

Oconee County

The Year in Review



Fiscal Year End
June 30, 2008



Dear Fellow Oconee County Citizens,

Oconee County continues to be the standard-bearer for counties across our state. The standards that have been set are attributable to county residents serving in various capacities, county staff, local educators, and others striving to better Oconee County. The efforts of so many make it possible to provide quality services that are desired by the public at the lowest cost.

The 2008 edition of *Oconee County The Year in Review* summarizes activities that have occurred within the county's departments over the past twelve months. Oconee County is fortunate to have a staff dedicated to serving you. Without their actions, none of the activities contained herein would be possible.

There have been difficulties that have proven challenging for Oconee County residents within the past year. With rising energy costs, rising fuel costs, and increased foreclosure rates, Oconee County has not been immune from hardships affecting communities and families nationwide. However, our government continues to perform exceptionally well. In fact, Oconee County's bond rating increased to "Aa-3" this year – a tremendous accomplishment.

Over the past year, several projects have been completed. Our Future Development Map was updated due to the considerable efforts of community residents, each of the municipalities, and county staff. This spring, hundreds of children were able to begin playing soccer on new athletic fields at the Oconee Veterans Park, which was accomplished using SPLOST revenues.

Other significant projects have been initiated that will have long-term benefits for Oconee County: (1) Oconee County is assured a long-term water source due to our partnership with Walton County on the Hard Labor Creek Reservoir. Bonds have been issued and property acquisition has begun. We are hopeful that state funds will be available to assist in the project funding. (2) We are currently awaiting a design to be completed for the upgrade of our Land Application System (LAS) to ensure sewage capacity for economic development activities that will diversify our tax base.

In addition, several county road improvement projects have been completed, and we have been assured that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) will let the contract for the construction of the Jennings Mill Parkway Extension this summer. Additionally, approval from GDOT has been obtained to proceed with the Mars Hill Road/Experiment Station Road right-of-way acquisition project. Just over 56 miles of road improvements were made throughout the county over the course of the 2007-2008 TIM. Fortunately, our commissioners had the foresight to "lock in" a contract price for paving, which saved untold sums for the taxpayers.

We trust that you will enjoy the information that we have provided in this review. Thank you again for your part in making Oconee County a great place to live, work and play!

For the Board of Commissioners,

Melvin Davis, Chairman

Jim Luke, Commissioner - Post 1
Margaret Hale, Commissioner - Post 3

Don Norris, Commissioner - Post 2
Chuck Horton, Commissioner - Post 4

Oconee County Mission Statement

Provide the highest quality services in a fiscally responsible manner to promote the health, safety and general welfare of all Oconee County citizens.

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Economic Development

Highlights of the Year

- From restaurants to jewelers to others, several new businesses began operating in Oconee County, which provides additional outlets for goods and services within our community.
- Spring Hill Suites (under the Marriott franchise), located near the intersection of SR 316 and Loop 10, broke ground in March 2008. It is scheduled to open its doors by late 2009.
- Right-of-way acquisition for the Jennings Mill Parkway expansion has been completed and the Georgia Department of Transportation has indicated that construction will begin later this year.
- Oconee County was designated an Entrepreneur Friendly Community by the Georgia Department of Economic Development in April 2008.
- Georgia's Innovation Crescent is a regional marketing effort focused on expanding and promoting life science businesses and industries for communities between metro-Atlanta and Oconee/Athens-Clarke Counties. Thirteen counties are involved.
- 243 new business licenses were issued in Oconee County between July 1, 2007 and June 27, 2008.
- Oconee County continues to participate in Georgia's Work Ready Community Initiative. This workforce training initiative assesses the skills of Georgia's workers, determines valuable job training opportunities and assures prospective companies that the state can provide a long-term, qualified labor pool.

NORTHEAST GEORGIA - GROWING COUNTIES COMPARISON				
County	2000 Population	2007 Population	% Change	Average % Change/Year
Barrow	46,144	67,139	45.5	6.50
Jackson	41,589	59,254	42.5	6.07
Newton	62,001	96,019	54.9	7.84
Oconee	26,225	31,367	19.6	2.80
Walton	60,687	83,144	37.0	5.28
<p>Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 - 2007 Population Estimate for the 100 Fastest Growing U. S. Counties Annual Estimates, Georgia, July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007</p>				

Economic Development

Oconee County Per Capita Personal Income									
	1980	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Oconee County	7,992	18,537	29,015	29,869	30,263	29,922	31,462	37,518	na
State of Georgia	8,420	17,603	27,989	28,555	28,821	29,000	29,782	31,193	na
Source: U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis www.bea.dor/bea/gov/regional/bearfacts									

Oconee County Workforce Statistics						
	Total Jobs	Job Growth	Labor Force	Unemployment		Regional Unemployment
2000	7081	8.39%	13,624	1.40%		3.20%
2001	7201	1.70%	13,458	1.70%		3.80%
2002	7490	2.00%	14,153	2.00%		4.70%
2003	NA*	NA*	14,237	2.10%		4.60%
2004	NA*	NA*	14,476	1.90%		4.10%
2005	NA*	NA*	17,013	3.0%		4.30%
2006	NA*	NA*	17,558	2.7%		4.1%
2007	NA*	NA*	17,542	2.5%		3.4%
2008	NA*	NA*	17,939	3.6%		4.3%
2008 stats as of March 2008					NA* -- not available	
Source: GA Dept. of Labor -- www.dol.state.ga.us/pdf/pr/laborforce.pdf						

Oconee County Government			
	Full-time	* Utility	Total Positions
	252.5	32.5	285
Per 1000 population	8.05	--	9.0

* Utility Dept. -- Enterprise Fund, not paid out of General Funds.

Source: Oconee County Human Resources - Number of positions as of June 2008.
Percentages based on 2007 U.S. Census population estimate of 31,367.

Utilities

WATER SERVICE								
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Water Customers	5120	5736	6176	6636	7131	7782	8117	*8374
Water Demand - Yearly (in million gallons)	628	716	716	796	825	1.002 billion	1.057 billion	na
Permitted Wells	25	19	16	15	15	15	15	na
* Note: through June 16, 2008					Source: OCUD Year End Report 2007			

- 58.86 miles of water lines installed in Calendar Year 2007
- 10.25 miles of sewer gravity and force main lines installed in Calendar Year 2007
- 1211 wastewater customers in Calendar Year 2007; as of June 16, 2008 there are 1251

Oconee County is now a WATERFIRST Community, one of only thirteen in the state.

AVERAGE DAILY DEMAND (MGD) July 1, 2007 thru June 16, 2008											
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
3.78	4.44	2.98	1.84	1.57	1.37	1.50	1.61	1.40	1.71	1.79	2.09

PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE PAID BY DEVELOPERS -- Calendar Year 2007

INFRASTRUCTURE	AMOUNT
Water	\$1,083,040
Sewer	\$3,517,995
Lift Stations	\$1,000,000
Total—Water & Wastewater Infrastructure	\$5,601,035

PROJECT CONNECTION, WATER AVAILABILITY AND METER FEES RECEIVED FROM DEVELOPERS - CY 2007

Capacity Fees ¹	\$354,778
Connection Fees ²	\$234,400
Water Availability ³	\$341,125
Meter Fees ⁴	\$225,295
Total Fees Received	\$1,155,598

1 Plant upgrades and expansions

2 Utility renewal and replacement

3 Utility water supply source and operating revenue

4 Utility operating revenue, purchasing meters (new and replacement)

Code Enforcement

BUILDING PERMIT TOTALS				
YEAR	RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL	MOBILE HOMES	DUPLEXES
2000	227	47	52	0
2001	247	28	48	33
2002	414	57	30	36
2003	435	20	26	12
2004	439	52	10	9
2005	436	100	9	40
2006	452	81	19	5
2007	341	96	11	0
2008 *	101	41	2	0
* to June 27, 2008			Source: Code Enforcement June 2008	



Public Safety

GBI Crime Statistics for Oconee County							
Crime	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	na
Rape	2	2	1	3	2	0	na
Robbery	6	1	4	4	0	2	na
Assault	7	16	15	9	20	5	na
Burglary	73	91	85	68	90	9	na
Larceny	280	358	356	235	286	68	na
Vehicle Theft	43	47	29	31	44	13	na
Source: Georgia Bureau of Investigation - June 2008 http://www.state.ga.us/gbi/gbistat1.html na: not available							

EMERGENCY RESPONSE		
	2007	2008
Medical (illness related)	940	1,034
Trauma (not motor vehicle)	330	323
Welfare checks	15	14
Medical Standby	35	40
Medical False Alarms	11	11
MVA / no injuries	110	81
MVA / injuries	207	199
MVA / Fatality on scene	5	4
Other (trees down, motorist assists)	106	98
Source: Oconee EMA June 2008		



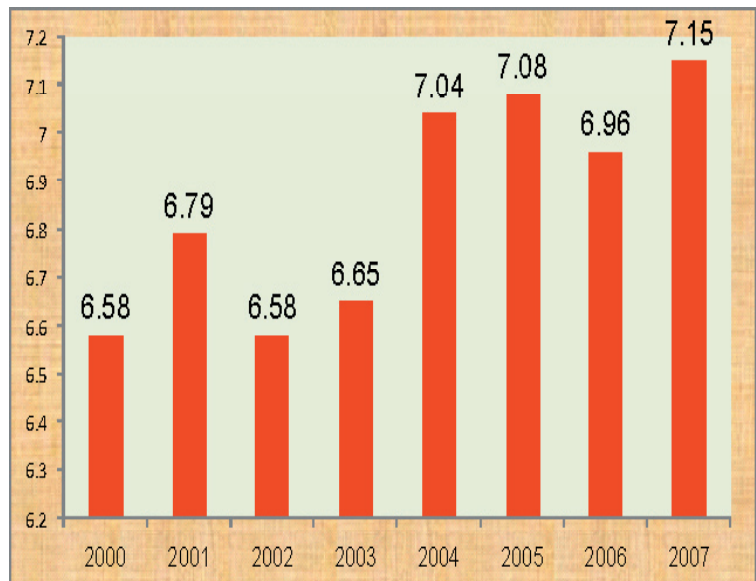
For emergencies dial 9-1-1

Public Safety

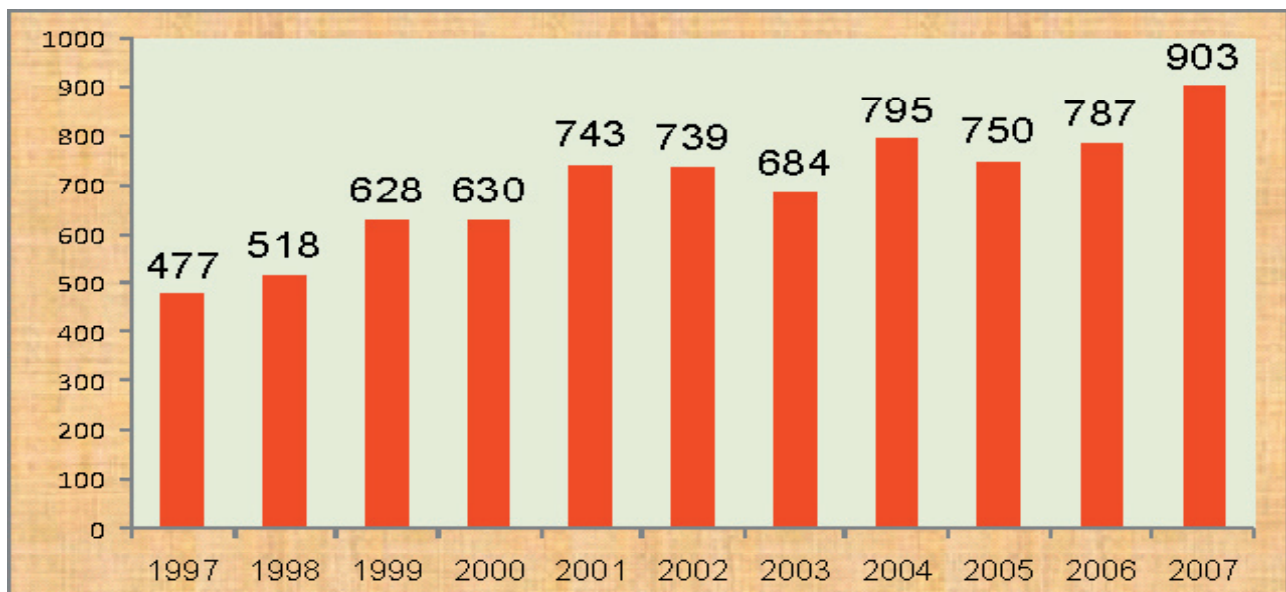
The **Oconee County Fire Department** is the only volunteer fire department in Georgia to teach and test its volunteers at the NPO Firefighter II level, according to the Georgia Fire Academy's Standards and Training Division. This is the same testing process that most paid departments require and is a standard of training recognized throughout the country.



Annual Fire Department Emergency Call Response Time (in minutes)



Fire Call Volume Comparison

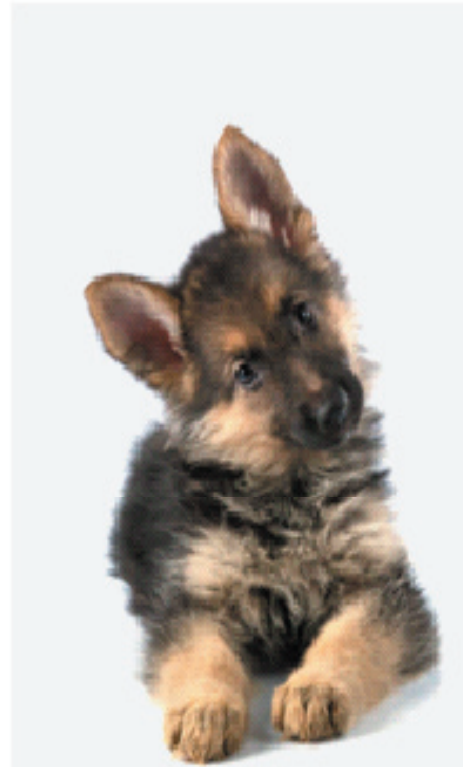


Public Safety

Oconee County Animal Control is proud of the association it has had with an area pet store, now in its sixth year. This partnership makes the dogs and cats picked up and surrendered to the Oconee shelter more visible to the public because the pet store serves as a foster home for some of them.

Please visit the shelter's available pets at www.oconeecounty.net and click on *Pet Corner*. Any questions can be directed to 706-769-3956 or e-mail the director at cvickers@oconee.ga.us.

Motto: Protect and Educate



Animal Control Activity Report

Month	Intake	Adopted	Returned to Owner	Agency Transfer	Complaint Calls	Bites	Rabies	Citations
JUL	156	27	17	20	155	16	1	8
AUG	160	30	8	24	138	6	0	7
SEP	111	11	12	7	128	6	0	7
OCT	183	19	35	18	167	6	2	13
NOV	120	11	22	13	148	6	1	10
DEC	120	20	13	14	158	6	1	10
JAN	80	16	10	10	166	6	1	7
FEB	99	15	8	17	154	4	1	0
MAR	90	21	10	17	153	8	0	17
APR	151	12	21	20	185	11	0	17
MAY	137	17	14	23	171	6	0	11
JUN	208	16	14	12	175	8	0	14
Totals	1,615	215	184	195	1,848	86	6	117

Source: Oconee County Animal Control as of June 27, 2008

Public Works

Monthly Activity Report												
	2007						2008					
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
<u>Road & Bridge Division</u>												
Work Orders Completed	69	73	76	71	36	32	39	60	88	77	61	72
Citizen Complaints / Inquiries	49	55	41	47	27	25	26	39	60	43	41	46
<u>Solid Waste Division</u>												
Collection Site Customers	5847	5829	5620	5524	5373	6303	5318	4936	5565	5317	5897	5777
% Disposing of Solid Waste	76	75	73	71	67	76	70	71	72	70	71	68
% Disposing of Recyclables	75	79	77	74	75	80	80	79	80	77	76	76
<u>Engineering Division</u>												
DRC Plan Review Support												
Rezones, Plats, CUPs, etc.	12	5	2	6	4	9	8	5	5	4	4	3
Full Construction Plans	6	2	0	2	1	6	2	2	3	1	1	1
Utility Plan Reviews	2	4	3	2	2	1	2	2	5	2	2	2
Source: Public Works Department - as of June30, 2008												

Transportation Improvement and Maintenance (TIM)				
Resurfacing and Paving Activity Report				
	*2005-2006		2007-2008	
Description	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost
County Road Resurfacing	10.5	\$445,000	45.25	\$5,522,000
Local Assistance Road Projects (LARP)	4.2	\$588,000	6.4	\$437,000
Maintenance Minimization (dirt roads)	1.5	\$116,000	1.6	\$226,000
County Road Paving / FDR**	1.5	\$540,000	2.9	\$534,000
Totals	20	\$1,689,000	56.15	\$6,719,000
** FDR - full depth reclamation	Source: Public Works Department June 30, 2008			
* NOTE: Oconee County began following a 2-year TIM plan.				

The 2005-2006 and 2007-2008 Transportation Improvement and Maintenance (TIM) Plan incorporates several funding sources to achieve its end result. Funding comes from the Capital Improvement Budget of the General Fund; Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) as approved by our voters in 2003; and from the GA Department of Transportation. Utilized together, these funding sources provide the base for an aggressive and proactive transportation improvement program.

Keep Oconee County Beautiful Commision

Keep Oconee County Beautiful is a certified affiliate of national Keep America Beautiful, Inc. a non-profit organization headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut. It is also a member of the state Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliate program under the direction of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. There are fifty-seven affiliates in Georgia. Twenty-one states have statewide programs.

The commission consists of twelve volunteer members who are appointed by the county Board of Commissioners to staggered three-year terms. We also have auxiliary members who volunteer to help on a part-time basis.



Recycling Displays

KOCBC:

- develops and executes environmental and educational outreach programs designed to increase citizen awareness and understanding of the need for individual environmental stewardship;
- provides supportive educational materials for county programs such as Litter Control and Abatement, Solid Waste Management & Recycling, and Beautification Projects;
- conducts recycling & environmental projects and programs.



Phone Book Recycling



Business Electronics Recycling



Bring One for the Chipper

AWARDS WON:

Distinguished Service Citation -- Keep America Beautiful, Inc. 2003

Innovation Award -- Keep America Beautiful, Inc. 2003

Litter Prevention Award -- Keep America Beautiful, Inc. 2004

Volunteer Organization Extraordinaire Proclamation - Oconee BOC 2005

Affiliate Award -- Keep America Beautiful, Inc. 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007

Cooperative Extension Service

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2007—2008

- Held rain harvesting workshop, landscape water conservation workshop, and rain barrel distribution to train citizens in landscape water conservation.
- Provided agriculture awareness education to: Leadership Oconee, Friendship Preschool, Oconee County Business Expo, Oconee County Third Grade Ag Day, Oconee County Fall Festival, Watkinsville Library Family Fun Day, Watkinsville Downtown Merchants, Middle School 4-H members.
- Collaboratively established Northeast chapter of the Georgia Green Industry Association (GGIA).
- Hosted Athens Area Master Naturalists with farm tour of USDA Experiment Station research and natural fibers.
- Provided recertification training for private and commercial pesticide applicators.
- Participated in and certified in emergency response planning for Oconee County: ICS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700; ESF-11 County Coordinator; Pandemic Preparedness Response Team; Drought Contingency Task Force.
- Coordinated beef educational series for Clarke-Oconee Cattlemen's Association.
- Trained University of Georgia Extension and Animal Science interns.
- Coordinated Harris Shoals Christmas tree recycling drive using 4-H volunteers.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES HIGHLIGHTS

- Trained 243 restaurant managers and food service employees through the National Food Handlers Certification Program.
- Trained High School Teachers in Financial Literacy for Students to help prepare teachers to comply with new state standards introduced in the fall 2007.
- Provided a Cancer Cooking School to help participants change eating and activity patterns to decrease the risk for cancer and other chronic diseases.
- Established a grant-funded energy education position which targets low income senior citizens to raise awareness of consumer choices for energy efficiency in their homes.
- Trained University of Georgia and Oconee County High School Family and Consumer Science student interns.
- Distributed Diabetes Lifeline Newsletter and Growing Together Newsletter for child care providers.
- Collaborated with the Oconee Area Resource Council on educational programming.
- Collaborated with the Northeast District Nutrition Education Coalition to provide food safety and nutrition education to Oconee County citizens.

OCONEE 4-H AWARDS:

- State 4-H Congress winners, the highest number in the state;
 - The State Champion Dairy Quiz Bowl team;
 - The State Champion Dairy Judging team;
- and...*

4-H Judging teams won 3 trips to compete at national contests
and...

Oconee 4-Hrs performed 250 hours of community service.



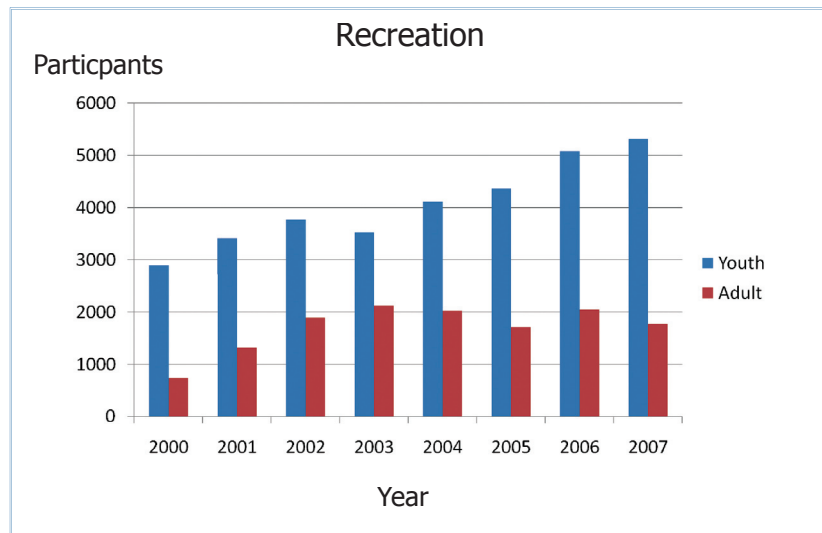
Oconee 4H Camp counselors
at Rock Eagle 4H Center
Eatonton GA, Summer 2008

Parks & Recreation

The new Oconee Veterans Park, which is still under construction, is now partially open to the public. Located at 3500 Hog Mountain Road in Watkinsville, the park includes a 10,000 square foot senior center, a 34,000 square foot community center with a gymnasium and indoor walking track, 4 full-size soccer platforms, 4 youth baseball and softball fields, 8 tennis courts, 3 adult softball fields, the Oconee Veterans Memorial and a picnic shelter. Also, the 196-acre park will provide a wide variety of outdoor play areas for children and paved walking paths for adults.

Events

- Briarwood Church All-Night Softball Tournament - held annually
- **Movie in the Park** at Oconee Veterans Park on Hwy. 53
- **Touch-A-Truck** at Oconee Heritage Park - held annually
- Initiated **Middle School Madness** - Fridays from 7 to 11 pm during the school year
- Initiated **Teen Extreme** - a special after-school program for middle-school age kids
- Little League games at Bogart Sports Complex
- Swim meets
- Mountain bike and cross-country events at Oconee Heritage Park



Touch-A-Truck

Herman C. Michael Park	37 acres	(baseball, tennis, basketball gym, biking & walking trails, volleyball, disc golf)
Bogart Sports Complex	33 acres	(baseball, softball, walking trails, barbecue pavilion, playgrounds)
Oconee Heritage Park	360 acres	(agriculture pavilion, biking trails, events)
Oconee Veterans Park	196 acres	(baseball, soccer, tennis, walking trails, Community Center, Senior center)

Senior Center



Pictured above is the the new Oconee Senior Center scheduled to open in 2008. The 10,000 square foot facility will offer many activities including a large crafter's area for ceramics, pottery, quilting, beading, art projects, sewing and much more. A billard room accommodating 2 pool tables will be the perfect place for gentlemen as well as ladies to perfect their pool game. The center will have a state of the art commercial kitchen and a dining area that can seat 250. A very attractive foyer with fireplace will offer a relaxed setting for visiting with friends or browsing the senior store where handmade crafts will be displayed for sale. Oconee seniors can also enjoy many park activities such as tennis, game events, walking trails, a gymnasium with exercise equipment and an inside walking track. It's a perfect place to watch grandchildren come and go. Our new Senior Center will make Oconee County one of the most desirable retirement communities in the state.

Staff and volunteers believe that a healthy mind, body, and spirit leads to a long and happy life. With this in mind, they promote healthy living for our seniors by providing exercise classes, yoga, Tai Chi, ballroom dancing, line dancing, health fairs, and nutrition classes. Bingo is always a favorite along with card and domino games. A Red Hat Society chapter brings ladies 50 years and older together as sisters. During the year, staff members organize at least 5 major parties where live bands and dancing are enjoyed by many. Away trips to locations in and out of the state are also a favorite. And if a senior wants to participate just by going to socialize, that's okay too. It's truly a home away from home.

A nutritious lunch is served Monday through Friday at the Center and to homebound seniors. And transportation is offered to and from the Center for activities and for shopping and appointments.



Some people, no matter how old they get, never lose their beauty -- they merely move it from their faces into their hearts.

-- Martin Buxbaum, Author

Court System

The Oconee County Clerk of Courts' office is responsible for management of Magistrate Court, Superior Court and Juvenile Court cases; management of jury selection; recording and maintaining deed and plat records; and the Board of Equalization. The Clerk of Court is an elected official and there are ten full-time employees in the department. Bailiffs for the court system are also scheduled through the Clerk's office. All criminal and civil cases are processed through the Clerk's office. A breakdown of the number of cases filed is as follows:

COURT	CRIMINAL CASES	CIVIL CASES
Superior	520	883
Magistrate	512	729

Superior and Magistrate Court cases included felony and misdemeanor violations. However, the type of case in the Civil Court category varies between the Superior and Magistrate Courts.

Superior Court civil cases include adoptions, child support, alimony, custody, contracts, dispossession, divorce, family violence, personal property, and wills/estates to list a few.

Magistrate Court civil cases include dispossessory, personal property, judgements, garnishments, and real property. Magistrate Court also hears county ordinance violations.

Deeds and plats are recorded in the Clerk of Court's office. During the period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, 9,160 deeds and 2,510 plats were processed and recorded in the permanent records of the Clerk of Courts' Records Room. During the same period, 211 liens were filed.

The Superior Court Clerks' Co-op Authority has website access to all deeds and plats.
The website address is www.gsecca.org (a registration fee is required.)



1888 Oconee County Courthouse
from a photocopy of a postcard written in 1911
Courtesy of William E. White

Library

Library Mission: To offer effective and professional library services by providing materials, resources, information and life-long learning opportunities for the people of Oconee County.

Library collections and programs grow every year, and use is on the rise—from the number of items checked out to the number of computer users every day.

Oconee County is a community of readers!



Library at Watkinsville

253,879 visits to our libraries

1,328 new cards issued

51,308 questions answered

58,740 computer log-ins



Library at Bogart

260,445 items checked out - a 41% increase from last year

8.6 items circulated per capita -- Oconee

4.49 items circulated per capita -- GA

7.2 items circulated per capita -- U.S.

217 programs for children with 7481 attendees

102 programs at schools and day-care centers with 6715 attendees

40 programs for young adults with 445 attendees

89 programs for adults with 924 attendees

379 groups used library meeting rooms with 5579 participants



Getting smarter by the minute!

Oconee resident Cathryn Land is already preparing daughter Carly for future success in school.

What the experts say:

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."

-- Emilie Buchwald, Publisher and Author

"The earlier a child is read to by his parents, the better his test scores are as he grows up."

-- Dr. Barry Zuckerman, Boston University

"In hard times, libraries are more important than ever. Human beings need what books give them better than any other medium."

-- Pete Hamill, Columnist

Libraries inform citizens, break down barriers and build communities.

-- American Libraries

Planning

Beginning in mid 2007 the department began the initial review phase of the Unified Development Code (UDC) to identify errors, omissions and unintended consequences. The project culminated with the Board of Commissioners reviewing and adopting amendments to the UDC in September 2007. With the aid of county staff outside of the department, planning staff began another round of data collection for possible changes to the UDC. This project is expected to be completed no later than September 2008.

A new relational database is currently being constructed that will enhance our ability to retrieve status information on current developments within the county including rezoning, special use, variance, development construction, and final plat information.

Staff also began working with the U.S. Census Bureau and the Northeast Georgia RDC on the first phase of the 2010 Census known as LUCA (Local Update of Census Addressing). As the 2010 Census draws closer, staff will receive additional training to aid with the count.

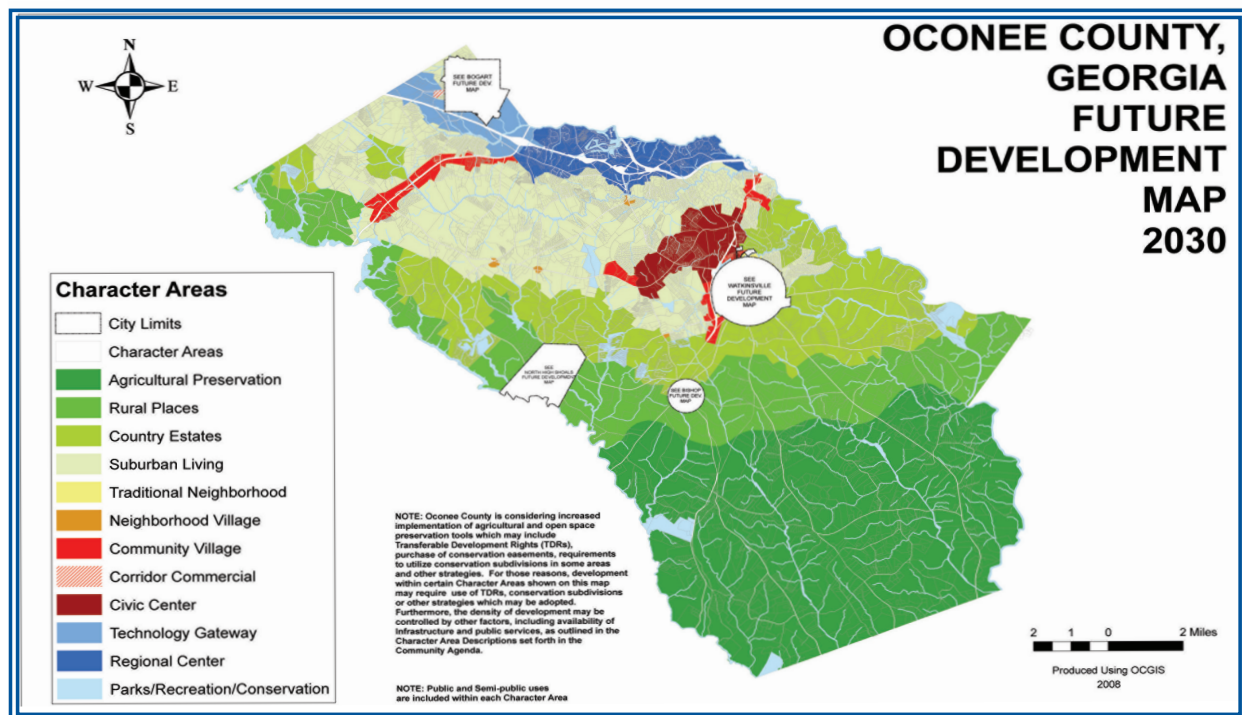
Within the fiscal year to date, department staff has received 6675 telephone calls and assisted 1255 customers in the office. Staff continues to provide services for the municipalities of Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville under their respective codes.

Description	Accepted for Planning Commission	Accepted for Development Review Committee	Accepted for Review and Processing or Administrative Approval	Accepted for BOC
Rezoning	27			
Special Use/CUPs	7			
Variances				16
Preliminary Plat/Site Plans		32		
Subd. Construction Plans		4		
Site Development Plans		23		
PUD Amendments				
Administrative Plats			80	
Final Plats			31	
ROW Deeds Review				7

Source: Oconee Planning Department

Strategic and Long-Range Planning

- Assists the Board of Commissioners, citizen advisory committees, and others with long-range planning and economic development issues in Oconee County. Also assists real estate and development professionals with long-range planning, typically early in the project concept and feasibility stage.
- Provides coordination between transportation, water & sewer, and land use planning for long-range growth strategy for Oconee County.
- Is responsible for coordination of comprehensive plan development and implementation on a five-year cycle.



For a larger view of this map see:

[http://www.oconeecounty.com/](http://www.oconeecounty.com/Government/StrategicPlanning/Strategic%20PDFsFutureDevelopmentMap2030.pdf)

[Government/StrategicPlanning/Strategic%20PDFsFutureDevelopmentMap2030.pdf](http://www.oconeecounty.com/Government/StrategicPlanning/Strategic%20PDFsFutureDevelopmentMap2030.pdf)

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) -- Long-Range Planning is currently coordinating work of the Citizens' Advisory Committee studying Transfer of Development Rights programs in Georgia to determine possible implementation of a TDR ordinance in Oconee County to enhance green space and agricultural preservation efforts.

Impact Fees -- Another ongoing responsibility of this department is the coordination of the Impact Fee Study Committee. This group will provide a preliminary analysis for a possible Development Impact Fee Program in Oconee County.

Tax Commissioner

Taxes Collected July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2008			
		County M & O	* School M & O
Tag Registrations Issued	33,600		
Ad Valorem taxes collected for vehicles & mobile homes		\$872,542	\$1,879,807
Tax Parcels for tax year 2007	16,190		
Property tax collected - 2007 Tax Year		\$9,890,558	\$23,100,578
Delinquent property tax collected in 2007 for 2006 and prior years		\$89,342	\$177,408
Source: Oconee County Tax Commissioner July 2008			

* The Oconee County Board of Commissioners, by law, has no control over Board of Education taxing authority.

Tax Assessor

HOME SALES IN OCONEE COUNTY						
	New Construction		Existing Construction		New & Existing	
	(# of Sales)	(Avg \$/Sale)	(# of Sales)	(Avg \$/Sale)	(# of Sales)	(Avg \$/Sale)
2000	141	\$269,991.00	372	\$189,031.00	513	\$211,283.16
2001	129	\$293,259.00	352	\$189,130.00	481	\$217,056.49
2002	203	\$260,779.00	346	\$209,146.00	549	\$228,237.98
2003	263	\$274,926.00	361	\$208,915.00	624	\$236,736.94
2004	203	\$330,198.00	330	\$229,337.00	533	\$258,068.00
2005	263	\$315,062.00	427	\$255,861.00	690	\$278,426.00
2006	243	\$355,517.00	458	\$266,158.00	701	\$297,134.00
2007	199	\$382,152.00	350	\$255,770.00	549	\$301,581.00
2008	40	\$345,992.00	118	\$274,847.00	158	\$292,859.00
These values were compiled from Fair Market Value sales only, 2008 sales through 06/12/08. Questionable FMV sales are not included. Custom built homes not sold on the open market are also not included.						
Source: Oconee Tax Assessor						

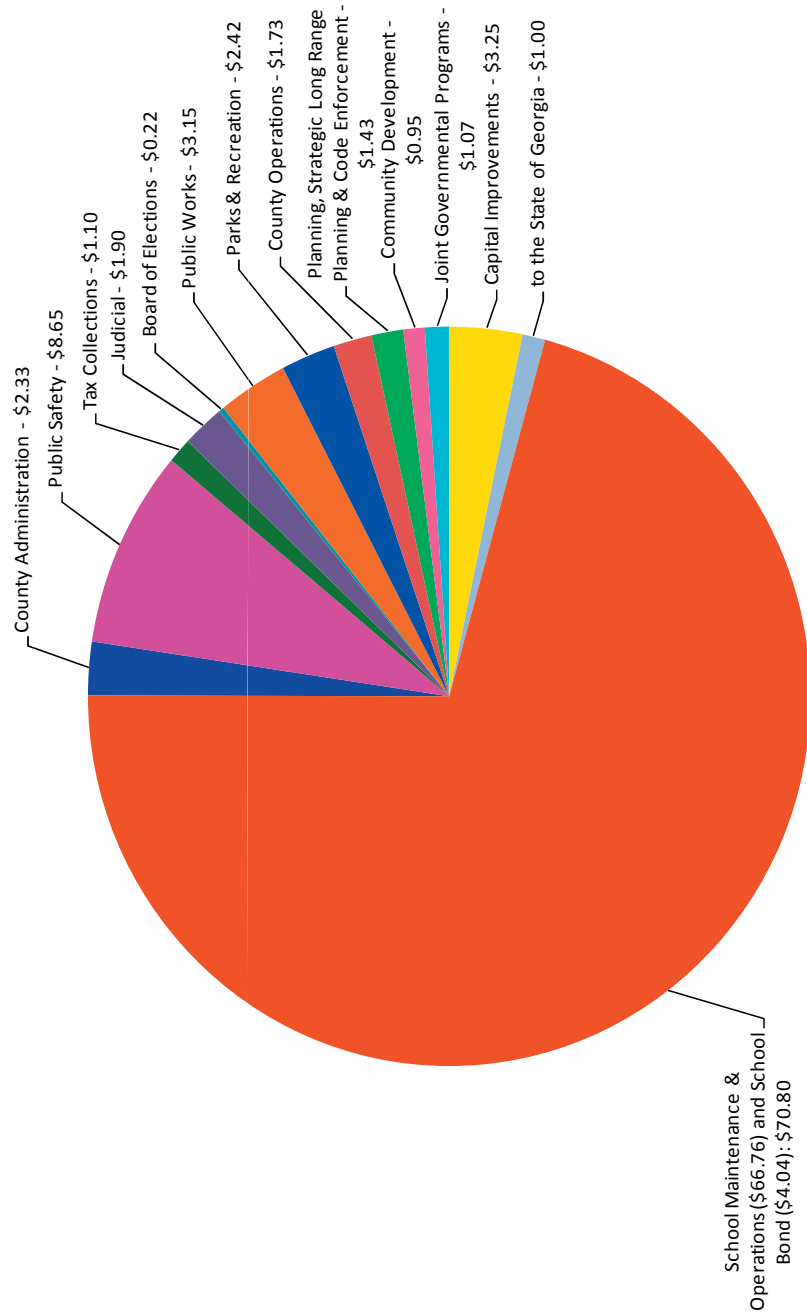
YOUR \$2,000 TAX BILL....

28.2% BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (\$564) – 6.98 mills (Unincorporated)

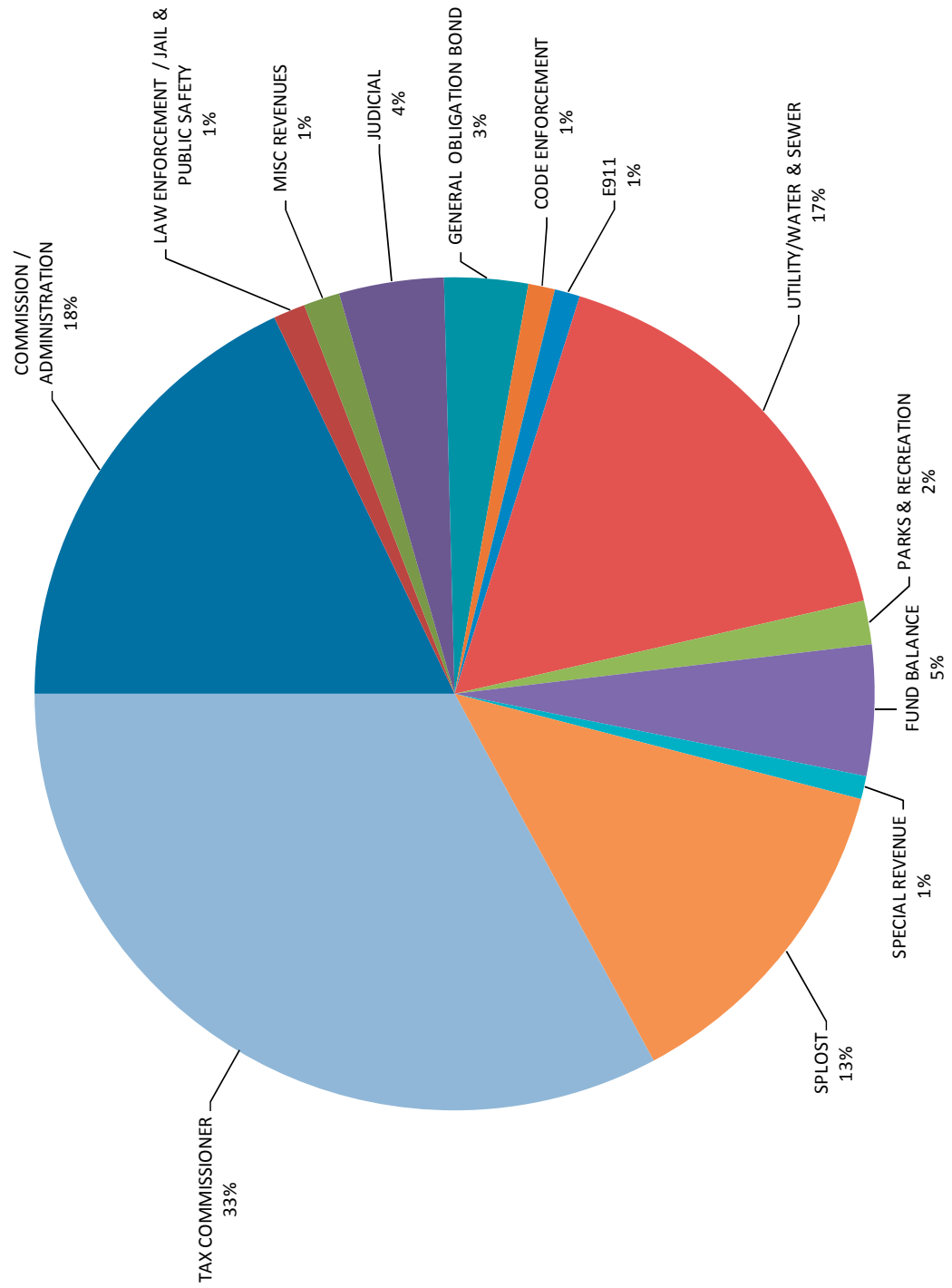
70.8% BOARD OF EDUCATION (\$1,416) – 17.50

1.0% STATE OF GEORGIA (\$20) – .25

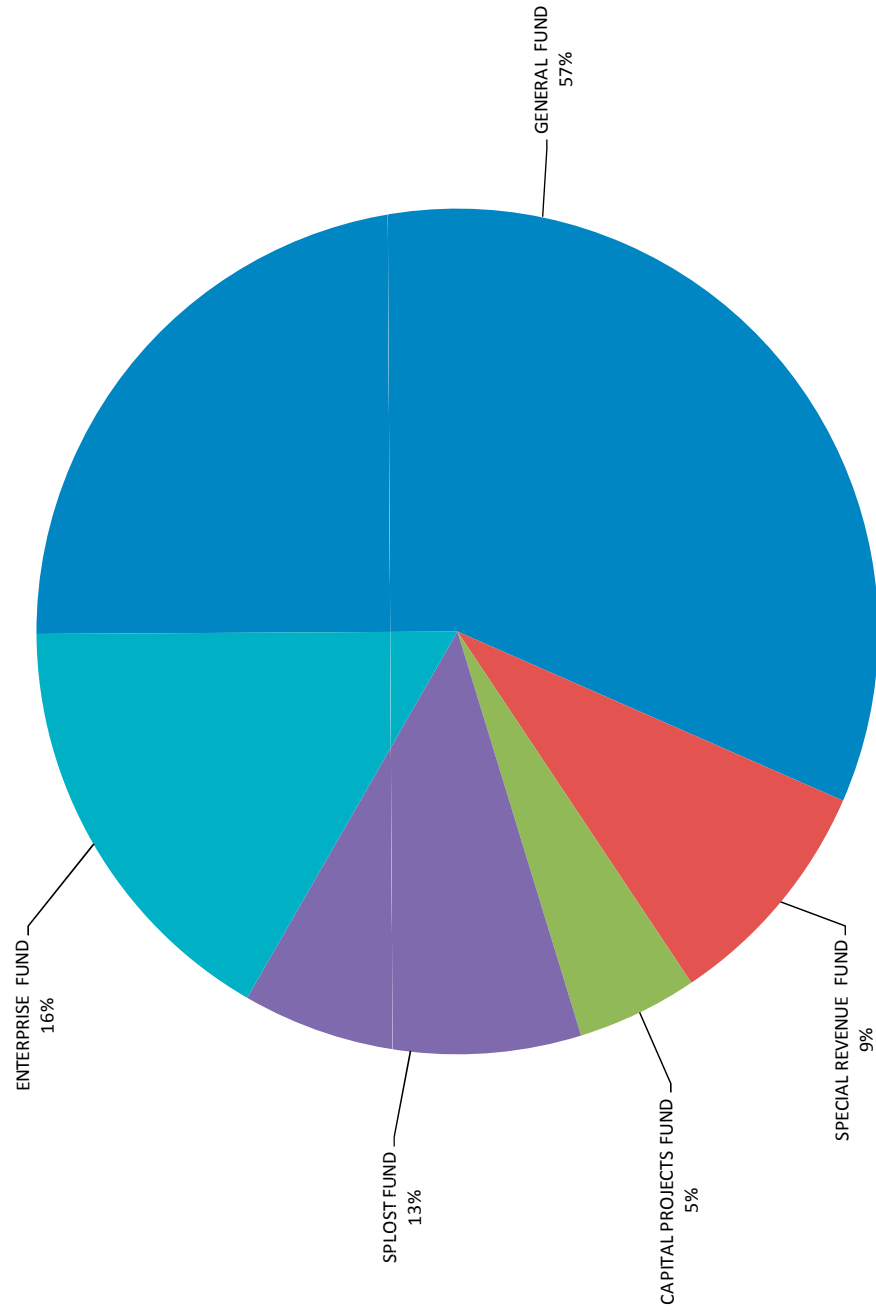
In FY08 For Every \$100 in Property Taxes, You Paid.....



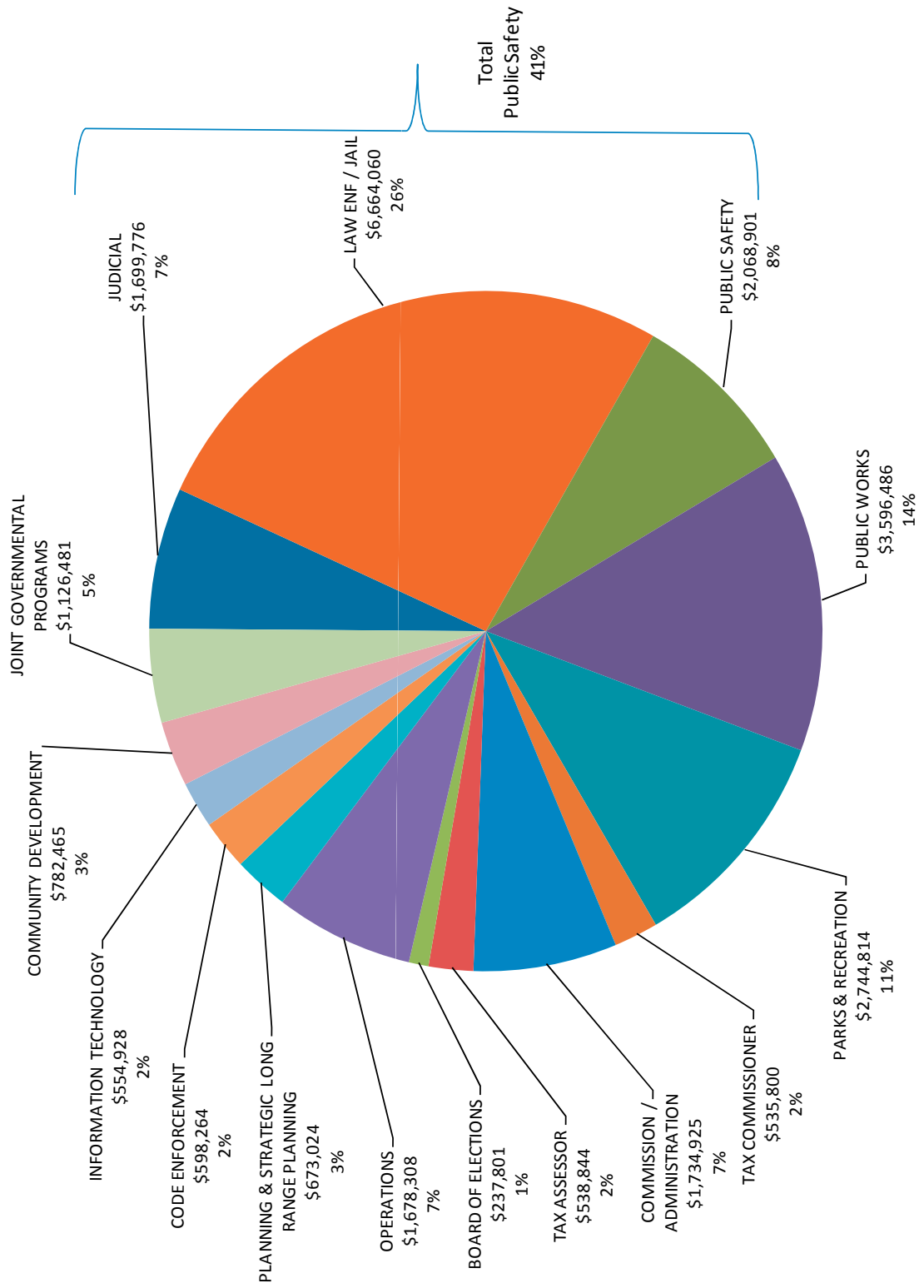
FY09 BUDGET - ALL REVENUES - \$39,388,887



FY09 BUDGET - ALL EXPENDITURES - \$39,388,887



FY09 BUDGET - GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES - \$25,234,877



Future Plans

WATER

Water continues to be a high priority topic here in the South. Climatologists indicate that dry conditions are expected to continue and people need to continue to be resolute in their conservation practices.

Bonds have been issued and land purchases are underway for the Hard Labor Creek Reservoir project. However, our need for water does not end with our Walton County partnership for the reservoir at Hard Labor Creek. We must continue to explore other sources, including options that might be available within Oconee County.

SEWER

In order to attract the commercial economic development (retail, office and industrial) needed to broaden our tax base, sewer capacity must be available. The Board's decision to upgrade our LAS facility on Rocky Branch is a step in that direction. The upgrade process is now being designed and construction may begin in FY '09. User fees will fund this expansion. This allows those using our sewer system to pay for the expansion of the plant as well as provide funding for maintenance and operation.

REGIONAL EFFORTS

We will continue to work with the four-county Georgia Bioscience Joint Development authority to pursue high-tech and bio-science economic development along the GA 316 corridor. We have a great opportunity to work cooperatively with Athens-Clarke County to proactively pursue life science business for the region.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRs)

A 16-member committee has been appointed by the Board of Commissioners to study the feasibility of using TDRs in Oconee County. TDRs allow a property owner in a less densely populated area to sell his potential to develop his land and thereby keep the property in green space. The owner is compensated for any potential capital gain he might have realized in selling the property to a developer and the buyer is allowed to use the density that he has purchased in an area that has been zoned for the purpose. The members of the committee are as follows: Clay Bryant, Melba Cooper, Delmar Finco, Philip Freshley, Edward Gardner, Albert Hale, Gene Higginbotham, C. Wayne Jordan, Chuck Lee, Sam Mitchell, Russ Page, Ed Perkins, Linda Carol Porterfield, Bob Smith, Brian Tomlinson, and Thomas Verner.

IMPACT FEES

An Impact Fees Study Committee is studying the use of impact fees in use in Georgia to see if they would have applicability to Oconee County. Impact fees are imposed as a way to recover the costs related to the development of any particular project. This committee is to study and report to the BOC its finding on the pros and cons of using impact fees. For instance, if a developer wants to erect a commercial center, then "impact" fees could be collected to offset the costs of the infra-

structure needed to build it. Likewise, a homeowners' subdivision places additional stress (an impact) on roads (traffic, turn lanes), emergency services, and schools, etc. The 12-member committee includes: Ken Beall, Bob Cain, Billy Crozier, Doug Dickens, Amrey Harden, Mary Mellein, Penny Mills, Russ Page, Mike Power, Flynn Warren, Chuck Williams, and Jon Williams.

JENNINGS MILL PARKWAY

Right-of-way acquisition has been completed on this much anticipated project and approval for construction from the GA Department of Transportation should be forthcoming in the near future. It is estimated that construction will take 18 to 24 months. While we continue to see delays in many state/federal DOT projects due to funding shortfalls, we do not anticipate delays in this project.

MARS HILL ROAD/EXPERIMENT STATION ROAD WIDENING

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has approved the state/federal funds to begin right-of-way acquisition. The contract with GDOT is for \$10,781,000. Oconee County will be reimbursed by GDOT for this expense. The ROW acquisition process should begin in the fall of 2008.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Our Land Use and Transportation Committee continues to review intersections throughout the county and provide input to our Public Works Department for improvements. We expect to incorporate the priorities into the county's current Transportation Improvement Plan (TIM). Members of this committee are: Abe Abouhamdan, Chair; Derek Crowe; Robert Isaac; Mary Mellein; James Morris; Courtney Gale; Frank Watson; Bill Tollner; Bob Sanders; Henry Norman; and Flynn Warren. One position is vacant at this time.

OLD CENTRAL SCHOOL RENOVATION

Exterior work is nearly complete on the old Central School. The structure is quite striking seen from U.S. Highway 441 south of Farmington at Oconee Heritage Park.



Old Central School



William Daniell House on Daniells Bridge Road

Board of Commissioners

G. Melvin Davis, Chairman

Jim Luke, Post 1

Donald H. Norris, Post 2

Margaret S. Hale, Post 3

Chuck Horton, Post 4

Constitutional Officers

David Anglin, Probate Judge

Scott Berry, Sheriff

Harriette Browning, Tax Commissioner

Angela Watson, Clerk of Courts

Elected Officials

Lawton Stevens, Chief Judge

Steven Jones, Judge

David Sweat, Judge

Ken Mauldin, District Attorney

John Simpson, Coroner

The Year in Review

Fiscal Year End

June 30, 2008