

## **Federal Regulators Grant MVP Pipeline Permit Extension with Person County's Support**

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Roxboro, NC

Last week, regulators at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission granted an extension for permits issued to the Mountain Valley Pipeline, allowing additional time for the pipeline to be constructed. The extension came after Person County leaders voiced support for the additional time to construct the pipeline that will bring natural gas from West Virginia into North Carolina.

“This pipeline is the key that unlocks the door to future prosperity for Person County,” said County Commission Chair Gordon Powell. “While we continue working with Duke Energy to ensure that new generating plants are located in Person County after the Mayo and Roxboro plants retire, we know that Duke will need access to natural gas to make that happen.”

Earlier this year, Person County Commissioners engaged two outside consultants to represent the County at the state Utilities Commission. The Utilities Commission is considering Duke Energy's carbon plan that would increase the use of renewable energy and retire coal-fired power plants such as Mayo and Roxboro under legislation passed by state lawmakers and signed by Governor Cooper last year. The legislation requires Duke to reduce and eventually eliminate its carbon emissions.

Person County filed comments with the Utilities Commission in July, seeking to continue the operation of the Mayo and Roxboro plants as long as possible and urging Duke Energy to locate replacement plants in Person County. Those replacement plants would likely be powered by natural gas, and Person County highlighted the need for access to more natural gas as a potential impediment to Duke being able to locate replacement plants in Person County.

“We have a decades long partnership between Duke Energy and the community in Person County,” Commission Chair Powell stated. “We see that Duke needs support to continue operating generation plants in Person County, and we know that our community has the land, transmission lines, and the people to help Duke keep the lights on for people all across North Carolina.”

Person County was among numerous other community, business, and economic development organizations that supported the requested permit extensions from federal regulators. Separate from the extension granted by regulators, lawmakers in Washington, D.C., reached a compromise to approve the Mountain Valley Pipeline. The Mountain Valley Pipeline will run from West Virginia and into North Carolina near Rockingham, with an additional pipeline spur that would run east into the Triangle region.

North Carolina currently has only one major pipeline running through the state, and the additional available natural gas could reduce wholesale prices and make it more economical for Duke Energy to locate natural gas plants in Person County under its carbon plan. Natural gas is seen as an attractive fuel source for electric generation because it provides reliable power with less carbon

emissions than coal burning power plants. The State Utilities Commission will hold a hearing on the carbon plan in September and must make a decision on the carbon plan by the end of the year.

*Person County has a population of approximately 39,259 and a median household income of approximately \$43,381. The North Carolina Department of Commerce designates Person County as a Tier 2, or moderately distressed county, based upon the average unemployment rate, median household income, percentage growth in population, and adjusted property tax base. Duke Energy's Mayo and Roxboro Plants have a combined annual property tax value of \$869,175,056, equating to \$6,258,060 in tax revenue to Person County, and representing 18.5% of Person County's \$34.65 million in annual property tax revenue. Visit [personcountync.gov](http://personcountync.gov) for more information.*