Westminster council gives OK to tourism initiative

'While these are all really good and worthy projects, at the end of the day it ends up with us kind of being all dressed up and nowhere to go, because none of us in the county have had a real strategic plan in place.'

Ken Sloan
Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau president

BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND
THE JOURNAL

WESTMINSTER — Westminster city council approved a funding request Tuesday night from South Carolina's Great Outdoors (SCGO), a project initiative to increase tourism in the city and the county.

Ken Sloan, president and CEO of the Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau, went before the council with a SCGO action plan, which he said will help "recreate the brand of Westminster" and Oconee County and attract more tourism.



Sloan

Sloan said the plan requires $15,000 from the three largest municipalities in the county — Seneca, Walhalla and Westminster — and the towns of West Union and Salem could become involved at a much lower cost.

Sloan said additional funding for the $117,000 project would come from the county and South Carolina National Heritage Corridor, which would fund the balance.

The initiative includes resource meetings between the state and county, countywide development like design standards for buildings, major sites and welcome centers, additions to tourism projects and marketing and advertising strategies for each municipality.

"You may know that

SEE **TOURISM**, PAGE **A5**