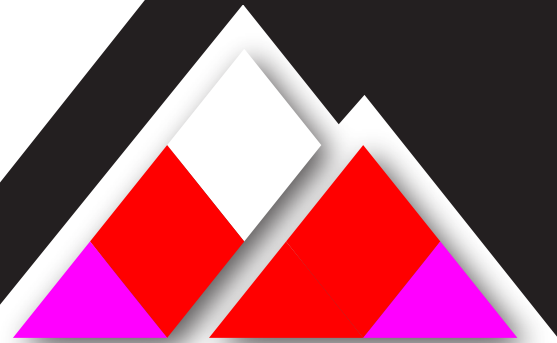


# Get Connected BrightRidge®



A Publication for Customers of BrightRidge

July - Sept. 2021

[www.brightridge.com](http://www.brightridge.com)

## Breaking Ground on 9-Megawatt Solar Farm

BrightRidge, Silicon Ranch, and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) held a ceremony on June 8 to break ground on a new solar farm that is now under construction in western Washington County. The 9-megawatt (MWAC) facility will be named the Martin Solar Farm in honor of the late Ralph Martin, who served for many years as a BrightRidge board member.

This project is the first to enter the construction phase under TVA's new Generation Flexibility Program that is designed to encourage local power companies (LPCs) like BrightRidge to develop new distributed generation facilities. The Martin Solar Farm will allow BrightRidge to generate clean energy at lower costs and support community and economic development.

"BrightRidge is honored to continue leading the region in distributed solar generation, thanks to partnership agreements with TVA and Silicon Ranch," BrightRidge CEO Jeff Dykes said. "These partnerships provide our customers with an efficient way to access clean energy benefits at scale while avoiding the long-term costs of individually owned and operated facilities. At the same time, we know access to clean energy is a key long-term driver of economic opportunity in our region."

The project will be the second solar generation facility on the BrightRidge system built in partnership with Silicon Ranch and TVA. In 2019, the partners commissioned the Telford Solar Farm under the former TVA Distributed Solar Solutions Program.

"Under the visionary leadership of its CEO Jeff Dykes and its board of directors, BrightRidge continues to represent the best of public power and is truly at the vanguard of the Flexibility Program here in the Tennessee Valley," said Silicon Ranch Co-Founder and Chairman Matt Kisber. "Silicon Ranch is honored to expand our partnership with BrightRidge through this landmark project, and we applaud TVA for empowering all LPCs to leverage low-cost renewable energy to meet customer needs and recruit new business."

TVA indicated the Martin Solar Farm is a continuation of the company's successful long-term effort to reduce its environmental impact by diversifying its generation portfolio while maintaining affordable rates and reliability.

"TVA is a low-cost carbon reduction leader, and it takes partners like BrightRidge and Silicon Ranch to help us transition into a cleaner energy future," Doug Perry, senior vice president, TVA Commercial Energy Solutions. "TVA plans to achieve a 70% carbon reduction by 2030, and BrightRidge's Martin Solar Farm will be a beacon to attract jobs and investment into the community."



**The Future  
Martin Solar Farm**



## From the CEO

*"If I had asked the public what they wanted, they would have said a faster horse." – Henry Ford*

As car manufacturers move towards electric vehicles, TVA and BrightRidge will be working to offer many options to charge those vehicles to keep you on the road for work and relaxation. As the mileage increases on batteries and

fast charging stations become a regular part of your driving experience, "range anxiety" will disappear. Today's electric vehicles are designed to easily provide commuting to work and trips to some of your favorite destinations. Enhancements to batteries and fast charging stations continue to improve and with the initiatives by Tennessee, TVA, auto dealers, and others to install stations along your travel routes - an electric car may be in your future. In today's newsletter, you see will some current local changes such as the first electric school bus in Tennessee placed in service by the Washington County School System as well as electric vehicle (EV) charging stations installed by ETSU on campus for use by students, faculty, and the community.

BrightRidge and Silicon Ranch broke ground for their newest solar farm which will provide clean electricity to our community. The farm is named for the longest serving BrightRidge Board Member, Ralph Martin. The Martin Solar Farm is being developed on property owned by the late Ralph Martin. Additional information is contained within the newsletter related to this latest generation project.

With things in our community beginning to look and sound more normal, I look forward to seeing BrightRidge's renewed participation in the community via our volunteer committee and the other great organizations our employees participate in.

May God bless and be with each of you and your families this summer as you begin to enjoy vacations and family get togethers that have been put off for so long. I hope this will be your best summer with your family yet as you find new ways to celebrate the blessing they are to you.

*"I cannot say whether things will get better if we change; what I can say is they must change if they are to get better." – George C. Lichtenberg*

Jeffrey R. Dykes,  
Chief Executive Officer

## BrightRidge Reminder...



**For tree planting tips and powerline safety information, please visit the Resources section of [www.brightridge.com](http://www.brightridge.com) to learn more!**



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Administrative Staff Directories.

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## Tree Removal

Recently, we've had many customer calls about dead Ash tree removal assistance. **For clarity, BrightRidge can only trim or remove trees that are interfering with the electric high voltage primary lines.** These trees must be located inside of the BrightRidge right-of-way which extends 10 feet beyond the line. A clearance of 15 feet is required directly above primary lines. Maintenance, trimming, or removal of trees that are on private property is the customer's responsibility.

BrightRidge does provide a free "cut-loose" service to customers for the purpose of de-energizing the line so that trees on private property may be trimmed or removed by the customer or a third-party tree company. Call (423) 952-5025 to schedule a "cut-loose" service. "Cut-loose" services are available Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 3:00pm, and requests must be made 24 hours in advance.

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) and BrightRidge celebrated the installation of eight electric vehicle (EV) charging stations on campus June 17. The project marked the 100th installation by Seven States Power Corporation in the Tennessee Valley.

“This has been a wonderful partnership, and we thank our friends with BrightRidge and Seven States Power Corporation for making this option available for members of the ETSU community,” said ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland. “The presence of these charging stations on campus will help reduce any barriers to EV adoption and will also promote sustainable transportation in the Appalachian Highlands.”

“BrightRidge is honored to support the university in its effort to ease the region’s evolution from fossil-fueled to electric-powered personal transportation,” said BrightRidge CEO Jeff Dykes. “Today’s event underscores the rapidly changing nature of transportation, and its partners like ETSU and Seven States that will help us achieve the goal of reducing range anxiety by ensuring we have ample charging capacity as these new models begin reaching our roads.”



## Tennessee’s First All-Electric School Bus

A new bus joined the Washington County Schools fleet, and it’s one of a kind in Tennessee – an all-electric school bus! The Washington County Department of Education was awarded a grant for \$219,250 to purchase the electric bus and charging station through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

BrightRidge and TVA supported the project by providing additional funding and assistance with installing and powering the charging station. The charging station will be installed at the Washington County bus garage in Jonesborough.

“BrightRidge is excited to continue partnering with our community on leading edge technologies that truly make a difference in our daily lives,” BrightRidge CEO Jeff Dykes said. “Electric vehicle sales are projected to increase exponentially in coming years as major manufacturers ramp up alternatives to fossil-fueled vehicles. At BrightRidge, we are planning for this future and pleased to partner with Washington County Schools as the future becomes reality.”



In the fourth quarter of 2018, BrightRidge announced plans for an eight-phase broadband buildout to provide High-Speed Internet, Video, and Voice service to the majority of our electric customers. We connected our first customer in June of 2019 and two years later we have almost 5,000 BrightRidge Broadband customers! In the last fiscal year, we were able to secure a State of Tennessee Emergency Broadband Grant to provide high-speed internet services to over 650 customers in the rural areas of Washington County who previously did not have access to any broadband services.

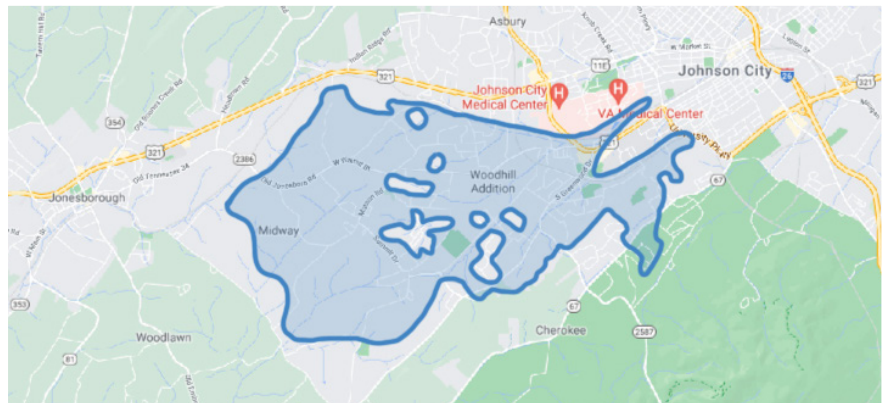
As we start the third year of the build, we have learned a lot and like any new business, our plans needed to evolve. The recent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a critical need for broadband access in underserved areas, to which BrightRidge has realigned our construction plans to reach as many customers as possible.

A new realigned Phase 4 map (*shown below*) shifts and expands our original plans for this fiscal year. This map shows that we'll be able to bring in more customers quicker than projected. The engineering review indicates that we will be able to bring 2,500 additional customers online in Phase 4 than previously projected. Although BrightRidge is making all efforts to adhere to the original buildout plans, some areas may move into different build phases from where they were in the original plans.

On the map, there are a few housing development areas that aren't highlighted in light blue. Although these areas are within the footprint of Phase 4, they won't be served at this time due to lack of available underground conduit for fiber. BrightRidge is working on three possible solutions that can expedite serving areas that don't have available underground conduit.

1. Working with local city/county public works to coordinate the installation of underground conduit with street paving schedules
2. Evaluating federal, state, and local grant funding opportunities to assist in the funding of underground and overhead build areas
3. Evaluating "Small Cell Wireless" solutions that can provide symmetric 1Gbps/1Gbps services to these areas

Please be patient with us as we update our online "Check Availability" tool with these changes on the BrightRidge Broadband website during July and August. If you want to check your address for its new projected availability, please visit the site in September, or call (423) 952-5000 for assistance.



With our evolved business plan, we're actually building out to more customers in a shorter time period than our original plan. These changes will allow us to complete our entire build out a year earlier so we'll be able to provide a majority of our electric customers broadband service by July 1, 2025!