

# <u>City of Blakely</u>

#### Hometown Commitment, Bringing Technology Home





#### Technology Department

- Formed in December 2015-Previously outsourced all IT needs.
- Provide internet and IT needs for the City offices, Utilities, and Public Safety areas.
- Provide, Deploy, and maintain Fiber to the Home Internet services within the City Limits.
- Manage and maintain a 5 county LTE and traditional Wireless Internet Service Provider, SGRITA.

Three Fiber trained employees/ 2 Splicing trailers/ 2 Bucket Trucks
Two office staff, two field staff, and one network employee.

#### Meet the Staff



### How did Blakely GA get into the Internet Business?

- Early County is a member of SGRITA (South Georgia Regional Information Technology Authority) created by state legislature in 2007 to extend broadband internet service to the unserved and underserved of Baker, Calhoun, Early, Miller, and Mitchell counties. 1947 square miles.
- In 2014, SGRITA was unable to fund employees and continue the 10 year LTE broadband project. The City of Albany entered into an intergovernmental agreement to manage the organization and to oversee the completion of the project.
- In late 2015, shortly after bringing the network online, the new City of Albany City Manager announced they would pull out of the management agreement.
- Blakely and Early County joined together to pick up where Albany left off with the intergovernmental agreement, as they were a part of SGRITA, and wanted to see the investment in their community continue. The foundation was in place for growing a great network. The Local ILEC was not investing in their network, and the Mayor saw the long term benefits of the broadband opportunity for the local community.

#### <u>SGRITA</u> South Georgia Regional Information Technology Authority

BRONZE PACKAGE Download Speed Up To 2Mbps \$40.85

SILVER PACKAGE Download Speed Up To 5Mbps \$60.85

Current Counties Served By SGRITA Baker | Calhoun | Early | Miller | Mitchell





### Vision

-Need the support of the decision makers

-Must have a vision of what tomorrow looks like for your community while considering return on investment

-Don't wait until "We Have To"- Plan now to support the future.



#### Assess the Need

- Local ILEC is Windstream. Copper services throughout. Bonded DSL offers 12-25Mbps speeds. Businesses on the town square only get 6Mbps Down x 1Mbps Up.
- Windstream only offers fiber to a few businesses.
- Broadband standards changed from 4Mbps down x 1Mbps Up to 25Mbps Down x 3 Mbps up.
- Quality of Life needs-School, college, entertainment
- Economy-Businesses are attracted by high bandwidth offerings

### Feasibility Study

 In the first quarter of 2016, the Council approved a feasibility study to determine if Fiber to the Home could be a realization for the roughly 17.5 square miles of Blakely City Limits. Estimated cost was about \$20k





#### Engineering Package

- After the feasibility study, the engineering firm put together an all inclusive package for Blakely. The cost was around \$1 per cable route foot.
- The proposal for Blakely included 62 route miles and was to provide a single fiber to all potential 2600 homes and businesses within City Limits. A 288 count fiber ring would support future growth.
- Included a complete design, construction bidding package, a bill of materials, onsite project management, and quality control and assurance.
- Design choice- MST's (multi station terminal) on poles-simplified deployment for techs
- Emphasis on Onsite Project Management- Managed 6 crews at once.
- NOTE- Owning the utilities is key or partnering with someone who does.

### Financing

- The construction was estimated at 1.7 Million. Due to additions presented during construction, and some minor challenges that were unforeseen, total construction was about 1.9 Million.
- Blakely found that going through the bond referendum process was too time consuming and required voter approval. They discovered that through the management of SGRITA, an authority can issue debt. They were able to obtain a 15 year loan for the project through this process.
- Fiber and construction materials were purchased by the city from major telecom distributors.

### Make Ready and Construction

- Make ready work was partially completed by our own Light Department.
- Due to the desired timeline, a third party was contracted to do the "heavy lifting" make ready work.
- Utility Make ready began in August 2016 and was completed in January 2017.
- The winning construction bidder began fiber construction in January 2017 and was 95% complete by the end of April 2017.

### Network Equipment

- During the construction phase, internal staff researched, purchased, and deployed: network servers, Fiber to the home delivery equipment, and a telecom billing system.
- <u>Powercode</u>-Telecom billing system, completely electronic, no paper billing. Monthly license per block of active customer method. At the time, our utility billing system was not geared for telecom services, so we chose to keep separate.
- <u>Adtran GPON</u>-Cost efficient, easy to manage, low support cost- all in comparison to other brands.
- <u>SMART RG-</u> Commercial grade wifi routers



- Fiber Splicers and training
- Fiber Trailers and Bucket Trucks

• OTDR

- GPON Power meters and test gear
- Telecom geared billing system/ Bandwidth Management
  - Stock of Fiber/ Hardware

### BlakelyNet

### **Growth Chart** JUNE 2017 - PRESENT



TOTAL ACTIVE CUSTOMERS: 363

### Current Packages RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

\$69.90 Residential 10 10 x 5 Mbps \$84.90

Residential 20 20 x 5 Mbps \$109.90

Residential 45 45 x 5 Mbps

#### **ROUTER RENTAL ADDITIONAL \$9.95 PER MONTH**

#### Current Packages BUSINESS SERVICES

\$99.95 Business 15 15 x 10 Mbps \$119.90

Business 25 25 x 15 Mbps \$139.90

Business 50 50 x 20 Mbps

#### **ROUTER RENTAL ADDITIONAL \$9.95 PER MONTH**

#### **Current Packages** GAMING SERVICES

\$99.95

Gamer 25 25 x 25 Mbps \$134.95

Extreme Gamer 50 x 50 Mbps

#### **ROUTER RENTAL ADDITIONAL \$9.95 PER MONTH**

## **Current Sales**



#### New Packages 2020 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

\$70.00 Residential 25 25 x <u>25 Mbps</u> \$85.00

Residential 50 50 x 50 Mbps

#### \$110.00

Residential 100 100 x 100 Mbps \$120.00

Gaming Package 75 x 75 Mbps \*1 static IP included\*

**ROUTER RENTAL ADDITIONAL \$10 PER MONTH** 

BlakelyNet Fiber Internet | 2020

#### **Recurring Revenue Trending**



#### New Packages 2020 BUSINESS SERVICES

\$120.00

Business 75 75 x 75 Mbps \$140.00

Business 100 100 x 100 Mbps \$225.00

Business 150 150 x 150 Mbps

#### **ROUTER RENTAL ADDITIONAL \$10.00 PER MONTH**

BlakelyNet Fiber Internet | 2020

### Summary

- Total project cost \$2.1 million for a complete FTTH network
- Support of Decision Makers Essential
- Having utility infrastructure allowed this project to happen.
- Project Management is essential.
- Dedicated staff are a necessity.
- Easier to train, than find experience.
- When available, Fiber is the best solution.
- LTE is expensive, and limited by available frequency. More economical solutions are available using mixed licensed and unlicensed spectrum. Consider long term maintenance and support costs.

