



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: News Media

From: Bamberg County Administration

Date: May 21, 2024

Re: Bamberg County Finally Breaks Ground on Broadband Expansion!

Bamberg, South Carolina (May, 2024) – If patience is a virtue, then Bamberg County Council and Administration are among the most virtuous. After ten years and eleven applications, Bamberg County Council broke ground on broadband expansion last Friday at the Bamberg County Airport entrance. Bamberg County and City officials, USDA Field Staff Branch Chief Shannon LeGree, Senator Graham’s Midlands Regional Director Laurie Traywichk, and William Metts of Metts Engineering participated in the festivities.

Bamberg County was awarded a \$12 million USDA federal grant last year to spearhead the long-awaited and desperately-needed broadband expansion project. The grant was funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Bamberg County Council Chairman Evert Comer, Jr. opened the ceremony followed by an introduction and remarks by Bamberg County Administrator Joey Preston. Mr. Comer stated the broadband groundbreaking will “greatly enhance the quality of life for Bamberg County students, residents, and business owners,” thanking Congressman Clyburn and others who assisted with the grant process.

Mr. Preston thanked the USDA, Metts Engineering, as well as Bamberg’s “progressive-thinking County Council,” noting this milestone would not be possible “without such tenacity and teamwork.”

Following Mr. Preston’s remarks, Engineer William Metts explained the technical aspects of the expansion, which will include “100% buried fiber that will connect 2250 households, 244 businesses, 60 farms, and 24 educational facilities” in the area.

Special guest, USDA Field Staff Branch Chief Shannon LeGree explained, “This grant is part of the fourth round of funding from the federal Reconnect Program, which has focused particularly on rural communities with a goal of connecting everyone by 2030.” LeGree continued, “Covid shed a bright light on the importance of broadband as an essential service for all Americans.”

Bamberg County Councilman Larry Haynes stated, “This is a great accomplishment to help students at home and in school” while Councilman Spencer Donaldson pointed out, “They could have chosen any county, and we are so appreciative Bamberg County made the cut, creating a brighter future for our children.”

Before the ceremonial groundbreaking, golden shovels and all, Bamberg Mayor Nancy Foster shared the historical nature of groundbreakings: “A groundbreaking represents a sacred deposit to Earth in exchange for a strong and lasting foundation.”

Bamberg City Councilman Corey Ramsey stated, “We must continue to be inventive and forward-thinking so our children and grandchildren will continue to prosper.” After he and several other County and City leaders “broke ground,” Mr. Ramsey closed the ceremony in prayer.

Indeed, patience is a virtue.

####

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