



PUBLIC COMMENT NOTICE

Bath County intends to file a grant application with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) under its 2020 Virginia Telecommunications Initiative Program (VATI). In accordance with the VATI Program Guidelines, Bath County is requesting public comments as to its submission of a grant. The County is working in partnership with BARC Electric Cooperative and its subsidiary BARC Connects on a multi-jurisdiction project to provide broadband to unserved areas.

Bath County consists of 529 square miles of which 35% of the total area is unserved by broadband as identified in the Center for Innovative Technology's 2017 survey. The purpose of this grant application is to facilitate deployment of a gigabit last mile FTTp network to unserved businesses and residents in the county, as well as properties owned by the county or its affiliated public safety agencies. BARC Electric Cooperative and its subsidiary BARC Connects proposes to own the gigabit last-mile network; the network will be constructed by BARC Electric Cooperative through its subsidiary BARC Connects. BARC proposes to offer four levels of broadband speeds: 50mbps/10mbps, 100mbps/50mbps, 250mbps/125mbps, and 500mbps/250mbps.

In order to provide a record to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, comments should be addressed to Ashton Harrison, County Administrator for Bath County. The preferred methods of comment are in written form and would be by email to aharrison@bathcountyva.org or by letter sent to Ashton Harrison PO Box 309, 65 Courthouse Hill Road, Warm Springs, VA 24484. Public comment will be open from Tuesday, August 6, 2019 to Tuesday, August 27, 2019. A complete list of all the comments will be sent to DHCD.

DHCD will post electronic copies of all submitted applications to the agency website after the deadline for application submissions has passed and prior to project approval. Any private sector broadband service provider wishing to request that DHCD deem a proposed project area as ineligible for VATI grant funding must submit a challenge with the required information, found in the 2020 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative Program Guidelines and Criteria located on the DHCD website no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 9, 2019. DHCD will have 30 business days to validate a challenge.