

2021 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) Program Guidelines and Criteria



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Background

The issue of rural telecommunications is not only one of technology; it is essential infrastructure for modern community and economic development. Many rural communities in Virginia evolved around industry sectors that have dramatically declined—rail, textile, manufacturing, and resource extraction to name a few. Broadband availability promotes sustainability and growth of communities by providing access to health care, particularly through the introduction of telemedicine, which improves the local workforce, provides increased educational opportunities through distance learning, and encourages an entrepreneurial economy where new and existing home-based and small businesses are able to compete globally.

Rural communities continue to struggle to retain existing businesses due to slow, sporadic, or limited broadband services. Since the vast majority of businesses rely on the internet to perform business functions such as online banking, e-commerce transactions (i.e. sales and on-line payment processing), market development (i.e. on-line ads, websites, bulk-email, etc.), customer service through on-line chat or emails and internal/external communication, broadband connectivity is vital to the performance of businesses of all sizes. Broadband has gone from being a luxury to a full participation necessity in the twenty-first century economy.

Additional guidance and questions regarding project development or about the VATI guidelines and criteria should be directed to:

Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D., Broadband Office Director

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(804) 371-7056

Tammy L. Breski, Telecommunications and Broadband Specialist

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Starting April 25, 2020:

Caroline Luxhoj, Telecommunications and Broadband Specialist

caroline.luxhoj@dhcd.virginia.gov

VATI email address

vati@dhcd.virginia.gov

Please refer questions regarding your application submittal through CAMS to Tammy L. Breski or Caroline Luxhoj.

Summary of Proposed Changes to the 2021 VATI Guidelines and Criteria

Allowable overlap

Based on prior rounds of VATI, staff is proposing different percentage of allowable overlap by project type.

- For a **wireline project**, a proposed project area is considered eligible if 10% or less of serviceable units have access to service with no additional special construction costs from any provider as of the date of the application.
- For a **wireless project**, a proposed area is considered eligible if 25% or less of serviceable units have access to service with no additional construction costs as of the date of the application.

Universal Coverage

Broadband universal service, or coverage, is referred to as ensuring all citizens have access to the internet. It is DHCD's goal that all VATI projects submitted are helping achieve universal coverage. DHCD encourages applicants to ensure all projects are fit into a larger plan to achieve universal broadband for the locality or region. Applicants are discouraged from submitting projects that focus on pockets of density while not including nearby unserved, less dense areas.

Project Financing

Consistent with VATI's enabling budget language (*Item 114L of the 2020 Appropriations Act*), the private co-applicant must contribute cash match to the total project cost. If the private co-applicant match is below 10% of total project cost, applicants must provide financial details demonstrating appropriate private investment.

Letter of Intent

Changed the Public notice requirement to a Letter of Intent. All applicants are required to issue a Letter of Intent detailing their intent to apply for VATI and submit to DHCD for posting on the VATI webpage. The sample letter is provided by DHCD.

Challenge Process

Evidence of serviceability must be demonstrated by showing a reasonable number of customers within the area of claimed serviceable units.

The following requirements have been added to the VATI challenge process:

- Planned service to a proposed project area is not eligible for the purpose of a challenge unless state or federal funds have been awarded and the provider has committed to providing service to the areas using these state or federal funds within 3 years.
- Areas adjacent to state or federally funded areas may be eligible for a challenge if the challenger can demonstrate existing awards would cover the adjacent area and fulfill the aforementioned requirements.
- Using the project area map submitted by the applicant, create a map indicating where the challenger's serviceable units are located in the proposed project area.

Implementation Deadline

- Changed the project completion timeline from 12 months to 18 months.
- DHCD will consider longer project timelines for larger project areas if applicants can sufficiently detail the reasoning for the extended timeline in their application.

Organizational and Management Capabilities

Private co-applicants that have not submitted a FCC Form 477 on previous years must provide additional documentation. Applicants must provide a detailed reason for not submitting, information on business background including but not limited to number of customers, overview or assets or equivalent information.

Evaluation Criteria

Based on the feedback during the debriefings from the 2020 VATI round, DHCD is sharing the application evaluation criteria during the 2021 guideline development stage.

Category	2020 Points	2021 Points
Demonstrated Need	100	100
Project Readiness	50	65
Budget and Cost Appropriateness	40	80
Commonwealth Priorities	15	55
Total	205	300

New evaluation criteria include the following:

- Moved marketing from **Demonstrated Need** category to **Project Readiness** category
- Added digital literacy efforts under **Project Readiness** category
- Changed locality assistance to ‘leverage’ under **Project Readiness** category
- Provided specific guidance on the **Commonwealth Priorities** category.

Program Description

Administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) enhances the sustainability and growth of communities throughout the Commonwealth by preparing those communities to build, utilize, and capitalize on telecommunications infrastructure. Consistent with the enabling budget language, DHCD will award \$34,725,000 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 to eligible applicants to provide last-mile services to unserved areas of the Commonwealth. A portion of the VATI funds are provided for administrative support of the program. DHCD reserves the right to award any amount to eligible grantees, depending entirely on the quality and quantity of applications received. Please note VATI funding is contingent upon final approval of the 2020-2022 Biennial budget by the General Assembly and may be subject to change.

The primary objective of VATI is to provide financial assistance to supplement construction costs by private sector broadband service providers, in partnership with local units of government to extend service to areas that presently are unserved by any broadband provider.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

DHCD has the legal authority with the following information contained in a public record and is exempt from the mandatory disclosure provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA): “information related to a grant application, or accompanying a grant application, submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development that would (i) reveal (a) trade secrets, (b) financial information of a grant applicant that is not a public body, including balance sheets and financial statements, that are not generally available to the public through regulatory disclosure or otherwise, or (c) research-related information produced or collected by the applicant in the conduct of or as a result of study or research on medical, rehabilitative, scientific, technical, technological, or scholarly issues, when such information has not been publicly released, published, copyrighted, or patented, and (ii) be harmful to the competitive position of the applicant.” Applicants wishing to receive FOIA exemption must submit a written request to DHCD and follow the FOIA policy, found on page 13.

Eligible Applicants

Applications must be submitted by a unit of government (Towns, Cities, Counties, Economic Development Authorities/Industrial Development Authorities, Broadband/Wireless Authorities, Planning District Commissions, School Divisions, etc.) with a private sector broadband provider as a co-applicant. Eligible projects must be owned and operated by the private sector co-applicant. Publicly owned networks are eligible for the program when partnered with a private sector co-applicant, so long as the private sector applicant is serving as the customer-facing internet service provider.

Selection Process

Awardees will be selected through a competitive application process. Application questions will be focused on the applicant's broadband needs as well as information for a shovel-ready project(s) needing financial assistance to supplement construction costs. The applicant must demonstrate a readiness to proceed with an awarded project in a timely manner by the required deadline.

Any modifications made to an awarded project will be subject to the VATI challenge process detailed on page 9 if a new project area has been added.

Technical Assistance

DHCD staff is available to provide technical assistance on the development of an application and during the challenge process to units of local government, internet service providers, grant writers, consultants, and all other VATI stakeholders. Please reach out to DHCD staff and consult the broadband toolkit available at www.commonwealthconnect.virginia.gov/broadband-toolkit prior to engaging a private consultant.

Universal Coverage

Governor Northam has set a goal for universal broadband coverage throughout the Commonwealth by 2028. To that end, DHCD encourages applicants to ensure all projects either achieve, or are part of, a plan to achieve universal broadband for the locality or region. Localities can find resources for developing a universal broadband plan on the Commonwealth Connect website at www.commonwealthconnect.virginia.gov/broadband-toolkit. Applicants are discouraged from submitting projects that focus on pockets of density while not including nearby unserved, less dense areas. This tactic, also known as cherry picking, hurts the economics of serving the remaining areas in your community and will ultimately make it more difficult and costly to get all Virginians access to broadband coverage.

Eligible Areas

DHCD will award funding to applicants to provide last-mile services, including middle-mile networks, equipment, or other investments required to deliver last-mile service to unserved areas of the Commonwealth. Unserved areas are defined as having broadband speeds at or below 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 1 Megabits (Mbps) upload. Applicants are discouraged from overbuilding served areas in proposed projects, as this will lower applicants' evaluations scores.

- For fiber projects – a proposed project area is considered eligible if 10% or less of serviceable units have access to service with no additional construction costs from a provider as of the date of the application.

- For fixed wireless projects - a proposed project area is considered eligible if 25% or less of serviceable units have access to service with no additional construction costs from a provider as of the date of the application.

Federal Funding

Applicants must do their due diligence to determine if their proposed VATI project area has in whole or in part been awarded federal broadband funds. These programs include, but are not limited to, Connect America Funds II (CAFII), ACAM, ReConnect and Community Connect. Projects with federal funds will be re-scoped to remove these area(s) out of the project. In the event the VATI co-applicant has been awarded federal broadband funds, they cannot use those funds as match. However, they are encouraged to leverage their federal award and apply for VATI funding to extend service to areas beyond those that were awarded federal funds.

On March 17, 2020 the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced eligible census blocks for the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). VATI applicants are encouraged to review the [Rural Digital Opportunity Fund \(RDOF\) eligible census blocks](#) and plan their VATI application accordingly. For VATI co-applicants planning to apply/bid for the same project area for both programs, you must detail your RDOF plans in the VATI application. In instances where RDOF census blocks have been awarded in VATI proposed project areas, RDOF funds will supersede VATI and the project must be re-scoped.

Contact DHCD staff for all questions regarding federal funds during project development.

Multiple Applications

An applicant must submit one application per service provider. This does not limit a service provider from submitting an application with more than one unit of local government. This also does not limit units of local government from submitting multiple applications with different service providers nor from including project areas that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

An applicant may include non-contiguous service areas in a single application. If designating more than one service area in a single application, each service area must be clearly delineated, and the required data and budget information must be provided by each service area.

Project Financing

VATI funding shall not exceed 80 percent of the total project cost. Applicants should note that the program is competitive however, and that those projects that bring greater match to the application are more likely to receive higher evaluations scores.

Consistent with VATI's enabling budget language, the private co-applicant must contribute cash match to the total project cost. If the private co-applicant match is below 10% of total project cost, applicants must provide financial details in their applications demonstrating appropriate private investment.

Letter of Intent

All applicants are required to issue a Letter of Intent detailing their intent to apply for VATI funding no later than Monday, July 13, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. Applicants must submit a copy of the Letter of Intent to DHCD at: vati@dhcd.virginia.gov. The sample letter of intent is located in Appendix A. Letters of Intent will be posted on DHCD's VATI webpage no later than Friday, July 17, 2020.

Challenge Process

Prospective challengers are *strongly encouraged* to contact applicants directly and discuss the contested project area before submitting a challenge as project areas can often be re-scoped to remove overlap. Evidence of serviceability must be demonstrated by showing a reasonable number of customers within the area of claimed serviceable units.

Planned service to a proposed project area is not eligible for the purpose of a challenge unless state or federal funds have been awarded and the provider has committed to providing service to the areas using these state or federal funds within 3 years. Areas adjacent to state or federally funded areas may be eligible for a challenge if the challenger can demonstrate existing awards would cover the adjacent area and fulfill the aforementioned requirements.

DHCD will post electronic copies of all submitted applications to the agency website within five business days after the August 17, 2020 application deadline. Providers wishing to submit a challenge must provide the information required in this section no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 23, 2020. Applicants will be notified if their proposed project area is being challenged and will have 15 business days from notification of a challenge to provide rebuttal information to DHCD.

Providers wishing to submit challenges on multiple applications must submit a separate challenge for each application. Challenges can be made to portions of a proposed project area without invalidating the entire project. DHCD reserves the right to invalidate a portion(s) of a proposed project area and aggregate challenges by different providers to determine percentage of serviceable units served in a proposed project area. Challengers must demonstrate that:

- For fiber projects - more than 10% of serviceable units in the project area have access to speeds above 10/1 mbps as of the date of the application.
- For wireless projects - more than 25% of serviceable units have access to service above 10/1 mbps as of the date of the application.

DHCD must receive all of the information detailed below or the challenge will be deemed incomplete and invalid. Challengers must provide:

1. A signed and notarized affidavit affirming the challenge and attached information is true.

2. Current Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477 or equivalent
3. Minimum/maximum speeds available in the proposed project area.
4. Number of serviceable units within the proposed project area. Provide the speeds those serviceable units are able to receive.
5. Street level data of customers receiving service within the proposed project area.
6. Using the project area map submitted by the applicant, create a map indicating where the challenger's serviceable units are located in the proposed project area.
7. Documentation of planned state or federal funding in or adjacent to the proposed project area and a signed commitment to serve the project area within 3 years.

DHCD will review all applicable challenge and rebuttal information to determine if a challenge is credible. DHCD reserves the right to request verified speed tests on all or portion(s) of the challenged area. DHCD reserves the right to re-scope any credibly challenged VATI application and fund portion(s) of a credibly challenged application. The Department shall notify the applicant and challenger in writing if a challenge is credible no later than 5:00pm on November 9, 2020.

Implementation Deadline

Applicants must demonstrate that projects will be completed within 18 months. The project timeline begins with the contract execution between the applicant and DHCD. DHCD will consider longer project timelines for larger project areas if applicants can sufficiently detail the reasoning for an extended timeline in their application. Applicants are encouraged to phase larger scale projects, and DHCD reserves the right to fund only a phase(s) of a project. Extensions are available for awarded projects that encounter delays due to circumstances outside of the applicants' control. Contact DHCD staff for all questions regarding project scope.

Organizational and Management Capabilities

To participate in VATI, applicants and co-applicants must demonstrate suitable organizational and management capabilities. To determine whether applicants meet this criterion, applicants and private sector partner(s), must submit the following documents and/or attest to each of the following:

1. Documentation that proposed project area is unserved based on VATI criteria
2. Private co-applicant must provide proof that they have filed an FCC Form 477 for two years prior to submission of application. If private co-applicant has not submitted an FCC Form 477 in previous years, the co-applicant must provide reasoning for not submitting, business background, number of customers, overview of assets, or equivalent information.
3. Projects must be fully-financed through a combination of the total requested VATI funds, committed matching funds from the applicants, and in-kind resources.
4. Private co-applicants must document current assets (i.e. total amount of available cash and equivalents, callable capital, in an amount no less than the proposed committed

funding or a commitment letter for financing) in the amount of match funds committed for the project at the time of application. Per VATTI's enabling budget language, the private co-applicant must contribute an appropriate level of match to the total project cost.

5. Applicants must be in good standing in performance of any and all existing Commonwealth of Virginia contracts and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws.

Proposal Due Date

Proposals are to be submitted by **11:59 p.m.** on August 17, 2020. Please note that DHCD offices close at 5:00 p.m. Therefore, staff will not be available to provide CAMS technical assistance after 5:00 p.m.

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Evaluation Criteria

Project Description and Need (Maximum of 100 points)

Describe the fundamentals of the project, including:

- Overview of the project area and how it was determined
- Amount of overlap from existing providers and how it was determined
- Number of serviceable units passed and the breakdown of those passings
- Internet speeds to be offered
- Network design

Project Readiness (Maximum of 65 points)

Describe the capacity to successfully implement the project, including:

- Breakdown of matching funds and in-kind resources
- Additional leverage to improve the project
- Marketing activities, including digital literacy efforts, to ensure a sufficient take rate
- Description of the project management plan, including key contacts, projected timeline, and history of managing similar projects/grants

Project Budget and Cost-Appropriateness (Maximum of 80 points)

Describe the project budget, including:

- Detailed project budget, including derivation of costs and documentation of cost estimates, delineated by each service area
- Information to calculate the Cost Benefit Index score

Commonwealth Priorities (Maximum of 55 points)

Describe how the project would reflect priorities of the Commonwealth, including:

- How the project fits into a larger plan for universal broadband coverage
- Passings of significant impact
- Unique partnerships involved in the project
- Digital equity efforts

Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) Freedom of Information (FOIA) Policy

Effective July 1, 2019

§ 2.2-3705.6:

(32) Information related to a grant application, or accompanying a grant application, submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development that would (i) reveal (a) trade secrets, (b) financial information of a grant applicant that is not a public body, including balance sheets and financial statements, that are not generally available to the public through regulatory disclosure or otherwise, or (c) research-related information produced or collected by the applicant in the conduct of or as a result of study or research on medical, rehabilitative, scientific, technical, technological, or scholarly issues, when such information has not been publicly released, published, copyrighted, or patented, and (ii) be harmful to the competitive position of the applicant. The exclusion provided by this subdivision shall only apply to grants administered by the Department, the Director of the Department, or pursuant to § 36-139, Article 26 (§ 2.2-2484 et seq.) of Chapter 24, or the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative as authorized by the appropriations act.

In order for the information submitted by the applicant and specified in this subdivision to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the applicant shall make a written request to the Department:

- a. Invoking such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought;*
- b. Identifying with specificity the data, information, or other materials for which protection is sought; and*
- c. Stating the reasons why protection is necessary.*

The Department shall determine whether the requested exclusion from disclosure is necessary to protect the trade secrets or confidential proprietary information of the applicant. The Department shall make a written determination of the nature and scope of the protection to be afforded by it under this subdivision.

Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) Freedom of Information (FOIA) Policy

All entities requesting Freedom of Information (FOIA) exemption for information pertaining to the VATI program shall submit the request for exemption in writing detailing the documentation to vati@dhcd.virginia.gov. DHCD FOIA exemptions do not extend to local government co-applicants. Only materials submitted to DHCD directly are subject to consideration for a FOIA-exemption. Pursuant to 2.2-3705.6-32, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will make a written determination within ten (10) days of the request as to whether FOIA-exemption will be afforded as well as the nature and scope of the protection. Upon receipt of the written determination from DHCD, documents must be submitted to vati@dhcd.virginia.gov. All exempted information will be securely maintained and accessed by VATI staff only.

Grant Applications

Consistent with VATI Guidelines, DHCD will continue to make available online submitted VATI applications. DHCD respects the right of the public to access to public information about the VATI program and encourages applicants to only request a FOIA-exemption when absolutely necessary. Applications submitted through CAMS must only include information that is open to the public. Applicants may request to submit supplementary information to the application that includes a FOIA-exemption, pursuant to “§ 2.2-3705.6” for information related to a grant application that may make the application more competitive. FOIA-exemption requests must be sent directly to vati@dchd.virginia.gov, and the applicant must indicate for which VATI application the information corresponds. Applicants wishing to submit multiple FOIA exemption requests for multiple VATI applications must do so individually in separate requests.

In order for the information submitted by the applicant and specified in this subdivision to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the applicant shall make a written request to the Department:

- a. Invoking such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought;*
- b. Identifying with specificity the data, information, or other materials for which protection is sought; and*
- c. Stating the reasons why protection is necessary.*

The Department shall determine whether the requested exclusion from disclosure is necessary to protect the trade secrets or confidential proprietary information of the applicant. The Department shall make a written determination of the nature and scope of the protection to be afforded by it under this subdivision.

Challenge Applications

Prospective challengers are strongly encouraged to contact applicants directly and discuss the contested project area before submitting a challenge. Many issues can be resolved without a formal challenge process.

Entities wishing to request FOIA exemption on information related to a VATI application challenge must submit any requested information directly to vati@dhcd.virginia.gov. Incumbents with information such as existing street level data in a proposed project area are required to submit a challenge. Challengers wishing to request exemption for multiple challenges must do so individually, in separate requests. Applicants who have received a challenge will be notified and may request FOIA exemption, pursuant to “§ 2.2-3705.6,” for information pertaining to their rebuttal.

In order for the information submitted by the applicant and specified in this subdivision to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the applicant shall make a written request to the Department:

- a. Invoking such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought;*
- b. Identifying with specificity the data, information, or other materials for which protection is sought; and*
- c. Stating the reasons why protection is necessary.*

The Department shall determine whether the requested exclusion from disclosure is necessary to protect the trade secrets or confidential proprietary information of the applicant. The Department shall make a written determination of the nature and scope of the protection to be afforded by it under this subdivision.

Grant Monitoring

Projects awarded VATI funds currently work with DHCD to monitor the completion and success of those projects. Entities wishing to request FOIA exemption on information relevant to evaluating the success of awarded projects, including take rate, must submit any requested information directly to vati@dhcd.virginia.gov

In order for the information submitted by the applicant and specified in this subdivision to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the applicant shall make a written request to the Department:

a. Invoking such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought;

b. Identifying with specificity the data, information, or other materials for which protection is sought; and

c. Stating the reasons why protection is necessary.

The Department shall determine whether the requested exclusion from disclosure is necessary to protect the trade secrets or confidential proprietary information of the applicant. The Department shall make a written determination of the nature and scope of the protection to be afforded by it under this subdivision.

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Definitions

Business – An organization or entity that provides goods or services in order to generate profit. Businesses based in the residential homes can count if they are a registered business (BPOL, LLC, etc.)

Challenge-a written objection of a proposed project area. The proposed project area encompasses a served area greater than the allowable percentage overlap at the prescribed VATI speeds or Federal or State funds have been committed for the proposed project area at the prescribed VATI speeds prior to the submission of the application. Please refer to the Challenge Process on page 9 for requirements.

Community Anchor - schools, libraries, medical and health care providers, public safety entities, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations and agencies that provide outreach, access, equipment, and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income, unemployed, and the aged.

Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) – A technology for bringing high-bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary copper telephone lines

Eligible Project Costs – Expenses eligible for reimbursement under the VATI grant

Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) – A network that delivers internet service over optical fiber directly to an end-user home, business, or other unit

Fixed Wireless – Wireless devices or systems that are situated in fixed locations

Hybrid Fiber Coaxial (HFC) – A broadband network combining optical fiber and coaxial cable

Last-Mile – Components of a network that provide broadband service to end-user premises or devices through an intermediate point of aggregation (e.g. remote terminal, fiber node, wireless tower, or other equivalent access point)

Middle-Mile – Network components that provide broadband service from one or more centralized facilities (e.g. the central office, the cable head-end, the wireless switching station, or other equivalent centralized facilities) to an Internet point of presence

Non-Residential Passing – Places of worship, federal, state, or local facilities or other potential customers that are neither a residence nor a business.

Passing – any structure that can receive service

Peak Interval - Weekdays from 7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. local time.

Served - Properties that currently have access to internet from a wireline or wireless facilities-based provider at speeds higher than 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 1 Mbps upload

Service Area – Refers to the geographic territory in which an applicant has proposed to provide service

Serviceable Units – Properties that are eligible for broadband service without additional special construction costs from the property owner/subscriber

Street Level Data – Address ranges or specific addresses from an existing provider along with the existing number of customers within those ranges. No personal information of specific customers will be requested

Take rate-The number of subscribers to a service-typically expresses in a percentage of those taking service divided by the total number of serviceable units

Unserved – Properties that currently have access to internet speeds at or below 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 1 Megabits (Mbps) upload

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List of Required Attachments

*All Attachments **MUST** be uploaded in PDF format

1. Map(s) of project area, including proposed infrastructure
2. Map(s) or schematic(s) of existing broadband providers (inventory of existing assets)
3. Documentation that proposed project area is not designated for Connect America Funding (CAF)
4. Documentation that proposed project area is unserved based on VATI criteria
5. Propagation Map if Wireless Project
6. Timeline/Project Management Plan
7. Documentation of relationship between applicant and co-applicant (formal or informal)
8. Letters of Support
9. Documentation for in-kind contributions, including value(s)
10. Funding Source Table
11. Derivation of Cost (Project Budget)
12. Documentation supporting project costs (e.g. vendor quotes)
13. Supporting documentation for costs estimates
14. Two most recent Form 477 submitted to FCC
15. Copy of Letter of Intent

Appendix A-Sample Letter of Intent

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**2021 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative
SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT FORMAT**

[Insert Date]

Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D
Director
Office of Broadband
Department of Housing and Community Development
600 East Main Street, Ste 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Dr. Holmes:

I am providing this Letter of Intent to notify the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development of **[insert name of unit of local government, and private provider (optional)]**'s intent to submit an application for the FY2021 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI).

[Name of unit of local government, organization] and [private provider (optional)] intends to submit an application requesting funding of **[anticipated grant amount to be requested]** for **[summary description of Project to be funded]** within **[proposed Project Area(s)]**.

[Name] will be our main point of contact for the purposes of the application process, and can be reached at:

[Mailing Address]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

[Name of applicant government, organization, or private provider (optional)] understands that this Letter of Intent is required in order to submit an application for the 2021 the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative and that this Letter of Intent to Submit is not binding on the entity represented by the undersigned, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

[Type the closing]

[signature]

Type the sender's name]

[Type the senders title]