



## COUNTY OF AMHERST



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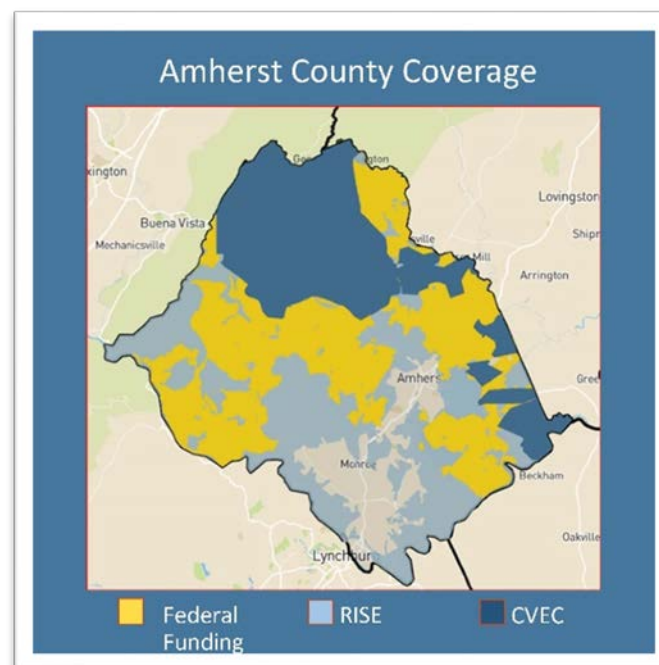
**For Immediate Release**

**December 14, 2021**

### **Amherst County Receives Grant to Fund Broadband Expansion**

Yesterday, Governor Ralph Northam announced \$79 million in VATI grants to Firefly Fiber Broadband to place broadband fiber in 13 Virginia counties. Projects in Amherst County will be funded with \$6 million in grant funds. In August 2021, the Amherst County Board of Supervisors partnered with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District and Firefly Fiber Broadband to apply for grant funds from the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) to expand broadband access to underserved communities.

Preliminary planning for the regional project identified 4,322 locations in Amherst County as unserved, which is defined as areas without access to speeds faster than 25 mbps download or 3 mbps upload. Plans to reach these locations include 548 miles of new fiber optic cable installed in the County. The Board has approved using up to \$3,025,400 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to match the grant. The project is expected to be complete in three years.



Additional information may be obtained from Joy Niehaus at [jlniehaus@countyofamherst.com](mailto:jlniehaus@countyofamherst.com) or (434)-946-9400.