



PUBLIC COMMENT NOTICE

The Bedford County Broadband Authority intends to file a grant application with Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VHCD) under its 2019 Virginia Telecommunications Initiative Program (VATI). In accordance with the VATI Program Guidelines, the Bedford County Broadband Authority is requesting public comments as to its submission of a grant. The Authority solicited proposals through the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002 and through this process selected Blue Ridge Towers as its private partner and accordingly, this grant will be on behalf of the Authority and its private partner, Blue Ridge Towers, LLC.

Bedford County consist of 764 square miles, over 50% of the area is unserved or underserved by broadband as identified in the Center for Innovative Technology's 2016 survey. The purpose of the public-private partnership of the Bedford County Broadband Authority and Blue Ridge Towers is to achieve the goal of having 97% of the County served by broadband. The partnership with Blue Ridge Towers (BRT) will result in nine towers that are constructed on properties owned by the County, or related agencies (the Bedford County School System and the Bedford Regional Water Authority) or its affiliated public safety agencies. The Bedford County Broadband Authority proposes to own the towers; the towers will be constructed by Blue Ridge Towers and Blue Ridge, through its subsidiary, Briscnet, LLC, will be a wireless internet service provider on the erected towers as well as three vertical assets current owned by the County or a related agency. Additionally, BRT will install nearly 21 miles of 48 strand fiber and will manage and maintain the towers for the Authority for a period of no less than five years. Briscnet will provide internet service via the 900 mhz and 5800mhz unlicensed spectrum. Briscnet proposes to offer four levels of broadband speeds: 15mbps/3 upload, 30mbps/3 upload, 50mbps/5 upload and 75mbps/5 upload

In order to provide a record to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, comments should be addressed to G. Carl Boggess, County Administrator for Bedford County. The preferred methods of comment would be by email to publiccomment@bedfordcountyva.gov or by letter sent to G. Carl Boggess 122 E. Main St., Suite 202, Bedford, VA 24523. Comment will also be received by telephone (540) 425-9003. These comments will be recorded. Public comment will be open from Thursday, November 15, 2018 to Friday, December 14, 2018. A complete list of all of the comments will be sent to VHCD.

DHCD will post electronic copies of all submitted applications to the agency website after the deadline for application submissions has passed and before project approval. Any private sector service provider wishing to request that DHCD deem a proposed project area as ineligible for VATI must submit a challenge with the information required in this section no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 15, 2019. DHCD will have 30 business days to validate a challenge.