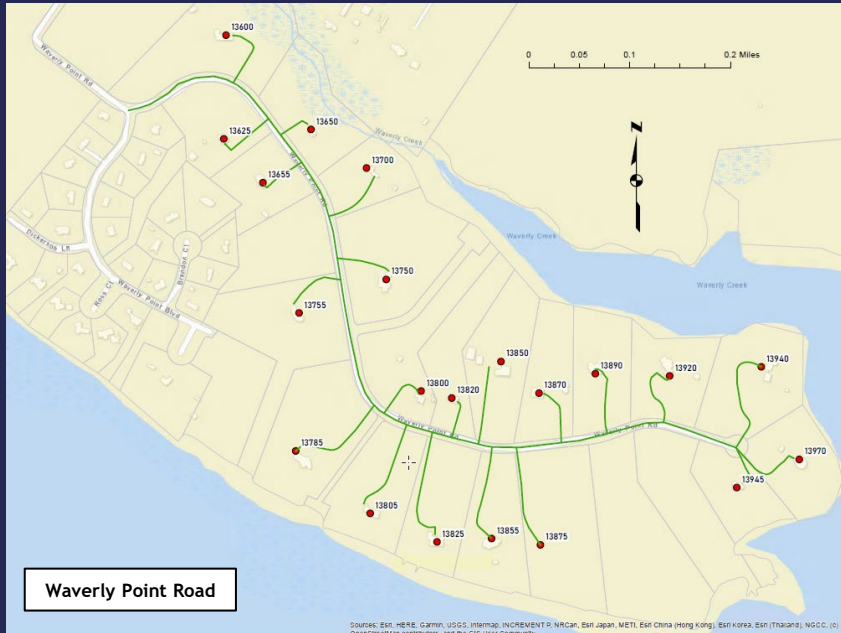
NBE-Cat2

Project Update

- ▶ Waverly Point build was completed in March 2022
- ▶ Serenity Woods build was completed in June 2022
- ▶ County staff meets with Comcast bi-weekly to get updates on the neighborhood builds.
- ▶ Progress is reported on the County's website dedicated to the project:
 - ▶ <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/our-county/rural-broadband/nbe-cat2>



NBE-Cat2 Maps



Questions / Comments

June 28, 2022

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About Charles County Government

The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service possible in a timely, efficient and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, our government must be operated in an open and accessible atmosphere, be based on comprehensive long- and short-term planning and have an appropriate managerial organization tempered by fiscal responsibility. We support and encourage efforts to grow a diverse workplace. Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where the preservation of our heritage and environment is paramount; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the best in the nation.

It is the policy of Charles County to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other status protected by law.