

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman
October 8, 2008
SC802 groundbreaking

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome. I'm Weston Newton, chairman of Beaufort County Council, on behalf of Council and our road improvement partners -- thank you for joining us today for this special occasion.

First - allow me to introduce the partners in this venture, Port Royal Mayor Sam Murray, from the City of Beaufort, Mayor Pro Tem Donnie Beer, my fellow councilmen, Laura Von Harten, Paul Sommerville, Herbert Glaze, and Brian Flewelling.

I would also like to welcome and introduce state house representative Shannon Erickson, Chris Steele, aide to Senator Joe Wilson, Clerk of Court Jeri Roseneau, we are also honored to have Captain Mark Bernier, commanding officer, U. S. Naval Hospital, here with us today.

I'm pleased to introduce our Beaufort County Administrator Gary Kubic, Deputy Administrator Bryan Hill, County Director of Engineering and Infrastructure - Rob McFee, as well as our friends from Dennis Corporation, Sanders Brothers Construction Company, United Contractors, Incorporated, Collins Engineering, S & M.E, Incorporated, T-H-C Right Of Way Services, Stuckey Law Offices, Tidewater Environmental Services, Woolpert, Incorporated, and last but not least, SCDOT.

Our sincere thanks goes out to all of you for your good work and for showing up today to mark this important occasion.

Now it is my pleasure to ask Councilman Herbert Glaze to join me at the lectern and lead us in prayer, Herbert?

(BENEDICTION)

Thank you, Herbert.

This is our first official ground breaking for a sales-tax-funded highway improvement project north of the broad river, it is a significant step forward in bringing our county transportation system up to speed, so to speak.

This \$40 million project is funded entirely with sales tax dollars as approved by voters in November of 2006, it includes widening sc 802 from U.S. 21 to Ribaut Road and the construction of a new bridge parallel to the McTeer Bridge.

The wisdom of our citizens in approving this project was made very clear following the mishap in 2007 when a barge ran into the McTeer Bridge. Fortunately, D-O-T worked quickly to resolve the issue.

Currently, the existing McTeer Bridge is designed for 16 to 18,000 vehicles each day, it is over capacity with an average of 22,000 vehicles each day, the new parallel bridge will increase capacity to safely and efficiently accommodate the 35,000 plus vehicle trips per day anticipated in the years ahead.

The roadway and intersection improvements in connection with this project will also take the strain off SC 802 through Lady's Island and the Town of Port Royal, I would like to thank our municipal partners for their involvement and contribution to our transportation improvement plans for Beaufort County.

When the people of Beaufort County approved the referendum to fund this project and others, they put their trust in us., we are proud to stand here today ready to do their bidding.

Now, i would like to invite council members Herbert Glaze, Laura Von Harten, And Paul Sommerville, Mayor Sam Murray, Mayor Pro Tem Donnie Beer, Rob McFee, Gary Kubic, Frank Ree-Bar, Jim O'Connor, Tom Stokes and Don Anderson to man a shovel and join me at that nice area of clean sand. Thank you.