



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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For more information, contact:

Cindy Mumby

Director of Governmental & Community Relations

410-340-5376

camumby@harfordcountymd.gov

Harford Seeks Partner on Grant Applications to Expand Broadband in Rural North

BEL AIR, Md., (May 14, 2020) - Harford County is seeking an internet service provider to partner with on grant applications to help offset the cost of expanding broadband in its rural northern region.


County Executive Barry Glassman has directed his administration to issue a formal “Request for Information” to identify an internet service provider that will apply for available state and/or federal grants, following recommendations by the county’s consulting firm, CTC Energy & Technology. The Glassman administration sought options from CTC in March after Armstrong withdrew from an earlier plan to expand its service in the area through a federal grant application process.

Extending internet service to rural regions requires providers to spread their costs over a small number of customers. This often discourages them from investing because the resulting fees would be too costly for most residents. CTC estimates it would cost \$12 million to extend broadband to northern Harford County’s 1,683 unserved residential and business customers. State and federal grants help offset those costs. Once a qualified internet service provider is identified for northern Harford County, county government and CTC will provide support and technical assistance with the grant applications.

While this plan will not immediately address needs created by the COVID-19 public health crisis, it has the potential to resolve a longstanding concern. Other options under consideration can be found in the CTC report published on the county website at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15397/Broadband-Strategic-Plan>.

Harford County’s Request for Information will be posted on its bid board by the first week of June at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1540/Bid-Board-and-Results>.

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