



## AT&T Invests Nearly \$35 Million Over Three-Year Period to Keep the Foothills Region Connected

HICKORY, N.C., June 24, 2020 – AT&T\* is proud to have the nation’s best and also fastest wireless network,<sup>1</sup> as well as the largest network in North America.<sup>2</sup> From 2017-2019, we invested nearly \$35 million in our wireless and wireline networks in the foothills region of Hickory, Lenoir and Morganton to expand coverage and improve connectivity in more communities.

That investment has increased reliability, coverage and overall performance for residents and businesses, which is essential for connecting our customers with family, friends and colleagues – no matter the distance. It’s also improved critical communications services for first responders using the [FirstNet](#) network.

Today, our 4G LTE network covers more than 330 million people.<sup>3</sup> That’s more than 2.61 million square miles and over 99% of all Americans.<sup>4</sup>

“AT&T’s investment highlights our commitment to establishing connectivity throughout the area,” said Kathleen Evans, regional director of external affairs, AT&T. “By expanding coverage and boosting performance, AT&T is working to grow the local economy and enhance residents’ lives.”

More details about our wireless coverage in the foothills, and anywhere in the U.S., can be found on the [AT&T Coverage Viewer](#). For updates on the AT&T wireless network, please visit the [AT&T network news page](#).

### **FirstNet: Transforming Public Safety Communications**

We’re honored to work with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) to build and manage FirstNet – the *only* nationwide, high-speed broadband communications platform dedicated to and purpose-built for America’s first responders and the extended public safety community. And we take our responsibility to deliver FirstNet seriously.

Building upon our current and planned investments across North Carolina, we continue to extend the reach, and [increase the coverage](#), capacity and capabilities of the FirstNet network:

- **Purpose-built network enhancements** – We’ve boosted the network with high-quality Band 14 spectrum across North Carolina. Band 14 is nationwide, high-quality spectrum set aside by the government specifically for FirstNet. We look at Band 14 as public safety’s VIP lane: in an emergency, this band – or lane – can be cleared and locked just for FirstNet subscribers.



- **Public safety-specific advanced capabilities** – FirstNet is providing North Carolina public safety with dedicated access when they need it, as well as an entire communication ecosystem with unique benefits like mission-centric devices, certified applications, *always-on* priority and preemption and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities enable FirstNet to perform faster than any commercial network<sup>5</sup> and bring its subscribers the unthrottled connectivity they need.
- **Unparalleled emergency support** – North Carolina agencies on FirstNet also have 24/7 access to a nationwide fleet of 76 deployable network assets at no additional charge. These assets can either be deployed for planned events or called upon in **emergencies** at no additional charge to help first responders stay connected and operate faster, safer and more effectively when lives are on the line. FirstNet Response Operations – led by a group of former first responders – guides the deployment of the FirstNet deployable assets based on the needs of public safety.
- **Free Smartphones for Life for Public Safety Agencies** – We have a responsibility to public safety unlike any other wireless carrier. That’s why North Carolina agencies spanning law enforcement, fire, EMS, healthcare, hospital emergency departments, emergency management and 911 operations on FirstNet can stay up-to-date with **smartphones for life** at no additional cost.<sup>6</sup> This means first responders across agencies of all sizes will have affordable access to *their* network.

The FirstNet network expansion in North Carolina is being done with direct feedback from state and public safety officials. This helps ensure FirstNet meets the short- and long-term needs of the public safety community.

Go [here](#) for more FirstNet news. Or check out [FirstNet.com](#) to learn more about the program.

This is all made possible by our talented, dedicated AT&T team members who are committed to being there and are the driving force behind our efforts to expand wireless connectivity both in North Carolina and across the country. That’s why we believe in investing in our employees and workforce. In 2019, *Fortune* and Great Place to Work named us one of the **Best Big Companies to Work For**.

<sup>1</sup> Best Network based on 2019 GWS OneScore. Fastest based on analysis by Ookla® of Speedtest Intelligence® data median download speeds for Q1 2020. Ookla trademarks used under license and reprinted with permission.

<sup>2</sup> Based on comparison of carrier owned & operated networks. No AT&T on-net coverage in select countries, including Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Coverage includes non-AT&T network areas covered by roaming agreements with third parties.

<sup>4</sup> Based on overall coverage in U.S. licensed areas. Coverage not available everywhere. AT&T’s 4G LTE coverage is not equivalent to its overall network coverage.

<sup>5</sup> Based on AT&T analysis of Ookla® of Speedtest Intelligence® data median download speeds for Q1 2020. Ookla trademarks used under license and reprinted with permission.



<sup>6</sup> Available only to FirstNet first responder public safety entities for Primary Agency Paid User lines of service. Requires a new FirstNet Mobile - Unlimited for Smartphone line or eligible upgrade on a two-year service agreement or AT&T installment 30-month agreement. For two-year agreement, upgrade your smartphone with a new eligible smartphone every two years at no

additional cost for as long as your service plan is in effect and in good standing. Pay \$.99 for eligible smartphone at purchase, credited back within three billing cycles. Upgrade requires new two-year agreement. For AT&T Installment 30-month agreement, upgrade your smartphone with a new eligible smartphone every time you satisfy your current AT&T Installment agreement and sign a new one for no additional cost for as long as your service plan is in effect and in good standing. For both plans, tax on full discount price (two-year agreement) or full retail price (AT&T Installment agreement) due at sale. Activation and other fees, taxes, charges and restrictions apply. See [firstnet.com/agencyoffers](http://firstnet.com/agencyoffers) for offer details.

### **\*About AT&T Communications**

We help family, friends and neighbors connect in meaningful ways every day. From the first phone call 140+ years ago to mobile video streaming, we innovate to improve lives. We have the nation's fastest wireless network.\*\* And according to America's biggest test, we have the nation's best wireless network.\*\*\* We're building [FirstNet](#) just for first responders and creating next-generation mobile 5G. With a range of TV and video products, we deliver entertainment people love to talk about. Our smart, highly secure solutions serve nearly 3 million global businesses – nearly all of the Fortune 1000. And worldwide, our spirit of service drives employees to give back to their communities.

AT&T Communications is part of AT&T Inc. ([NYSE:T](#)). Learn more at [att.com/CommunicationsNews](http://att.com/CommunicationsNews).

AT&T products and services are provided or offered by subsidiaries and affiliates of AT&T Inc. under the AT&T brand and not by AT&T Inc. Additional information about AT&T products and services is available at [about.att.com](http://about.att.com). Follow our news on Twitter at @ATT, on Facebook at [facebook.com/att](https://facebook.com/att) and on YouTube at [youtube.com/att](https://youtube.com/att).

© 2020 AT&T Intellectual Property. All rights reserved. AT&T, the Globe logo and other marks are trademarks and service marks of AT&T Intellectual Property and/or AT&T affiliated companies. All other marks contained herein are the property of their respective owners.

\*\*Based on analysis by Ookla® of Speedtest Intelligence® data median download speeds for Q1 2020. Ookla trademarks used under license and reprinted with permission.

\*\*\*GWS OneScore, September 2019.

FirstNet® and the FirstNet service logo are the intellectual property of the First Responder Network Authority.

### **For more information, contact:**

Clifton Metcalf  
AT&T Public Affairs  
704.802.6008  
[clifton.metcalf@att.com](mailto:clifton.metcalf@att.com)