Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects

(P341700)

Category	General Government	Date Last Modified	01/10/23
SubCategory	Technology Services	Administering Agency	Technology Services
Planning Area	Countywide	Status	Ongoing

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE ($000s)

Cost Elements	Total	Thru FY22	Rem FY22	Total 6 Years	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design and Supervision	1,429	539	-	890	100	250	250	250	20	20	-
Construction	18,656	2,207	-	16,449	1,877	4,430	4,405	4,417	660	660	-
Other	80	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	20,165	2,826	-	17,339	1,977	4,680	4,655	4,667	680	680	-

FUNDING SCHEDULE ($000s)

Funding Source	Total	Thru FY22	Rem FY22	Total 6 Years	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	Beyond 6 Years
Current Revenue: Cable TV	8,604	2,826	-	5,778	516	1,080	1,155	1,667	680	680	-
Current Revenue: General	1,600	-	-	1,600	500	600	500	-	-	-	-
State Aid	9,961	-	-	9,961	961	3,000	3,000	3,000	-	-	-
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	20,165	2,826	-	17,339	1,977	4,680	4,655	4,667	680	680	-

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA ($000s)

Appropriation FY 24 Request	779	Year First Appropriation	FY16
Cumulative Appropriation	8,704	Last FY's Cost Estimate	19,204
Expenditure / Encumbrances	4,454		
Unencumbered Balance	4,250		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects - CIP provides for capital funding to support Montgomery County's digital equity initiatives. Internet service accessibility, affordability, and adoption are critical factors in addressing equity disparities. Funding will support planning, design, and construction of: MoCoNet residential broadband in affordable housing developments to close the digital equity gap through the provision of free or low cost, reliable and robust residential Internet services, and devices, at affordable housing throughout the County; Public WiFi and Advanced Wireless Conduit Networks to provide conduit and fiber to support public WiFi and wireline and wireless broadband networks in commercial and community gathering areas of Montgomery County. Innovation Testbeds to spur development and expansion of traffic, transit, and pedestrian sensors, Internet of Things (IoT), advanced robotic, and cybersecurity IoT applications and innovation in Montgomery County; Purple Line Fiber to connect Montgomery County research and higher education facilities to MAX and Internet2 at the University of Maryland, College Park; and White Oak Science Gateway Conduit Network to provide broadband conduit infrastructure in Viva White Oak and other White Oak commercial development

projects.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

Digital equity installations began in FY21 and will continue through FY28. White Oak Science Gateway conduit construction will be performed concurrently with Viva White Oak construction. Design for public WiFi, advanced wireless, conduit, and testbeds in commercial and community gathering areas are underway and outreach to potential private partners is in development. Purple Line fiber connections are dependent on the Purple Line and third-party construction.

COST CHANGE

Project has received an additional $961,000 in state grants for FY23.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects is a digital equity program, designed to ensure that businesses and underserved residents of affordable housing units in Montgomery County have as much reliable, secure, and robust broadband service as they need to live, work, learn and keep our economy moving at the speed of our ideas. Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects also supports the County's racial equity and social justice goals by focusing our digital equity deployment of devices and residential broadband in affordable housing developments and underserved communities. Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects helps ensure that all residents have the broadband service, devices to participate in the digital world; expanding access to competitive broadband services in commercial buildings to support small and large businesses; and by leveraging infrastructure development and strategic conduit network deployment to create robust public WiFi and public private partnerships to support leasing of County broadband assets. Access to reliable broadband infrastructure throughout the County supports business growth and innovation in biotech bio-health, cybersecurity, IT services, financial services, media and similar high-bandwidth-consuming sectors, and for federal and state government, research and higher education institutions. Ensuring that all businesses can access reliable broadband services is essential to ensuring equity.

OTHER

This project was previously named ultraMontgomery until 2023 when it was renamed to Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects. This change was made to better describe the purpose of the project.
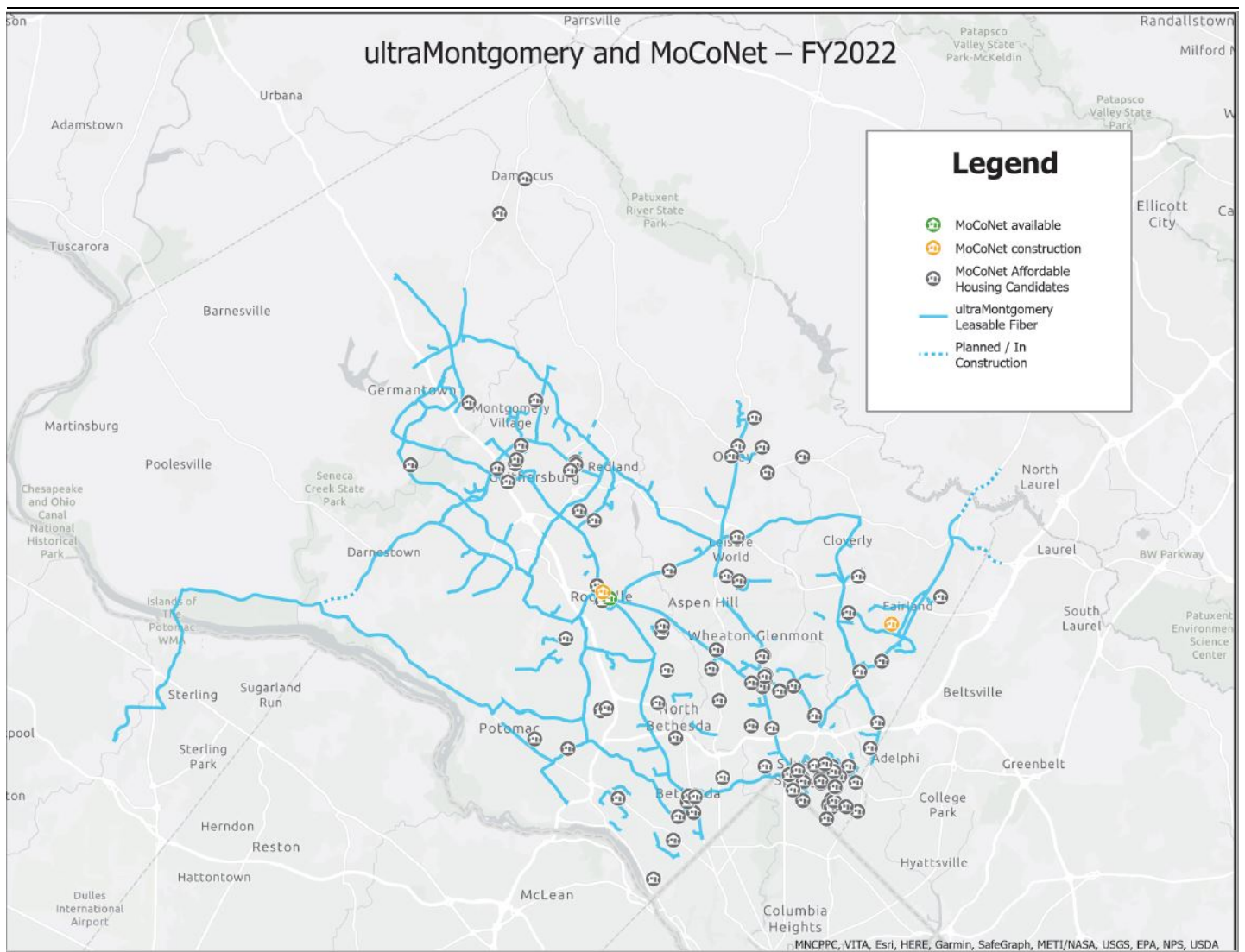
In 2021, the Great Seneca Fiber Hwy was completed to provide shortest distance, low latency connection between Great Seneca and Ashburn, Virginia data centers. Phase 2 of the East County Fiber Highway to provide regional north-south interconnections between White Oak and Howard County and east-west connections between Burtonsville and WSSC in Laurel will be completed in 2023. In response to COVID-19, funding for rural broadband is being provided through state and federal broadband grants and the Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects project pivoted to focus County broadband deployment on providing to service to low-income affordable housing developments where residents do not have access to or have difficulty affording robust broadband service. Engineering, planning, and design work provided by the Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects CIP has been instrumental in preparing state grant applications. Because other resources can support rural broadband deployment , funding from the Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects CIP for low-income affordable housing is being prioritized over rural broadband.

DISCLOSURES

The County Executive asserts that this project conforms to the requirement of relevant local plans, as required by the Maryland

Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act.

COORDINATION

FiberNet (P509651); Purple Line Department of Transportation; Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Montgomery College; WSSC; Information Technology Policy Coordination Committee; Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation; and affordable housing developers in Montgomery County.

ultraMontgomery and MoCoNet – FY2022

Legend

- MoCoNet available
- MoCoNet construction
- MoCoNet Affordable Housing Candidates
- ultraMontgomery Leasable Fiber
- Planned / In Construction

MNCPPC, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

This map shows the location of affordable housing developments in the County that would be served if ultraMontgomery receives the requested funding.