AGENDA
6:00 pm, Monday, June 3th, 2019
Council Chambers - Oconee County administrative complex

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation by County Council Chaplain
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Public Comment for _Non-Agenda Items_ (3 minutes per person)
5. Approval of minutes from 05202019
6. Comprehensive Plan
   a. Public Comment
   b. Public Outreach update
   c. Executive Summary update
   d. Transportation element
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Adjourn

Anyone wishing to submit written comments to the Planning Commission can send their comments to the Planning Department by mail or by emailing them to the email address below. Please Note: If you would like to receive a copy of the agenda via email please contact our office, or email us at achapman@oconeesc.com.

Minutes
6:00 pm, Monday, May 20, 2019
Council Chambers - Oconee County administrative complex

Members Present
Gwen McPhail
Mike Johnson
Frankie Pearson
Mike Smith
Alex Vassey
Mike Smith

Staff Present
Bill Huggins
Vivian Kompier

Media Present
None

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Pearson called the meeting to order at 6PM
2. **Invocation by Stacy Lyles**
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Public Comment for _Non-Agenda Items_ (3 minutes per person) -** none
5. **Approval of minutes from 05062019**
   Ms. Lyles made a motion to approve, Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor to approve.
6. **Comprehensive Plan 2030**
   a. Public Comment - Tom Markovich added comments about the cultural resources element:
      1) In the Historical Preservation portion the old courthouse is not listed as a historic site.
      2) Tax credits are not up to date. Federal tax credits have been changed, and there are abandoned building tax credits that are not in there.
   b. Public Outreach – Mr. Huggins reminded them that the next outreach meeting is this Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at Ravenel Elementary School in Seneca. Westminster has expressed interest in having one there. Mr. Huggins explained that we are gathering the information and categorizing it. Mr. Johnson questioned where it will go in the Comprehensive Plan, and asked that we please make a recommendation as to where it will go in the Comprehensive Plan.
   c. Executive Summary – Mr. Smith expressed that everyone is welcome to attend the meeting. They are looking for a format and will come up with questions for Janet

Hartman and work from there. The next meeting will be 6/3/2019 in the conference room at 5:30pm.

d. Cultural Resources element – Mr. Johnson suggested we get the comments from Mr. Markovich had over to the consultants and double check all their information.

- Mr. Smith refers to 5-17 #6, would like to add in charitable intuitions/nonprofits or give it a separate paragraph. Mr. Smith will get with Mr. Chapman and come back with suggestions.
- Mr. Smith refers to 5-17 #8, how much did the county actually get?
- 6.1.1 – Ms. McPhail made a motion that 6.1.1.3 and 6.1.1.4 be combined, seconded by Mr. Smith and approved by all.
- 6.1.2 – Mr. Johnson asked if there was a brochure of tax incentives. Mr. Malkovich explained that we need to be cautious about making a list, use a consultant. Mr. Malkovich recommends using the Bailey Bill that the state has. Oconee county currently dos not use it, according to Mr. Markovich, although as stated in the draft element, the Bailey Bill was passed by the State legislature to allow cities and counties to provide property tax incentives for improvements to historic structures. Mr. Johnson suggests the staff to look into the Bailey Bill or something like it.
- 6.2.1.2 – Ms. Lyles made a motion to strike out the words "and active participation" seconded by Mr. Johnson and approved by all.
- 6.3.1.4 – strike the word "and" before Native American.
- 6.3.2.3 – Ms. Lyles made a motion to add Oconee Alliance to the Accountable Agencies, Mr. smith seconded and approved by all.

9. **Old Business – None**
10. **New Business - None**
11. **Adjourn-** The meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm.

Cultural resources include historic buildings and structures, unique residential and commercial areas, archeological sites, entertainment venues and events, educational and religious institutions, and related features that comprise the unique attributes and defining character of Oconee County and its communities. The Cultural Resources Element generates awareness and consideration of historical, archaeological, and heritage issues. It also provides an overview of the historical development of the County, identifies significant historic and cultural resources, profiles local arts and cultural organizations, lists annual events and opportunities, and explores the current and potential economic impact of these resources in the community.

Preservation and enhancement of the County's abundant historic and cultural resources directly benefit the community through increased tourism activity and revenue, revitalization of core commercial and residential districts, higher property values, stronger community identity, and enhanced attractiveness to new employers and residents. The ability of Oconee County to attract and retain visitors, retirees, and professionals rests in large part on the quality of life offered by a rich historic and cultural resource base.

A. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The history of Oconee County has been extensively documented through several publications including *Oconee County* (1998) by Piper Peters Aheron and *Historic Oconee in South Carolina* (1935) by Mary Cherry Doyle. The Oconee County Heritage Book Committee also compiled *The Heritage of Oconee County, 1868–1995* in 1995.

Oconee County is nestled in the northwest corner of South Carolina between the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Chattooga and Tugaloo rivers. Its name is rooted in the Cherokee word translated as "land beside the water." Although the first inhabitants of the area were the Creek and Cherokee, early European settlement in the area began in the late-eighteenth century with the construction of a militia outpost at the colonial frontier. Named Oconee Station, the post served as a military compound and later as a trading post.

Through multiple treaties following the American Revolution, the Cherokee were displaced from most of the area, as more settlers moved west. Oconee County was carved out of the western portion of the Pickens District in 1868. Walhalla, founded nearly two decades earlier by German settlers, was designated as the new County seat.

Agriculture was the dominant economic activity of the area until the westward expansion of rail service in the late nineteenth century. The new communities of Seneca, Westminster, and Newry were products of the extension of rail access to the region. The arrival of the railroad also facilitated the development of the textile industry that would remain a major employer well into the twentieth century.

Following the Second World War, major infrastructure projects prompted additional changes in the County's economy. The construction of the national Interstate system included a segment

of Interstate 85 in the southeastern corner of the County, opening both industry and resident access to new opportunities in surrounding counties and neighboring states. A series of dam projects for power generation resulted in the creation of Lakes Hartwell, Keowee, and Jocassee. In addition to producing the energy to support growth in the region, these new lakes became valuable recreational assets.

B. HISTORIC RESOURCES

Small towns and rural communities with attractive cultural, scenic, and historical resources are among the fastest growing heritage tourism and retirement destinations. The historic and cultural resources of Oconee County and its communities contribute to the appeal of the area as a retirement destination, a desirable place to work and live, and a growing tourist destination. These local resources warrant special consideration in the comprehensive planning process to protect their unique character from development pressures and neglect. Protection of the County's historical and architectural resources requires an active partnership among public and private property owners, local governments, and State and Federal agencies.

1. National Register Listings

South Carolina has more than 1,400 listings in the National Register, with 160 historic districts statewide. The *National Register of Historic Places* is the nation's official list of historic and cultural resources formally deemed worthy of preservation. Authorized by the *Historic Preservation Act of 1966*, the National Register is the foundation of a national effort to identify, evaluate and protect irreplaceable architectural and archeological resources. Under the oversight of the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Register listing includes buildings, structures, districts, sites and objects that qualify as significant in the context of American history, architecture, engineering, culture and archaeology. The benefits of National Register listing include wide recognition of a property's significance, consideration and review in the federally-assisted project planning process, eligibility for federal tax benefits for rehabilitation and easements, and eligibility for federal and state historic preservation grants.

National Register listings can be achieved for larger *historic districts* that contain broader areas of multiple historic properties that have collective significance, for *individual* properties that meet the criteria, and for *landmark* sites that represent historical significance at a level greater than local and regional interest.

Historic districts can be designated to protect larger areas of historic properties and landscapes from adverse impacts of development. National Register criteria for historic districts require that the majority of the components that comprise a district's historic character have integrity, though alone they may be individually undistinguished. There are currently four designated historic districts in Oconee County. Table 5-1 profiles these historic districts shown on Map 5-2. Although each historic district has multiple contributing properties, there are also numerous individual National Register sites located outside of these districts (Table 5-2 and Map 5-2).

Table 5-1. National Register Districts in Oconee County

ID	District	Significance	Listed
D1	Newry Historic District	Turn of the century textile mill village built between 1893 and 1910 in the Little River Valley. Contains 118 properties including the Courtenay Mill complex, mill office, company store, post office, village church, and workers residences. Located within a 250 acre area. A typical New England textile factory design attributed to W.B.S. Whaley.	1982
D2	Oconee State Park District	Product of Great Depression era efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to protect natural areas through park construction while providing job opportunities for unemployed American men. Contains 63 contributing and 60 non-contributing resources arranged around a man-made lake. Includes vacation cabins, bathhouse, central administrative building, two residences and two picnic shelters.	2004
D3	Ram Cat Alley Historic District (Seneca)	Example of architectural and commercial development around the growth of the railroad in a small South Carolina town. Intact public, commercial, and social center, consisting of 21 commercial buildings in downtown Seneca. Eighteen contributing buildings constructed from 1887 to 1930.	2000
D4	Seneca Historic District (Seneca)	District is made up of two areas that include three churches and 20 homes in a variety of architectural designs which produce a cohesive and homogenous unit. Included are examples of late 19th century domestic architecture, pre-World War I dwellings, mid-1920s houses, and church architecture of the first half of the 20th century. Architectural styles include Victorian, Classical Revival, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, and Four-Square.	1974 and 1987

Source: National Register of Historic Places, 2019

Table 5-2. National Register Sites in Oconee County

ID	Property/Site	Significance	Listed
S1	Alexander-Cannon-Hill house (Seneca)	Provides an upcountry pioneer architectural link between the present and Old Pickens. Built in 1831 on a plantation at the edge of Old Pickens, the house was moved to its new location in 1972 to conform to Atomic Energy Commission regulations. Acquired by Duke Power in the 1960s.	1972
S2	Ellicott Rock (Salem)	Inscribed in 1813 as part of survey to settle a state boundary dispute. Recognized as the fixed common corner of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Located on the east bank of the Chattooga River.	1974
S3	Faith Cabin Library (Seneca)	Significant for its role in African American education and social history in South Carolina. Constructed in 1937 with support of Oberlin College, it is one of only two remaining free-standing Faith Cabin Libraries in the State and the only remaining building from the Seneca Junior College campus.	2012
S4	Keil Farm (Walhalla)	Antebellum farm house (ca. 1850) symbolizing the role of a German immigrant family in the settlement and development of Walhalla and Oconee County. Consists of frame farm house and six outbuildings.	1998
S5	Long Creek Academy (Long Creek)	Opened in 1914 by the Beaverdam Baptist Association as part of a system of mountain mission schools overseen by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.	1987
S6	McPhail Angus Farm (Seneca)	Established in 1902, the farm complex illustrates 20th century developments in South Carolina upcountry agriculture. Site includes eight contributing properties and more than 140 acres of terraced fields.	2007

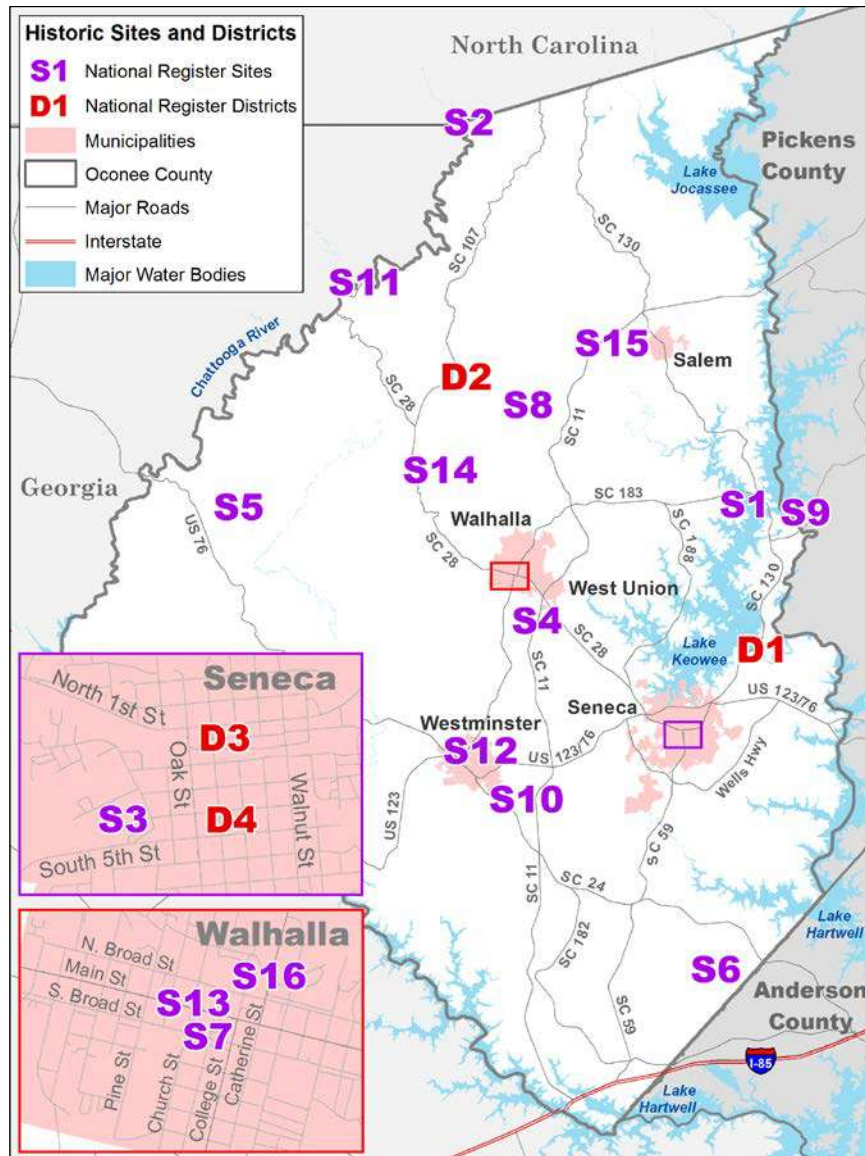## Table 5-2. National Register Sites in Oconee County, *Continued*

ID	Property/Site	Significance	Listed
S7	Oconee County Cage (Walhalla)	One of several *Jails on Wheels* used in the early 20th century as quarters for chain gang members at work sites. The small, metal cage on a wheeled chassis was constructed around 1900.	1982
S8	Oconee Station (Salem)	Building marks the farthest point in South Carolina to which white settlers ventured before the Revolution. Erected before 1760 as a military outpost to protect settlers. Used by the Cherokee as a trading post in the early 1800s. Includes the adjacent Richards house, constructed in 1805.	1971
S9	Old Pickens Presbyterian Church (Seneca)	Intact example of a mid-nineteenth century church built in the meeting house style and constructed of brick. Also significant for its association with the town of Pickens Court House (Old Pickens) and as the only remaining building from the old town site. A cemetery containing more than 200 marked graves is adjacent to the church.	1996
S10	Retreat Rosenwald School (Westminster)	Significant for its association with African American public education during the first half of the 20th century. Built in 1924 as one of ten Rosenwald Schools in Oconee County, serving as an important public educational and social center for rural blacks.	2011
S11	Russell House & Farmstead (Mountain Rest)	Constructed after 1867 as a stage stop and inn. Although the house burned in 1988, the complex includes ten agricultural outbuildings representative of a small, turn of the century Appalachian farmstead. Outbuildings include log barn ruins, spring house, outhouse, garage, corn crib, and potato cellar.	1988
S12	Westminster Depot (Westminster)	The Southern Railway passenger station (ca. 1885) is one of the town's oldest buildings. The station served as a community gathering place and activity center.	1976
S13	St. John's Lutheran Church (Walhalla)	Constructed between 1859 and 1861 for the German Lutheran congregation of Walhalla. Significant both for its German vernacular church form and for its role in the religious and organizational history of Walhalla. The site includes a brick Sunday School building and a church cemetery with the earliest gravestone dating to 1851.	1980
S14	Stumphouse Tunnel Complex (Walhalla)	Site includes 40 acres of land, two acres of water, Stumphouse Mountain Tunnel, Middle Tunnel, the 385-foot original railroad bed, picnic and camping areas, and a museum of railroad history. As part of the 1850s Blue Ridge Railroad project, the tunnels were planned as a final link in a shipping route from the Mississippi to the Atlantic seaboard. Stumphouse is also the site of the first successful attempt to age blue cheese in the South by Clemson University in the 1950s.	1971
S15	Tamassee DAR School (Tamassee)	Associated with the history of education in the rural northwestern corner of South Carolina and as one of only two schools in the nation created by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Opened in 1919 for children of poor rural families, the site includes 44 contributing and 11 noncontributing buildings, sites, and structures dating from 1919 to 1960.	2012
S16	Walhalla Graded School (Walhalla)	Example of an educational building in the Classical Revival style and significant for its role in the educational development of Oconee County. The facility is comprised of a 1902 graded school, a 1913-14 auditorium and east wing addition, and a 1950s classroom addition, built on the temporary site of Newberry College.	1992

Source: National Register of Historic Places, 2019

Map 5-1. Oconee County National Register Districts and Sites

Source: Oconee County, 2019

2. Historical Markers

Historical markers give recognition to places, people, events, and structures that have historical significance at the local, state, or national level. The South Carolina Department of Archives and History manages the *South Carolina Historical Marker* program. The program includes 1,500 markers statewide, with 19 in Oconee County (Table 5-3). These markers recognize diverse sites of historical significance throughout the County that include schools, churches, and Native American settlements. Although the Department must approve the content of all markers and their location must be coordinated with the S.C. Department of Transportation, there is no state funding for the signs. Markers must be sponsored and purchased by civic, church, historical, or educational organizations.

Table 5-3. State Historical Markers in Oconee County

Marker ID	Marker Name
37-1	First Soil Conservation District Plan
37-2	St. John's Lutheran Church
37-3	The Cherokee Path
37-4	Seneca
37-5	Replaced by Marker 37-11
37-6	Capt. Samuel Earle
37-7	Oconee County Training School
37-8	Seneca Institute
37-9	Newberry College
37-10	Stumphouse Tunnel
37-11	Keowee Town
37-12	Oconee Town
37-13	Cherokee Boundary (1777)
37-14	Jocassee Town
37-15	English School
37-16	Chattooga Town
37-17	Cross Roads Baptist Church/Cross Roads School
37-18	West Union Grammar School
37-19	Tamassee DAR School
37-20	Retreat Rosenwald School

Source: S.C. Historical Marker Program database, 2019

4. Archaeological Resources

As defined by the S.C. Department of Archives and History, an archaeological site is an area yielding three or more historic or prehistoric artifacts within a 30-meter radius and/or an area with visible or historically recorded cultural features such as cemeteries, rock shelters, chimney falls, brick walls, piers, and earthworks. Due to the sensitive nature and wealth of information that can be gained over time from careful study of these sites, locations are typically not publicly disclosed.

Such sites on federal or tribal lands or that are potentially impacted by federally funded projects are protected to a limited degree by the *Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979*, the *Native American Graves and Repatriation Act of 1990*, *Executive Order 13007* of 1996, and the *Department of Transportation Act of 1966*. At the State level, multiple laws and regulations protect archeological resources including the *South Carolina Mining Act*, the *South Carolina Underwater Antiquities Act*, the *South Carolina Water Resources and Planning Act*, as well as various State codes related to abandoned cemeteries and burial grounds. The State has also developed *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations* as an advisory framework for archaeological fieldwork and reporting in the state of South Carolina.

Archeological sites can be particularly fragile and vulnerable to development. Most sites are discovered during the land development process, especially road construction. The County and its municipalities should work to protect and preserve known sites, as well as identify and protect additional potential areas of archaeological significance.

5. Cemeteries

Cemeteries are a significant historical resource in every community and can be an important repository for social, religious, artistic, genealogical, and cultural heritage. There are nearly 100 cemeteries in Oconee County, ranging in size from small family plots to historic church cemeteries and memorial gardens. More than 70 cemeteries in Oconee County have been inventoried by the U.S. Geological Survey and included in the federal Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). Among these historic locations are the Mountain View, Oak Grove, and Lumpkin Street cemeteries in Seneca, the St. John's Lutheran Church cemetery in Walhalla, and the Old Pickens Presbyterian Church cemetery north of Seneca. The website of the Oconee County Cemetery GPS Mapping Project contains most cemetery information including aerial views, map coordinates and directions, and links to photos and tombstone texts. The the 7Old Pendleton District Genealogical Society also maintains the *Oconee Cemetery Survey Books* .

The South Carolina Department of Archives and History provides a reference guide for individuals and groups who are interested in the preservation and protection of historic cemeteries (*South Carolina's Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook, 2007)*. Vandalism, development, and neglect are the biggest threats to these historic resources. Cemeteries are protected by several State laws that address the preservation and protection of cemeteries (*S.C. Code 6-1-35*), access and relocation of cemeteries (*S.C. Code 27-43-10*), and destruction or desecration of remains (*S.C. Code 16-17-600*). However, enforcement of State laws pertaining to cemeteries rests with local law enforcement. The *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966* also provides some protection to cemeteries that are eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

6. Unique Areas and Scenic Corridors

Numerous unique areas and corridors showcase the history, culture, and geography of Oconee County. In addition to scenic views, these routes feature historically and culturally significant sites and the unspoiled, diverse natural character of the County. The *Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway* is also a *National Scenic Byway* that extends 112 miles along S.C. Highway 11, while the *Savannah River Scenic Highway* (S.C. Highway 24) forms part of the *South Carolina National Heritage Corridor* that extends 320 miles from the mountains of Oconee to Charleston. This Heritage Corridor offers a cross-section of the State's history, culture, and natural landscapes by showcasing the evolution of regional life, from plantations and farms to mill villages and urban centers. As a spur of the Falling Waters National Scenic Byway, the *Oscar B. Wigington Scenic Highway* (S.C. Highway 107) is only 20 miles long and offers spectacular mountain views from the North Carolina border to Oconee State Park. These corridors and other scenic areas are detailed in the *Natural Resources Element*.

7. Historic Preservation Organizations

State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations assist South Carolina communities in maintaining their local character by preserving historic and cultural landmarks. The **South Carolina Department of Archives and History** (SCDAH) preserves and promotes the documentary and cultural heritage of the Palmetto State through archives and records management, history education, and historic preservation. Housed in the SCDAH, the **State Historic Preservation Office** (SHPO) facilitates the responsible stewardship of South Carolina's irreplaceable historic and prehistoric places. The SHPO is responsible for implementing the goals of the *National Historic Preservation Act*, as well as programs to assist local communities with preservation efforts. Support includes coordination of the *Statewide Survey of Historic Properties* to identify and evaluate historic resources, nomination of eligible resources to the National Register of Historic Places, management of the *South Carolina Historical Marker* program, administration of the *Certified Local Government* (CLG) Program, and review of projects involving Federal and State funds, licenses, permits and certifications.

The **South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology** (SCIAA) maintains the official inventory of discovered archeological sites in the State. The SCIAA was established in 1963 with the mandate to create and maintain a statewide inventory of archeological sites and ensure the adequacy of archeological research and archeological investigations carried out in the State of South Carolina. The SCIAA serves as the lead State agency concerned with South Carolina's Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology.

The nonprofit **Palmetto Conservation Foundation** was founded in 1989 to conserve South Carolina's natural and cultural resources, preserve historic landmarks, and promote active outdoor recreation on the Palmetto Trail and other greenways. As detailed in the *Natural Resources Element*, three sections of the Palmetto Trail have been completed in Oconee County to date with the Stumphouse Passage, the Oconee Passage, and the Eastatoe Passage.

The **Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission** is a county supported non-profit that funds annual cultural and art events. To raise awareness of local cultural and historical heritage, the Commission launched a Passport program for residents that encourages visits to 21 sites. The **Oconee County Historical Society** is dedicated to researching, maintaining, conserving and promoting information concerning the history of Oconee County. The **Oconee Heritage Center** is a nonprofit organization focused on the preservation and promotion of the history and cultural heritage of Oconee County through museums, programs, and historic sites.

8. Historic Preservation Planning

Land use, transportation, and zoning decisions can critically impact historic preservation efforts. Communities that plan ahead to preserve historic properties and districts have a greater likelihood of success. South Carolina law allows local jurisdictions to enact zoning provisions that preserve and protect the character of a community. These communities can enact historic preservation ordinances that contain specific procedures and standards for designating historic

properties and districts, design guidelines, and a process for reviewing proposed changes to historic properties. The focus of such ordinances is on preserving the appearance, rather than the use, of identified historic properties. The City of Seneca adopted a design review ordinance and guidelines in 2000 to further its historic preservation goals.

9. Historic Resource Funding Opportunities

Incentive programs encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and the donation of conservation easements to protect historic sites. Although Federal and State resources to support historic preservation efforts have been limited in scope and funding, there are a few opportunities available to property owners and local governments for historic preservation efforts (Table 5-4).

Table 5-4. Summary of Federal and State Tax Incentives for Historic Preservation

Incentive	Benefit Summary	Eligibility	Level
20% Federal Historic Rehabilitation Credit	Federal income tax credit equal to 20% of rehabilitation costs	Income-producing use such as offices, stores, or rental housing with individual or contributing National Register (NR) status	Federal
10% State Historic Rehabilitation Credit	State income or license tax credit equal to 10% of rehabilitation costs	Same as federal credit above and does not require separate state application process	State
10% Federal Rehabilitation Credit	Federal income tax credit equal to 10% of rehabilitation costs	Non-residential income-producing use for buildings in service before 1936 that do not have individual or contributing NR status	Federal
25% State Historic Rehabilitation Credit	State income tax credit equal to 25% of allowable rehabilitation costs for exterior, structural systems, energy efficiency, HVAC, plumbing, electrical	Owner-occupied residence with individual NR status or as contributing to historic district or historic outbuilding associated with an eligible residence	State
Federal Income Tax Incentives for Easement Donations	Income and estate tax deductions	Owner-occupied residence or income-producing building with individual or contributing NR status	Federal
Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Textile Mill Buildings	Credit against local property taxes *or* a State income tax credit equal to 25% of rehabilitation costs	Rehabilitation and reuse of former textile manufacturing facilities	State
Federal Income Tax Credit for Low Income Housing	Credit to rehabilitate historic buildings for low income housing and rental units	Low Income Housing Credits allocated by S.C. Housing Finance & Development Authority	Federal State
Local Property Tax Special Assessment	Property is assessed on the pre-rehabilitation fair market value for the length of the special assessment for up to 20 years	Income-producing real property and owner-occupied property are eligible for buildings designated as historic by NR or local government	Local

Source: S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, 2019

Eligible projects can combine Federal, State, and local credits with one or more other local incentives resulting in even greater benefit. The *Bailey Bill* was passed by the State legislature to allow South Carolina cities and counties to provide property tax incentives for improvements to historic structures.

The SCDAH also offers two matching grant programs with funds from the National Park Service for *Survey and Planning* and *Stabilization Projects.* However, only Certified Local Governments (CLG) are eligible for grant consideration. *Survey and Planning Grants* can be used for identifying and recognizing historic properties, planning for historic districts, strengthening local government preservation programs, preservation education, and planning for individual historic properties. *Stabilization Project Grants* are used for stabilization repairs to National Register buildings, including roofs, structural framework, and deteriorated doors and windows. The City of Seneca is among 36 Certified Local Governments in the State and the only CLG in Oconee County.

The *South Carolina National Heritage Corridor* provides funding and technical support to communities throughout a fourteen-county region that extends from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Oconee County to the Atlantic Ocean at Charleston and Colleton Counties. Designated by Congress as a "national heritage area" in 1996, communities along the Heritage Corridor are eligible for funding from the National Park Service for projects that enhance their natural, cultural, and historic resources. Oconee County has received grants for historic preservation and destination way-finding signage through this program.

C. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources envelop the broad spectrum of the heritage, the traditions, the religions, and the arts of a community. Participation and awareness of the arts can significantly enrich the quality of life for residents. Partnerships among schools, libraries, arts and civic groups, churches, higher education, and local business and industry can leverage local cultural opportunities to increase exposure to the arts for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

1. Cultural Facilities

Cultural facilities are buildings and places where cultural programs are housed and provide public access points for the arts. Oconee County has a diversity of cultural venues for residents and tourists that include numerous museums, a library system with four locations, a fine arts center, a performing arts center, and a community theater.

a. Museums

Oconee County is home to many museums that carefully preserve the diverse cultural heritage of the County and its communities, as well as the contributions of its residents. These facilities are profiled in Table 5-5.

Table 5-5. Oconee County Museums

Museum	Significance	Location
Bertha Lee Strickland Cultural Museum	Focuses on the rich history, culture, and contributions of local African-Americans in Oconee County history.	Seneca
General Store Museum	Branch of the Oconee History Museum displaying a vast collection of artifacts from the historic England's General Merchandise store of Westminster, with local history exhibits, antique toys, clothes, glassware, medical equipment, photos and other items unique to the area.	Westminster
Lunney House Museum	Listed on the National Register, this California style bungalow was built in 1909 by Dr. and Mrs. W.J. Lunney and occupied continuously by the Lunney family until 1969. Offers distinctive arts and crafts architecture, along with a collection of Mission and Victorian furniture, period costumes, and Oconee County historic memorabilia.	Seneca
Museum of the Cherokee in South Carolina	Promotes the study of the history and legacy of the Cherokee in the Upstate of South Carolina. Housed in an historic building built in 1905, the museum seeks to create a stronger understanding of the rich history of the State in relation to the Cherokee and their interaction with non-native cultures.	Walhalla
Patriots Hall (Oconee Veterans Museum)	Tells the story of the contributions and sacrifices of Oconee County veterans for our country, the world, and our freedom. Built in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, the two-story museum honors the service of veterans through military artifacts, documents, photographs, and artwork supported by the personal stories of Oconee County veterans. The facility includes a "Walk of Honor" to recognize individuals and groups, along with a library and gift shop.	Walhalla
Oconee County Heritage Center Museum	Explores the diverse history and cultural heritage of the County amid the influences of Native Americans, agriculture, railroads, immigration, New Deal programs, textile mills, and more. An exhibit hall offers a self-guided tour of local history with artifacts that include preserved dugout canoes, a walk-in Stumphouse Tunnel exhibit, and a Depression-era tenant farmer's house. The Louise Russell Alexander Children's Corner engages children in local culture and heritage.	Walhalla
Oconee Station	Originally a military compound and later a trading post, the site offers a unique look at 18th and 19th century South Carolina. The stone blockhouse and the William Richards House are the only two structures that remain on the site.	Oconee Station
World of Energy	Operated by Duke Energy, the hands-on, self-guided facility on Lake Keowee portrays the electrical generation process. With interactive models, the high-tech center reveals how three reactors interact to generate electricity for the Upstate. The facility is also a popular venue for meetings and public activities. Opened in 1969, the center is the longest continually operating nuclear visitor's center in the world.	Oconee Nuclear Station

b. Libraries

High quality library facilities, programs, and services can enhance, enrich, entertain, and educate residents of all ages, while presenting opportunities for life-long learning and fostering cultural understanding. The *Oconee County Public Library* was established in 1948 in Walhalla by County ordinance. The first branch locations were added in Westminster in 1950 and in Salem in 1952. The Seneca branch followed closely in 1953. The system also provides monthly bookmobile service to outlying rural areas that are more than 1.5 miles from a library. The Library system is managed and directed by a Board of Trustees consisting of nine members appointed by the County Council. The system had 44,959 registered patrons, with a circulation of 317,126 and 225,158 visitors in 2018.

The system plays a vital role in promoting genealogical research, computer and internet access, and early and adult literacy through programs such as preschool story time, adult book clubs, and summer reading programs. The local history and genealogy collection is housed in the Antoinette "Ann" Rogers Memorial Room of the main library in Walhalla. The collection includes microfilm of local newspapers, as well as local histories, family histories, cemetery records, and a small collection of local historical maps. As part of the State Library's *Digitization in a Box Initiative*, the Oconee Library is digitizing books, pamphlets and other documents that relate to aspects of Oconee County history. Many of these are works by local authors, which were originally published in very small editions and are no longer available for sale in a print version. Access to e-books and downloadable audio is also available, along with online access to thousands of magazines, newspapers, and reference books. To encourage STEM (Science, Math, Engineering and Technology) learning opportunities for area teens, the library has introduced a telescope lending program and 3D modeling software and printing services. Other community events held at the libraries are family movie nights, children and teen craft workshops, and writing contests.

c. Fine and Performing Arts Centers and Related Community Facilities

Although Oconee County remains largely rural, it boasts a number of cultural resources that serve to both educate and enrich the lives of its residents and visitors.

The *Walhalla Performing Arts Center* strives to provide a world-class facility for performances, conferences, and special events to enhance the cultural and social life of Upstate South Carolina. The Arts Center is supported with funding from the South Carolina Arts Commission, the Oconee County Accommodations Tax (ATAX) Committee, the City of Walhalla, and private foundations and contributions. The Center is located in the Walhalla Civic Auditorium that was built as a grade school in 1903 and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The current facility is the result of a restoration effort launched in 1993 by the Walhalla Auditorium Restoration Committee. The auditorium was reopened with an inaugural performance in 2003. The facility features beautifully restored palladium windows, a decorative tin ceiling, and original hand planed woodwork and stair railings constructed by skilled German craftsmen.

The *Westminster Music Centre* is a non-profit, community focused music venue that hosts the region's finest musicians, artists, and performers in an intimate setting with a professionally designed sound system. In partnership with the City of Westminster, the Centre sponsors *Music on Main*, a live downtown music performance held on the first Friday of each month from April through September. The Centre is governed by the volunteer Westminster Music Association with the shared goal of fostering downtown awareness, tourism, and vitality by attracting local, regional, and out-of-town patrons to quality musical performances and events at the Music Centre.

The *Gateway Arts Center* of Westminster seeks to make a wide variety of art, history, and culture accessible to people of all ages and from every walk of life. The Center is an all-volunteer art exhibit and education organization that relies entirely on donations, grants, and fees. The community is engaged in the arts through public participation events that are offered free of charge alongside formal exhibits and classes.

The *Oconee Community Theatre* presents diverse plays and dramatic works to promote and encourage local interest in theatrical productions. Local actors are showcased in several productions each year. The Theatre is managed by a nonprofit organization created in 1971, operated with the hard work of dedicated volunteers, and has been housed in the Utica School in Seneca since 1989.

The *Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail* (UHQT) preserves and promotes the history of the Upstate through the local tradition of quilt making and sharing the stories of those who made them. Oconee County was the first county in South Carolina to embrace the quilt trail concept. Today, there are more than 200 quilts on display along the route that extends through Oconee, Anderson, and Pickens Counties. Through the display of quilt patterns on hand-painted panels, the region's homes, barns, churches, community buildings, and historic sites participate in showcasing the colorful stories and generations of craftsmanship that contribute to this County's rich quilt making history.

The *Young Appalachian Musicians* (YAM) program was launched in 2010 at the Oconee History Museum. The program is a subsidiary of *Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music* (POSAM) based in neighboring Pickens County. A variety of classes are offered for area youth in traditional Appalachian musical instruments including guitar, mandolin, banjo, clawhammer banjo, dulcimer, and fiddle. Students learn in a group setting with instruction in tablature and playing by ear.

The *Blue Ridge Arts Center* is committed to "Bringing Art to the People and People to the Arts." Located in the historic district of Seneca and housed in a former church that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Center offers opportunities for artist exhibitions and gallery shows. Classroom studio space allows members and the community to participate in art classes, painting groups, artist demonstrations, events, and meetings. The Center also houses an art library with art reference books, videos, and instructional materials in various mediums. Outreach efforts to place art into the community have included public murals, park benches,

and the Alley Cat "sCATenger Hunt" that features steel, laser-cut cats that have been painted by local artists and "hidden" throughout downtown Seneca for residents and visitors to discover. The Arts Center is maintained by the **Blue Ridge Arts Council**, a non-profit organization that works to expand understanding, awareness, and participation in the arts in Oconee County.

Additional public and private facilities are available for cultural programming throughout the County. These facilities host a variety of events including community performances, private functions, and productions.

2. Annual Festivals and Special Events

Local governments, cultural and civic organizations, and the private sector can play a valuable role in providing recreational, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that enhance the sense of community for residents, attract tourists, and boost activity in traditional downtown districts. Oconee County communities and organizations host numerous festivals and special events throughout the year for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. These festivals and entertainment events feature activities from music to bike rides that promote the heritage and scenic resources of the region (Table 5-5).

Table 5-5. Annual Festivals and Special Events in Oconee County

Event	Location	Date	Activities
Isaqueena's Last Ride	Various	April	Offers a challenging mountain ride through the Blue Ridge Mountains and S.C. Foothills with 100, 80, 60 and 30 mile route options
Jazz Fest	Seneca	April	Three-day music festival in Ram Cat Alley in downtown Seneca
Jazz on the Alley	Seneca	April -Oct	Thursday night live music and street party in Historic Ram Cat Alley
Wheels in Westminster	Westminster	April	Car show
Westminster Bluegrass Jam	Westminster	April	Live performances of Bluegrass musicians
Seneca Fest	Seneca	May	Memorial Day Weekend festival featuring music, movies, and food
Rally in the Valley	Walhalla	May	Features bicycle rides of 30 or 60 miles through the scenic foothills of the Blue Ridge, with post-ride live music and barbecue
Cinco de Mayo Celebration	Seneca	May	Celebration of Mexican culture with food, piñatas, music, dancing, and shopping in Ram Cat Alley
Long Creek Music Festival	Long Creek	May	Three day music festival over Memorial Day weekend with music, crafts, and food vendors
Fun in the Sun	West Union	June	Live music, food, and vendors
Hillbilly Day	Mountain Rest	July 4	Showcases traditional bluegrass music, clogging, fiddle and banjo competitions, greased pig chase, BBQ
Cruzin' on Main	Seneca	Summer	First Saturdays celebration offering music, food and classic car show

Table 5-5. Annual Festivals and Special Events in Oconee County, *Continued*

Event	Location	Date	Activities
South Carolina Apple Festival	Westminster	Labor Day week	Celebrates the beginning of apple season in Oconee County, the State's largest apple producing area
Carolina Foothills Heritage Fair	Westminster	Sept	Concerts, livestock shows, rodeos, dance exhibitions, 4-H youth events, hands-on learning opportunities, and farm animal exhibits
Road Titans 300	Oconee County	Oct	Three-day cycling challenge that offers a 150-mile and 300-mile route through scenic Oconee County.
Tour de Tugaloo	Tugaloo River	Oct	Offers 22, 42, 62 and 100 mile route options along the Tugaloo River Corridor, Lake Hartwell and the foothills of Western S.C.
Oktoberfest	Walhalla	Oct	Celebrates local German heritage with traditional food, music, dancing, craft vendors, and recreation

Source: Upcountry South Carolina; Oconee County Chamber of Commerce, 2019

3. Arts and Cultural Organizations

Arts and culture play an important role in shaping community identity and civic pride, as well as providing economic opportunities for creative residents. Community members connect with art and one another when they attend and take part in music, dance, and theater performances, tour architectural sites and art exhibits, share works of literature, and engage and express themselves through electronic and digital media. Oconee County has a thriving creative sector that includes local writers, artisans, and musicians. The County has active arts groups in areas including drama, music, and folk arts such as quilting.

The arts are easily integrated into strategies that improve the community livability. A recent report on the economic impact of the arts in South Carolina reveals that the arts cluster supports 115,000 jobs statewide, generates $269 million in tax revenue, and contributes more than $9.7 billion to the State's economy (*South Carolina's Arts-Related Economic Cluster, 2018*).

A wide range of agencies and organizations at the national, state, and local levels provide technical and funding support for artists and arts and cultural initiatives. The ***National Endowment for the Arts*** (NEA) was established by Congress in 1965 to give Americans the opportunity to participate in and experience the arts. The NEA awards project-based funding through multiple grant programs that support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for individuals, states, and communities across the country.

The NEA funds the ***South Carolina Arts Commission*** (SCAC), a state agency tasked with advancing and promoting excellence in the arts and a thriving arts environment in South Carolina. The work of SCAC is focused in the three areas of arts education, artist development, and community arts development. SCAC offers grant programs for individual artists, arts organizations, and schools. SCAC grants to organizations provide funding for operating support, presenting and performing arts, arts education, folklife and traditional arts projects, and accessibility. Funding assistance to individual artists includes artist fellowships, arts

apprenticeships, and artist ventures, as well as arts project support. SCAC grants assistance to schools supports arts education for students, teacher standards implementation, and the *Arts in Basic Curriculum Advancement* program to make the arts an integral part of the basic curriculum and daily classroom instruction.

As one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States, the **National Endowment for the Humanities** (NEH) seeks to promote excellence in the humanities and convey the lessons of history to all Americans. At the State level, the mission of the nonprofit **South Carolina Humanities** is to enrich the cultural and intellectual lives of all South Carolinians by increasing public understanding of and support for the humanities. Both organizations offer multiple grant programs. While NEH grants typically go to larger cultural institutions such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television, and radio stations, recipients of state grants have included local libraries, individual schools, churches, civic groups, and community historical and arts councils. South Carolina Humanities provides major grants, mini and planning grants, fast track literary grants, and council program grants.

4. Educational Institutions

Communities that promote a philosophy of lifelong learning among residents are better positioned to successfully compete in a global economy and benefit from a more engaged citizenry. Arts education and music programs are provided to more than 10,400 students each year through the **School District of Oconee County**. The School District supports a countywide arts education program that includes high school chorus, guitar and piano classes, orchestra/strings program, art exhibits, theatre, visual arts, music appreciation and theory classes, and symphonic, concert and marching bands.

The most recent Strategic Plan for the District incorporates the goal of expanding "arts awareness, appreciation and experiential programs, along with arts-infused instructional approaches." Strategies to advance this goal include partnering with other community arts groups to expand the *Artists in Residency* and *Arts on the Green* programs, as well as the Young Appalachian Musicians program.

5. Related Venues

Oconee County has several agricultural tourism sites and facilities that strongly complement its historic, arts, and cultural resources. In addition to supporting the County's agricultural economy, agritourism attractions showcase the cultural and historical traditions of the community. A number of local farms have looked beyond traditional markets to diversify their operations through agritourism, incorporating farm tours and field trips, dinners, on-site farm-to-table restaurants with markets, workshops, festivals, and u-pick operations. These operations are detailed in the *Agriculture Element*.

6. Religious Institutions

The faith community played an important role in the early development of Oconee County and its communities. The more than 200 churches, synagogues, and faith communities of various denominations in Oconee County are a vital partner in broadening community access to cultural opportunities. These institutions continue to have a positive impact on the quality of life by hosting events such as annual community concerts and reunions that preserve community and family histories, maintaining historic cemeteries, providing diverse youth activities and summer camps, and participating in festivals that showcase local food, talent, and crafts. Churches also often provide day care, pre-school, and faith-based private school options for many families.

7. Media

Newspapers, magazines, television, and radio stations can be a key conduit of information about local cultural events and festivals. Although there are no network television stations located within Oconee County, local residents are served by major network affiliate stations based in the Greenville-Spartanburg area. Three newspapers are published in the County. The *Seneca Daily Journal & Messenger* is published daily, while the *Westminster News* and the *Keowee Courier* are weekly newspapers serving the Westminster and Walhalla communities. Of the six radio stations based in the County, four are in Seneca, one is in Westminster, and one in Walhalla. Three of the stations broadcast country music, one contemporary religious programming, one adult contemporary music, and one urban contemporary.

8. Cultural Tourism

Tourism has grown to a $22.6 billion industry in South Carolina, accounting for nearly three percent of the State GDP (*U.S. Travel Association, 2019*). Tourism now supports one in ten jobs statewide. Domestic travelers to the State spent more than $12 billion on transportation, lodging, food, entertainment, recreation, and incidentals. Sector spending also generates $1.7 billion in State and local tax revenue. This equates to a tax burden transfer from residents to tourists of $895 per household.

State data also shows that Oconee County benefitted from more than $64 million in travel and tourism related expenditures, with $3.3 million in local tax revenues in 2017. Tourism generated nearly $10 million in local payroll. This activity ranked Oconee among the top half of South Carolina counties in total travel expenditures. Oconee County received $406,825 in total accommodations tax allocations for fiscal year 2017-2018, with $200,070 of the total remaining with the County, $186,798 of this total going to the City of Seneca, $7,070 to the City of Walhalla, $5,496 to the City of Westminster, $4,253 to the Town of Salem, and $3,138 to the Town of West Union *(SCPRT, 2018).*

Cultural tourism in particular offers significant economic opportunities for local businesses and residents through the creation of new retail and service markets in the areas of arts and culture, historical tours and sites, genealogy resources, agribusiness, specialty foods, and related products. In addition to visiting historic places and museums during their trips, heritage visitors enjoy shopping, parks, cultural events and festivals, and outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, boating, or biking. Such tourism is an attractive economic development resource for Oconee County as it preserves community character, instills local pride, promotes community investment, improves the overall quality of life, and generates local employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. The continued cooperation of public and private interests in marketing, preservation and revitalization, and programming for cultural tourism will position the County and its municipalities to continue building upon local heritage tourism assets that include historic sites of state and national significance, cultural attractions, festivals, outdoor events, and diverse culinary and retail offerings.

The *South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism* (SCPRT) is a cabinet agency assigned to operate and manage South Carolina's State Parks, market the State as a preferred vacation destination, and provide assistance to local communities for development and promotion of parks, recreation and tourism. SCPRT offers annual grants to support local governments and nonprofits in developing marketing and generating visitors to the state (Table 5-7.

Table 5-7. Cultural and Heritage Tourism Support Opportunities

Grant Program	Summary	Eligibility	Amount
Emerging Destination Marketing	Seeks to generate new visitation through select tourism advertising activities for highly-developed, emerging tourism destinations	▪ 501(c) non-profit charged with marketing tourism for specific city or unincorporated area	$100,000 to $200,000 (2:1 cash match)
Destination-Specific Tourism Marketing	Supports destination specific advertising that generate a proven economic return for the State	▪ Qualified tourism partners	$250,000+ (2:1 cash match)
Sports Tourism Advertising and Recruitment	Recruits new sporting events that enhance resident quality of life and generate significant economic impact to local communities through additional participant/visitor spending	▪ Nonprofit tourism or sports-related organizations, applying through local governments	Up to $50,000 (1:1 match)
Tourism Advertising	Expand economic benefits of tourism across the state by providing competitive, matching grant funds to qualified tourism marketing partners for direct tourism advertising expenditures in Festivals and Events, Attractions, and Destinations	▪ SC tourism regions and organizations engaged in tourism marketing ▪ Local government/non-profits attracting out-of-market visitors to destination, event or attraction	Up to $100,000 (1:1 and 2:1 match)
Undiscovered SC	Assists communities and nonprofits with development of *publicly owned* tourism products and attractions that	▪ County/municipal governments with ATAX distributions of $550,000	$100,000 to $200,000 (1:1 match)

encourage visitation to the State	or less	

Source: S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, 2019

The Oconee County Parks, Recreation & Tourism Commission serves as the ***Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee***. The Committee advises Oconee County Council on the expenditures of revenue generated from accommodations tax. Grants are made to local organizations for promotion of tourism related arts and cultural events and the construction, maintenance, and operation of civic and cultural facilities.

Discover Upcountry Carolina Association is designated by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) as one of the State's eleven official regional tourism development and promotion agencies. Established in 1978, the Association serves Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg Counties. The goal of the Committee is to support efforts that attract tourists from outside the Oconee County area and that generate overnight accommodations. Recent funding has been awarded to festivals, park improvements, and renovation and repair of historic structures.

Visit Oconee SC, formerly the Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau, is the destination marketing organization focused on bringing visitors into Oconee County to visit, stay, dine, and shop. Local businesses, restaurants, lodging, arts and cultural events, and recreational opportunities throughout Oconee County are highlighted through newsletters, social media, and visitor guides.

E. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Cultural resources, activities, and opportunities are prominent and essential elements of community life, contributing to the vibrancy, place, and identity of the County and the quality of life and well-being of its residents. Rural communities with attractive cultural, scenic, and historical resources are among the fastest growing heritage tourism destinations. A concerted effort to preserve and enhance the community's rich cultural resources base will continue to contribute to the appeal of Oconee County as a desirable place to work and live and as a tourism and retirement destination.

The goals, objectives and strategies for implementation (GOIS) table summarizes the actions that will be undertaken in the coming decade to achieve the goals and objectives identified in the *Cultural element*. Element goals are broad based ideals that are intended to guide the future of the community, while an objective is a more specific elaboration of a goal that also provides direction. Together the goals and objectives outline the framework for the element and provide the basis for the more detailed and specific plan strategies. Each supporting implementation strategy includes a listing of the agencies that are accountable for the implementation of the strategy, as well as a time frame for completion.

- *Blue text in GOIS table was added per input from focus group meetings*

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Goal 6.1. Protect the historic and cultural heritage of Oconee County, as embodied and reflected in its historic structures, sites, and districts.		
Objective 6.1.1. Emphasize the importance of historic and cultural resources in the policies, plans, and ordinances of local governments to ensure that the unique character of the County is preserved and enhanced.		
Strategy 6.1.1.1. Identify and address the protection of historical and cultural resources through County and municipal land use plans and regulations.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	
Strategy 6.1.1.2. Enhance the visual and aesthetic character of the County and its municipalities using codes enforcement, architectural review boards, and other measures as appropriate.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	
Strategy 6.1.1.3. Survey, list, and record the County's archaeological and historical assets; and inventory and add potential sites within the County that have historical and cultural significance. ~~-~~	• Oconee County • Municipalities • SC Archives & History • Property Owners	On-going
~~Strategy 6.1.1.4. Inventory and add potential sites within the County that have historical and cultural significance.~~	• ~~Oconee County~~ • ~~Municipalities~~ • ~~Property Owners~~	~~On-going~~
Objective 6.1.2. Protect local sites, structures and districts which represent or reflect elements of cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history at the community, County, regional and state levels.		
Strategy 6.1.2.1. Promote the on-going improvement and maintenance of property condition and appearance of historic structures and districts.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Nonprofits • Property Owners/Businesses • Neighborhood Associations	On-going
Strategy 6.1.2.2. Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic or architecturally significant buildings that connect the County and its communities with their histories.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Property Owners	On-going
Strategy 6.1.2.4. Explore the purchase and adaptive reuse of the Utica Mill site.	• Oconee County • City of Seneca • Private Businesses/Nonprofits	
Strategy 6.1.2.5. Educate the public and businesses on the economic and cultural benefits of historic preservation and available incentives.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	On-going
Strategy 6.1.2.6. Work with the School District of Oconee County School and private schools to establish and deliver programs on historic preservation and community history.	• School District of Oconee County • Private and Home Schools • Oconee County Historical Society • Oconee County Library	
Goal 6.2. Strengthen countywide access, involvement, and appreciation of the arts.		
Objective 6.2.1. Strengthen the creative capacity of the community by providing all County residents with diverse opportunities for arts participation.		
Strategy 6.2.1.1. Encourage residents to connect with one another and their communities through a strong awareness of and commitment to local history and historic places, as well as a deep appreciation for the arts. • Oconee County • Oconee County Library System • Oconee County Schools Museums and Historic Sites		On-going
Strategy 6.2.1.2. Increase the awareness ~~and active participation~~ of Oconee County residents of all ages and income levels in visual, performing, and literary arts, and cultural programming.	• Fine/Performing Arts Centers • Oconee County Library • School District of Oconee County • Other Cultural and Arts Groups	On-going

	•	

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Strategy 6.2.1.4. Enable residents of all ages to acquire knowledge and skills in the arts by supporting arts projects that address lifelong learning.	• School District of Oconee County • Cultural and Arts Groups	On-going
Strategy 6.2.1.5. Promote opportunities for volunteerism and sponsorships of tourism, cultural, and recreational offerings.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Cultural Organizations • Businesses/Employers	On-going
Objective 6.2.2. Strengthen the creative and operational capacity of existing community arts and cultural organizations.		
Strategy 6.2.2.1. Increase local arts funding by supporting arts organizations in federal and state grants applications, as well as corporate and private funding.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Private Businesses/Nonprofits	On-going
Strategy 6.2.2.2. Maximize funding from sources including the National Endowment for the Arts, the S.C. Arts Commission, the S.C. Humanities Council and the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.	• Oconee County • Cultural and Arts Groups	On-going
Strategy 6.2.2.3. Continue to support cultural and arts venues through annual appropriation of accommodations tax revenues.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	On-going
Strategy 6.2.2.4. Encourage volunteer involvement in cultural programming, organizations and events by community, faith-based, and civic groups, as well as businesses.	• Cultural and Arts Groups • Faith-based Organizations • Oconee County Public/Private Schools • Civic and Community groups	On-going
Goal 6.3. Leverage the County's historic and cultural assets as an economic development resource.		
Objective 6.3.1. Integrate the County's heritage into the overall economic development process, especially as it relates to building a cultural tourism industry.		
Strategy 6.3.1.1. Maintain and communicate a shared vision and guiding principles for tourism and recreation development in Oconee County among the public and private sectors.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Museums/Arts Organizations • Business Owners/Chamber	On-going
Strategy 6.3.1.2. Increase awareness of the rich genealogical resources in Oconee County as a means to attract additional heritage tourists.	• Oconee Historical Society/Museums • Oconee County Library	
Strategy 6.3.1.3. Ensure the County's visibility in the regional tourism market to support sustainable tourism development and make the County a destination for cultural enrichment, leisure, entertainment, and the arts.	• Upcountry SC Tourism Association • Visit Oconee SC • Oconee Chamber of Commerce • Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 6.3.1.4. Recognize, build upon and promote the County's historic and cultural assets with agricultural, Colonial and Civil War, African-American, and Native American (Cherokee), and Appalachian themes through local historical and arts institutions and programming.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Museums/Arts Organizations • Business Owners • Upcountry SC/Visit Oconee SC	
Objective 6.3.2. Support employers engaged in the cultural and heritage tourism, agritourism, and nature-based tourism sectors.		
Strategy 6.3.2.1. Pursue additional SCPRT and other grants for local governments and non-profits to supplement promotional efforts in tourism marketing for festivals, attractions, and events.	• Municipalities • Oconee County • Cultural Organizations	On-going
Strategy 6.3.2.2. Launch hospitality and tourism sector training and workforce development to support excellence in quality of services.	• School District of Oconee County • Tri-County Technical College • Oconee Chamber of Commerce • Employers • Oconee Economic Alliance	

| Strategy 6.3.2.3. Collaborate with the private sector to expand local shopping, dining, and lodging amenities as an important means of capturing tourist dollars. | • Oconee Chamber of Commerce
• Oconee County
• Municipalities
• Business Owners | On-going |

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Strategy 6.3.2.4. Preserve the culture and identity tied to agriculture and the landscape of the County's rural communities.	• Oconee County • Farms and Agribusinesses • Land Conservation Groups	On-going

The transportation-land use connection influences both land use and transportation planning. While the most significant role that transportation plays in land development is in providing access, transportation facilities serve as a critical element of the built environment, creating both connections and barriers. For instance, a high-volume, four-lane highway may connect key areas of a community for vehicular travel, but safety concerns can deter pedestrians who need to cross the highway to get to resources on the other side. Traffic congestion on a thoroughfare can also be a barrier, causing motorists to seek alternative routes through residential areas. An understanding of these relationships is critical to solving and even preventing transportation related problems such as congestion, higher energy consumption, impaired air quality, threats to public health and safety, and decreased access to services and employment.

Debate on the relationship between transportation and land use typically hinges on whether the transportation network should be planned to accommodate anticipated land uses and growth, or should the transportation network evolve organically to accommodate traffic generated by the location of land uses and subsequent growth patterns. Ideally, transportation networks should be planned to anticipate and accommodate future needs. However, funding for costly transportation infrastructure is limited, particularly at the local level, with resources focused on alleviating immediate problems such as congestion, road maintenance, and safety issues caused by increased traffic volume.

A transportation system is defined as any means used to move people and products. While roads comprise the majority of most transportation systems, they are not the only viable component. Effective transportation systems are broad, multi-modal networks that include options such as rail, air, shipping, public transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. The Transportation Element provides an analysis of transportation systems serving Oconee County including existing roads, planned or proposed major road improvements and new road construction, existing and proposed transit projects, and proposed and existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and projects.

A. ROAD NETWORK

According to the *2017-2022 South Carolina Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*, projected demand for travel in the State will continue to rise due to economic growth, as well as increases in the number of resident drivers and driving activity. While travel volume is generally highest on the Interstates, federal, and state highways and many local roads also experience traffic congestion and road wear associated with increased motor vehicle travel. An examination of the local road network will enable Oconee County to work with regional partners to plan for transportation needs for the coming decade, particularly as they relate to future land use.

1. Local Road Funding

The State of South Carolina's "C Program" is a partnership between SCDOT and the State's counties to fund location transportation projects and improvements to State, county, and city roads. Program funds, known as C-Funds, are derived from a 2.9925 cents per gallon user tax on gasoline sales. The tax is allocated to each of the 46 counties based on population, land area, and rural road mileage. The allocation per gallon will increase by 0.3325 cent per gallon each fiscal year through 2021, when it will reach a total of 3.99 cents per gallon. As part of the program, each county has a *County Transportation Committee (CTC)* with members appointed by the county legislative delegation. The three-member Oconee County Transportation Committee is responsible for the formation of a county transportation plan, and is empowered with the authority to select and approve projects to be funded utilizing C-Funds.

C-Funds may be used for construction, improvements, or maintenance on the State highway system; local paving or improvements to county roads; street and traffic signs; and other road and bridge projects. Resurfacing, sidewalk construction, and drainage improvements may also be paid for with C-Funds. By law, counties must spend at least 25 percent of C-Fund allocations on construction, improvements, and maintenance related to the state highway system, with the remaining 75% available for local transportation system projects. The FY 2018-2019 C-Fund apportionment for Oconee County was $1,951,600 *(SCDOT, 2019)*.

2. Road Naming and Addressing

The Oconee County Addressing Office administers the assignment of addresses, the naming of subdivisions, and road naming and renaming countywide per the requirements of the County's *Road Naming and Addressing Policy*. Road names and subdivision names must be submitted and approved by the Addressing Office before preliminary and final plat approval for all new developments.
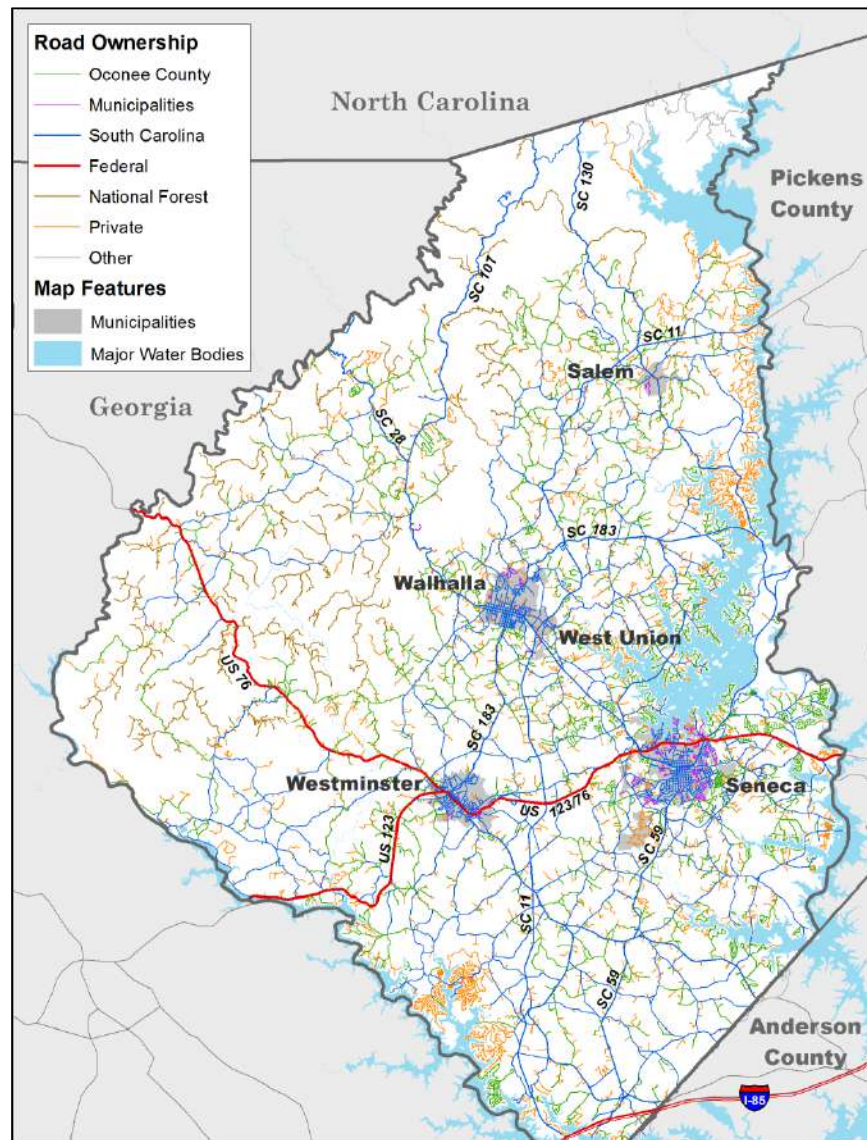
3. Road Network

There are more than 2,419 miles of roads within Oconee County. The County owns and maintains 659 of these road miles. The State of South Carolina maintains 830.9 miles of roads in the County that include 8.7 miles of Interstate 85, 44.2 miles of U.S. Highways, and 778 miles of primary and secondary State roads. The U.S. Forest Service maintains 189.5 miles of roads in the Sumter National Forest. Nearly 27.6 miles of road are maintained by municipalities, including 20.89 miles in Seneca, 4.21 miles in Walhalla, and 1.3 miles in Westminster. Less than one mile of road is maintained in both Salem and West Union. The remainder of roads in the County are privately owned and maintained. Several large residential developments own and maintain their road systems, including Foxwood Hills, Keowee Key, and Chickasaw Point. Map 9-1 illustrates road ownership in Oconee County.

The County's Roads and Bridges Department has 35 employees divided into several different crews. The Arbor Crew trims and removes trees from rights-of-way, the Mowing Crew mows the rights-of-way, the Construction Crew builds new roads and upgrades existing roads, and the Asphalt Crew repairs potholes and patches and paves new and existing roads. The Pipe Crew installs and repairs culverts, the Maintenance Crew maintains the County's gravel roads, and the Sign Crew installs and maintains street name and traffic signs.

Map 9-1. County Road Ownership, 2018

Source: Oconee County GIS Department, 2018

4. Road Paving

Maintaining dirt roads can be costly, while the return on investment for paving can take a number of years. However, the paving of dirt roads provides many benefits to residents as well

as local governments. Paving seals the road surface from rainfall, preventing erosion and protecting the base and sub-grade materials. It also eliminates dust, makes vehicular travel much smoother, and accommodates a wider range of vehicles such as tractor-trailers.

The life of a road, regardless of the surface, is affected by the number of vehicles and the weight of the vehicles using it. Generally, the more vehicles using a road, the faster it will deteriorate. For unpaved roads, heavy use can result in potholes, pronounced ruts, and washboarding that require more frequent road maintenance including scraping and resurfacing.

There are currently 705.5 miles of unpaved roads in Oconee County, representing 29.2% of the County's total road miles. Oconee County owns and maintains 157.3 miles of these unpaved roads that comprise 23.9% of the road miles owned and maintained by the County. More than 48% of unpaved roads (339 miles) in the County are privately owned and maintained and 24.8% (174.7 miles) are in the Sumter National Forest and maintained by the U.S. Forest Service.

All new roads submitted for acceptance into the County public road system must be paved. Private unpaved roads are allowed in new developments, but must be constructed to County standards and must remain privately maintained.

B. FUNCTIONAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Streets and roads serve two primary functions – to provide mobility and facilitate access to land. Optimally, the transportation network balances these two functions. On higher capacity roads such as interstates mobility is the primary function, while the primary function of local roads is to provide residential access. Between these two extremes, the level of mobility and access to land vary depending on the function of the network.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines functional classification as the process by which streets and highways are grouped according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Transportation planners and engineers classify roads based on FHWA and State criteria that consider the type of road and traffic volume. Streets and highways are grouped in four categories: freeways, arterials, collectors, and local roads (Table 9-1). The *Functional Classification Map* for Oconee County roads is shown in Map 9-2.

Table 9-1. Functional Road Classifications

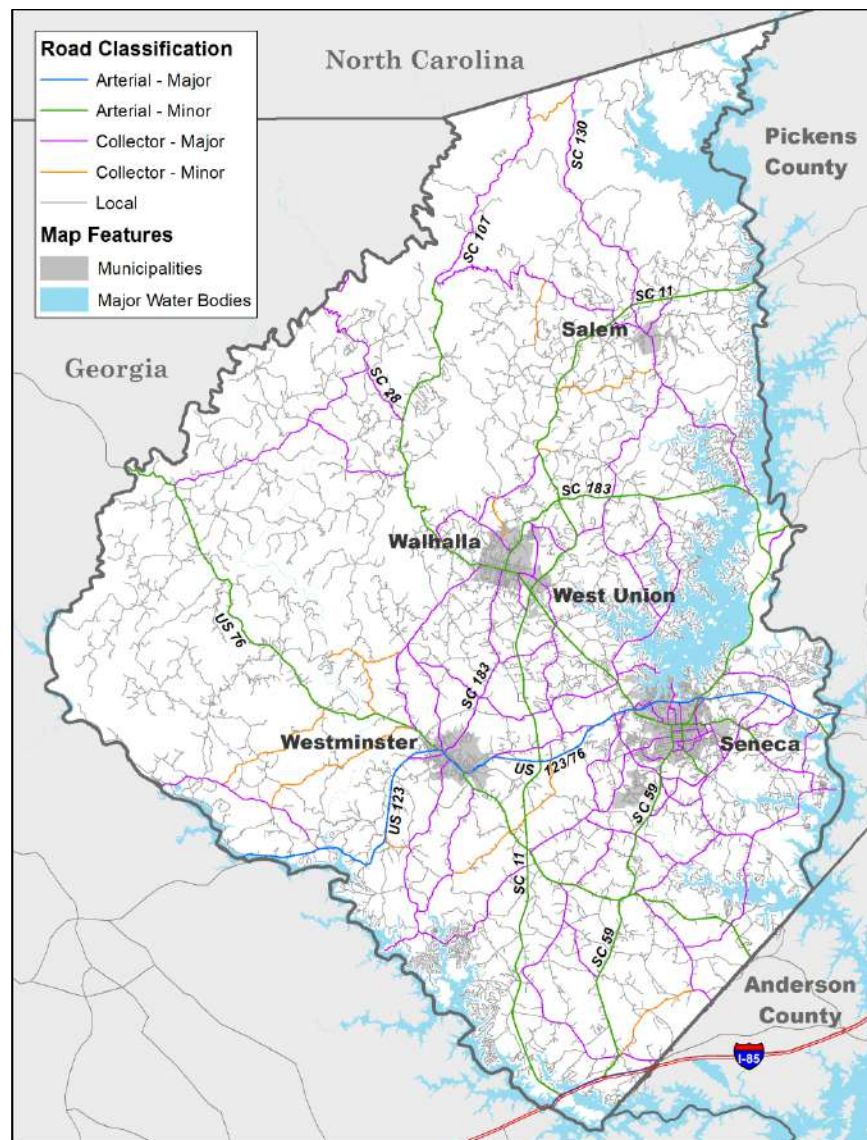| Classification	Functional Purpose
Interstates	▪ Multi-lane divided roadways with no traffic signals to interrupt traffic flow
Arterials	▪ Provide the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance ▪ *Major arterials* are connected networks of continuous routes that serve corridor movements and high percentage of area population ▪ *Minor arterials* form a network linking cities and larger towns as part of an integrated network, including arterials not classified as major and placing emphasis on land access

Table 9-1. Functional Road Classifications, *continued*

Classification	Functional Purpose
Collectors	▪ Provide service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials, provides both access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial, and industrial areas ▪ *Major collectors* serve the more important travel corridors within a county ▪ *Minor collector*s penetrate neighborhoods, distributing trips from arterial roads and collecting traffic from local streets

Source: Federal Highway Administration, 2019

Map 9-2. Functional Road Classifications, 2018

Source: Oconee County GIS Department, 2018

C. TRAFFIC COUNTS

Recent SCDOT traffic counts for the most traveled road segments in Oconee County are listed in Table 9-2 and illustrated in Map 9-3. The counts represent estimated 24-hour, two-way annual average daily traffic (AADT) and reflect seasonal and daily adjustments. Segments of Interstate 85 are the most traveled routes in the County, with AADT counts that range from 42,600 to 45,500. Traffic counts on segments of U.S. Highway 76 are also comparatively high, ranging from 11,200 to 26,300 on the Highway's busiest segments. Segments of S.C. Highway 28 also posted high AADTs in 2017.

**Table 9-2. Oconee County Road Segments with
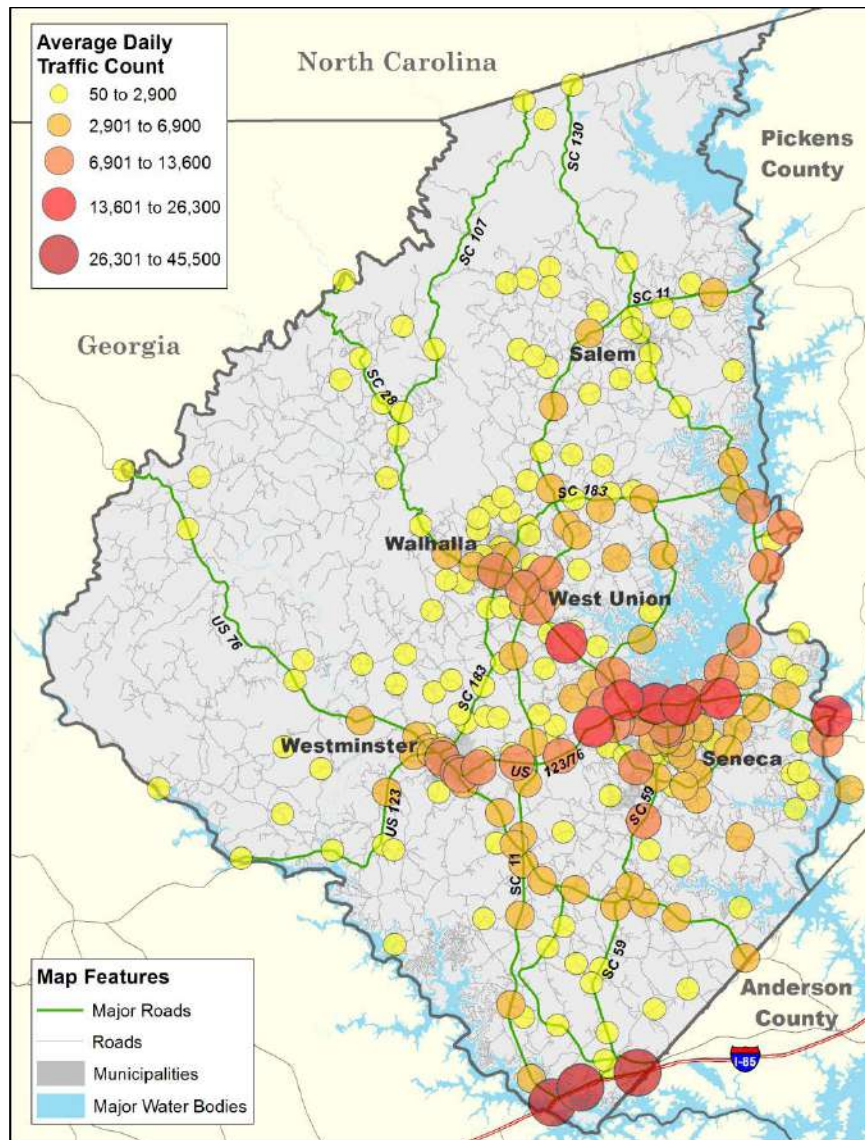Highest Average Daily Traffic Count (AADT), 2017**

Route	Station Number	Route Location	2017 AADT
I- 85	2261	State Line - Georgia to S.C. Hwy.11	45,500
	2263	S.C. Hwy. 11 to S.C. 59 (W. Fairplay Blvd.)	43,800
	2265	S.C. Hwy 59 (W. Fairplay Blvd.) to Old Dobbins Bridge Road (Anderson)	42,600
U.S. Hwy. 76	127	S.C. Hwy. 28 (Blue Ridge Blvd.) to N. Walnut Street	26,300
	129	N. Walnut Street to S.C. Hwy. 130 (Rochester Hwy.)	24,100
	133	Wells Hwy. to Pickens County Line	22,300
	131	S.C. Hwy. 130 (Rochester Hwy.) to Wells Hwy.	19,400
	125	Richland Road to S.C. Hwy. 28 (Blue Ridge Blvd.)	17,600
	123	S.C. Hwy. 11 to Richland Road	12,300
	115	Lucky Street to S.C. Hwy. 24 (West Oak Hwy.)	11,200
S.C. Hwy. 28	153	U.S. Hwy. 76 (U.S. Hwy.123 Bypass) to S.C. Hwy 188 (Keowee School Road)	20,200
	155	S.C. Hwy 188 (Keowee School Rd.) to Poplar Springs Road	16,200
	157	Poplar Springs Road to S.C. Hwy. 11	13,600
	159	S.C. Hwy. 11 to Poplar Springs Road	11,200
Wells Hwy.	389	U.S. Hwy. 76 (Sandifer Blvd.) to W. South 4th Street	12,200
	391	W. South 4th Street to S.C. Hwy. 59 (S. Oak St.)	10,900
Sheep Farm Rd.	556	Bountyland Road to U.S. Hwy.76 (Sandifer Blvd.)	10,600
S.C. Hwy. 11	118	S.C. Hwy. 28 (Blue Ridge Blvd.) to W. Main Street	10,600
S.C. Hwy. 130	203	U.S. Hwy. 76 (Clemson Blvd.) to Old Clemson Hwy.	10,000
S.C. Hwy. 59	135	Earlestead Drive to U.S. Hwy. 76 (U.S. Hwy.123 Bypass)	10,000

Source: SCDOT, Average Daily Traffic Counts for Oconee County, 2017

Map 9-3. Average Daily Traffic Counts, 2017

Source: SCDOT, Average Daily Traffic Counts for Oconee County, 2017

D. ROADWAY SAFETY

Traffic collisions are responsible for billions of dollars in economic losses in South Carolina each year in the form of property damage, medical costs, and lost productivity. Data compiled by the Office of Highway Safety of the S.C. Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) indicates a traffic collision occurs in the State every 3.7 minutes, with an injury due to a traffic crash occurring every 13.3 minutes. Every 9.5 hours one or more persons die in South Carolina due to injuries sustained in a traffic crash *(S.C. Traffic Collision Fact Book, 2017)*.

There are 78,981 registered vehicles in Oconee County *(S.C. Traffic Collision Fact Book, 2017)*. Among South Carolina's 46 counties, Oconee County ranked 24th highest in number of traffic collisions. The County ranked 25th highest in collisions resulting in injury and 21st highest in fatalities caused by traffic accidents in 2017. While only 1.4% of crashes resulted in fatalities, injuries were reported in more than one-third (37.5%) of collisions in the County.

There were 19 deaths as a result of traffic collisions in the County in 2017 – nine on State primary roads, five on secondary roads, three on U.S. primary roads and one each on I-85 and a county road (Table 9-3). Collisions were prevalent on S.C. primary roads and secondary roads in Oconee County, with a high number also reported on U.S. primary roads. Higher percentages indicate that collisions are more likely to occur on state primary roads in Oconee County than on such roads statewide.

Table 9-3. Collisions by Route Type, 2017

| | Collision Type | | | | | | Persons | |
| | Fatal | | Injury | | Total Collisions* | | | |
Road Type	#	%	#	#	%	#	Killed	Injured
Oconee County								
Interstate	1	5.9%	4	1.2%	36	2.6%	1	6
U.S. Primary	3	17.6%	79	22.8%	321	23.5%	3	133
S.C. Primary	7	41.2%	108	31.2%	451	33.0%	9	151
Secondary	5	29.4%	134	38.7%	458	33.5%	5	188
County	1	5.9%	21	6.1%	97	7.1%	1	34
Ramp	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.0%	0	0
Totals	17	100.0%	346	100.0%	1,366	99.8%	19	512
South Carolina								
Interstate	96	10.4%	3,533	9.0%	16,428	11.6%	104	5,454
U.S. Primary	258	27.9%	11,071	28.1%	37,465	26.4%	277	17,713
S.C. Primary	233	25.2%	9,324	23.6%	31,910	22.5%	257	14,544
Secondary	292	31.6%	12,569	31.8%	42,850	30.2%	304	18,743
County	45	4.9%	2,865	7.3%	12,627	8.9%	46	3,974
Ramp	1	0.1%	104	0.3%	594	0.4%	1	138
Totals	925	100.0%	39,466	100.0%	141,874	100.0%	989	60,566

* Property Damage Only collisions are included in totals but are not listed separately
Source: S.C. Department of Public Safety, South Carolina Traffic Collision Fact Book, 2017

In 2018, the Oconee County Community Development Department prepared a *Roadway Collision and Fatality Research* report for the Oconee County Planning Commission that provides a statistical baseline. The report examines collision data from 2012 through 2017 and provides additional information that can be used in corridor planning, while examining approaches for mitigation of the causes of collisions such as driving too fast for conditions and driving under the influence. The companion report *County Wide Citation Data 2013-2017, Highway 76/123 Traffic Data 2006-2016* released in 2018 provides average annual daily trips

and citation information including top routes, days and times of issuance, and ticketed offences related to leading collision causes.

E. COMMUTING PATTERNS

More than 71% of Oconee County workers aged 16 and over both live and work in the County, while nearly one-in-four commute outside of the County to work (Table 9-4). Among those that live in a town or city, only 4.1% or 7,137 workers, also work in the same town or city – a much lower percentage than statewide and nationwide at 16.2% and 31.5%, respectively.

Mean travel time to work for Oconee County workers is 24.7 minutes, similar to the commute time for workers statewide at 24.1 minutes, but slightly lower than commuters throughout the nation at 26.1 minutes (Table 9-4). Nearly one-third (31.1%) of Oconee County workers have a commute time of less than 15 minutes to work – a higher percentage than workers throughout South Carolina and the United States. Eight percent of County workers drive an hour or more to work.

Table 9-4. Journey to Work, 2016

Workers 16 and Older	Oconee County	South Carolina	United States
Place of Work			
Worked in Town or City of Residence	4.1%	16.2%	31.5%
Worked in County of Residence	71.1%	70.6%	72.4%
Worked Outside County of Residence	24.5%	24.1%	23.9%
Worked Outside State of Residence	4.4%	5.3%	3.7%
Means of Transport to Work			
Car, Truck or Van – Drove Alone	84.2%	82.8%	76.4%
Car, Truck or Van – Carpooled	10.0%	9.3%	9.3%
Public Transportation	0.7%	0.6%	5.1%
Walked	0.8%	2.2%	2.8%
Bicycle	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
Other Means - Taxi, Motorcycle, etc.	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%
Worked at Home	3.3%	3.6%	4.6%
Travel Time to Work			
14 minutes or less	31.1%	27.3%	26.7%
15 - 29 minutes	39.0%	39.5%	36.3%
30 to 59 minutes	21.6%	27.5%	28.4%
60 or more minutes	8.1%	5.6%	8.7%
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	**24.7**	**24.1**	**26.1**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

Personal vehicles are the primary travel mode for most Oconee County residents. Only 1.5% of County workers bike, walk, or travel to work on public transportation. Among workers living in

Oconee County, 84.2% drive solo to work, while 10% participate in carpools. Only 3.3% of County workforce works at home, which is slightly lower than the statewide percentage of 3.6% and the national rate of 4.6%.

Geographic data on worker commuting patterns is provided in Table 9-5. Of the 7,870 Oconee County residents who travel outside the County for work, more than 45% commute to Pickens County employers, followed by workers commuting to Anderson (22.9%) and Greenville Counties (13.1%). These outgoing commuters offer a potential labor pool for new and expanding industries and businesses as additional or better job opportunities are created closer to home.

Nearly 6,580 workers from surrounding counties and nearby states travel to employers in Oconee County. Pickens County residents lead the influx of in-commuters at 42.4%, followed closely by workers from Anderson County at 31.3%. Table 9-5 lists the top counties of origin for workers commuting into Oconee County, as well as the destination of local commuters.

Table 9-5. Top 10 Counties - Workers Commuting into/from Oconee County

Commuters into County		Commuters out of County	
County of Residence	**Commuters**	**County of Employment**	**Commuters**
Oconee County, SC	20,317	Oconee County, SC	20,317
Pickens County, SC	2,786	Pickens County, SC	3,553
Anderson County, SC	2,061	Anderson County, SC	1,802
Greenville County, SC	491	Greenville County, SC	1,034
Stephens County, GA	183	Stephens County, GA	213
Spartanburg County, SC	101	Jackson County, NC	168
Franklin County, GA	84	Spartanburg County, SC	137
Jasper County, SC	74	Fulton County, GA	77
Abbeville County, SC	73	Rutherford County, NC	67
Hart County, GA	64	Bartholomew County, IN	61
Total	26,895		28,187

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

F. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

1. Statewide Transportation Planning

The South Carolina *Department of Transportation Reform Bill* (*Act 114*) is intended to encourage sound infrastructure investment decisions made within the context of the statewide planning process. Specifically, *Act 114* requires SCDOT to establish a priority list of projects to be undertaken through the *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP) and in consultation with metropolitan planning organizations using the following criteria:

1) Financial viability including a life-cycle analysis of estimated maintenance and repair costs over the expected life of the project;
2) Public safety;
3) Potential for economic development;
4) Traffic volume and congestion;
5) Truck traffic;
6) Pavement quality index;
7) Environmental impact;
8) Alternative transportation solutions; and
9) Consistency with local land use plans.

The 2017–2022 STIP is the State's six-year transportation improvement plan for all projects and program areas that receive federal funding, including paving, bridges, upgrades, freight, safety, congestion mitigation, air quality, transportation alternatives, railroad crossings, planning, State Infrastructure Bank payments, preventative maintenance and operations, and public transportation. The STIP only includes projects for which there is committed funding available.

Planning for sound infrastructure is also a primary goal of the *South Carolina Priority Investment Act of 2007.* The *Priority Investment Act* amends *Section 6-29-1130* of the *South Carolina Code of Laws* and requires that local government comprehensive plans include a separate Transportation Element. The Act requires that the Transportation Element be developed in coordination with the Land Use element to ensure transportation efficiency for existing and planned development. The Act also requires comprehensive plans to include a Priority Investment Element, which must include an analysis of likely Federal, State and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities, including transportation systems. The Priority Investment Element must also recommend projects for expenditure of these funds over the next ten years, with recommendations coordinated with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.

2.   Regional Transportation Planning

Transportation planning for Oconee County is provided by the ***Appalachian Council of Governments*** (ACOG). ACOG is responsible for conducting the rural transportation planning process for its six-county region in partnership with SCDOT. The primary responsibilities of all designated transportation planning agencies are to: 1) develop a *Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP), which is, at a minimum, a 25-year transportation vision for the metropolitan area; 2) develop a *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP), which is the agreed-upon list of specific projects for which federal funds are anticipated; and 3) develop a *Rural Planning Work Program* (RPWP), which identifies in a single document the annual transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in support of the goals, objectives, and actions established in the LRTP.

Input on transportation projects is provided through the ACOG public participation plan and by the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), which includes a representative from each county represented by ACOG, including Oconee County. The committee meets quarterly or as needed to review project status, evaluate proposed modifications to the STIP, update the long-range plan and funding priorities, comment on rural functional classification changes, receive input on the rural work programs, and coordinate special studies. The RTAC forwards recommendations for program changes and project prioritization to the Policy Committee (ACOG Board of Directors), which includes six representatives from Oconee County, for final approval.

a. ACOG Rural Long Range Transportation Plan 2040

The Rural LRTP defines the regional goals for transportation, establishes existing and future transportation needs, and allocates projected revenue to transportation programs and projects that address these needs. The ACOG *Rural Long Range Transportation Plan 2040*, adopted in 2016, identifies a number of transportation improvement projects in Oconee County. Five intersection improvement projects are considered "fiscally constrained" with funding dependent on Guideshare program allocations. The regional LRTP also lists potential projects in Oconee County for which funding has not been identified. Included are six intersection improvement projects, three access management projects, four bridge improvement projects, eight road segments where the condition of the pavement is rated as "poor" and are in need of improvement, and two priority traffic signalization projects.

b. ACOG 2017-2022 Rural Transportation Improvement Program

The 2017-2022 *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP) for the ACOG region is a six-year program of transportation capital projects that includes a seven-year estimate of transit capital and maintenance requirements. While the TIP is updated as needed, and biennially at a minimum, amendments must go through a rigorous review by ACOG staff, the RTAC, and the public. The Plan must be financially constrained, meaning that the amount of funding programmed must not exceed the amount of available estimated funding. Specifically, the TIP identifies transportation improvement projects recommended for advancement during the program years that receive Federal Highway Administration or Federal Transit Administration funds and identifies the criteria and process for prioritization of projects in the TIP and any changes from past TIPs. The TIP also creates an implementation timeline for projects and includes realistic estimates of total costs and revenue for the program period.

The projects proposed by the TIP for each Council of Government (COG) or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are evaluated and incorporated into the Statewide TIP by the SCDOT Commission. The 2017-2022 TIP for the Appalachian COG region was adopted in June 2016. Oconee County projects included in the TIP, including regional prioritization, are listed in Table 9-6. The funding source for all of these projects is the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant program, with funding allocated by the SCDOT through the Guideshare program.

Table 8-6. ACOG 2017-2022 TIP Oconee County Guideshare Projects

Priority	Project Description	Budgeted Funds
Intersection Improvements		
1	U.S. Hwy. 123 (Clemson Blvd.) @ Davis Creek Road	▪ $300,000 in FY 2017 for planning, $250,000 in FY 2018 for ROW acquisition, $1 million in FY 2019 for construction
6	S.C. 24 (West Oak Hwy.) @ S.C. Hwy. 182 (Oakway Road)/Oak Creek Road	▪ $500,000 in FY 2018 for planning, $350,000 in FY 2020 for ROW acquisition, $1.8 million in FY 2021 for construction
8	S.C. Hwy. 59 @ S.C. Hwy. 182/S.C. 243	▪ $1 million in FY 2019 for planning, $1 million in FY 2021 for ROW acquisition, $2.5 million in FY 2022 for construction
9	JP Stevens Road @ W. Cherry Road JP Stevens Road @ Martin Creek Road	▪ $500,000 in FY 2020 for planning, $250,000 in 2022 for ROW acquisition

Source: ACOG 2017-2022 Transportation Improvement Program, 2019

c. ACOG 2020-2021 Rural Planning Work Program

The *Rural Planning Work Program* (RPWP) identifies work program tasks and presents budget allocations for planning activities to be undertaken in the rural areas of the ACOG region. Tasks identified in the RPWP include planning for transportation projects in the rural portions of the region, coordination of human service transit activities, and coordination of projects with other regional transportation partners. The RPWP is updated annually and documents major transportation planning and related activities for the coming two fiscal years. The most recent RPWP for the Appalachian COG region was adopted in March 2019. The total two-year budget for the 2020-2021 RWTP is $212,500, of which $170,000 is expected to be provided by the SCDOT and $42,500 by local match funding.

G. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Securing funding for needed transportation improvements is a top priority for South Carolina communities. Communities must seek alternative funding resources for much needed transportation projects including road maintenance, paving, bridge repair, transit, sidewalks, greenbelts, connecting trails, and traffic mitigation. The following sections discuss options available to local governments in the Palmetto State.

1. SCDOT Transportation Alternative Program

Oconee County and its municipalities are eligible for transportation enhancement funding under the *Transportation Alternative Program* (TAP), formerly known as the Transportation Enhancement Project Program, administered by SCDOT. TAP projects are federally-funded, community-based projects that provide opportunities for local governments to pursue non-traditional transportation related activities such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities and pedestrian streetscaping projects that might not otherwise be possible.

The TAP grant program provides funding on a reimbursement basis as part of the Federal-aid Highway Program funded through the FAST initiative. Costs are eligible for reimbursement only after a project has been approved by the State Department of Transportation or a Metropolitan Planning Organization and the FHWA division office. Eligible project areas authorized in FAST for the Transportation Alternatives Program and the SCDOT Commission include pedestrian and bicycle facilities and streetscaping projects. Eligible costs include preliminary and final engineering work such as project development, environmental work, cost estimates, construction plans, utility relocations, construction engineering, construction costs, and right-of-way acquisition. TAP funds generally account for 80% of the total project cost, with local governments required to provide a 20% match.

Available SCDOT program funding is provided in two population-based divisions. Urbanized areas with a population of more than 200,000, also known as a Transportation Management Area (TMA), are eligible to compete for a share of more than $2.9 million designated for urbanized areas of the State. Areas of the State with a population greater than 5,000 other than urban areas have a designated funding pool of more than $1.8 million. The SCDOT has also designated $2.6 million for areas with a population of less than 5,000. Oconee County and the City of Seneca, with populations of 73,375 and 8,228, respectively, are currently eligible in the second category, while the County's other municipalities are eligible under the third category.

Projects proposed by governmental bodies located in areas outside of Transportation Management Areas, such as Oconee County and its municipalities, are considered under the statewide program, with distribution of funds determined by the SCDOT Commission. Such projects are limited to a maximum of $400,000.

2. One Percent (Penny) Sales Tax

Section 4-37-30 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws* empowers counties to levy, by ordinance, a special sales and use tax as a source of revenue for highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related facilities including, but not limited to, drainage relating to highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects. The one percent tax equates to an additional penny on every dollar spent. The public must approve the tax through a referendum. The key advantage to such a tax is that out-of-county workers and residents and tourists who shop in the receiving county also contribute to the tax revenues through their purchases, helping to offset the costs of roads and other facilities.

Under the legislation, counties that implement a one cent sales tax must share the proceeds with their municipalities using a formula based on population and must specify a period of time to collect a set amount of money for the identified projects (not to exceed 25 years or the length of payment for the specified projects). Implementing counties must appoint a commission to consider proposals for funding capital projects and formulate the referendum question for public vote. In addition to funding transportation facilities, revenue from the one cent tax may also be used for civic, educational, and cultural facilities; water and sewer projects; flood control and storm water projects; and dredging, dewatering, and constructing spoil sites.

A number of South Carolina counties have implemented a one percent sales tax to address capital projects and transportation needs in recent years. Voters in other counties have rejected one percent tax plans, including in Oconee County where voters most recently rejected a proposed one percent sales tax in 2014.

3. Exactions

An exaction is a form of land use regulation that requires a developer to donate something for the public good in exchange for the right to develop property. By sharing the cost with new residents, exactions aid in protecting the community from the costs of providing additional infrastructure associated with growth. Exactions provide a way for jurisdictions to pass a portion of the cost of public facilities on to a developer at the time the development begins, rather than later through the collection of tax revenues or service charges from new residents. Exactions are formal cost-sharing agreements between the developer and the local government to fund the additional community infrastructure needed to serve the new development.

Several types of exactions may be used by local governments for transportation facilities. A *dedication* requires that a developer donate land or facilities for public use. For example, a developer may be required to dedicate land for use as a trail or greenway for the residents of the development and connection to existing or future facilities outside of the development. A *fee-in-lieu* requires the developer to pay a fee instead of providing a public facility on-site. For example, the developer can choose to pay a fee rather than dedicate land for an on-site greenway or trail. This type of exaction provides greater flexibility to local governments to place facilities where they are most needed and appropriate. *Impact fees* are scheduled charges applied to new development to generate revenue for the construction or expansion of capital facilities located off-site of the new development, but that benefit the contributing development.

The *1999 South Carolina Development Impact Fee Act (SC Code § 6-1-910, et seq.)* allows counties and municipalities to impose by ordinance a requirement for payment of development impact fees by a land developer as a condition of development approval. The Act defines a development impact fee as "a payment of money imposed as a condition of development to

pay for a proportionate share of the cost of system improvements needed to serve the people utilizing the improvements." System improvements are capital improvements to public facilities which are designed to provide service to a defined service area. Public facilities include water, wastewater, solid waste and stormwater services, roads, public safety, street lighting, capital equipment, and parks and recreation. Impact fee amounts must be based on actual improvement costs or reasonable estimates of the costs. The process for adopting an impact fee ordinance begins with a resolution by council that directs the planning commission to conduct the necessary studies and recommend an ordinance developed in accordance with the *Impact Fee Act*. The Act requires detailed calculations to determine impact fees, maximum impact fees, and the developer's proportionate share.

Several court cases have provided guidance in establishing exactions that are reasonable and defendable. First, there must be an "essential nexus," or reasonable connection, between the infrastructure need and the new development *(Nollan v. California Coastal Commission, 1987)*. Essential nexus extends to the establishment of a reasonable connection between the expenditure of the fee collected and the benefits received by the development. Second, there must be a "rough proportionality" in both the nature and extent of the exaction and the impact of the proposed development *(Dolan v. Tigard, 2005)*.

H. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Affordable and reliable transportation is a necessity for all residents. However, the lower incomes and limited mobility experienced by many special needs populations can magnify the importance of affordable and reliable transit options to maintain employment, receive support services, and access health care and other needed support programs.

Public transit is provided in a number of ways in South Carolina communities. *Fixed-route transit service* uses passenger vehicles operating on fixed routes and schedules. *Route deviation services* operate as conventional fixed-route bus services that allow buses to deviate from the route alignment to serve destinations within a prescribed distance of the route. Passengers use the service by calling to request a pickup, or by telling the bus operator if they need to be taken off-route. A *demand response service* is a transit mode that includes passenger cars, vans, or small buses that operate in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who dispatches a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. The vehicles generally do not operate over a fixed-route or on a fixed schedule and may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations.

1. Clemson Area Transit

Clemson Area Transit (CAT) provides public transportation in Oconee County. The fare-free service is provided by Clemson University, the City of Clemson, the Town of Central, the Town of Pendleton, the City of Seneca, SCDOT, and the Federal Transit Administration *(Clemson Area*
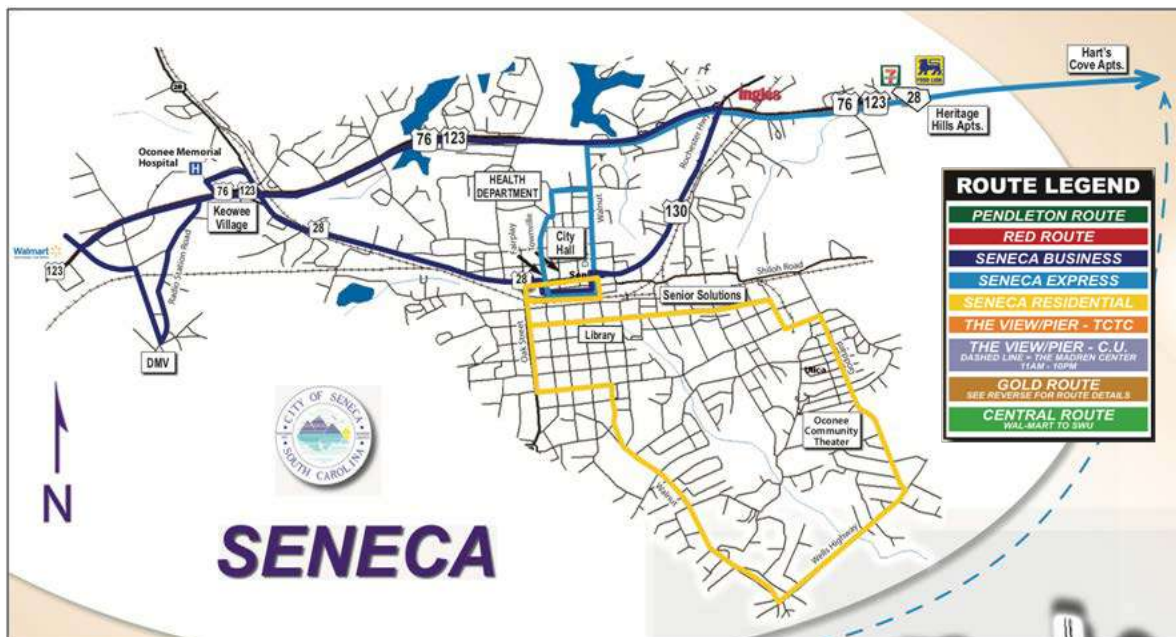
Transit, 2019). The **CATbus** system includes three routes that provide service along U.S. Highway 123 to destinations in the City of Seneca (Map 9-4). The *Seneca Business* and *Residential* routes operate Monday through Friday from 6:20 a.m. to 6:20 p.m. and the *Seneca Express* runs Monday through Friday from 5:45 a.m. to 6:25 p.m. In addition to the Seneca routes, the CAT system provides service to destinations in the City of Clemson, Clemson University, Tri-County Technical College, Southern Wesleyan University, the Towns of Central and Pendleton, and Anderson County.

CATbus service in Oconee County is provided through an intergovernmental agreement between the Cities of Clemson and Seneca. Similar agreements are also in place between Clemson and Tri-County Technical College, Southern Wesleyan University, and the Towns of Central and Pendleton.

CAT operates an all-electric bus fleet, including four zero-emission transit buses and charging stations at Norton Thompson Park and at Oconee Memorial Hospital that serve the Seneca area. The City of Seneca was recently awarded a $1.45 million *Low or No Emission Bus Program* grant from the Federal Transit Administration to purchase two additional electric buses that will enable expansion of bus service in Oconee County. Discussions are underway on new or expanded routes to be served by these new buses.

All CAT buses are equipped to accommodate persons with disabilities. The system also operates a fixed-route deviation service within three-quarters of a mile of its fixed-routes with curb-to-curb service for persons with disabilities. Requests for this service must be made 24 hours in advance.

Map 9-4. CAT Bus Routes in Oconee County

Source: Clemson Area Transit, 2019

2. <u>Senior Solutions</u>

Senior Solutions provides transportation options for Oconee County seniors and their spouses under age 60 and for dependents with disabilities. Pick-up and delivery services are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to non-emergency medical appointments, the Oconee Senior Center, and daily errands such as trips to the grocery store and pharmacy. Handicap-accessible vehicles are available as needed. Reservations for Senior Solutions transportation services must be made three days in advance by calling the agency's Oconee County Transportation Office.

I. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Well-designed systems of walkways and trails can provide residents with safe, inexpensive transportation alternatives to access jobs, education, and services. Alternative modes of travel can also help to improve air quality and reduce energy use. According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 246 Oconee County residents reported walking to work and 299 reported traveling to work by taxi, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means.

Information provided by SCDHEC lists multiple benefits of cycling or walking to destinations. In addition to reduced (or no) transportation cost, health benefits include a reduced risk of cancer, diabetes, stroke, and heart attack, along with weight loss and control (*Benefits of Alternative Transportation, 2010).* The sedentary lifestyle of Americans is largely attributed to the fact that "walking and cycling have been replaced by automobile travel for all but the shortest distances" *(Journal of the American Medical Association, October 1999).*
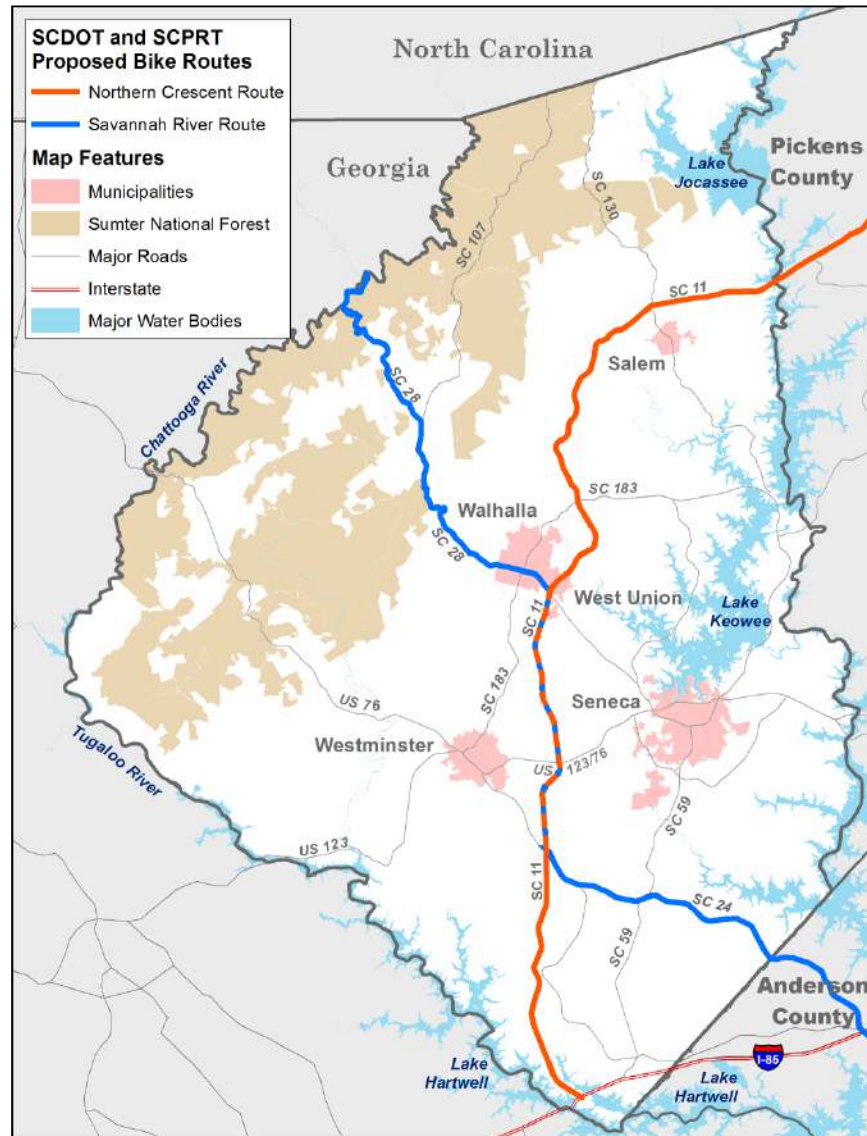
As detailed in the Natural Resources Element, there are nearly 193 miles of trails in Oconee County. Most of these trails provide access to parks or natural resources such as water bodies or scenic views or opportunities for hiking or mountain biking. However, very few outside of the County's municipalities provide linkages between residential areas and destinations such as work, shopping, entertainment, recreation, or other residential areas. Dedicated bike lanes are also very limited in the County, with cyclists generally competing with motorized vehicles when traveling public roads. However, there is an increasing interest in providing travel options in Oconee County. The Oconee County *Highway 123 Corridor Study and Plan* currently under development will include pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent and regional amenities and services with features such as sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, and cross walks intended to make the corridor a more friendly, safe, and inviting environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

The S.C. Departments of Transportation and Parks, Recreation and Tourism have jointly proposed two bicycle touring routes through Oconee County (Map 9-5). However, these routes are not currently designed for bicycle touring and may not include bike lanes. In Oconee County, the *Savannah River Route* follows S.C. Highway 28 from the northern Georgia border through Mountain Rest to Walhalla, then south along S.C. Highway 11 to I-85. The entire 286-

mile route generally parallels the course of the Savannah River from the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the coastal community of Beaufort. The Northern Crescent Route begins at the Pickens County border and follows S.C. Highway 11 west through the Salem and Tamassee areas, then south to West Union before heading east on S.C. Highway 24 to I-85. The entire 360-mile route runs just south of the North Carolina border to the City of North Myrtle Beach.

Map 9-5. SCDOT and SCPRT Proposed Bicycle Routes in Oconee County

Source: SCDOT, 2019

J. AIRPORTS

Aviation services for Oconee County and the surrounding area are available at the ***Oconee County Regional Airport*** (CEU) on Airport Road in Seneca (Map 9-6). The Airport is owned and operated by Oconee County. CEU has a 5,000 feet by 100 feet paved runway with a precision GPS instrument approach and a non-precision GPS instrument approach. The Airport is home to 75 aircraft, with the ability to host up to 75 transient aircraft with ramp and tie-down spaces. It is home to the Clemson University Flight Department and Clemson Flying Club and is popular with hobby flyers, Clemson football fans flying in for games, and with corporate executives traveling to nearby facilities. Available services include aircraft maintenance, rental car services, fueling services, pilot lounge, WIFI, full kitchen, conference room, and weather and flight planning room.

The *Greenville-Spartanburg Airport* (GSP) is located approximately 60 miles and an hour west of Seneca and Walhalla. GSP serves more than 2.3 million passengers and ships 60,000 tons of cargo annually through six major passenger carriers and numerous freight carriers *(Greenville-Spartanburg Airport, 2019)*. GSP offers an average of 50 non-stop flights to 19 destinations and is the site of a 120,000 square foot FedEx facility. Air operations are conducted on an 11,001 feet x 150 feet runway. The GSP terminal has 322,446 square feet of space, including third level jet bridge boarding and 13 departure gates. Listed as one of the nation's top 100 commercial service airports, GSP continues to expand to meet growing demand. Recent expansion and renovation of the terminal increased capacity to 4 million passengers per year and completion of a new cargo terminal is expected in mid-2019 *(Upstate Business Journal, 2019)*.

The *Hartsville-Jackson Atlanta International Airport* (ATL) is approximately 124 miles and a two hour drive from Seneca and Walhalla. ATL is the busiest and most efficient airport in the world, offering nonstop service to more than 150 domestic and 75 international destinations. The terminal complex is more than 6.8 million square feet in size, with seven concourses that include 152 domestic and 40 international gates. Air operations are conducted on five runways with lengths that range from 9,000 feet to 12,390 feet. The Airport is a primary hub for Delta Air Lines and a focus location for many other carriers, serving an average of 275,000 passengers daily. ATL is also a major cargo hub, with three cargo complexes with total space equaling 1.3 million square feet and an adjoining Foreign Trade Zone to reduce operating costs associated with international trade.
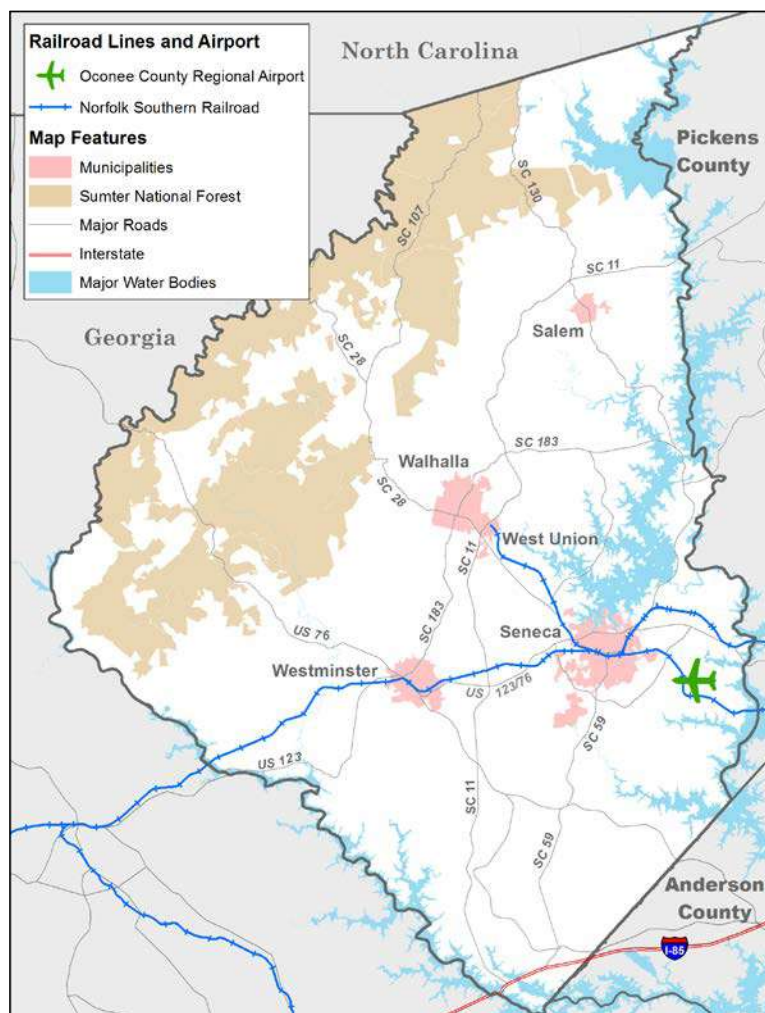
K. RAIL AND SHIPPING

In today's global economy, commercial transportation is critical to a region's potential for business and industrial development. Time sensitive transportation services are increasingly important to gaining a competitive advantage in manufacturing and service-based industries. Transportation options for the mass transport of passengers are also growing in importance, as travelers seek alternatives to individual automobile travel, whether for short commutes or long trips. Convenient and efficient connectivity to areas nationwide and overseas is attractive to businesses and industries. This option is an incentive for economic development and also contributes to the quality of life for area residents.

1. Railroads

The ***Norfolk Southern Railway*** provides freight rail service in Oconee County. As shown in Map 9-6, the Norfolk Southern rail line bisects the County from east to west, traveling through Westminster and Seneca, with a spur also running north to Walhalla. Norfolk Southern is the second largest carrier in South Carolina, with 679 miles of rail that account for 30% of the State's rail system *(S.C. Statewide Rail Plan, 2014)*. The railroad operates a total of 21,500 route miles in 22 states, connecting Oconee County to Greenville, Columbia, Greer, Spartanburg, and Charleston in South Carolina; Augusta and Atlanta in Georgia; and Charlotte, North Carolina and beyond. Access to Amtrak passenger rail service is available nearby in the City of Clemson.

Map 9-6. Railroad Lines and Airport

Source: SCDOT, 2019

Railroad safety is an important issue in transportation planning. There have been only two railway accidents reported in Oconee County in the past decade *(FRA Office of Safety, 2019)*. In 2016, a freight train struck a vehicle at a crossing near Seneca, with no injuries reported. An Amtrak passenger train struck a large tree near Seneca in 2017, with no injuries reported.
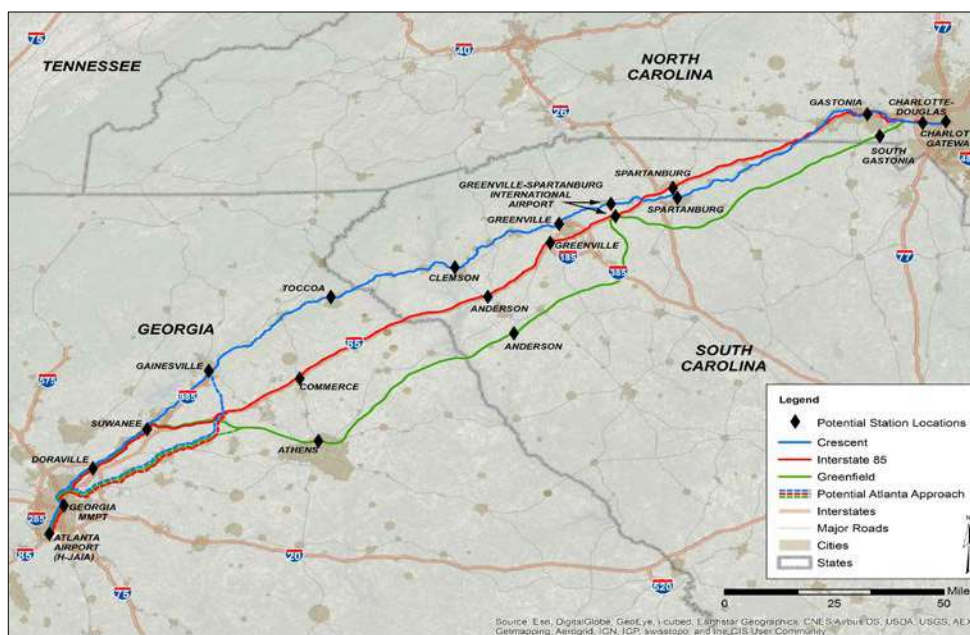
a. High Speed Rail

The *Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan* is a study to improve passenger rail service between the cities of Atlanta, Georgia and Charlotte, North Carolina *(Georgia Department of Transportation, 2019)*. The Plan is part of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor (SEHSR) passenger rail initiative by the Federal Railroad Administration. The corridor extends to four major sections – Atlanta to Charlotte, Charlotte to Raleigh, Raleigh to Richmond, and Richmond to Washington, D.C.

As illustrated in Map 9-7, the SEHSR Corridor Investment Plan identified three alternatives for the Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor. Two of the alternatives, the Crescent and Interstate 85, are proposed to travel directly through Oconee County, with a stop in Clemson proposed for the Crescent alternative and one in Anderson for the I-85 option. The Crescent alternative would share use with the Norfolk Southern rail line, while the I-85 alternative would predominantly use the I-85 right-of-way. The first tier of the planning process has been completed, with the I-85 alternative ranking highest among the six reviewed, followed closely by the Crescent option. During the second phase (tier II) of the project, analysis will include greater detail on potential environmental impacts for the three alternatives.

Map 9-7. Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan Route Alternatives

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, 2019

2. Trucking

Truck transport "is a cornerstone to the national freight transportation system," with trucks transporting 70% of all the tonnage in the United States to and from rail, water and air

transportation hubs and providing direct service between destinations for the transport of goods and materials *(South Carolina Statewide Freight Plan, 2017).* Lower operating costs and a higher level of service customization can make shipping by truck a cost effective and attractive alternative to shipping by rail or air. Truck movements in South Carolina totaled 300.6 million tons valued at $506.2 billion in 2011. Primary freight corridors include the State's five interstates, with major U.S. and State highways also accommodating significant freight flows*.*

Oconee County's strategic location along I-85 provides attractive intermodal freight network access for existing and prospective industries. The section of I-85 within Oconee County was used to transport between 25 and 50 million tons of freight in 2011. The portion of U.S. Highway 123 from Pickens County to Westminster was used to transport from one to five million tons of freight and as much as 1 million tons of freight was transported on other major federal and state roads in Oconee County including U.S. Highway 76 and S.C. Highways 107 and 76 during 2011.

3. Ports

The South Carolina Legislature established the *South Carolina Ports Authority (SCPA)* in 1942. SCPA facilities handled 2.3 million containers at its seaport terminals in Charleston and Georgetown and the inland port in Greer in 2018, a 6.4% increase in volume from the previous year *(SCPA, 2019)*. The SCPA and the State of South Carolina and other agencies and partners are investing $2.4 billion in port-related infrastructure in the coming decade.

Port service for Oconee County is available within five hours southeast (255 miles) through the Port of Charleston – one of the busiest container ports along the Southeast and Gulf coasts and the fastest growing major port in the nation. The Port consistently ranks among the top ten container ports nationwide and ranks 8th in dollar value of goods handled in 2017.

The infrastructure plan for Charleston includes construction of the new 286-acre Hugh H. Leatherman, Sr. container terminal, with completion of a significant portion of the anticipated work in 2021. While the Port currently has the deepest channels in the region, dredging is underway by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to deepen the Charleston Harbor channel from 45 feet to 52 feet, a move that will make the Port even more attractive to freight carriers as the deepest port on the eastern coast.

South Carolina's first Inland Port opened in 2013 less than an hour east of Oconee County in Greer. The Inland ports extend the Port of Charleston's reach by providing an inland area connected by rail from which goods could be distributed to the Southeast. Norfolk Southern serves the inland port through its main rail line and the facility is positioned along the Interstate 85 corridor between Charlotte and Atlanta, where Norfolk Southern operates additional rail yards. Rail service maximizes tonnage moved per gallon of fuel for importers and exporters, helping them save costs and lower their carbon footprint. The Port serviced 13 top shipping container lines and 117,812 containers in FY 2017-2018 – a growth rate of 28.5% over the

previous fiscal year (*S.C. Ports Authority, 2019*). The Greer Inland Port adds an additional benefit – access to empty containers – for regional shippers, who can send trucks to Greer for the containers they need to move their goods. The Greer Inland Port recently received a $25 million grant to expand terminal capacity and allow for additional storage and processing tracks. The SCPA opened a second inland port in Dillon in April 2018. This facility is served by CSX railroad.

Note: GOIS are coded for ease of review
- *Black text is directly from the current comprehensive plan*
- *Blue text was developed per input from focus group meetings*
- *Red text was developed by consultants to address issues in background data and to add/tweak language as needed*
- *Time frames in yellow cells should be added by staff and PC*

L. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The goals, objectives and strategies for implementation (GOIS) table summarizes the actions that will be undertaken in the coming decade to achieve to achieve the goals and objectives identified in the Transportation Element.

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Goal 9.1. Plan the location and development of transportation infrastructure to accommodate present and future needs.		
Objective 9.1.1. Develop and implement plans to guide decision-making on transportation issues.		
Strategy 9.1.1.1. Continue regional coordination with the Appalachian COG, municipalities and neighboring counties, and other public and private agencies in matters related to transportation, transit planning, and prioritization.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • ACOG • Neighboring Counties • Related Public and Private Organizations	On-going
Strategy 9.1.1.3. Commission studies for major transportation corridors to examine conditions, seek multi-modal options, and optimize travel times and access to residential, commercial, recreation, and other essential services.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • ACOG • SCDOT	On-going
Goal 9.2. Upgrade and maintain the County road system in a manner that meets the needs of the growing population and provides safe and efficient routes through the County.		
Objective 9.2.1. Meet current and future need for quality transportation facilities throughout the County.		
Strategy 9.2.1.1. Continue to acquire and allocate C-funds and leverage in-kind resources to maintain and enhance the County road network and supporting infrastructure.	• Oconee County • SCDOT • County Transportation Committee	On-going
Strategy 9.2.1.2. Develop an ongoing systematic road maintenance and upgrade program based on steady revenue sources.	• Oconee County	XXXX
Strategy 9.2.1.3. Maintain a priority road upgrade list that addresses existing traffic "bottlenecks" and other traffic issues and reasonably anticipates issues expected to emerge in the coming decade.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	On-going
Strategy 9.2.1.4. Explore and adopt appropriate traffic management tools and techniques available through land use regulation that utilize concepts such as limiting the number of curb cuts in high traffic areas.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	XXXX
Strategy 9.2.1.5. Prioritize evaluation of all roads within identified potential primary development areas.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	On-going

Strategy 9.2.1.6. Continue to require developers to provide traffic studies to determine if a road must be upgraded to safely handle increased traffic loads and to cover the cost of such road upgrades.	• Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.2.1.7. Enhance communication with local and State departments of transportation on current and proposed projects.	• Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.2.1.8. Upgrade County roads that were built prior to current standards and align roads that pose safety hazards.	• Oconee County	On-going
Goal 9.3. Provide a safe, efficient, and accessible multi-modal transportation system.		
Objective 9.3.1. Provide and maintain a safe, efficient, and interconnected roadway network.		
Strategy 9.3.1.1. Encourage connected street systems within new developments and between new and existing developments.	• Oconee County • Municipalities	On-going
Strategy 9.3.1.2. Explore incentives or requirements that increase the connectivity of local, connector, and arterial components of the County's roadway network.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • Developers	On-going
Strategy 9.3.1.3. Seek funding to install an electric vehicle charging station near I-85.	• Oconee County • ACOG	XXXX

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Objective 9.3.2. Provide and maintain adequate, safe, and accessible trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes in appropriate areas to promote alternative modes of travel by residents and visitors and to promote ecotourism opportunities.		
Strategy 9.3.2.1. Provide and encourage pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between existing and planned residential, parks and recreation areas, trails, public facilities, and commercial and industrial uses that will enable alternative transportation opportunities.	• Oconee County • Developers • Municipalities • Trail and Park Providers	On-going
Strategy 9.3.2.2. Develop standards that encourage developers to incorporate sidewalks and bicycle trails and lanes into residential developments.	• Oconee County	XXXX
Strategy 9.3.2.3. Seek funding opportunities to create nature trails, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other facilities designed to make communities more walkable, reduce vehicular traffic, and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.	• Oconee County • Municipalities • SCPRT • Community Partners	On-going
Objective 9.3.3. Continue to evaluate and fund public transportation in urbanizing areas of Oconee County, expanding as needed to provide for ongoing growth and development.		
Strategy 9.3.3.1. Promote and assist in the establishment of commuter parking lots to encourage ride sharing and decrease traffic congestion.	• Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.2. Continue to partner with Clemson Area Transit to provide existing service levels, while exploring opportunities to expand modes of public transportation such as van services and other non-traditional forms of mass transit.	• Oconee County • Clemson Area Transit • Community Partners	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.3. Seek and secure methods of expanding public transportation in remote areas for clients of facilities such as SCDSS, hospitals, medical complexes, government facilities, and parks and recreation facilities.	• Oconee County • Clemson Area Transit • Community Partners	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.4. Evaluate environmental and economic impacts and explore efforts to establish high-speed rail through the County, including rail stops in Clemson, SC and Toccoa, Georgia.	• Oconee County • Neighboring Counties	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.5. Seek and establish appropriate methods of mass transit that will promote and enhance tourism such as water taxis, tour boats, and other modes that allow tourists and residents to enjoy natural resources without substantial traffic increases.	• Visit Oconee SC • Parks, Recreation and Tourism Commission • Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.6. Support municipalities in their efforts to establish public transportation, while seeking options to expand service into unincorporated areas of the County as appropriate.	• Oconee County • Clemson Area Transit • Municipalities • Community Partners	On-going
Strategy 9.3.3.7. Identify locations for new bus stops and add as needed, with clear identification of bus stops for pedestrians, motorists, and bus drivers.	• Oconee County • City of Seneca • Clemson Area Transit	On-going

Goal 9.4. Provide a state-of-the-art regional airport for residents, businesses and industries, and visitors to the County and region.		
Objective 9.4.1. Continue upgrades to the Oconee County Regional Airport in a manner that serves existing clientele and establishes the facility as one of the premier small airports in the nation.		
Strategy 9.2.4.2. Complete planned upgrades, including relocation of roads, strengthening of runway, and other necessary improvements as funding becomes available.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	XXXX
Strategy 9.2.4.3. Construct additional hanger space as needed to accommodate anticipated demand.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.2.4.4. Develop an on-going capital improvements program aimed at upgrading the Airport facilities to attract use by additional employers and potential occupants of the business parks in the County.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.2.4.5. Seek and establish ways to utilize the Airport to foster partnerships with Clemson University in areas such as hanger lease agreements and facility use agreements.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	On-going
Strategy 9.2.4.6. Identify Federal and State funds for investment in airport enhancements.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	On-going
Goals/Objectives/Strategies	**Accountable Agencies**	**Time Frame for Completion**
Strategy 9.2.4.7. Seek public/private partnerships to fund airport operations and expansions.	• Aeronautics Commission • Oconee County	On-going