



COUNTY OF ANOKA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connect Anoka County Groundbreaking

Anoka County and Zayo will break ground on the Connect Anoka County high-speed fiber broadband project Tuesday, September 13, 2011.

What: Connect Anoka County groundbreaking

When: Tuesday, September 13, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Where: Connexus Energy, 14601 Ramsey Blvd, Ramsey, Minnesota 55303

Who: This event is open to the public. Come celebrate this project milestone!

Connect Anoka County is a partnership of Anoka County and Zayo. The project was awarded \$13,382,593 in July 2010 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), to expand fiber broadband connectivity across the county.

The groundbreaking will feature comments from key stakeholders including Bill Grant, Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce; Sandeep Taxali, federal program officer for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP); Charlie Kratsch, Founder and CEO of Infinite Campus; John Real, Zayo Networks Vice President; and Anoka County Commissioners Jim Kordiak and Robyn West.

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Connect Anoka County Groundbreaking – Add 1

The effort to secure an ARRA award began in 2009 with the creation of the Connect Anoka County project team, led by Commissioners **Jim Kordiak** and **Robyn West**. The team developed the project scope and, via the RFP process, established the partnership with Zayo.

“Fiber broadband is approximately 500 times faster than cable and twenty thousand times faster than dial-up,” said Commissioner Jim Kordiak. “If the future of our economy is the remote delivery of information, education, and entertainment, then we want to be at the forefront with the fastest known technology available.”

Commissioner Robyn West said, “It’s amazing but it also makes sense that Anoka County would qualify. This project commits 61 percent of the fiber to unserved and underserved areas of the county. The entire backbone opens the door for a global economy here in Anoka County. It’s also an open door for local Internet service providers to compete to bring the fastest connectivity possible to residents’ front doors.”

Connect Anoka County will link 145 anchor institutions with three core rings, creating a fiber optic backbone. The backbone will connect public safety, public works, libraries, law enforcement, license centers, city and town halls, county, and community buildings. It will serve 56 public safety agencies. The backbone will provide a direct advantage to local businesses, passing directly through the county’s key business districts and economic development zones, allowing Zayo to offer fiber optic speeds directly to businesses.

“Zayo is prepared and eager to commence this project along with Anoka County,” stated Glenn Russo, president of Zayo Networks. “Connecting the schools, public safety, and service entities presents a long-lasting benefit to any community’s well-being, and we are excited to support this network build.”

The ARRA appropriated \$7.2 billion to expand broadband access and adoption in communities across the United States with the goal to increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure, and provide long-term economic benefits. The Anoka County award was administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) as part of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP).

According to the NTIA, there are three BTOP project categories: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure, Public Computer Centers, and Sustainable Broadband Adoption. Anoka County, in partnership with Zayo, was awarded funds under the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure category.

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Connect Anoka County Groundbreaking – Add 2

The category invited projects which would deploy new or improved broadband Internet facilities (e.g., laying new fiber optic cables, or upgrading wireless towers) and to connect “community anchor institutions” such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and public safety facilities.

Connect Anoka County received more than 80 resolutions and letters of support from local businesses, school districts, cities, townships, colleges, elected officials, and public safety entities. The project includes a portion of southern Isanti County to incorporate the Cambridge campus of Anoka-Ramsey Community College.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$19,117,990 with Zayo and Anoka County collectively providing a \$5.7M contribution for the grant total of \$13,382,593.

“We at Anoka County have been very busy ensuring that this project is a great success for Anoka County and its people,” said Kordiak. “I’m very excited and I think everyone in Anoka County should be very pleased with this project moving forward.”

About Anoka County

Anoka County is part of the seven-county Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area and has a population of nearly 330 thousand people. We are home to several of the world’s leading companies including Medtronic, Aveda, and ATK Security and Sporting. The word ‘Anoka’ is derived from the native Dakota word *anokatanhan* meaning “on both sides” referring to the Rum River which flows through the heart of the county. Anoka County is rated AAA by Standard and Poor’s.

About Zayo Group

Based in Louisville, Colo., privately owned Zayo Group (www.zayo.com) is a national provider of fiber-based bandwidth infrastructure and network-neutral colocation and interconnection services. Zayo supports enterprise and regional businesses, as well as federal, state, and local government agencies that require lit and dark fiber services, as well as carrier neutral colocation. Zayo provides these services over regional, metro, and fiber-to-the-tower networks. Zayo’s network assets include over 23,000 route miles, connecting 153 markets across 31 states plus Washington, D.C. Additionally, Zayo had over 4,200 buildings on-net, more than 1,800 cell towers on-net, and over 170,000 square feet of colocation space. Zayo was recently named one of the Denver-areas Fastest Growing Private Companies by the Denver Business Journal.