

## News

# County Receives Close to \$3 Million in Grants to Expand Charles County Rural Broadband Access

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The Charles County Board of Commissioners is pleased to announce that Governor Wes Moore is awarding \$2,960,126 to expand high-speed internet access to an estimated 427 households and businesses across Charles County through [Connect Maryland](#).

Connect Maryland is an initiative to close the digital divide through the Office of Statewide Broadband. The Connect Maryland Network Infrastructure Grant Program made 35 awards to Internet Service Providers and local jurisdictions to construct new broadband networks to service unserved households. To view the Governor's release, click [here](#).

"We are pleased that we have received additional funding that will allow us to continue to strive for all Charles County residents to have access to Broadband services," said Commissioner President Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq. "I also would like to thank the Broadband Task Force for continuing to help Charles County move forward."

Access to broadband in rural areas is an issue nationwide, and Charles County is no exception. Although the more populated areas of our county have access to high-speed internet, there are remaining homes and businesses in the less-populated regions that still need it. For this reason, the Board of Commissioners included Infrastructure/Services, which included broadband access, in their Goals and Objectives.

"We are proud to deepen our partnership with Charles County to bring next-generation broadband to more homes and businesses throughout the county," said Michael Parker, Senior Vice President of Comcast's Beltway Region. "Technology is a powerful driver of innovation and economic growth, and we are excited to further invest in Charles County to ensure residents and businesses can fully participate in today's digital economy."

The Broadband Task Force, composed of representatives from multiple County departments, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Charles County Public Schools, and community stakeholders, have worked over to develop an action plan for bringing broadband access to rural areas of the county. Under the leadership of Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator, and Evelyn Jacobson, Chief of IT, they successfully mapped areas where access was needed, presented recommendations for expanded access, and sought grant opportunities to pay for it. The complete member list of the Rural Broadband Taskforce is located at [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/our-county/rural-broadband-in-charles-county](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/our-county/rural-broadband-in-charles-county).

"Verizon is excited to participate in Maryland's "FY23 Network Infrastructure Grant Program," said Tony Lewis, Verizon vice-president, state government policy. "This grant will assist Verizon in the deployment of its all-fiber network and Fios Home Internet service to addresses in Charles County, and thousands of additional homes and business in other parts of the State."

For more information about the Office of Statewide Broadband, visit <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Broadband/Pages/default.aspx>.

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**For media inquiries, contact [PressRoom@CharlesCountyMD.gov](mailto:PressRoom@CharlesCountyMD.gov).**

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