



BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM **Farmers Telephone Cooperative, Inc.**

Farmers Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (FTC) provides Internet, Wireless, Voice, Security, and Digital TV services in Clarendon, lower Florence, Lee, Sumter and Williamsburg counties.

With three total projects, FTC received over \$370,000 in CARES Act funding to help expand broadband infrastructure in South Carolina.

Impact to Community

Receiving CARES Act funding allowed FTC to install infrastructure that delivers broadband to customers. The CARES Act project installed fiber to the premises providing speeds up to 1 Gbps/1 Gbps (1,000 Mbps/1,000 Mbps) with a minimum speed of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps.

Access to broadband can impact economic development. Companies looking to locate to the area now have access to broadband. Small businesses now also have access to adequate broadband.



AT A GLANCE

Number of Projects: 3

Total Project Cost: \$755,412

CARES Act Funding: \$377,706

Households Served: 149

Households Passed: 287

Businesses Passed: 8

Community Anchor Points Passed: 1

Technology deployed:
Fiber to premises

Minimum download/upload speeds:
25 Mbps/3 Mbps

“ Both my wife and I are teleworking and we need that high speed, dependable connection. There’s a world of difference with what we have now. The fiber optic is like night and day; it has been a huge difference. When something like that is working and you don’t have to worry about it, it’s great. ”

*Bobby Fleming
Residential customer*



Helping Consumers During COVID-19

With limited access to health care facilities, many residents previously had to travel out of their immediate area to health care centers. FTC's CARES Act projects allow those individuals the ability to perform virtual telehealth visits with health care facilities and hospitals using high-speed internet, reducing the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus to others.

High-speed internet allows students to continue learning while at home.

Many students in the Clarendon and Williamsburg County School Districts are attending classes virtually. High-speed internet allows students to continue learning while at home.

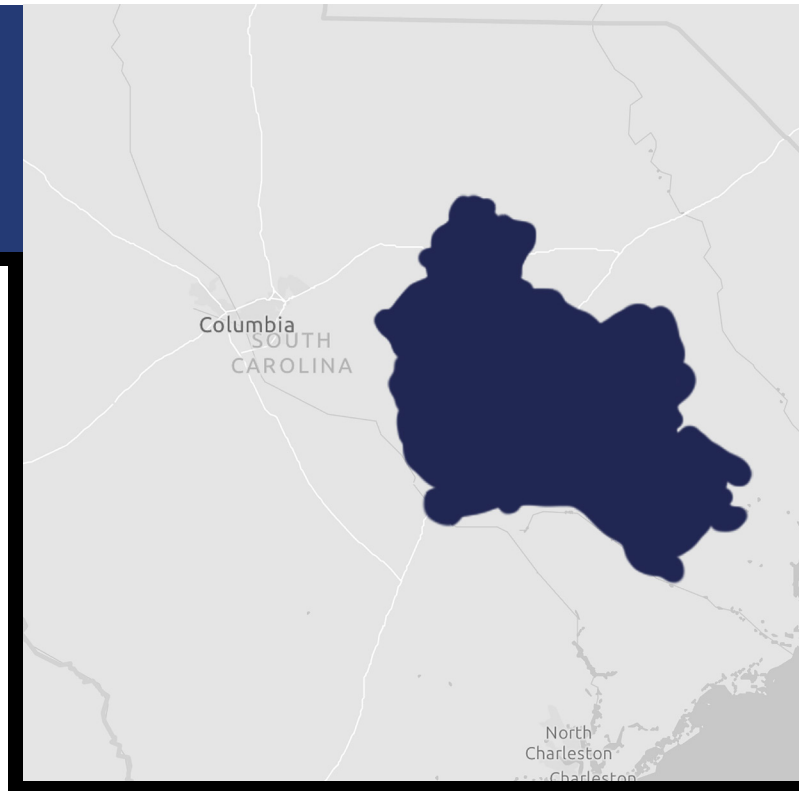
Many companies have required employees to work from home. Employees are now able to complete work previously hindered by the lack of access to broadband. Additionally, these employees are able to share bandwidth with their children that may be attending school virtually.



Project Areas

FTC projects were completed in the following counties:

- Clarendon
- Williamsburg



Average Cost

The average cost is determined by taking the total cost of the project and dividing by the number of locations. This is the average cost based on the amount of CARES Act funding received and not what a consumer would pay.

Per Location Served: \$2,651

Per Housing Unit Served: \$2,651

Per Business Served: \$2,651

CARES Act

Act 142 of the General Assembly allocated \$50 million of the Coronavirus Relief Fund for South Carolina included in the CARES Act to the ORS. The expansion of broadband infrastructure emphasized services to rural communities and communities with a high prevalence of COVID-19 or with demographic characteristics consistent with risk factors for COVID-19



About the Office of Regulatory Staff

The ORS represents consumers of investor-owned utilities in South Carolina before the PSC. The PSC is the state agency that sets utilities' rates. The ORS must look at the impact to the consumer and utilities' continued investment in reliable and high-quality services.

