

QAC Broadband Advisory Committee Meeting

August 16, 2018 4pm - 6 pm | Noovis (Tom Napoli)

Attendees

BAC/QAC

- Andrew Costello
- Ed Cummins
- Alison Davis
- Megan DelGaudio
- Joyce Jones
- Ben Schaffle

- Scott Seaborne
- Adam Weinstein

Atlantic Broadband

- Scott Randall
- Bernard Hazoord

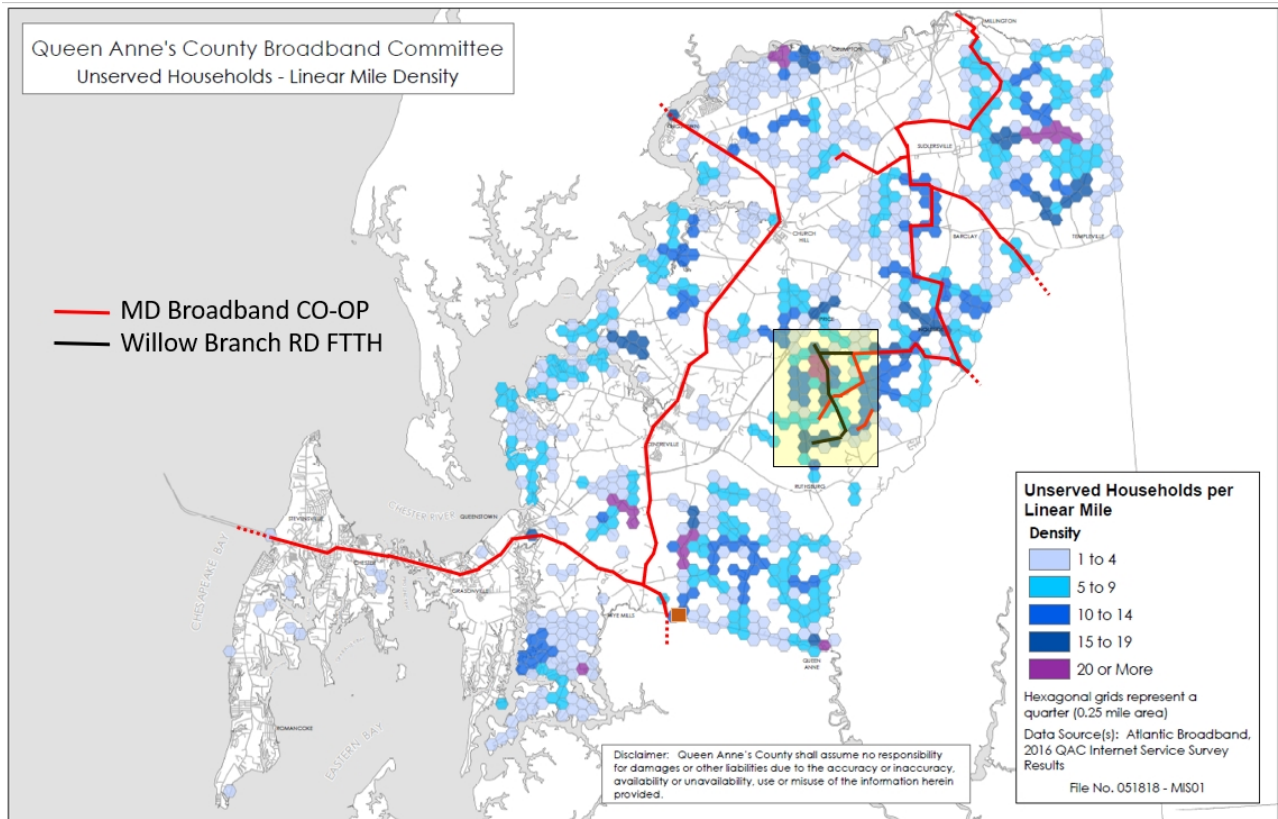
Noovis

- Company is 5 years old
- Designs, builds and integrates intelligent networks to support developing critical infrastructures, enhanced communities and smart cities
- Capabilities include outside plant, inside plant, fiber optic, and wireless networks
- Not an ISP, has worked with some wireless partners
- Partners with KCI Technologies who perform outside plant and structured cabling construction and installation services
 - KCI projects across DelMarVa
 - Maryland Department of Technology (Statewide contract for cable / wiring material and services)
 - Delaware Department of Transportation (Multiple statewide contracts for OSP and ISP fiber and copper cabling services)
 - Baltimore County and Howard County (Offices of Information Technology (Inter-County Broadband Network (ICBN), Design, construction, maintenance, and locates of fiber network services)
 - Harford County Metro Area Network (HMAN) (Turnkey design, build, fiber replacement, splicing, terminating, and locate services, Maintenance of fiber network)
 - Kent County, Maryland (Fiber backbone, long haul, and lateral fiber services)
- KCI/Noovis joint projects
 - Department of the Interior (Design/Build of an OSP fiber backbone across the Patuxent Refuge (4+ miles))
 - Margaritaville Orlando (Design/Build Passive Optical LAN for the Margaritaville Hotel)
 - Town of Smyrna, Delaware - Community Broadband Feasibility Study (Produced a detailed Plan including selected Business Model options)
- Varied clients

- Erickson Living retirement campus (PON, DAS, Wi-Fi, Smart Building Initiatives) - first and “anchor” client
- Broadband Connect (Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center)
- Atlantic Broadband (ABB) - Design/Build Fiber to the Home Initiatives, (Bay Cove & Queen Anne’s County, did John Brown Road project - ABB’s first rural fiber to home - 60 homes)

Noovis/ABB projects

- Performed detailed engineering analysis for 211 homes across seven miles along Willow Branch RD (in previous meetings/BAC documents this is referred to as the Colby project - shaded yellow in figure below) - Noovis loosely estimates the total cost of this project to be ~ \$1.2 million (about 30% covered by ABB). Extrapolating, covering remaining QAC unserved (4,000) would cost at least \$10,000,000.



Broadband funding sources include:

- USDA E-Connectivity Pilot Program (\$600 million pilot program to catalyze private investment and bring broadband to unserved rural areas of the country (population of 20,000 or less).
 - Public input stage until mid September
- MD Office of Rural Broadband (\$2 million statewide).

- Issued RFI due Sept 17 2018
- Will support initial engineering and legal fees upfront
- Can be used as the Cash Match for USDA grants
- MD DOIT (Potential to offset costs if connecting government buildings) - this is likely to be irrelevant for QAC

Discussion and Issues

- Noovis/ABB suggest that their two “shovel-ready” projects (Colby and Bulle Rock - from previous meeting with ABB) are good candidates to present for State Rural Broadband Task Force-issued RFI
- They consider their current design plans sufficiently detailed for this purpose and are happy to cooperate with QAC BAC to prepare RFI response
- ABB stated that the State is “hungry for success” and QAC is far ahead of other rural counties regarding design plans for broadband projects

Wireless

- BAC feels strongly that a hybrid plan is necessary to accommodate the variable geography and remote areas of QAC lacking population density - mix of fiber and wireless will be necessary
- There is variable support among potential vendors for wireless as a QAC broadband solution
- Noovis is willing to partner with wireless providers, but suggested that “ISPs don't often play well together”
- BAC is interested in presenting to the QAC commissioners a request for Noovis to develop a technical plan for a hybrid approach (wireless + fiber); however, this cannot be done in time for the Sept 17 RFI deadline

Future costs

- QAC needs to develop a 5-10 year plan for cost management of broadband
- ABB franchise fees paid to QAC (~\$0.5 million for video-related revenue) could cover some
- Need fair arrangement for taxpayers
- Need to establish and manage debt service plan

RFI response

- Need to look at whole picture of QAC current coverage - map out solutions for every area
- BAC members agreed that in addition to the two ABB/Noovis shovel-ready design plans, it will include reference to additional larger projects to tackle over time (7 other ABB QAC projects are at various levels of maturity), as well as pursuit of wireless solutions that will require additional access to towers (and likely, new towers)
- Alison will prepare Word document from RFI pdf template / Adam will upload to Google Docs* / group will edit simultaneously and discuss Wed Aug 29 @ 5 pm
 - *Note a Gmail account is required to work with Google docs