Broadband Expansion to all Residents Closer to Becoming a Reality

The Gloucester County Board of Supervisors recently allocated $2 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to expand broadband internet to unserved residents, bringing Gloucester another step closer to providing access to the entire community. The service will be provided by the County's partner in the project, Open Broadband, LLC and will utilize a fixed wireless system.

The project is designed to provide broadband service throughout the County. There are approximately 2,500 unserved structures in the County and the funding, along with a Virginia Telecommunications Initiative Grant currently underway will mean that everyone in the County will have access to Broadband. Cox Communications provides service to approximately 86% of the County.

The US Treasury Department requires that ARPA funds used on broadband deliver 100/100 Mbps capacity or 100/20 Mbps and scalable to 100 where geographic limitations are in place. That level of service allows streaming and other popular uses of broadband. The fixed wireless technology allows signals to travel through the air from towers that are connected to the internet by fiber to small receivers placed at the homes or businesses. This type of technology is excellent at reaching structures that are in remote locations. The County will allow the use of its towers and rooftops for broadband equipment and the Gloucester School Board recently voted to explore a contract with Open Broadband for use at its facilities as well.

"This funding will allow the County to reach our ultimate goal of making broadband internet available to all residents and businesses in Gloucester County," said Carol Steele, Gloucester's Acting County Administrator. "This project will not only directly impact our residents in a material way but will also continue to show the region that Gloucester is an economically viable town to live and conduct business in."

Residents or businesses interested in receiving service from Open Broadband should visit www.openbb.net/gloucesterco to sign up with no obligation. The company will contact those who have signed up once the service becomes available. Those who register will receive monthly e-mail updates with the progress of the project.

For overall information and updates regarding all of Gloucester County's broadband initiatives, visit the Broadband Information Hub at https://gloucester-broadband-gcgis.hub.arcgis.com/ or contact Steele at 804-693-4042 or csteele@gloucesterva.info.

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