Virginia Tobacco Commission:
Funding Revitalization and Innovation in the Tobacco Region

Featured Broadband Providers in the Tobacco Region

1. Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative
   Riverstone Technology Park
   1100 Confroy Drive, Box 4
   South Boston, VA 24592

2. Bristol Virginia Utilities
   15022 Lee Highway
   Bristol, VA 24202

3. LENOWISCO Planning District Commission
   372 Technology Trail Lane, Suite 101
   Duffield, VA 24244

4. Buggs Islands Telephone Cooperative
   100 Nellie Jones Road
   Bracey, VA 23919

5. Citizens Telephone Cooperative
   220 Webbs Mill Road
   Floyd, VA 24091

6. Scott County Telephone Cooperative
   121 Woodland Street
   Gate City VA 24251
The Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) provides the leadership and technology infrastructure necessary to assist in the economic revitalization efforts of Southern Virginia by providing high-capacity optical transport services on MBC’s 800+ mile regional and long-haul network from Atlanta, GA to Washington, DC.

MBC’s History

MBC got started with a $6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA). This grant was matched by the Virginia Tobacco Commission (VTC). The Commission eventually invested $34 million to enable the completion of the MBC network.

Expanding the MBC Network

In 2010, MBC was awarded two federal broadband stimulus grants. These grants will enable MBC to provide fiber connectivity to 121 K-12 schools in Southern Virginia that do not presently have access to a fiber network. MBC will also be able to build 170 new miles of fiber backbone into rural communities of Eastern Virginia.

The VTC has continued to generously support MBC’s economic development mission. In 2009, they provided funding for a “GigaPark” branding initiative. GigaParks are business and industrial parks located in the southern and southwestern regions of Virginia with access to advanced broadband connections. Additional VTC funds have allowed for marketing and advertising of the GigaParks, including signage at each park.

Last-Mile Broadband Projects

Since 2009, the VTC has funded two last-mile 50/50 matching grant programs, administered by MBC. The grants, totaling $2,264,143, were awarded to seven MBC member companies. These grants leveraged an additional $2.6 million in private sector capital, enabling over 19,460 residential and business customers in various Southern Virginia areas to have access to high-speed Internet services.

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BVU Authority

BVU Becomes Municipal Broadband Pioneer. BVU Authority is a public utility company in Southwest Virginia that had the foresight more than 10 years ago to invest in fiber-optic telecommunications technology as a way to impact the economic future of the communities it served. In fact, it was BVU’s pioneering spirit that enabled the company to become the first municipal entity in the country to offer the triple play of cable, phone and broadband services over an all-fiber-optic network. Little did its leadership know that BVU would gain international notoriety when – sparked by Virginia Tobacco Commission (VTC) funding and interest from local legislators, governments and economic development groups – the utility expanded its broadband infrastructure 900 miles into eight neighboring counties. That network – called OptiNet and CPC OptiNet in four of the counties – now provides fiber-optic speeds of up to 1 Gbps (gigabit per second) to customers in the city of Bristol and the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington and Wythe, positioning Southwest Virginia for unprecedented economic growth.

VTC Funds and Leverages OptiNet Growth. Monetary grant awards of nearly $40 million from the Virginia Tobacco Commission since 2003 have helped to fund the existing 900-mile OptiNet infrastructure. But, just as important, the VTC also provided needed leverage to attract an additional $6 million from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration to build CPC OptiNet – a broadband partnership BVU established with Cumberland Plateau Company to serve businesses in the counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell.

OptiNet Begins Middle-Mile Expansion. As recently as July 2010, the VTC continued its support of OptiNet by providing another $5 million, facilitating acquisition of a Recovery Act grant of $22 million from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. The monies go toward construction of 388 miles of middle-mile fiber into seven of OptiNet’s rural counties. This project paves the way for eventual fiber-to-the-home connectivity across Southwest Virginia. For more information, visit www.bvu-optinet.com.
With nearly 500 miles of broadband backbone through its three-county, one-city district, the LENOWISCO Rural Area Network has brought exciting new educational, research and economic development opportunities to the people of far southwestern Virginia.

The Lee Regional Medical Center has operated in Pennington Gap for more than 70 years. The 70-bed facility joined the Wellmont Health System (www.wellmont.org) in 2007. The LENOWISCO network is credited with bringing many benefits of Wellmont’s nationally recognized heart program to rural Lee County.

Lee Regional implemented its cardiac telemedicine program in January 2011, and through its relationship with the Wellmont CVA Heart Institute, hosts a cardiologist and a nurse practitioner with cardiac experience on-site certain days of the week. Involving additional cardiac experts as needed via telemedicine has enabled Lee Regional to get patients to appropriate care more quickly.

With its initial focus on cardiology, an area where telemedicine could provide immediate, significant benefit, Lee Regional will use that experience and expertise gained to expand into other service areas.

The secure, high-speed connection to the University in Charlottesville is also crucial for the College’s daily administrative system users and datacenter backup operations. The LENOWISCO broadband network affords the high-end network capabilities needed to run the institution effectively and efficiently. This state of the art fiber-optic infrastructure would have been extremely costly for the College to develop and maintain on its own, thus increasing the overall cost of education for its students. With more than 60 percent of its students coming from the LENOWISCO or neighboring Cumberland Plateau districts, the regional broadband network contributes to the affordability of the College to its regional students, and helps the College be a strong and growing academic institution while helping keep tuition and fee costs low for the region’s students.

The University of Virginia’s College at Wise is a major regional customer for LENOWISCO high-speed network services. With nearly 2,500 campus network users using commodity Internet services for everything from academic research to streaming video, UVA-Wise relies on fast, redundant and reliable Internet accessibility around the clock.

OnePartner’s Advanced Technology & Applications Center (ATAC), situated in the Duffield (Scott County) regional industrial park, enjoys designation as the first U.S. company providing outsourced commercial data center services (including colocation and disaster recovery) awarded Tier III Design Certification by the Uptime Institute of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The 9,200 square foot facility is truly world-class, providing its customers with an unparalleled computing environment, suitable for either primary or secondary systems. The Tier III classification is a measure of the facility’s reliability of service. With redundant capacity components, multiple independent power distribution paths serving IT equipment, and all IT equipment being dual-powered, a Tier III data center has no single points of failure anywhere in the environment.

OnePartner’s (www.onepartner.com) ATAC hosts CareSpark, with all medical records for the entire region. Other organizations from the health care industry relying on the ATAC include Holston Medical Group, Mountain Regional Family Medicine, Spectrum Laboratory Network, and COSEHC (Consortium for Southeastern Hypertension Control). The data center also houses Onepartner ecoSM®, a unique new Electronic Health Record (EHR) cloud infrastructure.
BIT Communications
BIT Communications is the deregulated division of the Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative.

The Wireless Broadband Initiative & Expanding the BIT Network
In 2010, BIT was awarded an NTIA federal broadband stimulus grant and a Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission grant to build a wireless broadband network infrastructure. These grants will enable BIT to provide wireless broadband access to the fifteen county area where Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative has Federal Communications Commission wireless licenses. Those counties are: Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Halifax, Isle of Wight, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex Counties.

About the Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative
The Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative, founded in 1951, provides quality communications services and products along with rapid deployment of the latest wireless technology and infrastructure necessary to assist in the economic revitalization efforts of south central Virginia.

Cooperative’s Vision
BIT is committed to bringing broadband services to the 299,375 people, 102,400 households, 15,100 businesses and 834 community anchor institutions in south central Virginia.

THE BIT & MBC Connection
BIT is a proud, active member of the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative and utilizes MBC’s high-capacity optical transport services on MBC’s 800+ mile regional and long-haul network. BIT is managed by General Manager Mickey L. Sims and is governed by a nine-member elected Board of Directors.
About the Cooperative

Citizens is a regional full service communications provider offering land-line telephone, VoIP, IPTV Video, web and e-mail hosting, DSL, and FTTP (Fiber to the Premise: Business Ethernet and FTTH, Fiber to the Home), serving 7 counties in Southwest Virginia.

In addition, Citizens operates a 248 mile regional open access fiber network in 6 Virginia counties including 8 industrial parks. Along this network, Citizens provides wholesale transport and Internet bandwidth to a variety of service providers. Citizens is partnering with other open access networks in Virginia like Mid Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) and Bristol Virginia Utilities (BVU) to provide high-capacity optical transport services that are necessary to assist in the economic revitalization efforts of Southwest and Southside Virginia.

History

Citizens has a long history as a rural service provider in Virginia and traces its roots back to 1914. Today, Citizens has made Broadband available to over 95% of the residents and geographic area within Citizens traditional ILEC (Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier) service area.

Expanding the Citizens Open Access Network

In 2010, Citizens in partnership with the New River Valley Network Wireless Authority (NRVNWA) obtained a federal broadband grant from NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration) to build an 186 mile middle mile open access network through 7 counties. This project will pass several industrial parks and over 60 Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) including over 30 K-12 schools. This expansion will tie into Citizens existing open access fiber network in three locations as well as provide critical diverse connections to Mid Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) and Bristol Virginia Utilities (BVU). This project is scheduled to break ground this summer and will leverage $396,622 of VTC funds for a project costing $11,560,803. For more information on this project please visit http://citizens.coop/BTOP.

Leveraging VTC grants

Citizens has received three grants from the Virginia Tobacco Commission (VTC) for a total of $5,959,122. These funds have been leveraged with other funding and assets, including $6,498,471 from Citizens, to build out a 200Gbps, 434 mile open access fiber network totaling $22,525,353.

This map is a representation of our fiber backbone and interconnections with partner networks. It does not include distribution fiber, nor does it specify co-location sites.
Who We Are

Scott County Telephone Cooperative (SCTC), a “501(c) (12) non-profit organization”, was Chartered by the State Corporation Commission on September 10, 1951 to serve 420.2 square miles of Scott County, Virginia and 15.4 square miles of Hancock County, Tennessee with dial-tone service. Today, SCTC’s service area includes an additional 125 square miles in Scott County, 110 square miles in Russell County and 15 square miles in Wise and Dickenson County. SCTC’s services have been upgraded to provide IP dial-tone, video and broadband services along with long-distance service. The SCTC Board of Director’s vision is to promote economic development by providing high-capacity (400 G gig) optical access and transport to the world along with providing enhanced broadband services that will improve the quality of life in Southwest Virginia.

Network Investments

In 1993, SCTC invested $8,885,000 from a RUS (Rural Utilities Service) loan to update its digital switching facilities and to construct a 100 mile fiber loop throughout Scott County. In 1998, SCTC invested $11,105,000 from a RUS loan to enhance this broadband network. SCTC received two Community Connect Grants from RUS in 2003 and 2004 totaling $1,086,737. Since 2005, the Virginia Tobacco Commission has invested $6,052,756 to expand and enhance SCTC’s network. SCTC has leveraged this investment to obtain another Community Connect Grant in the amount of $999,207, a Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) award in the amount of $24,850,000, and a Technical Assistant Grant in the amount of $199,920 from RUS.

Network Expansion

SCTC has been able to bring its high-capacity fiber optic network to 385 business customers, 2,932 broadband customers, 3,350 IP video customers, 5,600 IP dial-tone customers, and 1,428 cable customers. SCTC’s present expansion plans will pass an additional 5,000 customers, including 100 new business customers. SCTC’s high-capacity optical transport network extends to the Tri-Cities in East Tennessee to locations in Bristol, Kingsport and Johnson City.

Partnerships and Collaborations

SCTC is working with Mid-Atlantic Broadband to bring high-capacity optical transport to Southwest Virginia. SCTC is a member of the LIT Networks of Virginia and is expanding access for two locations in Scott County to be part of the “GigaPark Initiative”.

SCTC is a partner in IRIS Networks which is a high-capacity optical transport network which covers the State of Tennessee. SCTC will provide connectivity between the LIT Networks of Virginia and the IRIS Network in Tennessee.
The Virginia Tobacco Commission

Our Mission – Section 3.2-3101, Code of Virginia

“The Commission is established for the purposes of determining the appropriate recipients of moneys in the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Fund and causing distribution of such moneys for the purposes provided in this chapter, including using moneys in the Fund to (i) provide payments to tobacco farmers as compensation for the adverse economic effects resulting from loss of investment in specialized tobacco equipment and barns and lost tobacco production opportunities associated with a decline in quota and (ii) revitalize tobacco dependent communities.”

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GigaParks

AMELIA
Amelia County Industrial Park

APPMATTOX
Appomattox Center for Business and Commerce

BEDFORD
New London Business & Technology Center
Bedford Center for Business

BRUNSWICK
Brunswick County Industrial Park

BUCKINGHAM
Buckingham County Industrial Park

CAMPBELL
Dearing Ford Business and Manufacturing Center
Seneca Commerce Park

CARROLL
Carroll County Industrial Park
Gardner Industrial Park

CHARLOTTE
Heartland Regional Industrial Park
Charlotte County Business and Industrial Park

CUMBERLAND
Riverside Industrial Park
Cumberland Airport Site

DANVILLE
Airside Industrial Park
Cyber Park
Riverview Industrial Park

DICKENSON
Dickenson County Technology Park

DINWIDDIE
Dinwiddie Airport Industrial Park
Dinwiddie Commerce Park

EMPORIA
Emporia Industrial Park

FRANKLIN
Franklin County Commerce Center
Franklin-Rocky Mount Industrial Park

GREENSVILLE
Greensville County Industrial Park
Greensville Megasite

HALIFAX
Riverstone Technology Park
J Aubrey Houghton Industrial Park
Southside Industrial Park

HENRY
Martinsville DuPont Site
Patriot Centre Industrial Park
Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre

LUNENBURG
Lunenburg Commercentre
Lunenburg Victoria Industrial Park

LUNEBURG
Lunenburg Commercentre

MARTINSVILLE
Clearview Business Park
Martinsville Industrial Park
Rives Road Industrial Site

MECKLENBURG
Airport Industrial Park
Boydtown Plank Road Industrial Park

NOTTOWAY
Blackstone Industrial Park
Crewe Industrial Park
Pickett Park

PITTSYLVANIA
Brosville Industrial Park
Cane Creek Centre
Cherrystone Industrial Park
Gretna Industrial Park
Hurt Industrial Park
Key Industrial Park
Ringgold East Industrial Park
Ringgold West Industrial Park

PRINCE EDWARD
Prince Edward County Industrial Park

SMYTH
Battleground Industrial Park
Deer Valley Industrial Park
Mountain Empire Industrial Park

TAZEWELL
Bluefield Industrial Park
Wardell Industrial Park
Cedar Land Industrial Park
Tazewell Industrial Park

WYTHE
Fairview Industrial Park
Rural Retreat Industrial Park
Progress Park

If you would like more information about locating a business in one of the parks listed, please contact Suzanne Chvala at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (804) 545-5700
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