



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: News Media

From: Bamberg County Administration

Date: September 6, 2024

Re: After Mother Nature Targets Bamberg County Twice within a Seven-Month Timeframe, County Officials Continue Clean-Up Efforts and Remain Bamberg Proud and Strong

Bamberg, South Carolina (September 2024) – “Bamberg County has bounced back from devastating economic blows in the past, and we will again, but we need help to achieve that goal...help from the state and federal government. We also need help from our citizens; we need them to patiently stand by us during this long, challenging clean-up and rebuilding process.” stated County Administrator Joey Preston.

After marginal economic growth and several successful initiatives in 2023, on January 9, 2024, Bamberg was pummeled by an E-F 2 tornado with 125 mph winds, which caused nearly \$3 million in damage and irrevocably altered the landscape of Downtown Bamberg, the County Seat. While Bamberg County and City officials had been diligently working to clean up that particular mess, Mother Nature—in the form of Tropical Storm Debby—struck again in early August, less than seven months after the tornado. This time, the main culprits were rain, rain, and more rain, resulting in widespread flooding and washed-out residential roads.

Massive devastation in such a short amount of time has stretched an already skeleton crew with limited capacity to what many would consider the breaking point. However, Bamberg County and City leaders continue to make progress every day. Through grit, determination, assistance from state and national entities, and some good old fashioned stick-to-itiveness, Bamberg will become whole again.

Mr. Preston said, “Structural engineers and roofing specialists have surveyed and inspected the downtown damage to buildings and have made recommendations to ensure the most safe and expeditious clean-up process possible. Both County and City officials continue to aggressively implement these recommendations,” stated Preston.

Although the recent storms have necessitated the pause of some projects, county leaders are forging ahead as much as possible with other projects like the Discovery Center/Museum, the completion of the health and public services complex, and a Grand Central Station community complex. Ultimately, the ability to multitask and prioritize urgent projects has been instrumental in Bamberg's clean-up efforts. Progress has been made, and the work continues. Currently, all roads impacted by Tropical Storm Debby have reopened with the exception of Sweet Pea Road.

County Council Chairman Evert Comer, Jr. said, "Hopefully, Mother Nature will provide Bamberg, SC, with some breathing room for the remainder of the 2024 hurricane season. Regardless of the outcome, our small, resilient, and tenacious community will continue to lean on one another, pray for one another, and encourage one another. We are Bamberg PROUD and Bamberg STRONG and always will be."

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For more information on this press release, email info@bambergcounty.sc.gov