



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact Gage Harter.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: King and Queen County

Program Title: Countywide Broadband Access

Program Category: Communication; Information Technology

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Erin Lazar

Title: Director

Department: Community Programming

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Vivian Seay

Title: County Administrator

Signature: *Vivian Seay*

Rural communities across the Commonwealth are faced with the challenge of providing internet access to their citizens. King and Queen County was no different, but in 2019 the County partnered with RiverStreet Networks for an ambitious fiber build project to bring advanced broadband network services to residential and commercial customers. The King and Queen County Fiber-to-the-Home Project represented a monumental undertaking that made King and Queen County a leader in the Commonwealth. We believe that King and Queen County is the first county in Virginia to undergo a comprehensive fiber build covering the entire locality. The now-complete initiative guarantees that every resident and business in the County has access to the RiverStreet system to obtain fiber internet comparable to that of major urban areas.

Covering approximately 575 route miles of fiber, top-of-the-line broadband internet service is enjoyed by over 30% of homes and businesses in rural King and Queen. The completion of this county-wide fiber network expansion represents a significant boost to the economic and educational development of King and Queen County and positions the County, and its businesses and citizens, for unlimited future opportunities. With fast and reliable internet access, local businesses can thrive, students can access digital resources for educational opportunities, and residents can easily access telehealth services.

Funding for the project included \$14.6 million from grants, \$3.8 million from the county, \$5.8 million from DHCD/VATI, and \$5 million from FCC CAF II Auction Funding. The first threshold of 30% connection was met in September of 2023, following which milestone quarterly revenue shares have been, and will continue to be, distributed to King and Queen County. RiverStreet also worked with the Rappahannock Tribe to provide connectivity to the Tribal Center, located in King and Queen County, linking numerous tribal members. That portion of the project was funded by \$682,000 in CARES Act Grants and \$922,000 from River

Street Networks. And in addition to the funding sources accessed, it goes without saying that an undertaking of this magnitude required countless hours of staff time. Without the commitment of leadership and hard-working staff, this project never could have succeeded as it has.

King and Queen County is extremely proud of the internet service it provides to its schools, businesses, and citizens, and citizens regularly express their gratitude for this phenomenal asset. The King and Queen County fiber-to-the-home project reflects what can be accomplished when community leadership appreciates the need of the citizens and responds with a creative solution coupled with the needed resources to fully and completely address that need for all.