

Application for CARES Act Funding to Fast Track Broadband

Applicant Information:

1. City/County of: Augusta County
2. Completed by: Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator
3. Primary Point of Contact: Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator, jwhetzel@co.augusta.va.us, 18 Government Center Lane, Verona, VA 24482, 540-245-5610
4. Date: 11/16/20

Project Information:

1. Type of project seeking funding: [broadband infrastructure/broadband affordability/middle mile infrastructure/education/telehealth/other]

The proposed project includes both a last-mile Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) component and the deployment of middle-mile fiber infrastructure. The area being targeted for this project is extremely rural and many of the last-mile service drops are near (or over) 1,000 feet. The projects includes approximately 24,712 linear feet of middle-mile fiber and 24,550 linear feet of last-mile fiber cable, which will be installed from an existing fiber facility to a new fiber node. This new fiber node has the capacity of serve no less than 288 FTTH customers, however, due to the length of the drops in this area, we have included 36 FTTH drops to be completed with CARES Act funding. The remaining FTTH drops will be installed with other funding, primarily private funding provided by the ISP. Each of these components have been designed to enable broadband services to the rural residents, students, teleworkers, and other businesses/farms located within the planned coverage area.

2. Number of households to be served:

The last-mile FTTH solution included in this project was engineered to provide broadband to **36** rural residents, students, teleworkers, and other businesses/farms located along the planned fiber route. The middle-mile fiber that will enable these FTTH connections will pass through other areas that will have access to the fiber, however, due to the rurality and average length of the service drops, plus the timeline associated with "Fast Track Broadband" program- we felt it most appropriate to only include the 36 locations that are targeted to receive FTTH right away.

3. Maximum Deployment Speed(s) available, including package tier offerings:

All locations passed with fiber shall have all of Lingo Networks' standard fiber packages available to them, and other custom speed packages up to a Gig is available upon request.

SILVER: 50/10	GOLD: 100/20	PLATINUM: 200/40
\$59.99	\$69.99	\$99.99

** a typical non-symmetrical Gig package is \$249*

4. Total Project cost: \$416,722 (Request \$333,377.60 in CARES Fast Track Broadband Funding)

5. Match funding or in-kind resources

Local Investment	\$41,672.20
Private Investment	\$41,672.20

6. Project partners or subcontractors (if known):

Lingo Networks, LLC	Internet Service Provider
ER Excavating & Utilities, LLC	Subcontractor
Andrews Communications	Subcontractor

7. Projected project completion date:

The scope of the project includes 4-6 weeks of work, including the installation of fiber, establishment of the new broadband distribution facilities (fiber node), and servicing these rural customers. Options to expedite certain portions of the scope exist if needed (additional, on-call contractor listed above), and we are anticipating service to be activated and available no later than Dec. 15th.

Project Narrative:

1. What problem does this project seek to solve:

The proposed project will provide a last-mile broadband connection to any un-/under-served household, farm, or business in the project area that can receive service. This is an extremely rural area of the County with limited to no broadband ISP options. The project will provide broadband services to a minimum of 36 existing customers of the ISP which do not have broadband available today.

The middle-mile component will provide long-term, robust infrastructure to support the locations listed in this proposed project and many other fiber-to-the-home connections in the future.

Augusta County's 2016 Broadband Telecommunications Strategic Plan identified wireline or fiber as a solution for this area.

2. Describe how your broadband project will facilitate distance learning, telehealth and telemedicine services or increase telework capabilities in response to COVID-19 public health precautions. Generally, describe the nature and extent of the project:

This project will narrow the digital divide in this rural area of Augusta County by providing the broadband connectivity necessary for residents and students to effectively utilize telework, telehealth, telemedicine, and other internet-based resources and platforms. Lingo Networks has received countless service inquiries in this area, which get stored in an "Interested Customer List" which they use to strategically identify potential project areas. Almost all the inquiries received from this project area were related to general broadband availability and the need for higher speeds to work and learn from home due to the COVID-19 public health precautions implemented by employers and all levels of educational institutions. Lingo Networks continues to go above and beyond to get service to remote unserved areas, and this project will target an area that has historically been very difficult to provide adequate service for

both topographic and financial reasons. This rural broadband project would be a huge step forward for expanding broadband coverage in Augusta County and meeting the Commonwealth's goal of universal broadband coverage.

The students in Augusta County Public Schools attend school two days each week, with three days for virtual learning in between. There are many students who are without access to the internet and rely on the internet services at the school, local businesses or friends. This project will assist households with students by providing better access to the internet to complete their lessons. Two of the 36 households completed the 2019 County survey, both noted that they did not have internet access and one indicated K-12 students in the household. County business license records show four of the 36 households have a home based business.

3. What will funds be used to purchase or construct:

ITEM/PRODUCT	COST
24,712 linear feet of middle-mile fiber (\$7/ft)	\$172,984
24,550 linear feet of last-mile fiber (\$7/ft)	\$171,850
Fiber Distribution Facilities (CO-side)	\$39,098
Fiber Network Technicians & Splicing	\$6,700
Fiber Distribution Facilities (peds, splice closures, etc.)	\$4,715
Road Boring	\$6,000
Pole Attachment Engineering & Permitting	\$500
CPE Equipment	\$12,250
Network Technician/CPE Installs	\$2,625
TOTAL	\$416,722

4. Will this project be self-sustaining or will future funding be required from sources other than local revenues. If so, describe plans to acquire those funds:

The broadband services generated by this project are not only self-sustaining but have been designed to be scalable to allow for both increased throughput (speed) and subscriber capacity (more people connected). For example, the new fiber node will have the capacity of serving a minimum of 288 FTTH customers. Locations passed by the middle-mile component of this project, but not specifically targeted due to the timeline associated with the CARES Act funding, will have broadband access available to them. Any FTTH connection beyond the 36 listed in this proposal will be provided by the ISP utilizing private funding.

5. Upon completion of this project, provide metrics detailing the efficacy of the project, including but not limited to:

a. Number of households and businesses benefitting from the project:

This FTTH project is specifically targeting 36 unserved locations. We anticipate all targeted locations to sign-up for a fiber connection. Of those 36, we estimate that no less than 5 are farms (or home-based businesses) and while there is no data to support how many households have people working or running a business from home, we estimate that no less than 25 households require broadband for income-related reasons. In addition, 100% of any households with school-age children or children attending

Augusta County Public School System, require a broadband connection for their distance learning (virtual learning) curriculum.

b. For projects addressing affordability only, number of remaining unconnected households due to lack of ability to pay for service students, whether through lack of access to broadband infrastructure or lack of ability to pay for service:

The proposed project was not designed to address affordability only, but Lingo Networks pricing is very affordable and they have been working with the leaders in our public school system to get service to those who may not have access or be able to afford access or service.

6. Please provide any other relevant project information:

Lingo Networks has spent a great deal of time speaking with farmers and landowners in the project area with the goal of engineering & preparing a project that would provide a fiber connection to County resident's by Dec. 25th. The middle-mile portion traverses mainly through large parcels of farm land, while the last-mile fiber extends broadband service into an unserved mountain community.

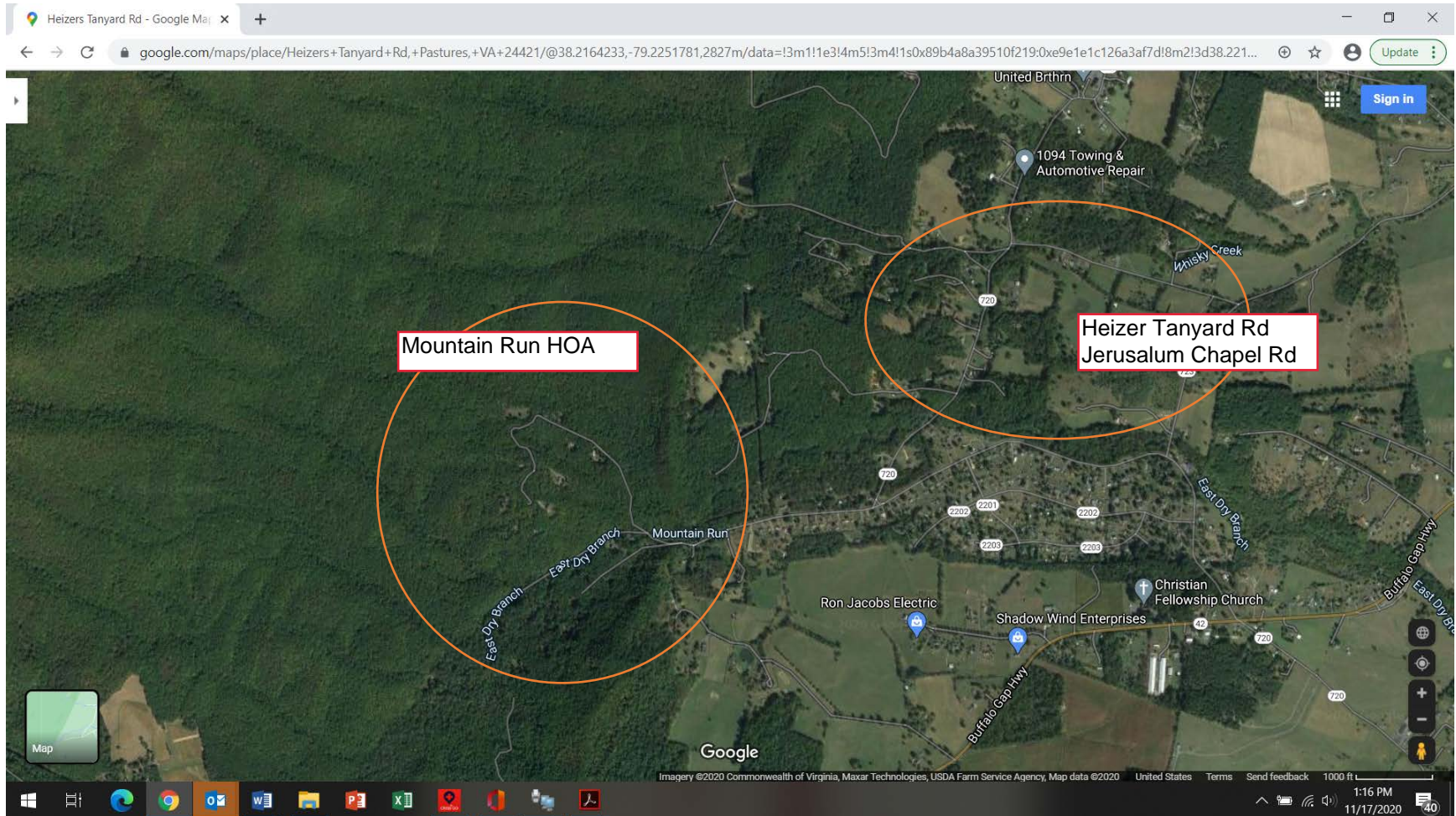
Augusta County and Lingo Networks have verified that this project does not overlap with the FY21 VATI Application submitted to DHCD in August 2020 by the County and same partnering provider.

Attachment A – Map of project area

Attachment B – MOU/Contribution Agreement

Attachment C – Certification for Receipt of Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments

Attachment A - Map of FTTH Project Area



Memorandum of Understanding

This agreement is made on _____, _____ between **Lingo Networks**, 29 N Central Ave, Staunton, VA 24401 (“Company”), and the **County of Augusta**, Virginia, Attn: County Administrator’s Office, 18 Government Center Lane, P.O. Box 590, Verona, Virginia 24482 (“County”).

RECITALS:

- A. Whereas, the Governor of Virginia is allocating \$30 million in CARES Act funding to Fast Track Broadband; and
- B. Whereas, the primary objective of the funding is to address the need to increase broadband connectivity for distance learning and telework as a result of the public health emergency; and
- C. Whereas, applications must be submitted by a locality with a private sector provider(s) as a co-applicant; and
- D. Whereas, the County has completed a Broadband Telecommunications Strategic Plan and issued a notification seeking Internet Service Providers to partner with the County to submit an project for the CARES Act funding; and
- E. Whereas, Lingo Networks submitted a project for broadband deployment solutions in the County, for 36 Fiber-to-the-Home connections, fiber node installation (capacity for 288 customers) and middle-mile fiber installation; and
- F. Whereas, the County and New Hope Telephone Cooperative will partner for a grant application for the CARES Act funding, requesting 80% grant funds of \$333,377.60.

NOW, therefore, the parties agree that they will uphold the following responsibilities:

THE COUNTY:

- 1. The County will formulate and submit an application for the CARES Act funding based on the project and information provided by the Lingo Networks; and
- 2. The County will draft a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the responsibilities for each party; and
- 3. The County will execute a Certification for Receipt of Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments; and
- 4. The County will contribute a local match of 10% of project costs or \$41,672.20; and
- 5. The County will manage the CARES Act requirements with Commonwealth Connect, including, but not limited to progress reports and funding draws.

THE COMPANY:

- 6. The Company will provide the County required information for the management of the CARES Act funding grant, including, but not limited to progress reports and monthly invoices; and
- 7. The Company will provide the required documents to the County for zoning and permit applications, if required; and
- 8. The Company will design, engineer, construct and implement broadband services as designated in the CARES Act funding application by the construction deadline of December 25, 2020; and
- 9. The Company will contribute a local match of 10% of project costs or \$41,672.20; and
- 10. The Company will guarantee that the standard bandwidth offerings for the projects will be a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload; and

CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

THIS CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT (“Agreement”) is entered into as of the 6th day of November, 2020, by and between the **COUNTY OF AUGUSTA, VIRGINIA**, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia (the “County”) and the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA**, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia (the “Authority”).

RECITALS:

- A. The County is authorized pursuant to § 15.2-953 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, to make gifts, donations and appropriations of money to economic development authorities for the purposes of promoting economic development.
- B. Whereas, the Governor of Virginia is allocating \$30 million in CARES Act funding to Fast Track Broadband, with the primary objective of the funding is to address the need to increase broadband connectivity for distance learning and telework as a result of the public health emergency.
- C. The County was awarded grant(s) for a project(s) within the County.
- D. The County hereby acknowledges and agrees that the expansion of broadband services would foster and promote the economic development of the County and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- E. The County hereby agrees to contribute the total of the Fast Track Broadband grant(s) to the Authority.
- F. The Authority hereby agrees that it is the Authority’s responsibility to pay the County contribution to the Provider(s).
- G. The disbursement of the Contribution Amount is necessary if the Provider(s) is to proceed with completing the grant project(s).

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the County and the Authority do hereby agree as follows:

1. **Recitals.** The recitations set forth in the foregoing recitals are material to this Agreement and are hereby incorporated into and made a part of this Agreement as though they were fully set forth in this Section 1 and constitute the representations and understandings of the County and the Authority according to the tenor and import thereof.
2. **County Commitments.** The County is committed to disburse to the Authority the Contribution Amount as and when appropriated by the County, for the Company’s explicit

COUNTY OF AUGUSTA, VIRGINIA, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia

By: 
Gerald Garber, Chairman
Augusta County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:


Clerk of the Board

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia

By: B. Randolph Roller Digitally signed by B. Randolph Roller
Date: 2020.11.05 11:29:30 -05'00'
B. Randolph Roller, Chairman

ATTEST:

Nick Grow Digitally signed by Nick Grow
Date: 2020.11.05 11:46:09 -05'00'
Secretary of the Authority

**CERTIFICATION for RECEIPT of
CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND PAYMENTS**

by




AUGUSTA COUNTY

We the undersigned represent **AUGUSTA COUNTY**
(the locality), and we certify that:

1. we have the authority to request direct payment on behalf of the locality from the Commonwealth of Virginia of revenues from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) pursuant to section 601(b) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136, div. A, Title V (Mar. 27, 2020).
2. we understand that the Commonwealth of Virginia will rely on this certification as a material representation in making a direct payment to the locality.
3. the locality 's proposed uses of the funds received as direct payment from the Commonwealth of Virginia under section 601(b) of the Social Security Act will be used only to cover those costs that:
 - a. are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
 - b. were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020, for the locality; and
 - c. were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.
4. any funds that are not expended or that will not be expended on necessary expenditures on or before December 30, 2020, by the locality or its grantee(s), must be returned to Commonwealth of Virginia no later than December 30, 2020, and that the Commonwealth of Virginia is entitled to invoke state aid intercept to recover any such unexpended funds that have not been returned to the Commonwealth within 30 days of December 30, 2020.
5. we understand that the locality will not receive continued funding beyond December 30, 2020, from any source to continue paying expenses or providing services that were initiated or previously supported from CRF funds prior to December 30, 2020.
6. funds received as a direct payment from the Commonwealth of Virginia pursuant to this certification must adhere to official federal guidance issued or to be issued regarding what constitutes a necessary expenditure.
7. any CRF funds expended by the locality or its grantee(s) in any manner that does not adhere to official federal guidance shall be returned to the Commonwealth of Virginia within 30 days of a finding that the expenditure is disallowed, and that the Commonwealth of Virginia is entitled to invoke state aid intercept to recover any and all such funds that are not repaid within 30 days of a finding that the expenditure is disallowed.
8. as a condition of receiving the CRF funds pursuant to this certification, the locality shall retain documentation of all uses of the funds, including but not limited to payroll time records, invoices, and/or sales receipts. Such documentation shall be produced to the Commonwealth of Virginia upon request.
9. the locality must maintain proper accounting records to segregate these expenditures from those supported by other fund sources and that all such records will be subject to audit.

10. any funds provided pursuant to this certification cannot be used as a revenue replacement for lower than expected revenue collections from taxes, fees, or any other revenue source.
11. any CRF funds received pursuant to this certification will not be used for expenditures for which the locality has received funds from any other emergency COVID-19 supplemental funding (whether state, federal, or private in nature) for that same expense nor may CRF funds be used for purposes of matching other federal funds unless specifically authorized by federal statute, regulation, or guideline.

We certify that we have read the above certification and our statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of our knowledge.

By: Gerald W. Garber	By: Timothy K. Fitzgerald	By: Misty D. Cook
Signature: 	Signature: 	Signature: 
Title: Chairman	Title: County Administrator	Title: Finance Director
Date: 11/4/2020	Date: 11/4/2020	Date: 11/4/2020