

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

January 16, 2024
OTHERS PRESENT

Finch Holt, Vice Chair
Ethel Gwynn
Rick McVey
Frank Rose
Tim Yarbrough

Tony Smith, County Manager
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager
Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director
Russell Johnston, County Attorney
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in regular session on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library.

WELCOME:

Vice Chairman Holt called the meeting to order, and welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting of the Caswell County Board of Commissioners. Then all paused for a moment of Silent Prayer, and the Board of Commissioners and all the guest in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Caswell Broadcasting Network: Ed Heintz had left.

Shannon Moretz: Good Evening. I am Shannon Moretz. I do fill many roles in the community, but tonight I am speaking as a member of Caswell County's Human Relations Commission.

The Commission recently requested that this board consider a proclamation acknowledging today, January 16th, 2024 as the National Day of Racial Healing. That request was removed from the agenda as you know and a revised draft of the proclamation was sent to the interim county manager who submitted it to the county attorney for review.

The proclamation does not appear on your agenda tonight, but that does not change the fact that today is in fact, the National Day of Racial Healing. I may not be able to speak on behalf of the Caswell County Board of Commissioners, but I can speak on behalf of the Caswell County Human Relations Commission and many other members of our community when I proclaim:

That WE BELIEVE that every person has the right to every opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in nurturing environments that do not violate their safety, dignity, and humanity; and

We all have a unique responsibility and opportunity to work collaboratively to create courageous and supportive environments that acknowledge the past; promote the healing of the wounds created by racial, ethnic basis, and build an equitable and just society where every person can thrive; and

We continue to dedicate ourselves to the principles of truth, racial healing and transformation, in order to bring the necessary changes in thinking and behavior that will propel our great county forward as a unified force where all biases become a thing of the past; and

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We believe that racial healing is vital and crucial to the education, social, mental, and overall well-being of all.

We can't heal what we don't understand, and we can't understand what we don't talk about.

I know that there are some in the community who don't understand why this keeps coming up. It's a lot like how able-bodied people don't understand the importance of accessibility until they or somebody that they love is in a wheelchair. I also know that there are a lot of people who only speak of such things in whispers behind closed doors because they're afraid they'll upset the wrong group. That in and of itself is indicative of a problem.

We, the Human Relations Commission, invite you, the Board of Commissioners, to explore perspectives other than your own, learn about how policy and practices can create or perpetuate inequalities, not just along racial lines, but along class, sex, gender, age, religion, ability, etc. We will be sure to invite you to participate in trainings we plan to host in 2024, and we invite you to let us know if there are particular topics or concepts related to improving human relations that you'd like to explore. We'd love to help this board develop a better understanding of how racism, classism, sexism, etc. is holding us all back and explore ways our community can move forward together. Thank you for your time.

Benton K. Thompson: Thank you for your time. I'm Benton Kay Covington Thompson from Blanch, NC. I was born in Caswell County, and except for the three years receiving my nursing education, I have lived here for 79+ years. I graduated from Bartlett Yancey High School in 1962 in a small class prior to the white schools consolidating and prior to our schools integrating. Growing up on a farm, I was exposed to a number of black people on the farm and in the community, and I honor these experiences. In my career, I have worked with and rented services to many blacks and learned so much as well as Hispanics. Most of my nursing career has been in Caswell County. As I have remembered my local, state, and national history education, I have discovered that much of what I was taught or learned in our schools was inaccurate and incomplete. I was privileged over the last several years to have been involved in a racism study led by the Reverend Allison Lancaster, former pastor of Prospect United Methodist Church. These studies taught me so much factual information that I had never learned, and in our very challenging and troubling history of racial abuse and injustices endured by our black brothers and sisters here in our state and in our country. It also instilled in me to try to do what I can to no longer be a part of that denial and to strive to show the love of our Lord to all people I come in contact with. Denial of our prejudice, which we all have including myself, does not help us grow but instills untruths that cause harm. We all have prejudices, whether they are learned from our homes, our schools, our work, and environment, etc., but by striving to expose them to the light to discover their truths of good or evil, we can grow wiser or stay entrenched in the past and refuse to embrace a better future. I'm one of 10 caring volunteer members of diversity of the Caswell Human Relations Commission. We will strive to help those who desire to grow in showing fairness to all residents as our US Constitution so outlined and our state and our County

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should want to achieve with cooperative individuals and community involvement. The goal is for a better and more equitable future that current and potential residents and businesses will embrace as a place that they will want to remain in, to come to, to raise their families, to work, and to call home. Do not be afraid of us, but be grateful for this group. We covet your support. Thank you.

Kyle Warren Love: Thank you for your time. My name is Kyle Warren Love, and I live in Prospect Hill. I am speaking today in honor of the National Day of Racial Healing. As someone who grew up on land once nurtured by people who were enslaved by my family, I know firsthand the fearful tactics used to influence white people not to stand up for racial justice. I am here today to ask you to be brave and take a stand to honor the work done in our past and improve relations for black, indigenous, and people of color, BIPAC people, and the work still needed to continue those improvements. One small step is to pass the proclamation provided by the Human Relations Commission honoring the National Day of Racial Healing. Growing up in Caswell taught me many things: how to be kind and help out your neighbors, how to show and give love, and how to forgive and heal. An extremely important step in this is accepting that there is still healing to be done. I have been honored to serve on the Human Relations Commission and learn more about the history of this county, my home, which I love so dearly. This history has taught me that healing isn't easy, but we have to at least try. The people who raised me is why I'm here speaking today. They taught me to be brave and stand up for what's right. I know what's right is accepting the reality of our past, seeing the inequality of the present, and embracing the need to continue the healing of the future. I ask you today to be leaders, to be brave, and pass the proclamation honoring the National Day of Racial Healing. Thank you.

RECOGNITIONS:

There were no recognitions.

AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gwynn and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** to approve the agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. January 2, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. January 8, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** approve the consent agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

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DISCUSSION ITEMS:

CRUISE PELHAM BUSINESS PARK TIMBER:

Interim County Manager Smith said yes. I'd like for the Commissioners tonight to maybe consider having the approximately 60 acres of timber in the Pelham Industrial Park cruised for income off the site to be used for future roads, signage, and possibly the level of additional pay for a shell building, a restaurant, or whatever it might be. That would let us see the property better, and we could possibly grub some of the stumps, and so forth. Like I said we could prepare for future development.

Vice Chairman Holt said can I ask a question? Are we talking clear-cut? Interim County Manager Smith said yes sir. I think it would have to be clear-cut?

Commissioner McVey said you got anybody in mind? Interim County Manager Smith said no. We've talked to a couple people, but we don't have any contracts. We wanted to talk to the Board first. Commissioner McVey said so you don't have any idea the amount of money that would be. Interim County Manager Smith said no sir. I could cruise it and report back to the Board my findings.

Commissioner Rose said basically we're looking at seeing how much the value is, and then putting that money back into... Interim County Manager Smith said I would like to roll it right back into the park and put a nice entrance there with signage. Like I said maybe use some of that money to grub the site and prepare for additional plants.

Commissioner McVey said how many acres is involved in the timber? Interim County Manager Smith said it's 78 acres now so I'd say probably 60 acres of timber.

Vice Chairman Holt said just for a thought. It always seemed to cost us about as much to remove all the stumps and grub it, as it did to cut the timber. I mean it's almost like an even swap because you got to haul them off. Interim County Manager Smith said right. Right. I would like to have it to where it looks good from the road, but future developers could bear that cost. Vice Chairman Holt said which would be? This is not going to be the Piedmont Community College having to pay for this. Interim County Manager Smith said oh no sir. That would be included in the cost of the land for future developers. Vice Chairman Holt said okay.

Commissioner Rose said I'd like to see what it's worth. I mean it's almost like any other commodity. It's up and down, but somebody should be able to give us a ballpark of how much we're looking at. Interim County Manager Smith said we'll proceed with that if the Board agrees.

Vice Chairman Holt asked if there was any more discussion? Hearing none, he moved on.

ZITEL UPDATE:

Interim County Manager Smith said Rodney, are you on the line? Rodney Gray said I'm here. Can you guys hear me? Interim County Manager Smith said yes sir. Mr. Gray said good evening members of the Board. I want to apologize first for not being able to make it down in person. I

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had all intents and purposes of being down there, but the five plus inches of snow we got here in Virginia and the 12 degrees that it is outside right now are kind of preventing me from wanting to make that drive. I don't have an actual slideshow or presentation for you. I just wanted to give you guys an update of where we stand on the Phase One Project for Zitel. All the materials, the fiber and all the materials to do the build, have been purchased, have been received, and are on our lay down yard here in Virginia just north of you guys. We have two contracts in place with outside subcontractors to put that fiber in the ground. We have our joint use agreement with Halifax power EMC, and we've done all the pre-engineering, the staking, and the field engineering is complete to put all of the fiber on the poles and/or in the ground. So all engineering is completed, and we submit our second quarter report to NCDIT, North Carolina Department of Information Technology, tonight. I think it was submitted earlier today that provides them with all that information. Construction is scheduled to start as soon as NCDIT gets their reimbursement process set. They kind of, in my opinion, put the cart before the horse. We have submitted our invoices for the materials but have yet to be reimbursed for the cost of materials going towards the grant because they don't exactly have the procedure in place yet. We were one of the first providers to actually, or I think we were the first provider to submit our invoices for materials for the counties in North Carolina that we received the GREAT Grant for. They didn't quite know yet what to do with them. So I think there's been some legislative changes to how the process is and the information that they need from us. We have everything submitted, and I think it's just waiting for NCDIT to make the final commitment. We need to get some of those monies reimbursed because we've already paid all the vendors for the fiber for four different counties in North Carolina. You guys, Person, Halifax, and Warren County have the materials, or they have been purchased and received. Our CLEC has been approved, and we're waiting for the final paperwork to come to us. Our attorney has informed us that Raleigh has approved the CLEC application, and all that is done and should be back with us. We've had a couple meetings with NCDOT Regional members about our permitting process. We have that procedure completely in place so we're ready to hit the ground running. We imagine that the 144 miles of fiber is going to take us about eight months to get it completely installed. Probably once we start the installation, within two months we'll be able to turn on the first customers. So we're hoping within the next month... We've got one subcontractor, the MIRS Group, that's ready to go. They have equipment on the East Coast and are ready to start getting fiber into the ground. Now I'm open to any questions you guys have for me. I'll be glad to answer them for you.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mr. Gray, how many households are you looking at in Caswell. Mr. Gray said so currently within what we call a thousand-foot buffer from our mainline fiber that we're going to put on the route map, which I think is part of the presentation I shared with you guys last time, we're going to be able to service 3,812 households. Those are addressable addresses by your GIS system. So that does not include empty lots or lots that do not have addresses on the 911 system and your GIS system. So there's probably more parcels than that that we'll be able to service. They just haven't been developed and you guys haven't assigned an

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actual physical address to them yet. We do a thousand foot drop from the mainland fiber for free. Now obviously there are maybe some addresses in there that won't get that service because it could be that the thousand-foot buffer or the computer system said we can service these, but they're within a 1,000 foot but on the other side of a river, a creek, or a railroad track that we can't cross with those drops. But we tried to comb through that engineering data and pull out as many of those addresses as possible. So I'd say there's probably only one, two, or three in there that are like that that we weren't able to find.

Vice Chairman Holt asked what area of the county is this? What area of the county are we looking at? Interim County Manager Smith said we're talking about a good part of Old 86 up to new 86 up by the ABC Store. It's primarily the Providence area. Mr. Gray said do you guys have the ability to see my screen? Can I share my screen and put a map up? I can show you an exact map of what we have. Vice Chairman Holt said I think so. Mr. Gray said all right. I think the moderator is going to have to give me permission to share my screen. There it is. Vice chairman Holt said there you go. Mr. Gray said so that shows our complete route map. We can actually provide, if you want, I can send down to Tony a CSV file that would have every individual of those 3,812 addresses listed in the CSV file. He can probably give that to your GIS team, and the GIS team can then plot those. Usually I know some of the counties here in Virginia that we've been building, their GIS department will put a layer on the GIS system called incoming Zitel Fiber, and people can search on that GIS system to see if they're one of the addresses that fit on this. We are working with our website designer right now to get that CSV file and this GIS map put into the background so citizens can search their address and see if they fall within that footprint. Interim County Manager Smith said that would be wonderful because we get numerous calls from citizens wanting to know when they're going to be connected. If I had that map, I could readily go to it and give them an answer. Mr. Gray said sure. I can email that down to you guys, and you can also pass them along our information. It's very easy zitel.com, or give them our office number and tell them to give us a call. We can answer any of their questions. We have pre-sign ups open right now, and they can pre-sign up for service. We do not give perspective and everybody gets upset with this, but basically we give them the grant completion date as the date they're going to get turned up. We predicate that with the concept of it could be, will be, and should be before then. Construction used to give estimates to customer service, and customer service would then say construction estimates your neighborhood will be completed in two months. Two months and one day we're getting very angry phone calls. Because of weather, snow, rain, whatever, permits being held up by NC DOT or V Dot, would just cause us to not be able to meet that perspective possible commitment that we had said to the citizens, and so we just don't really give out that type of detailed construction estimates anymore directly to future customers. But we'll be glad to talk to them, tell them about the routes, tell them where we can put fiber, if we're going to be able to turn them up, what the time frames are looking like, and just talk to them as openly as we can. Interim County Manager Smith asked do you have a contact name? Mr. Gray said sure. You can just give them our customer service phone number,

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which is area code 540-328-1970. I do not have our 1-800 number on hand to give that to you, but I can include that in an email when I send these maps down to you.

Commissioner Yarbrough said if none of the other Commissioners object, the County Fire Marshall has a question for Mr. Gray concerning service there at the fire departments that Zitel may be offering. Mr. Gray said sure. Vernon Massengill, fire Marshall, said Rodney, we've talked a couple of meetings, and you had discussed using five fire departments to put a transformer or whatever you called it into each of the fire departments. Number one, is that still in effect, and number two, have you talked to any of them yet? Mr. Gray said we have not. It is still 100% a possibility. Let me see if I can find the other map. Can you see that one? The Board replied yes sir. Mr. Gray said so those are the volunteer fire and rescue departments that we would consider or would like to contact about using. I can email that map down to anybody that wants to have it. We have not reached out to them yet. So just so everybody understands what we do. If everybody knows what a PoP is, a PoP is a Point of Presence, and I know you've seen one. They're those little ugly beige buildings that are like 15 foot by 10 foot on the corner of some property and got a chain link fence around them and a gravel parking lot in them. They're the boosting points for communications companies to boost their signal as they send it out around the community. What we've come to do here in Virginia is we've determined that Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squads are within the 20 km radius around the communities where we're going to build. They have generators. They have full-time access to their building, and they don't like to spend money for something like an internet service so we trade internet, phone, and TV services to the volunteer fire departments. We give them to them for free, if they let us use a closet hooked into their power and their generator. Our equipment does not take much power up at all. The fire departments here in Virginia that we work with have said they have seen no increase in their power bill, and they save an average of \$500, \$600 to \$700 a month in getting free internet services and free equipment from us in exchange for running our fiber into their building and utilizing a small closet to put a rack of equipment in. So yes, it's definitely still the plan. We would love to do it. We just have not ... We we need to get the reimbursement stuff with the NCDIT nail down and get that moving forward before we start reach down and making any headway within the local community. Fire Marshall Massengill said okay. I've already talked to the chiefs of those fire departments that you have marked, and as soon as you get to that point, we probably need to sit down with all of those and get this straight. Mr. Gray said yes sir. Not a problem.

Vice Chairman Holt asked if there was anything else? Then said I appreciate it, and Interim County Manager Smith said thank you, Mr. Gray. Mr. Gray said thank you very much. You guys have a wonderful evening and take care.

SPECTRUM UPDATE:

Justin DeLancey said good evening everyone. So these are the presentations that I really enjoy giving. It is a PowerPoint. We've already come thru and built a good sized project, and now we're on the verge of starting another one. So we got really exciting news, and we're really

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pleased and really thankful with the partnership and the county through our first RDOF build, which was with our federal funds. Now we're coming back through. Do you want me to just...? So short, quick history. Obviously this is just my involvement with the county. You guys journey with trying to get broadband for your community predates that quite significantly. I know that you were kind of left at the altar quite a few times, and we have tried to make amends for that. Where the providers have let you down, we tried to come through and really provide a top-notch service in a timely fashion. So you can kind of see we started with RDOF which we were awarded at the end of 2020. That was a six-year build for RDOF. It was a Federal grant program and we prioritized Caswell County and got it to the front of the line. Now that project's complete. We initially thought that it was going to be right around 4,000 addresses. When we got into the county, that 4,000 address mark was done off of a desktop design where we've got a guy in I think Colorado that's sitting at a desk and trying to look at Google Maps and figure out how many homes there are. When we actually got boots on the ground, it was a little less than that. Our as built total came out to be right at 3,600. So that's 3,600 previously unserved addresses, and I think that's a key point as well. It's not as if we're overbuilding another provider to boost numbers, it's previously unserved addresses. We completed that substantially in October so we're done with that. I haven't heard a whole lot of complaints. Typically, they rise up to me. I think customers in the county are pretty happy. We've seen a pretty large adoption rate in the county so I think that was a very successful project. Then we were very happy... that works. Thank you. Sorry I know that's just not the cleanest thing. So in blue was RDOF. Basically if your house was in that area, it got covered. There are some very small caveats, but 99.99% of the homes within those areas got covered. In red are 606 address points that we won through the GREAT Grant. So Zitel, who you just heard from, won your first round GREAT Grant. The State had some extra money left over in the pot so they gave providers sort of a second shot, if they had wide ranging applications. Those were the non-duplicate addresses from Zitel. So that's 606 again previously unserved addresses that we will be connecting through the GREAT Grant. We have already started construction on this so individual in the Cherry Grove area are getting lit up as we speak. Then you'll likely see us kind of working a clockwise motion around the county. As with Zitel, we can meet more periodically with you and try and give you a ballpark of when people in each quadrant might get lit up, but I don't want to just stand up here today and give you a ballpark month because weather might happen. Snow might happen. DOT, even though we work closely with DOT, DOT might knock some permits back. So we are on track to finish that well ahead of the two-year timetable that we have to build it. I would kind of expect us to see within the next eight months to a year all that be knocked out and us be done.

Mr. DeLancey said I did kind of quickly want to walk through just what our construction process looks like. And again we're kind of in a weird spot because we've already had such a large project come through. You've probably seen our trucks throughout the county. We start out with a walkout to assess the houses. Mostly the walkout is to figure out the condition of power poles, which is what we hang our fiber on. We'll go through the walkout. We'll figure out the heights of

each poles, and how each poll is looking. Then we'll go into the design phase. Keep going. Design is where we'll sit down and try to figure out the links that we need to go. What permits and things we need to get the engineering ready for permits. We roll into permits, and I like to think of permitting and make ready as kind of the same process. Most of it is done with the power pole owners. They permit us to be on their polls so we enter into negotiations with them on do we have to replace a pole, do we need to anchor a pole, and things like that and get permitted for it. The same with DOT, and then Make- Ready is the same process. Then construction begins, and about a month after we come through and construct an area or a month and a half, then we'll activate customers. I ran through all that really quickly because I anticipated some questions, and I don't want to keep you guys up. So I'm happy to answer any questions. I'm happy to go over anything in more detail, if you have any detailed questions.

Commissioner Yarbrough said you said 3,600 customers on RDOF? Mr. DeLancey said yes sir. Commissioner Yarbrough said now could you back up to the map. Mr. DeLancey said yes sir. Commissioner Yarbrough said the one that's got the blue on it. Right there. Customer that are not in the blue but or adjacent to it, they were allowed to tap in. Mr. DeLancey said so how RDOF worked was it was a reverse auction. The Feds gave us census block groups that were completely unserved. So if a provider claimed to serve one address in a census block, it was taken off the table. We bid on every single unserved block that we could in the county. So what we did was when we started out, we were going to fill every block. Then along the edges, typically they're bound by roads. If you're on the other side of a road from a block, we brought you in. If you were kind of down sort of an offshoot road where you had a few houses, we brought you in. So as much as we could kind of grab out as we were going through we did. Commissioner Yarbrough said so construction has finished as far as RDOF. Mr. DeLancey said yes sir. We are complete. Commissioner Yarbrough said is everyone that was eligible and wanted to get hooked up using RDOF on that construction, have they all been hooked up? Or do you still have customers waiting? Mr. DeLancey said no sir. The construction teams have rolled. The RDOF teams are gone. Commissioner Yarbrough said I'm talking about as far as hooking up individual homes. Everything's done? Mr. DeLancey said yes sir. When our construction teams roll through, they have it set up to where a technician can come back in and a technician can finish the install. So there may be an address that is looking for an install, and we haven't gotten to an install. But I would think at this point enough time has lapsed that, if someone requested service when we completed, they would have been scheduled for an install by now. Typically, our installs run about two to two and a half weeks at the most. It's kind of behind or lagging behind when you request an install when there actually is an install. I'm not saying that there might not be a situation where someone has a long drop. So if their driveway is longer than 1500 feet or if they live on a private road and we have to get easements from other homeowners, that will slow down the process. But 99.9% if you're in a blue area unless there's weird, strange caveats, it's done. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. Mr. DeLancey said do you have a particular, I sense that you have a particular area in mind. Commissioner Yarbrough said I was hooked up today.

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Mr. DeLancey said okay, and I didn't even make a phone call. Commissioner Yarbrough said believe you, my wife made several. Mr. DeLancey said that is perfect time. Commissioner Yarbrough said are you leaving after your presentation or are you going to hang around? Mr. DeLancey said I'm going to hang around. Commissioner Yarbrough said I want to talk to you after this.

Interim County Manager Smith said Justin, I have a question. The 3,600 potential connections, what percent of those have actually asked for your service? Mr. DeLancey said so I can't share that. It's proprietary. What I can share is that typically what we see in our RDOF and Rural completely new service builds, we see about a 40% to 45% acceptance rate. So that's sort of across the board what we plan to see. In some instances, it's more. I don't know that we really see less than that, but in some instances, it's quite a bit more. But safe bet is around 40-45%. What else guys?

Interim County Manager Smith said I have another question. Can you talk a little bit about the CAB project, and how this is going to be bided? What the County's participation will be in that project? Mr. DeLancey said yes sir. As you know and some of you guys might have heard, the CAB process was funded by the State at the same time that the GREAT Grant was. As you can see we've got the GREAT Grant started building, and we're still talking about getting CAB money out the door. So the State's kind of drug its feet on CAB fund. There are still some uncertain things about CAB that we don't know, but the gist of it is it is a State Finance Grant in which the county chooses its partner. So the State basically provides the county with a list of qualified providers that have requested to be partners in a particular County. The State provides eligible address lists. Then once that happens, and we're in short order of setting up, we probably need to set up a meeting to talk about it. Providers will get in the room with the county, and say this is the project that we can build. There is a RFP component. Kind of it's a bid component. That way it's not a Soul Source thing, but essentially the county will drive the process. There is a 35% match on the County's part to any project so that's a limiting thing. We tried to get some legislation changed around that to open that up because when you look at a 35% match, you're really limiting on how big of a build you can go. Now fortunately from where you all are sitting at between RDOF, what you've got with GREAT with us, what Zitel intends to build, and you've got Comcast through Yanceyville; you guys are well on your way. It's predominantly served now. It's kind of the onesie twosie where it's kind of really odd situations or instances where you might have a long drop instances like the gentleman spoke about earlier where your driveway goes across a railroad track. Things that are typically difficult for providers to go and build to, CAB can bridge that gap. Interim County Manager Smith said what criteria do we use to determine the coverage areas for CAB? Mr. DeLancey said the State will provide CAB eligible address points, and essentially all that is is the FCC has recently redone their broadband mapping. The FCC has tried to get to an address level broadband mapping system. I think it's a good start. I think there are some issues with it, but in general, it is a much better system than what they've had in the past. The State's taken the FCC data on coverage, compiled it with the

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results of its Broadband survey that it took a couple years putting out into the street, and kind of meshed those together and figured out where there are holes in service. So at this point, it seems like it's a pretty good start. Then obviously many projects will just use that as a starting point and then Branch out from there.

Deputy County Manager Williamson asked will there still be the BEAD Grant as well? Justin DeLancey said yes. So that's another thing. So we had \$400 million in GREAT Grant. We've got \$400 million in CAB. There is a \$100 million in what's called a Stop Gap Program, which is essentially your onesies and twosies that providers can tap into. There's another \$100 million in a pole replacement fund for providers to get. So you're already looking at a billion dollars that the State's appropriated. On top of that, there's \$1.5 billion in Federal funding that will start to flow next year, and all of that is for broadband. So it's broadband construction, broadband adoption, and any facet of broadband that money can be used for. So there's going to be a lot more money coming in from the Feds to the States to dole out for broadband expansion. I think if I'm doing my job right, certainly within the next four, five, or six years there really shouldn't be anybody in the county without broadband.

Interim County Manager Smith said I think the county really has been blessed to have the service we've gotten. We're ahead of most other counties. Mr. DeLancey said I'll honestly say you guys are. When I look at the counties that I cover, once we complete our RDOF builds, we will be in 96 counties in the state, and we're in 41 states across the country. When I look at your county and what we've built so far for a rural county, you guys are well ahead of the curve. I mean well ahead of the curve.

Vice Chairman Holt said thank you, and Justin DeLancey said I'll be around for questions.

CEAD UPDATE:

Dr. Senegal said good evening. I'm Dr. Pamela Senegal, and I'm President of Piedmont Community College. I'd like to continue the good news trend, and I think I've sent our PowerPoint. I'll do the same thing and give you a one finger signal as we proceed. But while she's pulling it up, I'll share some good news. We had our first Associate Degree Nursing cohort finish up from Caswell about three weeks ago. They've all tested for the statewide nurse exam, and we had 100% pass. I just wanted to share. Good. I had just enough time to share my good news. All right.

So a couple of things. I wanted to give you all some updates on our CEAD Project and where we are with phase one. So I wanted to do sort of a context set and to remind you of all the components that go into this project. Hopefully what you'll see in here is that we phased the project into three different sections. You'll notice here that there are three phases indicated by color. The pink phase is that first phase, orange is the second, and then blue is the third phase. The first phase, this is where we're laying down all the infrastructure for the entirety of the project. We're front loading this first phase with all of that infrastructure to make sure that as we go along to the subsequent phases that we're not stymied by water, sewer, power, data, all those

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kinds of things, or worse yet having to go back and redo some things. So we're doing all that up front.

The second piece that's a huge part of Phase 1 also includes the food hub. It also includes an incubator farm spaces for students, and those are the big things. Those are the big components. If we go to the next slide, we actually finally have renderings. So what I want you to see here is the food hub. Remember our partner for the food hub is a company called 4P. They've already started working with local farmers. They're already working with the Piedmont Progressive Farmers Cooperative (PPFC) to help increase the yield rate that they're getting or the pay rate that they're getting for their goods and their services. They've also done some grants for PPFC members so that they can make investments, and they can continue to grow and to produce more eggs. One of the best partnership examples that I can tell you about right now with 4P is they are supplying Elon University with all of their eggs. That's a result of this project. It's not even done, and we're already seeing economic benefits for our local farmers. So that's exciting for us. What you'll notice about the food hub is that there are bay doors, and then on the inside we've got refrigerated storage units. Farmers, who are contracted with 4P will have a code. So whenever they bring their harvest in, they'll be able to drive it in, punch their code in, and deliver their goods to their refrigerated area. That can happen after hours or it can happen early in the morning, but it's for the convenience and safety. The other thing that will happen in this space is that we'll have an office area, and we're dedicating one of those offices for our local food suppliers that are working with agencies like the Caswell Parish to make sure that food goods can get back out to them. One of the waste areas right now in our food system are that when contract farmers bring goods in and if something doesn't meet the exacting qualifications, then it gets tossed. Now what we'll be able to do is simply move that over and that will then be repurposed to community organizations that need it and will have refrigerated space to actually store it and keep it safe until it can get into the hands of families that need it. So we're excited about this additional contribution that we'll be able to build into this process. There's also space there for forklift training. Then there's a staff amenity area, but that's a rendering of how that food hub space will look with 4p as our partner.

If you go to the next one, it'll show you another component of Phase 1 which is the incubator farm plots. So this is where we'll have the agricultural barn support structures, a hoop house, a coolbots, farm areas, and outdoor meeting spaces, and then just to the right of this area, we'll have half acre to one acre plots for Ag. Business students. So that not only are they going to learn about the technical parts of how to be successful in agriculture, but they're going to have a chance to actually grow goods on their incubator farm plot that are that are located there. So those are the major components of Phase 1.

If you go to the next slide, you'll see some of the things that are included in Phase 2. What we love about this one, of course as the President of the college it's one of my favorite buildings, is the education building. We decided to put that into Phase 2 because we wanted to focus on the economic impacts for our community first. Then we'll come behind that with additional

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education. This is also the place, if you'll remember, where we'll have a co-branded clinic because that's one of the things that's missing in that area of Caswell County. So there are several days a week that that'll operate as a clinic. The days it's not operating as a clinic, it becomes a classroom learning space for Certified Nursing Assistants and for other health care providers. So every space has more than one use. We're not just spending a dollar one way; we're trying to figure out how to make that same dollar go a couple of different ways. We're also looking for private funders for sculpture gardens. So let me know if you're interested in sponsoring a lovely piece of art out front for the Pacer statue similar to what we have on our main campus in Person County. We'll also have cattle there, but they won't be there 24 hours a day. We're not hiring a shepherd or a herder. People will be able to bring them in for classroom purposes so that students will be able to better understand, and then they will leave. They will not be there 24 hours 365. There's also space there, if you'll notice, there's a wide porch in the front. The building is positioned so that they'll have the vistas of the mountains across the way. So it's just a gorgeous spot. Then that should say rural forums. But spell check doesn't know when you put the wrong word; it just knows when it's not spelled correctly. Okay, so that's one of the major components of Phase 2.

Then on the next slide, I'll show you a rendering of what Phase 3 will look like. This is where we finally get to the livestock building where we can have shows. Instead of our students, our 4H students always having to go somewhere else, we'll be able to actually have some of those shows here locally. We'll also be able to do CDL truck driver training, in addition to having walking trails, orchards, and those kinds of things. So far to date, we've raised \$10.625 million for Phase 1. We have been waiting, and you can go to the next slide. We've been waiting for another two and a quarter million from Representative Manning's office out of the Federal government. But if you've been paying attention to what's going on in the Federal levels, we're not quite clear as to when that money will be shaken loose. So what we've decided is to go ahead and value engineer Phase 1 to fit the cash that we have in hand so that we can go ahead and get it through design, and we can start bidding on construction. We listed everything we took out of the project that would represent that two and a quarter in case it comes through. It's been listed as an alternate; it'll still be bid out. So should that money shake loose, we'll be able to easily add those things back in, but they're not things that take away from the core elements of Phase 1.

The other good news is I've hired a full-time Foundation Executive Director, and one of her first priorities is to launch a capital campaign for phases two and three. So we will begin the effort of looking for corporate sponsors for phases two and three so that we can begin construction on those phases as well. Once we get to fourth quarter, that's when we'll actually have construction begin. We've already done some site clearing. We've already cleared out the retention ponds. We put some fencing out there, and we put some cover crops down for the incubator plots. So we've already started that piece. We anticipate that from the moment that the construction awards are given out, then it's an 18month construction period from there. So that's where we are.

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The other thing that we've been doing in addition to the CEAD Projects is we've literally been planting seeds. So on the next slide, the other thing that we've been doing is encouraging young people to consider careers in agriculture. Everyone in Caswell County were all in for agriculture, and so what we realized that we needed to do was to start in elementary school with encouraging young people to consider. So this is something that started out in one elementary school, and the results have been so positive that we were asked to expand this after school program to now this number of elementary schools. In addition, we work with the Caswell Homeschoolers. The big difference is that we found that students who participate in this after school, their reading scores are better and their math scores are better. It's all using an agricultural setting. So sometimes they're having so much fun doing a strawberry DNA pull, they don't even realize that they just did math, and they just read something. So that's been really exciting for us to help them dream a little bit more about careers potentially in agriculture. So if you go to the next slide. I thought I had some more pictures here. Okay, never mind. All right so I'm done now. What questions do you have for me?

Vice Chairman Holt said there was a few slides back when you talking about the clinic, and I couldn't understand what you said. I'm sorry. Dr. Senegal said so it's in Phase 2. So as part of the education building, we're structuring a classroom. Think about a health classroom, but when you walk in it'll have a reception area. It'll have examination rooms, and it'll also have a large classroom. So that's actually how we're setting up our health classrooms now. On the days we're not using it for Nursing Assistant training or preparing people to be Home Health Aids, we'll partner with our local Health Department or with some other entity so that they can run a health clinic there. Think about like a CVS Minute Clinic, that kind of thing. So it's not for everything. So if you need heart surgery, then this is not the place that you should go to, but if you need your diabetes checked, there will be a Licensed Practical Nurse that should be able to write you a prescription for those kinds of things. If you've got a cold, if you think you have strep, those are the kinds of things that you would typically go there for because there's a vast need for that in that community.

Commissioner Gwynn said let me ask you about the CDL licensing. Would that be an ongoing class, or just how would that work. Dr. Senegal said so right now in Person County, remember the college serves both Person and Caswell counties, we partner with a third party provider to offer CDL truck driver training. It's about a 10-week program. The reason we partnered with a third party to do it is because quite frankly I lack confidence that new drivers aren't going to strip the gears on an 18wheeler, and then I'll have to be responsible for fixing all those 18 wheelers. So what we did is we partnered with a company to do that, and the idea is that we would expand that partnership to this location as well. So part of the construction is going ahead and putting in that CDL pad. There's got to be a turnaround area, and it's right by the highway. Apparently you all are ordering a lot of stuff on Amazon because the demand for CDL truck drivers keeps going up and up. So we anticipate that that's something we would offer year long.

Interim County Manager Smith said you stated that Phase 1 includes all the utilities. Dr. Senegal said all the infrastructure and all the utilities. Interim County Manager Smith said will that also include all the excavation for the project? Dr. Senegal said storm and everything. We want to thank our partners at Duke Energy because they're putting in millions into this project that we're not having to add to the overall cost because they see the investment in this. Other funders like the Danville Regional Foundation and the North Carolina Tobacco Trust, there have just been lots and lots of good partners for us on this project, but we would like to not fund phases two and three \$50,000 at a time. It's been quite the road to get to \$10.625, and we'd like to do it just a little a little differently for phases two and three. Although we are not opposed to your \$50,000 check, so please, you are welcome to write those to PCC Foundation. Thank you all for believing in this project. I know it's been a long road, but we continue to be excited about the opportunity that this is for this entire community and for the region. So thank you. The Board said thank you.

ACTION ITEMS:

FY24 BUDGET AMENDMENT #8:

Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director, said here I am again with another budget amendment. So you have in front of you, Commissioners, budget amendment number 8. I skipped over budget amendment number seven; so I'm not going to bring that back to you again for a third time. So this is for the Senior Center. We have two items, and both items are for the Senior Center. Item number one is the Senior Service Housing Improvement Grant. This is a grant received from the Supportive Services for Housing and Home Modifications, and it was approved originally by the Board on 11/21/2022 for Fiscal Year 23. The term of the grant is two years, and funds are to provide help to seniors, 60 years of age or older, with home security and minor home repairs. We are rolling the funds from 23 fiscal year to 24 fiscal year as several projects have been scheduled/completed and ready for payment. These were revenue received upfront and because the funds were not spent in Fiscal Year 2023, they fell to fund balance. Therefore, they must be re-appropriated as the source of funds. So the revenue source would be appropriated fund balance. It would increase by \$75,000, which is the amount of the grant. The expenditure line is the Home Improvement Grant, and that would increase by \$75,00 as well. Do you want me to continue to item two?

Vice Chairman Holt said yes go ahead.

Mrs. Hammock said the second item is the Senior Service Center Without Walls Grant. This is a reimbursement Grant received from Piedmont Triad Regional Foundation to fund various projects held outside of the Senior Center. Programs include, but are not limited to: Health Education, exercise, mental health, nutritional programs, etc. Senior Services will hold these programs at facilities within the faith communities, the fire departments, the Ruritan building, and other accessible venues across the county. The term of this grant is two years. Reimbursement would occur monthly, and there is no county match. So we have a revenue line

within the Senior Services budget of \$70,000 increasing, and an expenditure line also for \$70,000.

Vice Chairman Holt said Is there some discussion on this?

Commissioner Yarbrough said Jennifer both of these, this is grant money on both of these. Mrs. Hammock said yes sir with no county match on either one. Commissioner Yarbrough said item two, is that a new grant whereas item one is a recurring second year of a grant? Mrs. Hammock said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay.

Vice Chairman said what's the pleasure of the Board?

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** approve Item I: Senior Service Housing Improvement Grant. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

Vice Chairman Holt said on the Senior Service Center without Walls Grant: A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** approve Item II of Budget Amendment #8. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

Agricultural Advisory Committee: This Board has four vacancies, and we received 1 application.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Rose and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to **appoint William B. Vernon to the Agricultural Advisory Committee.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

Board of Adjustment Alternate: This Board has two alternates needed.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** to **appoint William B. Vernon to the Board of Adjustment as an Alternate.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

Tourism Development Authority: This Board has one member who resigned, and we received 1 application.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** to **appoint Kamara Barnett to the Tourism Development Authority.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

REDUCE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY MEMBERSHIP:

Vice Chairman Holt said this was brought up last time. Interim County Manager Smith it was brought up last time, and it was recommended as an idea to reduce the membership from 9 to 7. Vice Chairman Holt said I'm not sure where I read it or who told me, but I was thinking each

Township had to be have a representative. The Clerk said yes, that is in the by-laws of that committee. It does state that the nine districts in the county should be represented.

Commissioner McVey asked how many members do we have on there now? Seven? The Clerk said it's five currently. Commissioner McVey said five members. Vice Chairman Holt said so we have four Townships. It was the Townships I was speaking of. So we have four. It's not even, and we're talking about cutting two. I don't think anybody wants not to be represented.

Attorney Johnston said Mr. Smith, are you looking to modify the By-Laws. Interim County Manager Smith said yes sir. That was what was suggested at the last meeting so I wanted to bring it to the Board for action.

Commissioner McVey said can I ask what districts are open? Interim County Manager Smith asked the Clerk if she knew that? The Clerk said I don't think they went by districts because there's two I think in Providence and there's two in one of the other District. So I don't think they're quite based on districts right now. Commissioner McVey said so they didn't follow their guidelines. The Clerk said they did not. Commissioner McVey said well if they didn't follow their guidelines and we're having trouble getting more people, I would suggest that we cut it down to seven. Interim County Manager Smith said we've advertised it for a long time.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** to cut it from nine members on the committee to seven. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

Commissioner Yarbrough said so we have five counting Mr. Vernon or does he make six? The Clerk said he would make six because right now we have Ken Watlington, who's in Yanceyville, Lucas Bernard, who's from Blanch, Brian Singleton in Yanceyville, B. Allen Smith is in Blanch, Matthew Solomon is Prospect Hill, and Mr. Vernon is Milton. Commissioner Yarbrough said so we have one opening now after tonight when we changed it? Interim County Manager Smith said correct.

COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATES:

Interim County Manager Smith said yes sir, I've got several items. First Teresa Roberts, who's the Interim Manager for Family Services, will serve on the Vaya District 4 Board representing Caswell County. Next the courthouse painting project is on schedule and to be completed by January 26th. They're finishing up, and it may be a little even then. But it looks excellent. They're doing a great job. Next the I.T. Cyber Threat report, as a result of the December 24th breach, will be presented at the next meeting, February 5th, to the Board. Next the Recreation Department received a grant from the Community Foundation of Dan River in the amount of \$12,500 to be used for playground equipment. I want to notify the Board, and I think we'll do a budget amendment at the next meeting for that amount. Next Thompson Price will present the 2021 Audit Report to the Board also on February 5th. It's ready now, but his schedule would not allow him to report tonight. Finally, we're waiting for two more bids on the audio system

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improvements for the Historical Courthouse. We'll get those and we'll present those to the Board. That's all I got.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Holt: I guess everyone's aware that we we've hired Scott Meszaros. I think it's tomorrow. I know me and Mrs. Gwynn have said that we wanted to meet. We're having 30 minutes of time that you could sit and meet with him. The Clerk said Mr. Rose also has. Vice Chairman Holt said okay. I wanted to make sure everybody knew about that. The other question was with Tony. What day is he starting? Commissioner Yarbrough said February 5th. Vice Chairman Holt said okay. The question is would the Board approve for Tony Smith to stay a few days to help Mr. Meszaros get lined up? Or do we want Tony Smith to go straight back to Economic Development? Commissioner McVey said Do we want to what? Vice Chairman Holt said let Tony stay a few days with Mr. Meszaros to get him oriented with what's going on. Commissioner McVey said okay. I understand what you're saying now. Vice Chairman Holt said if you need time to think about it or whatever, we got some days. I just wanted to bring it up because if we just drop him straight in, or do we want Tony to help for a few days. Whatever the Board's pleasure will be.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- January 27, 2024 Commissioners Planning Work Session 8 am to 12 noon at CoSquare
- February 5, 2024 Board of Commissioners Meeting at 6:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library
- February 15, 2024 Joint Town Meeting at 6 pm at the Yanceyville Town Hall

ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made at 7:39 pm by Commissioner Gwynn and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, and McVey)

Carla R. Smith
Clerk to the Board

Finch Holt
Vice Chairman

January 16, 2024

CASWELL COUNTY BROADBAND UPDATE

January 16, 2024

Justin DeLancey

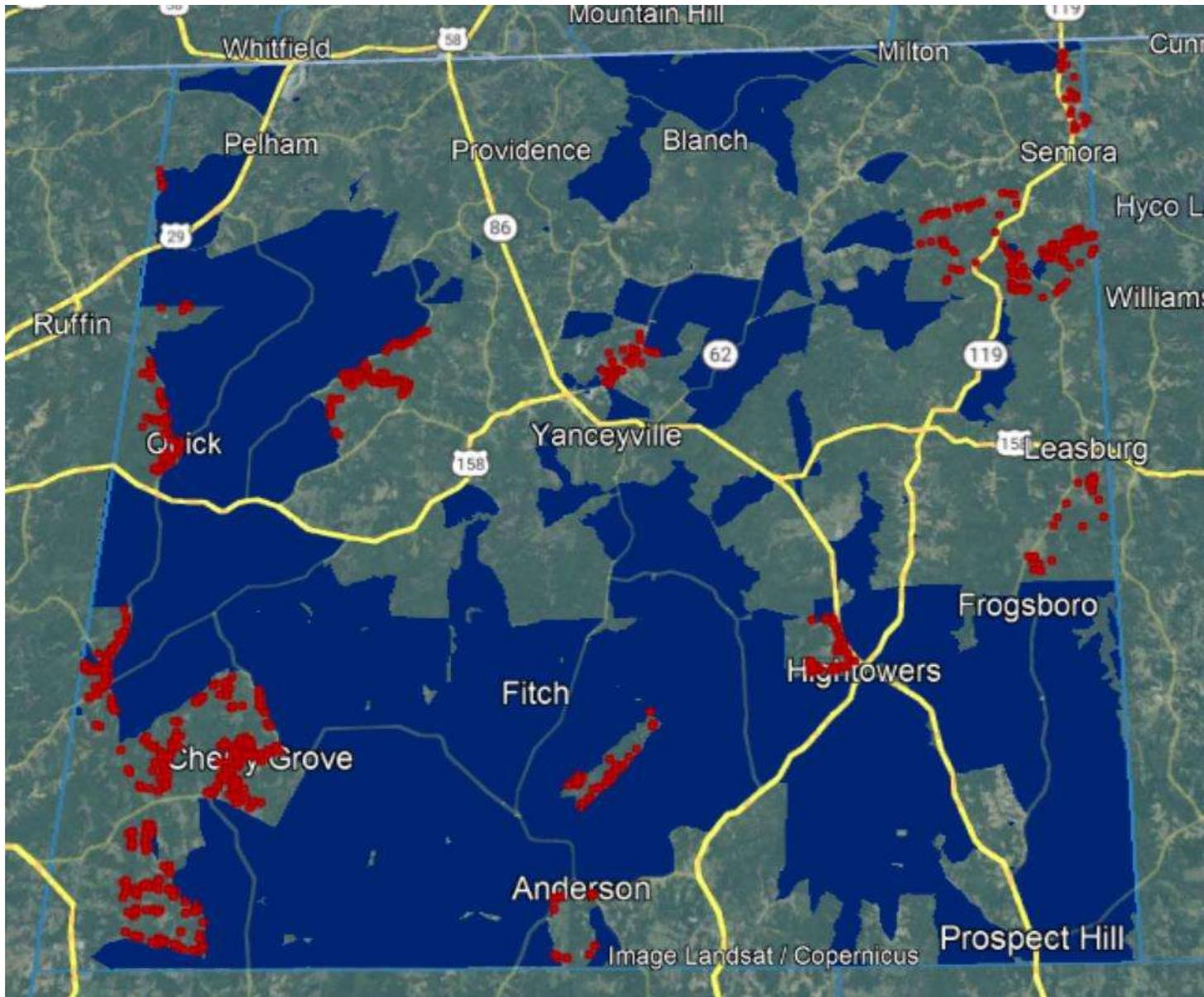
SENIOR MANAGER, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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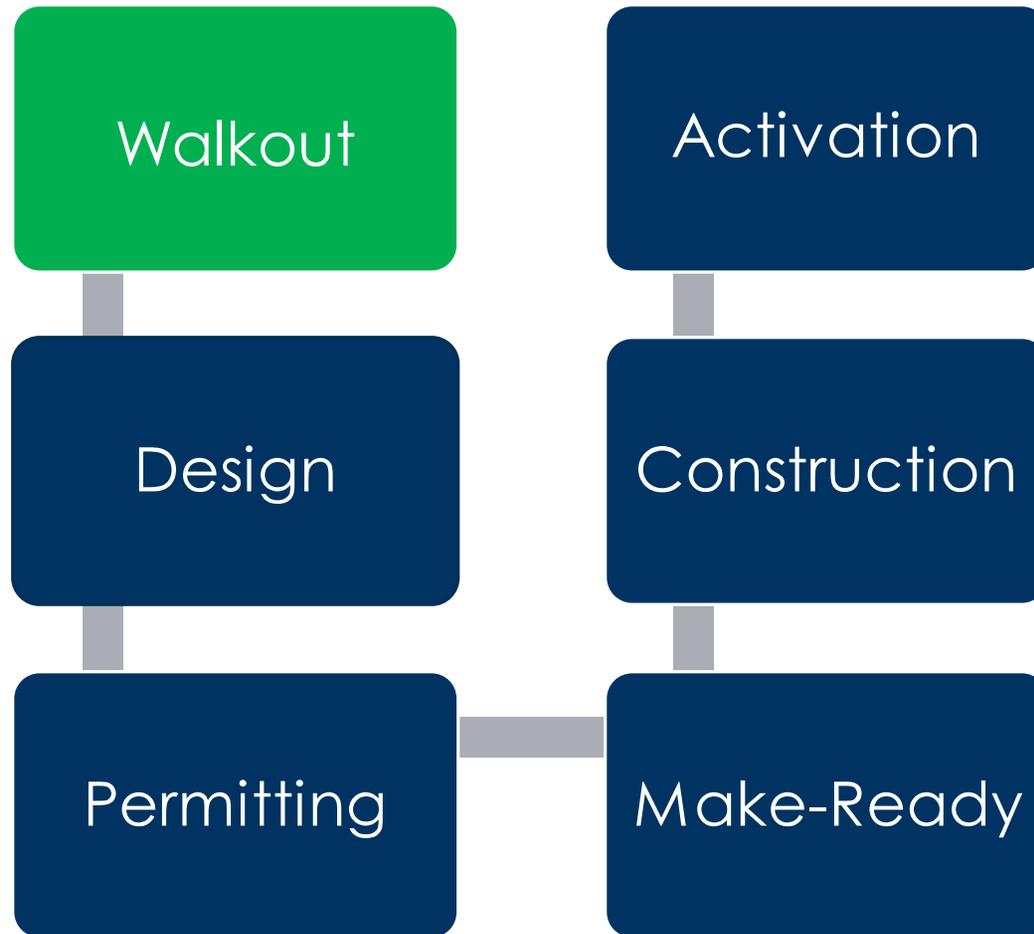
From RDOF to State Grant

- December 2020 – Received notice that Charter was awarded ~4,000 addresses in Rural Digital Opportunity Fund reverse auction.
- March 2022 – Received final approval from FCC to proceed on RDOF in NC.
- May 2022 – NC GREAT Grant Application Deadline.
- July 2023 – Received notice that Charter was awarded 606 addresses through the NC GREAT Grant.
- October 2023 – Completed RDOF construction in the County.
- 11/28/23 – Contracts between Caswell County, Charter Communications, and the State of NC fully executed.
- November 2025 – Project completion deadline

CASWELL COUNTY



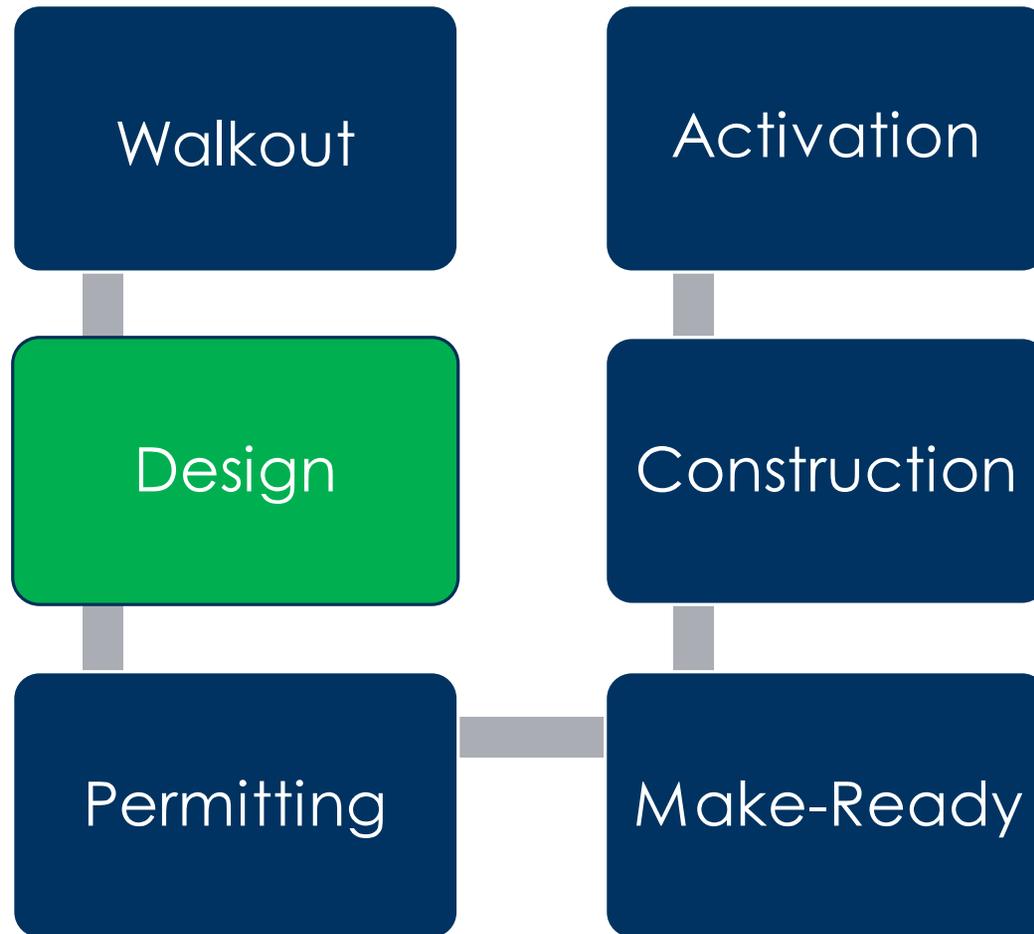
CHARTER'S BUILDOUT PROCESS



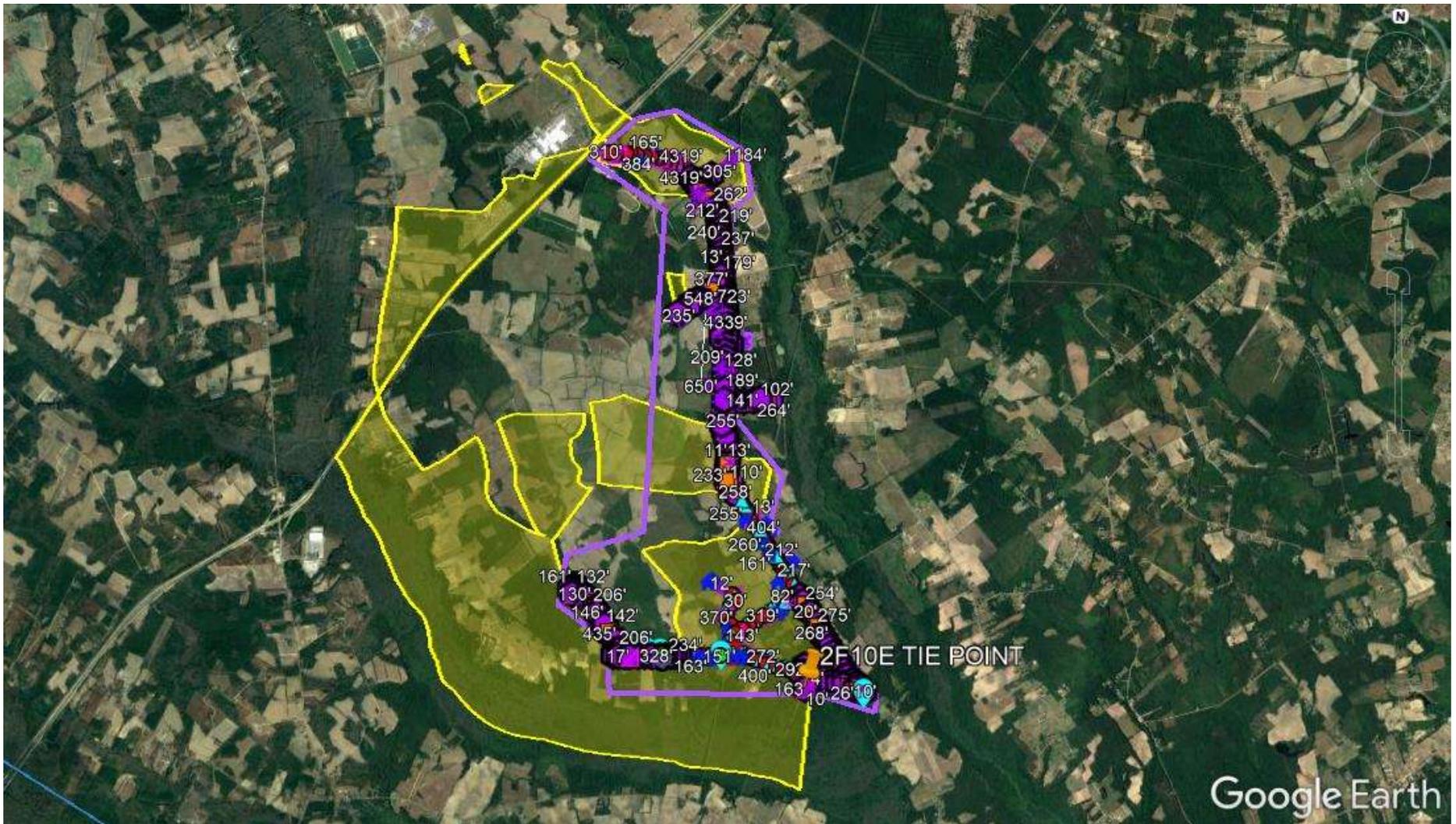
WALKOUT



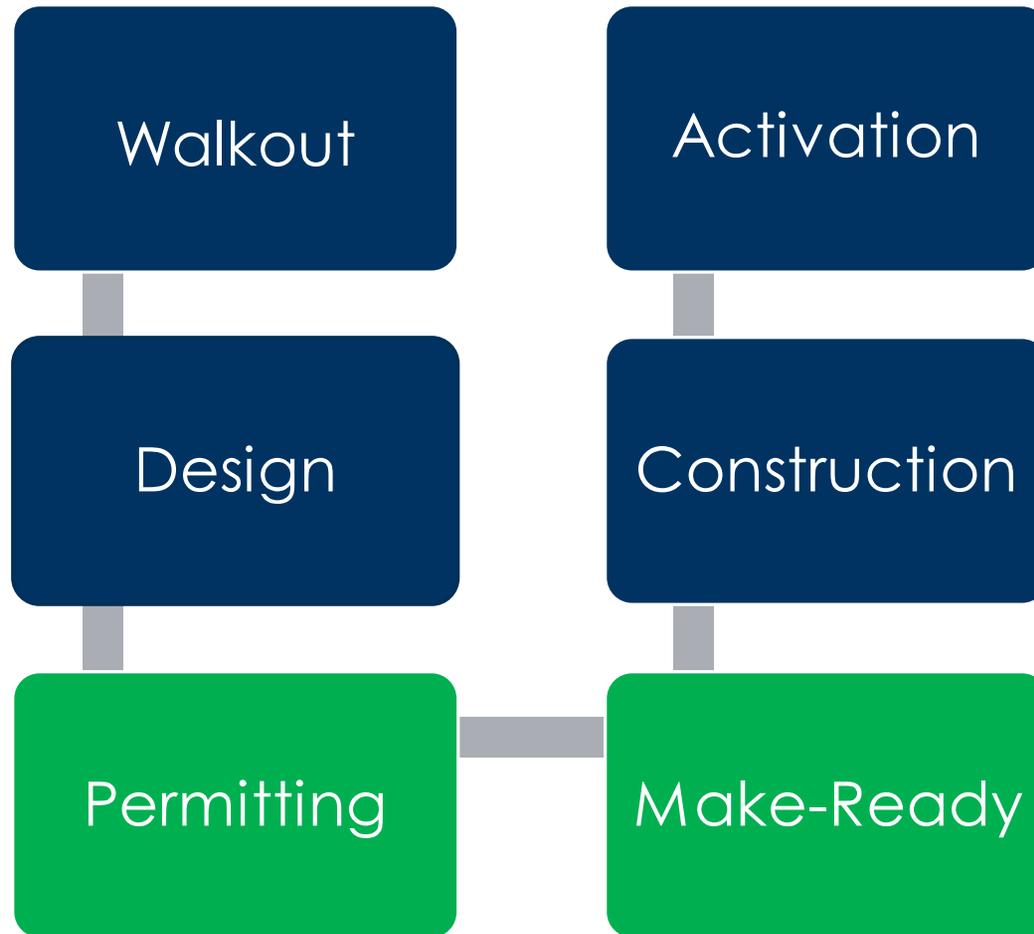
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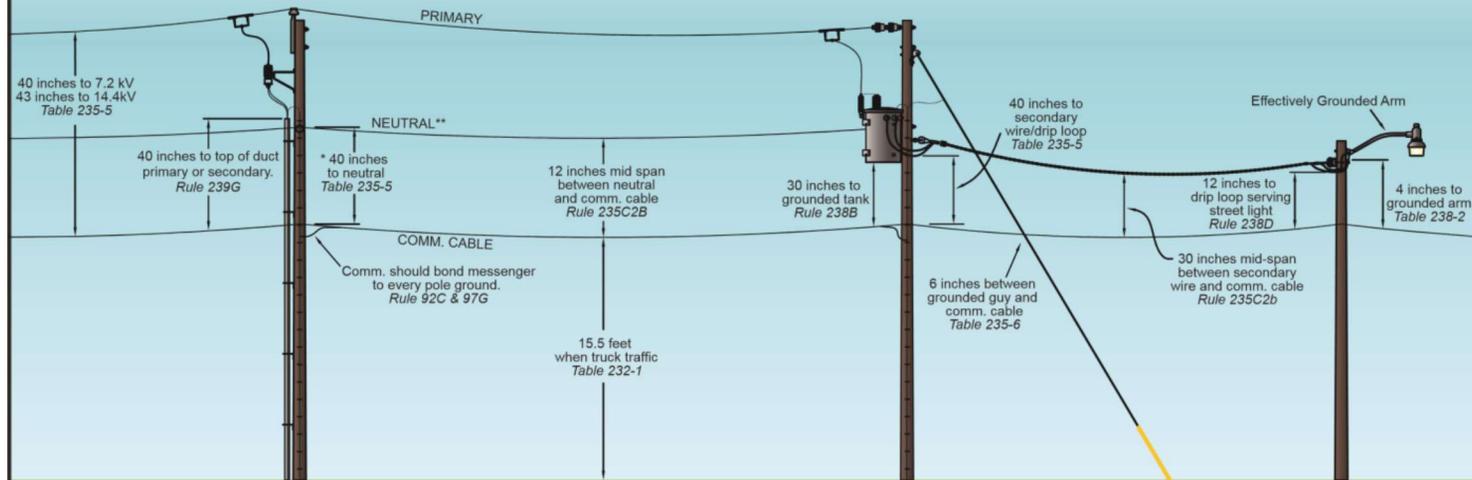


CHARTER'S BUILDOUT PROCESS



POLE ACCESS/PERMITTING

Summary of NESC Clearances to Communication Cables - see NESC for details and exceptions



* 30 inches is allowed if the communication messenger is bonded to the neutral throughout the service area. *Table 235-5*

** Fiber Optic Cables in the supply space (*Rule 224A*) will have the same required clearance to communication cables in the communication space as a multi-grounded neutral (*Rule 235C*)

A communication worker safety zone is 40 inches of clearance between communication lines and supply lines/equipment per *Rule 235C4* & *238E*



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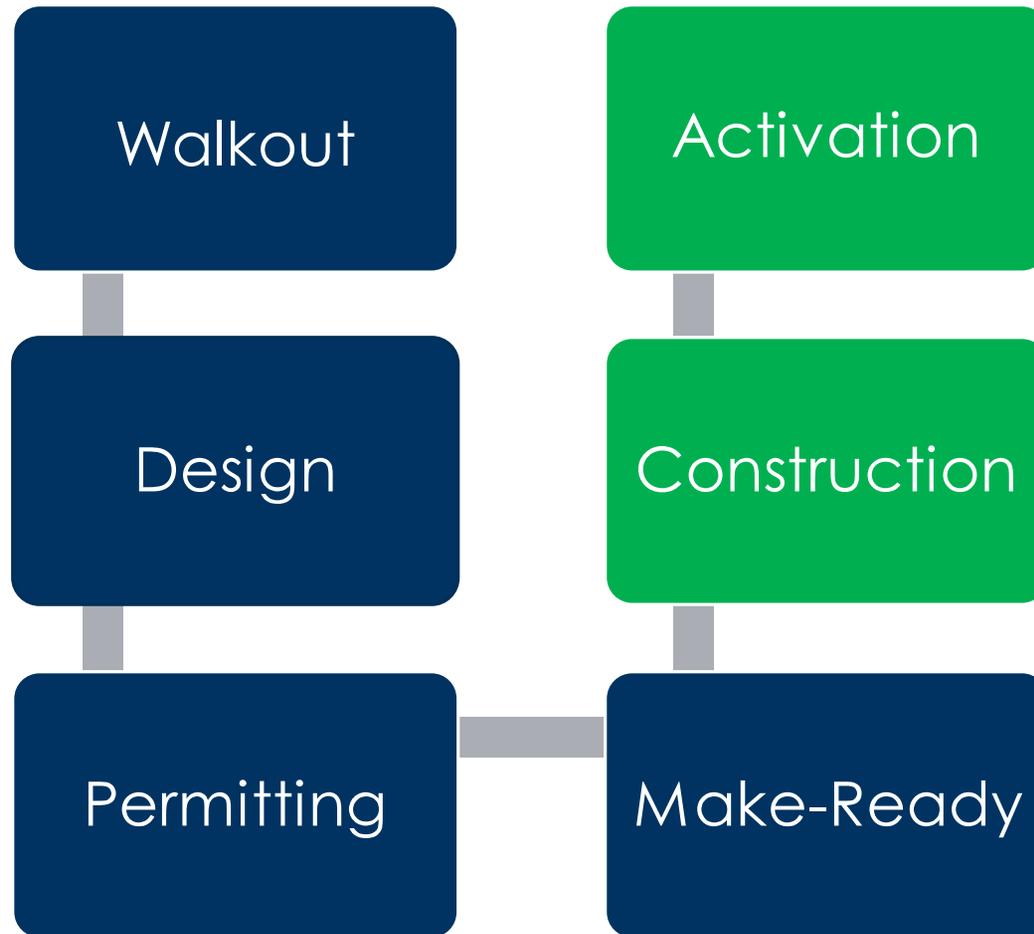


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Justin DeLancey

Justin.DeLancey@charter.com

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CASWELL COUNTY BROADBAND UPDATE

January 16, 2024

Justin DeLancey

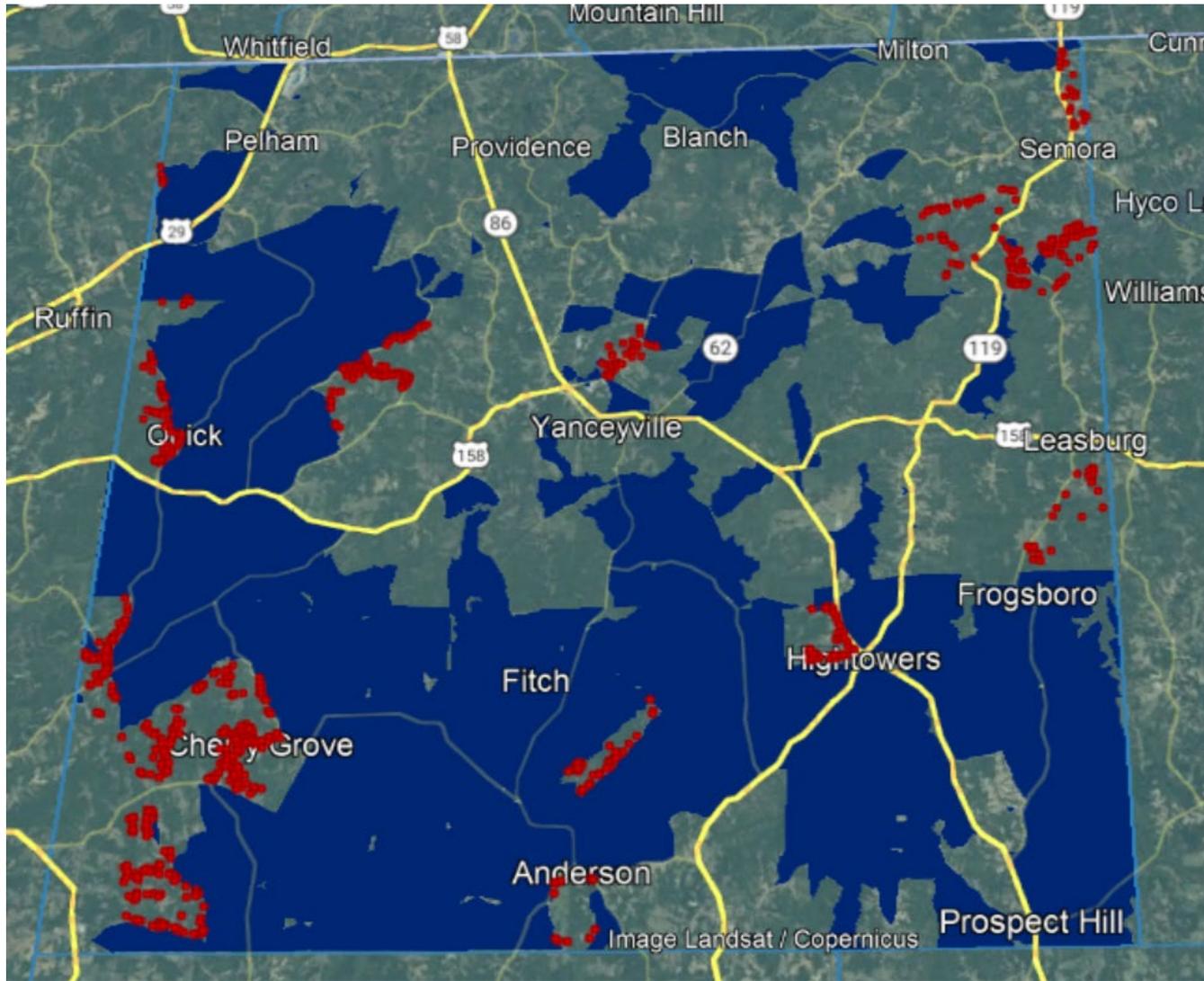
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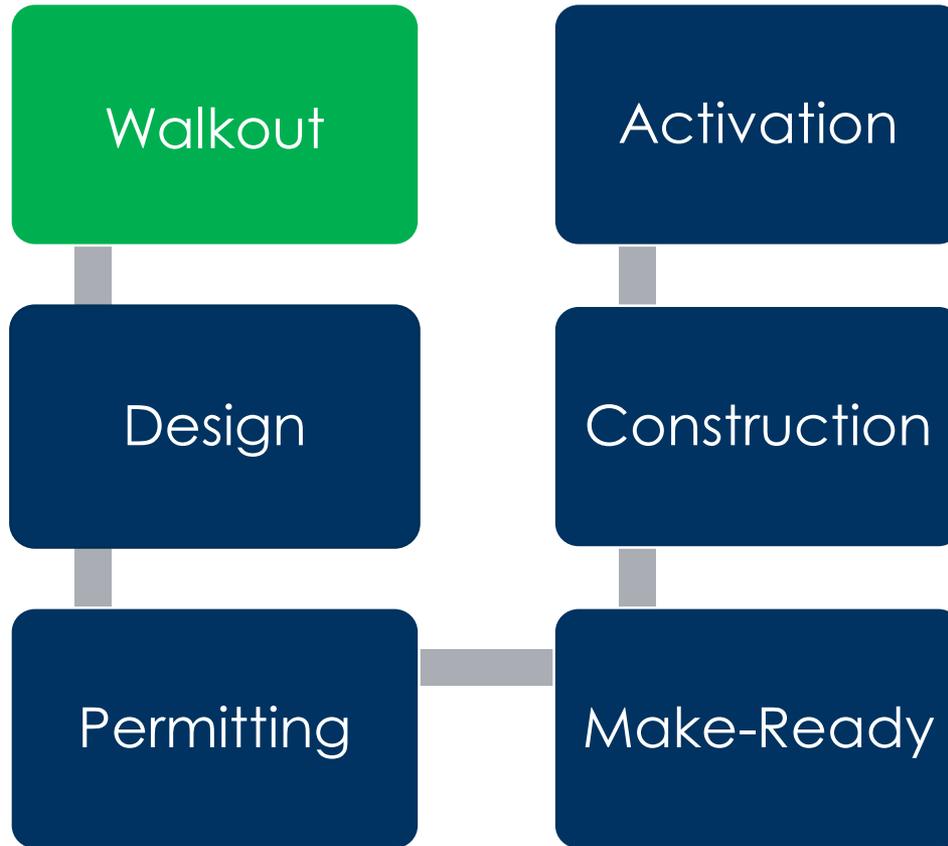
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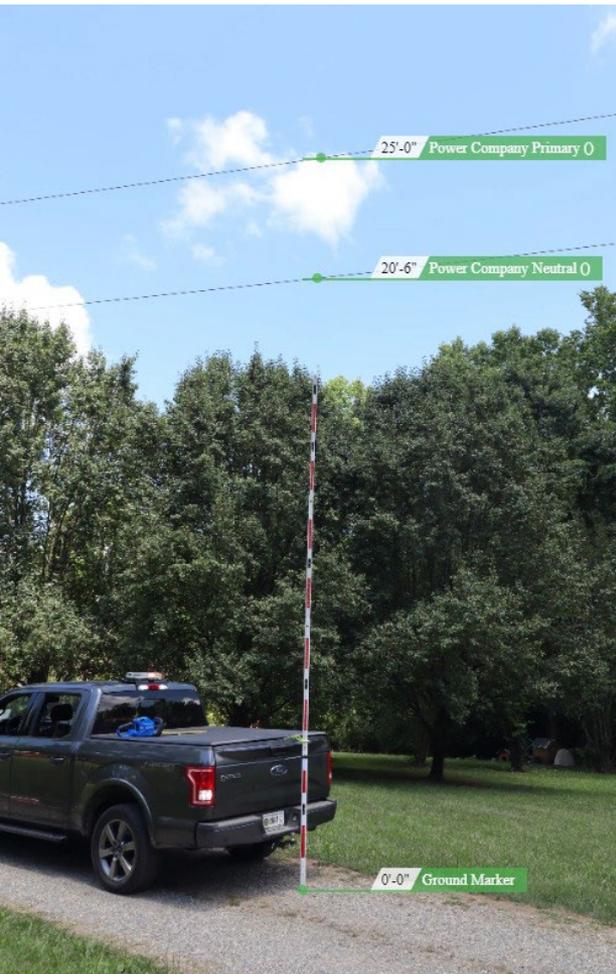
CASWELL COUNTY



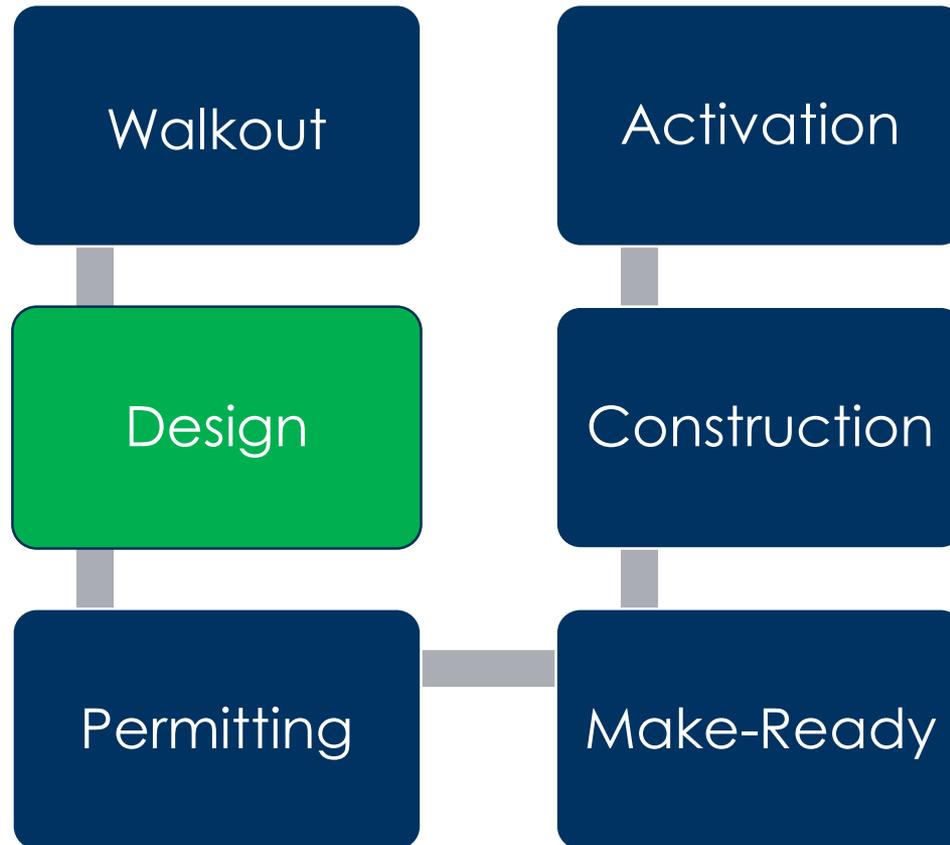
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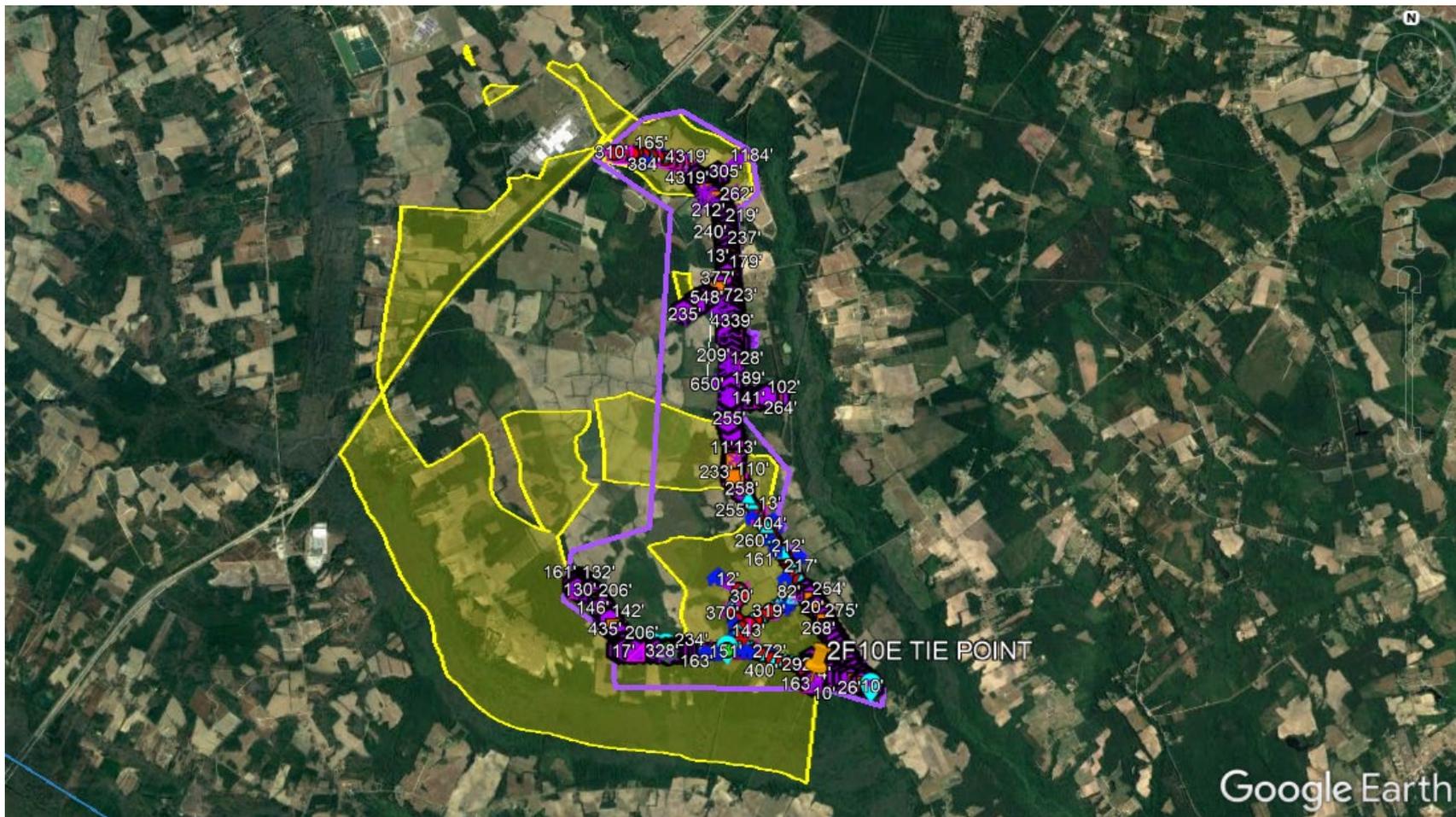
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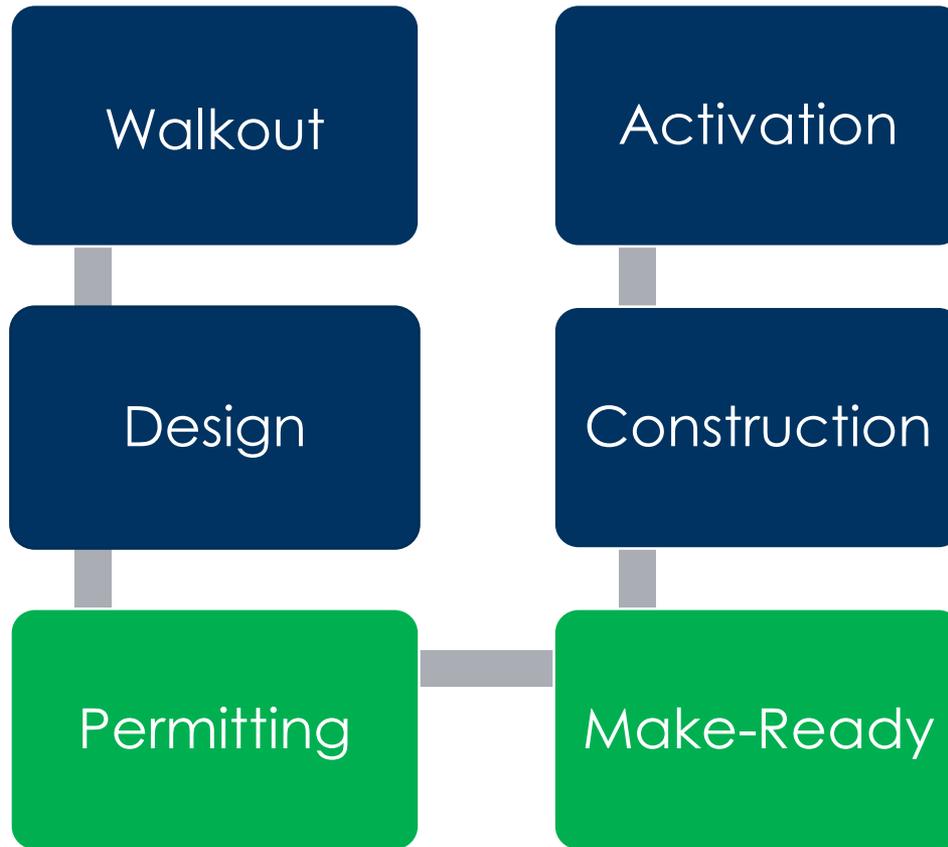
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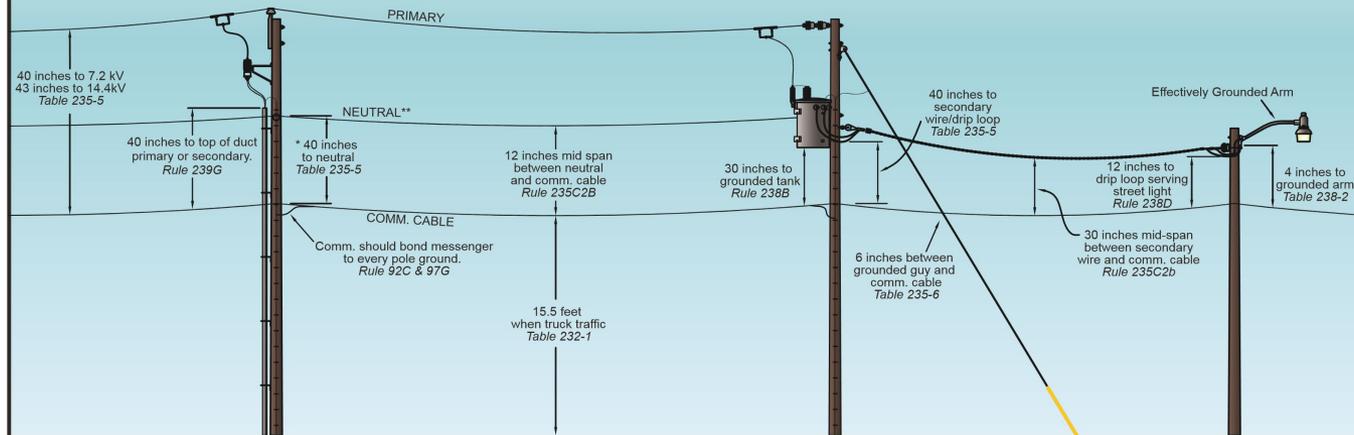


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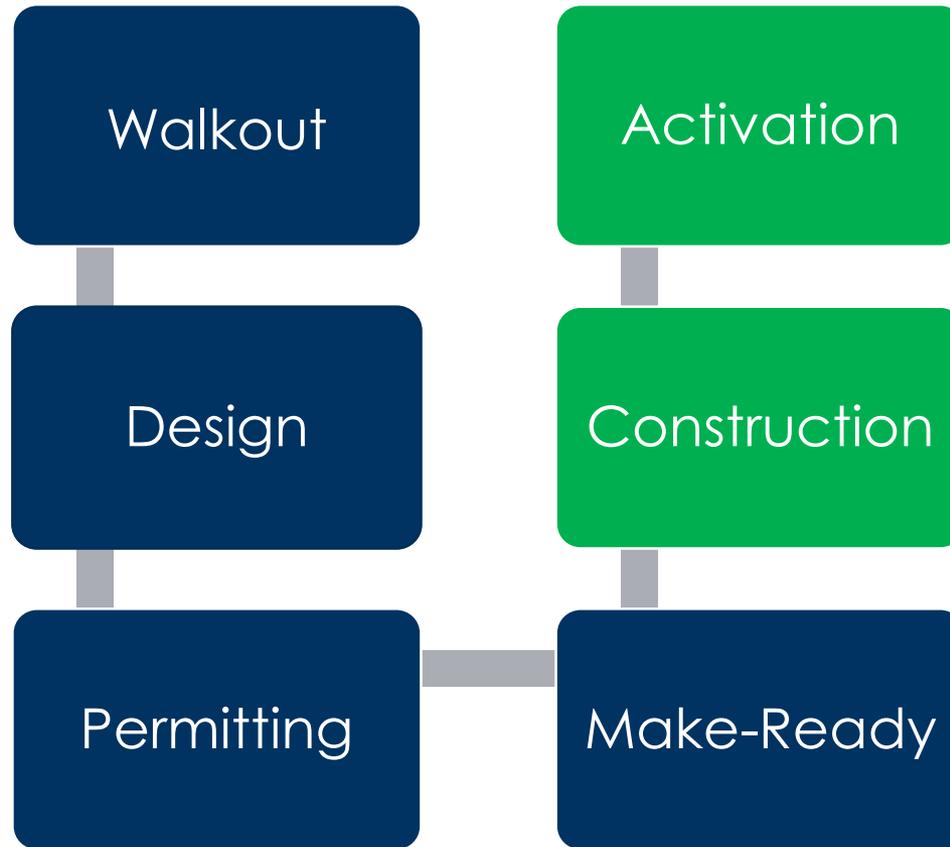


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CASWELL COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
FISCAL YEAR 2024
BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 8
Commissioner Meeting Room Equipment

BE IT ORDAINED by the Caswell County Board of Commissioners that the following amendment is hereby made to the Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

Item I: Senior Service Housing Improvement Grant

JUSTIFICATION: This is a grant received from the Supportive Services for Housing and Home Modifications and was approved by the Board of Commissioners on 11/21/2022 (FY2023). The term of the grant is two years and funds are to provide help to seniors, 60 years of age or older, with home security and minor home repairs. We are rolling the funds from FY2023 to FY2024 as several projects have been scheduled/completed and ready for payment. These were revenues received upfront and because the funds were not spent in FY2023, they fell to Fund Balance. Therefore they must be re-appropriated as the source of funds.

		FY24 Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	FY24 Amended Budget
REVENUES:				
Appropriated Fund Balance	1000000 390000	\$ 2,033,555.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 2,108,555.00
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ 2,033,555.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 2,108,555.00
EXPENDITURES:				
ARPA Housing & Home Improvement Grant	1005870 569105	\$ -	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00

Item II: Senior Service Center without Walls Grant

JUSTIFICATION: This is a reimbursement grant received from Piedmont Triad Regional Foundation to fund various projects held outside of the Senior Center. Programs include, but are not limited to: Health Education Programs, Exercise Programs, Mental Health Programs, Nutritional Programs, etc. Senior Services will hold these programs at facilities within the faith communities, the fire departments, the Ruitan Building, and other accessible venues across the county. The term of this grant is two years. Reimbursement occurs monthly and there is no County match.

		FY24 Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	FY24 Amended Budget
REVENUES:				
ARPA Senior Center w/o Walls	1005870 336457	\$ -	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ -	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
EXPENDITURES:				
ARPA Senior Center w/o Walls	1005870 546607	\$ -	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00

ATTEST:



 Clerk to the Board
 January 16, 2024

 Date



 Chairman