

From Unserved to Connected

Virginia's Leaders in Broadband Expansion

HIGHLIGHTING BROADBAND PROGRESS ACROSS VIRGINIA: PART TWO

The Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Office of Broadband continues to celebrate the Commonwealth's leaders in broadband expansion. Building on [Part One](#) of *From Unserved to Connected*, this installment highlights Shenandoah, Pittsylvania, Southampton, and Prince Edward counties, whose progress and partnerships have driven some of the Commonwealth's most significant broadband expansion efforts.* Together, localities participating in the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) helped connect more than 230,000 previously unserved locations between 2022 and 2025.

**Location data is sourced from the FCC Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric and reflects locations connected between December 2022 and December 2025.*

SHENANDOAH COUNTY

5,375 Locations Connected

As a largely rural area with remote communities, Shenandoah County has historically faced challenges to expand broadband service countywide. Through a landmark public-private partnership among the County, DHCD, and locally headquartered broadband provider Shentel, Shenandoah County has fundamentally reshaped its broadband landscape. This collaboration fueled a \$50 million infrastructure project, supported by multiple VATI awards, to extend gigabit-speed fiber to more than 7,100 previously unserved homes and businesses. By working with a partner deeply rooted in the community, Shenandoah County has overcome geographic challenges to bring high-speed internet to some of its most remote areas, including Fort Valley. Together, Shenandoah County, DHCD, and Shentel continue to make progress toward universal broadband coverage, laying the foundation for the County's future economic growth.



Fiber installation underway in Shenandoah County.

"For our residents, broadband has made the 'digital commute' a reality, allowing them to pursue global career opportunities through remote work while maintaining a high quality of rural life. Our small businesses and agricultural operations now possess the digital tools necessary to reach international markets, while our students and healthcare providers benefit from the reliable connectivity required for modern research and telehealth." –Doug Culler, Director of IT, Shenandoah County Public Schools

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

7,120 Locations Connected

Low population density and limited infrastructure have presented challenges to broadband access across Pittsylvania County's 978-square-mile rural footprint. In 2018, the County began accelerating broadband deployment through partnerships with Pittsylvania County Schools and RiverStreet Networks.

With support from VATI funding, the County has focused efforts on significantly expanding access to high-speed internet for residents and businesses, laying the foundation for greater access to education, healthcare, employment, and economic opportunities in key sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing. These efforts will position Pittsylvania County for greater long-term economic resilience and opportunity.



State, local, and industry partners break ground on a project to expand high-speed internet access.

"We have lived in the county for over 20 years and have never had fast or dependable internet until now. With the fast and consistent speeds that fiber to the home brings... I was even able to do a Zoom call with my mother in Florida. It was nice and clear, unlike previous times where it was pixelated and choppy. That was great to be able to do that!" –Victor Hardy, Pittsylvania County resident served by RiverStreet Networks

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY

4,730 Locations Connected

Southampton County has partnered with Charter Communications/Spectrum to implement a joint broadband project with the City of Suffolk and Isle of Wight County. This project, funded through VATI and administered by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, has brought new broadband service to almost 5,000 locations in the most rural parts of Hampton Roads. Charter Communications/Spectrum completed the project through underground fiber installation, going the extra mile to bring broadband service to homes and businesses in the community. As a result, fiber installations have nearly eliminated the need for hotspots and other internet additions for students, farmers, and business owners in these areas, demonstrating significant progress in providing reliable high-speed connectivity countywide.



Crews in Southampton County work to connect rural communities to reliable broadband.

With reliable connectivity, new agricultural processes in Southampton County are becoming possible, including persistent planting and GIS tracking of crop placement.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

4,021 Locations Connected

As a largely rural county, Prince Edward faced limited internet availability. In remote areas in particular, residents often relied on dial-up, satellite service, or slow DSL connections for internet access. Over the past decade, Prince Edward County has collaborated with private internet providers, regional partners, and state and federal broadband initiatives, including VATI, to expand reliable service throughout the county. In partnership with Planet Networks, Prince Edward is deploying fiber-optic broadband infrastructure to help extend high-speed internet access to the County's most rural and underserved areas. These efforts have improved access to telehealth services, making it easier for residents to connect to healthcare providers without traveling long distances. Students are also benefitting from increased connectivity through greater access to virtual learning and online educational resources. With significant expansion efforts already underway, Prince Edward County continues working toward the goal of providing universal broadband availability to its communities.



Planet Networks is deploying fiber-optic broadband to previously unserved homes and businesses.

Broadband expansion is improving daily life for residents of Prince Edward County. Communities are experiencing increased access to telehealth services, stronger public safety and emergency communications, increased access to virtual learning and remote employment opportunities, and improved ability to communicate day-to-day.

INTERESTED IN BEING FEATURED AS A **COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT?**

The Office of Broadband invites members of the Commonwealth to share recent accomplishments, news, or upcoming broadband or digital opportunity initiatives. Please submit your information by completing this form and emailing it to broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov.

**VIRGINIA
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