

# OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



TEL (864) 638-4218 FAX (864) 638-4168

## AGENDA

6:00 pm, Monday August 19th, 2019

Council Chambers - Oconee County administrative complex

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Public Comment for Non-Agenda Items (3 minutes per person)
5. Approval of minutes from 08052019
6. Joint Planning Commission / County Council meeting regarding the 123 Corridor
7. Planning Commission purpose statement
8. Transportation Element - financing language
  - Public comment (3 minutes per person)
  - Discussion / Vote
9. Economic Element - retirement language
  - Public comment (3 minutes per person)
  - Discussion / Vote
10. Modification of standing agenda items
11. Old Business
12. New Business
13. 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](mailto:achapman@oconeesc.com).

# OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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## Minutes

6:00 pm, Monday, August 5, 2019

Council Chambers - Oconee County administrative complex

## Members Present

Alex Vassey

Mike Johnson

Frankie Pearson

Mike Smith

Andrew Gramling

Stacy Lyles

## Staff Present

Adam Chapman

Vivian Kompier

## Media Present

Caitlin Harrington - The Journal

1. **Call to Order - Mr. Pearson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm**
2. **Invocation by Ms. Lyles**
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Public Comment for Non-Agenda Items (3 minutes per person)**

Mr. Brad Kisker would like to see a smaller Comprehensive Plan. Duke Energy pays approximately 1/3 of the taxes and we need to know if they have a long range plan of staying in Oconee County. Mr. Kisker would like to see higher paying jobs to support middle class housing.

5. **Approval of minutes from 07152019 and 07252019**

Mr. Vassey made a motion to approve the minutes of 07152019, seconded by Mr. Gramling and approved 7/0.

Ms. Lyles made a motion to approve the minutes of 07252019, seconded by Mr. Smith and approved 7/0.

**Joint Planning Commission meeting** – Mr. Chapman brought up a plan to have a meeting of the all the Planning Commissions. It was well received and a motion was made by Mr. Vassey, seconded by Mr. Pearson and approved 7/0 to schedule the meeting.

6. **Highway 123 Corridor Plan -**

- a. **Public Comment (3 minutes per person)**

Mr. Brad Kisker made point that no matter what we do we still need to get through Clemson so we need a long range plan to reroute traffic around Clemson.

Mr. Devoe Blackstone mentioned that Highway 123 has a 100-foot Right of Way and the State has jurisdiction over Oconee County. He also mentioned respecting people's property rights.

Mr. Tom Markovich states that the Highway 123 Corridor Plan doesn't reroute traffic and the County cannot override State law. He goes on to mention that we need a bypass and it needs to be a higher priority.

- b. Presentation by Alta Planning & Design** – Kat Maines presented and answered questions about the Highway 123 Corridor Plan. Ms. Maines explained that this is a project plan and a further feasibility study is needed.
  - c. Discussion/Vote** – Mr. Vassey made a motion to send the Highway 123 Corridor Plan to County Council for their feedback and prioritizing, seconded by Mr. Smith and approved 7/0.
- 8. Old Business** – None
  - 9. New Business** – None
  - 10. Adjourn**- The meeting was adjourned at 6:56pm.

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## Planning Commission Purpose Statement

It is the function and duty of the county planning commission to undertake a continuing planning program for the *physical, social, and economic growth, development, and redevelopment of the county*. The plans and programs must be designed to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, prosperity, or the general welfare as well as the efficiency and economy of the county.



Oconee County Planning Department

[planninginfo@oconeesc.com](mailto:planninginfo@oconeesc.com)

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## Transportation Element - Financing language

### **Section A. 1. Local Road Funding, has been moved to Section A.3. State and Local Transportation Funding for clarity:**

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*).

**Below is additional material added to further explain the County's funding approach in recent years:**

The County may request C-Funds based on the annual apportionment amount, however the amount requested by Oconee County has generally been less than \$600,000

Oconee County residents are also assessed a tax millage of 2.1 for Road Maintenance and 1.0 for Bridges and Culverts maintenance (*Oconee County 2018-2019 Budget Document*). Revenue budgeted in FY 2018-2019 totaled \$1,171,920 from Road Maintenance and \$530,000 for Bridges and Culverts. Road Maintenance funds are primarily used for road paving, maintenance, and repair, while Bridges and Culverts funds are used to replace and repair the County's bridges and culverts.

Additional funding for transportation projects is also provided from other sources including grants. Oconee County receives grant funding from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for transportation improvements. *National Forestry Title I* funding is provided to counties with National Forest lands, with allocation based on gross receipts from all sources such as timber and special permits. The County received \$220,000 in FY 2019 from the National Forestry Title I grant.

#### 4. Road Projects Funding Summary

A summary of allocated and anticipated funding from federal, state, and local sources for transportation projects is outlined in Table 9-7 and is based on recent funding levels.

**Table 9-7. Funding Summary for Oconee County Transportation Projects**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projects Funded</b>	<b>Allocated/Anticipated Annual Funding</b>
<i>Oconee County - General Fund</i>	Study and address land use, transportation, and development issues such as transportation corridor studies	\$89,000 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Oconee County - Special Revenue Fund, Road Maintenance Fee</i>	Road Maintenance – road paving, maintenance, and repair	\$1,171,920 <sup>2</sup>
<i>State - C-Funds</i>	Improvements to state and local roads and bridges, resurfacing, and other transportation projects. Requested C-Funds are placed in the County’s Special Revenue Fund	\$1,951,600 <sup>3</sup> (allocation, available on as needed basis)
<i>Oconee County - Capital Projects Funds</i>	Economic Development Capital Projects Fund (transportation projects related to Economic Development) Bridge and Culvert Fund – repair and replace	\$769,000 <sup>2</sup>  \$530,000 <sup>2</sup>
<i>Oconee County – Grants</i>	U.S. Forest Service – National Forestry Title I funding	\$220,000 <sup>2</sup>
<i>ACOG – Rural Transportation Improvement Program</i>	Capital transportation projects for federally funded transportation facilities and transit projects	\$2 million FY 2019 <sup>4</sup> \$850,00 FY 2020 <sup>4</sup> \$1.8 million FY 2021 <sup>4</sup> \$2.75 million FY 2022 <sup>4</sup>

*Sources: <sup>1</sup>Oconee County 2019 Strategic Plan Report; <sup>2</sup>Oconee County, SC 2018-2019 Budget Document;*

*<sup>3</sup>SCDOT, S.C. Secondary “C” Program Apportionment of Funds for FY 2018-19;*

*<sup>4</sup>ACOG, 2017-2022 Rural Transportation Improvement Plan, June 2016*

## **Section F. Transportation Planning**

**Introductory paragraphs are added to further explain the planning structure in South Carolina and to highlight funding options such as “C” funds. This also directs the reader to the remaining sections and to the Priority Investment element, which further explains the funding issues.**

Planning for transportation projects in Oconee County is undertaken at the State, regional, and local levels. Likewise, much of the funding for transportation projects is requested by local governments, reviewed and prioritized through the regional councils of governments, included in the State Transportation Improvement Program, and ultimately provided through Federal transportation programs. Administration of major transportation projects utilizing federal funds is provided by the individual regional Councils of Governments such as the Appalachian Council of Governments that includes Oconee County.

Funding for transportation projects is also provided by the State through the “C Fund” program. Locally, Oconee County utilizes “C Funds,” along with additional funds provided through sources including the County’s Road Maintenance Fee and Bridges and Culverts Fund, to construct and pave roads, make road improvements, maintain roads and bridges, and address related transportation needs. These programs and funding sources are explained in greater detail in the sections below and in the Priority Investment Element.

### **3. Exactions (page 18)**

**A paragraph is added on Page 19 to expand upon the discussion of impact fees, which are not used in Oconee County for transportation needs.**

While Oconee County has not adopted an impact fee in association with transportation, it is experienced in the adoption and administration of such fees. In 1989, Oconee County adopted a *Sewer Impact Fee* for all users of the wastewater treatment facility and industries specifically permitted to discharge wastewater into the wastewater treatment system. The purpose of the fee is to

“obtain revenue for the future renovation, modernization and expansion of the existing wastewater treatment plant and the construction of any new plant.” Per the County’s Ordinance, the impact fee is an initial charge based on the “permitted or projected volume of wastewater discharge or contribution to the system.” Wastewater impact fees are also in place for several of the County’s municipalities.

An influx of retirees to a community, coupled with higher numbers of current residents who are aging-in-place, can influence the local economy by spurring growth to meet the demands of a growing and older population. The benefits of growing the retirement base of a community generally include higher incomes and educational levels, economic stability and vibrancy, and a neutral fiscal impact on service delivery (*Golden Rules, University of Georgia, 2013*). It is estimated that one new job is generated by every two new retirees to a community. As a result, retiree recruitment has become part of the overall economic development strategy for many communities.

Retirees relocating to a community generally seek certain non work-related amenities and quality of life factors that include mild climate, lower cost of living, low crime rates, quality housing options, medical services, cultural and recreational opportunities, and services for seniors. More recent studies show that retirees are placing an increasing emphasis on cultural, educational, and wellness opportunities as well as technology access in their new communities (*Attracting Retirees to South Carolina, 2016*). Research shows that most retirement relocation decisions are not made in a few months, but are made over a period of years leading up to actual retirement. Opportunities to attract retirees often occur when they first visit a community as tourists much earlier, closely linking tourism and retiree recruitment strategies. As a result, many states including neighboring North Carolina, have launched *Certified Retirement Community* programs similar to initiatives geared toward industrial development. These program assess communities in terms of access to health care, volunteer and part-time employment opportunities, recreation and wellness, climate, tax structure, safety, and lifelong education and entertainment.

South Carolina ranks well in common retirement metrics such as quality of life, climate, health care, and affordability. Approximately two-thirds of the nearly 110,000 people who made South Carolina their new home in 2017 were over the age of 50 (*The Center for Carolina Living*). The State consistently ranks within the top ten retirement destination lists of national publications such as Kiplinger's, Southern Living, Forbes, Conde Nast, and U.S. News & World Report. A retirement preference survey conducted by the University of South Carolina found that most potential retirees to the State prefer to retire in small towns, coastal regions, mountains, rural, and urban areas.

Armed with potentially significant purchasing power, retirees impact the local economy particularly in the areas of health care, retail, and housing. Current retirees in South Carolina generate an annual economic impact of nearly \$30 billion (*Attracting Retirees to South Carolina, 2016*). The annual rate of in-migration of retirees is close to 54,000. The Upstate has emerged as a favorable destination for many of the State's retirees. Oconee County is particularly poised to attract retirees seeking convenient access to the Greenville metro area, Interstate access, the more relaxed climate of smaller cities and towns, the cultural and sports venues of nearby Clemson University, lower traffic congestion, and abundant natural lake and mountain amenities. The City of Seneca was named among the top fifteen retirement cities (*SmartAssets*) and Oconee County was named among the top 10 in the nation for living and boating (*Boating Magazine*).

Communities attracting large numbers of retirees should also plan for the impacts of an aging population. The future needs of the retiree population should be evaluated to determine the types of cultural activities, amenities, facilities and services needed to serve current and recruit additional retirees to the County. An older population typically has a greater need for specialized health care providers and facilities, aging services, transportation, and housing options. The influences of an older population on the types and focus of community services and programming can also affect the appeal of a community to younger families and young professionals whose interests may differ.

#### **Sources:**

<https://discoversouthcarolina.com/articles/the-good-life-retirement-in-south-carolina>

[https://sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/hrsm/research/centers/richardson\\_family\\_smartstate/pdfs/studies/smartstate\\_retiree\\_annual\\_report\\_11\\_10\\_16.pdf](https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/hrsm/research/centers/richardson_family_smartstate/pdfs/studies/smartstate_retiree_annual_report_11_10_16.pdf)

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