



Supervisor Tony Buffington
Blue Ridge District
NewsFlash



Loudoun's VATI Grant Application Approved for Submission!

**A Real Chance to Connect the Remaining 8,800 Un and
Underserved Western Loudoun Residents & Businesses...**

Sent: July 21, 2021



Loudoun Broadband Access ~~Could~~ ^{WILL} Extend West!!!

Loudoun's VATI Grant Application Moves Forward!

During last night's July 20th Board Meeting, my colleagues and I unanimously voted to direct the County Administrator to submit Loudoun's Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) grant application in partnership with All Points Broadband for the extension of broadband into the remaining un and underserved portions of western Loudoun County.

To make our application strong and provide the highest chance of grant approval from Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development, Loudoun County allocated \$12.425 million of our recently received American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

This VATI grant application provides a real opportunity to combine state, federal, and private investment in order to provide real last mile fiber-to-the-home broadband connections to the approximately 8,800 remaining un and unserved homes and businesses throughout western Loudoun! And it does so without affecting the local tax rate

as the \$12.425 million from Loudoun comes from recent federal funding and not our local tax dollars.

I want to thank county staff for their hard work on this and several other initiatives to connect western Loudoun to real high speed broadband internet services! I also want to thank Supervisor Kershner and the rest of my colleagues for their continued support of our efforts to ensure connections for every western Loudoun resident and business owner. But most of all, I would like to thank the many Blue Ridge District residents, business owners and organizations who have and continue to email the Board of Supervisors and speak publicly at Board meetings in support of these efforts.

County staff will continue working hard to maintain the positive momentum that our VATI Grant Application has gained as we move through the below listed milestones:

Table 1. Key FY 2022 VATI Application Milestones

May 17	Public Comment Period on Draft Guidelines Closes
June 4	DHCD releases Final Guidelines for the FY 2022 VATI Round
July 27	Notice of Applications Due
August 3	DHCD Posts Notices of Application on VATI website
September 14	Applications Due
September 21	DHCD Posts Applications on VATI Website
October 21	Application Challenges Due
October 28	DHCD Notifies Challenged Applicants
November 18	Deadline for Challenge Rebuttals
December 3	DHCD Notifies All Parties of Challenge Determination
Late December	Anticipated Announcement of Awards

Access to the internet is no longer a convenience. It has become a necessity and should long ago have been classified a "utility" by our state and federal governments. Unfortunately, they have yet to accomplish this much needed action.



According to the 2020 National Community Survey for Loudoun County, six of ten respondents designated increased broadband access as either essential or very important to them.

Therefore, ensuring high speed broadband access for western Loudoun residents and businesses remains a top priority for my office.

Additional Emergency Broadband Implementation Plan updates were provided by County staff in their quarterly report to the Board, available [here](#).

All our best!

Tony Buffington
Blue Ridge District Supervisor
tony.buffington@loudoun.gov

Rachael Holmes
Chief of Staff
rachael.e.holmes@loudoun.gov

Robin Bartok
Legislative Aide
robin.w.bartok@loudoun.gov

Christi Maple
Legislative Aide
christi.maple@loudoun.gov

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Blue Ridge District | 1 Harrison Street, S.E. 5th Floor, PO Box 70000, Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

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