

# Oconee fast-tracks Echo Hills

County to spend \$126,500  
for sewer, water engineering

BY CARLOS GALARZA  
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Oconee County is developing Echo Hills faster than the Golden Corner Commerce Park.

County Council will be asked tonight to spend \$126,500 for sewer and water infrastructure improvements at the Echo Hills property on Highway 11.

The engineering work would allow Walhalla to provide sewer and water service to Echo Hills, according to a change order request on tonight's council meeting agenda.

BP Barber and Associates of Columbia would do the engineering work. The new change order increases to \$219,250 the amount of money Oconee has paid the firm for work at Echo Hills.

BP Barber did site analysis at Echo Hills before Oconee paid \$2.5 million for the 406-acre property in December.

County Administrator Scott Moulder said Monday that a written agreement with Walhalla would not be needed to receive sewer and water services.

"We'd just be like any other customer of the city," Moulder said.

The county had been in talks with Walhalla and Westminster to see which municipality would provide water and sewer service. Both cities have lines within a mile of Echo Hills.

Westminster Administrator David Smith had challenged Walhalla's right to service Echo Hills based on its claim of territorial rights.

OCONEE COUNTY  
COUNCIL MEETING

**When:** 6 p.m. tonight  
**Where:** Council Chambers, 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla

However, the point became moot because Oconee has chosen to use Walhalla's services.

"It's the customer's choice," Smith said Monday.

Although the county purchased Echo Hills only four months ago, it likely will attract industrial clients before the Golden Corner Commerce Park, which Oconee bought more than five years ago.

Industries usually pass on sites that don't have sewer, which is the case with GCCP.

Both sites are listed on the South Carolina Department of Commerce website, but while the county advertises that sewer is planned at the GCCP, it notes that sewer is being engineered at Echo Hills.

Council approved two weeks ago the issue of a request for qualifications for the building of a package sewer plant at GCCP. Procurement has yet to advertise the RFQ on its website.

Oconee is asking \$35,000 an acre at Echo Hills, or \$5,000 more than it is asking per acre at GCCP, according to information on the Department of Commerce website.

A complete agenda of tonight's council meeting is available at [www.oconeesc.online](http://www.oconeesc.online).