



CITY OF SENECA

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City of Seneca Performing Arts Center Parking Garage Funding Request

The City of Seneca is respectfully requesting the State of South Carolina to provide a \$12 million grant to support the construction of a mixed-use parking garage serving a Performing Arts Center on Main Street in downtown Seneca. The \$12 million funding will be coupled with a recent \$10 million grant to complete both buildings as one project that will include a 706-seat Performing Arts Center and an estimated 440 space Parking Garage with mixed residential and commercial uses. Local funding will be provided using New Market Tax Credits to bring local investment to the project. Both projects will create a tourism destination that compliments and brings awareness to existing cultural and historic resources, while contributing to the local economy and enhancing quality of life. These projects will certainly provide a direct positive impact to the City of Seneca's economy, but the benefits will also extend well beyond our municipal boundaries. The other cities within Oconee County and the entire upstate region will most certainly benefit from the tourism and economic boost upon completion.

The mixed-use garage will increase much needed parking availability to support business development and tourism to the city. The garage will include, as conceptually designed, a mixed-use structure to incorporate additional commercial and residential square footage to include approximately 50,000 square feet of additional residential apartments and 10,000 to 12,000 square feet of commercial units.

The parking garage and Performing Arts Center will build upon the momentum from our previous efforts in revitalizing downtown's core commercial area. The city currently has a Commercial Building Improvement Program in place as an incentive to economic development in the Downtown District. The city has also demolished some buildings downtown that were eyesores and beyond repair. In addition to the economic benefits to the businesses in the Downtown District and the 123 Business Corridor, the project will bring awareness to the City's other amenities - Gignilliat Community Center, Ram Cat Alley, Strickland Cultural Museum, Lunney Museum, Blue Ridge Arts Center, and Norton Thompson Park.

The Performing Arts Center and Garage will serve as a gathering spot and an entertainment venue that will attract tourists and residents. In addition, the venues will provide much needed opportunities to partner with local theater, music, and dance groups including the local School District Fine Arts program.

When awarded, the funds will help to strengthen the region's community and economic development potential by preserving and investing in the City's local cultural heritage and natural assets; to support the State of South Carolina's efforts to maximize asset-based and heritage tourism through adaptive reuse of vacant structures in distressed downtown communities; and generating new economic opportunities and job creation by bolstering tourism.

Respectfully submitted by,

T. Scott Moulder
City of Seneca Administrator