



Rural Broadband Task Force

November 30, 2021

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
- ▶ Current Projects
 - ▶ Nanjemoy/Cobb Neck (NCN) Broadband Buildout
 - ▶ Neighborhood Broadband Expansion (NBE) - Cat2
- ▶ Potential Projects
 - ▶ Category 1 -
 - ▶ Charlotte Hall/Dentsville
 - ▶ Nanjemoy Ridge
 - ▶ Southern Cobb Neck
 - ▶ Category 2 - Various neighborhoods in the County
 - ▶ Category 3 - Rural Broadband Installation Grant

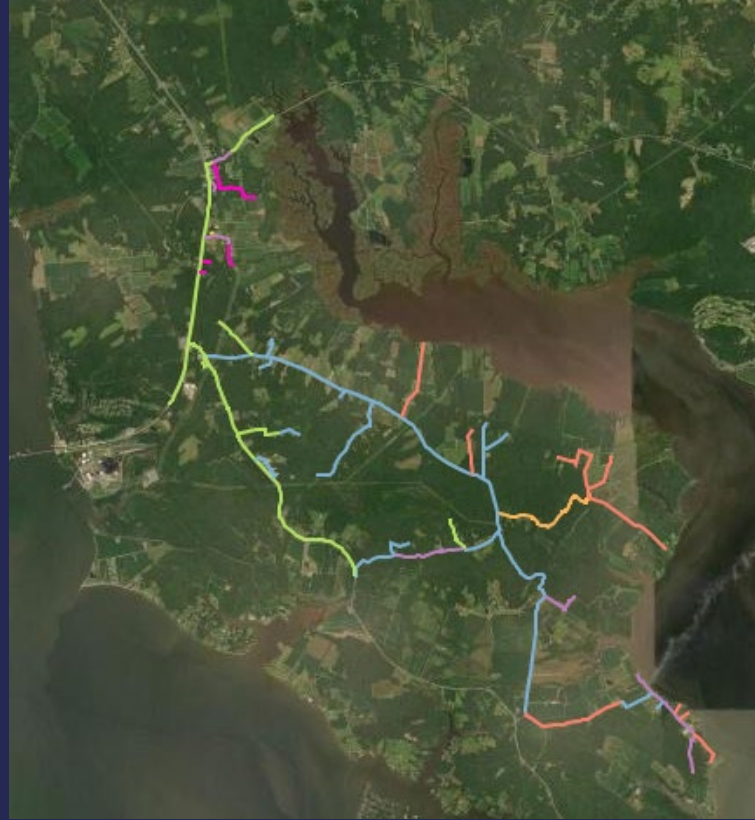
Categories of Unserved

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”
 - ▶ Federal & state governments do not consider Category 3 to be “unserved” and do not make grants for this category.

NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects - Maps



Legend

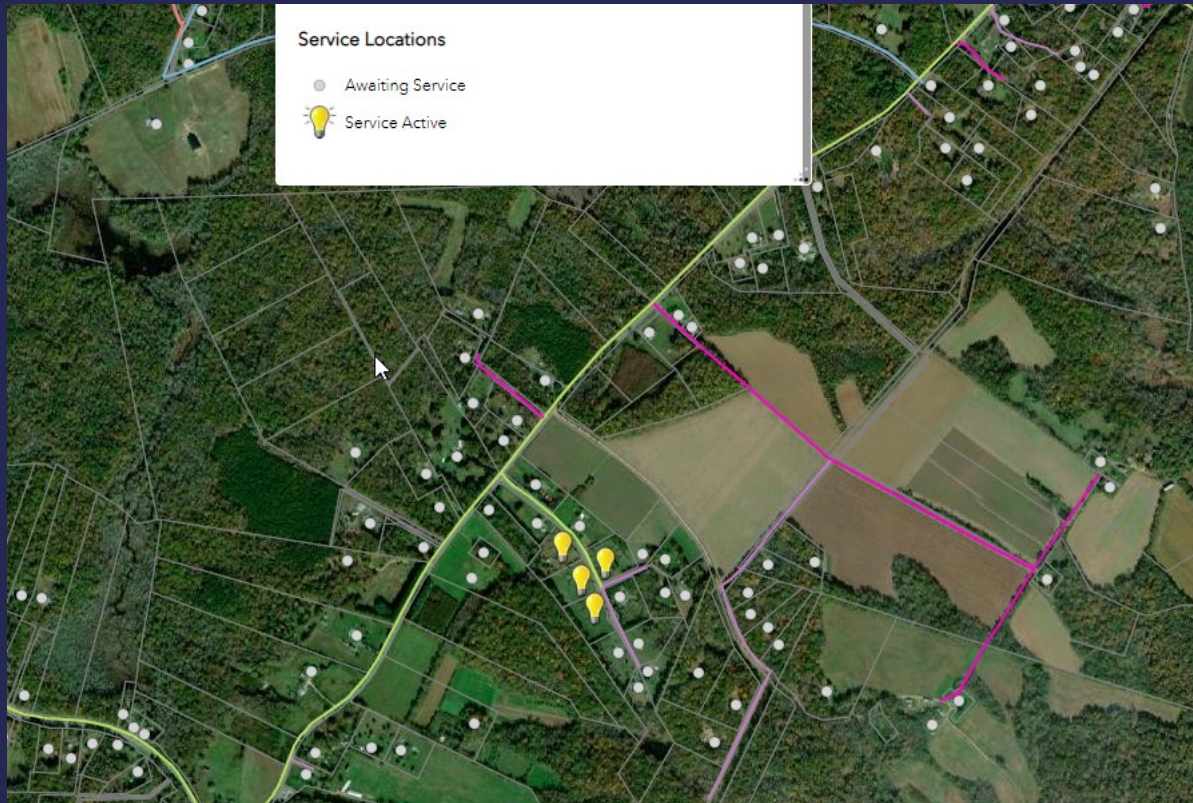
Fiber Segments

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

NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects - Maps

- ▶ Interactive map displays service status for residents



NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects

- ▶ First customers in Nanjemoy were “lit” on November 15



November 30, 2021

NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects - Build Progress

Nanjemoy

- ▶ Total Segments in FSA: 160
- ▶ Total Segments in Phase 1: 26
 - ▶ Completed: 9
 - ▶ Under Construction: 7
- ▶ Total Segments in Phase 2: 23
 - ▶ Completed: 10
 - ▶ Under Construction: 1
- ▶ Fiber installed: 168,370 feet

Cobb Neck

- ▶ Total Segments in FSA: 56
- ▶ Total Segments in Phase 1: 13
 - ▶ Completed: 6
 - ▶ Under Construction: 4
- ▶ Total Segments in Phase 2: 11
 - ▶ Completed: 5
 - ▶ Under Construction: 0
- ▶ Fiber installed: 47,989 feet

NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects - 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.
- ▶ As ThinkBig waits for easements, they continue their build in future phases.

NCN Broadband Buildout

Current Projects - Easements

Nanjemoy

- ▶ Properties in FSA: 1130
- ▶ Customer service agreements received: 126
 - ▶ Phase 1: 47
 - ▶ Phase 2: 32
- ▶ Easements received: 89
 - ▶ Phase 1: 30
 - ▶ Phase 2: 5
- ▶ Easements still needed: 536
 - ▶ Phase 1: 46
 - ▶ Phase 2: 26

Cobb Neck

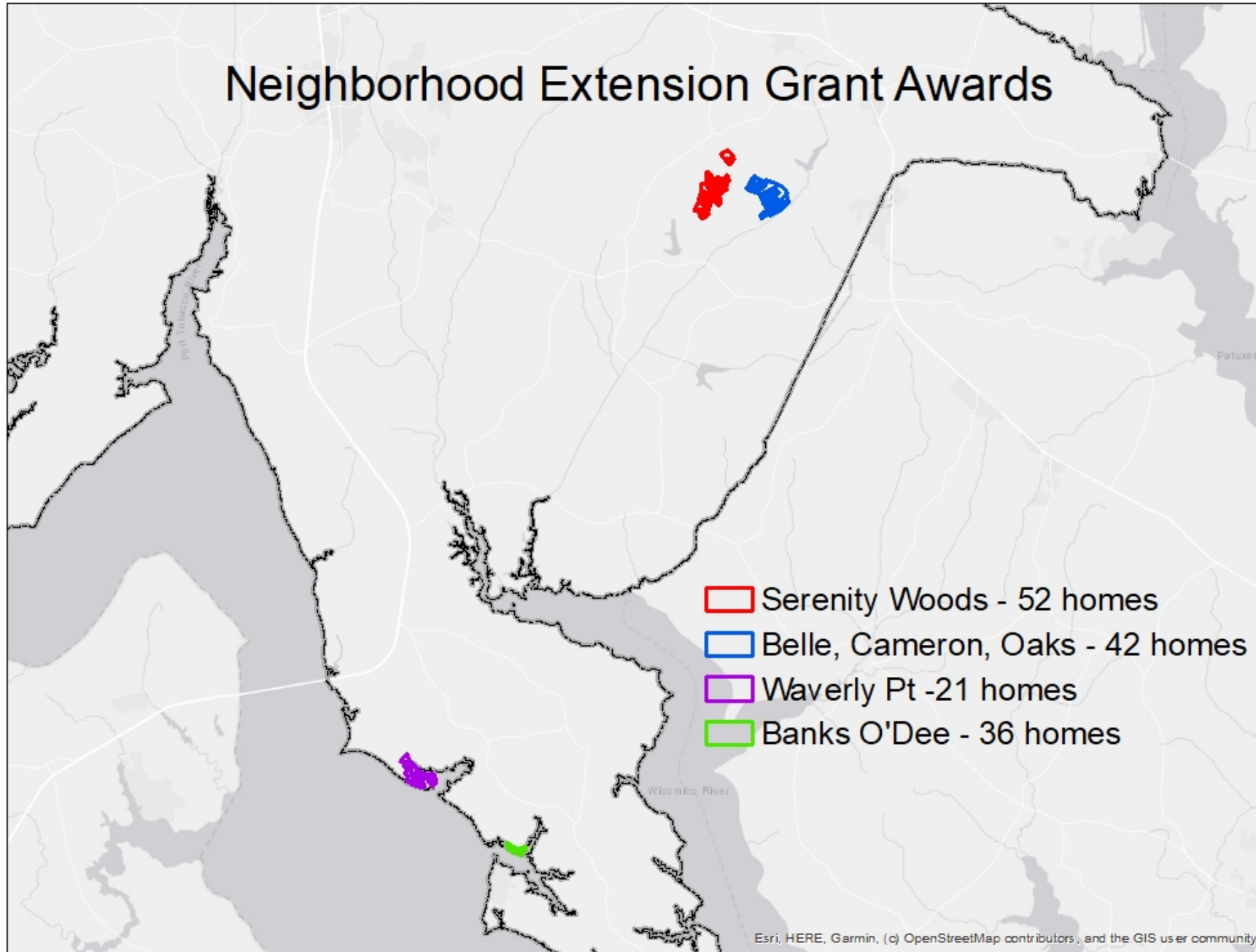
- ▶ Properties in FSA: 278
- ▶ Customer service agreements received: 22
 - ▶ Phase 1: 5
 - ▶ Phase 2: 4
- ▶ Easements received: 33
 - ▶ Phase 1: 7
 - ▶ Phase 2: 4
- ▶ Easements still needed: 136
 - ▶ Phase 1: 13
 - ▶ Phase 2: 11

NBE-Cat2

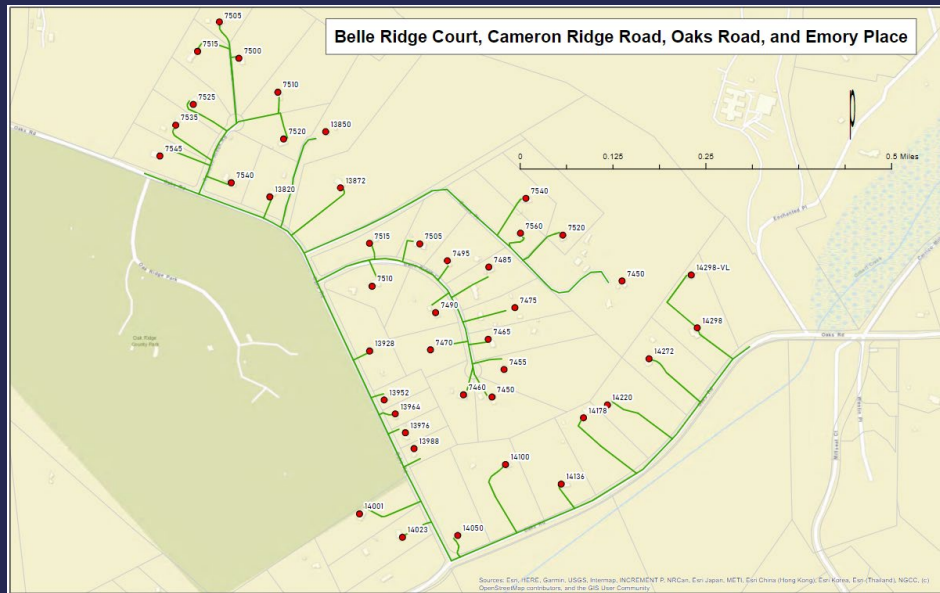
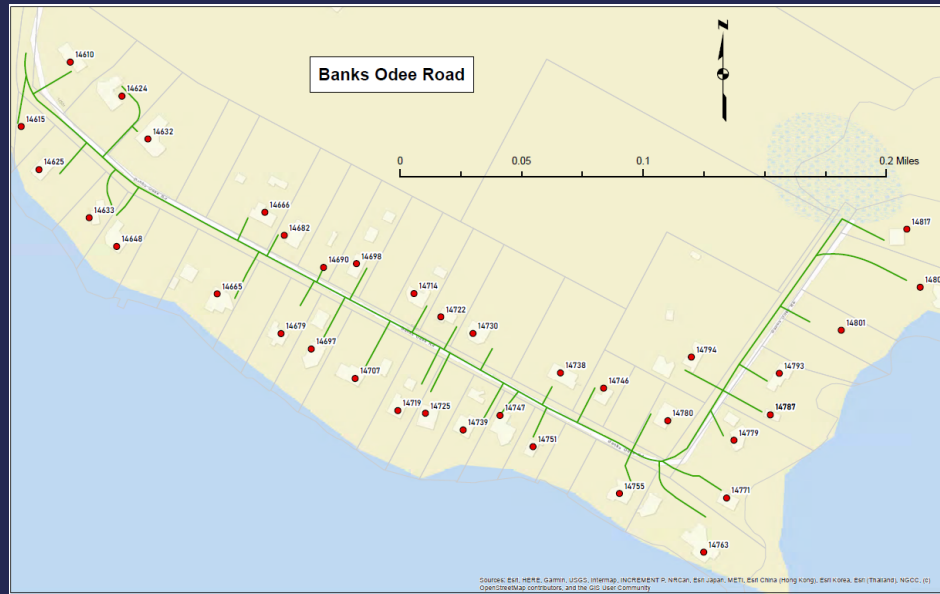
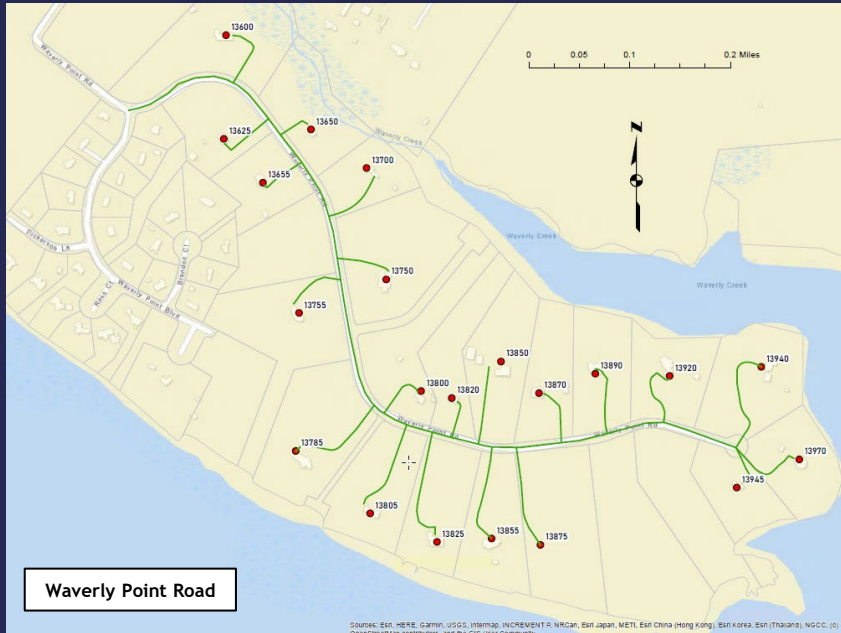
Current Projects

- ▶ Earlier this year, the County, partnering with Comcast, was awarded funding from the State to bring service to 151 homes in several Category 2 areas.
 - ▶ State contribution: \$617,294
 - ▶ Comcast contribution: \$178,715
 - ▶ County contribution: \$335,699 - BTR approved by Commissioners on May 4
- ▶ This project has been named Neighborhood Broadband Expansion - Category 2 (NBE-Cat2).
- ▶ The state grant indicates that the project must be completed by December 31, 2022.

Neighborhood Extension Grant Awards



NBE-Cat2 Current Projects



Additional Category 1 Areas

Potential Projects

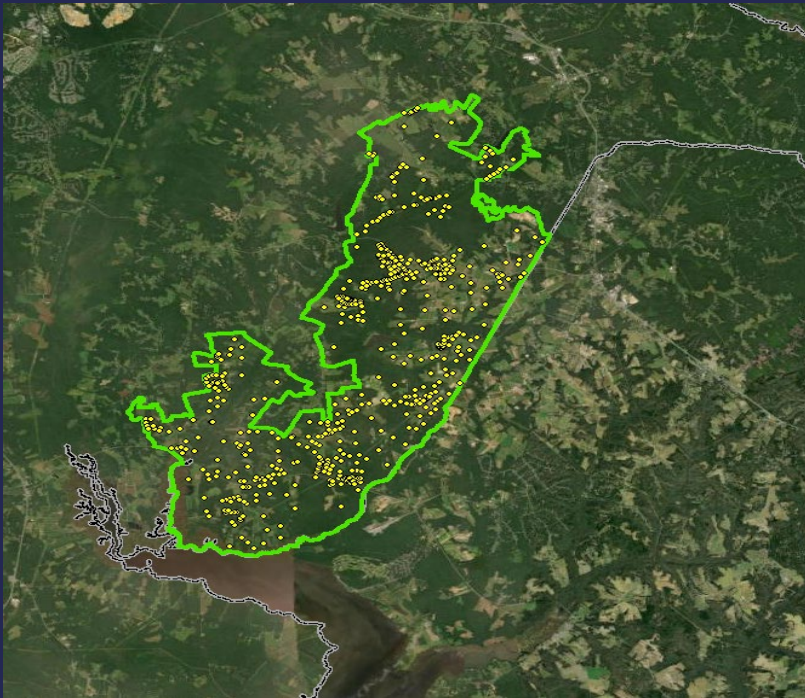
- ▶ Maryland State has opened up the Connect Maryland - FY22 Network Infrastructure Grant Program offering grants between \$1-10 million to provide broadband service to unserved areas.
- ▶ The program requires a cash or in-kind match of between 10% and 30% of the capital construction costs depending on the project.
- ▶ The County is working with our three (3) incumbent providers (Comcast, Verizon and ThinkBig) to explore possible partnerships in applying for this grant in order to serve our large Category 1 areas.
- ▶ Applications for this grant are due January 14, 2022.

Additional Category 1 Areas

Potential Projects

Charlotte Hall/Dentsville

570 properties



Nanjemoy Ridge

249 properties



Additional Category 2 Areas

Potential Projects

- ▶ Maryland State has opened up the Neighborhood Connect Broadband Grant program offering grants between \$50,000 to \$500,000 to provide broadband service to unserved areas.
- ▶ The program requires a cash or in-kind match of between 10% and 30% of the capital construction costs depending on the project.
- ▶ The County is working with two (2) of our incumbent providers (Comcast and Verizon) to explore possible partnerships in applying for this grant in order to serve Category 2 areas.
- ▶ Applications for this grant are due December 23, 2021.

Category 3 Grant

Potential Projects

- ▶ The County has developed a grant program to provide financial assistance to residents who are facing high costs to install service due to their “long driveways.”
- ▶ This program is called the Rural Broadband Installation Grant.
- ▶ The County has allocated a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for this grant program.
- ▶ Beginning today, residents can submit their information through our preliminary questionnaire: www.charlescountymd.gov/cat3grant

Rural Broadband Installation Grant Preliminary Questionnaire

Font Size: [+](#) [-](#) [Share & Bookmark](#) [Feedback](#) [Print](#)

If you live on a private driveway and running broadband to your home or business is cost prohibitive, please complete the following preliminary questionnaire.

Program Description - Please Read All

Charles County Government is piloting a new broadband grant program designed to help Charles County residents who live on lots with long driveways that require costly construction in order to get broadband service. The County plans to assist with funding for the construction of "service drops" to connect homes at the end of long, private driveways to the communications network on the road.

The County is establishing a pilot grant program to accept applications from Charles County residents. For those applications that are selected, the County will provide financial assistance to help with the service drop construction cost. It is important to note that in order for a Charles County resident to participate in this program, a service provider (Comcast, Verizon, or ThinkBig) must be present and able to provide service to your home AND be willing to partner with the County on this initiative.

The pilot program is intended to enable the County to assess the quantity of homes that cannot currently receive internet service due to a long driveway and to determine future funding needs that may not be wholly addressed with this initial pilot grant. The funding for the program is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

* Full Name

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>

* Physical Address of Property

<input type="text"/>	
<i>Street Number and Name</i>	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>City</i>	<i>State/Province/Region</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Postal/ZIP Code</i>	

* Mailing Address (if different from physical address)

<input type="text"/>	
<i>Street Number and Name</i>	
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Unit Number</i>	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>City</i>	<i>State/Province/Region</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Postal/ZIP Code</i>	

* Phone Number

* Email Address

* Preferred Method of Contact

- Phone
 Email

* Is broadband/internet service available in your area?

If yes, is it available at your home?

* Is this your primary residence?

* Do you own the property?

If you are a renter, have you contacted the landlord concerning access to broadband? Please note, if you are a renter, approval from the property owner will be required if the County moves forward to the application process.

* Have you contacted an internet service provider and received a preliminary estimate of the cost to install broadband?

If yes, what date did you receive the preliminary estimate?

What was the total estimate? Please attach a copy of the estimate below, if available.

200 characters

Installation Cost Estimate

<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="BROWSE..."/>	<input type="button" value="CLEAR"/>
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Disclaimer: Completing this application does not constitute funding your request. Additionally, this program does not pay for any subsequent monthly service fees once connection has been established.

Questions / Comments

November 30, 2021

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Charles County Government
200 Baltimore Street • La Plata, MD • 301-645-0550
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www.CharlesCountyMD.gov



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.