



2. Goals and Objectives

Thoughtful goals and objectives assist in recognizing deficiencies and appropriate solutions. This Multi-Modal Transportation Study (MMTS) builds on the transportation elements of the 2007 Effingham County Comprehensive Plan, providing a more detailed analysis of each transportation mode and offering specific potential improvements in response to identified needs. The process of developing a strategic plan must also recognize that the plan does not exist in isolation. A robust and realistic plan should be informed by, and seek to inform, the goals and objectives of other related plans.

Effingham's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the policy basis of this study, is composed of three documents: a Community Assessment, a Community Participation Plan, and a Community Agenda. The Community Assessment portion of the plan was completed in early 2007, and provides an overview of Effingham County – its people, history, environment, infrastructure, services, and industry. Undertaken concurrently was the Community Participation Plan that identified local stakeholders and solicited public input to the planning process. The Community Agenda was completed in November 2007 and defines the vision, issues and opportunities, and implementation program for Effingham County and its three cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield. As required by the DCA, it covers the following eight elements: population change, economic development, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, housing, land use, transportation, and intergovernmental coordination. In addition to the required eight elements, a ninth “community character” element is also present due to the volume of public comment received relating to the design of public spaces in Effingham County.

Though this Multi-Modal Transportation Study focuses on providing a more in-depth assessment of Effingham's transportation infrastructure, transportation affects and is affected by all of the aforementioned elements discussed in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, especially land use. Recognition of planning element interdependency is present throughout the Community Agenda and is reflected in the vision and policies set forth by it. In the interest of truly comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing planning, these guiding principles serve to create a foundation for this Multi-Modal Transportation Study as well.

Vision

Exhibiting common themes in their visions, Effingham and its cities desire to be inclusive, sustainable communities that preserve their natural environment and history, while guiding growth and investing in appropriate infrastructure so that old and new residents alike experience a high quality of life. In support of these ideals, a number of goals and objectives were established according to the nine DCA elements previously described. Transportation and supportive land use goals, which were generally the same for the county and its cities, are reproduced on the pages that follow. Taken directly from the Effingham County Comprehensive Plan, the following goals are the basis of this Multi-Modal Transportation Study.



Transportation Goals

Transportation Planning

- Develop a long-range transportation plan for the county.
- Promote comprehensive, long-range transportation planning in conjunction with comprehensive planning.
- Promote alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling and public transit.

Accessibility and mobility

- Encourage mixed-use development and design standards that are pedestrian-oriented to promote mobility and access for all citizens.
- Ensure that new and reconstructed roadways will support multiple modes of transportation and enhance the aesthetics of the community.
- Support access management strategies to improve the safety and aesthetics of commercial corridors.

Network connectivity

- Ensure connectivity between road network, public transit, and pedestrian/bike paths.
- Promote higher-density and mixed-use developments in areas conducive to walking and bicycling.
- Promote a continuous network of bicycle routes and provide bicycle facilities (e.g., parking racks) at destinations throughout the county.

- Promote pedestrian and bicycle mobility and circulation in and between residential subdivisions and surrounding commercial uses.

Public transportation

- Promote county participation in a regional bus system, such as commuter routes to Chatham County and rural routes between populated areas of the county.
- Identify potential linkages with social service agencies and proposed rural transit to provide transportation for those with special needs.
- Protect opportunities for the future re-use of railroad infrastructure for public transit.

Aesthetics and scenic corridors

- Reduce the visual impact of the automobile in both commercial and residential areas of the county/city
- Protect scenic corridors including preservation of existing trees within the right-of-way.
- Create a “sense of place” along the county’s gateways and entrance corridors.
- Adopt and enforce a signage ordinance to minimize the negative aesthetic impacts of inappropriate signage on the landscape.
- Evaluate the entryways into the community and develop landscaping, signage, etc., at all points of entry in conjunction with private landowners and the Georgia Department of Transportation.
- Develop a vision for the aesthetic quality of future arterial highways, gateway interchanges, and collector streets.



Land Use and Related Goals

General policies

- Address compatible land uses in all districts, especially industrial and commercial uses adjacent to residential.
 - Coordinate future land use with transportation.
 - Allow greater residential densities in areas where water/sewer infrastructure already exists.
 - Protect residential areas from intrusion of incompatible and conflicting non-residential land uses.
 - Promote efficient use of land by creating well designed, pedestrian-friendly development patterns that contain a mix of uses [where people have easy access to schools, parks, residences and businesses through walkways, bike paths and other pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.]
 - Target reinvestment in declining, existing neighborhoods to further encourage private sector redevelopment and accommodate future growth.
- Encourage efficient land use.
 - Promote the development of mixed-uses and the redevelopment/revitalization of existing and underutilized commercial and industrial areas over development of new land for commercial purposes.
 - Encourage innovative land use planning techniques to be used in building higher density and mixed-use developments, as well as infill developments.
 - Accommodate new development while enhancing existing local assets.
 - Promote mixed-use development by right in appropriate areas.

Existing infrastructure and services

- Encourage development in areas where infrastructure and services already exist to maximize efficiency of services and reduce costs associated with sprawling development patterns.
- Promote increases in residential densities in areas that meet community design standards, environmental constraints and available infrastructure and service capacities.

Unincorporated Effingham County also had a number of land use policies regarding farmland and rural preservation. These are detailed within the Community Agenda.