

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

AGENDA

6:00 pm- Monday, October 7th- 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 09/16/2019
6. Public hearing related to road renaming of Osheal Drive
 - a. Public Comment
 - b. Discussion / Vote
7. Comprehensive Plan
 - a. Public Comment
 - b. Land-Use Element
 - c. Executive Summary & Appendix
 - d. S.C. *Right to Farm Act*
 - e. Discussion / Vote
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. 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.

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

Draft Minutes

6:00 pm- Monday, September 16th- 2019

Council Chambers - Oconee County administrative complex

Members Present

Mike Johnson
Frankie Pearson
Mike Smith
Andrew Gramling
Gwen McPhail
Alex Vassey
Stacey 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. Jerry Barnett stated that times have changed and he finds the 123 Corridor Plan disturbing.
5. **Approval of minutes from 09/05/2019** – Mr. Gramling made a motion to approve, Mr. Johnson seconded and approved 7/0.
6. **Comprehensive Plan - Agricultural Element**
 - a. **Public Comment** – Mr. Jerry Barnett finds adding another County employee disturbing, we do not need another person at the County level.
 - b. **Guest Speaker - Rex Blanton, Chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Board** – Mr. Blanton presented the Agricultural Element to the Planning Commission for review.
 - c. **Discussion / Vote** – A motion was made by Mr. Smith to approve, seconded by Mr. Vassey. After Ms. McPhail recommended changes (below), Mr. Smith amended his motion to approve with the changes, seconded by Mr. Gramling. Approved 7/0.

PG 8-17 – Separate individuals lacking

Take out duplicate “as”

Change map to data

8.1.1.5 – Add Legislative Delegation to Accountable Agencies.

8.1.1.8 - Add Legislative Delegation to Accountable Agencies.

8.1.1.10 – spelling error “agricultural”.

- 8.1.2.1 - Add OEA and Oconee County Chamber of Commerce to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.3 – Add Planning Commission to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.4 – Add Oconee County Schools to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.5 – Add OEA to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.7 – Add FARM Center to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.8 – Add Planning Commission to Accountable Agencies.
 - 8.1.2.9 – Add FARM Center to Accountable Agencies.
7. **Discussion regarding future public hearing related to road renaming.**
Mr. Chapman explained that we have a public hearing coming up in regards to renaming of Osheal Dr. Since the responses from the property owners were not 100% it will be up to the Planning Commission to hear the case and decide if it will be renamed.
- a. **Public Comment** - None
 - b. **Discussion / Vote** - None
8. **Discussion regarding Entry Corridors**
Mr. Chapman explained using Appalachian Rustic Elegance is controversial. We need to come up with a different name.
- a. **Public Comment** - None
 - b. **Discussion / Vote** – After much discussion a motion was made by Ms. McPhail and seconded by Mr. Vassey to call them Design Standards. Motion was approved 7/0.
9. **Unfinished Business** - None
10. **New Business** - None
11. **Adjourn** – meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:00pm.

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PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING ROAD NAME CHANGES

10/07/2019

A group of property owners proposes the following:

1. Change the name of an approx. 100 ft segment of Osheal Dr to South Shore Dr (see attached map). The segment will become an extension of South Shore Dr.
2. Change the name of the remainder of Osheal Dr to Lake Path Walk

Policy discussion:

1. There is 100% agreement amongst property owners for Item 1 (Osheal Dr to South Shore Dr), which means the Planning Director *may* approve the change by policy.
2. All but one property owner responded favorably to Item 2 (Osheal Dr to Lake Path Walk), which means the Planning Commission must approve the name change.
3. Kyle Reid, Assistant Director of Public Works for Oconee County stated the Roads Department has no objection, so that paves the way for a public hearing before the Planning Commission. *See email below*

From: Kyle Reid

Sent: Wednesday, September 04, 2019 2:14 PM

To: Lisa Simmering

Subject: Re: Road Renaming Inquiry

The Road Department has no objection. All associated costs will be paid by the requesting parties.

Thank you,

Kyle Reid

Assistant Director of Public Works

Oconee County Roads & Bridges

Deliverables required by the Road Naming & Addressing policy:

1. **Justification** (provided by Mr. Brett Carton):
Current street name reflects the previous land owner's last name, who has passed away. Every current land owner on Osheal Drive,(WHO) except one that did not reply has requested a name change that better reflects the community and it's land owners. The current name of Osheal does not reflect this.
2. Signatures of at least 75% -92% gathered, of property owners affected by the name change. Mr. Brett Carton collected and forwarded signatures.
3. Map showing all affected property owners and their corresponding TMS numbers along with general location map (included on map above)

Excerpt from the Oconee County Road Naming and Addressing Policy

I. RENAMING EXISTING ROADS

All road name changes shall be in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 6-29-1200 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Citizens requesting changes to existing road names shall submit the following to the Addressing Office:

1. Justification for the name change
2. Tax map showing all affected property owners and their corresponding tax map numbers
3. Map showing general location of road (this may be included on the tax map)
4. Three proposed road names for consideration by the county (must meet conditions set forth in this document)
5. Signatures of 75% of property owners affected by name change
6. Payment of fee established by resolution of Oconee County Council

The Planning Commission shall approve all road name changes.

Names for which 100% of all impacted property owners agree in writing or private driveways that access a single parcel *may* be changed by approval of the Planning Director, provided due notice.

LIST OF RESIDENCE AFFECTED BY NAME CHANGE

			B639-7						
OCN ID	TMS NUMBER	PLAT	OWNER	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP		
1	1	053-00-01-087	1	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC	29651	
2	2	053-00-01-128	2	FULLER ANTHONY MARK & SANDI DENIECE	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC	29689	
3	3	053-00-01-127	3	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301	
	4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301	
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4	8	053-03-01-016		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642	
	9	053-03-01-017		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642	
5	10	053-00-01-068		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR	
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N/A	14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC	29696	
N/A	15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC	29686	
86%									

OCN ID 14 & 15 - It is infeasible /cost prohibitive to extend OSheal Drive to connect to Red Oak Drive. These two properties will not be affected by name change. In addition, OSheal Drive becomes a private road at TMS: 053-03-01-017.

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name:

1 Water Walk Way
 2 Lake Path Walk
 3 Country Breeze Way

change OSheal to this

Please change 465 & 467 to Southshore Dr

4	8	053-03-01-016		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
	9	053-03-01-017		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642

Maria Meinke, number
 Sign Name
Maria Meinke
 Print Name

Mariamainke@gmail.com
 Email address Phone Number

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:
 3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

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- 4 ← Water Walk Way
- 2 → Lake Path Walk
- 3 → Country Breeze Way

1. South Shore Dr.

6	11	053-03-01-015	SUSAN RAWLINGS	130 SILVERFOX LN	WEST UNION	SC	29696
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Susan Rawlings

Sign Name

SUSAN E RAWLINGS

Print Name

Susanelaw1@aol.com 864-557-2636

Email address Phone Number

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:
3504 Hwy 153 #274
Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

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FOR THE REST OF OSHEAL

PLEASE CHANGE 464 OSHEAL DR TO SOUTH SHORE

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 Sign Name
 BRETT S. CARLTON
 Print Name

brettcarton@att.net
 Email address
 Phone Number
 864-275-7463

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:
 3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

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1 053-00-01-087 ✓ 1 **FIVE COUSINS, LLC**

Jeffrey D. Howard, member
 Sign Name
Jeffrey D. Howard, member
 Print Name

jhowardrebel@yahoo.com *864-641-5298*
 Email address Phone Number

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:
 3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

053-00-01-087

PREVIOUS OWNER: JOAN S OSHEAL DEED 2452-33B 29 Mar 2019

PLEASE SIGN & RETURN

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	86%	67%							

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 Sign Name
BRETT S CARLTON
 Print Name

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

brettreig@att.net Phone Number
 Email address

Please sign and email or mail to:
 3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

053-00-01-126
 -123
 -122
 -075
 -127

}

PREVIOUS OWNER: JOAN S DSHEAL
 DEED 2448-344 19 Mar. 2019
 PLAT B639-4

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7	13	053-00-01-112		WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTRO	CA	92244
	14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC	29696
	15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC	29686
86%	67%							

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name:

- 1 Water Walk Way
- 2 Lake Path Walk
- 3 Country Breeze Way

4	8	053-03-01-016	✓	WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
	9	053-03-01-017	✓	WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642

Maria Meinke

 Sign Name
Maria Meinke

 Print Name

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Email address

Phone Number

Please sign and email or mail to:

3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

DEED 2366-108

PLAT
 B639-4

LIST OF RESIDENCE AFFECTED BY NAME CHANGE

OCN	B639-7		OWNER	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
ID	TMS NUMBER	PLAT					
1	1	053-00-01-087	1	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC 29651
	2	053-00-01-128	2	FULLER ANTHONY MARK & SANDI DENIECE	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC 29689
2	3	053-00-01-127	3	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
	4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
	5	053-00-01-122	5	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
	6	053-00-01-126	6	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
	7	053-00-01-123	7	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
3	8	053-03-01-016		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC 29642
	9	053-03-01-017		WWDOKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC 29642
	10	053-00-01-068		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND SE1 7HR
	4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC 29301
4	11	053-03-01-015		NEAL RICHARD W & JUDY S	1805 COPELAND CIR	CAMDEN	SC 29020
	12	053-00-01-009		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND SE1 7HR
5	13	053-00-01-112		WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTRO	CA 92244
	14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC 29696
	15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC 29686

56%

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name:

- 1 Water Walk Way
- 2 Lake Path Walk
- 3 Country Breeze Way

10	053-00-01-068	✓	RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
12	053-00-01-009	✓	RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR



 Sign Name

Grego Squato, Managing Agent

 Print Name

grego@heritagereis.com

 Email address

Phone Number
 917-416-0887

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:
 3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

2 MORE SIGNATURES REQUIRED

PLEASE SIGN & RETURN

THANK YOU GREG

LIST OF RESIDENCE AFFECTED BY NAME CHANGE

OCN	B639-7		OWNER	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
ID	TMS NUMBER	PLAT					
1	053-00-01-087	1	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC	29651
2	053-00-01-128	2	FULLER ANTHONY MARK & SANDI DENIECE	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC	29689
3	053-00-01-127	3	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
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6	053-00-01-126	6	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
7	053-00-01-123	7	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
8	053-03-01-016		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
9	053-03-01-017		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
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11	053-03-01-015		NEAL RICHARD W & JUDY S	1805 COPELAND CIR	CAMDEN	SC	29020
12	053-00-01-009		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
13	053-00-01-112		WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTRO	CA	92244
14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC	29696
15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC	29686

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name:

- 1 Water Walk Way
- 2 Lake Path Walk
- 3 Country Breeze Way

11 053-03-01-015

NEAL RICHARD W & JUDY S

Judy S. Neal Richard W. Neal
 Sign Name
 Judy S. Neal Richard W. Neal
 Print Name

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Email address

Phone Number

Please sign and email or mail to:

3504 Hwy 153 #274
 Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU

DEED 2467-206 } sold to Susan Elease Rawlings
 21 May 2019 } 130 Silver Fox Ln
 West Union 29696

PLEASE SIGN + RETURN

LIST OF RESIDENCE AFFECTED BY NAME CHANGE

OCN	B639-7		OWNER	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
ID	TMS NUMBER	PLAT					
1	053-00-01-087	1	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC	29651
2	053-00-01-128	2	FULLER ANTHONY MARK & SANDI DENIECE	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC	29689
3	053-00-01-127	3	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
5	053-00-01-122	5	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
6	053-00-01-126	6	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
7	053-00-01-123	7	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
8	053-03-01-016		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
9	053-03-01-017		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
10	053-00-01-068		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
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11	053-03-01-015		NEAL RICHARD W & JUDY S	1805 COPELAND CIR	CAMDEN	SC	29020
12	053-00-01-009		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
13	053-00-01-112		WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTRO	CA	92244
14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC	29696
15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC	29686

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name:

- 1 Water Walk Way ①
- 2 Lake Path Walk ③
- 3 Country Breeze Way ②

I hope you are successful - good luck!

It was terrific meeting you both last summer.

Mike

13 053-00-01-112 WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L



Sign Name

Michael S. White

Print Name

owlshome@earthlink.net

Email address

760 554-8946

Phone Number

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Please sign and email or mail to:

upstateinterest@gmail.com

3504 Hwy 153 #274
Greenville, SC 29611

THANK YOU

Deed 2395-268

PLEASE SIGN & RETURN

LIST OF RESIDENCE AFFECTED BY NAME CHANGE

B639-7

	OCN ID	TMS NUMBER	PLAT	OWNER	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
1	1	053-00-01-087	1	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC	29651
2	2	053-00-01-128	2	FULLER ANTHONY MARK & SANDI DENIECE	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC	29689
3	3	053-00-01-127	3	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
	4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
	5	053-00-01-122	5	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
	6	053-00-01-126	6	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
	7	053-00-01-123	7	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
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	4	053-00-01-075	4	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
6	11	053-03-01-015		NEAL RICHARD W & JUDY S	1805 COPELAND CIR	CAMDEN	SC	29020
	12	053-00-01-009		RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP % LEONIDAS V	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
7	13	053-00-01-112		WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTRO	CA	92244
N/A	14	053-00-01-116		GUYNN DOUGLAS K & CHRISTINE K	103 SUMMER BID	WEST UNION	SC	29696
N/A	15	053-03-01-018		JOHNS EVAN D	741 RED OAK DR	TAMASSEE	SC	29686

86%

IT IS INFEASIBLE TO EXTEND OSHEAL ROAD TO CONNECT TO RED OAK DRIVE. THESE TWO PROPERTIES ARE NOT AFFECTED BY

We are requesting a street name change for O'Sheal Drive to the following 911 approved street name: NAME CHANGE.

- 1 Water Walk Way
- 2 Lake Path Walk
- 3 Country Breeze Way

Agreed. Existing structures are addressed off Red Oak Dr. JIS 24 June 19

4	8	053-03-01-016		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
	9	053-03-01-017		WWDOCKLIFE, LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642

Sign Name

Print Name

Please provide your email address and phone number (not required)

Email address

Phone Number

Please sign and email or mail to:
3504 Hwy 153 #274
Greenville, SC 29611

upstateinterest@gmail.com

THANK YOU



Oconee County Planning

LAND-USE

SITE-PLAN REVIEW

CODE ENFORCEMENT

NOTICE REGARDING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATED TO CHANGING THE ROAD NAME OF OSHEAL DRIVE

The purpose of this letter is to inform the property owners addressed off of Oconee County Road OSHEAL DRIVE that an application has been made to change the name of OSHEAL DRIVE, in whole or in part. Pursuant to the Oconee County Road naming policy the Planning Commission shall vote on all proposed road-name changes where 100% of property owners are not in agreement for the name-change request. You are invited to attend the hearing but not required to attend the meeting. If you are unable to attend and wish to comment please send comments by email or mail to:

achapman@oconeesc.com

Oconee County Planning Department

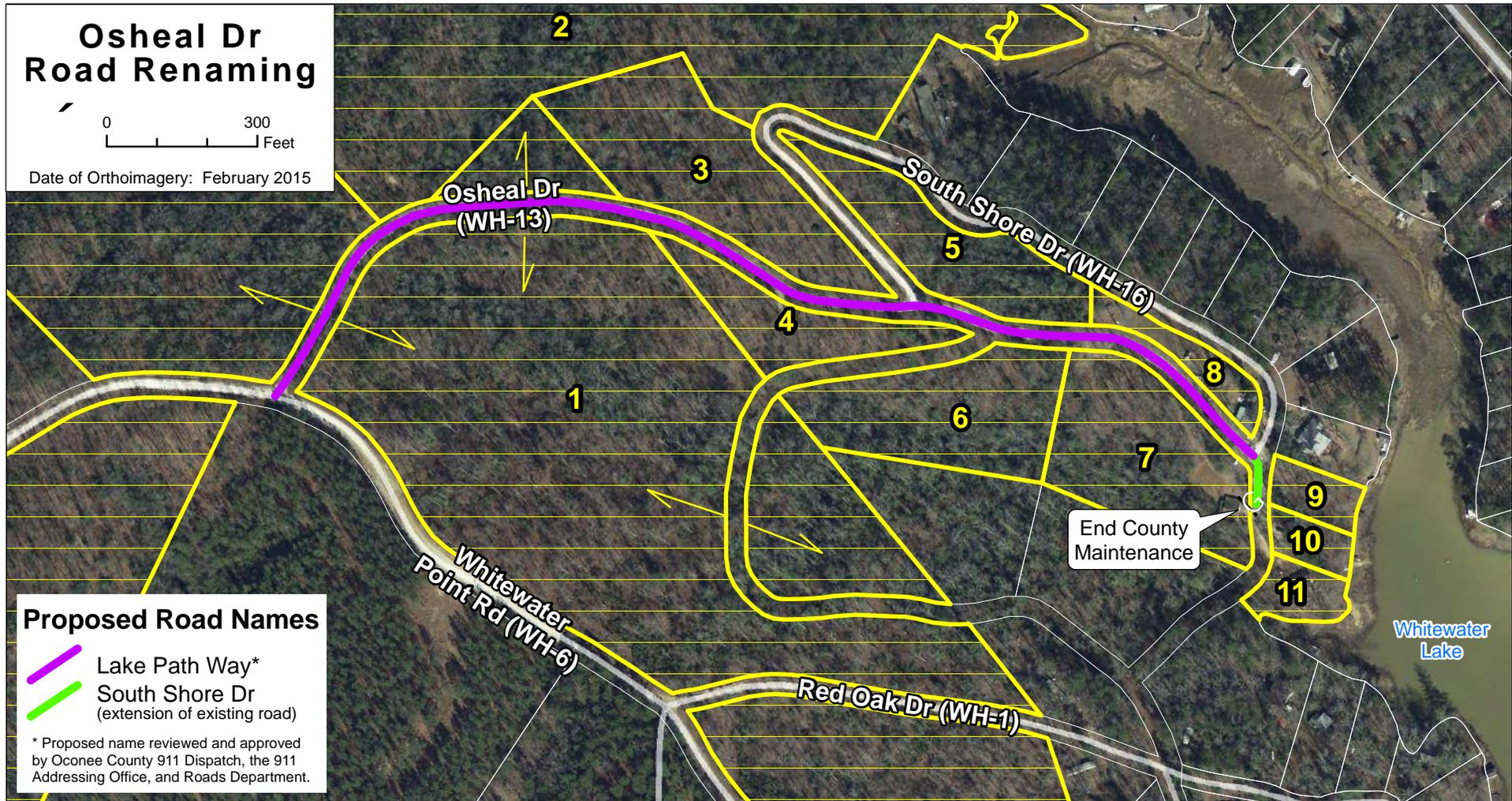
415 South Pine Street

Walhalla, S.C. 29691

Or call 864-364-5103 for more information

The hearing will be held on:
Monday, October 7th 2019
6PM

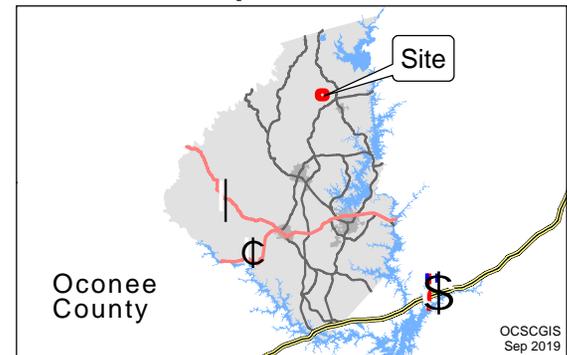
Oconee County Council Chambers
415 South Pine Street
Walhalla, S.C. 29691



Affected Parcels and Property Owners

ID	TMS	OWNER NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
1	053-00-01-068	RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP	3RD SEPTEMBER ST #2	ATHENS	GREECE	104-31
2	053-00-01-009	RAMBOR INVESTMENTS CORP	121 WESTMINSTER BRIDGE RD	LONDON	ENGLAND	SE1 7HR
3	053-00-01-087	FIVE COUSINS, LLC	118 FERNWOOD DR	GREER	SC	29651
4	053-00-01-128	FULLER ANTHONY M & SANDI D	423 CEDAR GROVE RD	TOWNVILLE	SC	29689
5	053-00-01-127	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
6	053-00-01-122	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
7	053-00-01-075	TRUSOUTH HOLDINGS, LLC	104 A FRANKLIN AVE #113	SPARTANBURG	SC	29301
8	053-00-01-112	WHITE MICHAEL S & MARIA L	PO BOX 1414	EL CENTO	CA	92244
9	053-03-01-015	RAWLINGS SUSAN ELEASE	130 SILVERFOX LN	WEST UNION	SC	29696
10	053-03-01-016	WWDOCKLIFE LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642
11	053-03-01-017	WWDOCKLIFE LLC	101 WILLIAMSBURG WAY	EASLEY	SC	29642

Location Map



Land is a finite resource. Planning for land use plays an essential role in balancing the demand for specific types of uses with the need to protect the community's amenities, character, and resource base. The goal of land use planning is to guide a more efficient land development pattern that maximizes community resources and enhances the overall quality of life for Oconee County residents.

The Land Use Element is the centerpiece of the Comprehensive Plan, representing a culmination of the issues, information, analyses, goals and objectives of the other eight required plan elements. These elements provide the foundation of the Land Use Element and inform the need for various types of land uses to include residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, public and institutional, and recreational land.

Preparation of the Land Use Element is also the most challenging task in the comprehensive planning process. The Element recognizes current and historical trends while providing an opportunity to reflect on strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Because the process relies on multiple variables, crafting a future land use plan is not an exact science. While facts and data play an important role, less quantifiable factors of public opinion, beliefs, and values are equally important. Variables including market demand, land availability, population and economic trends, the environment, transportation, community character, current policies, natural disasters, and the provision of community facilities and services must also be taken into account in land use planning.

The purpose of this chapter is to profile existing land use patterns and forecast future land use. An existing land use inventory has been developed by County staff using the parcel-based land use data in the County's Geographic Information System (GIS). The Future Land Use Plan reflects the community's desire to guide and direct growth, supplemented with goals, policies and strategies that support and reflect those in the eight preceding plan elements. The Future Land Use Map in this chapter serves as a visual representation of the land use goals, policies and strategies that have been derived from community and Planning Commission input as part of the other eight planning elements. Relevant documents have been referenced and incorporated where appropriate.

A. EXISTING LAND USE

In order to plan for future development in Oconee County, it is necessary to inventory current land uses, assess development patterns and trends, identify undeveloped properties, examine the impact of existing land use regulation, and evaluate the capability of existing conditions to accommodate the future land use needs of the community. An inventory of existing land uses within the County was developed through a geographic information system (GIS) analysis of digital mapping data. Mapping of existing land uses integrated land use category definitions with Oconee County Assessor tax parcel data, as well as County staff knowledge.



Land uses in the unincorporated area of Oconee County were classified and mapped using the following ten categories as profiled in Table 11-1 and Figure 11-1 and depicted in the *Existing Land Use Map* (Map 11-1).

Table 11-1. 2019 Existing County Land Use by Area*

Existing Land Use	Acres	%
Agriculture and Forest	191,778.3	51.2%
Sumter National Forest	83,633.4	22.3%
Single-Family Residential	41,891.8	11.2%
Vacant Land	18,745.4	5.0%
Utility	11,436.6	3.1%
Public and Institutional	9,901.4	2.6%
Parks and Recreation	8,729.9	2.3%
Commercial	5,726.4	1.5%
Industrial	1,917.2	0.5%
Manufactured Home Park	422.1	0.1%
Multi-Family Residential	300.3	0.1%
Total	374,482.9	100.0%

* Acreages do not include road and rail rights-of-way

Sources: Oconee County Assessor, November 2018; Oconee County GIS Manager, May 2019

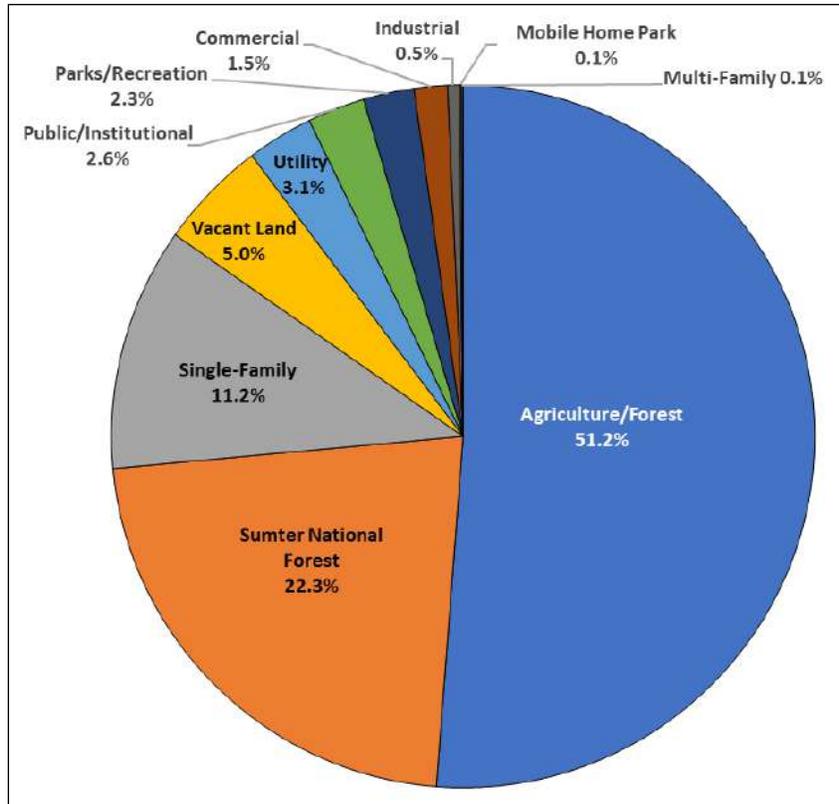
- **Agriculture and Forest** – Land used primarily for agricultural and forestry purposes, including uses accessory to agriculture or forestry such as residences for farm owners or workers and storage for equipment or crops. Properties that are less than five acres in size and are classified in the Oconee County Assessor’s database as agricultural for taxation purposes but include a residence are not included in this land use category. Land in agriculture or forestry use is the most prevalent in Oconee County, accounting for more than half or 191,778 acres of the County’s total unincorporated land area.
- **Commercial** – Land used to conduct businesses, trade activities, professional activities or services, administrative activities, or personal services. Included are establishments for wholesale or retail sale of goods and services, restaurants, entertainment facilities, administrative or professional offices, gas stations, grocery stores, personal services, furniture stores, clothing stores, car sales, hotels and motels, and nursery or garden centers. Commercial land uses comprise 1.5% or more than 5,726 acres of the County’s unincorporated land area.
- **Industrial** – Land used to manufacture, assemble, process, or fabricate goods and/or to store or transport goods. Examples include manufacturing plants, industrial parks, truck terminals, and warehouses. Industrial land use comprises 0.5% or more than 1,917 acres of the total unincorporated County land area. Much of Oconee County’s industrial development has occurred along major transportation routes including U.S. Highway 123 and S.C. Highway 28 between Seneca and Walhalla, S.C. Highway 11 from Walhalla south past U.S. Highway 123, along Wells Highway near Seneca, and near Interstate 85.

- **Single-Family Residential** – Land used for detached single-family residential structures and manufactured homes on individual properties. Properties that are less than five acres in size and are classified in the Oconee County Assessor’s database as agricultural for taxation purposes, but have residential improvements on the property, are included in this land use category. Single-family residential uses comprise 11.2% or nearly 41,892 acres of the unincorporated land area in Oconee County. While single-family residences are located throughout the County, much of the County’s single-family development is concentrated near the County’s municipalities and Lake Keowee and Lake Hartwell.
- **Manufactured Home Parks** – Land with improvements and utilities to accommodate the long-term parking of three or more manufactured homes. Eighty-six manufactured home parks have been identified, totaling more than 422 acres.
- **Multi-Family Residential** – Land used for residential structures other than those included in the Single-Family Residential land use category, including structures containing three or more dwelling units, duplexes, zero lot line developments, patio home developments, condominium developments, and townhouses. Higher density multi-family residential uses account for only 300 acres in the unincorporated area of the County.
- **Parks and Recreation** – Land used for public active and passive recreation or for open space preservation. Examples of park and recreation uses include ball fields, golf courses, tennis courts, parks, greenways, public gardens, playgrounds, conservation areas, nature preserves, state parks, wildlife management areas, and recreation centers and facilities. Residents of Oconee County have access to numerous recreational opportunities, with nearly 8,730 acres (2.3% of all unincorporated land area) classified as Parks and Recreation.
- **Public and Institutional** – Land used primarily for private, public, quasi-public, religious, philanthropic, or other activities undertaken to provide for the social, cultural, educational, health, or physical betterment of the community and public governance. Examples include schools, churches, hospitals, congregate care facilities (nursing homes), postsecondary institutions, community non-profits, libraries, cemeteries, and government offices. More than 9,901 acres of land (2.6% of all County unincorporated lands) are in Public and Institutional use in Oconee County. Uses in this category are located throughout the County, with many concentrated in the vicinity of Seneca and Walhalla and along major roads. Clemson University owns more than one-third of all public and institutional land in the unincorporated area of Oconee County. Most of this 3,314 acres is located west of Seneca near the Pickens County border and close to the University.
- **Sumter National Forest** – Lands within the Sumter National Forest. At more than 83,633 acres, these Federally-owned lands comprise the second largest land use in Oconee County, accounting for 22.3% of all unincorporated land area.
- **Utility** – Land used for utilities including electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, and communications. Utilities comprise 3.1% of all land use or almost 11,437 acres in unincorporated Oconee County. Duke energy is by far the largest single owner of land in utility use in the County at more than 4,200 acres.



- **Vacant Land** – Land area not developed for a specific use or assigned a land use classification. More than 18,745 acres (5% of all unincorporated land) is classified for land use planning purposes as vacant or undeveloped. However, much of the County's 191,778 acres currently in Agriculture and Forestry use does not include physical improvements such as buildings and could also be considered undeveloped.

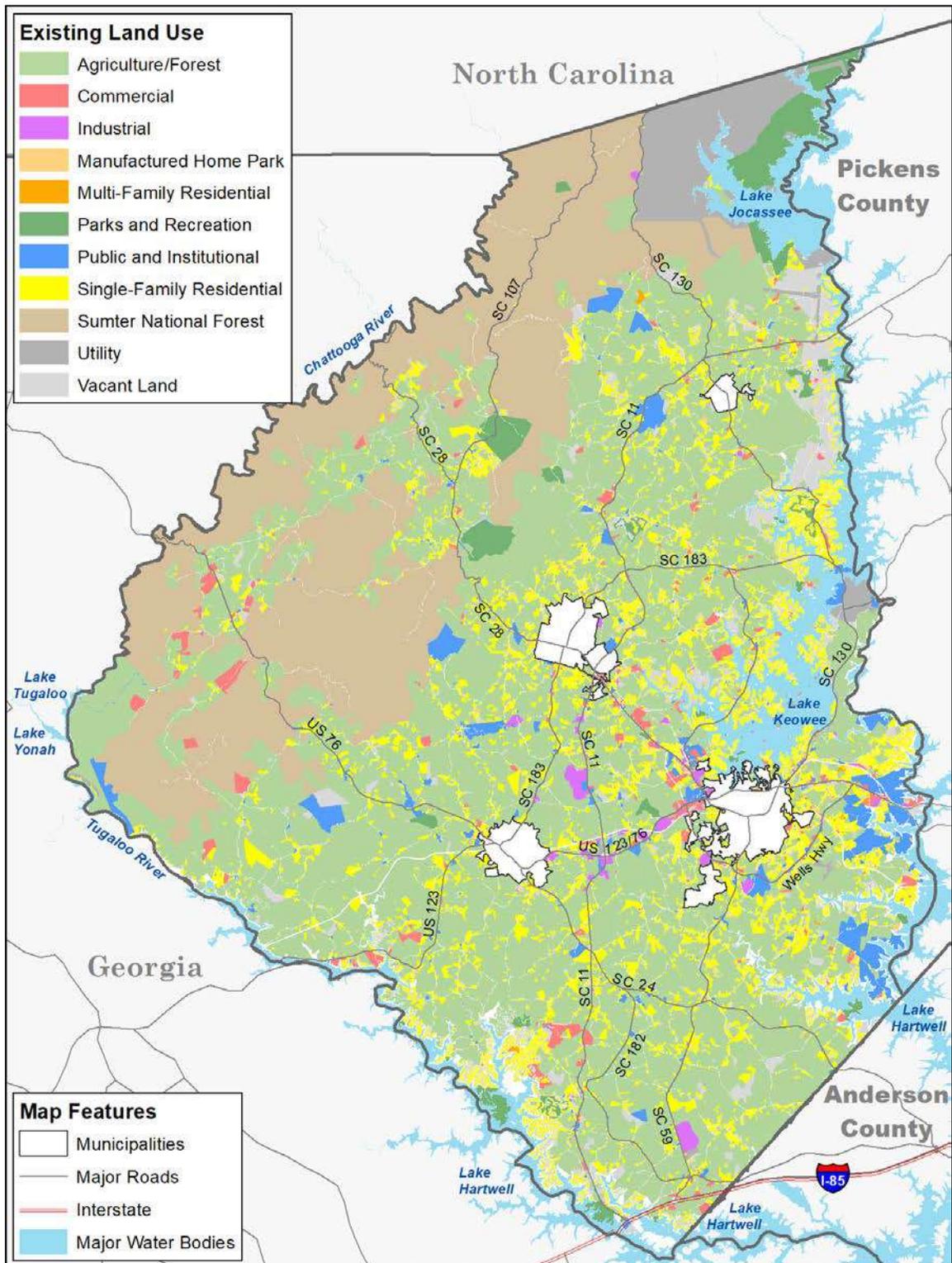
Figure 11-1. Existing Land Use Area Chart, 2019



Sources: Oconee County Assessor, November 2018; Oconee County GIS Manager, May 2019



Map 11-1. Existing Land Use Map



Sources: Oconee County Assessor, November 2018; Oconee County GIS Manager, May 2019



B. FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use (FLU) Map is a blueprint for the physical development of Oconee County and sets the context and provides the vision for future growth and development in the County for the next ten years. Implementation of the Future Land Use Map will be accomplished through regulatory measures included in the County's *Zoning Enabling Ordinance* and *Land Development and Subdivision Regulations*. As detailed in the Population and Housing Elements, by 2030 the Oconee County population is projected to increase by 7,678 persons, accompanied by nearly 3,335 new dwelling units.

1. Future Land Use Map

Development of the Future Land Use Map is anchored by land use data provided by the existing land use map and supplemented by staff knowledge of current development trends and potential future development areas. As illustrated in the Existing Land Use Map, the Sumter National Forest comprises a large percentage of all unincorporated land in Oconee County and much of the remaining land is primarily rural in nature (Map 11-1). Commercial areas, industrial development, and residential areas have evolved and matured over time and have been incorporated in the Future Land Use Map. For consistency, the following future land use categories used in the *2010 Comprehensive Plan for Oconee County* have been updated for use in the *2030 Comprehensive Plan* and are depicted in Map 11-2.

- ***Agricultural Preservation*** identifies areas deemed to be prime or special agriculture lands that are vital to the continuation of agricultural enterprise in Oconee County. Because agriculture-related activities typically impact most aspects of life within such areas, uses should be limited to those that are compatible with ongoing agricultural activity and can coexist with the secondary effects commonly associated with such activities.
- ***Rural*** identifies those areas characterized by a continuing rural lifestyle and open lands. This area is generally sparsely populated, but includes pockets of commercial uses and mixed-use development that serve as hubs of activity in the area. Although not identified as a preservation area, new uses should not negatively impact existing land uses.
- ***Rural Suburban*** identifies those areas that have undergone conversion from rural lands to a mix of uses, but remain predominantly characterized by a rural landscape. Infrastructure sufficient to support additional development is reasonably accessible, and pockets of significant development exist throughout. New uses should be compatible with existing, with limited impact on the overall character of the area.
- ***Suburban Transitional*** identifies areas of densest development. These areas are well served by infrastructure and are suitable for continued development. New uses may vary in nature and intensity, but should not negatively impact existing land uses.

- **Residential** are those areas deemed to be appropriate for development primarily focused on residential uses. Such areas may contain significant clusters of existing residential developments, as well as pockets of agriculture, rural, commercial, and other land uses. Although new uses may vary, they should not detract from the overall residential character of area, and not impose negative secondary impacts on nearby properties.
- **Parks and Recreation** lands are primarily reserved for recreational use, and as such are reasonably open to the public.
- **Industrial** areas are reserved for existing, planned, and future industrial or commercial uses. This in no way imposes a limitation on the location of such uses in other future land use categories or other land uses in the industrial category, where appropriate.
- **Sumter National Forest** includes all federally-owned and managed lands within the Sumter National Forest.

The analysis of future land use in Oconee County provided in Table 11-2 does not include land areas within the cities of Seneca, Walhalla, and Westminster and the towns of Salem and West Union because the County does not conduct land use planning and regulation within the incorporated borders. More than one-fifth of unincorporated land in Oconee County (83,633 acres) is within the *Sumter National Forest* and is not subject to local land use regulation. Nearly one-third of the total unincorporated land area in Oconee County (118,762.4 acres) is designated in the Future Land Use Map as *Rural* and 15.8% (59,183.2 acres) as *Agricultural Preservation*. Almost 10% of unincorporated Oconee County (36,892.1%) is more densely developed and designated as *Suburban Transitional*, while 9.7% is designated as *Residential* (36,437.9%) and 7.9% as *Rural Suburban* (29,587.3). Land designated as *Parks and Recreation* and *Industrial* in the Future Land Use Map comprise smaller percentages at 2.1% (8,044.3 acres) and 0.5% (1,942.3%), respectively.

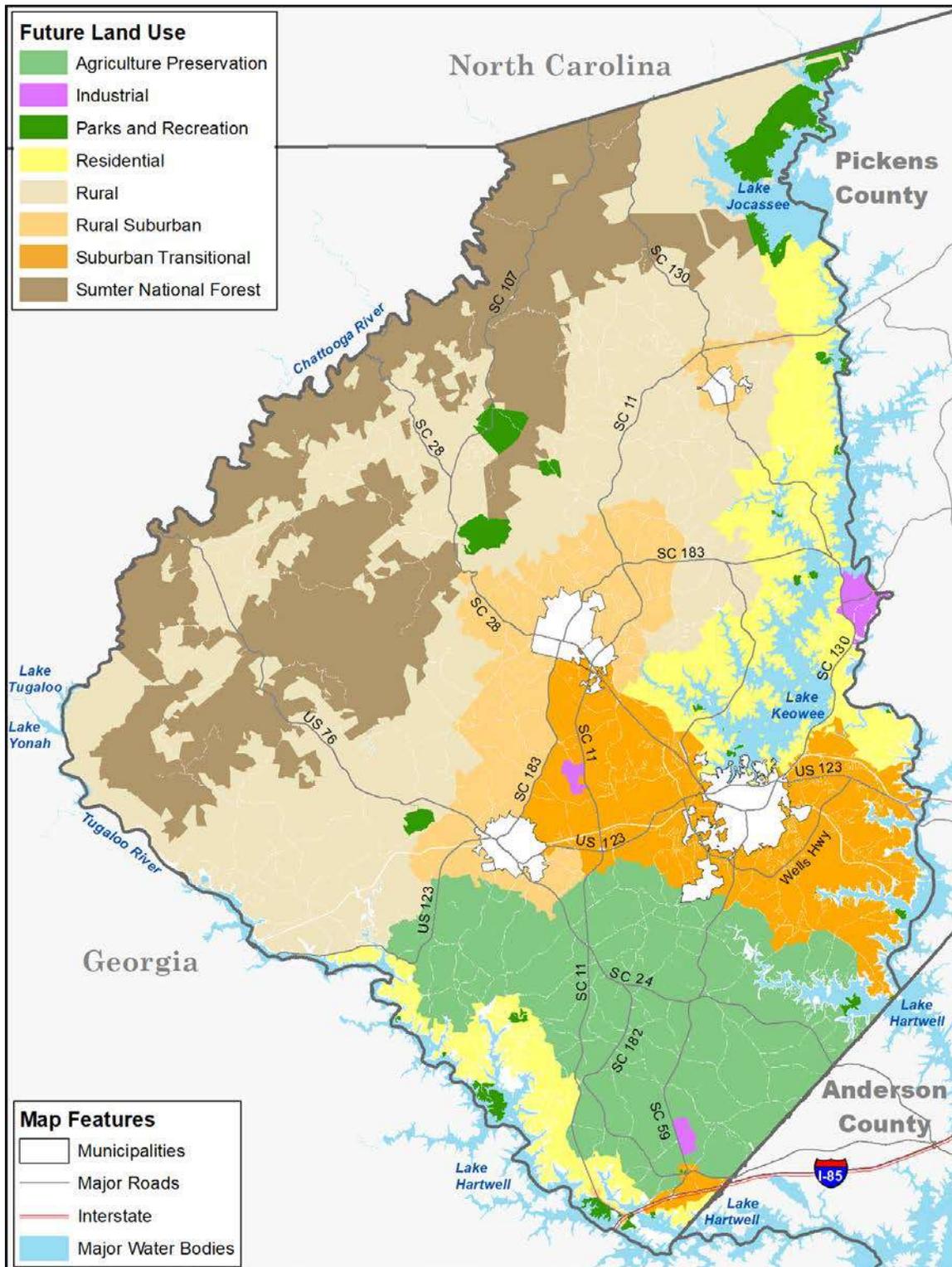
Table 11-2. Future Unincorporated County Land Use by Area

Future Land Use	Acres	%
Rural	118,762.4	31.7%
Sumter National Forest	83,633.4	22.3%
Agricultural Preservation	59,183.2	15.8%
Suburban Transitional	36,892.1	9.9%
Residential	36,437.9	9.7%
Rural Suburban	29,587.3	7.9%
Parks and Recreation	8,044.3	2.1%
Industrial	1,942.3	0.5%
Total	374,482.9	100.0%

Source: Oconee County Planning and Zoning Department, 2019



Map 11-2. Future Land Use Map



Source: Oconee County Planning and Zoning Department, 2019



2. Future Development Opportunities and Challenges

Oconee County has an abundance of opportunities to support future growth and development. The County's strategic location along the busy I-85 corridor that connects the Greenville, Atlanta, and Charlotte metropolitan regions makes it attractive to prospective businesses and industries, as evidenced by the County's expanding manufacturing base. The County's location is also a draw for potential residents who are seeking a more rural or smaller town lifestyle within an easy drive of employment centers within Oconee County or in nearby Clemson, Greenville, and Anderson. Retirees are increasingly drawn to the area, whether looking for a more affordable option for lakeside or mountain living near thriving small cities and towns, a major metropolitan area, a major university, or in a quiet rural setting. The need for higher educational attainment and specialized job skills to meet the needs of existing and prospective higher wage industries and businesses is being addressed through job training programs and facilities provided at the new Oconee County campus of Tri County Technical College. The desirability of Oconee County as a place to live, work, and play is further enhanced by an abundance of natural, historic, and cultural resources and a strong sense of community.

A wide range of factors will shape this development potential including the economy, development intent of private property owners, affordability and obtainability of housing, regional growth trends, and the availability of infrastructure. As is the case in any growing community, Oconee County faces a number of challenges in the coming decade. However, each challenge also presents opportunities for positive growth and change.

A number of areas in the County are in transition in terms of character, density, and land uses. Formerly rural areas are transitioning to more suburban residential development. Student-oriented housing developments and accompanying commercial development are drawn to major corridors near Clemson University. New residents and visitors are increasingly attracted to the County's lakes, rivers, and other natural resources. Proximity to a major university and nearby metropolitan areas, coupled with its quiet rural character are also appealing. These changes boost the local economy and bring much needed commercial activity to Oconee County residents. However, increased housing density and associated commercial development will result in higher traffic volumes on key transportation routes and can increase travel times and cause congestion during peak hours. A growing and increasingly more diverse population in terms of age, income, and expectations will likely impact schools and infrastructure and can bring differing expectations for a range of issues such as public services, land use, recreation, and community appearance. The County has been proactive in addressing these issues and recently conducted a focused study of the U.S. Highway 123 corridor. Planning for growth along these corridors provides an opportunity to explore options to encourage development while ensuring traffic safety; accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and transit; and create an attractive and functional environment for residents and visitors.

Oconee County enjoys mutually beneficial working relationships with its municipalities, adjacent jurisdictions such as the City of Clemson and Pickens County, Clemson University, Duke Power, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, home owners associations, and other organizations. With so many related groups and jurisdictions, it is challenging to maintain regular communication while building on established relationships and initiatives. However, the mutually dependent nature of these relationships provides opportunities to establish new and enhanced ways to share information and ideas and coordinate and cooperate where appropriate and needed. Such formal and informal lines of communication are necessary in emergency situations, but are also vital to providing reasonable and consistent land use planning and requirements in growth areas that span municipal boundaries and for planning for the provision of infrastructure, recreation, and services.

Oconee County is working with the OJRSA to expand the wastewater system to the Fair Play community in the I-85 area. This and other future infrastructure expansions will provide reliable water and sewer service to residents and businesses and enhance economic development efforts in these areas. However, as with the fast-growing major transportation corridors, opportunities for growth also present challenges in terms of increased traffic and associated transportation issues. Planning for growth in these areas provides opportunities to encourage new developments, businesses, and industries while ensuring traffic flow and safety and an attractive and productive addition to the community.

Oconee County has several ordinances in place related to land use regulation, including the *Zoning Enabling Ordinance* and *Unified Performance Standards* that regulate sexually-oriented businesses, airport height, communications towers, group residential developments, tattoo facilities, and signs, and include land development and subdivision regulations. Administration and enforcement of these regulations can pose a challenge to staff as they navigate multiple ordinances that include redundancies and contradictory requirements and definitions. However, this also presents an opportunity to consolidate land use regulations into one comprehensive document to improve clarity, remove duplication, ensure consistency, and streamline staff review and administration.

Housing affordability data in the *Housing Element* indicate that 45% of all renters and nearly 30% of all homeowners in Oconee County are cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of household income for homeowner costs or rent and associated costs such as utilities, taxes, and insurance. Local agency and community representatives indicate that it is difficult for young families, professionals, and others who would like to live and work in the County to find homes in moderate price ranges that are safe and in good condition. This presents an opportunity for the County to work with developers and public and private organizations to encourage and enable development of affordable housing options and to rehabilitate existing housing where feasible to meet this need.

Oconee County is blessed with unparalleled natural resources, as detailed in the *Natural Resources Element*. Additionally, the County has a rich agricultural tradition that continues to



thrive. Stewardship of these resources creates both challenges and opportunities. Perhaps the most critical challenge is how to balance protection of these resources with encouragement of appropriate and complimentary growth and development. Included in that challenge is the need to provide reasonable and safe access to the County's lakes and rivers for residents and visitors, while protecting the rights of private property owners. Much of the land in the County is in the Sumter National Forest, which protects many of the County's natural resources. Likewise, agricultural lands are in private ownership. However, as the County continues to grow, it has an opportunity to explore ways to incorporate procedures, guidelines, requirements, and educational programs that will protect natural resources and agriculture from incompatible or potentially harmful land uses without unduly limiting growth and development.

In addition to abundant natural resources, Oconee County residents and visitors have access to the Sumter National Forest, four State parks, three county parks, the Stumphouse Tunnel/Issaqueena Falls Park that includes a new Mountain Bike Park, and 193 miles of trails ranging in size from small spurs of less than a mile to the 77-mile Foothills Trail. Many of the trails lead hikers to nearly 150 waterfalls and other destinations as detailed in the *Natural Resources Element*. The Oconee passage of the Palmetto Trail connects Oconee State Park to the Oconee Station State Historical Site. These resources serve as the foundation of the opportunity to further incorporate trails and greenways to connect neighborhoods, parks, employment centers, essential services, and other key locations in the County and encourage travel alternatives such as biking and walking. In Walhalla, a greenway plan has been proposed that would connect the Stumphouse Tunnel Park to the City's downtown and serve as the western terminus of the Palmetto Trail. Transportation corridor studies can also accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, as was done in the County's U.S. Highway 123 Corridor Study.

The Land Use Element is the culmination of the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies developed in the other eight plan elements and provides a blueprint for the development of the community for the coming decade. The Future Land Use Map and the accompanying goals, objectives and implementation strategies provide the basis for policy decisions impacting the general location, density, and intensity of land uses. These are grounded in the overarching goals of enhancing and preserving community character; protecting natural, cultural and historic resources; reducing sprawl; ensuring adequate public services; promoting sound fiscal management and allocation of resources; and meeting long-term community needs for infrastructure, facilities, and employment opportunities.

The benefits of land use planning are many. Planning for growth enables the County to facilitate the delivery of more efficient and cost-effective services by encouraging development in areas where services already exist or can be more easily provided. The Plan also protects property values of residents and businesses, while encouraging additional investments by providing a reliable idea of how and where growth will occur. Sound planning helps balance the need for quality of life amenities and the economic activity that is necessary to sustain this quality of life for the County and its residents.

C. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

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

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Goal 11.1. Establish an efficient, equitable, and mutually compatible distribution of land uses that complements Oconee County's traditionally rural lifestyle, yet supports sustainable economic development, protects the environment, and manages future growth and changes.		
Objective 11.1.1. Encourage development in a way that protects and preserves the County's natural resources.		
Strategy 11.1.1.1. Review and update existing land use regulations as needed to facilitate development that preserves forests, prime agricultural lands, sensitive areas, and natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.1.2. Explore ways to incorporate procedures, guidelines, requirements, and educational programs that will protect natural resources from incompatible or potentially harmful land uses without unduly limiting growth and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Objective 11.1.2. Manage development in a manner that ensures the County's natural resources and lifestyle enhance sustainable economic prosperity while respecting private property rights.		
Strategy 11.1.2.1. Utilize the zoning process to enhance development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.2. Coordinate urban/suburban development in Oconee County to ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to support balanced growth in primary growth areas, while minimizing sprawl and protecting natural resources, prime agricultural lands, and sensitive areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.3. Review and consolidate land use regulations to improve clarity, remove duplication, ensure consistency, and streamline review and administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.4. Use incentives, tools, and regulatory options for reducing and preventing conflict between incompatible land uses and reducing such issues in high growth areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.5. Use corridor overlays, design guidelines, and performance standards to ensure the protection of the environment, community appearance, and property values while respecting private property rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.6. Address on-premise and off-premise signs, billboards, and their life-safety and visual impacts along roadways in the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.7. Identify the location and density of RV parks within the County to determine if additional regulation is needed to manage traffic, ensure health and safety, and address environmental impacts, with particular emphasis on waterbodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.8. Enable and promote the development of cluster subdivisions, with design features incorporating site amenities and resources such as open space, greenways, and wetland preserves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.13. Consider requiring landscaping and buffer provisions for new non-residential development along specific corridors and within specific areas of the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.2.14. Encourage landscaping, beautification, and repair of properties through volunteer community programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	



Objective 11.1.3. Protect agricultural land through preservation and land use strategies designed to mitigate higher density residential and commercial development of rural farmlands.		
Strategy 11.1.3.1. Utilize the zoning process to accommodate appropriate development as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	On-going
Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
Strategy 11.1.3.2. Implement as feasible the incorporation of voluntary mechanisms such as the use of conservation easements, purchase of development rights, and transfer of development rights to preserve agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.3.3. Map prime and functioning agricultural properties to determine areas that may need protection from incompatible uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Objective 11.1.4. Address the changes and emerging needs of areas transitioning to a more intensive land use.		
Strategy 11.1.4.1. Develop additional corridor plans focused on safety and design issues but with additional focus on reducing visual blight and inappropriate and incompatible development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.4.2. Develop overlay districts, primarily along principle community entrances (highway corridors) to meet the individual needs of each district in areas such as signage, appearance, transportation needs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.4.3. Prohibit development inconsistent with the scenic character of S.C. Hwy. 11 through the incorporation of a corridor overlay, conditional use provisions, or other mechanisms; and explore ways to preserve and maintain tree lines and scenic vistas along S.C. Hwy. 11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.4.4. Continue to work with the OJRSA and other infrastructure providers on expansions to serve residents and businesses and provide opportunities for economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County OJRSA Infrastructure providers 	
Strategy 11.1.4.5. Seek resources, plan for, and implement the innovative development and redevelopment of unincorporated areas such as Fair Play, Oakway, Newry and Utica.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Strategy 11.1.4.7. Continue to seek new opportunities to coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with municipalities, adjacent jurisdictions, and associated agencies and organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County Municipalities Adjacent jurisdictions Agencies and organizations 	
Objective 11.1.5. Enable and promote a range of housing choices to meet the needs of residents that accommodate a variety of economic levels, age groups, and preferences.		
Strategy 11.1.5.1. Work with developers and other public and private agencies and organizations to encourage and enable development of affordable housing options to meet current and projected housing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County Developers Public and private agencies and organizations 	
Strategy 11.1.5.2. Work with developers and other public and private agencies and organizations to encourage and enable the redevelopment and revitalization of dilapidated and unsafe housing in declining residential areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County Developers Public and private agencies and organizations 	
Strategy 11.1.5.3. Encourage new and innovative approaches to residential development that will expand housing options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County 	
Objective 11.1.6. Expand and promote opportunities for recreation and access to natural resources and greenspaces.		
Strategy 11.1.6.1. Work with the State, Sumter National Forest, Duke Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other organizations to provide reasonable and safe access to the County's lakes and rivers for residents and visitors while protecting private property rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County State of South Carolina Sumter National Forest Duke Energy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Other related organizations 	
Strategy 11.1.6.2. Explore partnerships and alternative methods of connecting residential, employment, recreation, other essential services, and communities such as greenways and trails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County Municipalities 	
Strategy 11.1.6.3. Continue to seek and utilize resources and partnerships to connect to regional trail and park systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oconee County State of South Carolina Park and trail providers 	



<p>Strategy 11.1.6.4. Continue to cultivate eco-tourism opportunities in key areas such as near the new mountain bike facility at Stumphouse Tunnel and planned expansions of County parks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oconee County • Municipalities • State of South Carolina • Sumter National Forest 	
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Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Accountable Agencies	Time Frame for Completion
<p>Strategy 11.1.6.5. Seek opportunities to increase greenspaces, to include exploring requiring open space/greenspace as a component of new development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oconee County 	
<p>Objective 11.1.7. Continue support of a comprehensive planning process to ensure that the citizens of Oconee County possess accurate inventories and analyses of existing county conditions and the opportunity to better manage future conditions.</p>		
<p>Strategy 11.1.7.1. Review and update the components of the Oconee County Comprehensive Plan as needed, not restricted to the minimum time periods established in the S.C. Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, as amended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oconee County 	
<p>Strategy 11.1.7.2. Expand public access to the County's geographic information system (GIS), emphasizing the accuracy and maintenance of data collected and the usability of the GIS website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oconee County 	
<p>Strategy 11.1.7.3. Utilize Assessor's data and GIS technology to better track development trends for use in planning for future growth and change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oconee County 	

Note: GOIS are coded for ease of review

- **Black text is directly from the current comprehensive plan**
- **Purple text added by staff**
- **Blue text was developed per input from focus group meetings**
- **Red text denotes edits or info developed by consultants to address issues in background data**
- **Green text added per the Planning Commission**
- **Time frames in yellow cells should be added by staff and PC**



2030 Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary - Draft

DRAFT

DRAFT

A message to the residents of Oconee County

Oconee County has prepared a new Comprehensive Plan that guides the County's growth and development decisions over the course of the next 10 years. The Plan is required, by State law, to be revised after five years. The Plan is a living document and should be updated regularly as conditions change and shifts occur in public policy. The Plan serves the County and participating municipalities as an advisory document regarding actions or policies which will promote preferred goals related to economic development, land use, transportation, housing, quality of life and other interrelated topics.

Primary input for the Comprehensive Plan was developed by input from the residents. Over the course of seven months, nine public outreach meetings were held in all five voting districts. Approximately 500 citizens attended these meetings and 250 comments were received. Five surveys were included as supplements to the Upstate Journal which resulted in over 1,100 completed surveys with an additional 350+ survey comments. In short, the County reached out for citizen input using radio and newspaper advertisements. The following pages describe the results of public participation that informed and guided this planning document.

The Comprehensive Plan is the County's principle guiding or vision document – designed to formulate a coordinated, long-term planning program to maintain and enhance the managed growth and viability of the County. The Plan lays out the desired future for the County and relates how that future is to be achieved. The Plan serves as a resource to both the public and private sector by projecting how land will develop, housing needs met, training developed to attract businesses with well compensated jobs, how recreational interests are developed and the environment protected, and how public services and facilities will be provided and improved.

The County will use the Comprehensive Plan in the following ways:

- **Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

The Comprehensive Plan provides objectives and strategies that guide short term actions to reach long term goals. These strategies, which are reflections of County values identified through public outreach efforts, will be used as guidelines in the analysis of managing growth and other capital investment decisions.

- **Future Land Use Map**

The Future Land Use Map shall be referenced in making managed growth and capital investment decisions. It provides a representation of the County's vision helping to guide development based on citizen input, development needs and preferences and indicates areas where various types of land uses should be encouraged to grow.

- **Implementation Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan includes an Implementation Plan that will direct public investment and private initiative: Plan implementation is carried out through the adoption or revision of ordinances and through the completion of projects and programs outlined in the goals, objectives and strategies sections.

A Call to Action

This is a dynamic time for Oconee County. Rapidly changing technology, national demographic shifts, and changing market preferences are reshaping our county. Many of the changes Oconee County has experienced over the last decade present daunting challenges. But at the same time, the County has had successes addressing needs and cultivating its unique assets. The Plan's recommended actions include more visionary efforts to address our challenges and build upon our assets.

Challenges to Overcome:

- Stagnant workforce population growth
- Transportation Infrastructure planning for cars, bikes, and pedestrian
- Careers, not just jobs, but the need for more high paying ones.
- Lack of emphasis on training for skilled "blue-collar jobs"
- Critical shortage of affordable & obtainable housing
- Critical shortage of housing and planning for housing and care for our aging population
- Limited internet availability
- Divided population regarding managing growth
- Lack of entertainment options

Assets to Build On:

- Being a *Growth Region*
- I-85
- Clemson University and Tri-County Technical College
- Retirement communities
- Our agricultural areas
- Mountain, lakes, and rivers
- Strong light-industry base
- Geographic placement and mild climate
- Quality tourist-areas
- Quality K-12 education – several new schools
- Recreational activities - Biking, Hiking, Boating

How to Measure Progress

The many strategies in the Comprehensive Plan vary widely in their very natures. Some are relatively easy to measure; while others are more complex and subjective, reflecting such words as “encourage”, “leverage” or “promote.” Consequently, there is no single uniform system of measuring the success of all these strategies. As progress of a strategy is identified, regular updates will be made to the County Council. Once experience is gained completing a strategy, the lessons learned will be adapted to the remaining similar strategies.

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How Can Citizens Become Involved ?

The foundation of the Comprehensive Plan rests on input from the County's citizens. Once the plan has been accepted by the County Council, the Planning Commission will begin addressing the goals, objectives and strategies that fall within their purview. Other boards, committees and commissions, along with the County Council will address other identified priorities. Continued input from citizens and nongovernmental organizations will be critical to success. This can be accomplished by attending and speaking at meetings of the Planning Commission or County Council. Additionally, making written comments to these groups, meeting with Commission members, or any combination of these means is encouraged. Meeting dates and times of these groups can be found on the county's web site: oconeesc.com

Who we heard from

The Comprehensive Plan is revised based on citizen input. To encourage citizens to attend upcoming meetings, newspaper advertisements and radio announcements were used. Nine public outreach meetings were held in all five voting districts. Approximately 500 citizens attended these meetings and we received over 250 comments. Additionally, five newspaper inserts went out with surveys to 10,000 addresses, of which 1187 surveys were returned (see appendix for results) with an additional 350+survey comments. There were 14 initial focus-group meetings held with stakeholders representing industry, business, environmental, social and community groups. Additional input meetings were held with 15 interested stakeholder groups. Multiple emails were received from individuals and groups. Lastly, there were 20 planning commission meetings dedicated in whole or in-part to the Comprehensive Plan process.

What we heard

The topics listed below are some of what we heard from the citizens and citizen groups during the planning process. The comments that received the most attention are listed and grouped under the general topic. These were identified based on citizen input and are not intended to be in a ranked order.

- **Transportation:**
 - Build a road system for the future
 - Improve maintenance of existing road system
 - Bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure incorporated and expanded into our transportation system
 - Rural transportation options including expansion of CAT bus service
- **Jobs:**
 - Rewarding sustainable careers and jobs
 - Workforce development efforts on “skills for the future”
 - Technical or “Blue-Collar” job training is every bit as important as “White-Collar” job training
- **Housing:**
 - Affordable and obtainable
 - Aging in place with a proximity to services
 - Reduce housing and property blight
- **Law Enforcement:**
 - Increased law enforcement presence
 - Substations in rural areas
 - Increased monitoring and enforcement of safe-driving laws
- **Natural Resources**
 - Protect lakes, mountains and natural beauty
 - Protect drinking water supply
 - Ordered growth and buffers around these areas
 - Preserve rural view

- **Plan for Future Growth**
 - Increase access to high-speed internet access Countywide
 - Managing growth and protection for ag, commercial, community and residential development
 - Sewer expansion
 - Keep youth in the area
- **Tourism**
 - Promote
 - Expand/maintain parks and recreational sites
 - Develop alternate entertainment/ recreational venues
 - Promote shopping and sit-down restaurants.
 - Review fee structure for sites and how that money is distributed throughout the County and municipalities
- **Quality Development**
 - Encourage citizen participation in process
 - Manage sprawl
 - Develop alternate design standards and find ways to incentive to encourage
 - Corridor standards related to safety and aesthetics
 - Facilitate municipality development

Consequences of Inaction

- Loss of trust in government to respond to residents,
- Missed opportunity to keep residents involved in long term planning,
- Disillusionment by public after such a major public effort to revise the comprehensive plan,
- Continued unmanaged sprawl with business/population growth,
- Cost to correct problem increases with delay,
- Perception that another study will 'go on the shelf',
- Short term actions causing long term problems,

How to implement the Plan

Comprehensive Plan priorities should be an agenda item at the annual County Council strategic planning session. The County Administrator will present a priority list of Plan strategies, funding needed, progress goal timelines and estimated completion dates to County Council. These annual items for funding and completion will be taken directly from the Comprehensive Plan. Funding (and lead time for funding) is a critical component for priorities and will communicate to the citizens of the County that their priorities are being addressed each year, both objectively and financially.

Acceptance of priorities by County Council should be publicized to demonstrate the County's effort to address the citizens input to the Comprehensive Plan.

The County, along with other agencies, is listed in the Comprehensive Plan as an "Accountable Agencies". For the strategy to be effectively completed, all the listed agencies must devote the resources and cooperation to complete the strategy. It is the responsibility of the County staff (Administrator and department heads) to identify the individuals in these organizations who are accountable for "partnering" to accomplish the strategy.

The County Administrator should assign action items to department heads for coordination with the responsible individual in the "Accountable Agencies". The department heads should report at regular intervals on the expense status, timeline status of key goals and if help is needed with outside agencies.

The County Administrator should report progress to County Council on a regular basis as a part of the performance review process.

What we heard. Continued

Each element is addressed listing objectives or strategies most commonly mentioned by citizens or citizen groups during the creation of the Plan. These were identified based on citizen input and are not intended to be in a ranked order. The numbers represent an objective or strategy found in that element. The text following the number is a brief summary of the related objective or strategy. The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of an Executive Summary, 10 Elements, or chapters, and an appendix of community input. These 10 Elements are:

1. Executive Summary
2. Population
3. Housing
4. Transportation
5. Community Facilities
6. Cultural Resources
7. Economic
8. Natural Resources
9. Priority Investment
10. Agricultural
11. Land Use

The numbering system is *Element.Goal.Objective.Strategy*

For example, 2.2.2.2 is Population Element, Goal two, objective two, strategy two

POPULATION

- a) 2.1.2.4/2.2.2 – Coordinate and develop programs with available agencies for quality education to include advanced training.
- b) 2.1.2/2.1.2.3/7.3.1.4 – Seek opportunities for entertainment and recreation options for young adults and families.
- c) 2.2.1 – Ensure access to adequate health care and preventative services.
- d) 2.3.1 – Coordinate planning efforts among the County, municipalities and neighboring jurisdictions.

HOUSING

- a) 3.1.2/3.1.2.2 – Encourage housing development that will allow residents to “age-in-place” such as higher density and multi-family, assisted living and nursing facilities.
- b) 3.2.1.2/3.2.1.3 – Develop housing options that are affordable for low- and middle-income families.
- c) 3.2.2.1 – Expand water and sewer facilities for new residential development.
- d) 3.1.1.1 – Development of a range of housing types to include single-family, multi-family developments and manufactured homes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- a) 4.3.1.1/4.3.1 – Promote the development of downtown retail and commercial markets.
- b) 4.3.2.4 – Improve high speed internet access to all areas of the County.
- c) 4.1.1.3 – Continue to develop the I-85 industrial corridor.
- d) 4.3.2.1 – Support small business start-up and expansion and assist in clearing key steps in the development process.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

- a) 5.1.1/5.1 – Emphasize the importance of the historic and cultural resources of the County thru plans and ordinances.
- b) 5.3.1.1/5.3.2.3 – Develop and promote tourism and recreation.
- c) 5.2.2.4 – Encourage volunteer involvement in cultural programming and civic groups.
- d) 5.1.2.4 – Explore the reuse of the Utica Mill site.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- a) 6.2.4.4 – Promote programs to discourage littering; encourage litter pickup programs; review ordinances for littering.
- b) 6.2/6.2.1/6.2.3 – Preserve, protect and enhance County's land resources.
- c) 6.2.3.1/6.2.3/6.2.4.3 – Protect natural resources for recreational uses and develop opportunities for recreational access.
- d) 6.3.3.1/6.3.4.2 – Adopt measures for erosion and sediment control and preserve watersheds around lakes.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- a) 7.2.1.3 – Expand and upgrade library facilities.
- b) 7.3.1.4 – Explore ways to increase recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.
- c) 7.3.1.3 – Evaluate, amend, and implement recreation plans as necessary.
- d) 7.3.1.1 – Develop a Countywide greenway system and to connect existing parks to enable safe cycling routes.

AGRICULTURE

- a) 8.1.2.7 – Promote farm stands and farmers markets in rural and urban areas.
- b) 8.1.1.2 – Support collaboration between landowners and public in the development of plans for preservation of farmland and forests.
- c) 8.1.1.5 – Support state legislation that links incentives to continue farming with controls preventing conversion of agricultural land to non-farm uses.
- d) 8.3/8.3.1 – Ensure access to healthy, fresh food.

TRANSPORTATION

- a) 9.2.1.2/9.2.1.1 – Develop ongoing systematic road maintenance and upgrade program based on steady revenue sources.
- b) 9.3.2/9.3.2.1/9.3.2.2 – Provide and maintain safe and accessible trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes in appropriate areas.
- c) 9.2.1.7 – Establish coordination and communication between local and state transportation departments.
- d) 9.2.1.4 - Limit curb cuts in high traffic areas.

PRIORITY INVESTMENT

- a) 10.1.1 – Plan for and prioritize public infrastructure and facility's needs.
- b) 10.1.2.1 – Encourage development that protects and preserves our natural resources.
- c) 10.1.2.9 – Expand bicycle and pedestrian routes to allow for recreational and greater use of alternative forms of transportation.
- d) 10.1.2.3 – Enhance access to affordable housing through both public and private cooperation.

****LAND USE****

- a) 11.1.2.2. Coordinate urban/suburban development
- b) 11.1.2.5. Use corridor overlays, design guidelines, and performance standards while respecting private property rights.
- c) 11.1.5.2. Work with developers and other public and private agencies and organizations to enable the revitalization of dilapidated and unsafe housing in declining residential areas.
- d) 11.1.4.3. Prohibit development inconsistent with the scenic character of S.C. Hwy. 11 and explore ways to preserve and maintain tree lines and scenic vistas along S.C. Hwy. 11.

Additional comments from surveys sent out via the newspaper

Comments from Population and Housing survey

1. What kinds of additional housing types are needed for an ageing population? 3.1.2.1, 3.1.2.2
2. Low maintenance patio homes 3.1.1
3. Houses with in law apt to help them. 3.1.2
4. all
5. Progressive care 7.2.5.3
6. Small, single level homes for seniors. ADA compliant. 3.1.2
7. Maintenance free Condos and townhomes 3.1.2
8. Like what is found in Clemson ????
9. Life care communities 7.2.5.3
10. Single units 3.1.1.1
11. Retirement community 7.2.5.3
12. Skilled nursing 7.2.4.1
13. apartments, condo's 3.1.1.1
14. Apartments 3.1.1.1
15. Smaller 2 bedrooms 2 bathrooms 3.1.1.2
16. Patio homes 3.1.1.1
17. The elderly need affordable living as well - low income homes 3.1.1.2
18. Single family 3.1.1.1
19. Single story condominiums 3.1.1.1
20. Apartments 3.1.1.1
21. small home communities with amenities such as pool, cabana, for 55+, there is nothing like that in this area. We have townhomes but not amenities.. 3.1.2.2

- 22. small affordable 2-3 bedroom houses/townhouses in the \$100-150,000 price range for "starter" and "retirement" people; low-income rental apartments in the \$250-750 a month price range 3.1.1.2
- 23. Build apartments over stores in places like Seneca. People will come to live and work and restore and compete against big box stores on the highways.
- 24. Inter-generational, human-scaled developments 3.1.2.2

- 25. Integrated housing where all ages co-mingle 3.1.2.2
- 26. Manufactured housing parks with nice amenities 3.2
- 27. Affordable retirement communities 3.2
- 28. Better and safe housing that people can afford. 3.2.1.1
- 29. Affordable for senior citizens 3.1.2.2
- 30. Single level homes 3.1.2
- 31. Condos 3.1.2
- 32. Low Income Homes and Section 8 listings. 3.2.1.3
- 33. Single level 3.1.2
- 34. Single housing 3.1.2
- 35. Manufactured homes and/or trailer parks 3.2
- 36. Multilevel care - like a Clemson Downs, homes, assisted living, nursing care
 - a. 3.1.2.2
- 37. To attract younger workers and professionals, and to keep our local youth in Oconee County, what kinds of facilities does Oconee County need, or need more of? 2.1.2
- 38. Place to take their dogs...dog parks 7.3.1.4
- 39. Competitive recreation facilities for youth 7.3.1.4
- 40. Competitive recreation facilities for youth. Youth entertainment parks. 7.3.1.4
- 41. Daycare
- 42. bike trails, hiking trails in the towns, community gardens, more opportunities for recycling; "green" technology 7.3.1.1

43. Waterparks, indoor laser tag, community pools, roller skating/skateboard parks, mini golf/go carts, arcades 7.3.1.4
44. Industrial / business 4.1.2
45. Mall 4.1
46. Skating, bowling, miniature golf, swimming pools, recreation facilities 7.3.1.4
47. More upscale shopping and restaurants. 4.3.2
48. Parks with entertainment for teens and children, biking, skating, 7.3.1.4
49. YMCA and its programs for youth, adults and seniors 7.3.1.5
50. Pet Friendly
51. Music and outdoor theaters 6.2
52. We are in desperate need of a community park in the Walhalla/West Union area with walking trails, maybe a water park. A roller skating rink would be great as well. There definitely needs to be more for our teenagers to do. 7.3.1.4, 7.3.1.1
53. Ymca 7.3.1.5
54. Amphitheater 6.2
55. Ymca 7.3.1.5
56. More quality companies to start careers in 4.3.2
57. Skate park, skating rink, arcade, mini golf 7.3.1.4
58. Actual parks!!
59. Walkable communities, bike trails, lien swamp rabbit 7.3.1.1
60. Jobs. 4.1.1
61. Indoor recreation: Top Golf, other venues when rainy, extreme hot or cold 7.3.1.4
62. Things for teens to do..... Skating rink or other busy activities. Kids have very little to do, therefore when they go to college, they don't want to come back and have a family or raise children here because of lack of activities to keep kids busy and out of trouble 7.3.1.4
63. Better paying jobs 4.1.1
64. Affordable Daycares like the DAR. We LOVE the DAR its realistic practices. The teacher turnover is low which makes me feel at ease

leaving my little. Also, a 2nd shift daycare is needed due to manufacturing. (Land Use)

- 65. We need a COUNTY RECREATION organization that has the best interest of kids at heart. 7.3.1.4
- 66. Good restaurants aka Longhorn 4.3
- 67. Restaurants and shopping that is attached to some of of natural resources, a restaurant near the bike trails, more eating or marinas on the lake, outdoor clothing and item stores. 4.3.3.2
- 68. Dog park, running and bike trails 7.3.1.1
- 69. Community center for special occasions, showers, reunions ????
- 70. Quality restaurants and shopping. Not more fast food restaurants 4.3.2.1
- 71. Medium priced restaurants 4.3.2.1
- 72. "Cool Hip" places where they want to be 4.3.2.1
- 73. bring in more up to date fashion places besides Belk in Seneca. I think they set their fashion for 80+. We could use something like a Kohls... 4.3
- 74. Quality infrastructure (road, sidewalks). Clean, safe environment. Good schools. Affordable, single-family homes to purchase. 3.2.1, 7.1, 2.2.3
- 75. Recreation! Look at North Myrtle Beach, YMCAs, Rock Hill, etc... We are way behind! 7.3.1.3
- 76. sidewalks, neighborhood playgrounds, green space for walking, dog parks 7.3.1.1
- 77. Your biggest challenge is to get the young to love learning and to continue to learn after leaving high school. It is engaged parents and retired mentors who can do that, not facilities. When you think of economic development in Oconee include the development of people not just property. 2.2.3
- 78. Public indoor spaces 6.2.2.3
- 79. Medical 7.2.4
- 80. Book store 6.3.2.3
- 81. Nice Restaurants, not fast food & places to work 6.3.2.3
- 82. More than one movie theater 4.3

83. Target! Coffee shops! Sit-down restaurants! Trails! Nice downtown merchants in all municipalities. Attractions and spaces for all populations- black, white, young and old 4.3.1
84. steak house, Olive Garden 4.3
85. Local restaurants that serve fresh and exceptional food that you don't mind paying for because you know the quality. 4.3.2.1
86. I would love to see the old buildings in town be utilized, including Seneca, Walhalla & Westminster. 4.3.1.4
87. Activities for youth/teens. 7.3.1.4
88. We need more playgrounds with better quality than the existing ones. 7.3.1.4
89. The county needs more of the large chains... Best Buy. Target, outback, longhorn... while most in Seneca can travel to Anderson. It's inconvenient for those in the rest of the county to travel that far 4.1.2
90. Anything family friendly, playgrounds, splash parks, children's garden, etc. More festivals and things for kids and families. 7.3.1.4
91. Green Ways, bicycle friendly paths & lanes, walking trails 7.3.1.1
92. Target 4.1.2
93. County own Recreation Center with indoor pool 7.3.1.3
94. Fun zone, skating, go carts, sky zone . Keep people here and not send them to send their money in Anderson or Greenville county 7.3.1.4
95. Playgrounds 7.3.1.4
96. Large outdoor complexes that combine multiple use athletic fields with camping spots and various activities. Baseball fields, grills, outdoor basketball courts, disc golf, batting cages.. etc. 7.3.1.4, 7.3.1.3
97. Things for families to do together/good restaurants 4.3.2.1
98. Coffee houses, activities for kids (indoor and outdoor), outdoor/sports businesses geared to hiking and camping, bike shop. 4.3.3.2
99. Our is very much in need of something in the area to keep them busy so we do not lose them to Juvenile Justice Systems/Prisons. 6.2, 7.3
100. Bowling facility in good repair 4.3.1.5
101. Beautiful Community Theatre 7.2.5.3

102. Indoor facility for large groups, sporting events meeting facilities
7.2.5.3
103. Higher end stores and water view restaurants. Companies offering higher pay need higher level amenities. Dollar stores and strip malls are not attractive. Look at Greenville and the companies they attract. 4.3.1.1
104. **Comments from Natural Resources and Community Facilities survey**
105. If you have additional comments, please enter them here:
106. We have beautiful natural resources and outside activities. Any improvements to our "outdoor" resources must be in tandem with improving Seneca, Walhalla, and Westminster to support the local residents and influx of visitors to the county. 4.3.3.2
107. Oconee County is naturally beautiful. It is a pleasure to live here, however, the cities of Seneca, Walhalla, and Westminster would benefit greatly by developing and promoting areas like "Ram Cat Alley" for local residents to utilize and enjoy as well as a providing dining, shopping, and entertainment for all the visitors who travel to the area. 4.3.3.2
108. "Fishing piers on all 3 lakes for elderly, handicap non boat-owners - numerous locations 6.2.4.3
109. Demolish abandoned buildings in front of Seneca City Hall - build new library, increase foot traffic downtown 4.3.1
110. In the schools - what is the ratio of teachers/admin to students from 1988-2018?"
111. County Council will need to balance economic growth with preservation of our rural lifestyle. 4.3.3.3
112. Everyone wants to talk about the soft issues. What Oconee County needs is increased employment, higher wages and jobs that increase average wages that will result in all the tax revenue you want to do all these other things! Put your effort into attracting new high tech businesses and that will provide a means to addressing the other opportunities!
4.2.2.1

113. "improve US123. Need turn off run ways for any place where there are left turns thru the medium. There are many accidents at these points. 9.1.1.3
114. Maybe a center lane all the way between Seneca and Clemson, the 5th being for left lane turns. For that matter lanes for Cat Bus stops instead of it stopping anywhere along 123" 9.3.1.2
115. Need to protect the water ways and lake areas that furnish drinking water and support tourism. Septic tank maintenance needs to be continually emphasized with ability to identify problem systems. Need strong ordinance for riparian protection and burning of debris from land disturbance. People should not be able to disturb land unless they have a permit and install and maintain silt fencing. 6.3.2.4
116. I am so glad you are seeking community input. Your comprehensive plan for the future of Oconee County is forward thinking. Thank you!
117. In terms of community facilities, i would like to see a couple of business incubators in Westminster & Seneca. Instead of looking to build a new structure towards Clemson/OC Area, the money should be used to refurbish older buildings in Downtown Westminster & Seneca and convert them into Business Incubator spaces for developing Co-ops & Entrepreneurs. 4.3.2.2
118. The reason visitors come to Oconee is to experience its natural beauty, which must be preserved in the face of development. As long as developers have the power to sway decisions within Oconee County, our county will continue to degrade and lose its charm. 4.3.3.3
119. Oconee County is a beautiful place, and we're fortunate to live here. If more tourism is desirable, then let the tourists pay for it. Our money should be better spent on preservation of existing resources. 6.2.3.1
120. Disc golf is becoming a popular sport and it would be nice to see it represented in more of the area parks. Also, any new equipment to playgrounds to incorporate the special needs community with wheel chair swings and sensory areas. Simpsonville City Park has such an area. 7.3.1.4
121. I would like the county to look again at providing internet infrastructure for ALL residents of the county, not just where our private

developers are willing to sink money at their profit. I live in a reasonably affluent community, but because we are only 60 owners, no provider will make any infrastructure investment to bring high speed internet with acceptable bandwidth to our neighborhood -- and we are prime customers for this type of service. If the direction of all communications and services is going to be internet, then we cannot assume that profit motive alone will make developers cover everyone. 4.3.2.4

122. It would be nice to see a dog park in Oconee County. 7.3.1.4

123. We are so excited about the ymca opening. I actually voted for the tax increase originally to provide that but it did not get the majority votes. Looking forward to all the new exciting things coming to our area. 7.3.1.5

124. Having, and following a plan is important. ????

125. Need more accessibility to recycling, more recycling receptacles, more man power to do so 7.2.2.1

126. We need to invest in children and family recreation or this country will be only for retirees and older people 7.3.1.4

127. Have recently came across info pertaining to other places using recycled plastic in the maintenance and building of their roads and highways. Why are we not doing this? The county recycles plastic so why not put it to a good use and the roads have shown to last longer with less repairs. Just a suggestion and it would eliminate having to dispose of the plastics somewhere else in the environment. We could be a first in the are to try this!!! Let's be a first for something good instead of something to be ashamed of. We have the CAT buses... Let's get our roads taken care of by using the resources that are available without more cost and that will last longer into the future. After all... This is a major complaint of Oconee County Citizens!!! Potholes and roads in bad need of repairs and upkeep. Present this to the people of Oconee and I think it would be highly supported!!! 7.2.2.1

128. These type investments pay off in the long run, and will help keep our area a top location for tourism, retirement location, and for families to locate. Along with improvements to education, it will help draw industry and job growth to the area.one question I did not rate was recycling center

availability. There are several I go to, fairly close. I have not studied the overall distribution county wide and did not feel qualified to comment.

7.2.2.1

129. We have to protect our natural and scenic areas in Oconee county. Our rivers and lakes are 2 of the main reasons for tourist in the area. Tourism brings in lots of money for the county and residences of the county. If our rivers, forest, lakes, etc. are polluted, in my opinion we would lose out on a lot of visitors to the area. 6.3.3.1

130. Town needs a friendlier atmosphere. 2.2

131. Hope to won \$100 Could help my family a lot

132. Improving the appearance on the area around Exit 1 off I-85 is critical. The roads are in horrible shape, There is an abandoned gas station that is an eyesore and potentially hazardous. The impression of the southern entrance to our county is terrible. Also, if Hwy 11 is supposed to be a scenic highway, it should have some protections from commercial signage, etc. LAND USE

133. I would love the enhancement of this county but maintain the beauty / simplicity of it as well as getting new restaurants into the area is important it sucks because I have to drive to Anderson / Easley / Greenville to be able to have something different and amazing food 4.1.2

134. There is a huge need for wheelchair accessibility to picnic areas like the one table at Mullens Ford. This is the only place my family is now able to go to due to my mother being wheelchair bound. 6.2.4

135. We gave a beautiful County and the litter breaks my heart. We need more clean up days and stricter laws against it. 6.2

136. Like it or not, our secret is out and beautiful Oconee is a main tourist attraction in South Carolina. With the loss of industry in our area, we need to cash in on the tourism dollar. All of Oconee needs to work together to provide all we can to promoted and protect the natural resources we have, while attracting tourism. 6.2.3

137. I would love for there to be areas at the park for walking trails. Where you could enjoy the beauty of the water while you walk and get your exercise in. People are so busy this day and time, this could be a place

to walk and enjoy the beauty of the lakes and being outdoors while not having to rush around with life's busyness. 7.3.1.1

138. I strongly support a 1cent sales tax that would enable and benefit the majority of the projects Oconee County needs 10.2.1

139. Oconee County has some beautiful natural areas. I hope you will continue to protect them. We especially appreciate the educational programs run at South Cove County Park. Thank you! Keep Oconee beautiful! 6.2.3

140. In regards to recycling we need areas that actually support recycling, our county "recycling" centers make recycling very difficult or at least the one we use in Richland does. 7.2.2.1

141. I was disappointed learning my Access Pass does not allow day use at Oconee Point Campground. I moved to Oconee County from Houston Texas this past November. I chose this county because of all the parks. I have a brain injury, on my good days I enjoy the parks. 6.2.4

142. Lake and landing fees to non-residents. They play in our lake/water/land then they pay. 7.3.1.2

143. I am totally against raising taxes under any circumstances. The people are taxed enough. Before the above are considered. I would place emphasis on infrastructure and divert lottery money to pave roads. Our county has horrible roads and I am ashamed for vacationers to come here. That should take priority over any of the above!!!!!!!!!!!! 9.2

144. I love nature. Taking my family to these areas, sometimes I know nothing about them and I have lived around here my whole life. Resource book and directions would be amazing 6.4

145. I can't even believe this is a survey with these questions! There should be no question in regards to protecting our parks and lakes and our history!!!! What the world!!! ?????

146. People that live near or on the lake generally have access. These lakes are a gem and there should be fines on those that destroy them with trash and harmful things. People should be educated about what a precious resource it is. When we were temporarily in an apt in Seneca before renting a house on Keowee, it was difficult to use and access the lakes. One thing

we really love are the swings and porch of the general store at South cove. Make more areas where people can have seating and stuff to watch and relax in the sunsets and sunrises. More places to dock a boat temporarily if you are not on a waterfront lot. Unless you have a waterfront lot, there is virtually no dock space to just dock for a few hours or a day! More access to actual beach type areas. We LOVE 12 mile recreation for this reason- beautiful, picnic tables, and huge beach area. Make areas more handicap accessible. We love to visit devils state fork park. The beach area has gotten trashy and you are attacked constantly by bugs. It's not very handicap accessible (one of the reasons we like 12 mile is because it is very handicap accessible). 6.2.4.3

147. Protect and restore our environment 6.2.3
148. "Improve current recycling centers (staff often doing little) instead of creating more. Make recycling easier so it will be more widely used ex. home recycling bins available and other interventions. Is recycling creating revenue or costing tax payers? 7.2.2.1
149. Enforce dumping for residents only at dump center, charge others not citizens who need to dispose of large items. 7.2.2.1
150. Maintain roadways, keep drains clear of debris and overgrown weeds to prevent ponding, clean debris from roadway. Some of our roads have unnecessary piles of debris which have potential to damage vehicles. 9.2.1.2
151. Zoning of new development for deceleration lanes and safe turning lanes so that accidents don't occur or frequent near misses." 9.2.1.4
152. "As I have suggested before, consideration for paved bike paths - possibly in the footprint of local utility lines as the roadways are not safe considerations to ride. I have NO INTEREST IN riding areas currently being developed for instance in the Stumphouse Tunnel area. 9.3.2
153. Also, would like to see some coordinated effort to promote organized/regular tennis activities at the tennis courts at South Cove Park. 7.3.1.4
154. Moving to this area I have found a very difficult time to find fellow activity minded tennis players to play regularly. In my communication with

the staff at this location I keep hearing there is no capacity to support this request. Thank You!" 7.3.1

155. CLEAN UP and IMPROVE PLAYGROUNDS. Oconee County kids deserve SAFE, clean places to play and learn outdoors. We need parks with walking, hiking, and biking trails. 7.3.1.4
156. I have lived in Illinois, California, Washington and Dorchester County SC. Oconee County is definitely home. I love it here! ?????
157. Emphasis on recycling. Add bus stops. 7.2.2.1
158. Convenience centers are fine, but would like to see open hours on Wednesday and Sunday, even if they're shorter. 7.2.2.1
159. Keep Oconee Beautiful -- place an immediate stop on the installation of billboards. LAND USE,
160. I've lived in Oconee County less than a month so I haven't enough familiarity with some of the subject matter to render an opinion.

Comments from the Economic Element survey

When it comes to growth and development, what is the county's greatest challenge? Below are comments related to this question

161. Changing the opinion of the agricultural people to want change and progress. 8.1 ????
162. Specially to cater to those that make \$45,000 annually and lower. 4.2.2.2
163. tourists come to view natural resources. They spend money and make little impact on infrastructure. Let's encourage them by protecting our special place. Protect small towns' character also. 4.3.3.1 and 3
164. Unmanaged growth with little zoning. LAND USE
165. Divided population about managed growth 6.2.3
166. Job opportunities while protecting our character & natural resources 4.3.3.3
167. We have minimum wage jobs, but it still does not pay the bills. 4.2.2
168. Providing more options for fine dining 4.3.2

169. Providing great downtown spaces to bring people together. 4.3.3.1
170. We need more restaurants, shopping, and things to do. 4.3.2
171. There is nothing to do in this town for adults and children! Education consists of giving a child a tablet all day! 2.2 ???
172. Infrastructure is a major problem in the county. The roads are in desperate need of attention. The more growth, the more dire the need. 9.3.1
173. The downtown area needs revitalization NOW - people will come and spend their money if the town has great restaurants/breweries/shopping! 4.3.3.1
174. People in power that lie
- a. What type of development is most needed? If you chose Other above, please elaborate**
175. campgrounds, museums, arts colony, restaurants that serve breakfast on Sunday. 4.3.3
176. Development of our downtown area, more restaurants & retail. Also need another big box store like a Target. 4.3.1.4 and 4.3.2.1
177. increased community resources (cultural, societal, public services) 6.3.1.3
178. Parks, bike/walking paths 9.3.2
179. Quality care facilities for aging population 3.1.2
180. Develop the Golden Corner Commerce Park...this keeps getting overlooked 4.1.1.5
181. Better roadways 9.3
182. For the disabled or elderly. We have to send elderly a long way from their family sometimes because there is not enough beds around here. 3.1.2
183. Decent housing for the poor and affordable housing for the lower/middle class working families. 3.2.1
184. Reuse of downtowns 4.3.1.1
185. Restaurants, shopping, things to do. 4.3.1.1
186. Clean adequate organized parks and recreation. 6.2.4

187. Even though newer is nice, I think some of the older buildings should be fixed when possible. 4.3.1.3
188. Fixing structures that already exist 4.3.1.3
189. Keep developing the downtown area like Ram Cat Alley and Seneca will thrive! 4.3.1.3
190. More public parks, children's areas, dog parks 7.3.1.1
191. Safe places for our wildlife. 6.2.1
192. Commercial and residential are equally important LAND USE
193. Updated libraries 7.2.1.3
194. Parks and recreation 7.3.1.2
195. City parks and libraries 7.3.1.2
196. apartments and low-income housing 3.2.2.3
- a. **What county improvements should the County prioritize? If you chose other above, please explain?**
197. WELLS HIGHWAY PRETTY PLEASE!!! 9.2
198. There needs to be more for teenagers to do so they'll want to stay here and be an economic driving force. My 2 teens can't wait to move somewhere else with "more to do". 7.3.1.4
199. revitalize cities and towns 4.3.1.1
200. WE DO NOT NEED MORE STUDENT HOUSING!!! We need more lower to middle income housing. Since there is not an open response to the next questions, we should be growing and recruiting small businesses that will fill our empty stores on all of our Main Streets. I think we have sufficient manufacturing job opportunities.3.2.1.3 , 4.3.1.1
201. Develop spec bldg that has already been funded for GCCP. 4.1.1.4
202. Our roads are so bad my car is tearing up driving down the road. 9.2.1.2
203. Help us keep our local museums open to the public. They struggle too much just to keep the doors open. 6.2
204. Restaurants, shopping, things to do. 6.3.2.3
205. pot holes everywhere 9.2.1.2
206. Bring in decent retail/restaurants/events and the rest will follow! 6.3.2.3

207.	Police Response	7.2.3.2
208.	Downtowns	4.3.1.1
209.	Residential, shopping	6.3.2.3
210.	Libraries (all branches)	7.2.1.3
211.	Residential, shopping	6.3.2.3
212.	Libraries	7.2.1.3

a. Other Comments

b. Anything else you'd like to add?

213. Walhalla needs more shops/restaurants if people frmo all over to visit Oconee, fix it up. More affordable housing, no more expensive houses/apartments 6.3.2.3, 3.2.1.3
214. Water and sewer needed to I-85 exits 7.2.2
215. 75-84 age range, but we're still very active
216. Multiple references to wanting a Lane Bryant and Hamrick Clothing stores 4.3
217. No
218. I would love to see more available & affordable housing options for anyone who either lives in Oconee or wants to live in Oconee. Also, I want to see more entrepreneurship programs pushed here in Oconee, especially with our young people. There is too much focus on getting our youth into the manufacturing industry and very little to none focused on teaching them how to create their own businesses. I would also like to see more Co-ops in existence here in Oconee as well. Worker Co-ops, Consumer Co-ops, Housing Co-ops, etc... need to exist in our area. The County govt as well as the municipalities need to do more for the Black & Hispanic Communities when it comes to Entrepreneurship & Affordable Housing. These groups along with poor white have been ignored for way too long and drastic steps need to be taken to address these critical issues. So far, that has not happened. Eventually I hope it does. 3.2.1.3, 4.2.2.3. 4.3.2.2

219. There needs to be some consideration in providing more funding for the county parks, museums, and libraries. 7.2.1.3, 6.2.3.4
220. The county is growing in a small geographic area compared to the total area of the county. We need to manage that growth and if that means zoning, corridors and overlays then we need to act proactively. We're already behind and we need to move forward more quickly. LAND USE
221. Oconee needs homes in the \$150,000 or less range to accommodate young families working in the manufacturing and service sectors of our economy. Oconee also needs to stop pretending that manufacturing is a quality job in Oconee County - most companies are only hiring temps for 1 year because they don't want to offer insurance, so most high school grads working in manufacturing are just working in circles as they hop from 1 factory to the next and never advancing or getting any stability. Management positions are limited and usually filled by young adults who transfer from the company's other locations and only stay for a few years on their way up the corporate ladder in other locations. Economic Development brags about opportunities in manufacturing and even has the school district pushing students in that direction, but the reality on the ground is very different and not at all healthy. 3.2.1.3, 2.1.2.4
222. The corruption needs to stop.

Cultural Resources and Transportation comments

223. The county and some state roads are unsafe and in terrible shape. Need repair! 9.2.1.2
224. All pick-up trucks should be mandated to cover the truck bed at all times. It is too easy for drivers to toss trash in their truck beds. As they drive down the road trash flies out. Our county roads would be much cleaner. 6.2.4.4
225. More concerts 2.1.2.3
226. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan should include actions to reduce litter in Oconee County (enhance attractiveness of scenic corridors), plus provide

a central facility large enough to accommodate large gatherings - concerts, graduations, meetings, weddings, etc. 6.2.4.4, 2.1.2.3

227. Things that annoy me about this county - lack of dead animal cleanup in timely manner (how about dead deer at Christmas time). Lack of turn in and out lanes of HWY 28 and other busy roads. Grass mowing alongside roads right after trash bags filled, thus leading to the bags being ripped apart and area looking worse with the trash, and the same with dead animals that that have not been moved and get sliced and diced. Mopeds driving not up to speed limits of roadway. Pitiful appearance of Downtown Seneca. Neglected roadways in general. Lack of professionalism in manners and attire with some county employees. Lack of apparent Architectural control. I could go on. 9.2.1.4, 6.2.4.4, 9.2.1.2
228. Please clean up and mow regularly our right of ways, they are embarrassing! 6.2.4.4
229. "Live in a small subdivision with a private road (about 20 houses). It has a deeded right of way. It's so bad the fire trucks and ambulances have warned us they may refuse to come down it in the future .Most live in mobile homes and/or on social security and don't have money to fix it proper. 9.2.1.4
230. Wish Salem had CatBus." 9.3.3.2
231. "This survey includes comments re Highway 11 Scenic Highway. NO ONE is caring for it in the last 20 years. It will not remain at all scenic if it is not somehow included in zoning, permitting, or etc." LAND USE
232. I'd like to ride a road bike for exercise, but the roads are too narrow making them very dangerous. 9.2.1.8
233. Better internet options for rural areas. Also, have you thought about placing tornado sirens on top of existing water towers to increase coverage areas. 4.3.2.4
234. "PLEASE increase emphasis on litter control. Some type of zoning/property management to eliminate unsightly lots, ie junked cars, overgrown yards, structures that are falling in. Maintain the roadway shoulders with more frequent mowing. Consolidated athletic/recreational

area(s) to include pool, fields, and courts(handball, tennis)" 9.2.1.2, 6.2.4.4, 6.1.2.1, 6.1.1.2

235. I would like to see wider berms on the roads - very unsafe to run or walk- even facing traffic. 9.2.1.8

236. Walking and bicycling options need much improvement. Both in terms of availability and safety. Safety consists of both law enforcement and maintenance by adjacent property owners. Wells Hwy from Radio Station Rd to S Oak St and back up to Blue Ridge Elementary is a prime example of speeding not being enforced and property owners not maintaining the sidewalks for overgrown weeds and trash. The lack of pedestrian walkways is a common complaint of visitors to our company that stay in the hotels along Hwy 123. 9.3.2.2, 7.2.3.2

237. Seneca library needs to be updated; CatBus is not safe to ride due to drug activity on board. Bike riders on curvy secondary roads is not safe for the bike rider or the car driver as it now stands. 7.2.1.3

238. I think the CAT bus is great. I just don't have a need to use it. Haven't been to any Farmers Markets, but I plan to.

239. This survey left out any mention of the arts - Blue Ridge Arts Center, Walhalla Performing Arts Center, Westminster Music Centre, Gateway Arts Center, and Oconee Community Theater are just as important as the local museums listed. 6.2

240. "I would support funding for the airport because of the large amount of visitors to Clemson events that arrive/depart from there. Those visitors bring in money while here. However, I would like the county to provide more funding for the library system to upgrade the buildings that residents use every day first. 9.4.1.1, 7.2.1.3

241. We need new library facilities in this county. 7.2.1.3

242. A cultural resource I'd like to see is a public space for people to enjoy art, music, or a performance, something edifying and enlightening. I would support a farmers' market if it wasn't so far away from where I live. Why don't you build a new library in Seneca and make the current library into an art museum? Or build a new art museum with performance spaces that is

- close enough to downtown to encourage people to park and walk there?
Having to drive everywhere in Oconee County is detrimental to its cultural development by letting the car dictate people's habits. 6.2, 7.2.1.3
243. Seneca could use a dog park 6.2.3.1
244. We NEED a new library facility in Seneca. We need CATBUS to run to Walhalla (County offices, Courthouse) from Seneca and Westminster. 7.2.1.3
245. "I believe funding for the Oconee county Libraries should take priority. 7.2.1.3
246. The Seneca Library needs a new building in particular." 7.2.1.3
247. Since my arrival 18 months ago there seems to be a mindset that new things/suggestions are not viable as many reactions seem to be either we can't do that, we have too much already on our plates, it's been that way for as long as I remember, don't even try to approach that subject as change is not possible - too much negativity etc. I have heard the same from other new residents as we "settle in." ?????
248. have moped/bike lanes on the side roads. 9.3.2.1
249. "Change is a fact of life. We must not avoid change; we must embrace it. That said, I think residents need to promote tourism more. Oconee county has much to be proud of and we must showcase it. The natural beauty is breathtaking and must be preserved and respected. The Oconee History Museum is working diligently to preserve Oconee's past before it is lost and everyone ought to support their efforts. 6.3.1.3, 6.2.2
250. The county needs to move forward. Bike lanes, connect trails like Swamp Rabbit. Protect the lake with strong riparian and septic tank ordinance. Don't depend on DEHE for correcting septic tank problems after the fact. Protect traffic nodes with overlays that promote building design and signage standards. Corridor planning with signage and building standards. 9.3.2.3
251. We need better bus transportation in the county. Transportation from Westminster to Walhalla for one. Walhalla is the county seat. Also,

bus transportation to polling places on Election Day or several days to Walhalla during the early voting period. 9.3.3.3

252. I would love to see better restaurants with more verity. I would also like to see more restaurants or grocery options along Hwy 11 6.3.2.3

253. "I live in the city limits of Seneca, but do not know what kind of road we live on. ??????"

254. I have my own car so I do not ride the Catbus." ??????

255. We should have cruising brought back in all towns. Growing up my parents could always find me in 10 minutes by parking at Hardees in Westminster if I wasn't driving i was in somebody's car " car hopping" at least we were all safe, together, and could be monitored by local city and county Police. Those are my most cherished teenage memories and nobody hardly ever got into anything big or bad trouble 4.3.1

256. Schools need to hold more dances over the weekends and such to wear these kids will have something constructive to do and become friends instead of enemies and more meetings and get-togethers at the schools and communities as well need Community get-togethers in front of Walmart or in Walmart's parking lot for the safety of the kids and as well as bands that would draw the interest of the younger generation and as well something that would draw interest for the older people of the community just camaraderie in the community that would draw people from all communities each Community having its own little get-together such as Walhalla Seneca Westminster there has to be something that will draw interest to all age groups.... with all of the things going on in this world today that the racism thing needs to be addressed ... 2.1.2.3

257. I would like to see planning to incorporate a lakeside world-class resort in our community. Also, I would like to see the Planning commission work on additional uses for the 123 corridor to include office parks, live/workspace projects and more Senior/Assisted living projects so our Seniors can easily transition from SFR homes to a supported lifestyle environment. Finally, the Control Free Zones could use some discussion as it relates to those CFZ parcels that are closer to more densely developed properties. Thanks for all your hard work on this project. 6.3.2.3

258. County needs to pick up the trash that sorry people throw out on highways & side roads. They also need to keep the grass/ weeds cut on side roads more often than once a month or two!!! The pot holes on roads need to be fixed better the first time they fix them so won't have to keep returning back frequently spending more money! People that live on county side roads have to deal with all this mentioned daily. This is a pretty county so better care needs to be done don't the roads for trash, holes & weed cutting and also ditches that get full of weeds, trash & other debris that prevents them from draining well!! And this county needs another nursing home/ rehab facility because only have 2. This would help families not having to place a parent out of town making it difficult to see & check on them. There are more assisted living places then long term places here!!

6.2.4.4, 9.2.1.2

259. The county should support the YMCA more with a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) but not put 20 other things with it like the last time. 7.3.1.5

260. "Oconee County lacks adequate (healthy lifestyle restaurants) Fast food is not an option for us. I like the idea of the CAT Bus even though I would not use it as I don't work. Safer bike trails is a must. We seem to many roads under some sort of construction very frequently. Yet the overall improvement of most state or county roads are in need of constant upgrades. Poor quality materials or poor repair work. There never seems to be a plan of where and when road work is taking place and for how long. The major state road that is adjacent to our community was patched up for several miles thinking the entire road would be repaved--not so. SR-130

6.3.2.3, 9.3.2.3, 9.2.1.2

261. Cultural activities are limited and not well publicized unless you subscribe to the local paper. 6.2.1

262. I would love to purchase more local produce but most of the framers markets are a longer drive away then the local supermarkets and the hours open do not fit into my lifestyle." 8.1.2.7

263. It is terribly sad to see the public pools closed for years when there are so many poor children that the only entertainment they had in the

summer was to go to the pool. I know some of them!!! In the 17 years I have been a resident of Oconee County, I have seen not just no progress but a shift toward the worst when it comes to programs or facilities that help our youth. Sometimes I wonder if more is being done for the jails than for the poor children of Oconee County and the evidence is disheartening. 7.3.1

264. I would love a better gas station, quick store, and restaurant on Stamp Creek Road near the entrances to Keowee Key. I would love some sort of bar or restaurant on the water so we could meet friends by boat or take company out by boat. It doesn't have to be full scale eating. Beer and pizza would be good enough. We miss the restaurant up near Jocassee that burned down a couple years ago. 6.3.2.3

265. -Enforce the code

266. You need to provide insurance for employees that work for the county. Provide turn Lanes on W. Cherry road and fix the roads in the county especially the most used roads in this county. Keep the history of the county alive by increasing the funding for all the museum's in this county. 9.2.1.4.

267. Make railroad from Seneca to Walhalla into a bike / walking trail similar to the Doodle Trail and Swamp Rabbit. Connect it to Clemson and the new trails at Stumphouse. 9.3.2.1

268. Biking paths, trails, and/or wide dedicated shoulders for bikes is the #1 biggest lack of transportation in Eagle county. It's really appalling that there is NO safe place to bike in this county. Even the roads that claim to be for bikes (e.g., Hwy 11), has an itty bitty shoulder with traffic going 60mph+ along it. No wonder I never see bikes on it. I don't feel safe on a bike anywhere. We moved here from Colorado and have permanently stored the bikes we used all the time there as they're useless here. 9.3.2.1, 9.3.2.3

269. Need bus service to Walhalla. Need bus service from every direction to the polls on election days. 9.3.3.7, 9.3.3.2

270. "Apart from museums and music, I see nothing about other cultural resources, How about performances? The visual arts? Will these not be part of planning?" 6.2.1.2
271. I'm a recent resident of Oconee County and very happy and proud to live here. It's a great and safe community. I'd love to see more small restaurants/coffee shops on Main Street in Seneca. I love the Tannery, shop there often and would enjoy more shops there. Overall, we are very happy we made the move. 6.3.2.3
272. Where I lived previously, I rode my bike to work and for recreation. In Oconee County, it is unsafe to ride a bicycle anywhere. 9.3.2.1.
273. We could use more variety in restaurants and music venues. 6.3.2.3
274. Oconee is a great place to live. Careful zoning would be a good step to prevent unplanned growth. LAND USE
275. "We need more hangar space at the airport. If the county isn't going to invest in building them, let's allow some of the private entities who have expressed interest in partnering with the airport to do so. 9.4.1.4
276. I'd also love to see more walking trails near our waterways. Shaver has a great track but ""blue ways"" as mentioned above are so much more relaxing." 9.3.2.1
277. I am very excited about the YMCA coming and the new running course being built beside Shaver. I wish we had more running trails and more ball fields for the kids. I do not like how many homeless people hang around but have noticed less around Belks lately. I'm excited by businesses moving in downtown and wish someone would do something about the abandoned buildings downtown (I do think they are privately owned). The airport is a great resource to have! 9.3.2.3, 6.2.3.3
278. "Help locals find water to swim in during the summer. 7.3.1
279. Money for Parks" 6.2.3.3
280. The roads need to be fixed as soon as possible. Where are the fuel tax dollars being used? Not in Oconee County. 9.2.1.1, 9.2.1.2, 9.2.1.8
281. Economic development must be improved 4.1.1
282. Need to fix the pot holes in the county 9.2.1.1, 9.2.1.2

283. I welcome growth in Oconee County even perhaps the kind that makes tourists as eager as they are about our hubs in the Upstate like Greenville and Spartanburg. But I also hope for growth that is responsible, that enriches and strengthens us and also does not sacrifice the environment of our region. (I love our trees, mountains, trails, animals, etc.!). In addition, I hope, as some of these questionnaires suggest, there is intention and thought put into fair and adequate (maybe more than adequate) access to education, leisure, public transportation, health and other quality-of-life items for the people of our communities, whether they be families or individuals. 6.3.1.3, 2.1.2.4, 9.3.3.2, 2.2.1.4
284. Moved here only recently and am very impressed
285. I have lived here for 16 years and my major frustration is the lack of vision for this community. Professionals who make their living working with communities like ours could be a big help."
286. "Your air quality goals are in black type which means they have been in effect since the last survey. What has been done, and why is ozone the only pollutant mentioned in the goal? What about others such as mercury? Also in black type is a statement of plans to improve water quality and erosion, yet I often see land clear-cut and even bulldozed around Salem. What has been done up to now? I live near Devil's Fork State Park where every warm week-end, there are long lines of cars, engines idling waiting to get into the park, when often the park is full and they are sent away. A ""Park Full"" sign at Highway 11 or Boone's Creek church would reduce air pollution and lower many human blood pressures. 6.1.1
287. I think everyone would benefit from sidewalks along Hwy. 123. I often see people walking along that road, and it simply isn't safe to do so. 9.2.1.1
288. Love being raised in, Seneca SC ...love seeing it grow day by day ... Wish there were more shopping places and restaurant options... Bobcats all the way !!!! 6.3.2.3
289. We need more retirement communities. 3.1.2.1

290. I feel that if there was a better sidewalk/crosswalks by Seneca High School more students would walk/ride bikes. Currently it is just too dangerous not to mention the emissions from the parent drop off/pickup lines. 9.2.1.2
291. I'm fortunate to not have to rely on the CATbus but support any funding to make it as accessible for those that do need it. 9.3.3.3
292. Oconee Regional Airport should get more money from the Clemson elite. Correct me if I am wrong but isn't that who uses it most?" 9.4.1.3
293. Roads in Seneca need repaired 9.2.1.2
294. "Need more Officer out patrolling streets getting these people who are doing drugs 7.2.3.2
295. Wish they could go in people homes in get adults who are doing drugs with kids ???
296. Would love to see more entertainment choices in Oconee 7.3.1.4
297. Not sure what this survey is intended to determine, but Oconee county has so much potential, but little engagement. There needs to be more Walhalla and Westminster community development. People should be going TO both towns, not THROUGH them 4.3.1, 4.3.3.2
298. We need bus routes to Shaver center for election days. Polling for Seneca Districts 1,2,3,4 should not be so crowded into Shaver Center. There should be bus routes from all major towns in Oconee County to the County Seat of Walhalla. 9.3.3.7
299. The roads need to be fixed. I have replaced one set of tires. We have waited long enough. I would love to see the library in Seneca enlarged and improved. It should have larger meeting rooms with technology and sound systems. Also, high speed internet service should be available everywhere. 9.2.1.2
300. Seneca needs a new library, more city and county parks. 7.2.1.3, 7.3.1.2
301. Need play grounds for kids with more updated equipment. Two person swings for older adults should be added to all play grounds now in use. Grandparents could enjoy the facilities with grandchildren. Some

shaded areas would also be nice and water fountains. Thank you!!

7.3.1.2

302. Too many people moving here. They need to be discouraged. If the trend continues, we will be overrun with newcomers. That can only lead to urban sprawl and the problems associated with it. Development may be good for business, but it's definitely not good for the environment.

11.1.1.2

303. more ways to attract tourists...suggest a trolley (rented or bought used) for special events to connect the towns at those times and solve parking problems 6.3.1.3

304. The town of Salem is a prime location for a grocery store and culturally sensitive development of other services to serve the rapidly growing communities off Hwy 11 between West Union and Lake Keowee. Services in this area are extremely limited! 4.3, 4.3.2, 4.3.3.2

305. Walhalla needs more for teenagers. It needs somewhere where they can gather in a safe environment. 7.3.1.4

306. Entertainment options getting better ???

307. We have lots of things needing funding, airport is not one of them.

308. Relocated here in November 2017 and my wife in November 2018. Didn't realize we had 2 farmers markets in Seneca, so I will start going there regularly. Love fresh veggies and fruits. Enough entertainment for my wife and I. Love Jazz on the Alley, Walhalla Performing Arts Center, the lake and waterfalls. It was awesome to see SenecaFest in downtown this year. ???

309. Biking is dangerous. Many have bikes. Nowhere to ride. Very healthy and social. We eat lunch after rides in Pickens, Greenville. Connect bike trails to Pickens and Greenville. 9.3.2.1

310. Sidewalks we have need repair. Most markets not open and had low vendor participation on listed days last year. 8.1.2.7

311. Seniors could use more entertainment options. 6.2.1.2

312. Need to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities. 6.2.3.3

313. Not enough entertainment for youth and teens. Rode CATbus once to observe, it was a good ride. 2.1.2

314. Sidewalks should be accessible to those with walkers/canes and wheelchairs. Would ride the CATbus everywhere if available. 9.3.37
315. I don't need to pay for airport expansions for Clemson football.

Agricultural

316. As a 3rd generation family farmer in Oconee County I believe it is vital to support our farmers and locally owned Agribusinesses. quit building low density housing projects and protect lake watershed 8.1.2, 6.3.3
317. Glad to see that Oconee County is working to keep farmers in the area.
318. It's hard to find a list of farm markets and when they are open. Many are only once a week for a short time and ones that are open daily seem to have a ton of grocery boxes from the produce distribution center. So I question how much of the produce of local farm produced. Would be nice to have a list that is easy to find. 8.1.2.7
319. promote backyard gardens, use Kellet School property for neighborhood small space garden patches, tear down Utica condemned houses use space for resident gardens etc, etc, etc 8.1.2.10
320. encourage more food stands, farmers markets 8.1.2.7
321. I am part owner of farms in other states and support young farmers as well as established farmers. 8.1.2.10
322. Thank you for making this survey possible. _____
323. I like everything about Oconee County _____
324. We had a garden every year until the urban growth across the bridge into Oconee Co. caused the wildlife such as deer to overrun our neighborhood and CU needs to have a control hunt especially for deer! Frustrating with all wildlife eating gardens, shrubs, and flowers! LAND USE
325. The only way to keep people on the farm is to make it worth their time as a viable career. It is a load of work and many people can't farm for a

living. It would be great if people would pay more for local produce, but they won't. 8.3.1.6, 8.1.2.10

326. I do not support government subsidies as a buffer for anything but I will support fair trade practices. _____?

327. Oconee County is a nice place to live. But our downtown area in Seneca is sad. Beautiful old buildings that should be used as shops, restaurants and businesses. They are in sad shape. I've heard it's because our local city taxes make it almost impossible to buy or rent them plus having to repair. Our downtown area should be a thriving destination for our city. The few new businesses are a good draw for people to come downtown. But A LOT of empty buildings. Sad. A farmer's market would be nice too. Somewhere we can buy local stuff.. 4.3.1, 4.3.1.4, 4.3.2.1

328. We need more farmer markets , produce stands etc .. 6.1.2.7

329. I would like for more home grown foods in S.C and leave other countries out of the farm life here. To many recalls on foods that make people sick. American farmers are better. 8.3.1

330. My wife and I used to grow a lot of our food through gardening but due to health and age no longer can. I would hope we do not lose any more of our farmers. We look forward to purchasing our fresh vegetables from our local truck farmers. Hope and pray they never go away and they need to be supported every way possible. Locally and by our government.

8.1.2.7, 8.1. 2. 2, 8.1.2.3

331. Growth is good, but sustainability is more important. 8.1.1.2, 8.1.1.1

332. Don't complain about the farmers with your mouth full. _____?

333. I fully support local farmers, and try to buy local as much as I can. 8.1.2.7, 8.1.2

334. Not on topic, but why can't Seneca have a place to take their dogs? We can't take them to Shaver and you did not vote on a dog park. It seems your against animals. Seneca needs a dog park! We are tired of driving to Clemson! 7.3.1

335. What are you going to do with downtown Seneca? Most of the buildings downtown are vacant, with the exception of Ram Cat Alley. We

need more businesses in the historic downtown area instead of decrepit empty storefronts. Maybe turn the old hometown back into a local grocer, and get some of those farmers you care about so much to sell their goods there consistently. Redmond's is closed most of the year - we need consistent access. 4.3.1.1, 4.3.1.3, 4.3.1.4

336. I have little all day sunshine and trouble growing Veggies. Would if I could 8.3.1.2

337. People need food, so we need farmers. 8.1.1

338. I understand this is about farming... But a NICE playground and community park would be nice too. One with a pond and walking paths, a large dog park and even fitness equipment We need ways of bringing people to Oconee. And the rental market is not doing it! 7.3.1, 7.3.1.1, 7.3.1.2

339. No

340. Would be interesting to breakout the data of how much chicken farming is to the total dollar amount of produce stated. ???

341. Need better farmer participation at farmers markets. I go each week and often there is nothing I wish to purchase. Need a dedicated area that is attractive & has restrooms. (Take a look at the farmers market in Mt Pleasant. 8.1.2.7

342. We frequent the farmers market to support local growers and feeling good about eating farm fresh foods 8.1.2.7

343. We MUST protect our farmers! At any cost.... 8.1.2.3, 8.1.2.6,

344. I find it very difficult to find locally grown produce. The 'farmers' markets' are sparse and not reliable. I would definitely support a farmers market that had many farmers and lots of locally grown produce and meat. 8.1.2.7

345. Although I don't grow my own food, if I had time I would love to do so; I will support our farmers. Ag, Property Tax breaks need to be given to our small 3-4 acre farms as well. 8.1.1.5, 8.1.1.6

346. I do not drive _____

347. Encourage the next generation of farmers rather than discourage them 8.1.2.10, 8.3.1.2

348. Agriculture should be treated the same as any other business in the county with recognition that investments in ag will not increase return. The economics of agriculture should drive investments in ag. The county should focus and invest in those areas that will produce jobs and revenue for the county. Agriculture is low in property taxes and minimal pay/employment for the county. 4.1.2
349. We have a vegetable garden
350. My main focus: New library for Seneca and more services; think how our library look to newcomers. 7.2.1.3
351. Timber land is local -- Sumnter NF, mts, CU forest near Clemson. Establish reserved timber lands across county. 8.2.1.2, 8.2.1.3
352. Build apartments over stores in places like Seneca. People will come to live and work and restore and compete against big box stores on the highways. 11.1.2.2
353. Daycare 11.1.5
354. Affordable Daycares like the DAR. We LOVE the DAR its realistic practices. The teacher turnover is love which makes me feel at ease leaving my little. Also, a 2nd shift daycare is needed due to manufacturing. 11.1.5
355. Community center for special occasions, showers, reunions
356. Improving the appearance on the area around Exit 1 off I-85 is critical. The roads are in horrible shape, There is an abandoned gas station that is an eyesore and potentially hazardous. The impression of the southern entrance to our county is terrible. Also, if Hwy 11 is supposed to be a scenic highway, it should have some protections from commercial signage, etc. 11.1.2.5.
357. Keep Oconee Beautiful -- place an immediate stop on the installation of billboards. 11.1.2.6
358. Unmanaged growth with little zoning. 11.1.2.1
359. Achieving a balance of all of the provide and protect items listed above. 11.1.1.2
360. Maintain balance between agriculture, industry and lake living 11.1.2

361. More commercial lake development would turn this sleepy little county into a travel destination.
362. Commercial and residential are equally important 11.1.2
363. Leave us as-is 11.1.1.2
364. The county is growing in a small geographic area compared to the total area of the county. We need to manage that growth and if that means zoning, corridors and overlays then we need to act proactively. We're already behind and we need to move forward more quickly. 11.1.2/11.1.4.2
365. This survey includes comments re Highway 11 Scenic Highway. NO ONE is caring for it in the last 20 years. It will not remain at all scenic if it is not somehow included in zoning, permitting, or etc." 11.1.2.5/11.1.4.3
366. "-Include rules on development to include and maintain green spaces. 11.1.2.8
367. Limit high density residential development like apartments and condominiums off main traffic routes so all the traffic does not empty into busy highway routes directly. 11.1.2.5
368. Oconee is a great place to live. Careful zoning would be a good step to prevent unplanned growth. 11.1.2.1
369. I don't need to pay for airport expansions for Clemson football
370. We need to keep farm land and farmer but also need future growth in businesses and manufacturing which will help the economy and job force. We have room for both. 11.1.2.2
371. I do not support government subsidies as a buffer for anything but I will support fair trade practices
372. Don't complain about the farmers with your mouth full



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OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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

SURVEY RESULTS

During the comprehensive plan creation process a series of inserts or “tabs” were created by combining information from the current comprehensive plan and drafts of the new plan. These tabs had snapshots of information, narratives, and a survey dealing with individual elements of the comprehensive plan. The Upstate Journal was hired to do the layout and distribution of the tabs. In total five tabs were created by Planning staff and the Journal and delivered to ~10,000 addresses County-wide. Additional copies were available at the County offices and libraries with individual Planning Commission members placing the tabs at various public spots throughout the County. A total of 1194 surveys were filled out and returned via online portal, mail, or dropped-off at various spots throughout the County. While this was not a statistically-relevant survey the following information are the survey results. These have been and will be utilized to drive conversations and policy related to the comprehensive plan process.

Respondent information

People from 41 zip codes responded

All Oconee zip codes and zip codes from:

- Washington State
- California
- Minnesota
- Indiana
- North Carolina
- Virginia
- New York
- And throughout South Carolina

Total number of respondents 1194



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future

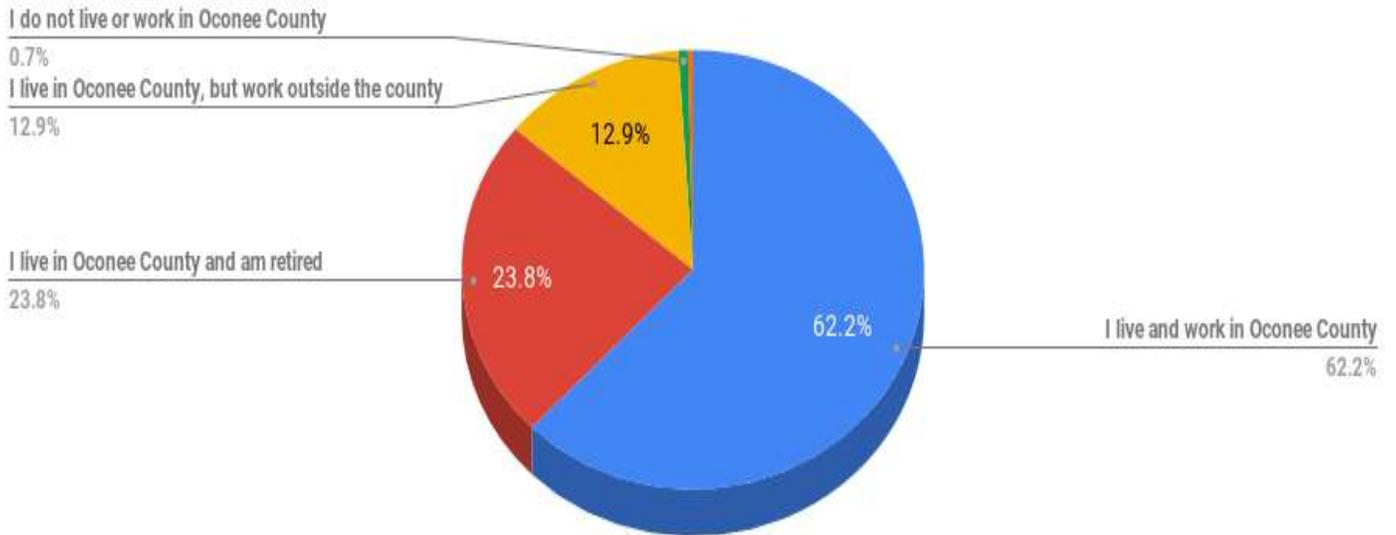
March 2019: Population & Housing

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

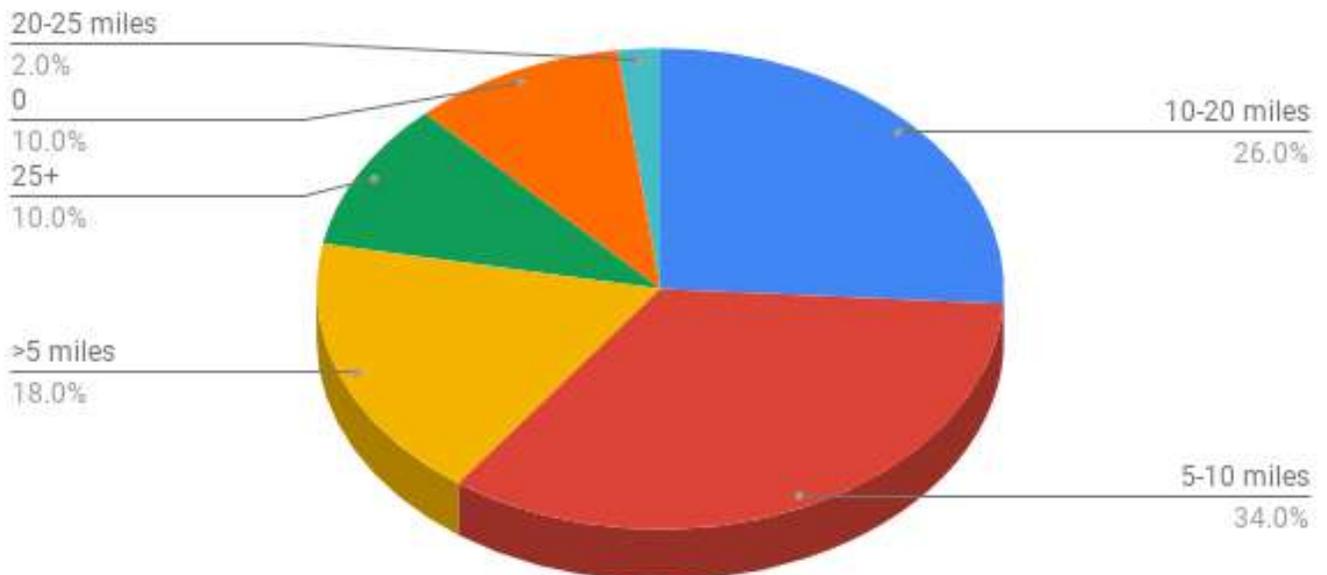
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

228

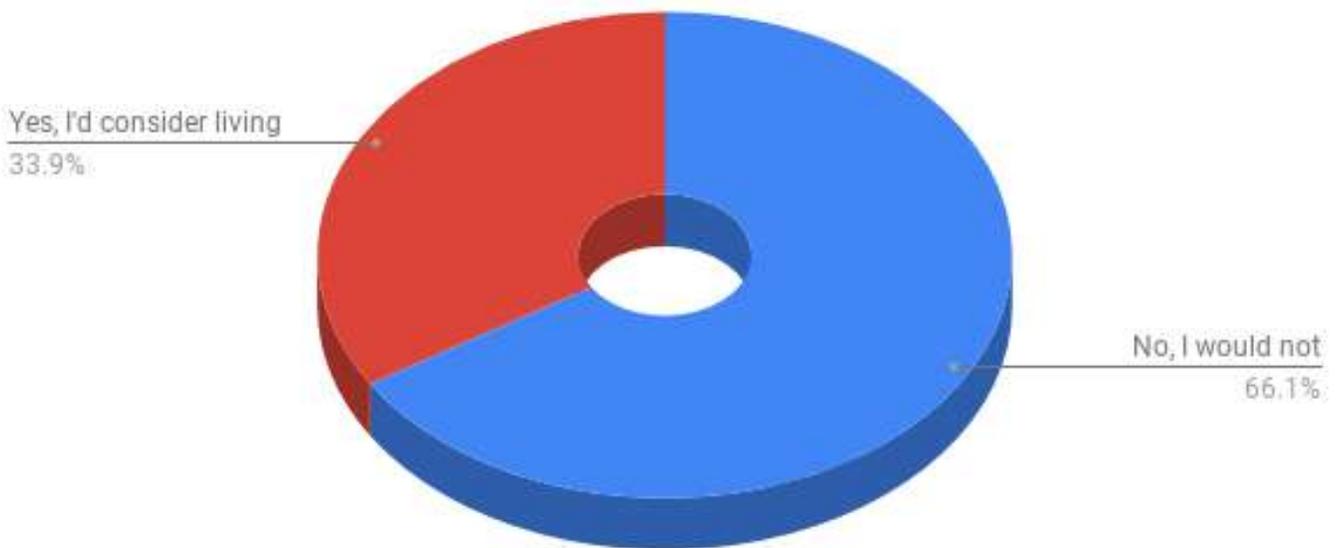
Live and work status



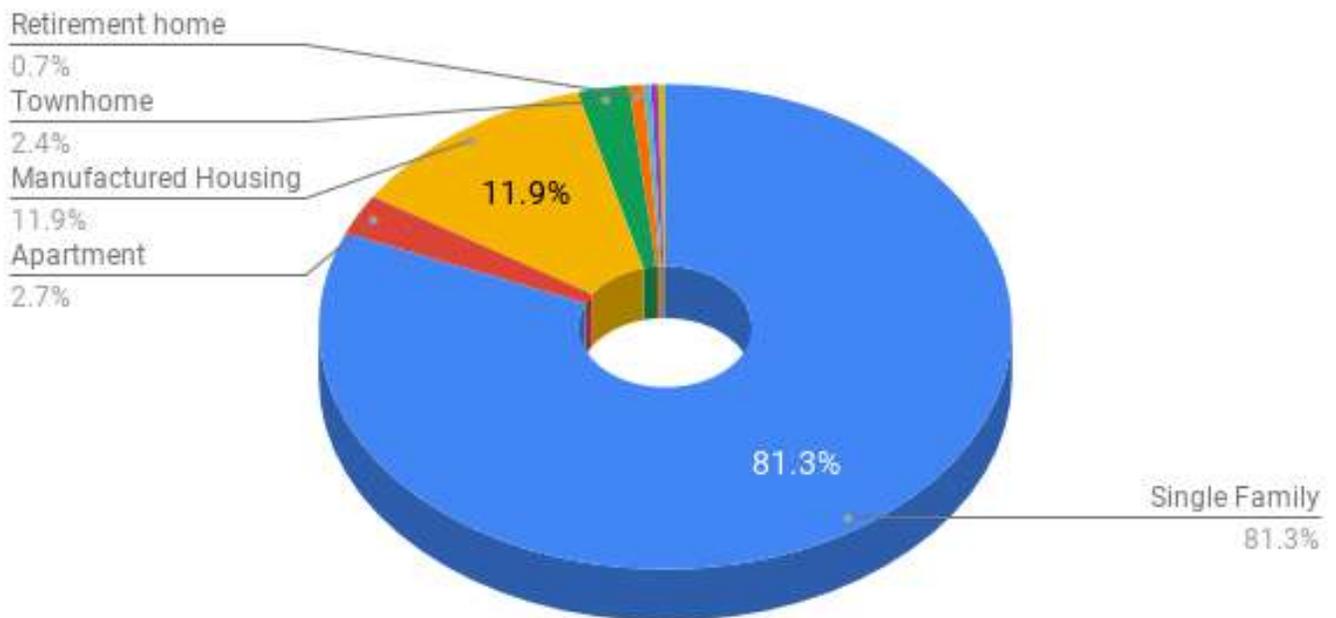
How far do you live from your workplace?



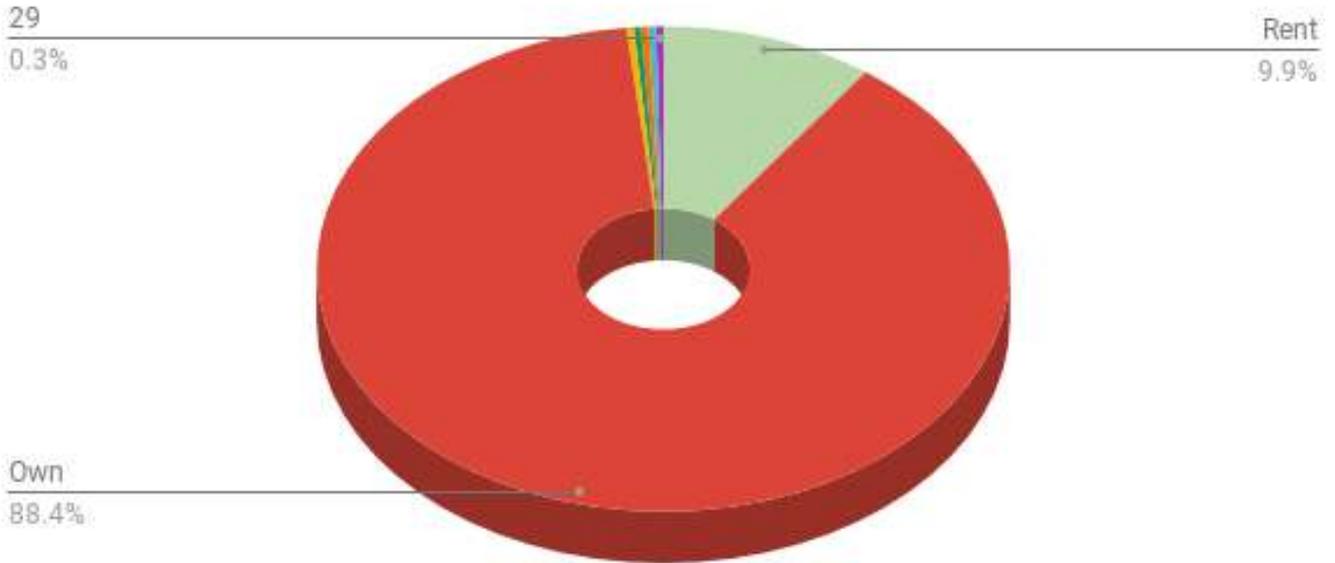
Would you consider living in a downtown area?



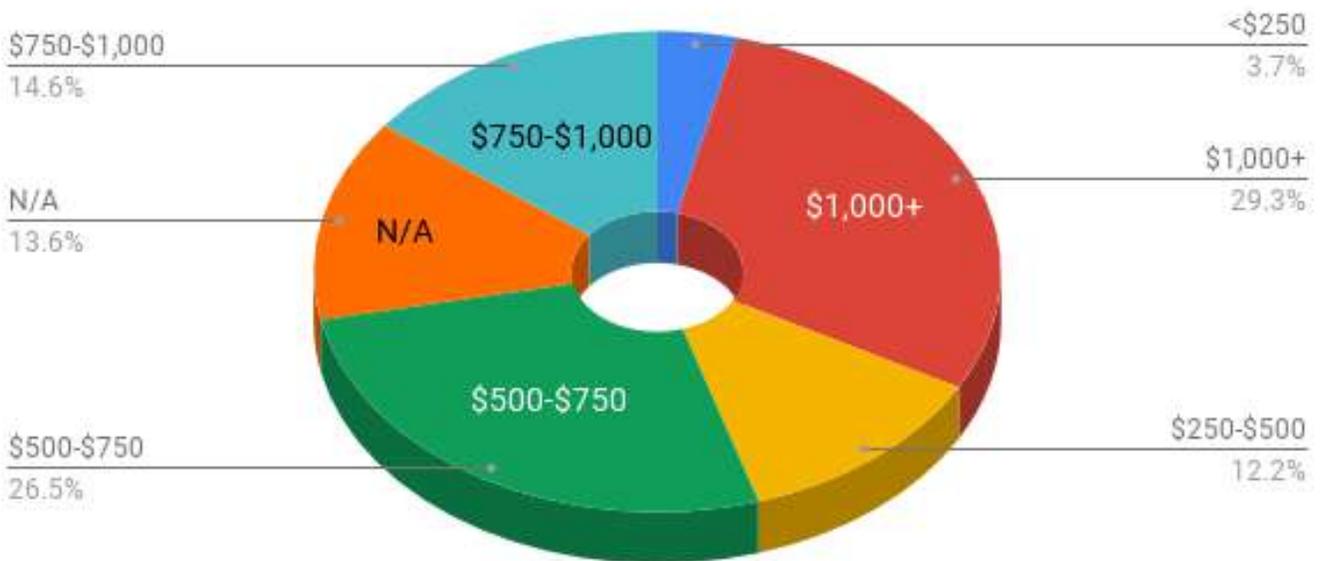
What type of housing do you live in?



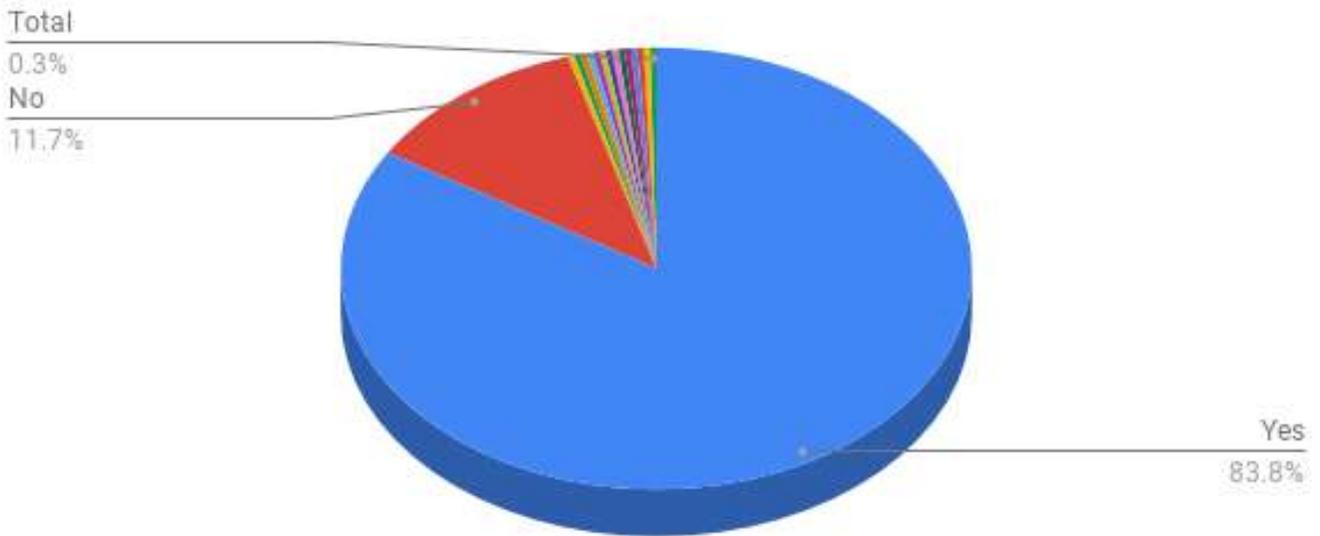
Do you own or rent your home?



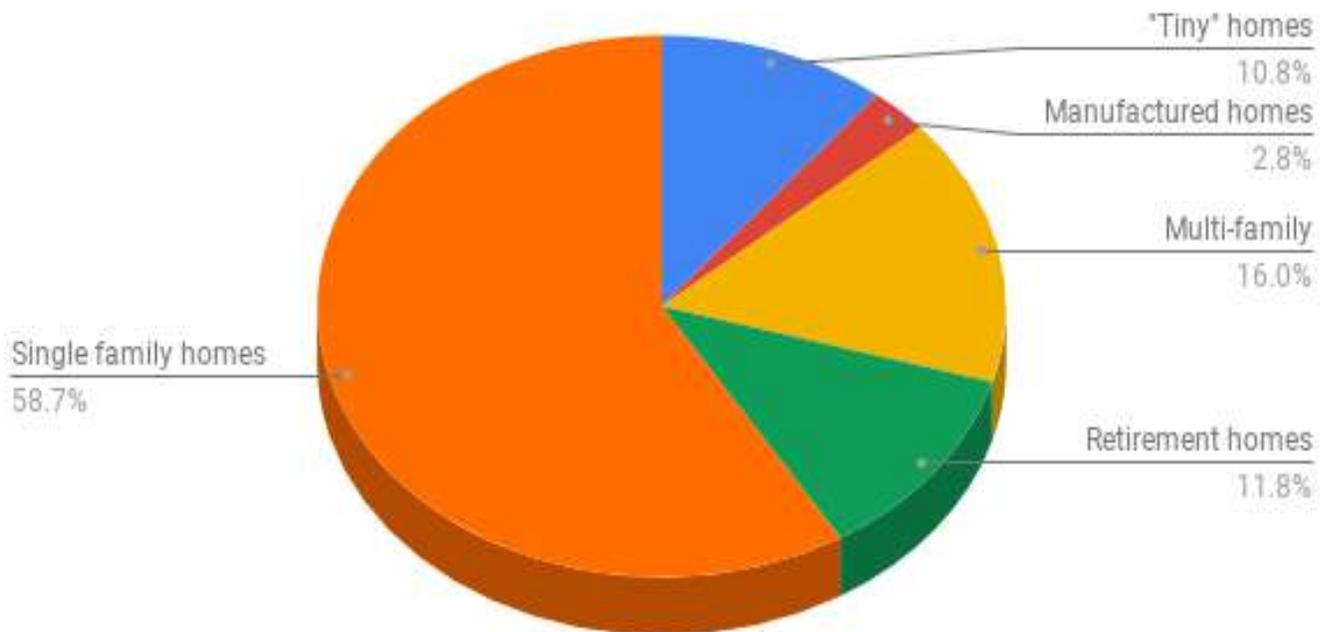
What monthly payment can you afford for housing?



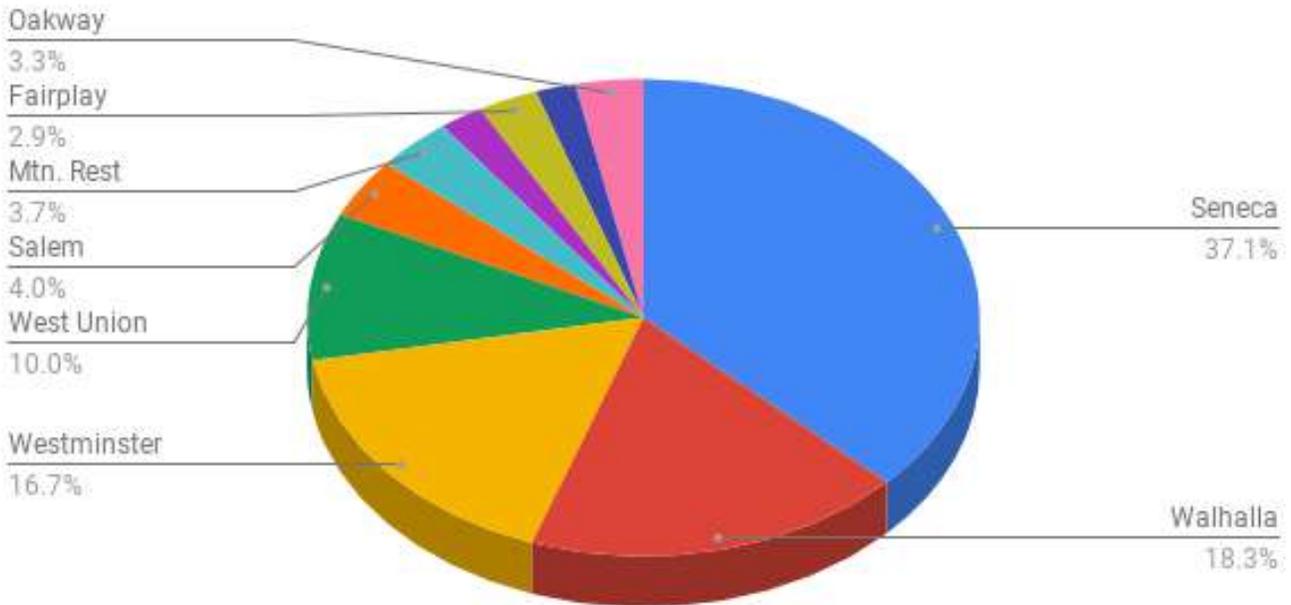
Do you think more affordable housing is needed in Oconee County?



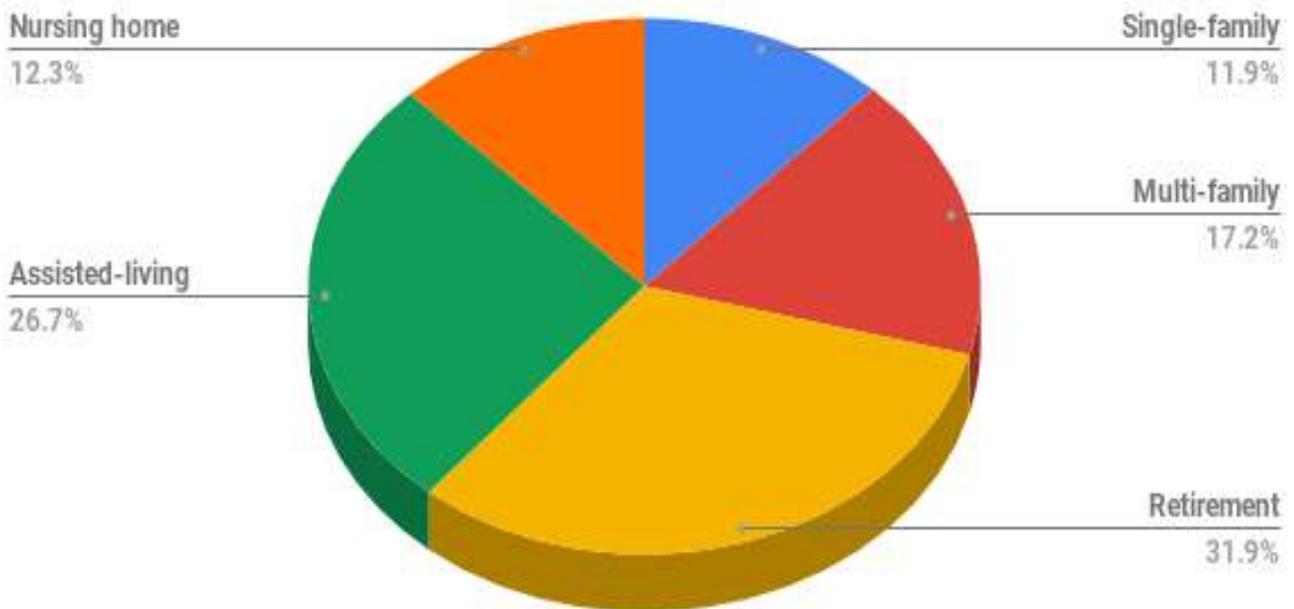
What type of housing is most needed in Oconee County?



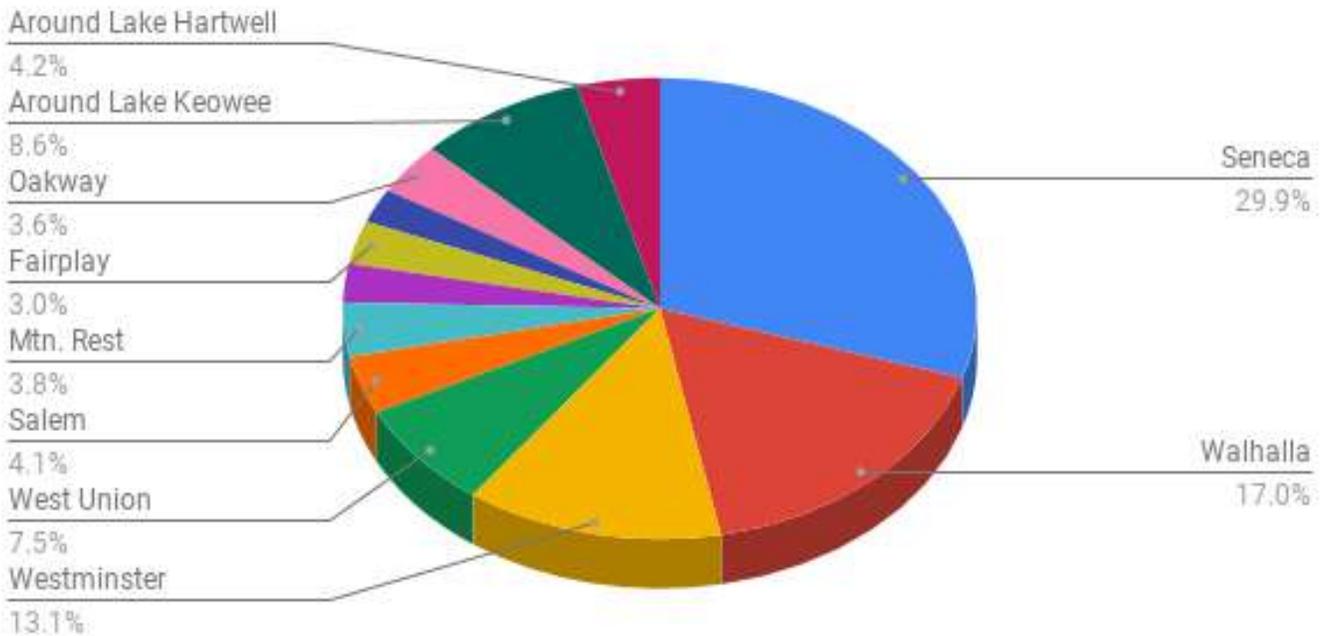
Where do you think most future HOUSING growth will occur?



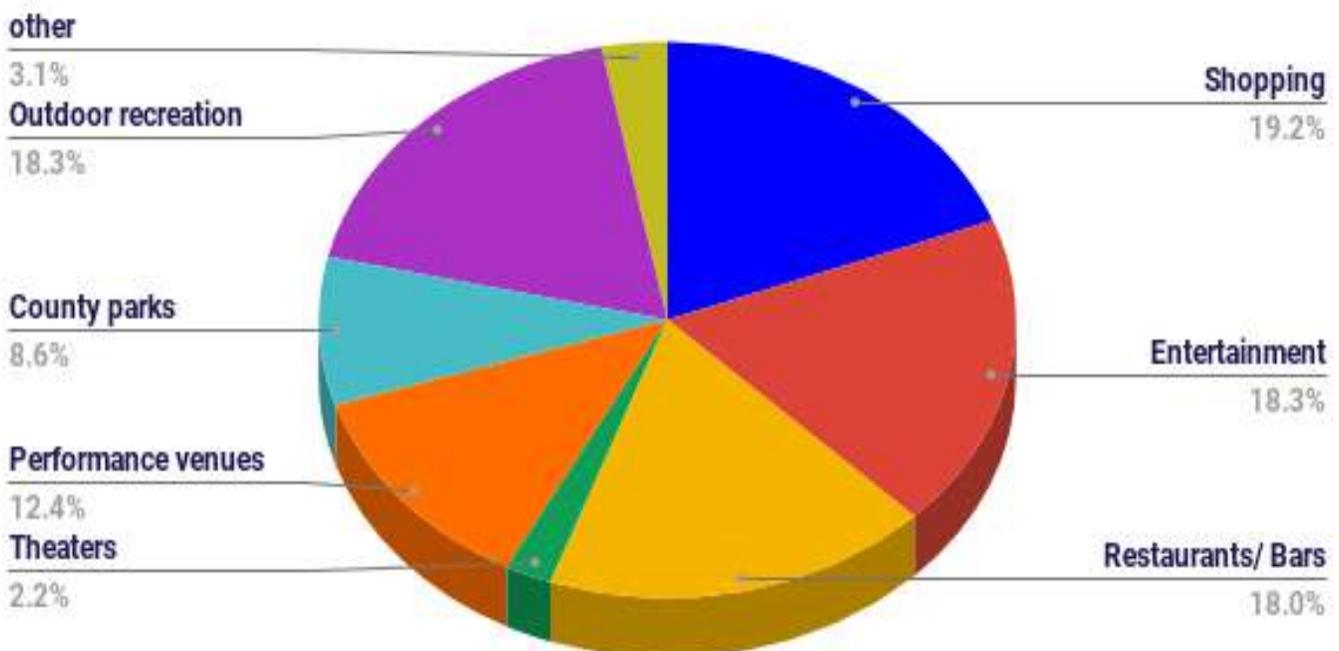
Senior housing types needed



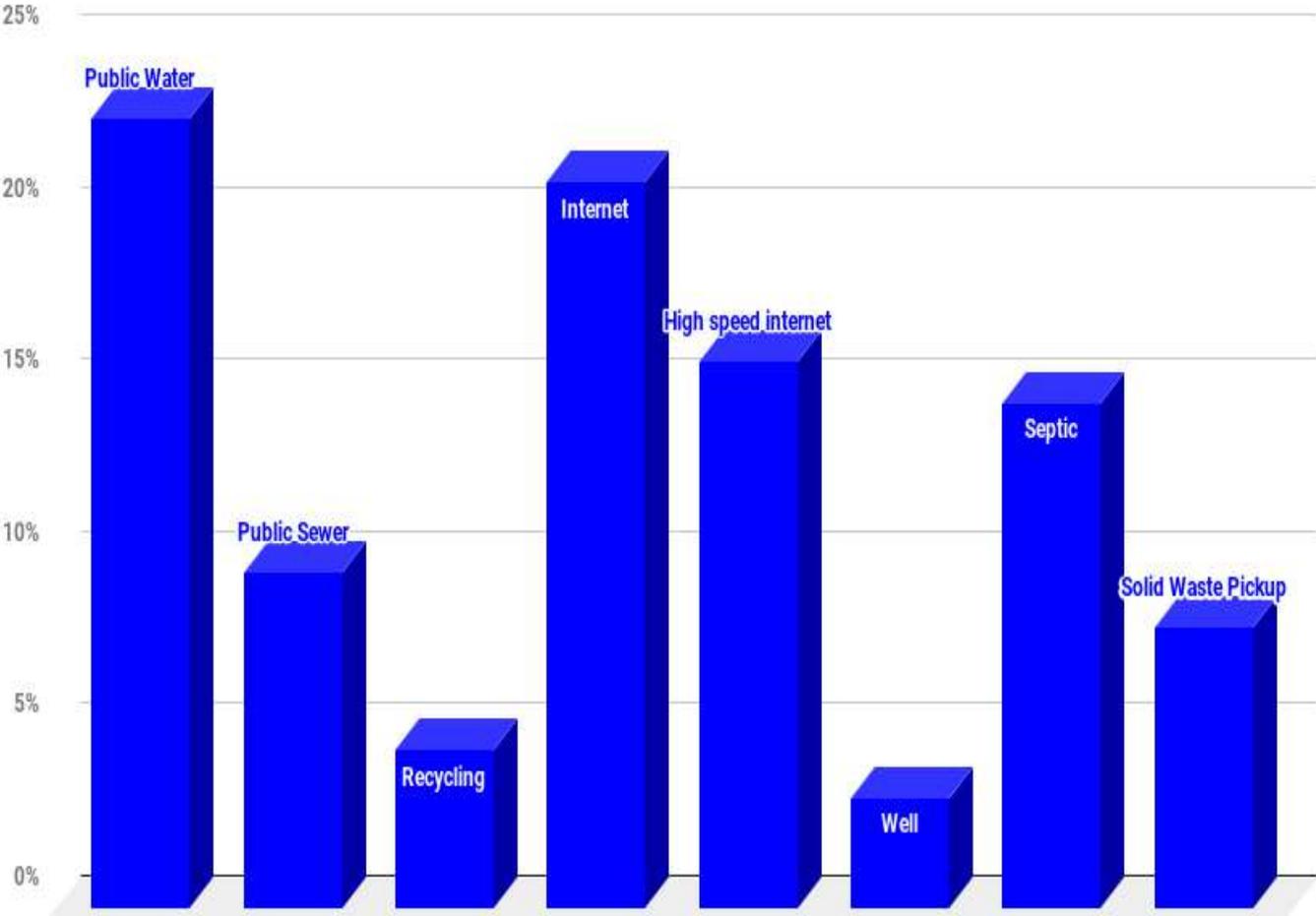
Where do you think additional housing that has facilities for an aging population, should be located?



Types of social facilities to attract and retain people



What utilities are available at your home?





YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future

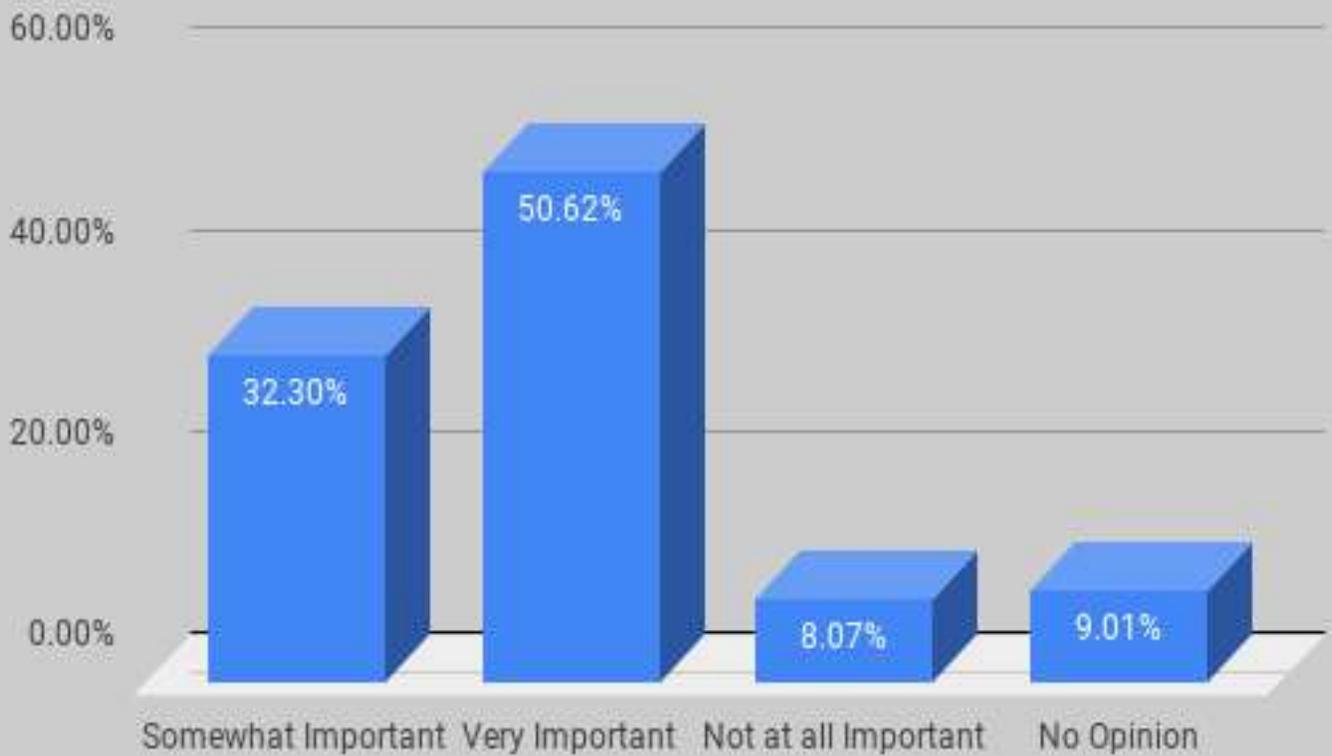
April 2019: Natural Resources & Community Facilities

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

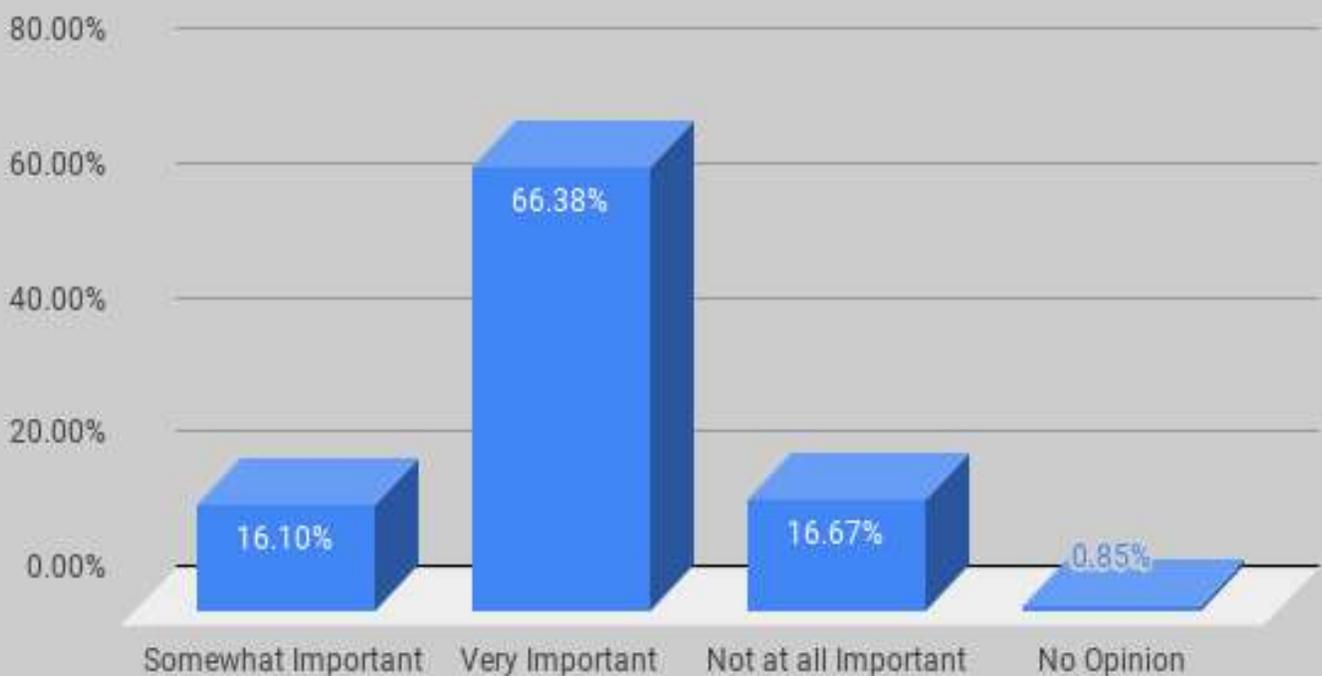
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

297

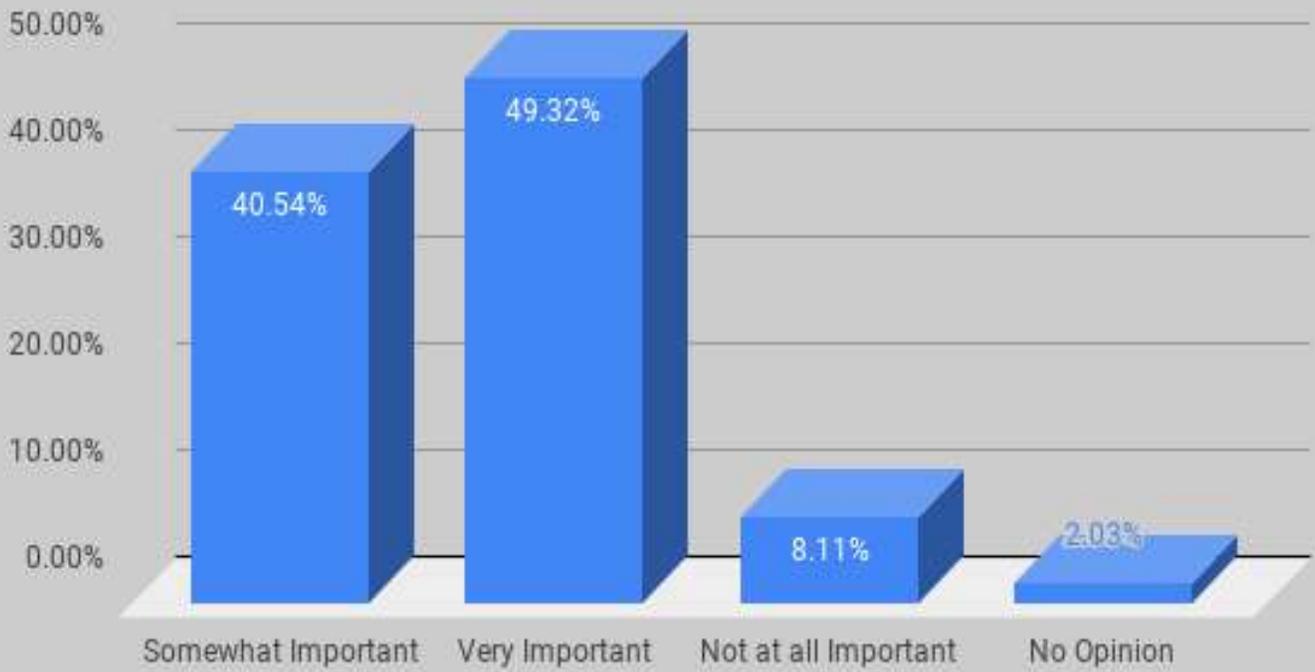
How important is expanding/developing new parks?



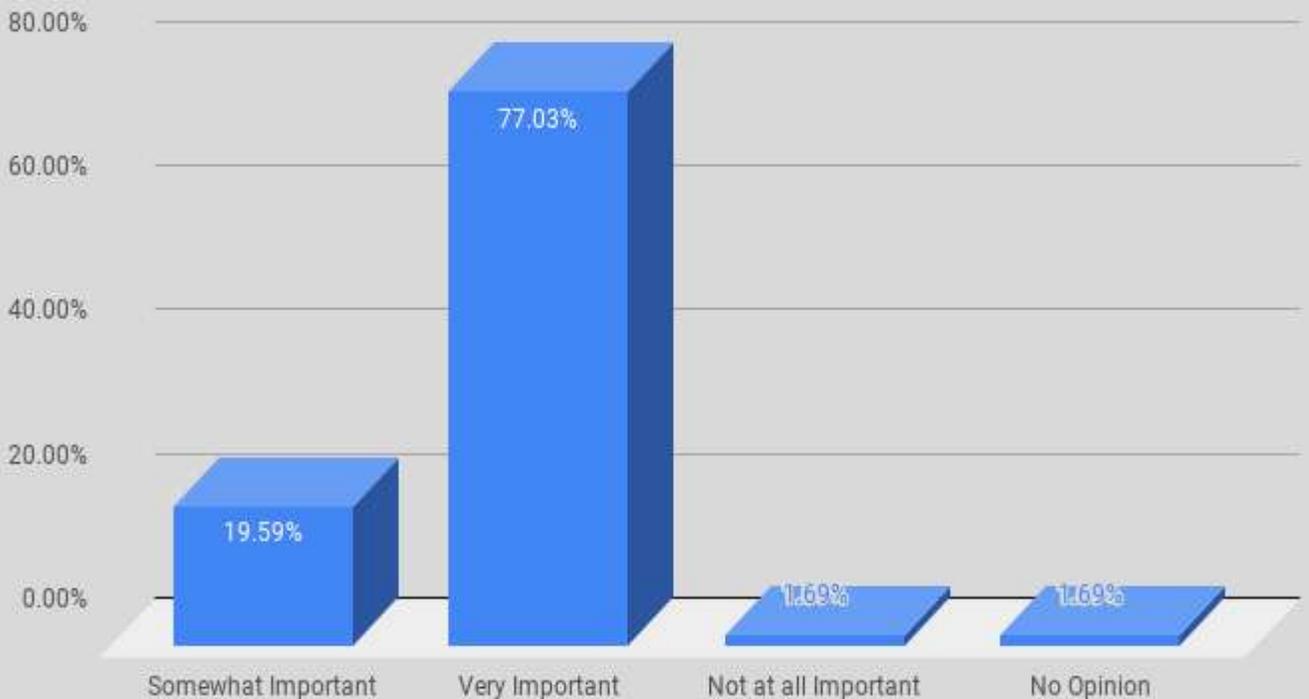
How important is improving the quality of existing parks/recreation?



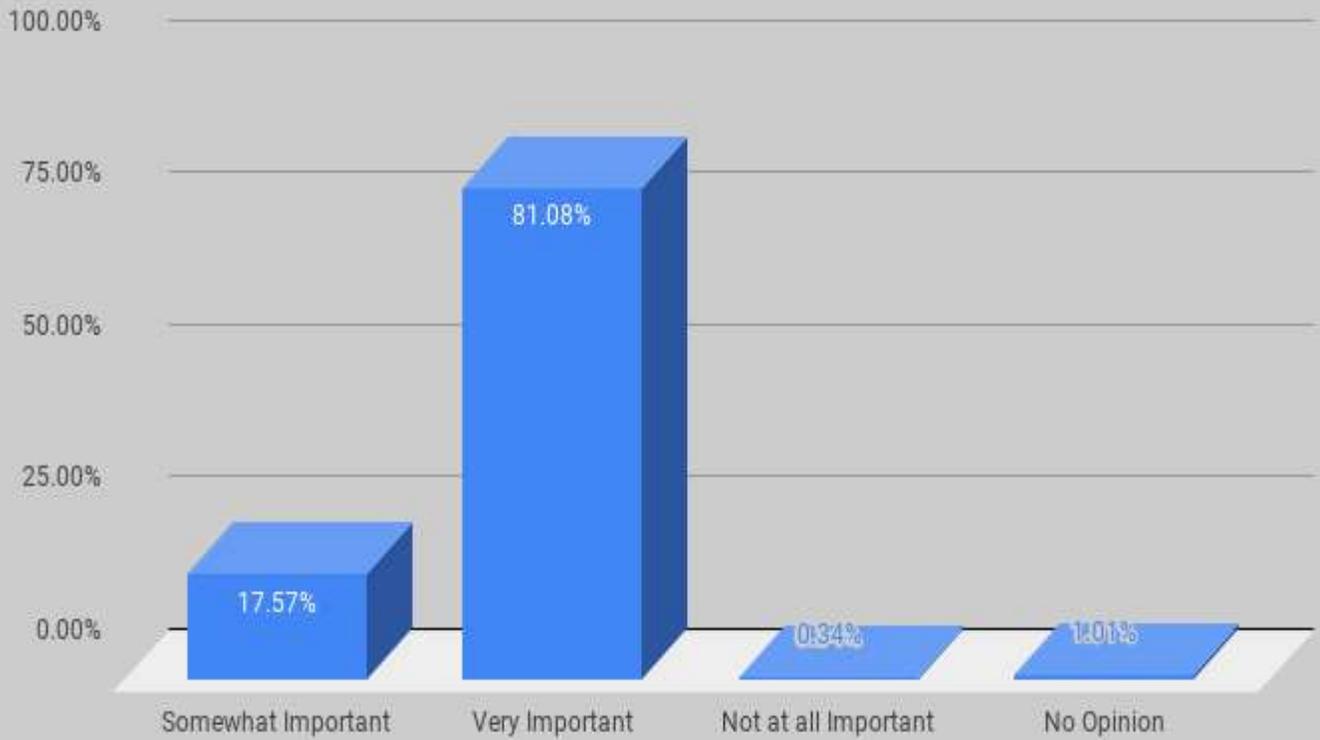
How important is growing a network of greenways/bike trails?



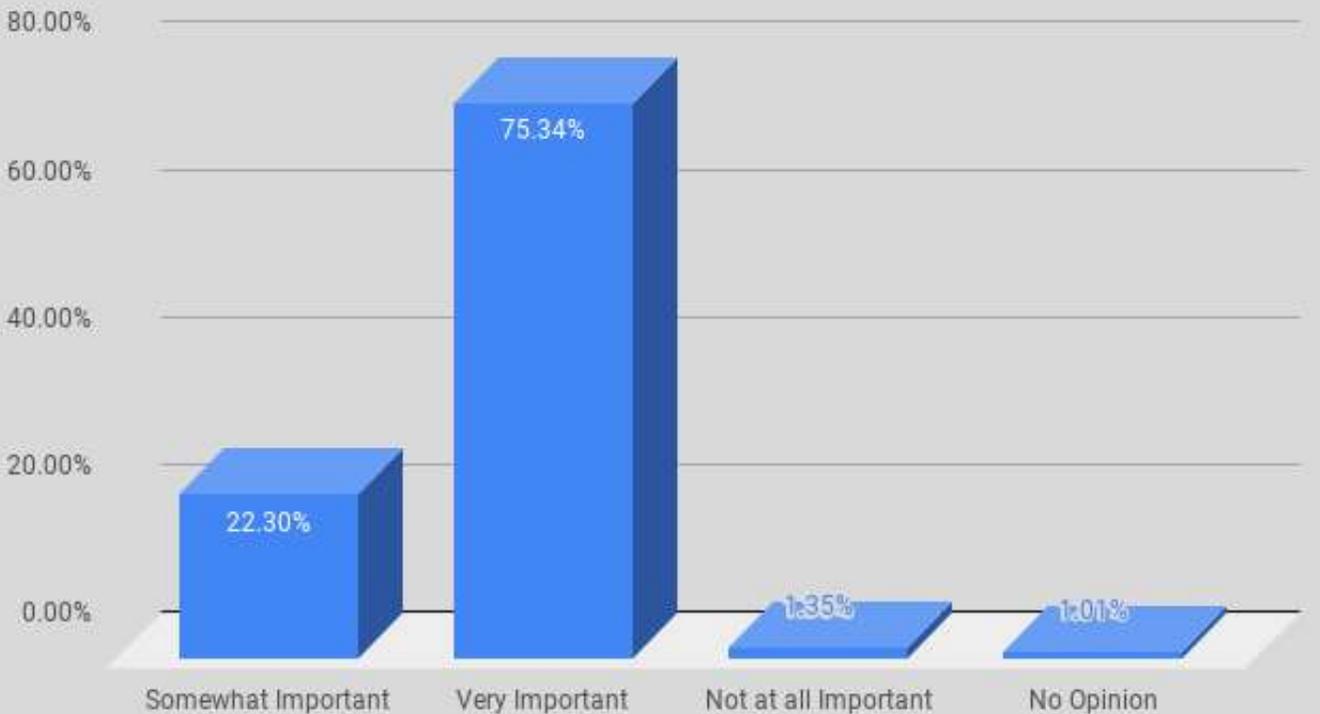
How important is promoting development that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns?



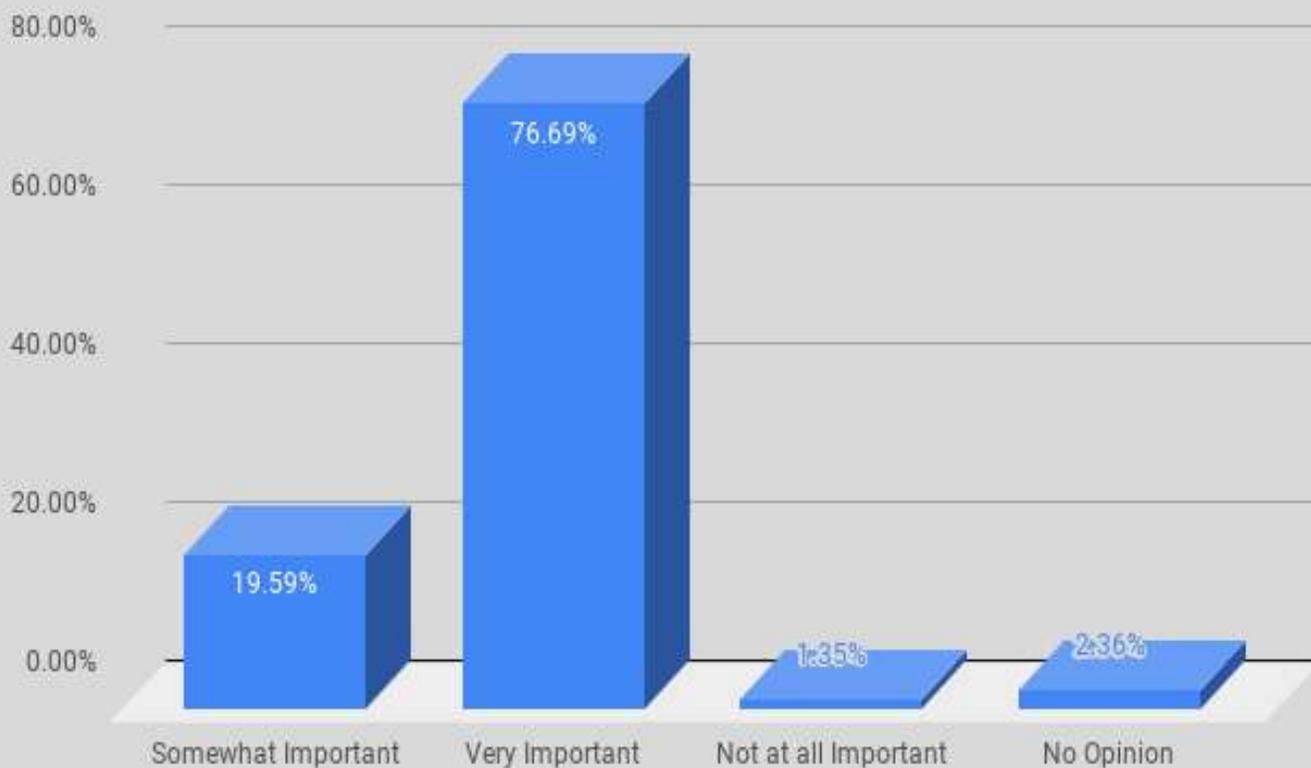
How important is preserving or enhancing access to parks and natural environments?



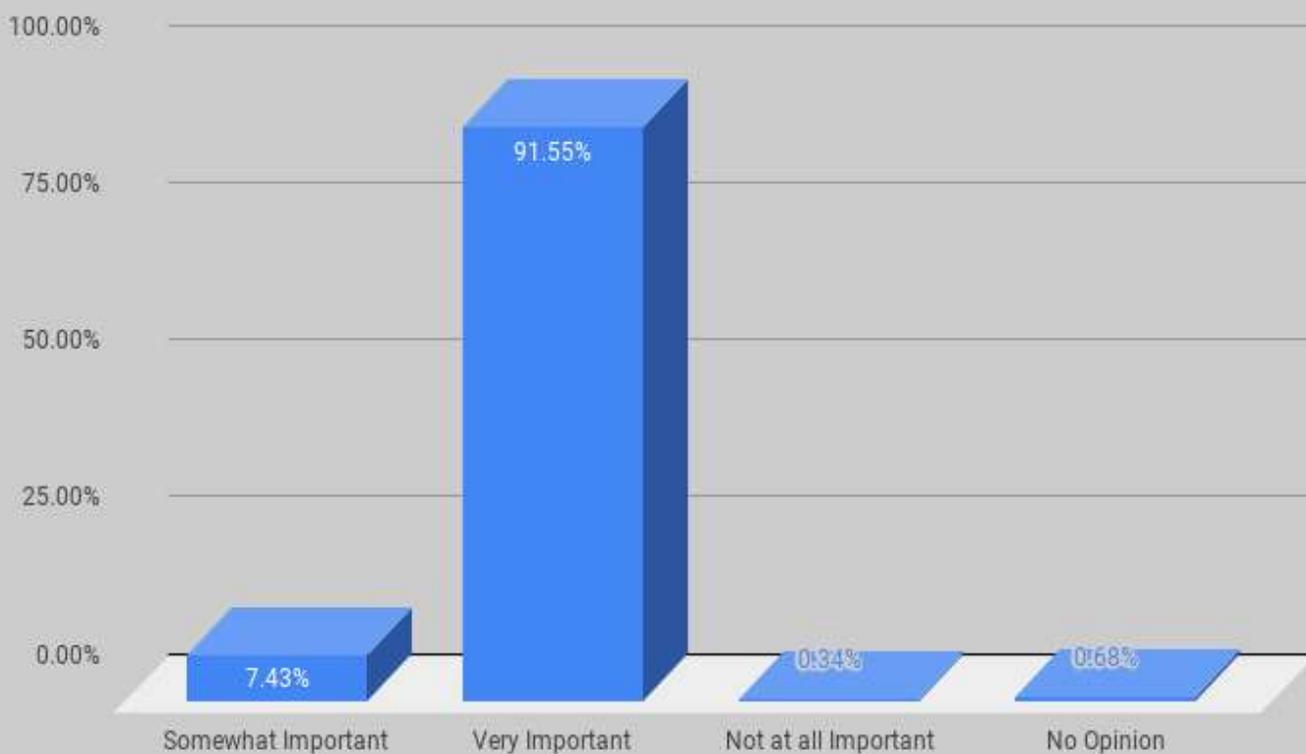
How important is preservation of farmland?



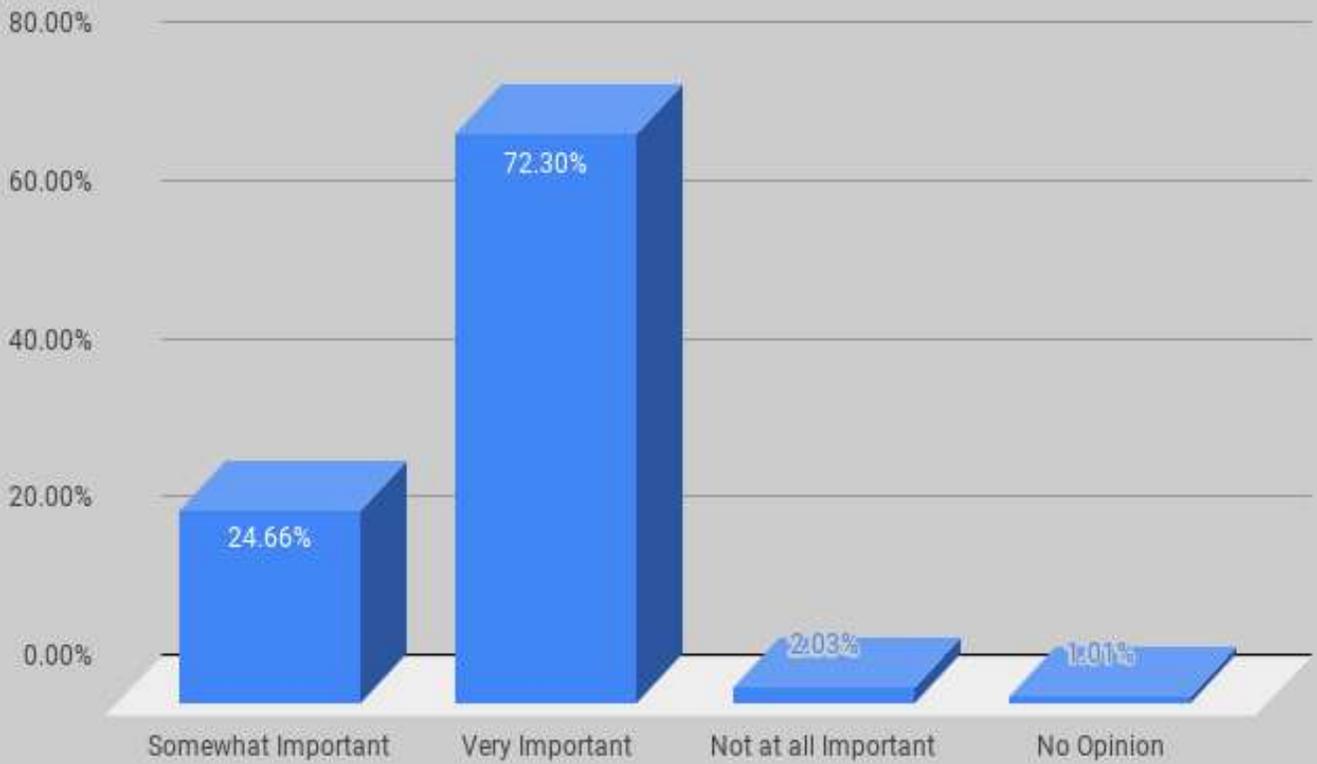
How important is preservation of soils?



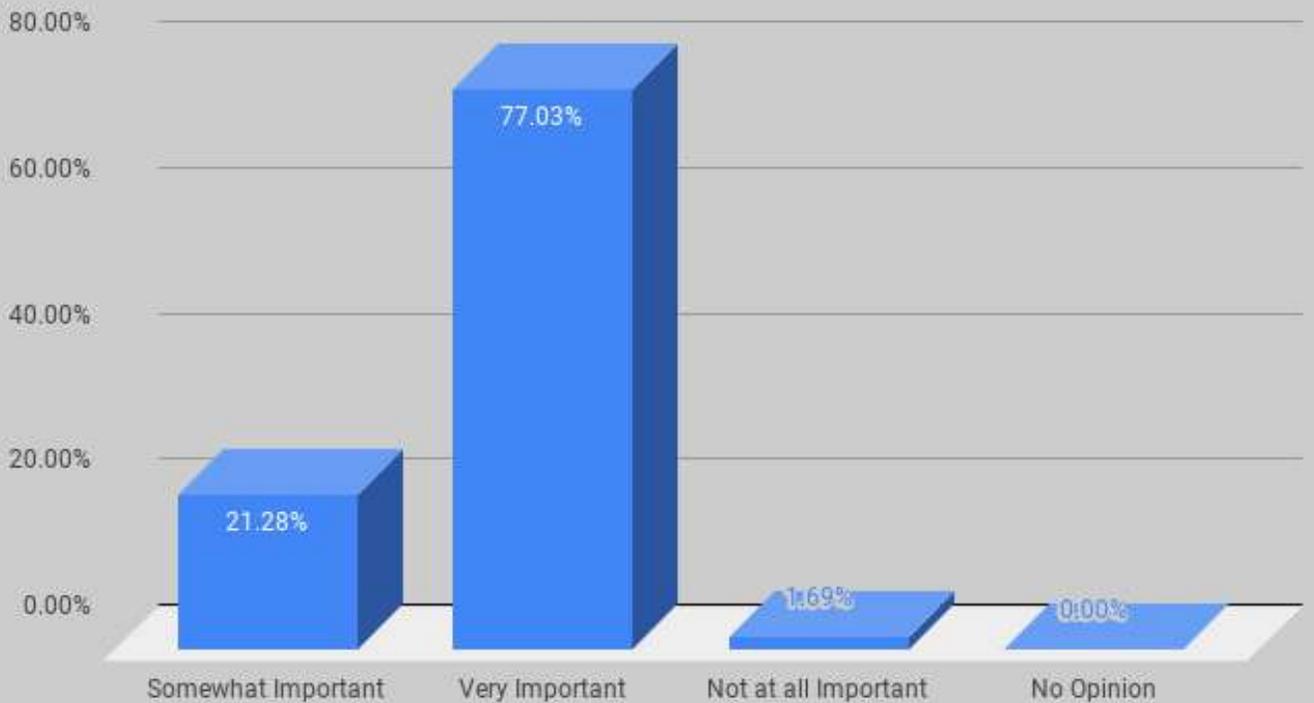
How important is preservation of lakes/waterways?



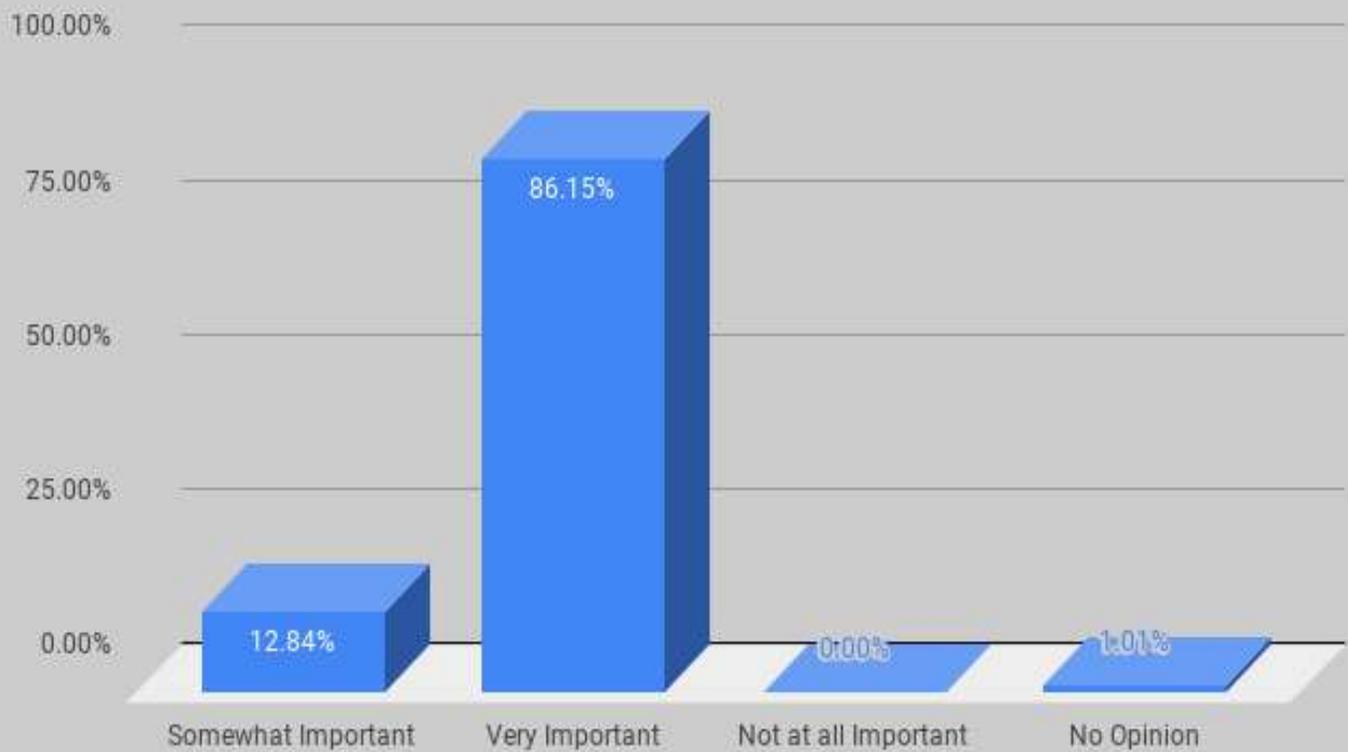
How important is preservation of Historic structures/places?



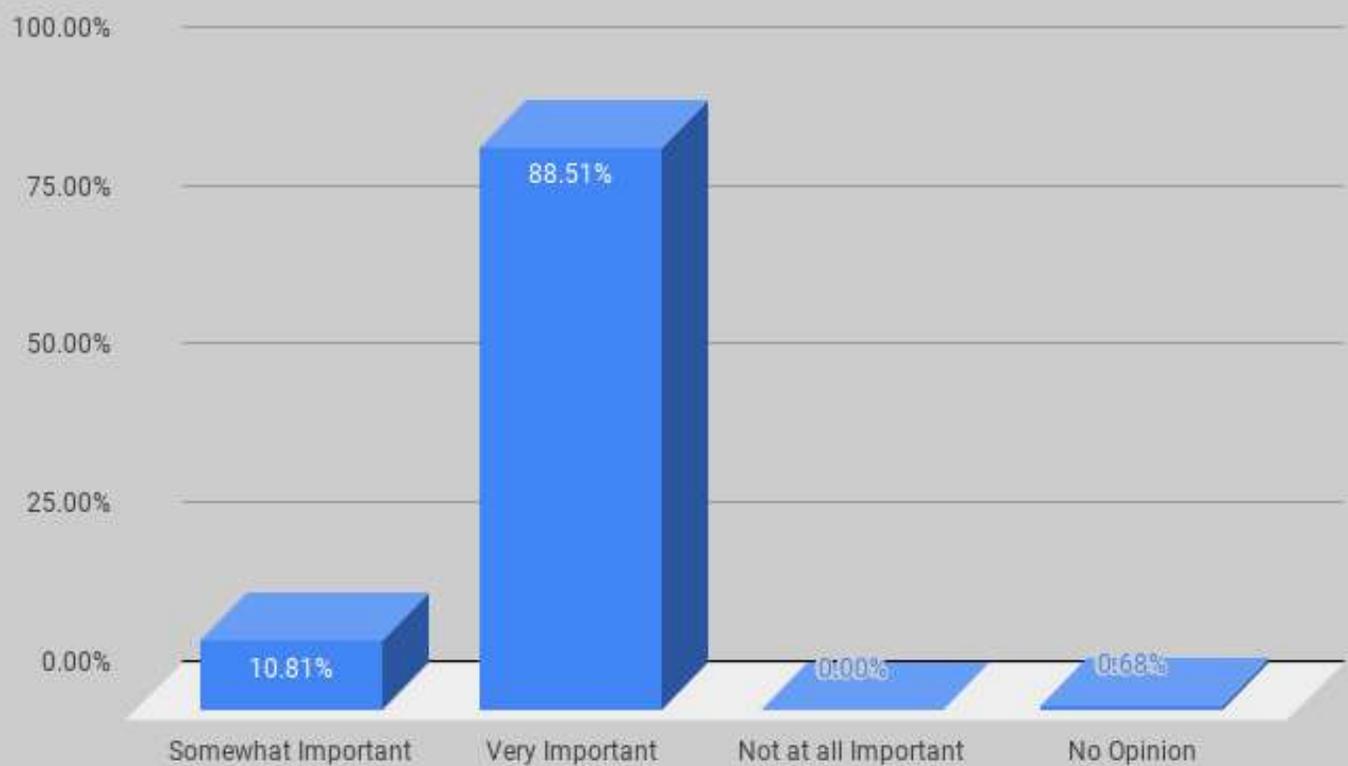
How important is preservation of scenic views?



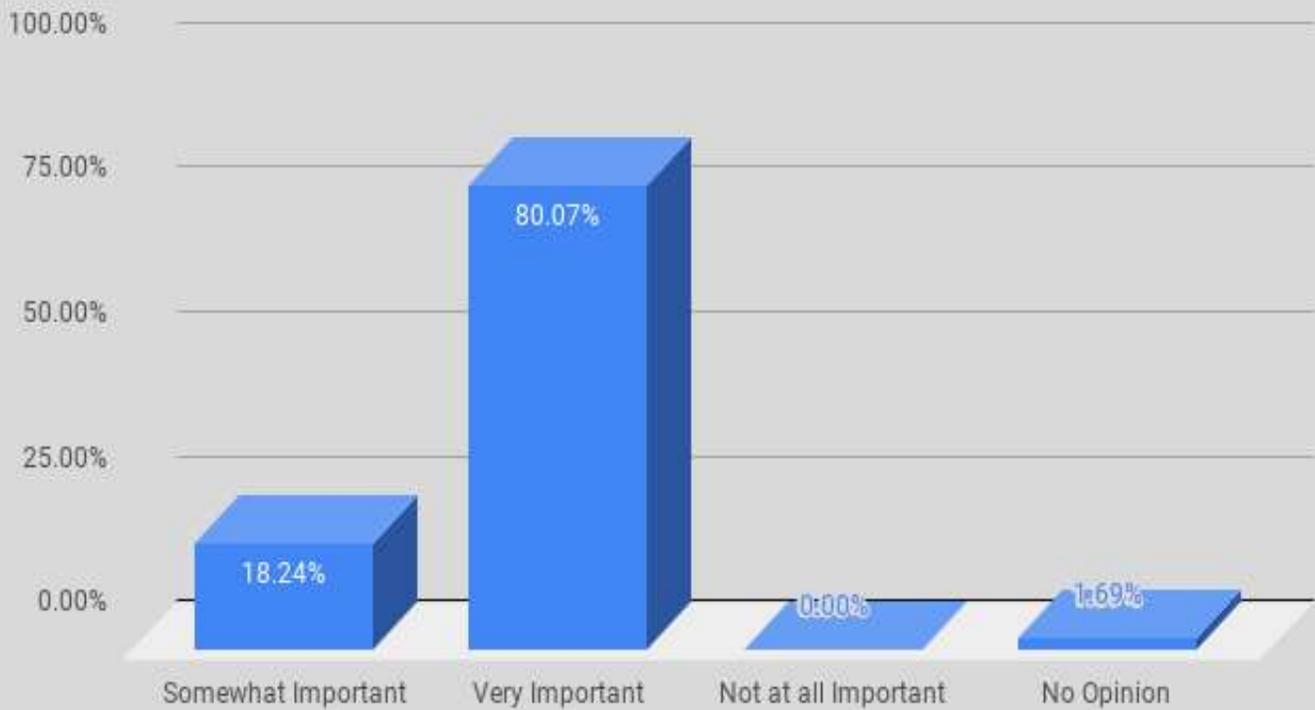
How important is preservation of wildlife?



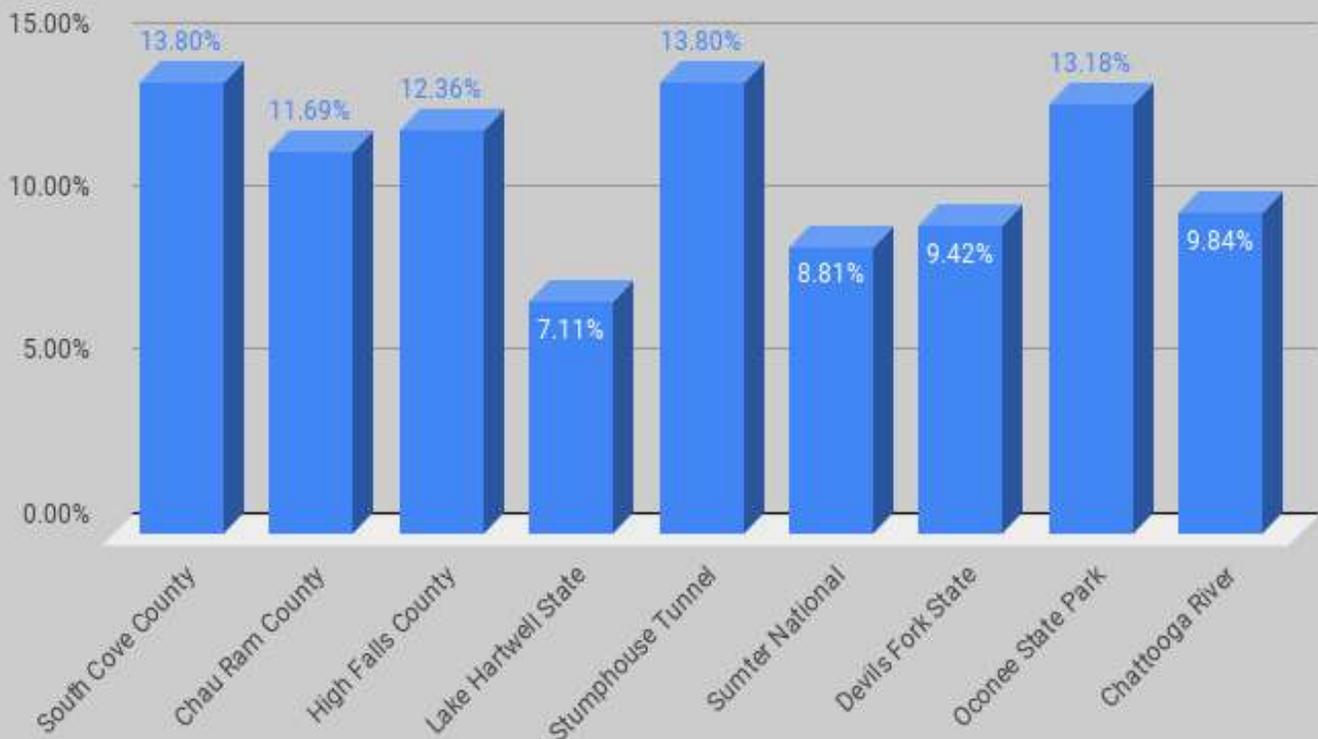
How important is preservation of forests/wilderness areas?



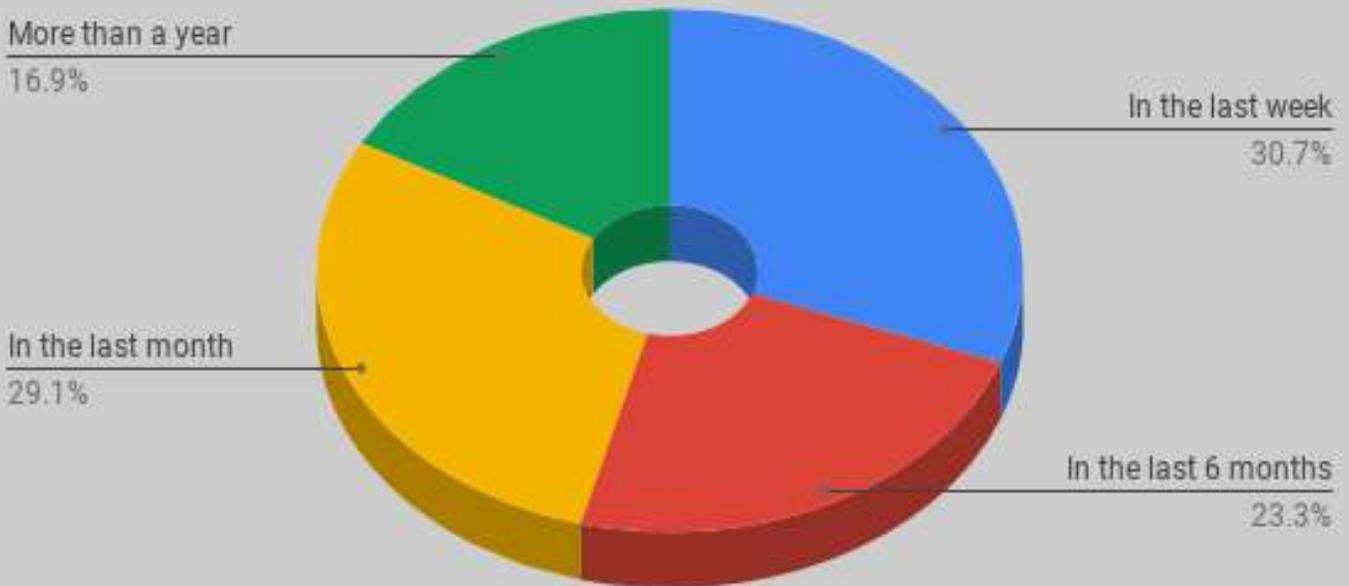
How important is mitigating the impact of drought, flooding, landslides and other environmental hazards?



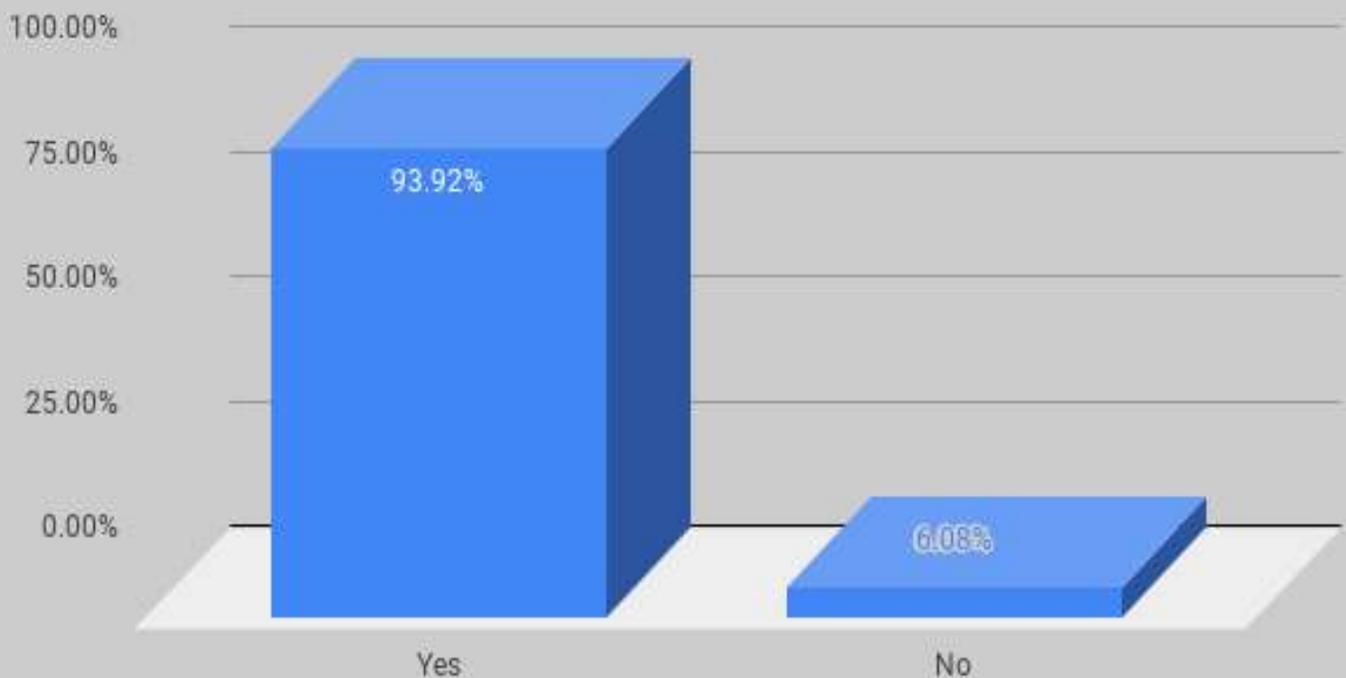
Have you visited any of the following?



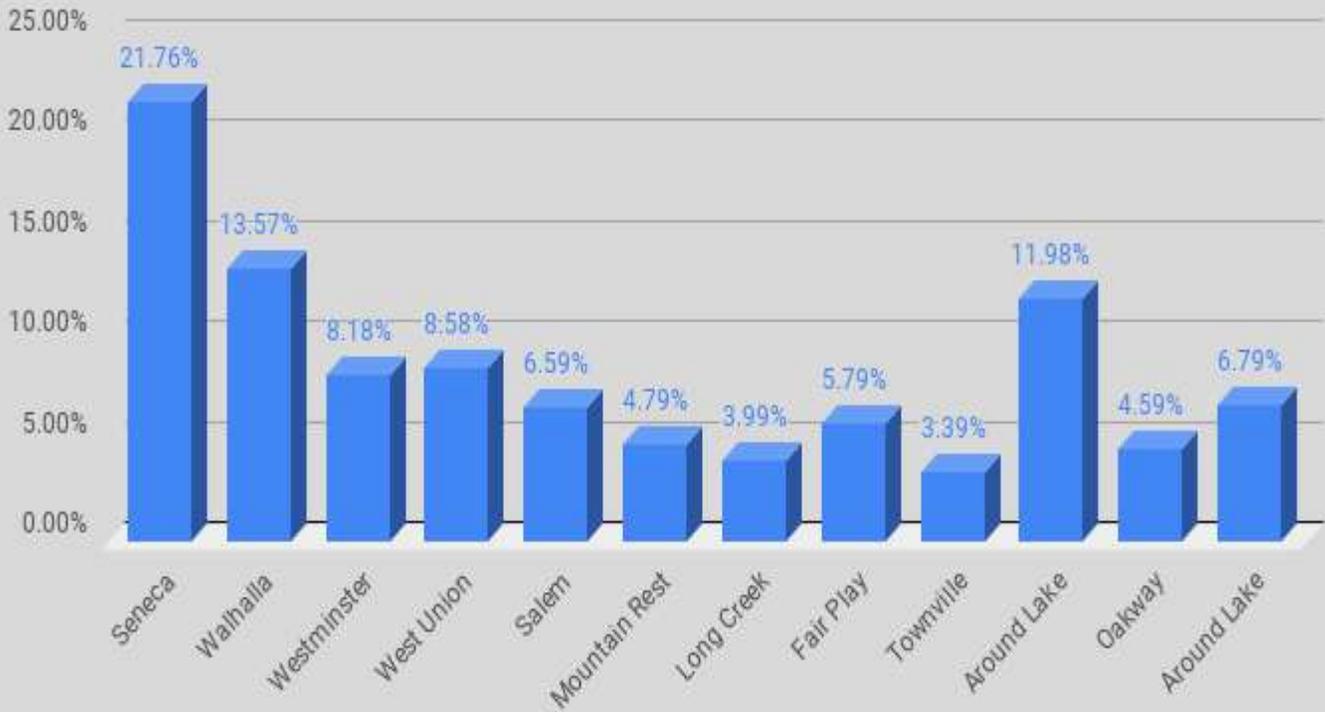
When did you last visit a county or state park?



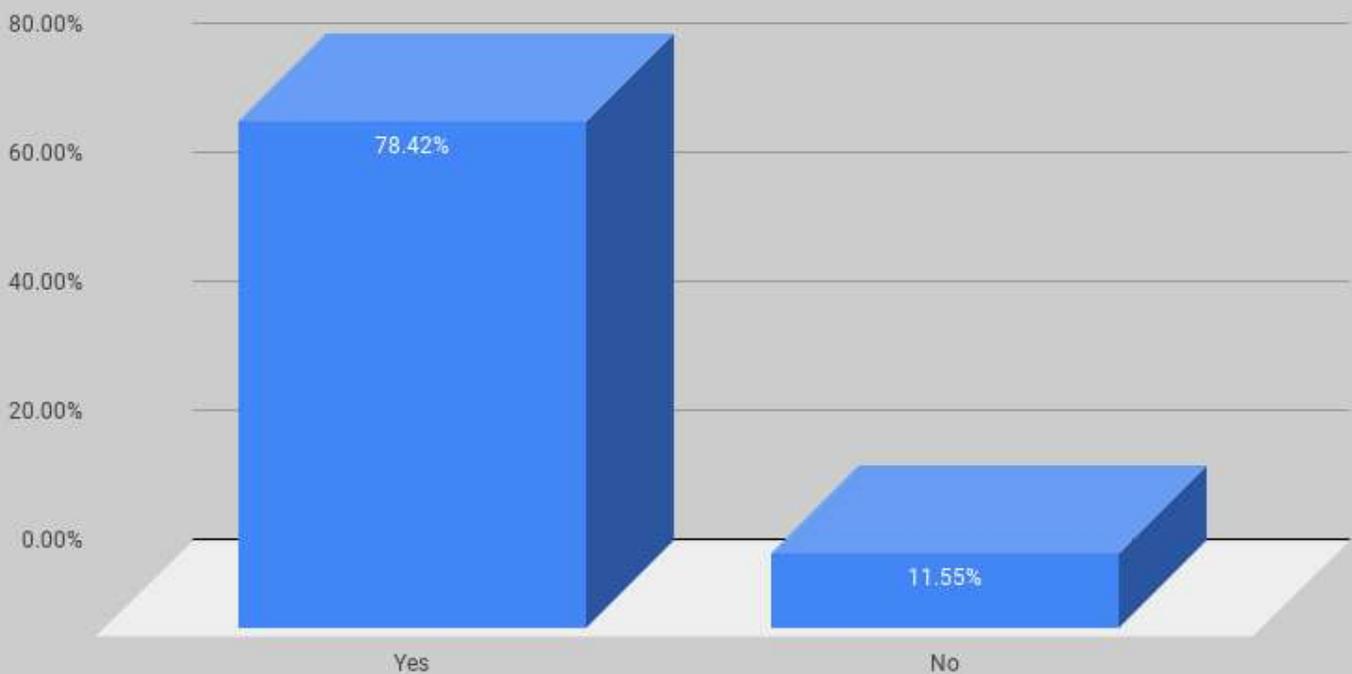
Do you have convenient access to recreation facilities, including access to natural places?



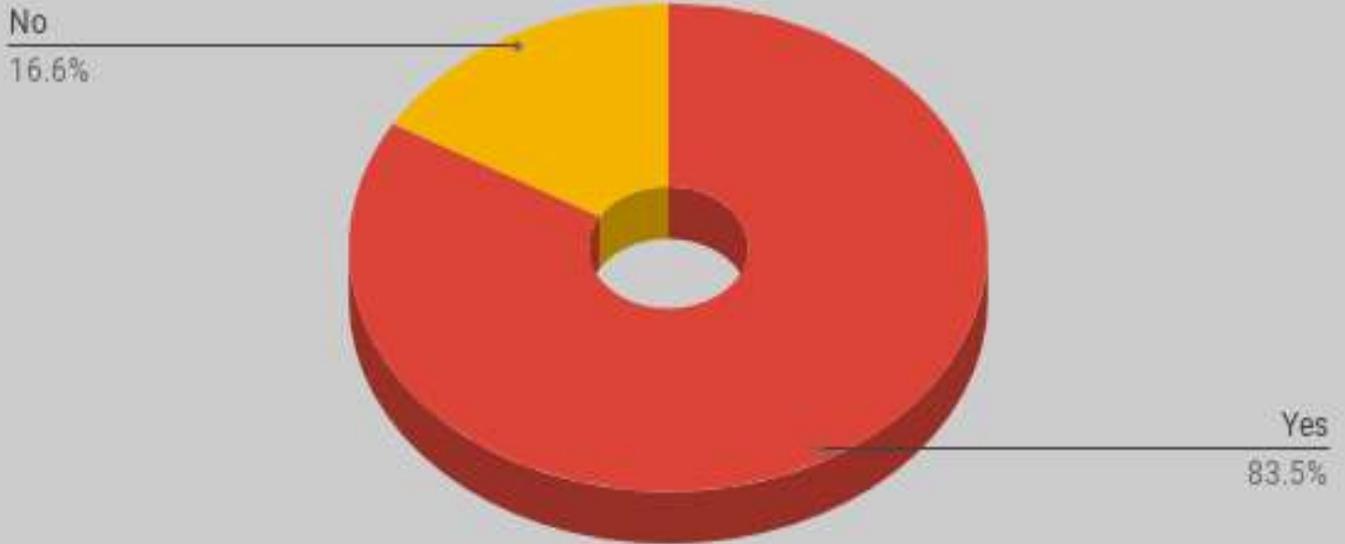
Where would you like to see more household garbage/recycling centers located?



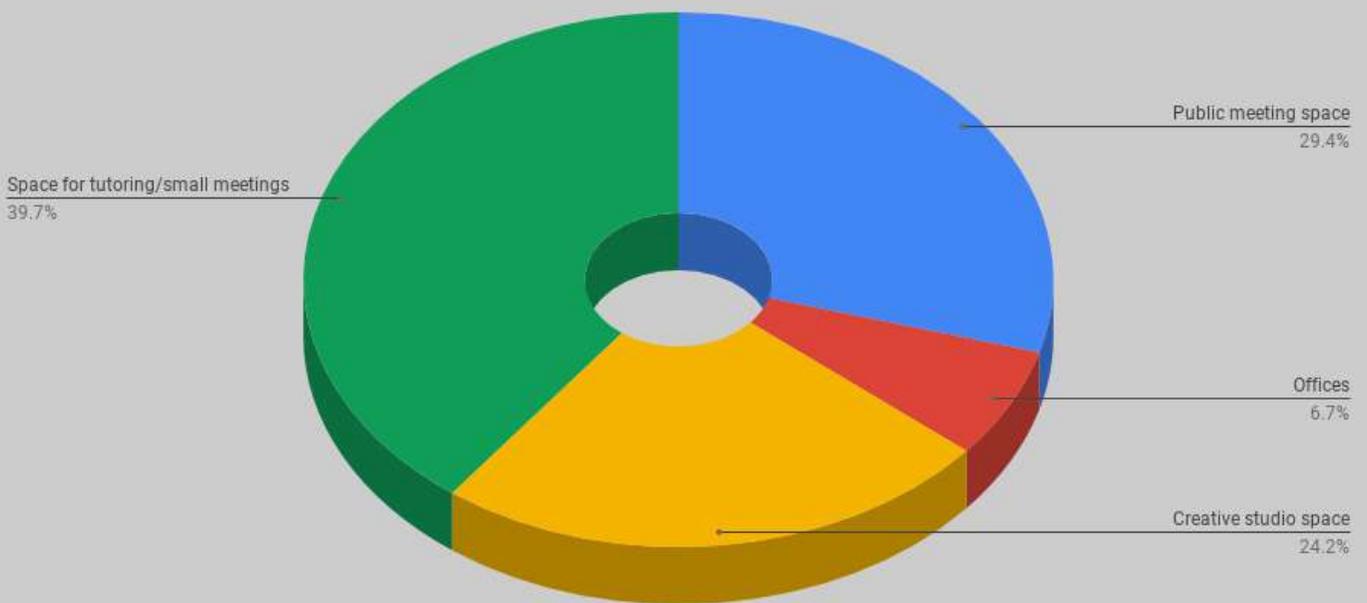
Would you support additional protections for the land around bodies of water to help mitigate pollution, flooding and erosion?



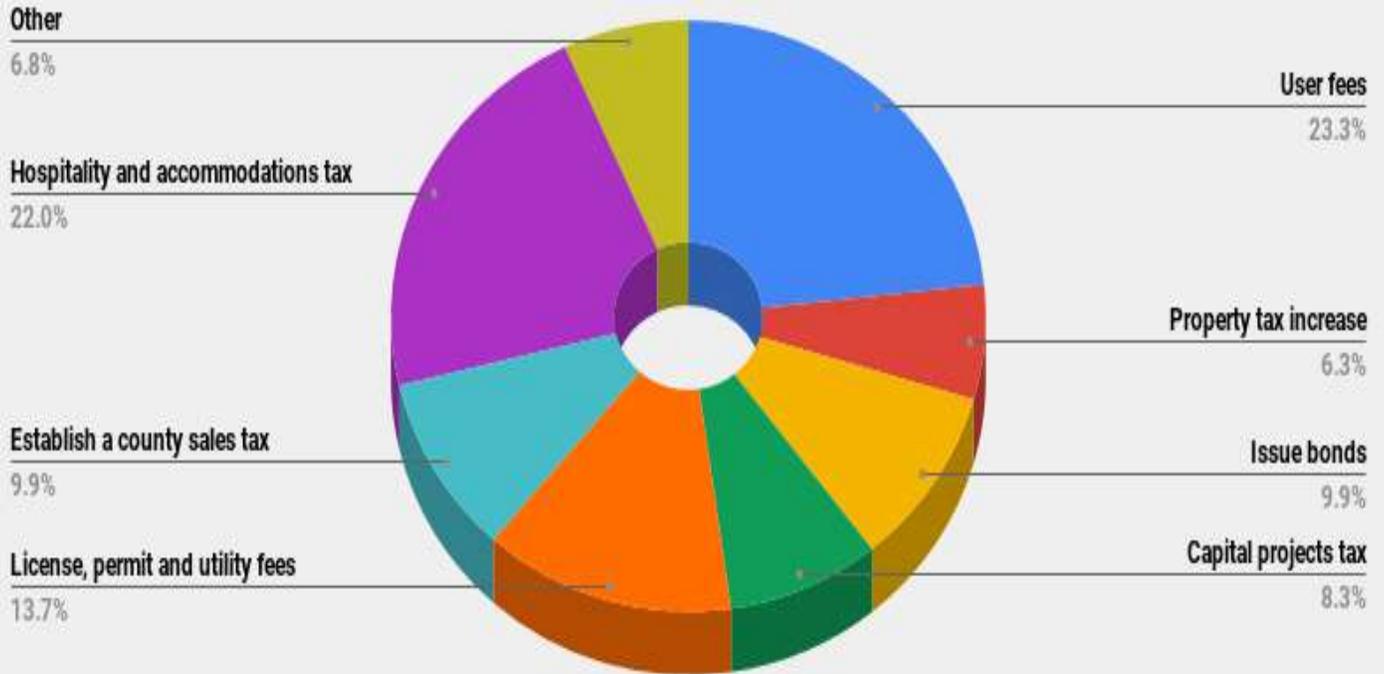
Do the county's natural resources play a part in why you live, work or play in the area?



What feaures would you like to see added to the libraries?



Addressing some of the issues identified in this survey may require additional revenue. What would be your first choice to find funding?



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future



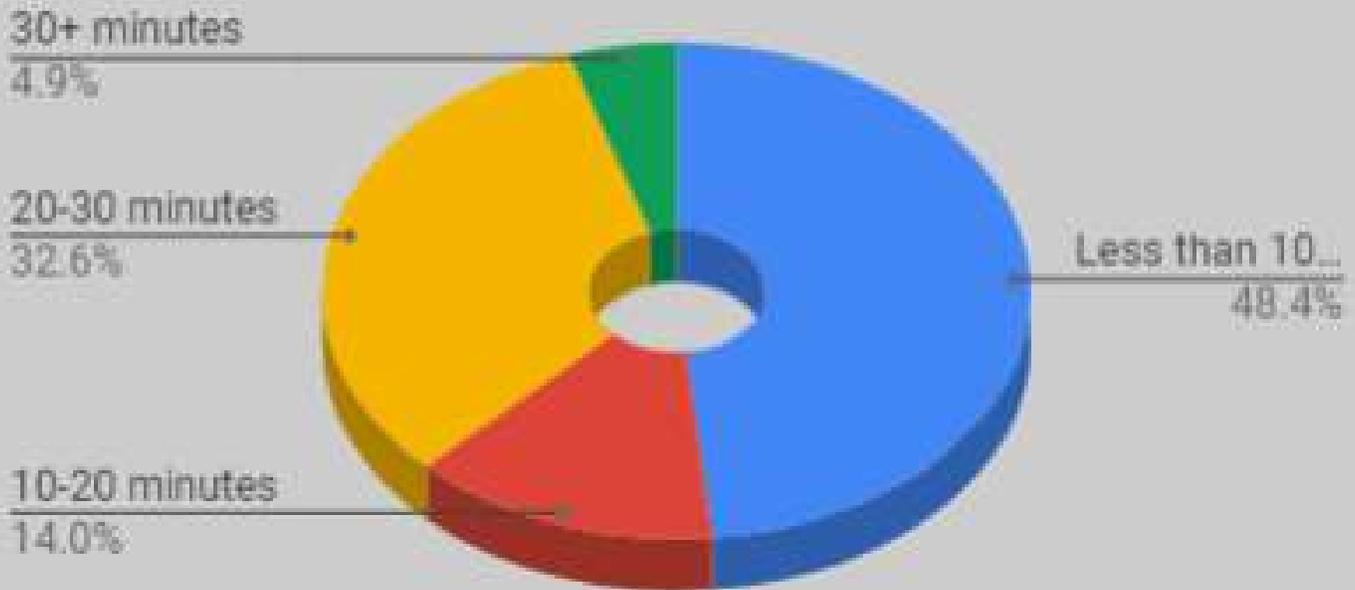
May 2019: Cultural Resources & Transportation

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

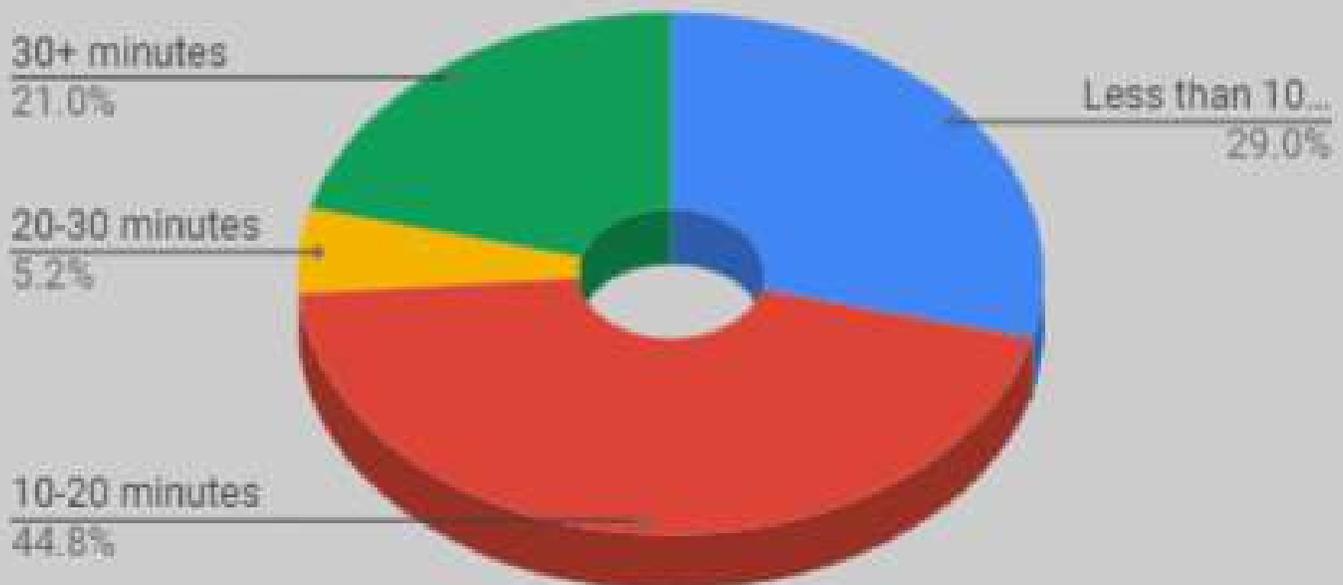
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

289

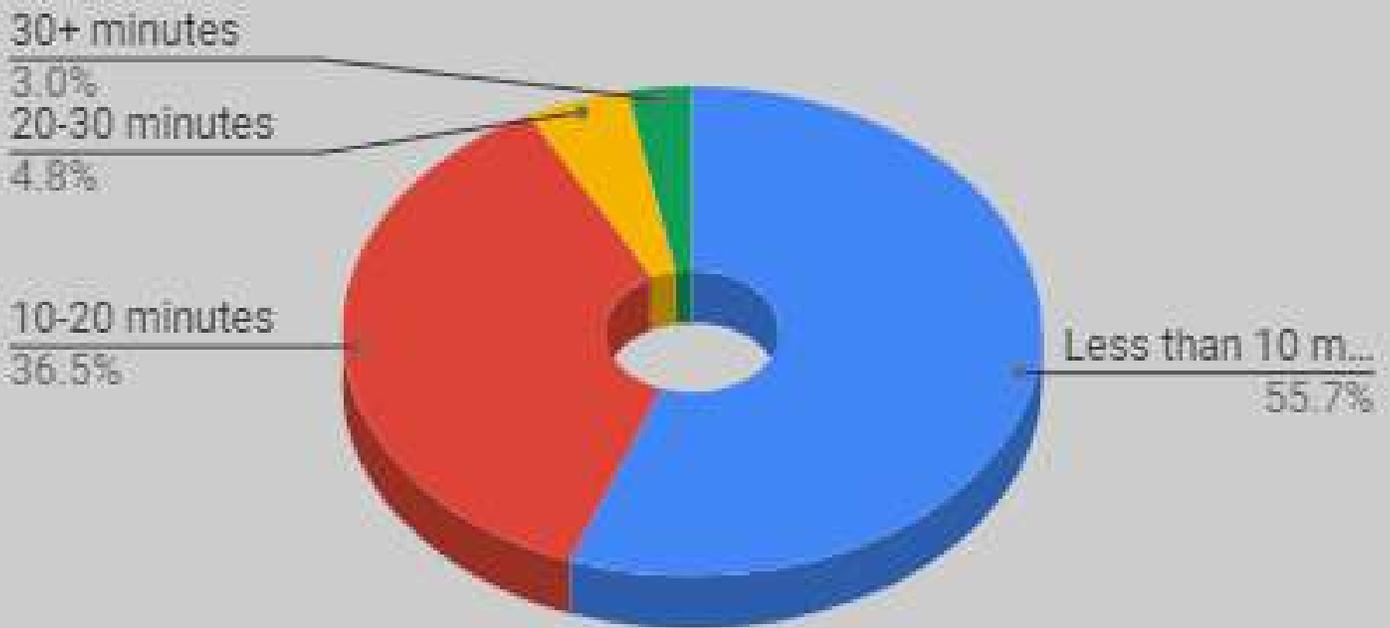
How long does it take you to reach a full-service grocery store?



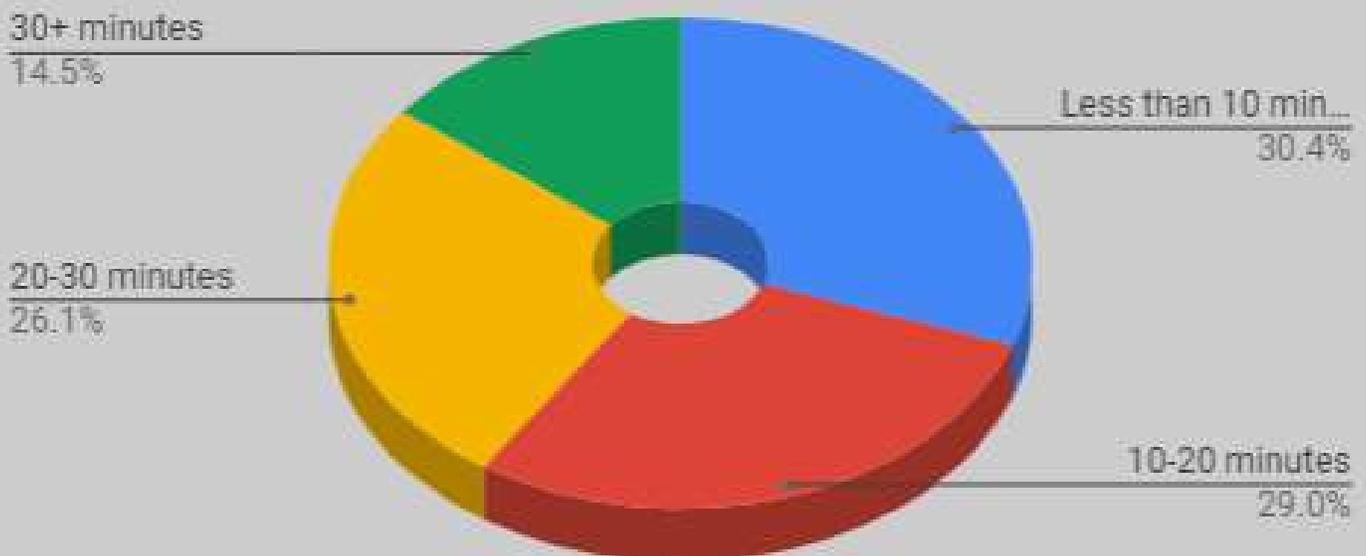
How long does it take you to reach a medical facility?



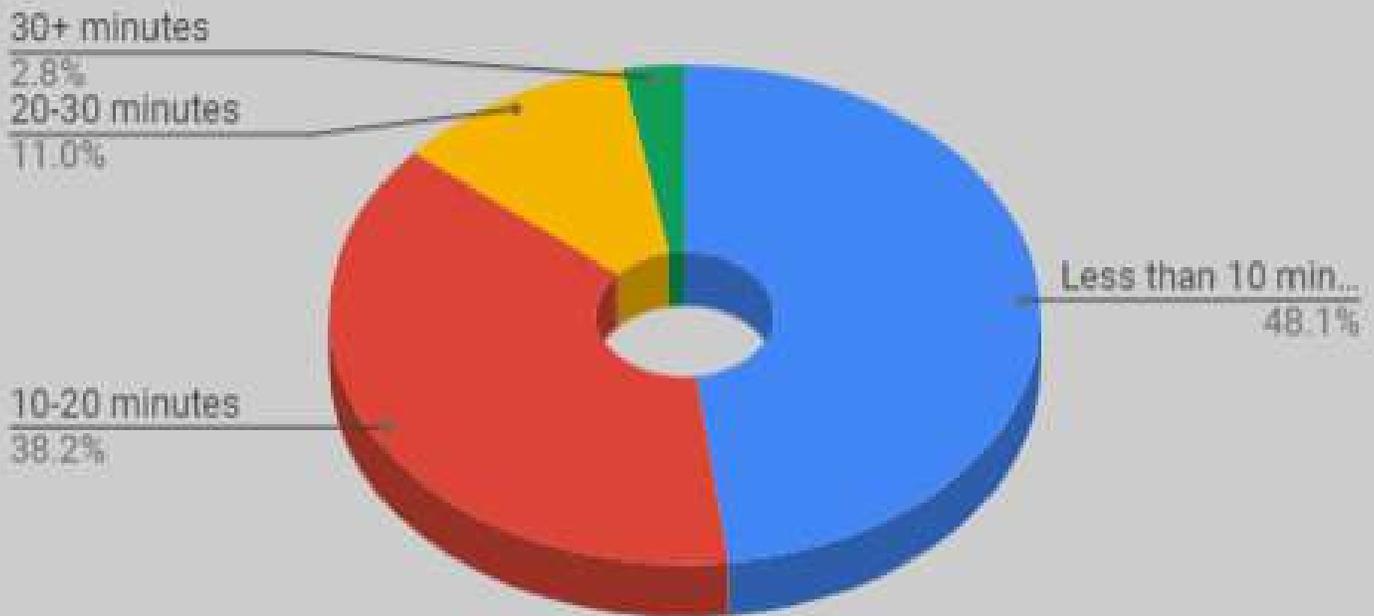
How long does it take you to reach school?



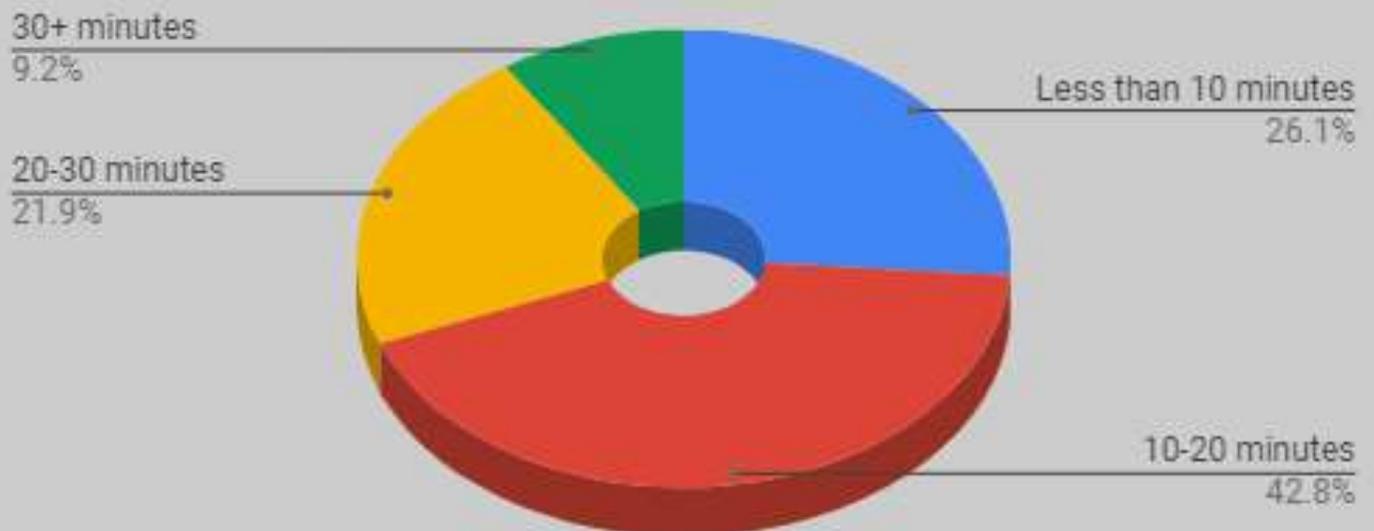
How long does it take you to reach work?



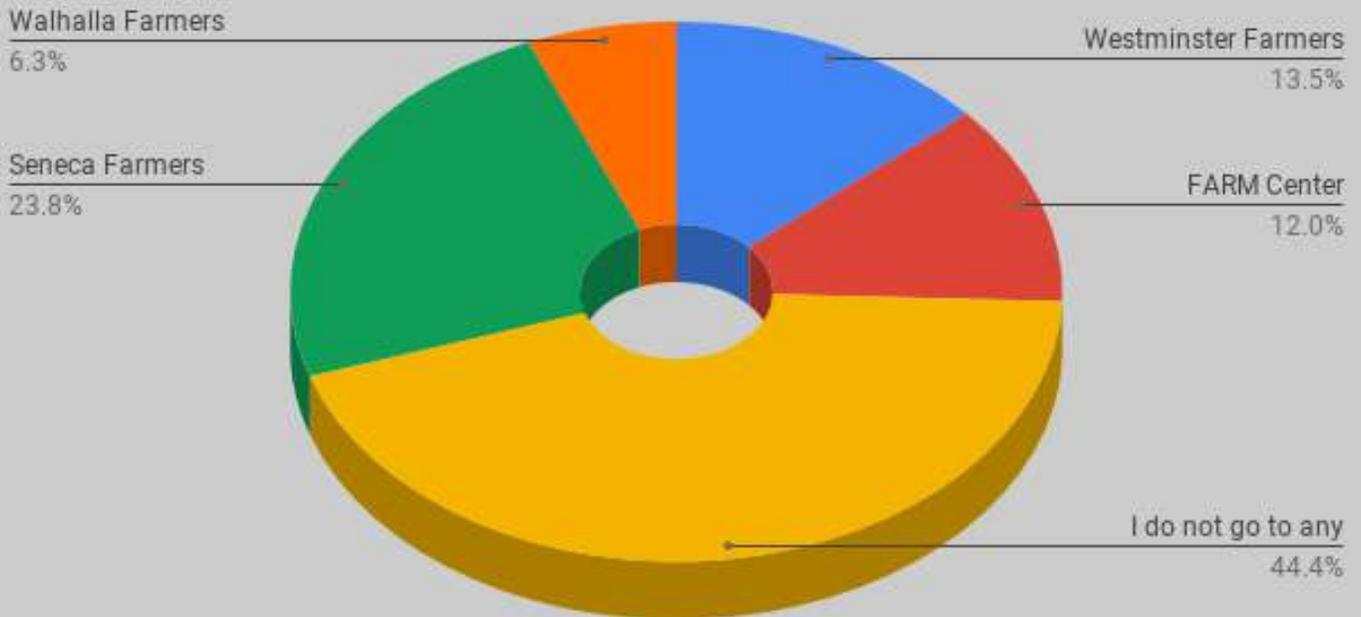
How long does it take you to reach a restaurant?



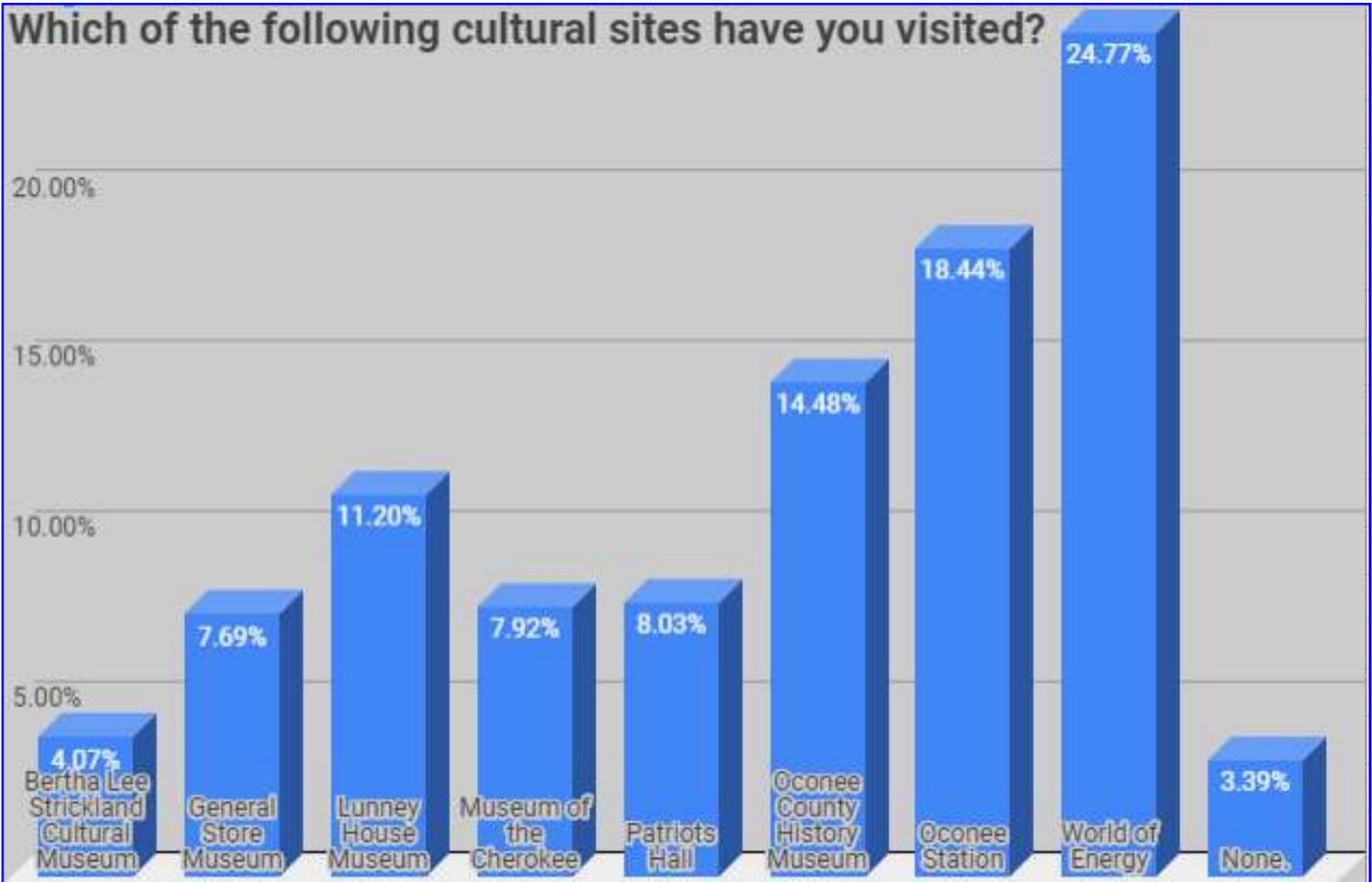
How long does it take you to reach shopping/entertainment?



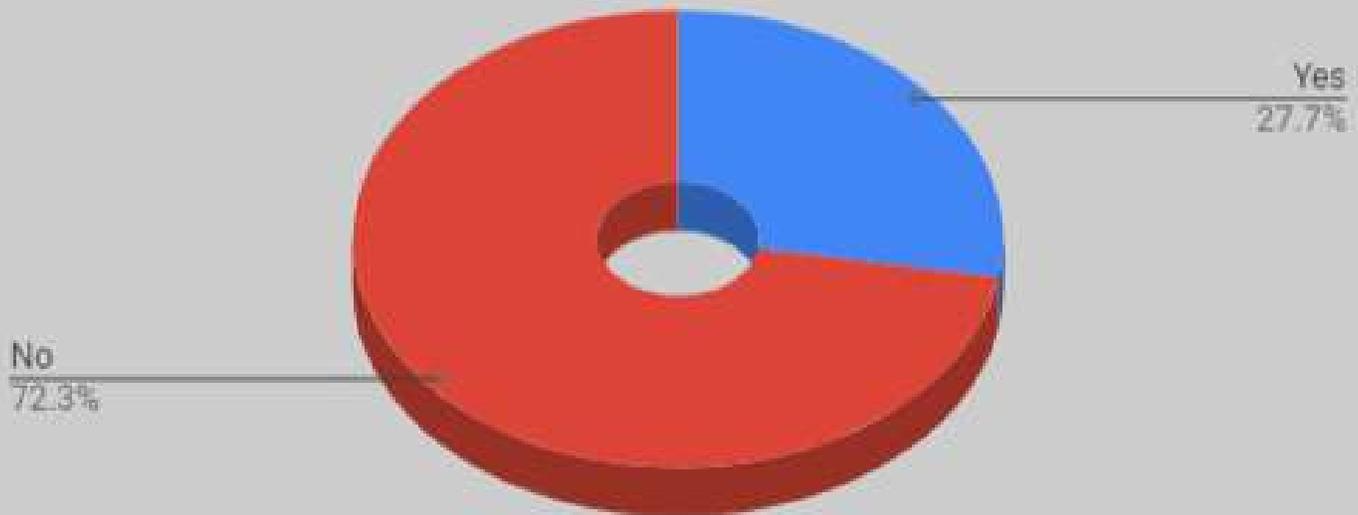
Do you utilize any of our four Farmers Markets? If so, which ones:



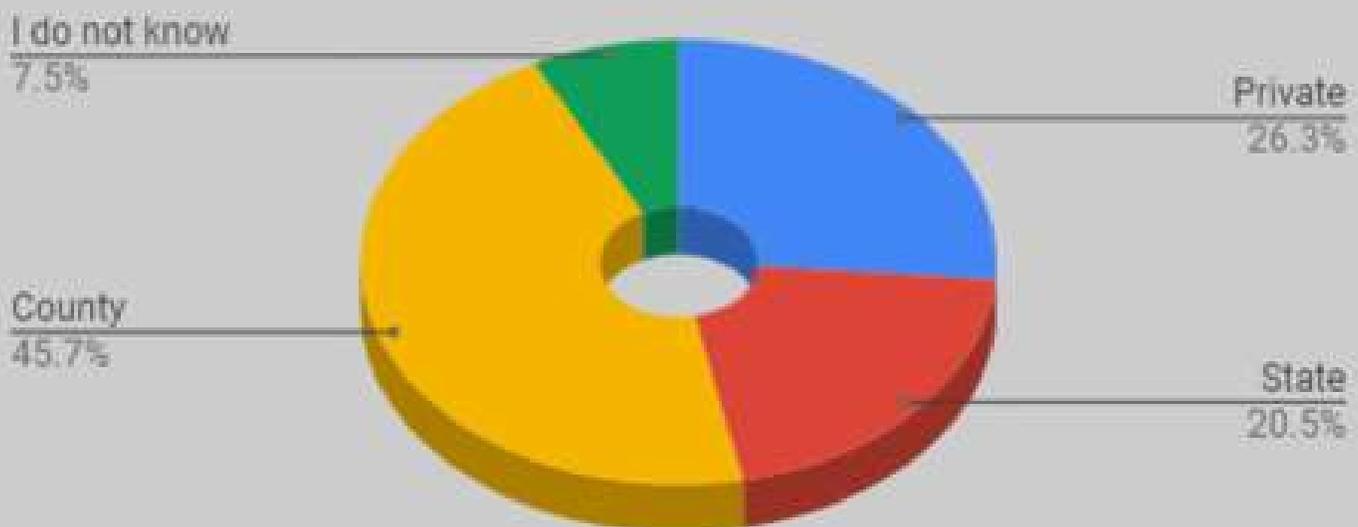
Which of the following cultural sites have you visited?



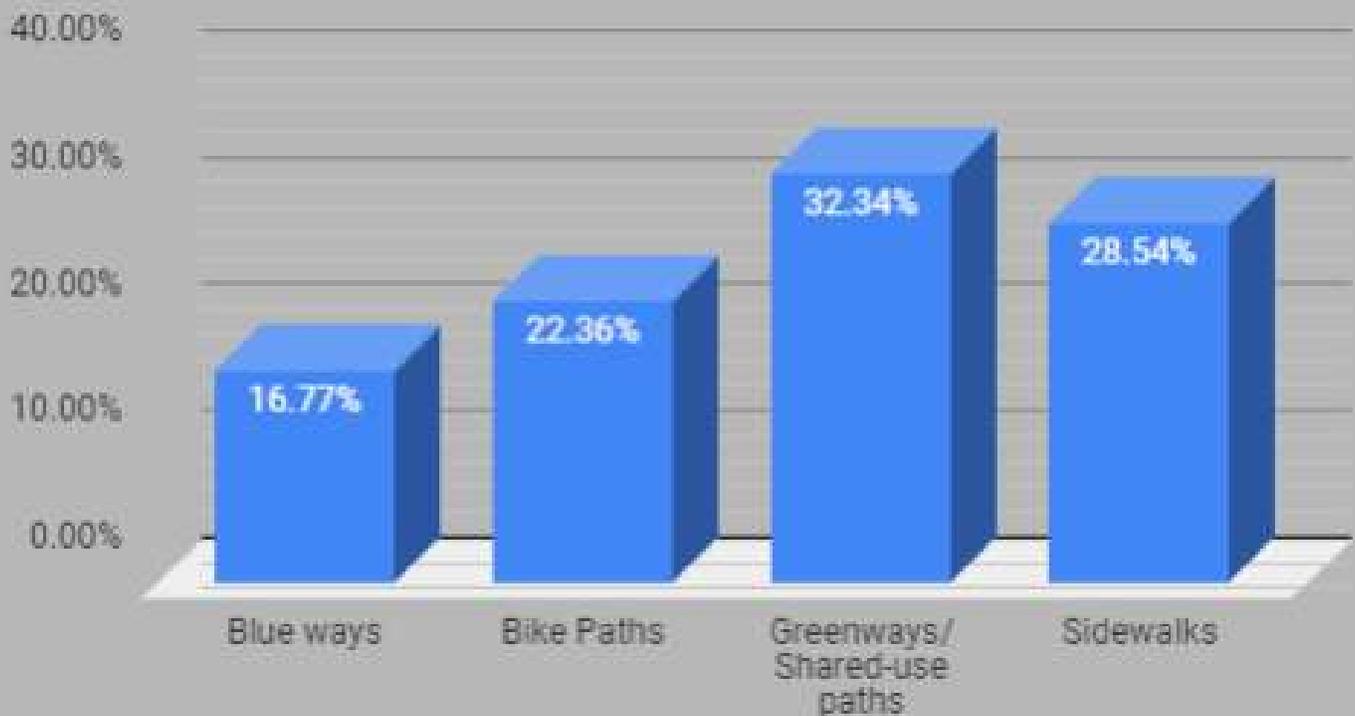
Do you think there are enough entertainment options for the various age groups in the county?



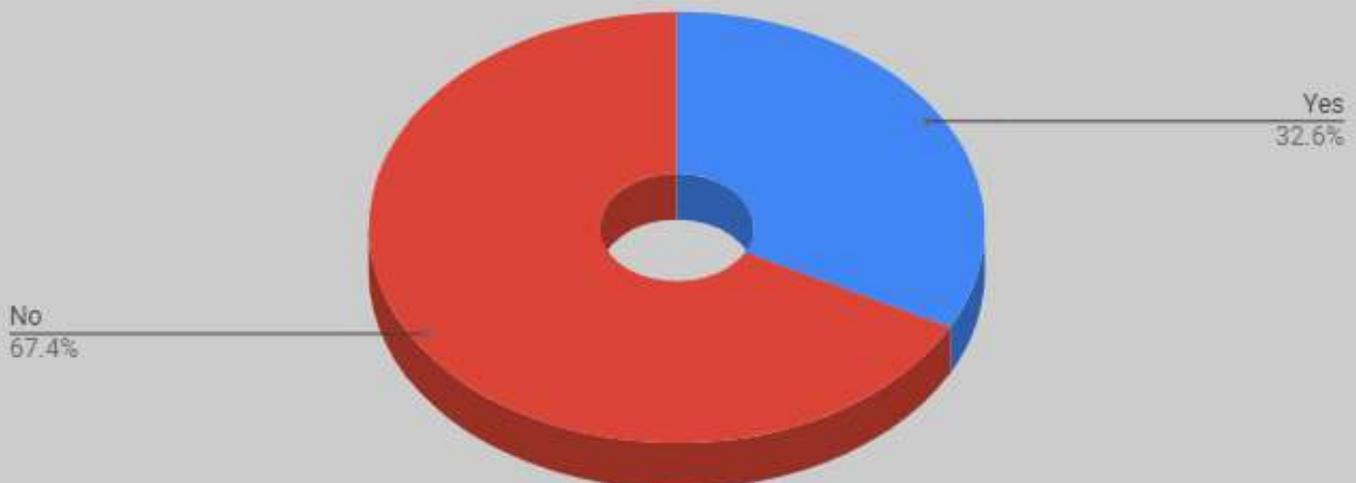
Do you live off of a private, county or state-owned road?



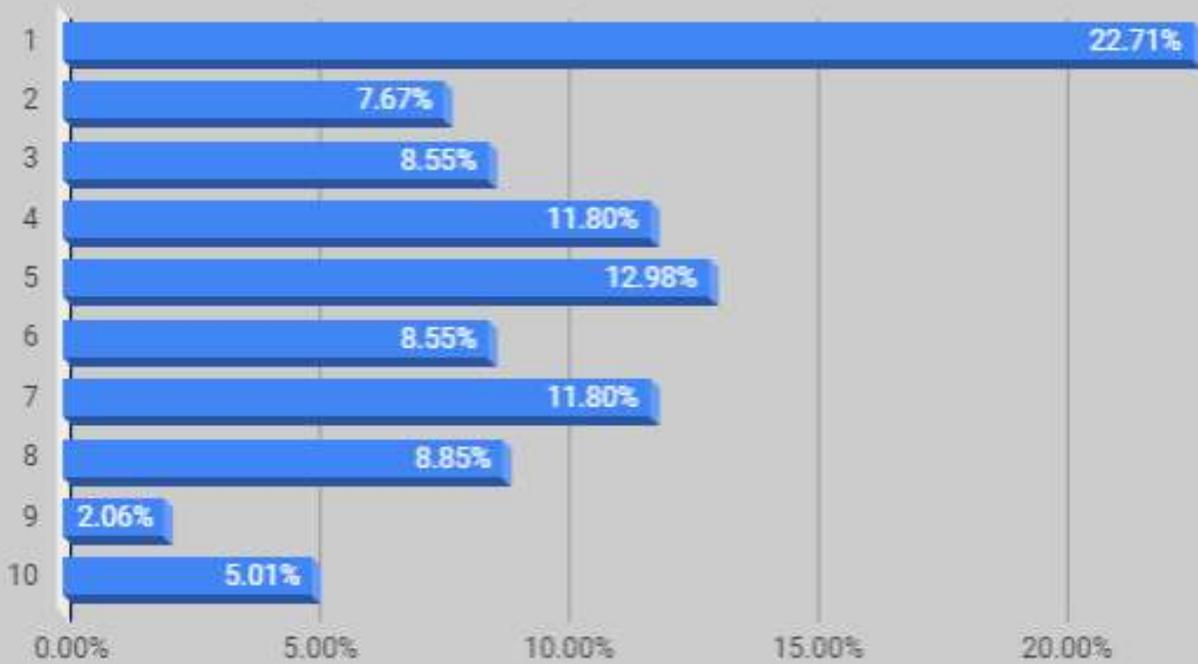
What does the county need more of ?



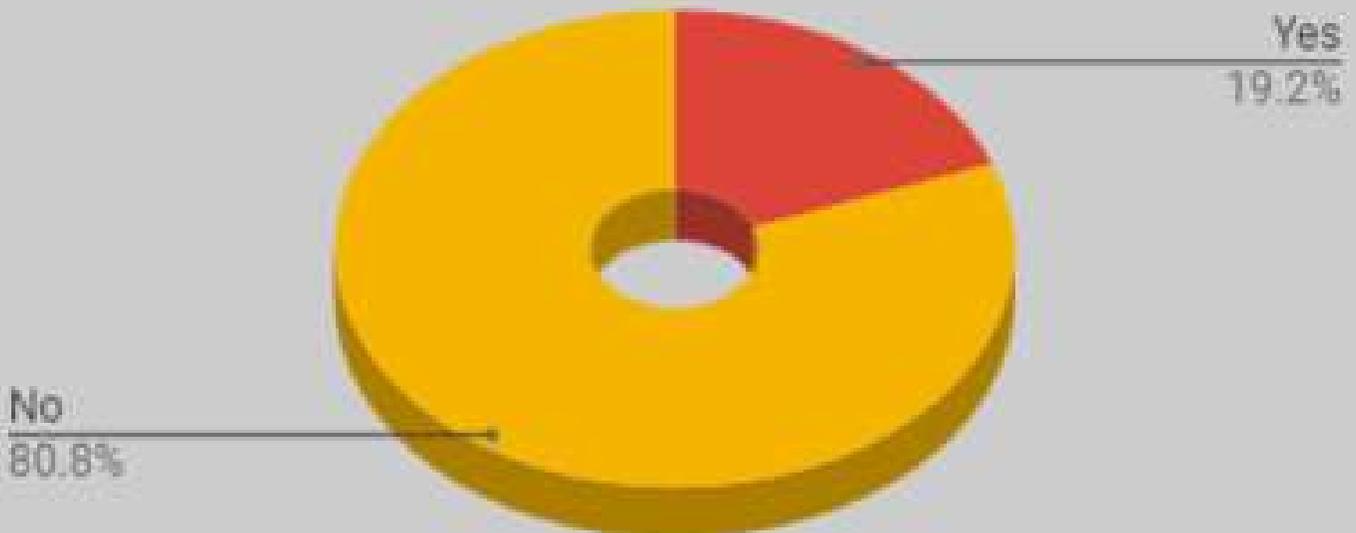
If riding a bike along the side of the road was practical and made safe, would you ride a bike to work, school, shopping or other places around the county?



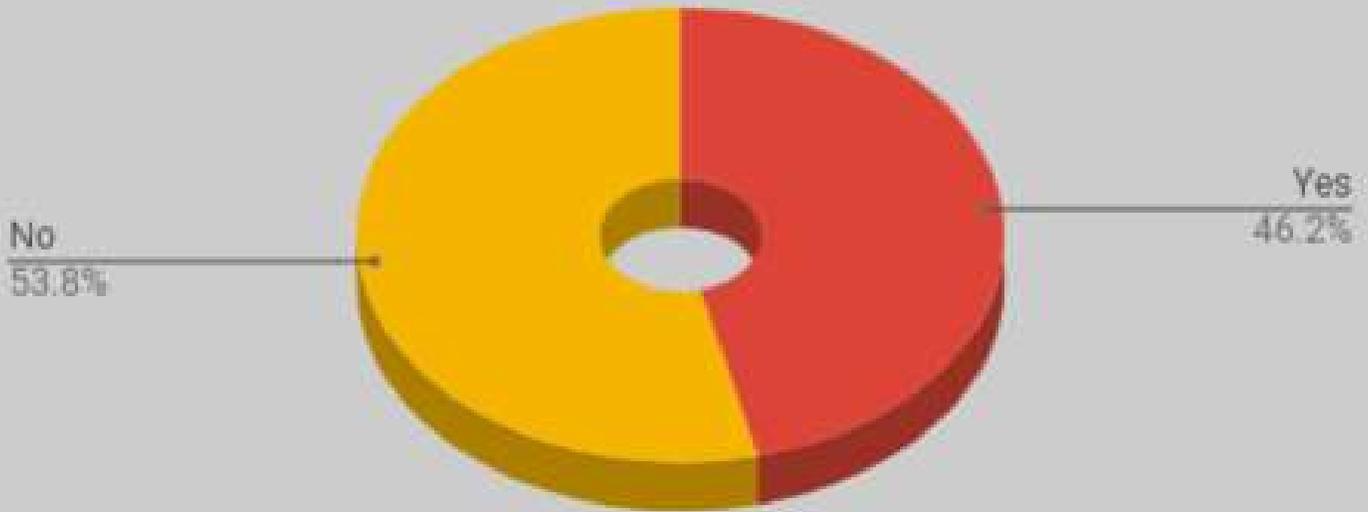
On a scale of 1 (Very Unsafe) to 10 (Very Safe), how do you feel about the maintenance of your roads?



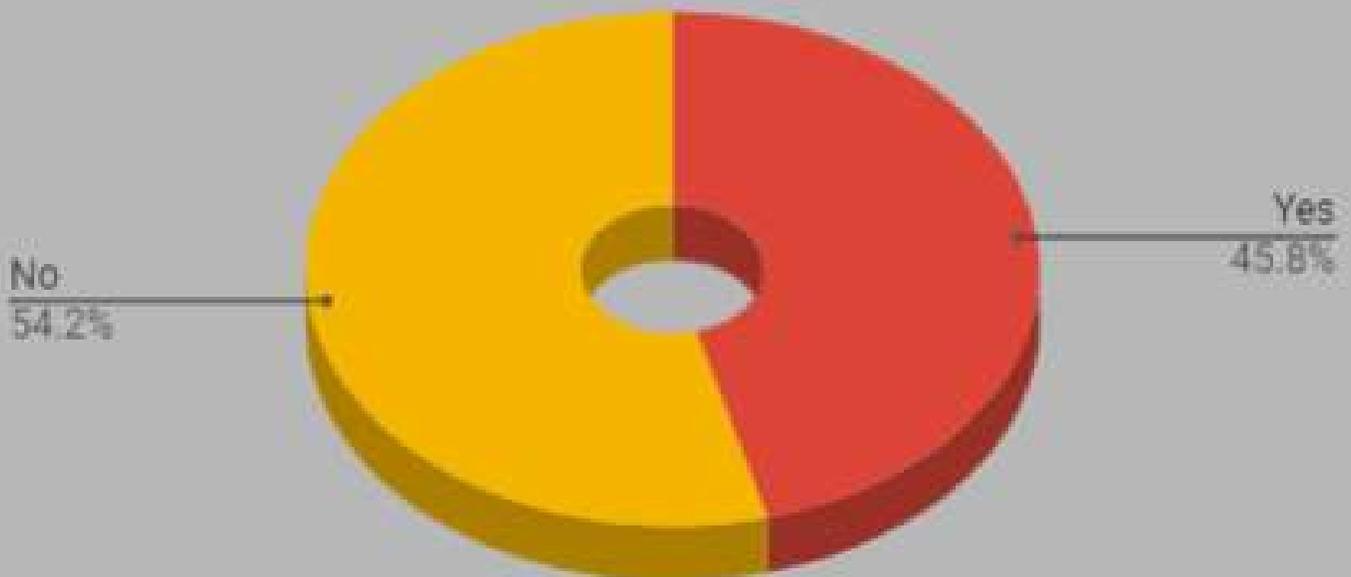
Have you used the CATbus?



If it were available to you, would you ride the CATbus?



Would you support additional funding for Oconee County Regional Airport?





YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future



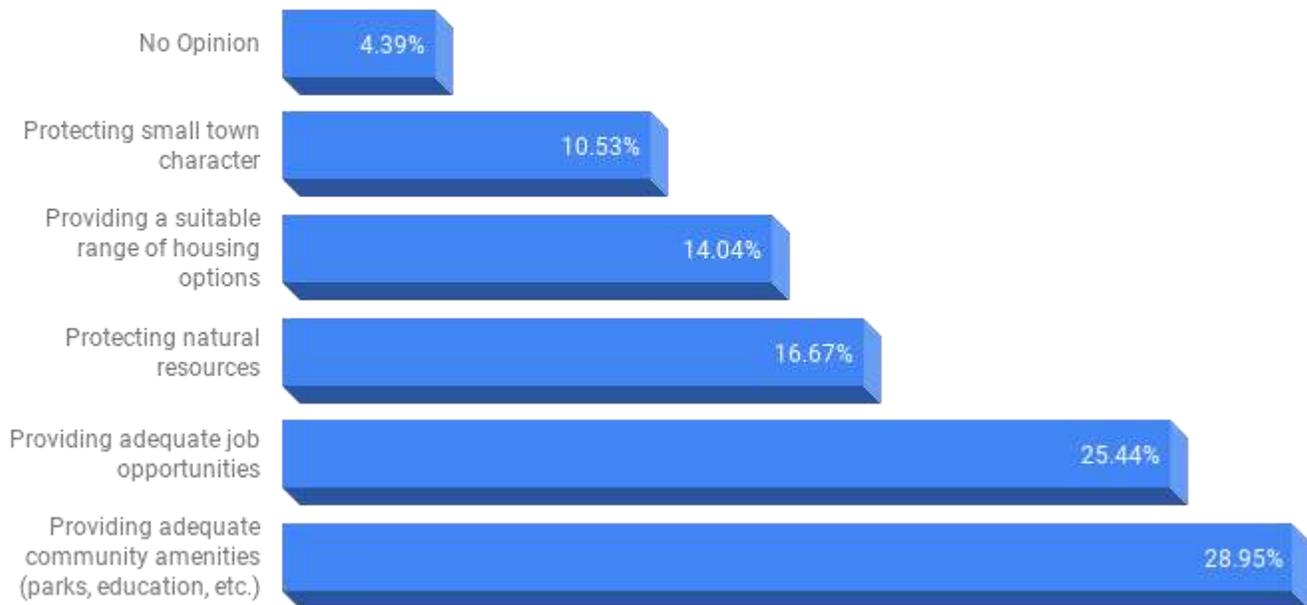
June 2019: Economic Development

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

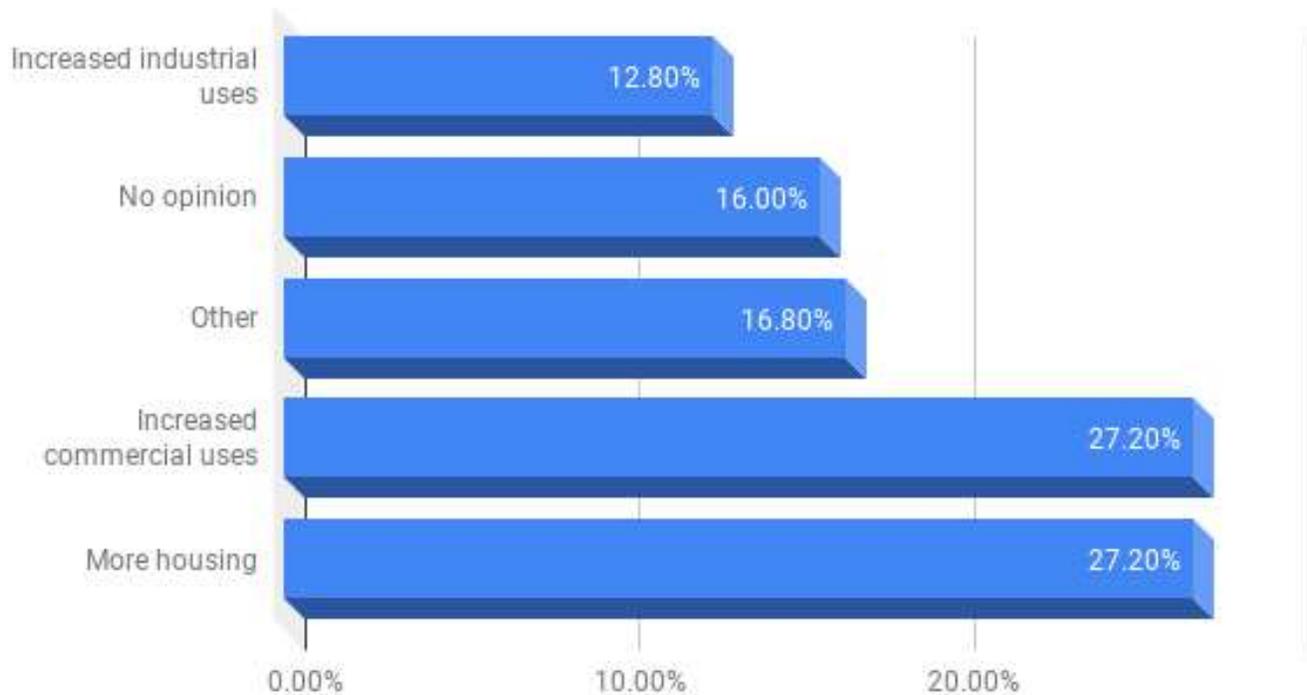
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

125

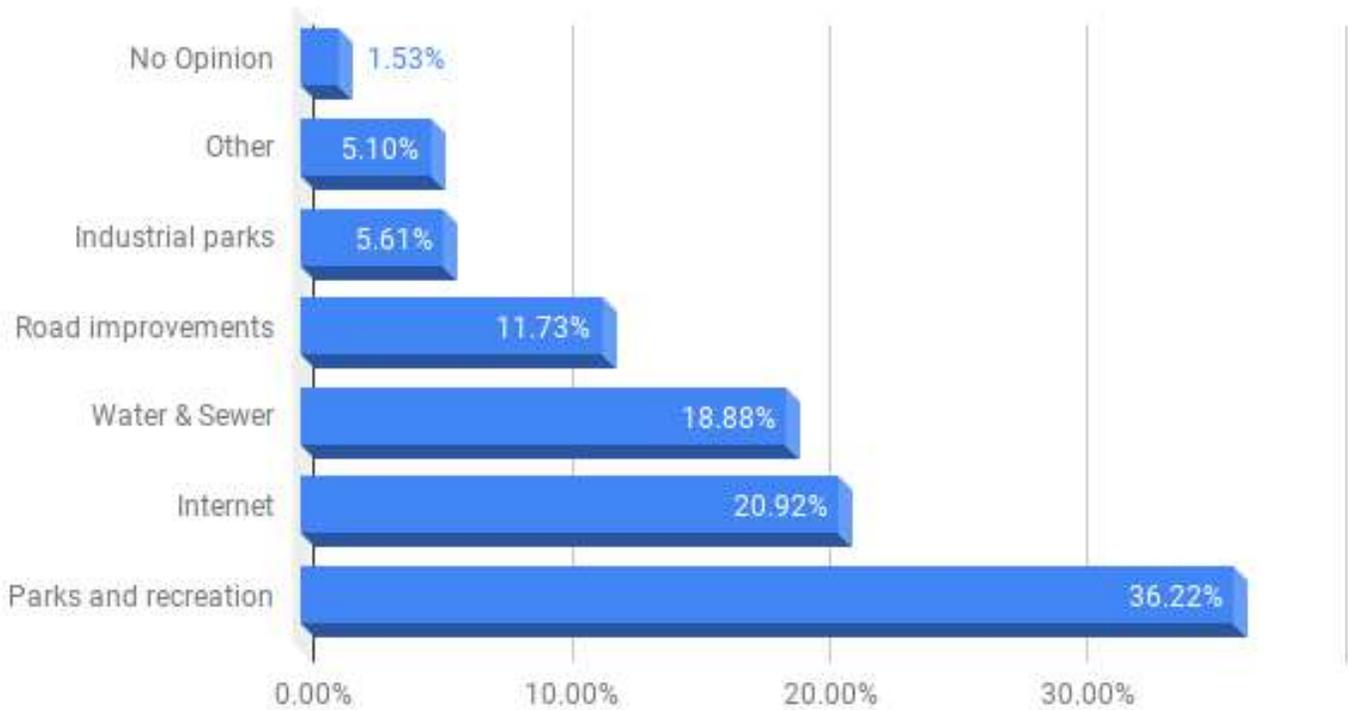
When it comes to growth and development, what is the county's greatest challenge?



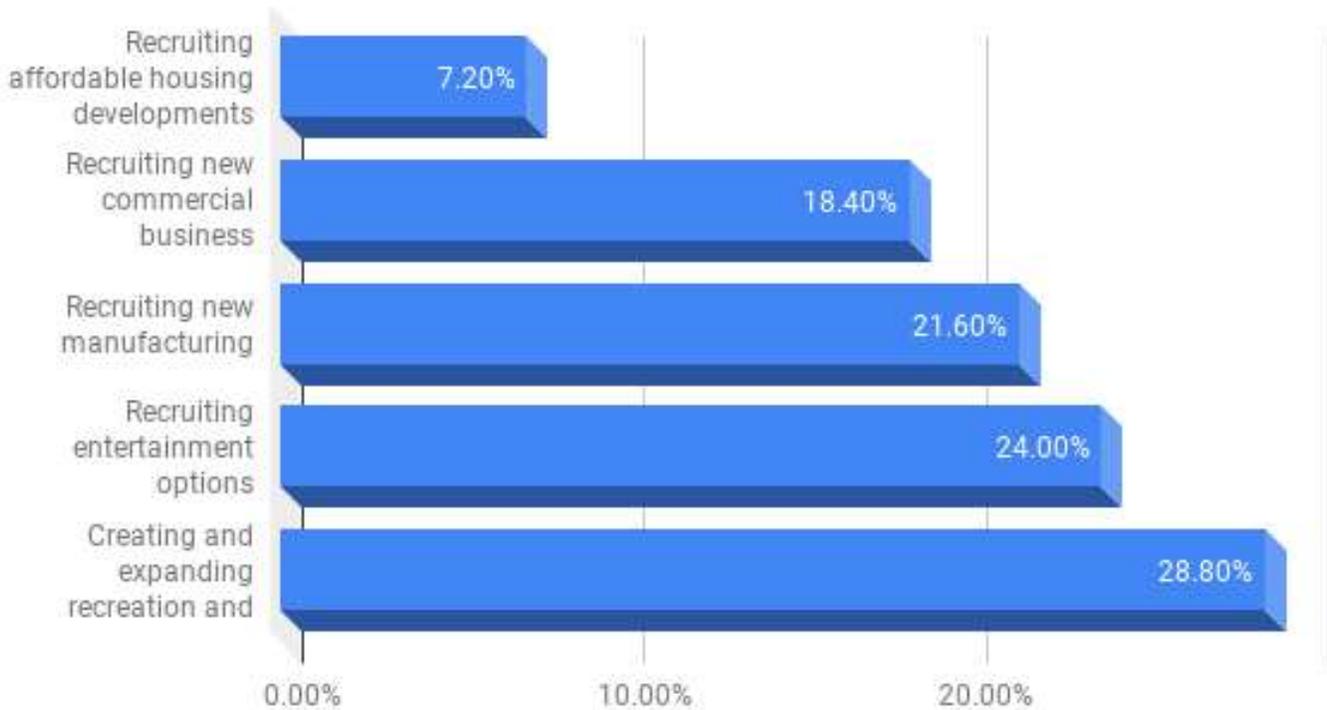
What type of development is most needed?



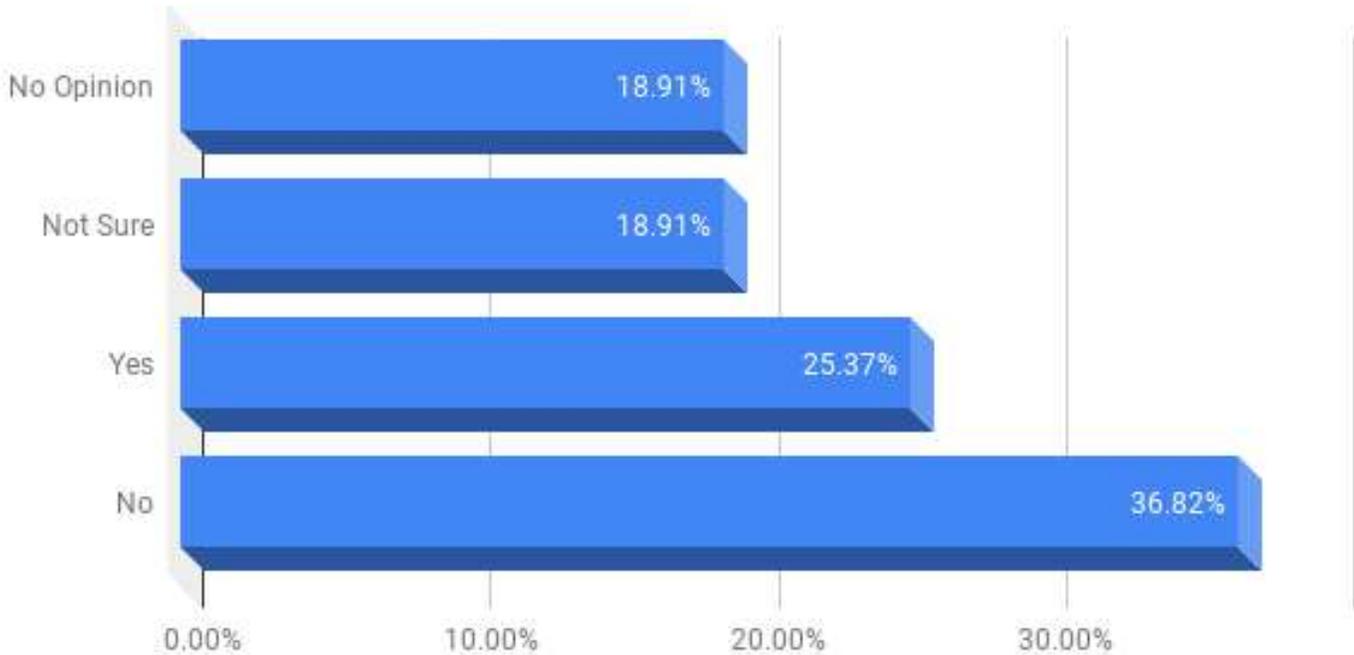
Which capital improvements should the county prioritize?



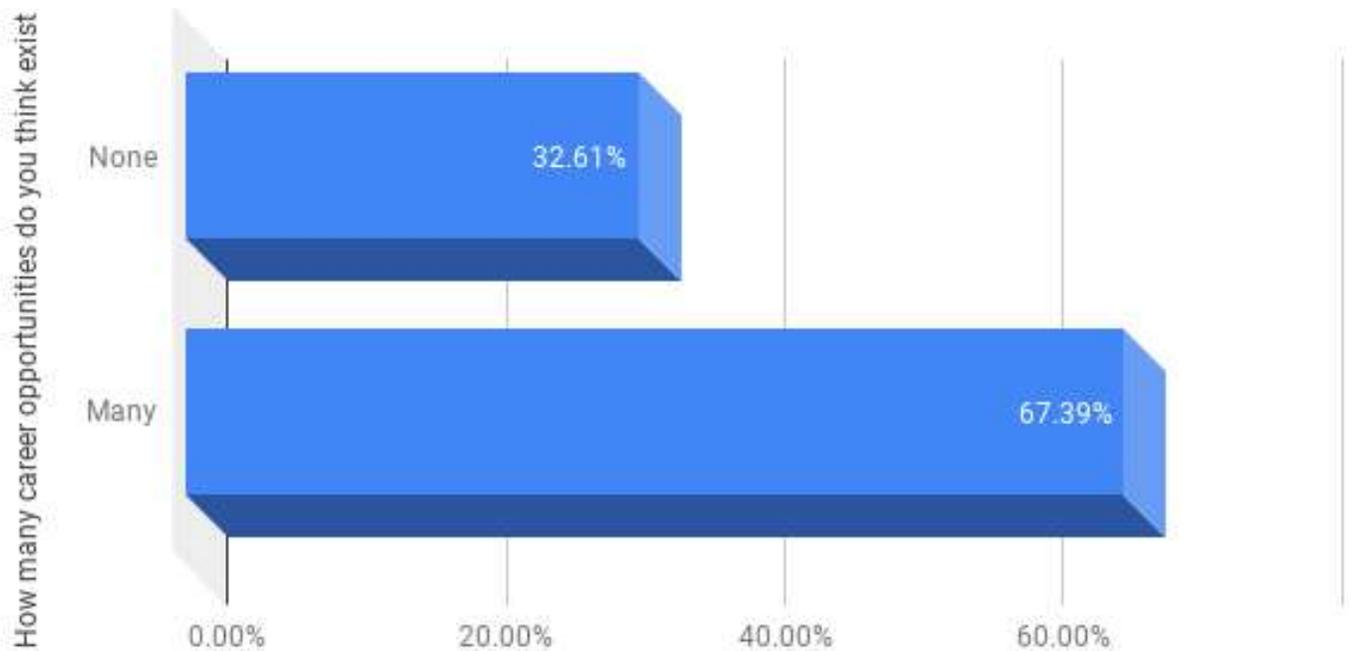
What should be the top economic development priority?



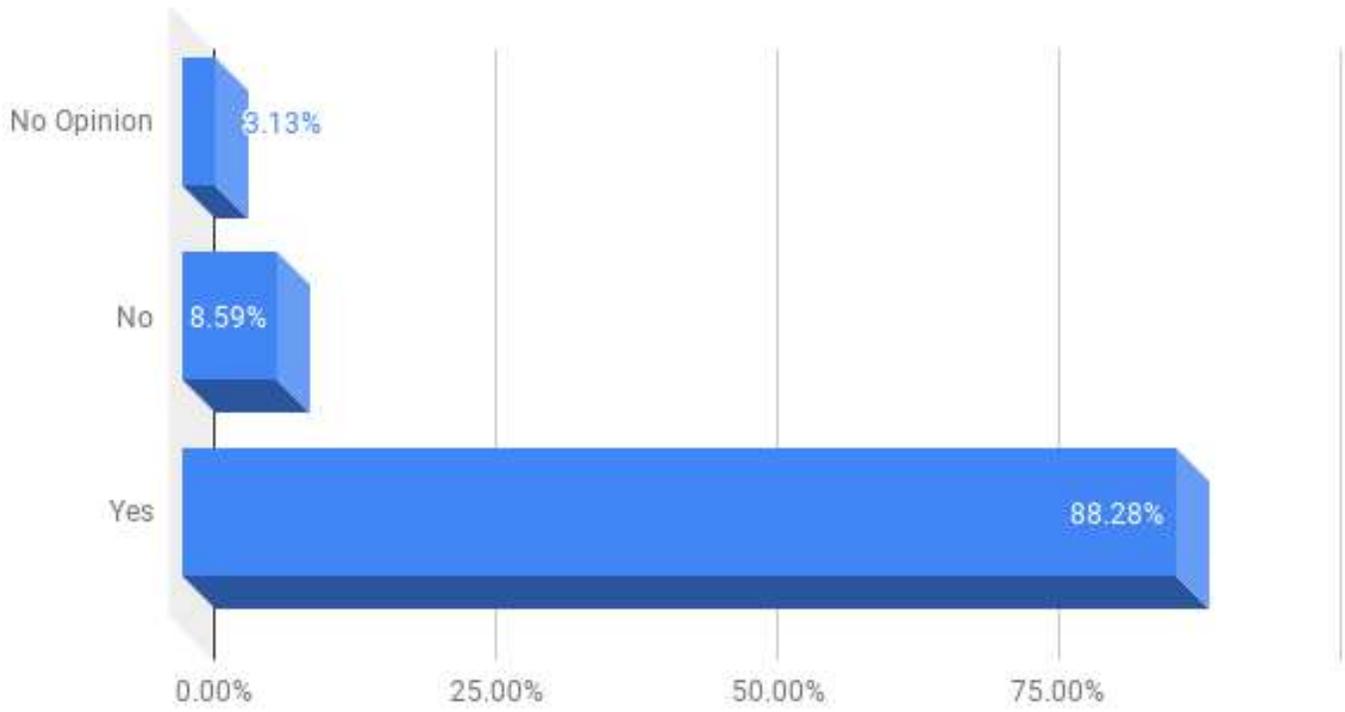
If you wanted to find a job in Oconee County today, would you be able to work in an industry that interests you?



How many career opportunities do you think exist for our high school and technical college graduates?



Do you shop local when it is available?





YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future



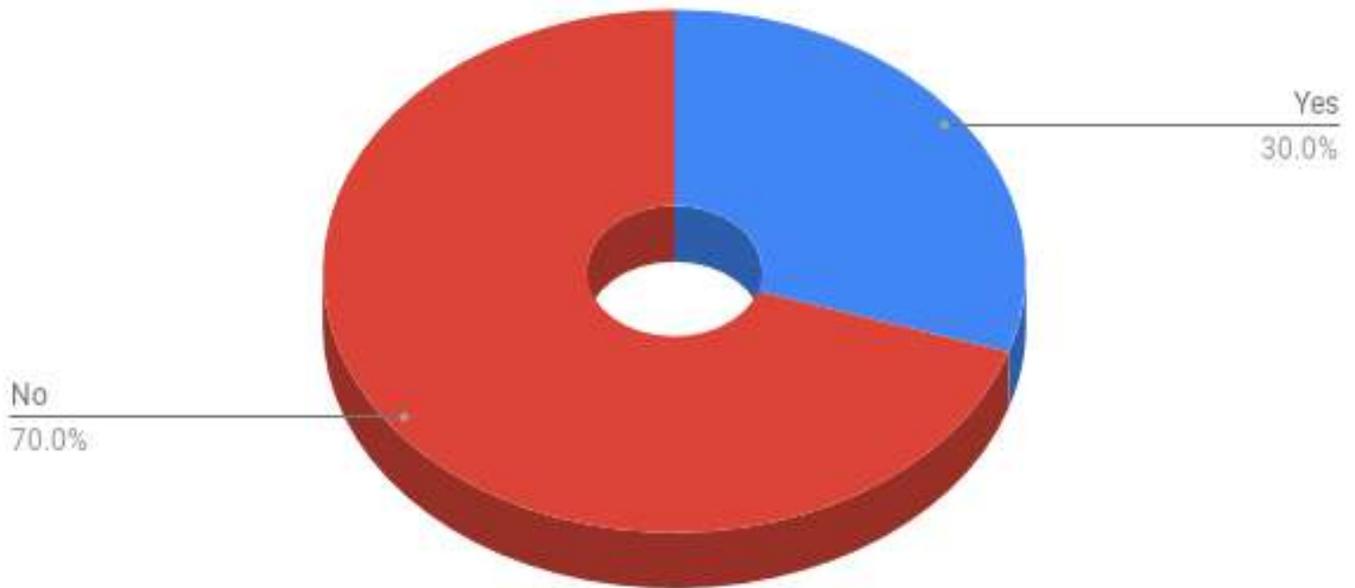
July 2019: Agriculture and Land Use

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

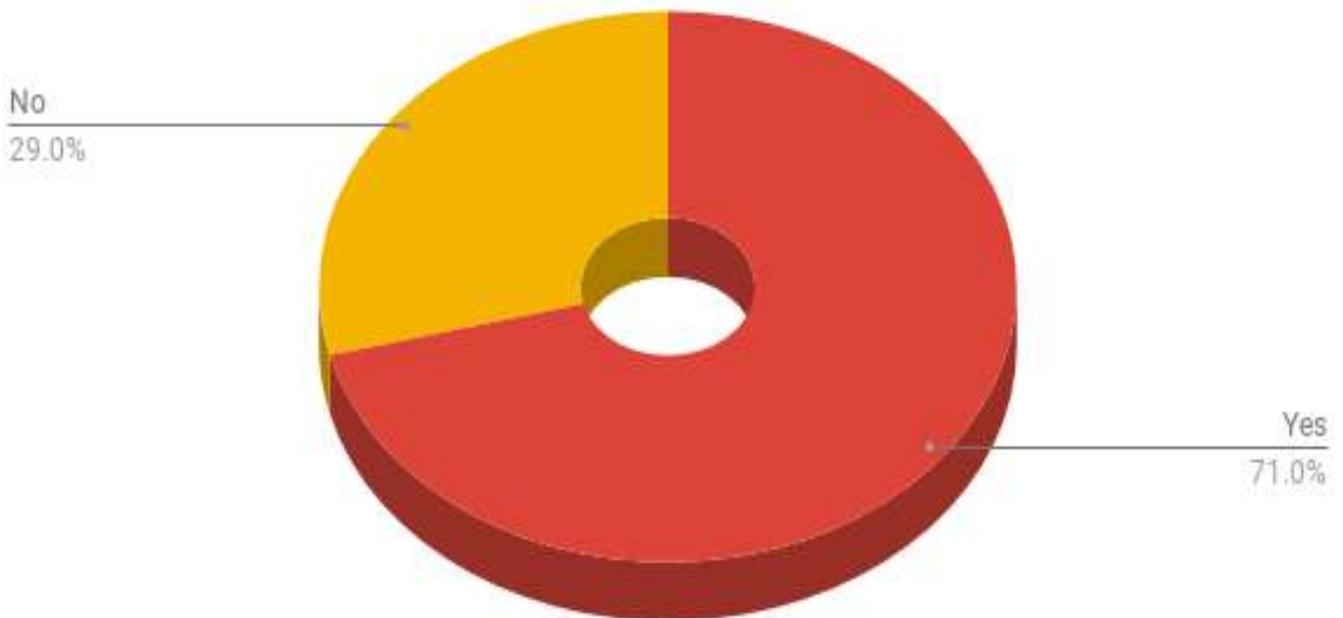
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

255

Are you now, or have you been, a farmer or rancher?

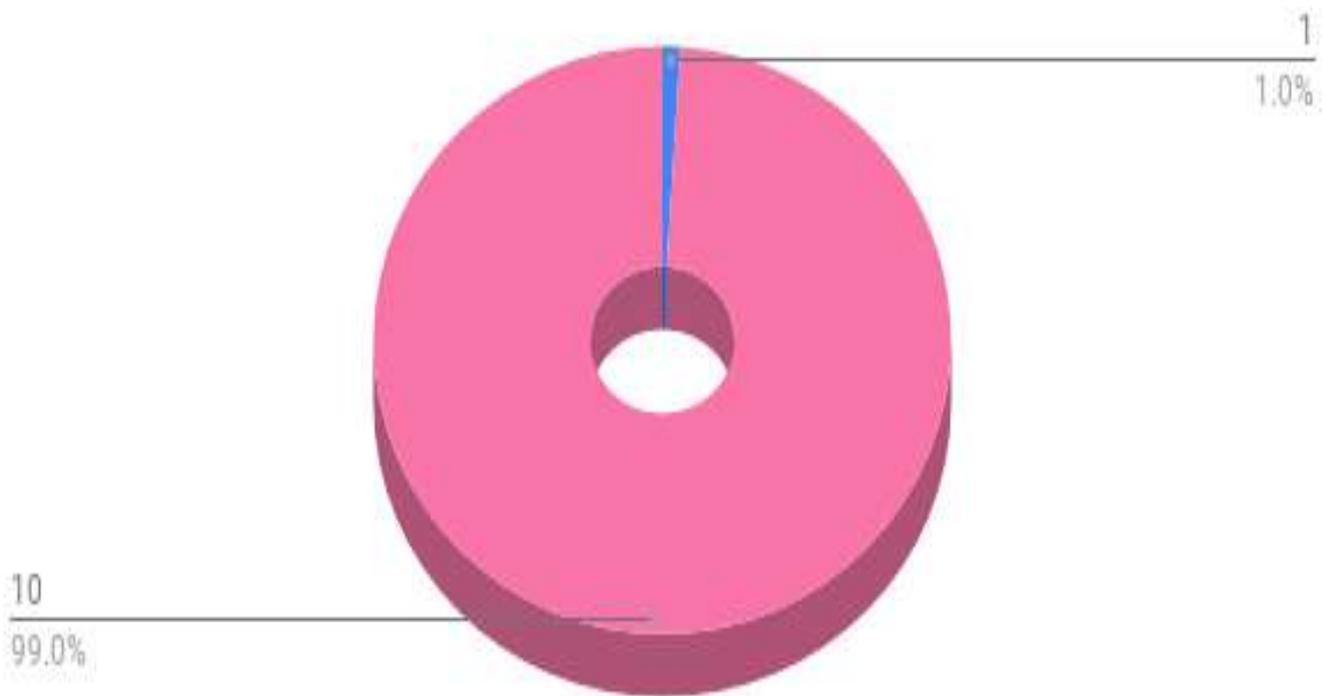


Do you know any farmers who farm in Oconee County?

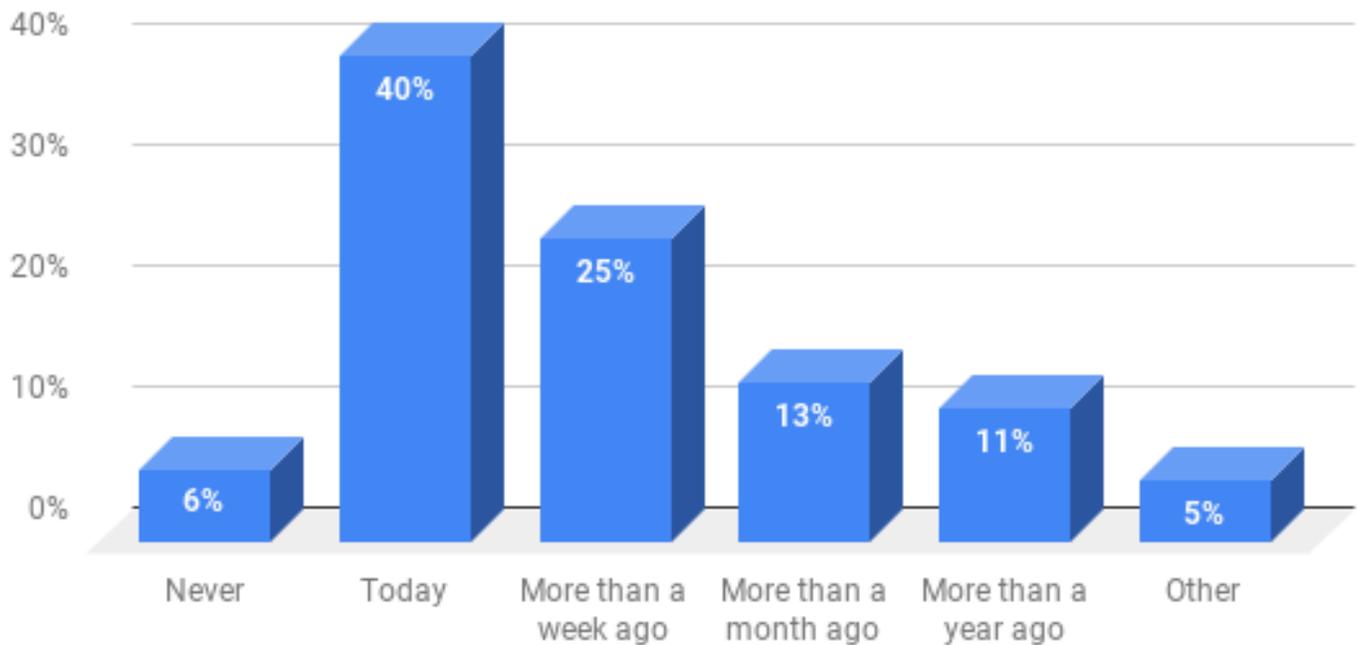


How important is having your food grown or raised in the United States of America?

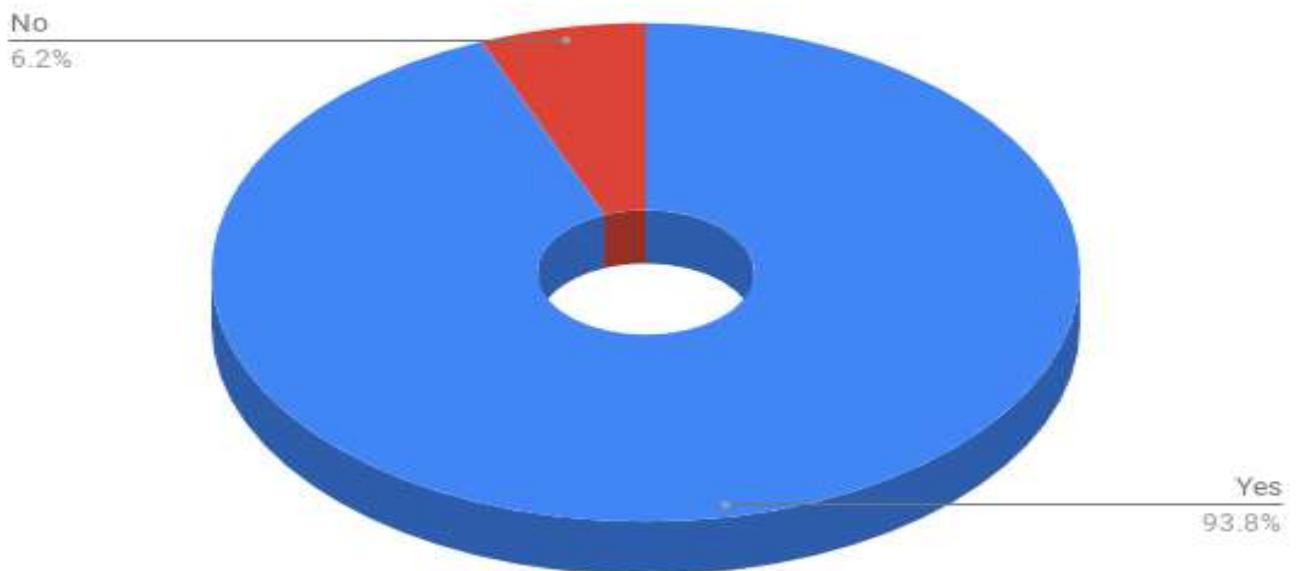
Scale of 1-10: Not important-Very important



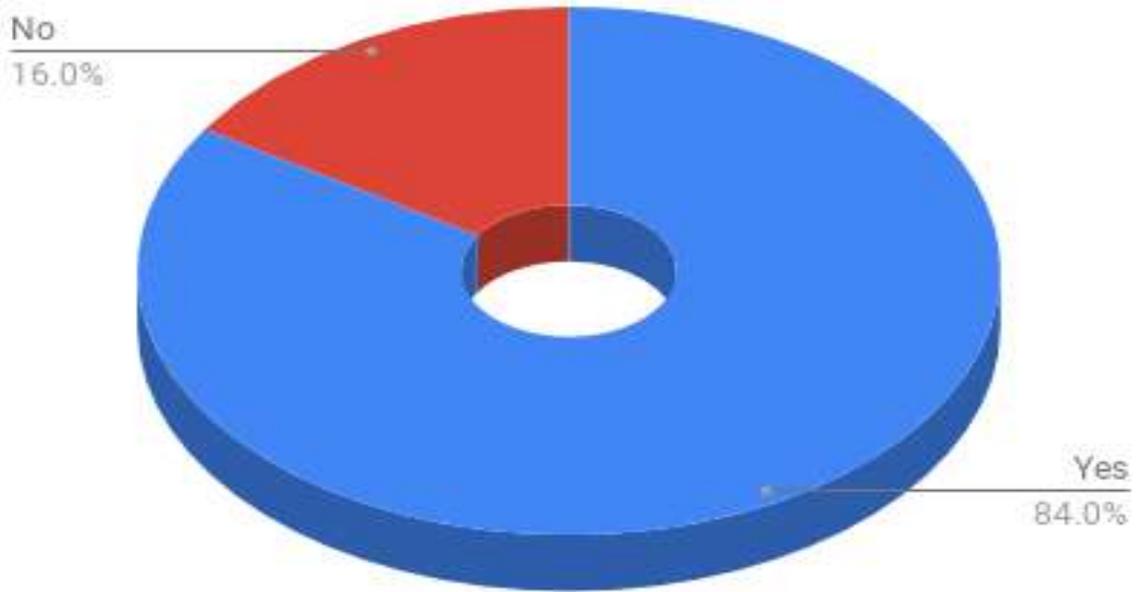
When is the last time that you knew where the food on your plate came from? (The supermarket doesn't count.)



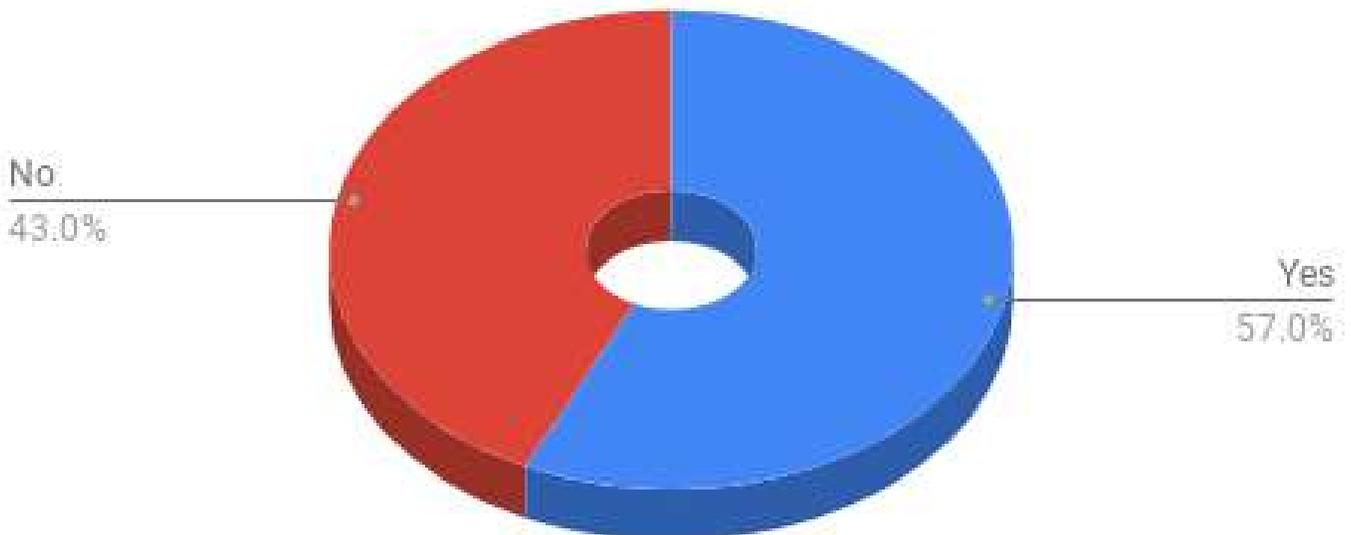
Oconee County is losing farms and farmers. Would you support legislation that promotes, protects and preserves our agricultural past, present and future?



Do you know where to buy locally grown or produced farm products in Oconee?



Do you grow any of your own food?



Farmland, generally, is flat and cleared, and great for farming. Flat, cleared land is also great for building homes. How do we preserve our irreplaceable farmers and farmlands while still providing enough housing for our growing population?



Community Outreach 2019



Community Outreach 2019

2- Population

Access
to mental
health
treatment

Employment to
keep youth

Access
to
mental health
treatment

Proximity
to
Clemson

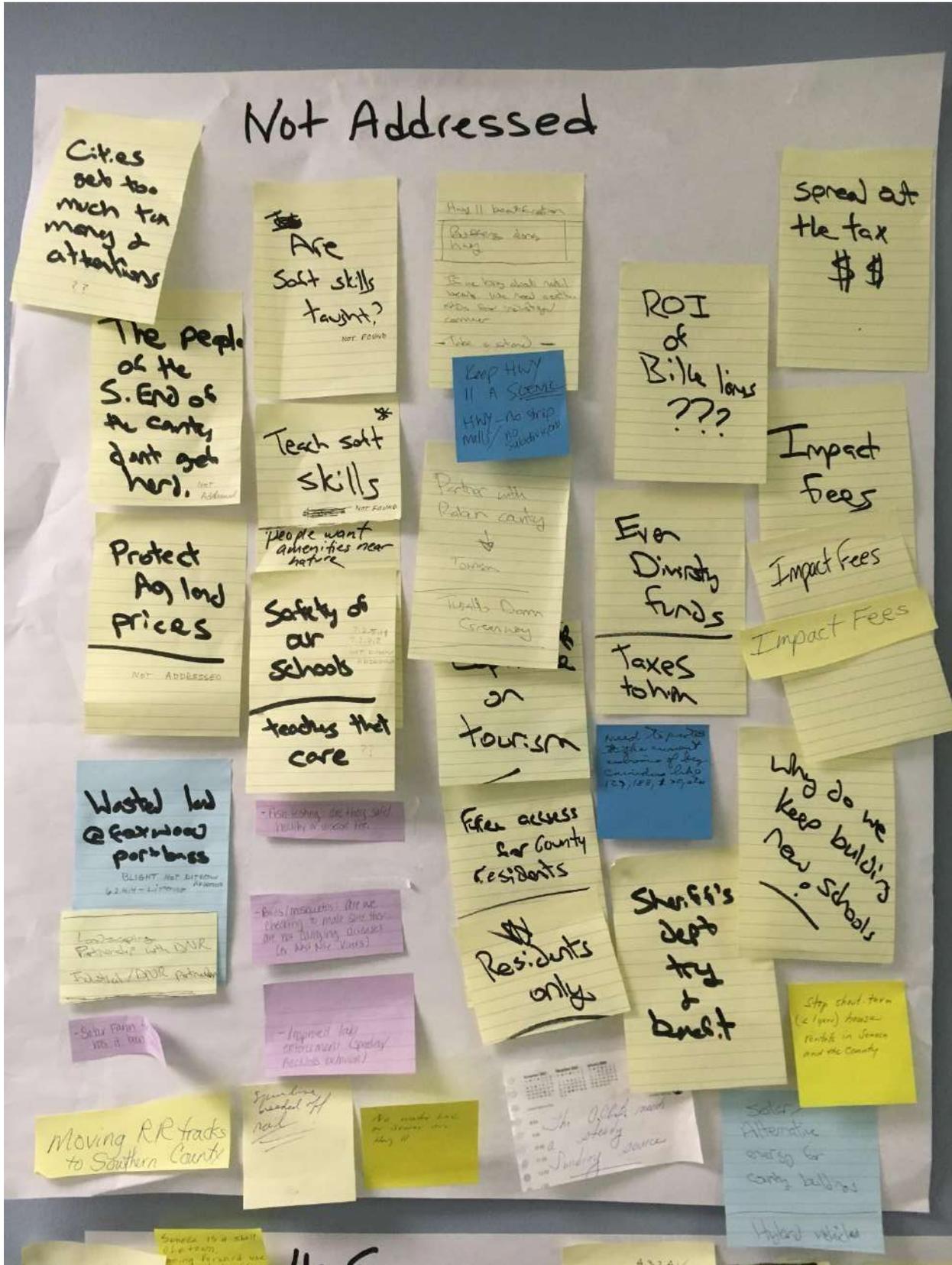
People
move into
places bk
of recreation
+ parks

Education
for jobs
that are
available

Education

Attract
businesses
based
on how we
educate

Community Outreach 2019



Community Outreach 2019

3- Housing

Shortage
of Affordable
options
Younger
Seniors

- NO TINY HOMES!!

Need
Low-income
housing

Students
Housing needs
to be measured
& managed

Low
income
housing

I (E) BEEN HERE
31 185 - AT THE TIME
OF 31 185
I HAVE BEEN HERE
31 185 - AT THE TIME
OF 31 185

I HAVE BEEN HERE
31 185 - AT THE TIME
OF 31 185
I HAVE BEEN HERE
31 185 - AT THE TIME
OF 31 185

Need
Affordable
housing

Lofts
above
downtowns

New home is
attractive
to
New home buyer

Retiree
community
Age in
Place

Hotel
Sewer
& H₂O



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future

March 2019: Population & Housing

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE OCONEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ...

is a state required document that provides guidance for the county — the administration, council and private citizens — for the coming decade.

To get input from the community for the goals and strategies in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the county is producing a series of special sections to break down the data and offer you a chance to provide feedback.

This is the first of five monthly sections that will cover the 10 elements of the comprehensive plan.

Population

Everything Oconee County does is based on the people who live here. Population growth directly impacts the physical growth of a community.

As the number of residents increase, so does the demand for housing, education, healthcare, utilities, recreation and other key community services.

In turn, the characteristics of the population shape the scope and delivery of these essential community services and infrastructure.

The population element serves as the foundation for the other elements of the Oconee County Comprehensive Plan. It provides a detailed assessment of Census data combined with other key social indicators.

This element provides an overview and analysis of key demographic aspects of the county. It looks at growth trends and population projections for the county and its municipalities, income and family characteristics of households and education levels as well as the race, gender and age of residents.

The population element provides the context for understanding current and future needs of the county with respect to housing, employment and job growth, education and community services, infrastructure and land development.

Housing

Adequate, safe housing is a basic human need. It's one of the top three issues affecting personal and community health, according to the American Public Health Association.

With a diverse population of residents, Oconee County is faced with a myriad of possibilities and challenges in planning for its future housing needs.

Businesses and employers factor in the quality, availability and affordability of a community's housing stock when considering new locations. Newcomers to Oconee County consider a variety of factors when choosing their new homes, such as quality of schools, public safety, access to community amenities and convenience to jobs and services.

However, the deciding factor for housing is typically the quality and affordability of the available homes in an area.

A thorough study of current housing conditions and probable trends for the future can identify a balance of housing types to accommodate the diverse housing needs of current and future county residents.

The housing element assesses the condition, availability and affordability of Oconee County's housing stock in order to help project housing needs and trends.

The prediction of future housing needs poses a distinct challenge, as homes are essentially expensive consumer products with a demand greatly influenced by economic conditions. Interest rates and the overall economy have dramatic effects on the housing market. When such factors make home ownership unattainable for lower income families, many residents find themselves dependent on the rental market. This element considers both owner-occupied and rental housing needs in the coming decade.

**If you don't know
where you're
going, any road
will get you there.**

– Lewis Carroll

Questions or comments?

You can reach Oconee County Planning Director Adam Chapman at achapman@oconeesc.com or (864) 364-5103.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Monday, April 1
Planning Commission
6 p.m.

Tuesday, April 2
Budget, Finance and
Administration Committee
4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

Monday, April 8
Agricultural Advisory Board
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 9
Budget, Finance and
Administration Committee
4:30 p.m.

Monday, April 15
Planning Commission
6 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23
Budget, Finance and
Administration Committee
4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

All meetings take place in council chambers at 415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla.

► **Can't make the meeting but still want to keep up?**

Oconee County meetings are recorded live and available to watch at [YouTube.com/YourOconee](https://www.youtube.com/YourOconee)



OCONEE COUNTY POPULATION

Oconee County
75,375
RESIDENTS
 18th Most-Populated
 County In SC
 2016 ESTIMATION

The Population Element provides the context for understanding the existing and future needs of the County and its municipalities with respect to housing, employment and job growth, education and community services, infrastructure, and future land development.

POPULATION

▶ In 2016, Oconee County had an estimated 75,375 residents, making it the 18th most-populated county in the state.

▶ Though the county has continued to grow, the rate has slowed significantly since 2010. Between 1990-2000, the growth rate was 18.3 percent. That number dropped to 1.5 percent growth from 2010-2016.

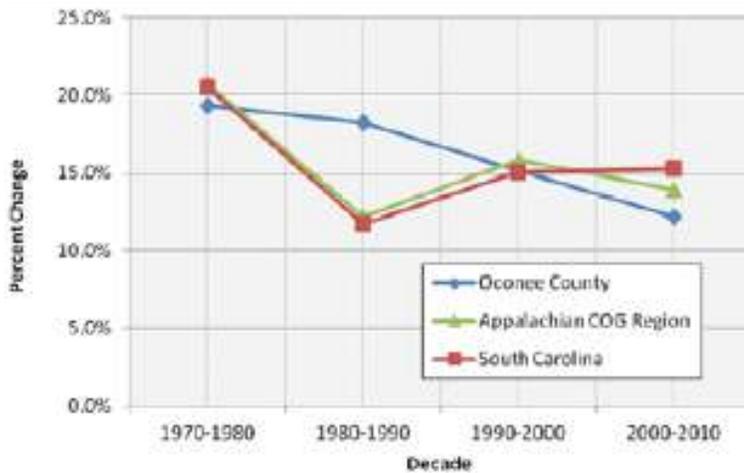
▶ South Carolina is projected to gain 400,000 new residents between 2010-2020, mostly due to Baby Boomers entering retirement with financial resources to relocate. Oconee County is projected to reach a population of 84,739 by 2030.

▶ Within the municipalities, Seneca and West Union are expected to grow around 8 percent, Walhalla by 6.5 percent, Westminster by 1 percent and no population change is expected in the town of Salem by 2030.

URBAN AND RURAL

▶ Oconee County is becoming more urban at a rate faster than the state. Urban population grew by 31.6 percent from 1990-2000 and 35.6 percent from 2000-2010.

POPULATION CHANGE BY DECADE, 1970 TO 2010



DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

▶ An increase in life expectancy has contributed to a nationwide aging population and Oconee is no exception to the rule.

▶ The median age of residents increased by 5.4 years from 2010-2016, higher than the state's increase of 3.4 years. It should come as no surprise that the median age of residents in areas

around Lake Keowee and Lake Jocassee exceeded the overall median County age by more than 16 years.

DIVERSITY

▶ More than 61 percent of Oconee's residents are lifelong South Carolinians, similar to the 60.5 percent of state residents.

▶ More than a quarter of the county’s Hispanic residents speak little-to-no English and almost half lack a high school education. Of the five municipalities, Walhalla has the largest Hispanic population in Oconee County.

▶ Communication is a concern for many Hispanic residents who often find it difficult to find and obtain government services, health care and other essential services because they do not understand materials that are provided in English and cannot communicate effectively with providers.

▶ The county’s white population increased by 10.4 percent in the 2000s.

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

▶ There are 30,867 households in Oconee county with an average size of 2.42 people. More than a third of them include at least one person aged 65 or older.

▶ Household and family incomes in Oconee County are lower than incomes statewide by about \$5,000. Education is a key indicator of current and future earnings potential, and the percentage of county residents without a high school education dropped nearly 10 percent from 2000-2016.

RACIAL COMPOSITION, OCONEE COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITIES, 2016

Jurisdiction	Total	White		African-American		Other Races ¹		Hispanic ²	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Oconee County	75,375	66,486	88.2	5,549	7.4%	3,340	4.4%	3,700	4.9%
Salem	149	145	97.3	0	0.0%	4	2.7%	0	0.0%
Seneca	8,228	5,384	65.4	2,198	26.7	646	7.9%	506	6.1%
Walhalla	4,263	3,483	81.7	373	8.7%	407	9.5%	1,138	26.7%
Westminster	2,482	2,219	89.4	219	8.8%	44	1.8%	17	0.7%
West Union	305	218	71.5	7	2.3%	80	26.2	86	28.2%
South Carolina	4,834,605	3,252,252	67.3	1,322,368	27.4	259,985	5.4%	258,361	5.3%
United States	318,558,162	233,657,078	73.3	40,241,818	12.6	44,659,266	14.0	55,199,107	17.3%

¹Other races also includes persons of two or more races

²Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2012-2016 ACS

▶ Per capita income is highest in areas bordering the lakes and lowest in the rural, southern area of the county. Nearly 19 percent of Oconee County residents live in poverty, higher than the state average of 17.2 percent.

SENIORS AND VETERANS

▶ An aging population can increase demand for services such as adult day care, home meal delivery, in-home respite services, home repair and modification, transportation services, long-term care and focused recreational and fitness programs. Oconee County has the highest percentage of residents 65 years and older among the six Appalachian Region counties at 21.5 percent.

▶ Nearly one fourth of the county’s senior residents and 21.3 percent of males are

veterans. Veterans comprise 10.8 percent of the County population.

▶ More than 60 percent of living veterans in Oconee County are aged 65 years or older and more than one third of all Oconee County veterans are disabled.

HOMELESS

▶ The most recent point-in-time count was conducted in January 2018. At that time, 54 people were counted as homeless in Oconee County, a drop from the 63 counted in 2017.

▶ While those numbers appear low, thankfully, it is worth noting that households that spend more than half of their income on housing and related expenses are particularly at risk for homelessness, and 2,020 homeowners in Oconee County fall into that category.



1940

Oconee County has
HIGHEST % OF RESIDENTS 65 YEARS+
 among the six
 Appalachian Region counties

ON THE UP AND UP

Housing market sees recovery, inventory shortage



CAITLIN HERRINGTON | THE JOURNAL

Andy and Bethany DeVries moved to Seneca from Indiana when his job transferred him to the area. They're renting a house while they get to know the area and discover where they want to buy a place to call home for them and their four children, Connor, Christian, Chandler and Chesney.

— BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON | THE JOURNAL —

Though the Upstate didn't take the worst hit in the housing market crash of 2008, home prices have stabilized and people are ready to make some moves, according to local Realtors.

The problem is, for most buyers, inventory is becoming scarce as prices inch back up.

"Home prices are way back up again, so buyers are more hesitant to pull the trigger," local Realtor Rita Meigs said. "They're paying a lot more than they were even a couple of years ago for the same type of house."

While short sales and foreclosures were the norm for a while — and "flipping" houses a popular trend — those tend to be rare finds in Oconee these days. Houses that could have been sold at a loss during the downturn were instead rented out, according to April Cope of Cope Property Management.

She and her husband, Kevin, who runs Cope and Company Real Estate, have seen the market shift more than once during their time in the real estate world.

"We got an influx of people wanting to rent their lake homes at the crash, then we saw people wanting to sell their lake homes," Cope said. "We had people wanting to rent those lake homes because they wanted to sell somewhere else and couldn't.

"That dropped off and everyone just started selling their rental homes. Somewhere in the last two years, maybe, we've seen many of those rentals that we have being sold."

The solution now, according to Cope and Meigs, tends to be for buyers to build a new home rather than wait for something they love to come on the market. Hurdles exist there as well, since material prices have increased and many skilled workers gave up their trades in lieu of more stable work in the crash.

"The need, especially in Oconee County right now, is for nice homes \$150,000 and under," Realtor Kevin Cope said. "I do think a 1,000-square-foot home that's done really nice, in an area where people feel safe and that's affordable is what we really need."

Custom builders don't want to touch that stuff right now because there's very little profit margin in it."

Clemson University's popularity has added to the population in Oconee as students have started to spread across county lines to find a place to live, he said, and it draws extra attention to the area for retirees.

"Our cost of living is a lot less expensive than a lot of areas around the United States," Kevin Cope said. "We're close to several major universities, we're four hours from the coast and 45 minutes from the mountains. It's very appealing."

Meigs, who moved to Oconee County in 2000, understands the appeal very well and works hard to find her clients exactly what they want and where they want it.

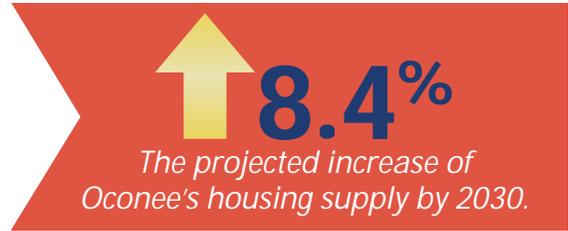
"We take for granted our public busing and transportation that's free and our proximity to so many other great areas without all the busyness that brings on," Meigs said. "I've just never found a small community like this where you feel so safe that has so many amenities."

"Our cost of living is a lot less expensive than a lot of areas around the United States."
— Kevin Cope



OCONEE COUNTY HOUSING

The Housing Element assesses the condition, availability and affordability of Oconee County's housing stock in order to help project housing needs and trends. This element considers both owner-occupied and rental housing needs in the coming decade.



HOUSING GROWTH

► Growth in housing supply is closely associated with population growth. A housing stock that offers variety, affordability and quality can also attract people to a community. Oconee County experienced a 12.2-percent increase in population from 2000 to 2010, accompanied by a 19.7 percent increase in housing units.

► Part of that difference can be attributed to current residents moving to newer homes, resulting in higher housing vacancy rates but no population increase. The housing supply rate from 2000 to 2010 mirrors statewide growth of 21.9 percent.

► The percentage of housing classified as rural in Oconee County is substantially higher than the 43.8 percent of statewide housing considered rural, though the County has become more urban in recent decades. More than 30 percent of homes are now considered urban.

HOUSING UNIT GROWTH, COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITIES, 2010 TO 2016

Jurisdiction	2000 Census	2010 Census	# Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010	2016 ACS	# Change 2010-2016	% Change 2010-2016
Oconee County	32,383	38,763	6,380	19.7%	39,139	376	1.0%
Salem	72	77	5	6.9%	72	-5	-6.5%
Seneca	3,677	4,076	399	10.9%	4,230	154	3.8%
Walhalla	1,705	1,852	147	8.6%	1,896	44	2.4%
Westminster	1,333	1,227	-106	-8.0%	1,281	54	4.4%
West Union	145	150	5	3.4%	153	3	2.0%

SOURCES: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS AND 2012-2016 ACS

HOUSING OUTLOOK

► Single-family homes are the most common type of residential use, accounting for 98.2 percent of all residential land in Oconee County. Less than two percent of residential land is in use as multi-family. There are more than 3,000 properties in use for agriculture or forestry that also include a residential use.

► Oconee's housing supply is projected to increase by 8.4 percent — an addition of 43,518 units — by 2030.

Census number of 63.2 percent. These numbers exceed the statewide percentages of 61.5 percent in 2000 and 62.9 percent in 2016.

► Manufactured homes account for 8,037 housing units in Oconee County, or more than 20 percent of the county's total units. This amounts to a reduction of nearly 5 percent from the 2000 Census figures.

AGE AND CONDITION

► The median age of Oconee's houses is on par with the state. The median construction year is 1986, though homes in the municipalities have a few more years on them. The median year built in Westminster is 1966, while Salem and Seneca both have a median year of 1978.

► It should be no surprise the areas with the newest housing units are bordered by Lake Hartwell and Lake Keowee.

HOUSING TYPE

► As of 2016, more than 67 percent of all housing units in the county were single-family, detached homes, a slight increase from the 2000

OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

► Oconee's housing market has a 21.1-percent vacancy rate, a substantial and surprising increase from the 15.7 rate in 2000. It is also higher than the state's vacancy rate of 16.1 percent.





► Multiple Listing Service data in Oconee reveals a steady increase in residential sales from 2009-2017 though sales prices decreased annually from 2010-2012. The financial crisis of 2008 is a likely explanation for that downturn. The median low reached \$143,750 before rising to a median high in \$179,500 in November 2018.

► Nearly one third of county homeowners pay housing costs totaling 30 percent of their income, slightly higher than the state rate of 28.6 percent of “cost burdened” residents. Of greater concern are the 8.5 percent of homeowners and 23.7 percent of renters who spend more than half their income on housing-related costs.

state, renters are paying less than state median rates. Only 17.5 percent of county renters live in housing that costs more than \$1,000 per month — significantly lower than the 25.8 percent of renters statewide.

HOUSING AND OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

► In contrast to the state totals, Oconee County has more renter-occupied homes than owner-occupied homes.

► Adults 65 or older are the householders for nearly one-third of Oconee’s housing units, higher than the state percentage of 25.7 percent. More than 32 percent of householders in the county are between the ages of 35-54, which is lower than the state average of 36 percent.

► While Oconee’s homeowners paid, on average, \$7,500 more for their home than the rest of the

OCONEE COUNTY HOMES + Renter-Occupied Homes - Owner-Occupied Homes

RACE OF HOUSEHOLDER, 2016

Jurisdiction	Total Occupied Units	Householder Race						Hispanic*	
		White		African-American		Other			
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Oconee County	30,867	27,910	90.4%	2,057	6.7%	900	2.9%	1,088	3.5%
Salem	64	64	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Seneca	3,826	2,662	69.6%	996	26.0%	168	4.4%	182	4.8%
Walhalla	1,594	1,299	81.5%	128	8.0%	167	10.5%	334	21.0%
Westminster	1,021	931	91.2%	68	6.7%	22	2.2%	6	0.6%
West Union	128	107	83.6%	3	2.3%	18	14.1%	28	21.9%
South Carolina	1,839,041	1,294,880	70.4%	477,479	26.0%	66,682	3.6%	67,116	3.6%

*Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race. SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2012-2016 ACS

PUBLIC HOUSING

► There are eight public housing developments in Oconee County — three of which are located within city limits — that provide a total of 228 housing units for qualifying residents. The state regional housing authority provides general administration and oversight for these.

► Among assisted rental units, 99 are allocated to elderly residents and 12 units provide support for people with disabilities. As the population ages, availability of appropriate housing for seniors becomes increasingly important. As of 2016, an estimated 38.5 percent of Oconee County residents aged 65 or older are disabled.



Citizen Survey of Population and Housing

This survey was developed as a means of providing the county with some understanding of the things you like about Oconee County, as well as the issues that concern you. The survey is also your chance to dream a little, to give us your vision of the county's future and how you think we might arrive at that destination.

Visit upstatetoday.com/survey to complete survey or drop off completed survey at your local library, The Journal at 210 W. North 1st Street in Seneca, or the Oconee County Planning Department at 415 S. Pine Street in Walhalla.

- Of the following, which applies to you?
 - I live and work in Oconee County.
 - I live in Oconee County, but work outside the county.
 - I live outside Oconee County, but work in Oconee County.
 - I do not live or work in Oconee County.
- Would you consider living in a downtown area in Oconee County?
 - Yes
 - No
- How far do you live from your workplace?
 - 5 miles or less
 - Between 5 miles and 10 miles
 - Between 10 miles and 20 miles
 - Between 20 miles and 25 miles
- What type of housing do you live in?
 - Single Family residential (stick-built)
 - Manufactured housing
 - Apartment
 - Townhome
 - Condominium
 - Retirement home
- Do you rent or own your home?
 - Rent
 - Own
- What type of housing is most needed in Oconee County? (choose one)
 - Single family homes
 - Multi-family
 - Manufactured homes
 - "Tiny" Homes
 - Retirement homes
- What utilities are available at your home? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Public water	<input type="checkbox"/> Well water
<input type="checkbox"/> Public sewer	<input type="checkbox"/> Septic system
<input type="checkbox"/> Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste pickup
<input type="checkbox"/> High speed internet	<input type="checkbox"/> Recycling
- What monthly payment can you afford?
 - \$250
 - \$250 to \$500
 - \$500 TO \$750
 - \$750 TO \$1000
 - \$1000 +
- Where do you think most future housing growth will occur?

<input type="checkbox"/> Seneca	<input type="checkbox"/> Fairplay
<input type="checkbox"/> Walhalla	<input type="checkbox"/> Townville
<input type="checkbox"/> Westminster	<input type="checkbox"/> Oakway
<input type="checkbox"/> West Union	<input type="checkbox"/> Around Lake Keowee
<input type="checkbox"/> Salem	<input type="checkbox"/> Around Lake Hartwell
<input type="checkbox"/> Mountain Rest	<input type="checkbox"/> Madison
<input type="checkbox"/> Long Creek	
- What additional kinds of housing facilities does Oconee County need to accommodate an aging population?
 - Single-family housing
 - Multi-family housing (apartments, condos, townhomes, etc.)
 - Retirement communities
 - Assisted-Living facilities
 - Nursing homes
 - Other
- Where do you think additional housing that has facilities for an aging population, should be located? (These are broad areas, not specific locations.)
 - Seneca
 - Walhalla
 - Westminster
 - West Union
 - Salem
 - Mountain Rest
 - Long Creek
 - Fairplay
 - Townville
 - Oakway
 - Around Lake Keowee
 - Around Lake Hartwell

YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO

WIN \$100

just for voicing your opinion!

Submit your completed survey and be entered to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards! Winners will be drawn on April 10 and announced April 12.

*Name: _____

*Ph. #: _____

*E-mail: _____

*Indicates required field so prize winners may be contacted. Personal information for contest will not be kept or sold. Must be age 18 or over to be eligible to win prize. Employees of Oconee County or The Journal and their families are ineligible. Limit of one prize per household. Please note that survey prizes are not being funded by Oconee County but have been generously donated by The Journal.

- Do you think more affordable housing is needed in Oconee County?
 - Yes
 - No
- In order to attract younger workers and professionals, and to keep our local youth in Oconee County, what kinds of facilities does Oconee County need, or need more of?
 - Shopping
 - Entertainment
 - Restaurants/Bars
 - Theatres/Performance venues
 - More County parks
 - Outdoor recreation
 - Other _____
- Please select the range that includes your age.
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-64
 - 65 or Older
- What is your zip code?

- What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future

April 2019: Natural Resources & Community Facilities

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE OCONEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ...

is a state-required document that provides guidance for the county — the administration, council and private citizens — for the coming decade.

To get input from the community for the goals and strategies in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the county is producing a series of special sections to break down the data and offer you a chance to provide feedback.

This is the second of five monthly sections that will cover the 10 elements of the plan.

Natural Resources

Nestled at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains and featuring lakes Jocassee, Keowee and Hartwell, Oconee County has abundant natural resources. Even a quick trip to the grocery store can showcase the county's multiple lakes, parks and trails, rivers, streams, waterfalls and forests.

These natural resources provide land for development with scenic and environmental amenities, while offering an opportunity for sustainable development. The appeal of natural resources — for aesthetic and recreational use — can also increase land development pressures to accommodate both new residents and tourists.

The resulting challenge is to achieve a balance in natural resources planning that promotes productive use of land and resources, maintenance of critical ecological functions, and protection of residents and property from natural hazards.

The natural resources element includes information on local geographic and geologic conditions, climate, agricultural and forest lands, plant and animal habitats, scenic areas, water resources and other factors that significantly impact the natural environment and shape the future development of Oconee County. A thorough look at the county's natural resources inventory must be taken into account during planning efforts to avoid depletion or destruction of sensitive, and often irreplaceable, assets. Valuing and investing in efforts to protect and improve our natural resources supports the quality of life for all county residents.

Community Facilities

This element focuses on the activities and entities that are essential to maintaining Oconee County's health, safety, growth and quality lifestyle. These include government facilities and infrastructure, fire protection, health and emergency medical services, education, libraries and cultural facilities.

Continued growth has resulted in increased demands on community facilities throughout the county. Governmental facilities, like the Department on Health and Social Services, have been expanded to provide much-needed space to better serve citizens. Continued renovations and maintenance of existing facilities has continued to be a part of the ongoing work of the county.

Several changes have occurred in the area of Emergency Management and Fire Service throughout the county, which should continue to serve the county well in the years to come.

On the whole, Oconee County is served by modern, relatively efficient community facilities. In fact, compared to those living in other areas of similar size and population, Oconee's residents are fortunate in many ways.

The challenge facing the county, however, is not to simply maintain what exists now, but to provide for the expansions and upgrades that will be necessary in the coming years. Most sources indicate that the population of Oconee County will continue to grow rapidly in the foreseeable future. Therefore, for citizens to maintain control of how their community develops, it will require planning years in advance. If the county is not adequately prepared to manage future challenges, it will be run over by them. The area's community facilities, which play a major role in establishing and maintaining the county's lifestyle, are accordingly of vital interest.

Let our advance
worrying
become advance
thinking and
planning.

— Winston Churchill

Questions or comments?

You can reach Oconee County Planning Director Adam Chapman at achapman@oconeesc.com or (864) 364-5103.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

District Drop-Ins

Wednesday, April 24

District 3: Seneca Library • 4 p.m.

Thursday, May 2

District 1: Keowee Elementary • 6 p.m.

Thursday, May 14

District 4: Long Creek Fire Dept. • 4 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22

District 5: Ravenel Elementary • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23

Budget, Finance and Administration Committee • 4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

Thursday, May 2

Parks, Recreation and Tourism • 12 p.m.

Monday, May 6

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7

Budget, Finance and Administration Committee • 4:30 p.m.

Transportation Committee • 4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

Monday, May 13

Agricultural Advisory Board • 6:30 p.m.

Monday, May 20

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 21

Budget, Finance and Administration Committee • 4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

All meetings take place in council chambers at 415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla.

▶ **Can't make the meeting but still want to keep up?**

Oconee County meetings are recorded live and available to watch at [YouTube.com/YourOconee](https://www.youtube.com/YourOconee)



OCONEE COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources Element takes a look at the opportunities and assets Oconee County has by simply existing. This chapter showcases the things we don't have much control over — from the air we breathe to the water we drink — and the ways we spend our time outdoors and utilize the land.

AIR QUALITY

▶ As of February, all 46 South Carolina counties are within the threshold for ambient air quality. However, increased urbanization in the nearby Greenville-Anderson-Mauldin area may impact the air quality in Oconee County.

▶ Local leaders should monitor the factors that contribute to higher ozone levels to maintain acceptable levels and ensure the health of the county.

LAND RESOURCES

▶ With more than 626 square miles, Oconee is the 26th largest county in the state. Nearly 50 of those are water — primarily lakes Jocassee, Keowee and Hartwell.

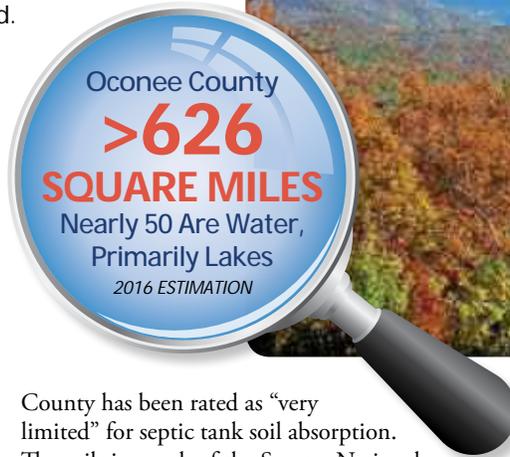
▶ Soil erosion is a concern for more than 60 percent of the county. Less than half of the county's land is considered to be at moderate risk of erosion, and 15.4 percent of the county has a "severe" or "very severe" rating.

▶ The soils at the most severe risk are in the Sumter National Forest. Loss of soil productivity and off-site damage is more likely on these lands where erosion control measures are typically costly and impractical to employ.

▶ Elevation in Oconee County ranges from 638-3,180 feet above sea level.

DEVELOPMENT LIMITATIONS

▶ According to the USDA, more than two-thirds of land in Oconee



County has been rated as "very limited" for septic tank soil absorption. The soils in much of the Sumter National Forest are included in this soil rating, in large part due to the steeper sloping topography.

▶ An additional 30.2 percent of county soils are rated as "somewhat limited," indicating that the soils have features that are moderately favorable for use as a septic system absorption field.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

▶ There are 32 county and municipal outdoor park and recreation facilities encompassing nearly 553 acres in Oconee County. Eleven of the

parks and facilities are owned and maintained by Oconee County, eight by the city of Seneca, seven by the city of Walhalla, five by the city of Westminster and one by the town of West Union.

SURFACE WATER

▶ Oconee County has an abundance of surface water generally sustained by rainfall, including several major water bodies as well as numerous rivers, creeks, ponds and streams. Surface water accounts for more than 99 percent of the public water supply in Oconee County.

THE LAKES

▶ At 56,000 acres, Lake Hartwell is the largest water body that extends into Oconee County. Full pool elevation for Lake Hartwell is 660 feet above mean sea level, with a maximum depth of 185 feet and an average depth of 45 feet.

▶ Lake Keowee was formed in 1970 and has two distinct halves. Much of the 18,372-acre lake is 800 feet above mean sea level, with a maximum depth of 297 feet and average depth of 53 feet.

▶ Lake Jocassee was created in 1973 with the construction of the Jocassee Dam. The 7,565-acre has a full pool elevation of 1,110 feet above mean



sea level. It has an average depth of 157 feet, though its deepest point is 351 feet.

WATER USE

▶ Water suppliers withdraw more than 10.8 million gallons of water daily in Oconee County for domestic, commercial, industrial and public use. Of the water withdrawn, 0.24 million gallons are drawn from surface water sources such as lakes, rivers, and streams and 10.58 million gallons from groundwater sources beneath the earth's surface.

▶ There are nine watersheds — five in the Seneca River sub-basin and four in the Tugaloo River sub-basin — that impact Oconee County. The Chauga, Coneross and Little River-Lake Keowee watersheds cover the largest areas.

▶ An additional 45.9 million gallons of the



Brasstown Falls

county's groundwater were withdrawn for irrigation use and 30.49 million gallons for golf course use.

SURFACE WATER



Water suppliers withdraw **>10.8 MILLION GALLONS** of water daily in Oconee County

SOURCE: USGS NATIONAL HYDROGRAPHY DATASET, DECEMBER 2018



Foothills Trail

FROM DISMAL TO DREAMY

It was a miserable, rainy day the first time I laid eyes on Oconee County.

My sister, who lived in Marietta, Ga., when I was interviewing for my first real “big girl” job, told me I just had to apply to The Journal. She'd been camping with some friends who lived in Anderson and thought the area would be right up my alley.



CAT'S MEOW

CAITLIN HERRINGTON

I did some research and found I agreed, applied and made the trip up for a January interview.

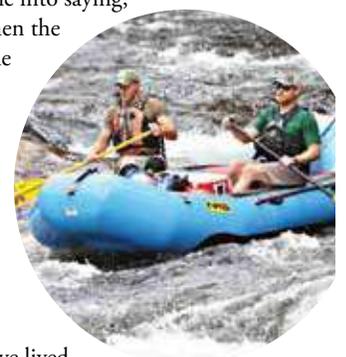
I hated it.

The weather was dismal, I couldn't find the waterfall I wanted to visit and — even though I clearly rocked my interview — I just didn't have a great feeling about Oconee County.

I'll say it was the free ice cream that tricked me into saying, “Yes,” when the offer came in, but

it's the mountains and rivers that are keeping me here. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't excited about The Journal's ice cream freezer being re-stocked for summer, though.

I have friends who have lived



here their whole lives and not taken advantage of the parks, trails, scenic views and waterfalls we have here. It boggles my mind.

Have you looked in our backyard lately?

Notice I say “look” — I understand not everyone can or is willing to hike up their socks for a camping trip on the Chattooga or a trek on the Foothills Trail. But goodness, just look up on a clear day coming down Wells Highway from Seneca High School and tell me this place isn't special.

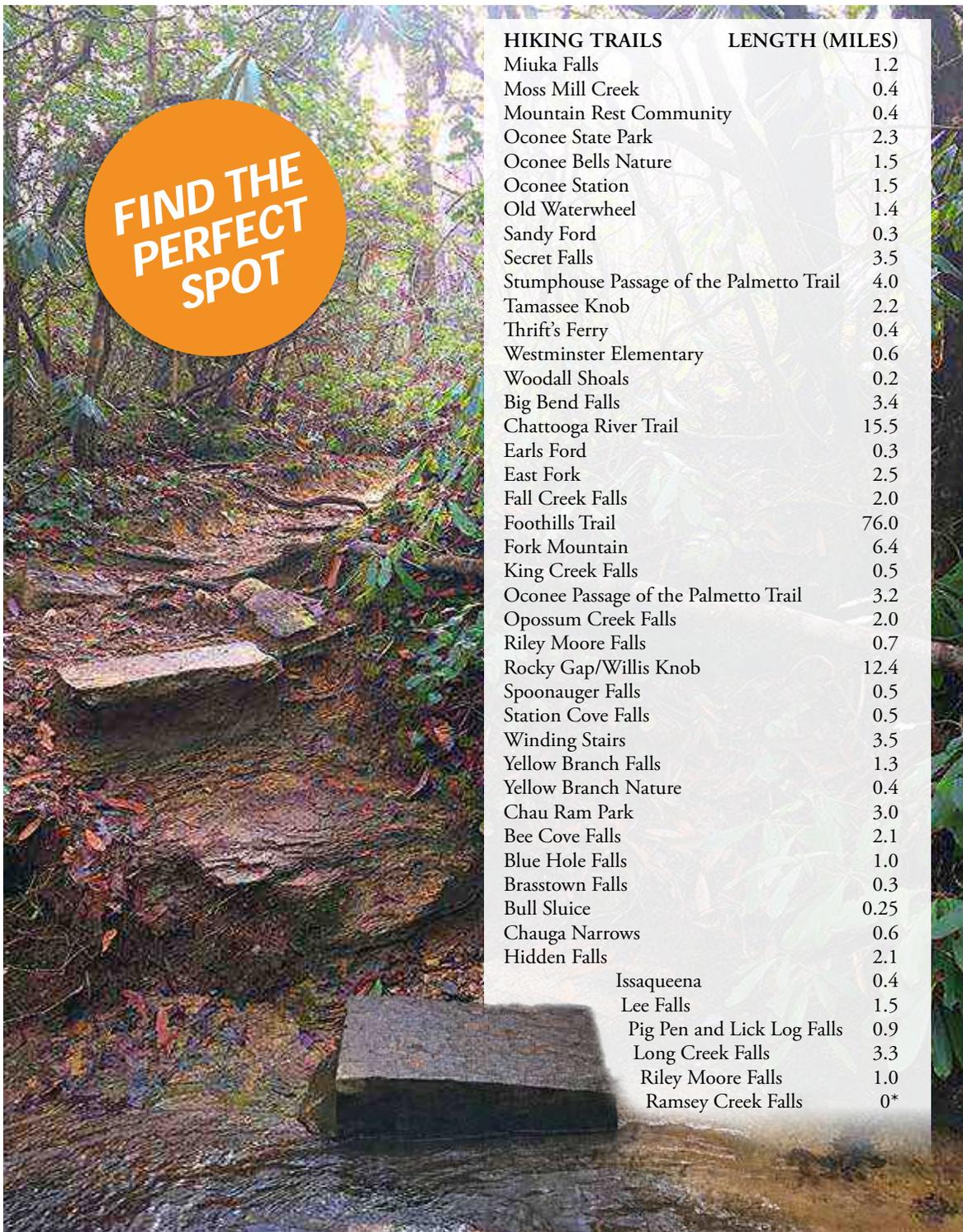
Take a slow, winding drive up to Issaqueena Falls and walk down to the observation deck. If you don't have a vehicle that can handle the gravel roads and potholes of Horsepasture Road to access Jumping Off Rock, the roads are paved all the way to the Oscar Wigington overlook up in Salem. Either spot produces a dreamy view of Lake Jocassee without much physical effort.

HAVE YOU LOOKED IN OUR BACKYARD LATELY?

For those who can, take a hike. I highly recommend trips to waterfalls that eventually flow into the Chattooga River as the best — and sometimes only — way to cool off during the summer. It's nearly impossible not to feel a chill the first time you dip your toes in the water.

As much as I clearly love ice cream, it doesn't quite do the trick after a 3-mile hike in 85-degree weather.

Caitlin Herrington is the Lifestyle Editor at The Journal. You can find her chasing waterfalls or at cherrington@upstatetoday.com.



HIKING TRAILS	LENGTH (MILES)
Miuka Falls	1.2
Moss Mill Creek	0.4
Mountain Rest Community	0.4
Oconee State Park	2.3
Oconee Bells Nature	1.5
Oconee Station	1.5
Old Waterwheel	1.4
Sandy Ford	0.3
Secret Falls	3.5
Stumphouse Passage of the Palmetto Trail	4.0
Tamassee Knob	2.2
Thrift's Ferry	0.4
Westminster Elementary	0.6
Woodall Shoals	0.2
Big Bend Falls	3.4
Chattooga River Trail	15.5
Earls Ford	0.3
East Fork	2.5
Fall Creek Falls	2.0
Foothills Trail	76.0
Fork Mountain	6.4
King Creek Falls	0.5
Oconee Passage of the Palmetto Trail	3.2
Opossum Creek Falls	2.0
Riley Moore Falls	0.7
Rocky Gap/Willis Knob	12.4
Spoonauger Falls	0.5
Station Cove Falls	0.5
Winding Stairs	3.5
Yellow Branch Falls	1.3
Yellow Branch Nature	0.4
Chau Ram Park	3.0
Bee Cove Falls	2.1
Blue Hole Falls	1.0
Brasstown Falls	0.3
Bull Sluice	0.25
Chauga Narrows	0.6
Hidden Falls	2.1
Issaqueena	0.4
Lee Falls	1.5
Pig Pen and Lick Log Falls	0.9
Long Creek Falls	3.3
Riley Moore Falls	1.0
Ramsey Creek Falls	0*

SOURCES: OCONEE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION, SCTRAILS.NET, USDA FOREST SERVICE, FEBRUARY 2019 *ADA ACCESSIBLE WATERFALL



OCONEE COUNTY COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities provide many tangible benefits for the county, ranging from health and public safety to education and preserving history. As the county continues to grow, so should these facilities — in a responsible manner that matches the needs of the people they serve.

GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES

▶ Most of Oconee County's government offices are county owned. While the majority of the offices were scattered throughout Walhalla, most were relocated to the Pine Street Administrative Complex in 1999. As a result, the citizens of Oconee County are able to conduct most governmental business in one location.

▶ The county's road and bridges department, solid waste, and the vehicle maintenance facilities are now all located on Wells Highway in the Seneca area. The present county courthouse, completed in 2003, is located in downtown Walhalla.

LIBRARIES

▶ Oconee County boasts a library system that has, since 1948, grown to include the main library in Walhalla and branches in Seneca, Westminster and Salem. A bookmobile services the rural areas of the county.

▶ Oconee's libraries utilize an internet-based catalog system, enabling users to take advantage of the latest information technology.

FIRE PROTECTION

▶ There are currently 17 fire districts in Oconee County, with the county providing equipment for fire protection in the unincorporated areas of the districts.

▶ There are five full-time fire departments in Oconee County with the personnel paid by the municipalities or, in the case of Keowee Key, by fees collected from property owners.

▶ Oconee established countywide Emergency Service Response in June 2007. A relative

Most government offices are
COUNTY OWNED
and located on Pine Street in Walhalla

measure of the success of the fire protection system is shown in the ISO ratings — used to determine fire insurance costs — which vary from 4 to 10, with the lowest found in Seneca and the highest found in the rural areas.

▶ The county's ISO ratings will be reassessed in summer 2019.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

▶ Unincorporated areas of the county are protected by the Oconee County Sheriff's Office. Although the majority of deputies are focused on patrol duties, a number of different specialties exist within the department.



▶ As urbanization increases, the county should look at optimal ratios of officers to population, additional funding to maintain and improve services, potential additional command centers and tools like intergovernmental agreements.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL

▶ Emergency medical service in Oconee County is provided by Prisma Health's ambulance fleet with paramedics available 24 hours per day.

▶ Additionally, all fire departments within Oconee County have CPR/AED equipment and trained personnel to assist with medical response when needed. Two special forces — Oconee Special Rescue Team and Oconee County Dive Team — conduct unique rescue operations. These teams are equipped to handle calls such as wilderness searches and swift-water rescues.

HEALTH SERVICES

▶ The cornerstone of Oconee County's healthcare system is Prisma Health Oconee Medical Campus, which includes a 169-bed hospital and a 120-bed nursing and rehabilitation center in Seneca.





SPECIAL FORCES
conduct unique rescue operations for OC

▶ Numerous physician offices are located throughout the county. Mergers in recent years have given citizens access to a larger network of specialists located in and outside the county.

WATER TREATMENT

▶ There are five major public water providers located in Oconee County with an overall capacity exceeding 14 million gallons. Recent upgrades in some systems have greatly increased the volume.

▶ In addition, a number of private suppliers offer service to residents living in developments across Oconee County.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

▶ Public sewage treatment is provided by the Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority, which operates a treatment facility that primarily serves the municipal wastewater collection systems of Seneca, Walhalla and Westminster.

▶ Plans are also underway to establish sewer service to Oconee County's I-85 corridor, an effort



anticipated to dramatically expand the area's ability to attract new businesses.

▶ As well as the public sewer system, several private providers offer service to some of the larger residential developments in the county.

SOLID WASTE

▶ The Oconee County Solid Waste Department provides residents with 11 manned and two unmanned convenience

EDUCATION

centers located across the county. Currently, all of the county's solid waste is hauled to landfill facilities in Homer, Ga. The county does, however, maintain a Construction and Demolition Landfill near Seneca.

▶ Oconee County is home to 16 public educational facilities. The majority are owned and operated by the School District of Oconee County, though there are a few private and faith-based schools. SDOC also operates an adult education program, an alternative school program and the Hamilton Career Center.

▶ Though neighboring counties provide many post-secondary education options, the Oconee County campus of Tri-County Tech opened in the fall of 2018.



16 *Public Educational Facilities in Oconee County*

TRI-COUNTY TECH

Oconee County campus opened in 2018



Citizen Survey of Natural Resources & Community Facilities

This survey was developed as a means of providing the county with some understanding of the things you like about Oconee County, as well as the issues that concern you. The survey is also your chance to dream a little, to give us your vision of the county's future and how you think we might arrive at that destination.

Visit upstatetoday.com/survey to submit online or drop off completed survey at your local library, *The Journal* at 210 W. North 1st Street in Seneca, or the Oconee County Planning Department at 415 S. Pine Street in Walhalla.

1. How important are the following?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	No opinion
▶ Expanding existing/developing new parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Improving the quality of existing parks/recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Growing a network of greenways/bike trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Promoting development that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Preserving or enhancing scenic views	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Preserving or enhancing access to parks and natural environments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How important is preservation of:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	No opinion
▶ Farmland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Lakes/waterways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Historic structures/places	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Scenic views	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Forests/wilderness areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How important is mitigating the impact of drought, flooding, landslides and other environmental hazards?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	No opinion
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Have you visited any of the following?

- South Cove County Park
- Chau Ram County Park
- High Falls County Park
- Lake Hartwell State Park
- Stumphouse Tunnel Park
- Sumter National Forest
- Devils Fork State Park
- Oconee State Park
- Twin Lakes
- Chattooga River
- Coneross Point

5. When did you last visit a county or state park?

- In the last week
- In the last month
- In the last 6 months
- In the last year
- More than a year
- Never

6. Do you have convenient access to recreation facilities, including access to natural places?

Yes No

7. Where would you like to see more household garbage/recycling centers located? (Note: These are general areas, not specific locations.)

- Seneca
- Walhalla
- Westminster
- West Union
- Salem
- Mountain Rest
- Long Creek
- Fair Play
- Townville
- Around Lake Keowee
- Oakway
- Around Lake Hartwell

8. Would you support additional protections for the land around bodies of water to help mitigate pollution, flooding and erosion?

Yes No No opinion

9. Do the county's natural resources play a part in why you live, work or play in the area?

Yes No

YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO

WIN \$100

just for voicing your opinion!

Submit your completed survey and be entered to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards! Surveys must be submitted by May 8 to be eligible to win. Winners will be drawn and announced May 10.

*Name: _____

*Ph. #: _____

*E-mail: _____

*Indicates required field so prize winners may be contacted. Personal information for contest will not be kept or sold. Must be age 18 or over to be eligible to win prize. Employees of Oconee County or The Journal and their families are ineligible. Limit of one prize per household. Please note that survey prizes are not being funded by Oconee County but have been generously donated by The Journal.

10. What features would you like to see added to the libraries?

- Public meeting space
- Offices
- Creative studio space
- Space for tutoring/small meetings
- Other _____

11. Addressing some of the issues identified in this survey may require additional revenue. Please rank your TOP 3 choices to find this funding:

- ___ User fees
- ___ Issue bonds
- ___ License, permit and utility fees
- ___ Establish a county sales tax
- ___ Hospitality and accommodations tax
- ___ Other _____
- ___ Property tax increase
- ___ Capital projects tax

12. What is your age range?

- 12 or under
- 13-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-84
- 85+

13. What is your zip code?

14. What is your gender?

M F

Additional comments/suggestions may be attached or emailed to achapman@oconeesc.com

YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future



May 2019: Cultural Resources & Transportation

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE OCONEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ...

is a state-required document that provides guidance for the county — the administration, council and private citizens — for the coming decade.

To get input from the community for the goals and strategies in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the county is producing a series of special sections to break down the data and offer you a chance to provide feedback.

This is the third of five monthly sections that will cover the 10 elements of the plan.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources contribute greatly to the defining character of Oconee County and its communities. This element of the comprehensive plan includes information on historic structures and buildings, festivals, entertainment venues, unique residential areas and educational and religious institutions.

Preservation and enhancement of the county's abundant historic and cultural resources directly benefit the community through increased tourism activity and revenue. It also emphasizes revitalization of core commercial and residential districts, higher property values and enhanced attractiveness to new employers and residents.

Small towns and rural communities with attractive cultural, scenic and historic resources are among the fastest-growing heritage tourism and retirement destinations. The ability of Oconee County to attract and retain visitors, retirees and professionals rests largely on the quality of life offered by a rich historic and cultural resource base.

Transportation

This element focuses on Oconee County's transportation system, a major factor in our prosperity and way of life. The system is made up of roads, airports, railroads, mass transit routes, bicycle routes and pedestrian routes, and is owned and maintained by a mix of public and private entities.

Oconee County's location at the edge of the mountains has played a major role in the history of transportation in the county. The ridges and valleys that serve as a beautiful backdrop to the natural features that attract so many of today's visitors have also acted as an impediment to easy travel.

Even today, it is possible to see the remains of portions of many of those paths and wagon roads, winding through the hills and along the ridges, establishing the routes that much of our modern transportation system continues to follow.

So, unlike some of our neighboring counties, our transportation goals must be tempered by the knowledge that nature itself has imposed additional hurdles that, many times, make the simplest solution, in the end, less than satisfactory.

It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan.
— Eleanor Roosevelt



Blue Ridge Arts Center

Questions or comments?

You can reach Oconee County Planning Director Adam Chapman at achapman@oconeesc.com or (864) 364-5103.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Monday, June 3
Planning Commission
6 p.m.

Tuesday, June 4
Planning & Economic Development Committee
4:30 p.m.

Real Estate, Facilities and Land Management Committee
4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

Monday, June 10
Agricultural Advisory Board
6:30 p.m.

Monday, June 17
Planning Commission
6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 18
Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Committee
4 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

All meetings take place in council chambers at 415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla.

▶ **Can't make the meeting but still want to keep up?**
Oconee County meetings are recorded live and available to watch at [YouTube.com/YourOconee](https://www.youtube.com/YourOconee)



OCONEE COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCES

An area with deep Native American and agrarian roots, Oconee is rife with opportunities to preserve its history while expanding and embracing opportunities to celebrate it. From festivals and entertainment venues that feature traditional music to art galleries that add a splash of color, there are several ways to enjoy and relish in what makes the county stand apart from its neighbors.



Oconee History Museum



Westminster Music Centre



Oconee County is home to **4 HISTORIC DISTRICTS** and **16 HISTORIC SITES**

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, which includes 1,500 markers statewide, with 23+ in Oconee County.

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

FINE & PERFORMING ARTS CENTERS & RELATED COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- The Walhalla Performing Arts Center
- Westminster Music Centre
- Gateway Arts Center
- Oconee Community Theatre
- Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail
- Young Appalachian Musicians (*subsidiary of Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music*)
- Blue Ridge Arts Center
- Silver Dollar Music Hall

and offers spectacular mountain views from the North Carolina border to Oconee State Park.

LIBRARIES

► The Oconee County Public Library was established in 1948 in Walhalla. The first branch locations were added in Westminster in 1950 and



OCONEE'S NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

NEWRY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Listed in 1982, includes 1,818 properties in a turn-of-the-century textile mill village built between 1893 and 1910 in the Little River Valley

OCONEE STATE PARK DISTRICT

Listed in 2004, the Civilian Conservation Corps project from the Great Depression era includes 63 contributing resources around a man-made lake

RAM CAT ALLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Listed in 2000, includes 21 commercial buildings in downtown Seneca that exemplify development around the railroad systems

SENECA HISTORIC DISTRICT

Listed in 1974 and 1987, includes two areas with three churches and 20 homes in a variety of styles, including Victorian, bungalow, Tudor revival and four-square

The LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY collection is housed in the main library in Walhalla.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, 2019

Property	Listed
Alexander-Cannon-Hill House (Seneca)	1972
Ellicott Rock (Salem)	1974
Faith Cabin Library (Seneca)	2012
Keil Farm (Walhalla)	1998
Long Creek Academy (Long Creek)	1987
McPhail Angus Farm (Seneca)	2007
Oconee County Cage (Walhalla)	1982
Oconee Station (Salem)	1971
Old Pickens Presbyterian Church (Seneca)	1996
Retreat Rosenwald School (Westminster)	2011
Russell House and Farmstead (Mountain Rest)	1988
Westminster Depot (Westminster)	1976
St. John's Lutheran Church (Walhalla)	1980
Stumphouse Tunnel Complex (Walhalla)	1971
Tamassee DAR School (Tamassee)	2012
Walhalla Graded School (Walhalla)	1992

SOURCE: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, 2019

in Salem in 1952, followed by Seneca in 1953. The system also provides monthly bookmobile service to outlying rural areas.

The system had 44,959 registered patrons and 225,158 visitors in 2018.

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,



Jazz On The Alley

as well as local histories, family histories, cemetery records and a small collection of local historical maps.

The libraries offer learning opportunities and community events such as movie nights, writing contests and craft workshops.

EDUCATION 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

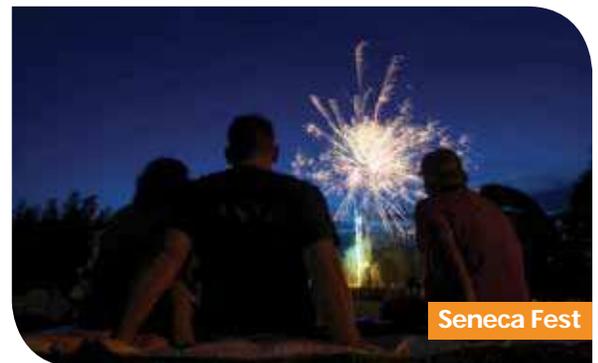
SOURCE: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, 2019

music programs are provided to more than 10,400 students each year through the School District of Oconee County.

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 diversified 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.



Seneca Fest

ANNUAL FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Issaqueena's Last Ride Jazz Fest
- Jazz on the Alley
- Wheels in Westminster
- Music on Main
- Westminster Bluegrass Jam
- Seneca Fest
- Cinco De Mayo Celebration
- Long Creek Music Festival
- Fun in the Sun
- Hillbilly Day
- Cruizin' on Main
- S.C. Apple Festival
- Carolina Foothills Heritage Fair
- Road Titans 300
- Tour de Tugaloo
- Oktoberfest
- Brew and 'Que

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

— BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON | THE JOURNAL —

If variety is the spice of life, then it's probably safe to say Oconee County has some pretty spicy roads.

From former wagon trails carved into the mountainsides to Interstate 85 at the southern end, several types of roads serve as daily commutes for Oconee's residents and workforce.

Some of that workforce includes the staff and volunteer firefighters of Oconee County Emergency Services who make trips up winding roads, state highways and interstate alike. If anyone has seen a variety of roads in nearly every muddy, sunny, ice-topped condition, it's the men and women who serve every corner of the county.

Larry Wilks, who has been chief of the Fair Play Fire Department for 26 years, has seen his fair share of wrecks and fires in his more than 30-year firefighting career.

Though the roads may have changed over the years, the biggest hazard he sees on the roadways is the drivers.

"Every time you ride down the road, you see somebody not paying attention, crossing the yellow line or blowing through stoplights just in a hurry to get where they need to be," Wilks said. "When we go to accidents, the cause is usually human error rather than mechanical failure."

When it comes to servicing the smaller roads in his area, there are several plans in place, Wilks said. They know which roads are one-lane or barely two lanes — which can be tricky to take large equipment through.

"Sometimes we have to pull in a driveway and let somebody else pass or, if we're coming through with sirens, they pull off for us to pass," Wilks said. "We do have fire plans in our area and know the various routes in subdivisions where trucks can't pass. Essentially we park the trucks where we can and hike in, but we practice getting to those areas."

Oconee County Emergency Services director Scott Krein said the variety of roads and elevations can be deceiving for many drivers, especially in inclement weather.

"You get in our mountains and there's limited visibility for roadways and driveways that come in," Krein said. "The sight distance was not designed for the speeds we may go. At least once a year, we seem to have unpredictable weather that puts us within one or two degrees of bad weather where, in the mountains, we have a lot of ice and, just down from that, everyone thinks everything's OK."

The road standards have changed a bit over the years as well, Krein said, and as roads are repaired, they're also widened and upgraded to meet new safety criteria.

While the airport plays a role in bringing people to Oconee County, another major factor in the area sees a few more issues with ground transportation. Krein said there are several train crossings in Oconee that have been problematic



"One of the big things that has changed is technology and how we make the roads better sustainable to water," Krein said. "They've designed them now so water will run off instead of pool and, in doing so, they've corrected some of those issues as they widen them."

Both men advised taking it slow — especially on unfamiliar roads or hazardous weather conditions — and heeding to emergency vehicles.

"Don't be slamming on the brakes when you see us coming," Wilks said. "Fire trucks weigh about 36,000 pounds. They don't stop nearly as quickly. Go to the side of the road, pull off if you can pull off, but don't break your vehicle. We don't want to turn around and have to pull you out of a ditch."

in the past with larger vehicles getting stuck or drivers thinking they can race across the tracks before the train arrives.

"We do have a very busy train lane that comes through Oconee," Krein said. "The East Coast transit system comes right through Oconee. You can't outrun the train, and the train can't stop."



OCONEE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

Planes, trains and automobiles — Oconee County has it all and then some. A strong railroad history in the area maintains its presence today, though it's rarely used for local travel. The system of public and private roads is used by pedestrians, bikers, mass transit and everyday commuters in addition to tourists visiting the area.

NATURAL LIMITATIONS

► In spite of the development of safe, modern routes throughout the county, the geography and topography of Oconee County continue to have a major impact on travel through the area. Even the rail system that bisects the county — a part of a major route connecting the northeastern United States to the South — skirts along the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains, following roughly the same course as the major road routes.

With this in mind, as we consider the status of our transportation system, there is no escaping the fact that, as important as travel is to our modern lives, there are practical limits imposed by the surroundings.

OWNERSHIP OF ROADS

► Oconee County is served by more than 2,000 miles of roads, with 1,060 miles comprised of state and federal roads. Those maintained by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) include 8.6 miles of Interstate 85, 50 miles of U.S. highways, 188 miles of primary state routes and 657 miles of secondary state routes.

The U.S. Forest Service maintains 156 miles of roads in the Sumter National Forest.

Oconee County currently maintains almost 1,200 miles of roads, with approximately 400 unpaved.

ROAD CONDITIONS

► Oconee County is currently implementing a systematic approach to evaluating and prioritizing roads for maintenance activities, with safety being of the greatest concern. But the identification of those roads is only one component to improving the system, for there remain impediments to creating a comprehensive program.

Another major hurdle associated with upgrading

the road inventory is the lack of deeded road right-of-way, for in years past, many county roads were taken into the system without any. As a result, a number of roads are maintained with only prescriptive right-of-way, enabling only 'ditch-to-ditch' repairs; no upgrade of work can be performed outside of the existing boundaries of the road, prohibiting any widening that may be needed as a result of increased traffic.

PRIVATE ROADS

► Approximately 625 miles of privately maintained roads are located throughout Oconee

PRIVATE ROADS

PRIVATE DRIVEWAYS serve 0-3 residences, have no design standards and must meet building and fire codes

PRIVATE DRIVES serve 4-10 residences and must have a 20-foot driving surface with 50-foot right-of-ways, appropriate signage, sight distance, and other basic requirements while meeting all applicable building and fire codes

PRIVATE ROADS serve 11 or more residences and must meet most standards applicable for public roads of a similar nature

Oconee County is served by more than **2,000 MILES** of roads.



County. Although most of these are primarily driveways and drives that access private neighborhoods, some are utilized as access to amenities open to the public. Few, if any, however, are considered public thoroughfares. Among the major developments that maintain their own road system are Chickasaw Point, Keowee Key and The Cliffs.

MASS TRANSIT

► Currently, the only mass transit system serving the general public in Oconee County is the Clemson Area Transit System (CAT), which provides free bus service in and around the City of Seneca, and along U.S. 76/123 between Seneca and Clemson.

The success in Seneca has given rise to consideration of expanding the 'CAT Bus' system to the cities of Westminster and Walhalla.

THE ROAD AHEAD

► While an adequate road system is vital for any community's health and economic wellbeing, the impact on an area's scenic attributes and lifestyle resulting from the road may result in losses that are not easily shown on a spreadsheet. As a result, although the costs of establishing a public transportation system may appear on the surface to be greater than simply adding some lanes to a road, over time, the impact on the scenic character



ROAD, RAILWAY & AIRPORT SYSTEMS ARE VITAL to Oconee County's future

and 'small town' feel of an area may actually cost more through lost tourism revenues.

As a result, Oconee County's transportation system, which is focused almost exclusively on transporting people in private automobiles, is limited in sustainability.

AIRPORT

▶ Other small airports located close by Oconee County include the Anderson Regional Airport, which is located off S.C. Highway 24, 3 miles west of the City of Anderson, South Carolina, and has 4 runways.

AIRPORT NEEDS

▶ The Oconee County Airport, already important to the area's economic wellbeing, is positioned to become an even greater asset. The facility, which is located near U.S. 123 in a growing area of the County, offers easy access to destinations throughout the primary development areas of the county, for both business and private customers. Also, its existing linkage with Clemson University provides a foundation for the development of even great partnership, particularly as the school expands its position as one of the premier research institutions in the nation.

RAILROADS

▶ Although rail service played a major role in Oconee County's growth and

development, it has declined significantly in recent decades.

Currently, there are no operating passenger stations or points of access within Oconee County.

Most of the rail traffic moving through Oconee County is dedicated to freight transportation. With the main rail line that parallels U.S. 123 serving as a major artery for Norfolk Southern between Charlotte and Atlanta, many thousands of tons of freight pass through Oconee County on a daily basis. Few local businesses, however, rely



on transporting freight directly to and from their facilities by rail, for most have turned to truck transport, leaving a number of miles of secondary 'spur' rail lines seldom used.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE

▶ On the local level, as new developments and communities are planned, the existence of pedestrian and bicycle friendly routes will serve to attract the attention of developers seeking to take advantage of the growing number of people desiring to reduce the time spent in their cars. Already, the issue of designing walkable and bikeable projects in Oconee County is of growing interest for developers, with the trend expected to continue. Given the growing emphasis on physical activity and healthy lifestyles across America, projects that meet such expectations are likely to prove to be more successful than those that fail to recognize the change.





Citizen Survey of Cultural Resources & Transportation

This survey was developed as a means of providing the county with some understanding of the things you like about Oconee County, as well as the issues that concern you. The survey is also your chance to dream a little, to give us your vision of the county's future and how you think we might arrive at that destination.

Visit upstatetoday.com/survey to submit online or drop off completed survey at your local library, *The Journal* at 210 W. North 1st Street in Seneca, or the Oconee County Planning Department at 415 S. Pine Street in Walhalla.

- How long does it take you to reach a:

	<10 mins	10-20 mins	20-30 mins	30+ mins	N/A
Full-service grocery store	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Medical facility	<input type="checkbox"/>				
School	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shopping/entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
- Do you utilize any of our four Farmers Markets? If so, which ones:
 - FARM Center: Every Saturday 8 a.m.-noon, April-October (located between Seneca and Westminster)
 - Seneca Farmers Market: Tues., Thurs. & Sat. on Main Street, 8 a.m.-noon
 - Walhalla Farmers Market: Saturday 8 a.m.-noon
 - Westminster Farmers Market: June-October, Tuesdays at 4 p.m. at the depot
 - I do not go to any Farmers Markets
- Which of the following cultural sites have you visited?
 - Bertha Lee Strickland Cultural Museum
 - General Store Museum
 - Lunney House Museum
 - Museum of the Cherokee in South Carolina
 - Patriots Hall (Oconee Veterans Museum)
 - Oconee History Museum
 - Oconee Station
 - World of Energy
 - None
- Do you think there are enough entertainment options for the various age groups in the county?
 - Yes
 - No
- Do you live off of a private, county or state-owned road?
 - Private
 - County
 - State
 - I don't know
- What does the County need more:
 - Bike Paths
 - Sidewalks
 - Greenways/Shared-use paths/trails (Swamp Rabbit / Doodle, for example)
 - "Blue ways" (river trails)
- If riding a bike along the side of the road was practical and made safe, would you ride a bike to work, school, shopping or other places around the county?
 - Yes
 - No
- How do you feel about the maintenance of your roads?

	<i>Very Unsafe</i>				<i>Very Safe</i>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
- Have you used the CATbus?
 - Yes
 - No
- If it were available to you, would you ride the CATbus?
 - Yes
 - No
- Would you support additional funding for Oconee County Regional Airport?
 - Yes
 - No

YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO

WIN \$100
just for voicing
your opinion!

Submit your completed survey and be entered to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards! Surveys must be submitted by June 12 to be eligible to win. Winners will be drawn and announced June 14.

*Name: _____

*Ph. #: _____

*E-mail: _____

*Indicates required field so prize winners may be contacted. Personal information for contest will not be kept or sold. Must be age 18 or over to be eligible to win prize. Employees of Oconee County or The Journal and their families are ineligible. Limit of one prize per household. Please note that survey prizes are not being funded by Oconee County but have been generously donated by The Journal.

12. What is your zip code?

13. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

14. Please select the range that includes your age.

- 12 or Under
- 13-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 or Older

Additional comments/
suggestions may be
attached or emailed
to achapman@oconeesc.com



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future



June 2019: Economic Development

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE OCONEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ...

is a state-required document that provides guidance for the county — the administration, council and private citizens — for the coming decade.

To get input from the community for the goals and strategies in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the county is producing a series of special sections to break down the data and offer you a chance to provide feedback.

This is the fourth of five monthly sections that will cover the 10 elements of the plan.

Economic Development

Oconee County possesses the necessary assets to insure a very prosperous economic future. Its workforce has proven itself to be bright, hardworking and able to meet the requirements of a wide variety of businesses. And, with the support of the region's world-class educational and technical training system, virtually any type of operation is able to choose from an large pool of well-qualified, trainable employees.

Already, the county is home to a diversified business base, evidence of the presence of a supportive environment for operations looking to locate in the region. There is little doubt, therefore, that Oconee County has many of the basic tools in place to insure its future economic prosperity. Still, there are some challenges that will have to be overcome before the county's economic potential can be achieved.

Expanding necessary infrastructure will only be accomplished with the cooperation of the cities in Oconee County, as well as other government entities.

Too often in the past, it appears infrastructure projects have been isolated efforts. The cost of development necessitates the sharing of burdens whenever possible, in the end not only both reducing redundancy of effort and the price paid by individual partners, but also magnifying the end results far beyond what could have been achieved singly.

It is imperative, therefore, for all Oconee County governmental entities to look beyond their own immediate interests and cooperate with others around them.

Of all of the potential opportunities for Oconee County's future economic prosperity, perhaps the greatest will prove to be the ability of its leaders to identify, evaluate and plan for every eventuality that may impact the growth of the county.

Such planning should guide all aspects of economic development — land use, infrastructure, labor force and relationships with municipalities and other governmental entities. Oconee has recently seen the fruits of its collaborative labor with the municipalities in its new and very unique workforce development campus.

The establishment and maintenance of a successful economic development program involves focusing the efforts of all aspects of county government on the goal.

There are no isolated decisions. With the proper commitment in place, all other hurdles become much smaller obstacles. The power to insure Oconee County's future success in economic development therefore lies within its grasp.

Questions or comments?

You can reach the Oconee County Planning Department at planninginfo@oconeesc.com or (864) 638-4218

UPCOMING MEETINGS

District Drop-Ins

Tuesday, July 6

Mountain Rest Community Club
6 p.m.

Thursday, July 11

Salem Community Center
6 p.m.

Thursday, July 18

Westminster Depot • 6 p.m.

Thursday, July 25

Fair-Oak Youth Center • 6 p.m.

Monday, July 1

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Monday, July 15

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 16

Transportation Committee
4:30 p.m.

County Council • 6 p.m.

Monday, July 22

Board of Zoning Appeals
6 p.m.

Monday, August 5

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

All meetings take place in council chambers at 415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla.

► Can't make the meeting but still want to keep up?

Oconee County meetings are recorded live and available to watch at YouTube.com/YourOconee

Give me
six hours
to chop
down a tree
and I will
spend the
first four
sharpening
the axe.

– Abraham Lincoln



OCONEE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is often said that economic development lies at the intersection of public policy and the free enterprise system. Economic development includes activities as varied as improving education, quality of life, physical and technological infrastructure, business services and financial support. All those facets must come together and work cohesively toward local success and prosperity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

▶ Economic development is a very broad subject that has many varying definitions. Here in Oconee County, economic development has historically consisted mainly of the pursuit of industrial or manufacturing “projects.” These projects can either be recruiting new companies to build or working with existing companies to expand their physical footprint or upgrade their current facility with new equipment, staff or significant training.

In both cases, there are many things that have to come together before growth can occur.

OCONEE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

▶ The Oconee Economic Alliance is a public-private nonprofit effort to accelerate job creation and capital investment, increase per capita income, diversify the local tax base and generate awareness of Oconee County as a business location.

It works with existing employers to help them grow in Oconee County and conducts efforts to attract new companies to locate here. From product development to workforce improvement strategies, the OEA team works with various community partners to enhance the area’s desirability for businesses and residents.

RECENT INVESTMENTS

▶ Since 2012, the Oconee Economic Alliance has ushered in 38 economic development projects that have brought in more than \$501 million in capital investment and 1,591 new jobs.

In 2018 alone, Oconee County saw more than \$69 million in new, taxable investment, added a “workforce development campus” and installed wayfinding signs throughout the county. In 2017, the capital investment total was \$153,229,800.

WORKFORCE

▶ As Oconee’s population ages, economic development must also focus on retaining its younger workforce to fill the jobs created by bringing in new industry. The median age of the county is increasing faster than most areas due to its attractiveness to retirees.

Available labor, especially skilled labor, is considered to be a key driver in site selection decisions. Workers are often the lifeblood for a company’s operation.

LABOR SHED

▶ While the majority of Oconee residents live and work in the county, its labor shed comes from 11 neighboring counties and totals nearly 289,000 people.

A 2016 study showed Oconee County was drawing roughly 2,400 workers from Pickens County and 2,000 from Anderson County, but nearly 3,000 Oconee residents were making the daily commute to Pickens and 3,400 were traveling to Greenville County for work.

EMPLOYMENT

▶ Manufacturing accounts for most of the county’s jobs, totaling more than 6,000 people in its workforce. There are more than 60 manufacturers in the county that provide jobs for Oconee residents and their neighbors.

As of April 2019, Oconee County’s unemployment rate was 2.8 percent, translating to roughly 2,000 people without work. In 2010, that number was 9.6 percent, meaning around 7,100 residents weren’t working.

INDUSTRIAL PARKS

▶ Oconee County owns property at three separate industrial parks throughout the county.

OCONEE COUNTY'S TOP 10 PRIVATE EMPLOYERS



BorgWarner: 970 employees



Itron: 930 employees



Koyo: 580 employees



Schneider Electric: 550 employees



BASF: 400 employees



US Engine Valve: 380 employees



Greenfield Industries: 350 employees



Sandvik: 300 employees



Clarios: 240 employees



Baxter Enterprises: 180 employees



Hamilton Career Center



Tri-County Technical College

OCONEE COUNTY FAST FACTS

Oconee's total population	77,725
Labor force*	35,700
Employed in manufacturing	6,000+
Unemployed population*	1,160
Median household income	\$42,876

**As of April 2019*

Each is a S.C. Certified Industrial Park, has a master plan and infrastructure on site, helping make them more marketable to industries looking for a new home.

GOLDEN CORNER COMMERCE PARK

► Located in Fair Play, the Golden Corner Commerce Park has more than 260 buildable acres of county-owned land. It is the state's closest industrial park to Atlanta and is only 2 miles from Interstate 85.

It is a S.C. Certified Industrial Park and has infrastructure on site, including a fiber optic network. Oconee County purchased this park in 2005 for a little more than \$2.3 million.

SENECA RAIL PARK

► Just outside the city limits of Seneca, the Seneca Rail Park is comprised of 82 buildable acres in an Opportunity Zone. It offers rail service



Seneca Rail Park

via Norfolk Southern and is only 5 minutes from U.S. Highway 123.

Oconee County officials were notified in May



that the county has been awarded a \$500,000 S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority grant for water and sewer lines, bringing the total dollar investment just under \$1 million.

OCONEE INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY PARK

► Home to Tri-County Technical College and Baxter Hi-Tech Mold, and the future space of the Hamilton Career Center and Horton Industries, Oconee County Industry and Technology Park has more than 406 acres to its name.

It is an S.C. Certified Industrial Park located off U.S. Highway 11 and only 2 miles from U.S. Highway 123, offering quick access to Westminster, Seneca and Walhalla. The county spent around \$2.5 million on the land and at OITP, which has a little more than 180 buildable acres remaining for development.



COMING HOME

Plant manager returns to Oconee County

— BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON | THE JOURNAL —

Despite a recent promotion and a move to Music City, Stephen Scruggs couldn't wait to come home to Oconee County when the opportunity unexpectedly presented itself.

When he received an offer to be the plant manager at Schneider Electric's Seneca plant, Scruggs packed his bags and left Nashville, Tenn., after only three months. It was the answer to a lot of prayers, he said, to live in his childhood hometown.

A nearly 30-year career in manufacturing — most of which was in the Golden Corner — means Scruggs has worked his fair share of positions and watched the industry adopt new technologies.

"This was an unexpected opening that presented itself, but the leadership team knew of my passion for being here at this plant and in this community," Scruggs said. "We've got one of the strongest workforces in Oconee County. The people here are eager to learn, and they're very flexible. As technology changes, they're very open to learning and applying the skills they learn."

Aside from the mountains and lakes that offer a wealth of recreation opportunities, Scruggs said the reason he came home was the people — and not just those inside the doors of Schneider.

"I like the (Oconee Economic Alliance) and the team that we work with," Scruggs said. "We leverage each other in the business community. I



see that as a really strong strength. There may be another business within the county that can be a solution provider for our business, and not only do we leverage each other, we get stronger as a community at the same time."

But it's not just fellow manufacturers and those tasked with assisting and promoting the industry who participate in supporting the businesses, he said. It's the community as a whole.

"The community government is really a partner in the industrial segment," he said. "I love the fact that we've got a (Tri-County Technical College) campus literally five minutes from here now. It and the new Hamilton Career Center ...



SAVANNAH BLAKE | THE JOURNAL

Above: A Seneca High School graduate who started his manufacturing career at 18, Stephen Scruggs recently returned to Oconee County to be the plant manager at Schneider Electric in Seneca. • At left: Third shift supervisor, Stephen Scruggs (left), discusses workflow with Gary Moss.

are feeders into the industrial business, which is really what's on the horizon for Oconee County."

While many may associate the

manufacturing industry with thankless factory jobs, Scruggs said company morale and philosophies could be surprises for outsiders. At Schneider, he works to maintain a solid team network so employees at every level feel they're "part of something bigger," which is one of the things that first attracted him to manufacturing.

"You're starting with raw material and making a finished product. You see the process through from start to finish," he said. "It was very rewarding to see the results of your efforts."

Despite not knowing what he wanted to do after high school, Scruggs said he's found the manufacturing sector to be even more exciting as companies grow and find

better ways to serve their customers all over the world.

"We're a global company, so we ship product across the globe. Our customers are throughout North America and beyond," he said. "I think it's more about taking the service and the quality, and giving our customers what they want when they want it."

Oconee is poised and ready to offer growth on a global level, he said, with its emphasis on workforce and industrial parks.

"As the economy becomes more global, you've got to have transportation and logistics to support industry and business," he said.

"Obviously, the infrastructure with the transportation industry and how that network will work with Oconee County is a concern. I think the challenges will continue to be how we educate our team of employees with technology changing so quickly and trying to be proactive with that. That part of growth never goes away."



OCONEE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GRANTS

▶ Since 2010, more than \$10 million in grant money has been applied toward economic development in the county. This includes adding crucial infrastructure to industrial parks, improving the physical footprint of the parks and marketing Oconee County to potential developers.



THE COUNTY'S HIGHEST SINGLE CAPITAL INVESTMENT to date was the \$73 million expansion of the BorgWarner facility in Seneca in 2018.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

▶ Industrial capital investment in equipment, buildings and land is an important contributor to the local economy, yielding more tax revenue per investment dollar to schools and local governments than residential and commercial development. The economic multiplier for manufacturing industries is typically

much higher than for retail, health services and personal business services.

Efforts to recruit new employers to the county have targeted industries in metal fabrication, plastic injection molding, automotive and advanced manufacturing. Oconee County has also experienced industrial employment growth through international investment. Oconee is now home to facilities of companies based in China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Sweden.

in the county paid roughly \$5.3 million dollars in taxes to Oconee County.

INCENTIVES

▶ Public investments and incentives, when part of a well-planned development strategy, can provide an attractive business climate and increase private investment. The state and county can provide multiple tax incentives to existing and new businesses to encourage economic growth and investment.

Among the strongest incentives available to state and local economic developers are the jobs tax credit, the fee-in-lieu of property taxes and job development and retraining credits. Because the state does not tax real or personal property, property tax incentives must be implemented in conjunction with each county.

MILLAGE

▶ The county's base millage rate for 2018 was 71, with a value of one mil at \$559,921. This base rate covers county operations, debt service, economic development, Tri-County Technical College operations and bridge and road maintenance.

PROPERTY TAXES

▶ The value of the property tax base impacts the ability of the county and its municipalities to provide vital services and facilities and to make the necessary public investments to encourage private investment. Property taxes are also the leading source of revenue for local governments. In 2018, the top 10 manufacturing employers

REGIONAL ALLIANCE

▶ To overcome certain local challenges, Oconee County joined the Upstate SC Alliance, a 10-county partnership of community leaders, developers and private companies. Formed in 2000, the Upstate South Carolina Alliance is a public/private regional economic



37TH

Where South Carolina ranks nationally in terms of its overall business tax climate and 15th for favorable corporate tax structure. (2018 State Business Tax Climate Index)

OCONEE COUNTY had nearly \$2 billion in gross retail sales and more than \$558 million in net taxable sales in 2016, **RANKING AMONG THE TOP 20 COUNTIES IN THE STATE.**

development organization designed to market and promote the dynamic, commerce-rich, northwestern corner of South Carolina. Its mission is to position the Upstate to excel in the global economy through strategic marketing, collaboration and thought leadership. It works with local economic developers, investors and the South Carolina Department of Commerce to move business forward in the Upstate.

TOURISM

► Oconee County is blessed with an abundance of natural resources that are already utilized for outdoor recreation, yet it is falling short as a recognized outdoor recreation destination. Just as Charleston has become the premier historic destination of South Carolina, Oconee has the ability to surface as the premier outdoor recreation destination for the state.



Resources alone do not make Oconee a destination. Investment in public access points, tourism infrastructure, marketing and downtown development in Oconee’s communities will provide for top-quality visitor amenities and services. By doing so, Oconee can become a one-of-a-kind outdoor recreation destination for the southeastern United States. It will require leadership from elected officials, collaboration among the county and cities, cooperation among the public and private sectors and an understanding by the residents that local investment is crucial.

DESTINATION OCONEE

► This is a “tourism/destination marketing strategy” with the purpose of showcasing the natural assets of our county and building upon them. Destination Oconee is a driving force to enhance the economic climate within the county and accelerate efforts to continue to make the area one of the leading tourist destinations in South Carolina.

Destination Oconee is a road map for the future — it encompasses all geographical areas of the county and touches everyone in the county in one way or another.

Its goals are to capitalize on the abundance of our natural resources, promote the uniqueness of Oconee’s downtown areas, create a strong “sense of place” and a distinct, cohesive destination and to focus on quality of life as the driving force.

THINK OCONEE

► Originally a buy local campaign challenging Oconee citizens to consciously focus their spending habits toward local business, Think Oconee has grown into a way of life. Established in October 2016, it now not only challenges natives to think, buy and give locally, it also challenges South Carolinians, Georgians and North Carolinians alike, to Think Oconee when they travel.

The driving force behind this campaign was the Destination Oconee plan.



Nearly 2,000 of Oconee’s acres are for industrial use, less than 1% of the county’s land. Commercial land uses account for almost 2% of the county’s land area at 7,211 acres.



Citizen Survey of Economic Development

This survey was developed as a means of providing the county with some understanding of the things you like about Oconee County, as well as the issues that concern you. The survey is also your chance to dream a little, to give us your vision of the county's future and how you think we might arrive at that destination.

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1. When it comes to growth and development, what is the county's greatest challenge?

- Providing adequate job opportunities
- Providing a suitable range of housing options
- Protecting natural resources
- Protecting small town character
- Providing adequate community amenities (parks, education, etc.)
- No opinion
- Other _____

2. What type of development is most needed?

- Commercial
- Residential
- Industrial
- No opinion
- Other _____

3. Which capital improvements should the county prioritize? (Select top three)

- Road improvements
- Internet
- Water and sewer
- Parks and recreation
- Industrial parks
- No opinion
- Other _____

4. What should be the top economic development priority?

- Creating and expanding recreation and tourism
- Recruiting new manufacturing

- Recruiting student housing
- Recruiting new commercial business
- Recruiting new entertainment options
- Recruiting affordable housing developments

5. If you wanted to find a job in Oconee County today, would you be able to work in an industry that interests you?

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

6. How many career opportunities do you think exist for our high school, vocational school and technical college graduates?

- None Many
- 1 2 3 4 5

7. There are a number restaurants, agritourism options, hardware stores, salons, boutiques and other commercial and industrial establishments that call Oconee County home. Do you "shop local" when it is available?

- Yes No No opinion

8. What is your zip code?

9. What is your gender?

- Male Female

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10. Please select the range that includes your age.

- 12 or under
- 13-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 -74
- 75-84
- 85 or older

Additional comments/suggestions may be attached or emailed planninginfo@oconeesc.com.



YOUR OCONEE

Planning for the Future

July 2019: Agriculture and Land Use

THE OCONEE COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE OCONEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ...

is a state-required document that provides guidance for the county — the administration, council and private citizens — for the coming decade.

To get input from the community for the goals and strategies in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the county is producing a series of special sections to break down the data and offer you a chance to provide feedback.

This is the fifth and final monthly section that covers the 10 elements of the plan.

Agriculture and Land Use

Over the past century, agriculture in the U.S. has become more mechanized, industrialized and dependent on — and threatened by — globalization. While much of the agriculture in the Upstate consists of relatively small farms, these trends have affected farming in Oconee County as well.

More than half of Americans were farmers at the turn of the 20th century, and their farms typically were diverse in plants and animals, had a focus on family subsistence, and supported the local area. While this is still true on some small farms, the trend towards specialization and truck farming — producing products primarily for shipment often bypassing local markets— has had its impacts on the Upstate as well.

However, a recent return to market-farming or direct-to-consumer farming is changing how some farmers do business.

Farmers often need to diversify to stay in business. Diversification could mean using a part of the cornfield for a Halloween maze, turning raw products like grapes into other products, like jelly, direct selling through farm stands, establishing restaurants and ice cream shops, or inviting schools and tourists to tour or participate in farm life and production.

The lack of access to a variety of fresh and healthy foods can be a problem for many low-income and other transportation-challenged populations. Ensuring access to healthy food is both a land use and a transportation issue and requires a holistic approach to successfully address the problem. Such an approach can include increasing public transit; making sure land use policies allow a mix of uses in residential areas that allows grocery stores, farmers markets, and similar fresh food outlets; and educating citizens on backyard gardening and food preservation to encourage a certain amount of self-sufficiency where possible.

There is a growing movement centered on eating locally grown and produced foods. To support this in Oconee County, the county should ensure it has no unnecessary barriers that restrict accessory processing on farms and in commercial areas — jams, jellies, wine, pickles — encourage farmers markets and farm stands, work cooperatively to link producers with retail consumers — restaurants, bars, etc. — as part of a broader economic development strategy and assist with marketing local farm products.

Questions or comments?

You can reach the Oconee County Planning Department at planninginfo@oconeesc.com or (864) 638-4218



UPCOMING MEETINGS

District Drop-Ins

Thursday, July 25

Fair-Oak Youth Center • 6 p.m.

Monday, August 5

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Monday, August 12

Agricultural Advisory Board
6 p.m.

Monday, August 19

Planning Commission • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, August 20

Oconee County Council • 6 p.m.

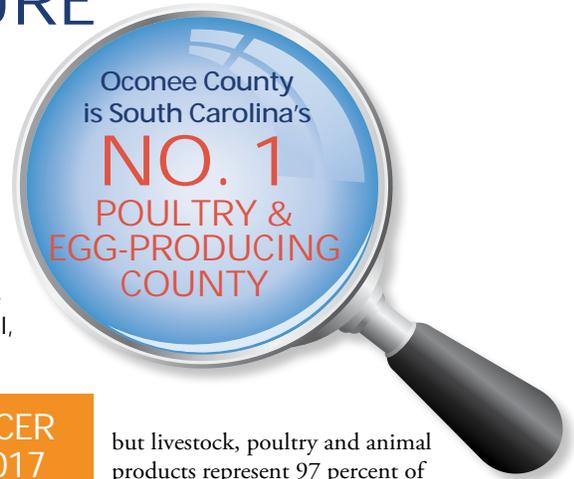
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▶ Can't make the meeting but still want to keep up?

Oconee County meetings are recorded live and available to watch at [YouTube.com/YourOconee](https://www.youtube.com/YourOconee)



OCONEE COUNTY AGRICULTURE



Agriculture and forestry are critical components of both the landscape and the economy of Oconee County. Based on Oconee County tax data, 51% of the County's land area is currently in use for agriculture or forestry. However, of County land that is not included in the Sumter National Forest, nearly two-thirds is in agriculture or forestry use.

According to the Oconee Economic Alliance, Oconee County has nearly 900 farms encompassing more than 67,000 acres of land. Together these farms have a market value in products worth more than 121 million dollars. In addition to the economic benefits of agriculture and forestry, both land uses can contribute social, environmental, and health benefits.

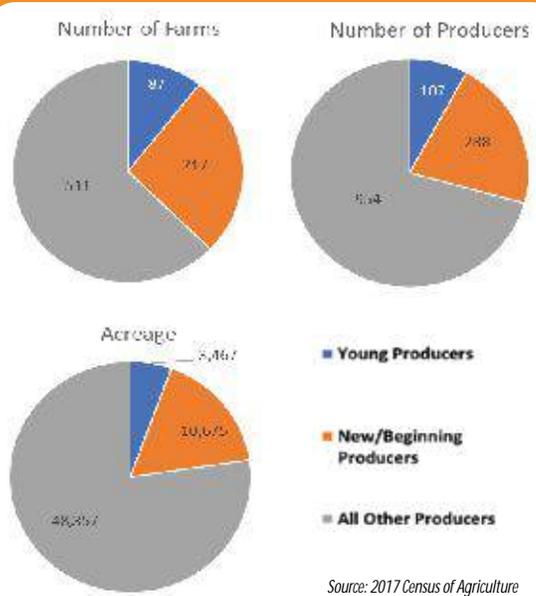
Prime farmland has been disappearing across America as urbanization has taken over the landscape. The sharp increase in road and utility expansion in the 20th century divided many rural farms, opening vast areas for urban and suburban development. The relatively flat, cleared land preferred by farmers is also preferred by developers looking to minimize the cost of land preparation. However, the loss of farmland is not caused solely by the need for land to accommodate growth.

This link to natural resource protection should be respected and enhanced when possible through the use of easements, education and value-added land use policies.

Although the number of acres farmed in the County is declining, the net income of farm operations has increased. The greatest increases in the number of farms has been those with annual sales of \$50,000 or more.

A variety of vegetable, fruit and livestock are produced on Oconee County farms,

CHARACTERISTICS BY PRODUCER TYPE IN OCONEE COUNTY, 2017

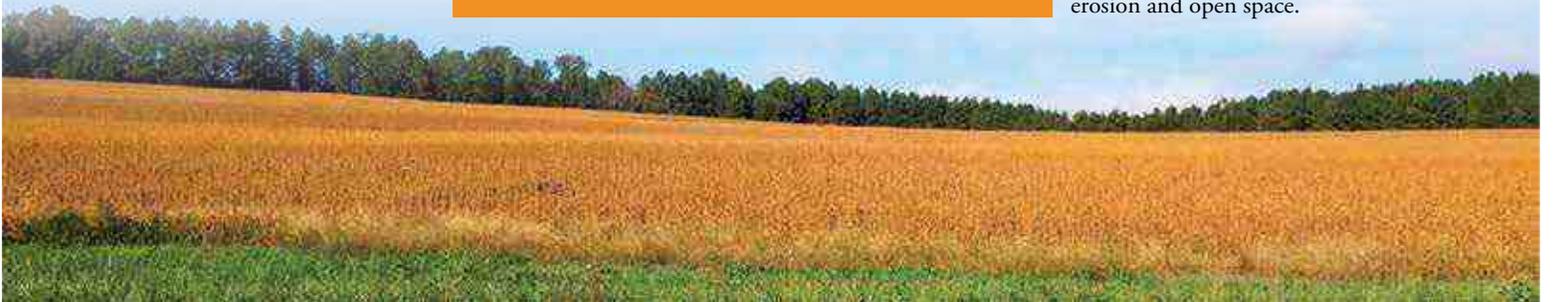


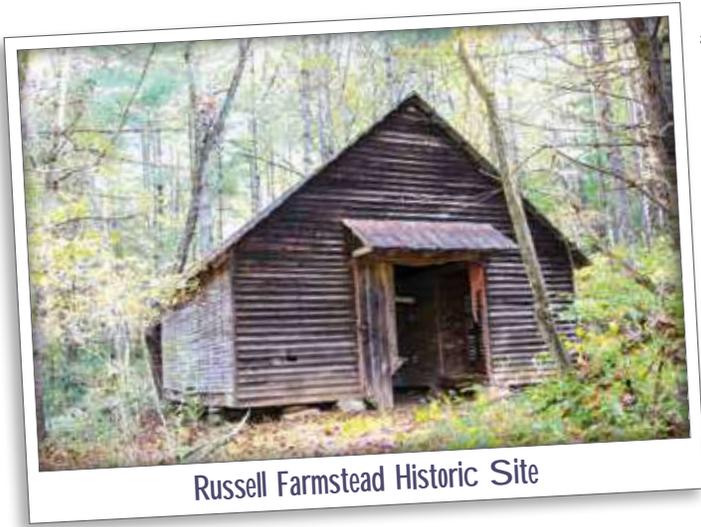
but livestock, poultry and animal products represent 97 percent of the total share of farm sales. Oconee County is South Carolina's No. 1 poultry and egg-producing county. It ranks 77th nationwide out of 3,007 counties.

A distant second, in terms of sales and rank, is the production of cattle and calves, followed by milk, hogs and pigs, sheep and goats, equine and aquaculture.

Based on criteria set by the State of South Carolina, 10.4 percent of the land area of Oconee County — 44,829 acres — is considered to have soils of statewide importance to agriculture.

Forest lands are important to the economy, character, environment and overall health of Oconee County. Agricultural and forested lands are home to many of the area's critical natural resources and provide valuable wildlife habitat, windbreaks, enhanced water quality, decreased ambient temperatures, groundwater recharge areas, mitigation of stormwater run-off and erosion and open space.





Russell Farmstead Historic Site

are ways the county could help protect farmers from nuisance complaints. Another way to protect farmland and provide for residential growth is a new trend called “agrihoods.” These are subdivisions that integrate farmland into their overall design, making it a core feature much like golf courses have been in the past. Agrihoods, which already exist in the Upstate, appeal to people who want good, steady access to local farm produce.

Roughly 63 percent of

Oconee County’s land area is forested, totaling 251,354 acres. Much of the county’s forest land lies within the Sumter National Forest. While forestry is a key component of the economy in the state and region, Oconee County ranks 45th out of 46 counties in delivered value of timber. This is at least partially due to the lack of major processing mills that exist in or near other counties.



*Although the number of acres farmed in the county is declining, **THE NET INCOME OF FARM OPERATIONS HAS INCREASED.***

Forest land and tree canopy also contribute significantly to the character of Oconee County. Studies conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture indicate that forest land is a

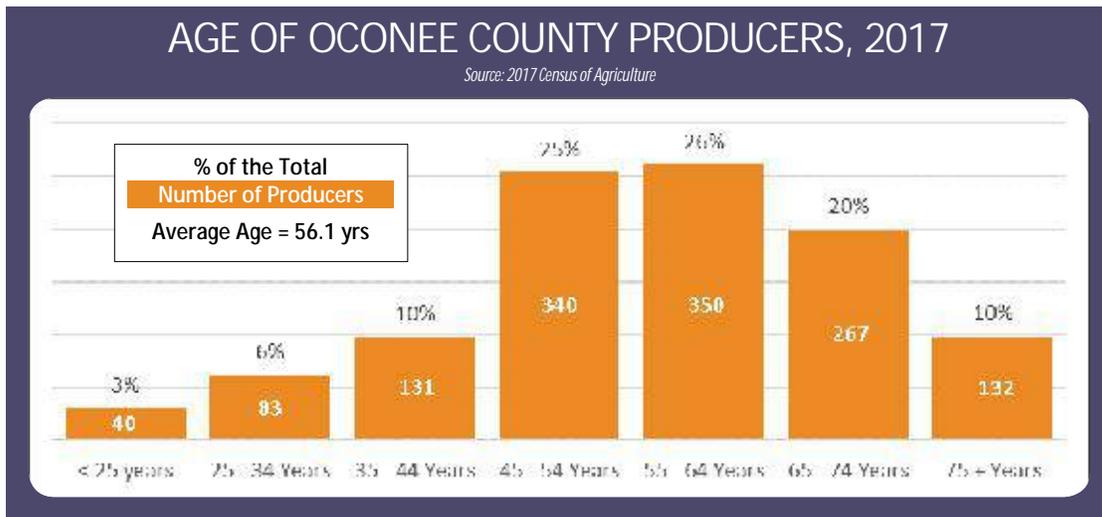
Between 1982 and 2012, an estimated 395,900 acres of South Carolina’s prime farmland were developed (Farmland Information Center, 2016). Conversion of prime farmlands to non-agricultural use is a concern, as the farming industry is forced to bring more marginal agricultural land into production. Marginal farmland has less productive and more erodible soil, often with irregular topography that require greater labor, equipment and material costs.

An essential step in protecting valuable farmland is to ensure that policies on growth and development recognize the importance of local farming to the health, well-being, and economy of Oconee County.

The lack of policies to protect farming from the encroachment of inappropriate land uses can lead to additional problems.

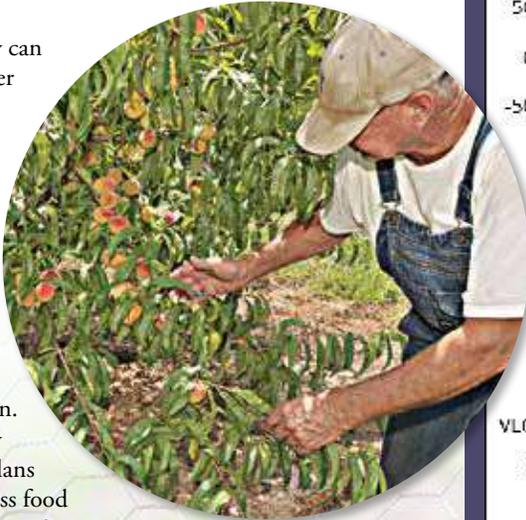
Conventional residential subdivisions often do not make good farm neighbors. Clustering, buffering and controlling residential density near farm borders

compelling factor for where people choose to live. Tree canopy has a positive impact on community appearance and forests are important recreational resources. State-level data recently released by the S.C. Forestry Commission indicate that forest-based recreation contributes \$1.6 billion annually to the state’s economy.



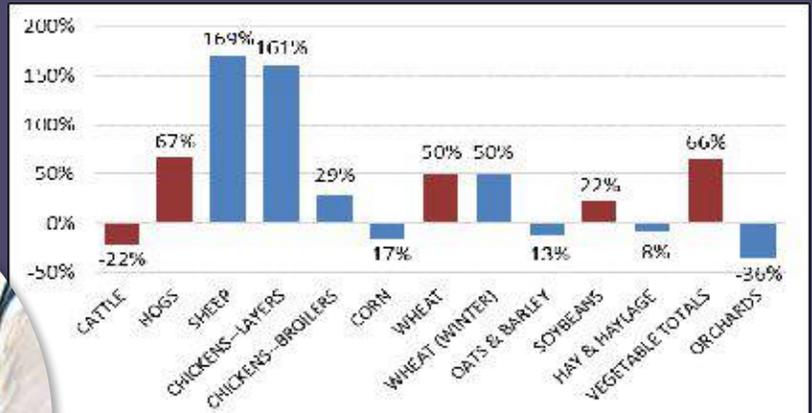
Food access is a critical element of community prosperity and security, and should be an integral feature of planning at regional, county, community and neighborhood levels. Successfully addressing food security requires cooperation and coordination from the public, private and nonprofit sectors, and collaboration with a variety of entities including retailers, transit services, and non-profits focused on healthy food education and childhood nutrition.

Food security can be a much larger problem and impact many more people during natural disasters and other emergencies that affect transportation systems and food production. Few emergency management plans currently address food access and security, but more communities are beginning to add this very critical link.

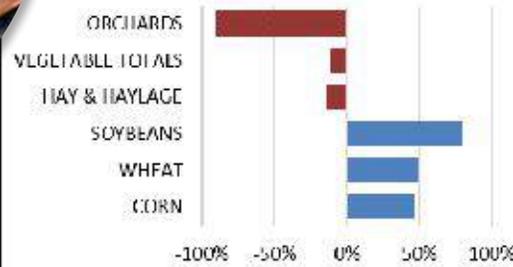


CHANGES IN FARM COMMODITIES

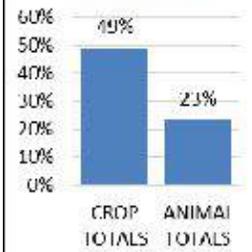
Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture



Change in Commodity by Acreage 2002 to 2017



% Change in Crop and Animal Sales 2007 to 2017





OCONEE COUNTY LAND USE

This element focuses on the way land is used in Oconee County and seeks to establish the direction that citizens desire their community to grow, as well as identifying the various tools deemed appropriate to guide this growth. Additionally, it examines existing usage by category — residential, commercial, industrial, etc. — and attempts to anticipate the relative amount of land needed to accommodate future changes. The way land is utilized in a community impacts most aspects of our lives, therefore, the other elements of this comprehensive plan are a major consideration throughout the creation of this element.

Land use in the Oconee County area has primarily been focused on using the region's abundant natural resources. The county has distinct differences in its types of land that have traditionally offered a variety of opportunities for sustenance and economic gain — mining, timbering, farming and similar operations are dependent on direct utilization of resources.



The demand for housing has also continued to grow. Higher-end, single-family development remains a strong component of land use, with much of that focus on lakefront communities on the eastern side of Oconee County.

In addition, a student housing boom is underway, due primarily to growth at Clemson University. The Clemson Epoch project, located near lake Hartwell west of Clemson, will feature more than 900 beds. The Pier, another major development, features apartments, cottages and tiny homes.

The boundaries of Oconee County encompass a total area of approximately 670 square miles with 600 square miles being land. It should be noted that, due to large federal and state property holdings — including Sumter National Forest and

Due to large federal and state property holdings — including Sumter National Forest and Clemson University — APPROXIMATELY 25 PERCENT OF THE COUNTY IS PRESERVED AS FOREST LANDS.

Clemson University — approximately 25 percent of the county is preserved as forest lands.

Sumter National Forest alone occupies almost 80,000 acres of the county, with Clemson University and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers possessing thousands of additional acres. In spite of the rapid growth experienced in the county during the last several decades, the overall

LAND USE ISSUES ARE SOME OF THE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENTS that a community deals with.

amount of land available for development has continued to drop due to an expansion of both public lands and the conservation of larger tracts of private lands.

Therefore, when it comes to anticipated growth, it is necessary to remember that a significant portion of Oconee County is unavailable.

New housing production is needed as primary residences for working-age families moving to the county for jobs or existing residents who may presently be renting or living with another family member.

Growth management is not limited solely to governmental action. The most effective growth management programs are often a combination of public and private efforts.

Recently, council and the planning commission have taken on several issues involving growth and development. The commission is looking at strategies for improving the principle highway corridors in the county, with an immediate focus on U.S. Highway 123 between Seneca and Clemson.

The way we choose to utilize the land impacts our lives far beyond simply determining what is built on it. Any benefits derived from investment can be partially or wholly negated by nearby activity.

Precious natural or cultural resources, impossible to replace, can be taken by the careless act of a neighbor. Even the cost of purchasing and maintaining a home is directly affected by the way

surrounding properties are developed and maintained. Without a doubt, land use issues are some of the most critical that a community deals with.

There are many potential benefits associated with growth and development, provided it occurs in a manner that does not create negative impacts that outweigh the positives.

Although no two communities develop and evolve in exactly the same way, over time, most communities find themselves forced to deal with similar issues. This can be seen in Oconee County today, for we are increasingly being faced with similar development pressures felt years earlier in some neighboring counties.

The ability of a property owner to use their land as they wish has been a cherished ideal throughout Oconee County's history. This, and similar issues, are often discussed in various forums throughout the county on a regular basis. In the past, when

the population density was much lower, and when the variety of land use was in one way or another centered on agriculture, the chances of significant instances of incompatibility of use were limited.

Today, however, we as a community do not live as we used to. Already,



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thousands of acres previously devoted to farming or timbering are covered with homes; rural lanes are increasingly being widened to accommodate the traffic of busy commercial centers; and remote, forested hillsides have become densely populated lakeshore communities.

Still, for those born here, as well as many of those that move here to escape the grasp of urban areas, a high value is placed on Oconee County's traditionally rural character, with farming at the heart of it.



OCONEE COUNTY PRIORITY INVESTMENT

Pursuant to the requirements of the South Carolina Priority Investment Act (PIA), adopted in 2007, local governments are required to include an element in their comprehensive plans that focus on anticipated capital expenditures over the coming 10 years, prioritizing those deemed most critical.

The element must also discuss potential methods of funding for the projects, considering all likely federal, state, and local sources.

Additionally, the PIA mandates that the list of projects includes all projected needs in public infrastructure and facilities, including water, sewer, roads, and schools, and that the list is provided to all "adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies" for their review and comment.

The Oconee County Planning Commission is charged with identifying a list of those capital projects anticipated to be funded with public money in next 10 years. The list of projects is

to be reviewed and considered as part of the Planning Commission's annual recommended prioritization of projects for County Council. The source of projects to be considered on the list may be, but is not limited to, the listed needs of various County agencies on their 5-year Capital Improvement Plans (CIP), school board building programs and other public infrastructure and facility requirements identified as critical to the citizens of Oconee County.



Citizen Survey of Agriculture and Land Use

This survey was developed as a means of providing the county with some understanding of the things you like about Oconee County, as well as the issues that concern you. The survey is also your chance to dream a little, to give us your vision of the county's future and how you think we might arrive at that destination.

Visit upstatetoday.com/survey to submit online or drop off completed survey at your local library, The Journal at 210 W. North 1st Street in Seneca, or the Oconee County Planning Department at 415 S. Pine Street in Walhalla.

1. Are you now, or have you been, a farmer or rancher?

- Yes No

2. Do you know any farmers who farm in Oconee County?

- Yes No

3. How important is having your food grown or raised in the United States of America?

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|--|----------------|
| Not Important | | | | | | | | | | | Very Important |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | |

4. When is the last time that you knew where the food on your plate came from? (The supermarket does not count.)

- Today
- More than a week ago
- More than a month ago
- More than a year ago
- Never
- Other _____

5. Oconee County is losing farms and farmers. Would you support legislation that promotes, protects and preserves our agricultural past, present and future?

- Yes No No opinion

6. Do you know where to buy locally grown or produced farm products in Oconee County?

- Yes No

7. Farmland, generally, is flat and cleared, and great for farming. Flat, cleared land is also great for building homes. How do we preserve our irreplaceable farmers and farmlands while still providing enough housing for our growing population?

(Select all that apply)

- Promote managed growth surrounding farmlands
- Get the next generation of farmers to stay on the farm
- Access to land for beginning farmers
- Easements, buffers, and other legal tools to protect farmlands
- Educating and communicating the economic, national security and community benefits of farms to county residents.
- Preserve "small-town" feel by preventing our cities from encroaching on farmlands
- Other _____

8. Do you grow any of your own food?

- Yes No

9. What is your zip code?

10. What is your gender?

- Male Female

YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO

WIN \$100 just for voicing your opinion!

Submit your completed survey and be entered to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards! Surveys must be submitted by August 7 to be eligible to win. Winners will be drawn and announced August 9.

*Name: _____

*Ph. #: _____

*E-mail: _____

*Indicates required field so prize winners may be contacted. Personal information for contest will not be kept or sold. Must be age 18 or over to be eligible to win prize. Employees of Oconee County or The Journal and their families are ineligible. Limit of one prize per household. Please note that survey prizes are not being funded by Oconee County but have been generously donated by The Journal.

11. Please select the range that includes your age.

- 12 or under
- 13-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 -74
- 75-84
- 85 or older

Additional comments/suggestions may be attached or emailed planninginfo@oconeesc.com.