

NEWS RELEASE

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Broadband Expansion Timeline Extended as Projects Surge, Causing Statewide Backlog

During its April 16, 2024, meeting, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors received an update on the progress of the county's rural broadband initiative that included a change in the timeline for completion of the project. The timeline has been extended from July 2024 to October 2025.

Loudoun County Department of Information Technology staff, who are overseeing the county's project, joined representatives from Dominion Energy Virginia (DEV) and All Points Broadband (APB), which is contracted by the county to construct a broadband network in western Loudoun as part of the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) that awarded Loudoun a more than \$17.5 million grant. The project's funding sources also include \$12.4 million in Loudoun's America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, and \$20 million contributed by APB.

The project includes construction of fiber to 8,629 Loudoun addresses that are not currently served by a wired provider. The first homes within the project scope are expected to have access to broadband later this year. All homes within the scope of the VATI project are now expected to have broadband access by October 2025. Potential customers will be notified about 90 days prior to service availability for their residence. Eligible residents may choose to pay a connection fee to access the service for a fee of \$199.

About the Delay

The 15-month extension is a result of heavy demand for utility pole attachment approvals and middle-mile construction during the prior two years as other Virginia localities also pursue broadband projects via the VATI initiative. Nearly half of the 2022 VATI projects in Virginia are experiencing a delay.

Contractors working on broadband expansion must submit applications to attach to existing utility poles owned by DEV and the Northern Virginia Electrical Cooperative (NOVEC). Prior to the 2022 VATI awards, the applications to attach to Dominion utility poles totaled about 10,000 statewide. Dominion received requests for approximately 125,000 poles in 2023; APB will submit applications for 13,000 Dominion and NOVEC poles in Loudoun alone.

It is not possible to predict when each Loudoun home within the scope of the project will gain access to broadband connections because the project's timeline and orders for last-mile connections are difficult to forecast beyond 90 days in advance. Before APB deploys workers to connect broadband from the utility poles to homes for service, it requires a significant number of utility pole attachment

approvals in linear sequence by Fiber Service Area. The work is being completed throughout the county and connections to homes will be delivered on a rolling basis.

Registration Remains Open

Residents may determine whether their address is included in the project area [on the APB website](#). Interested residents may receive additional updates from APB by subscribing to updates from APB on its website. Registration does not commit any resident to purchase broadband service.

More information about the project is posted online at loudoun.gov/broadbandexpansion.

Video

- Watch the April 16, 2024, [staff presentation about broadband expansion](#).

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