

# COVER SHEET FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING SUBMITTALS

Name(s) of Submitting Government(s): **City of Guyton**

RC: **Coastal Regional Commission**

Submittal Type: **2024 Comprehensive Plan Update**

Preparer:  RC  Local Government  Consultant: **Pond & Company**

Cover Letter Date: **2/10/25**

Date Submittal Initially Received by RC: **2/8/25**

Explain Unusual Time-lags or Other Anomalies, when present:

*Inaccurate/incomplete information, above, and nonconformity with the standards articulated, below, are reportable as performance errors under the terms of the annual DCA/RC contract and may lead to adverse audit findings.*

- **ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY USING THE DEPARTMENT'S SHAREPOINT SITE.**
- **COMBINE ALL INDIVIDUAL IMAGES, DOCUMENTS AND SPREADSHEETS INTO ONE SINGLE, SEARCHABLE PDF (INCLUDING COVER LETTERS, APPENDICES, ETC.), PUT THIS COMPLETED FORM AS THE FIRST PAGE OF THE PDF AND THEN UPLOAD IT.**
- **REVISED SUBMITTALS MUST INCLUDE THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT, NOT ONLY THE REVISED PORTION.**
- **EMAILED OR HARDCOPY MATERIALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR DCA REVIEW.**
- **ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE CHanneled THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE REGIONAL COMMISSION.**

**CITY OF GUYTON  
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 2025-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF GUYTON TO ADOPT THE  
2024-2029 CITY OF GUYTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS,** The City of Guyton is subject to the State of Georgia Planning Act of 1989 which calls for a certified Comprehensive Plan in order to obtain and maintain the status of Qualified Local Government; and,

**WHEREAS,** The City of Guyton is a member of the Coastal Regional Commission, an agency created to provide regional planning and intergovernmental coordination among certain county and city governments in the coastal area of Georgia; and,

**WHEREAS,** The City of Guyton 2024-2029 Comprehensive Plan was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and was found compliant in meeting minimum standards by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
OF GUYTON HEREBY** adopt the City of Guyton 2024-2029 Comprehensive Plan.

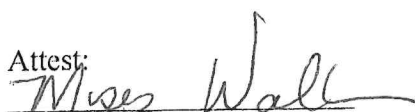
SO RESOLVED, this 14<sup>th</sup>, day of January, 2025.

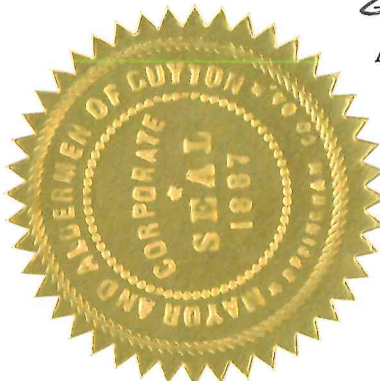
**CITY OF GUYTON**



Andy Harville, Mayor

Attest:

  
Moses Walker, City Clerk





# CITY OF GUYTON

PO Box 99, Guyton, Georgia 31312  
Telephone – 912.772.3353 . Fax – 912.772.3152  
www.cityofguyton.com  
*Working Together to Make a Difference*

---

**Mayor**  
Andy W. Harville  
**City Clerk**  
Fabian M. Mann, Jr.

September 2024

Coastal Regional Commission  
1181 Coastal Drive SW  
Darien, GA 31305

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Guyton has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Coastal Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Fabian Mann, City Clerk at 912-772-3353.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of Guyton



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Guyton



November 2024

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan is a result of the community's collaborative efforts to envision the future of The City of Guyton including contributions from community members, the Advisory Committee, elected officials, City staff, and the planning team:

## City of Guyton

Russ Deen, Mayor  
Meketa Brown, City Manager  
Marshall Reiser, City Council  
Hursula Pelote, City Council  
Michael Johnson, City Council

## Stakeholder Committee

Lon Harden  
Lucy Powell  
Lula Seabrooks  
James Breletic  
Greg Manior  
Amy Dickerson  
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Michael Garvin  
Tamela Mydell  
Ken Nesmith  
Crossgate HOA  
Next Move Realty  
Frank Patterson  
Dr. Franklin Goldwire  
Josh and Tess Smith  
Andrew Cripps  
Effingham County Chamber  
Jamie Deloach  
Joel Tucker  
Bobby Hunter  
Rita Elliott  
Georgia Hi-Lo Trail  
Jimmy Rutland  
Royal Temple  
Pine Street Baptist  
Liberty Christian Fellowship  
Veronica Cook Johnson

*Thanks to all who contributed to this plan document in ways large and small by participating in meetings, surveys, and providing feedback to the planning team.*

## Prepared by:

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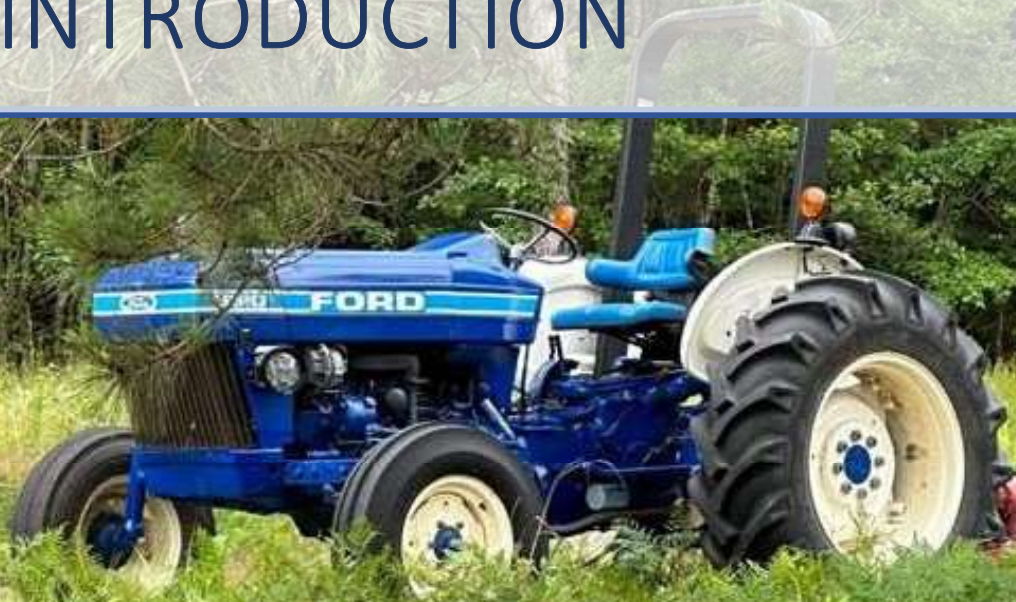
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# 1

## INTRODUCTION



The City of Guyton is situated in the central western part of Effingham County within Georgia’s coastal region. Effingham County is bordered by South Carolina to the east, Chatham County to the south, Bulloch and Bryan Counties to the west, and Screven County to the north. Guyton is approximately 20 miles northwest of the city of Savannah, making it part of the Savannah metropolitan area. Known for its small-town ambiance and tight-knit community, Guyton is served by GA Highway 17 and GA State Highway 119. It’s notable neighboring cities are Rincon, Springfield, and Pooler, Georgia.

As Guyton moves forward, it remains committed to balancing growth and development with the preservation of its historical identity. The City’s comprehensive plan aims to build on its historical strengths, promoting sustainable development, enhancing quality of life, and ensuring that Guyton remains a vibrant, welcoming community for future generations.

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is an essential tool for guiding the growth and sustainable development of the City of Guyton. The plan helps coordinate development efforts across various sectors such as housing, transportation, land use, and economic development. This ensures that growth is balanced and meets the needs of the community while preserving the quality of life. Planning of infrastructure is needed so as roads, utilities, and public services



are outlined with the necessary improvements and expansions to support current and future populations, ensuring that infrastructure development keeps pace with growth.

The Plan also helps foster economic growth by identifying opportunities for business development, job creation, and investment. It provide a framework for economic initiatives that can enhance the local economy and improve the standard of living for residents.

The Comprehensive Plan acts as a strategic guide, setting clear priorities for development while balancing growth with conservation, community needs with economic opportunities, and current realities with future aspirations.



Figure 1. Study Area

## PLAN ELEMENTS

The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 mandates that each local government in Georgia must create a comprehensive plan that adheres to specified minimum standards to retain their certification as qualified local governments. This legislation gives the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) the authority to establish these standards and procedures for appropriate and timely comprehensive planning by all local governments. The Minimum Standards and Procedures, effective March 1, 2014, is to provide a framework for the development, management, and implementation of local comprehensive plans at the local, regional, and state government level.

The following elements are key elements in the City of Guyton's comprehensive plan:

- **Community Goals:** Outlining the vision and strategic objectives for the future of the community.
- **Needs and Opportunities:** Identifying current challenges and potential opportunities that the community can leverage.
- **Community Work Program:** Detailing actionable projects and initiatives to be undertaken to meet community goals.
- **Economic Development:** Focusing on strategies to enhance the economic vitality and competitiveness of the community.
- **Land Use:** Planning and regulating the use of land to support sustainable growth and orderly development.
- **Transportation:** Developing infrastructure plans to improve mobility and connectivity for residents and businesses.
- **Housing:** Addressing housing needs to ensure a diverse range of affordable, quality housing options.
- **Broadband:** Expanding access to high-speed internet as a critical infrastructure for economic and educational advancement.

*Each element is required to express existing conditions, show needs and goals in the area, and set out implementation strategies. These plans are expected to be revisited every five years and more thoroughly updated every ten years. This document serves as the first City of Guyton Comprehensive Plan.*

# PLANNING PROCESS

This comprehensive plan has been created based on a combination of factual research and community engagement. This provides the plan with a robust understanding of the needs in the community, the goals the community has for the future, and the tools available to help reach those goals. To identify these aspects, the planning process has been built around a five-step process.

## RESEARCH

Data was collected to better understand the City of Guyton community – including the population, economic environment, natural features, and the businesses that call it home. This phase also included research into the City’s current policies and goals from the previous comprehensive plan and other planning efforts.

## VISION

Through community engagement including both a dedicated advisory committee and broad public input opportunities, the planning team crafted a vision for the Guyton community. This vision is documented through the needs, opportunities, and goals in this plan.



## DEVELOP

The Develop stage was focused on identifying specific tools to help the Guyton community. This phase included revisions and continuing coordination to ensure that the tools identified are appropriate and feasible.

## DOCUMENT & ADOPT

The final phase of the project included the creation of this plan document and the ultimate adoption of the plan by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.



## PLANNING PROCESS

The concerns and goals of the Guyton community are at the center of the City of Guyton Comprehensive Plan. As such, there have been extensive efforts to listen to a wide range of community members. This chapter details the specific efforts made to engage the community and presents the feedback received. This feedback is incorporated in many of the decisions made and informs the planning direction taken in later sections.

### PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing for a comprehensive plan serves several critical purposes in the community planning process. It is a formal event designed to ensure transparency, foster community involvement, and provides an opportunity to present the plan to the community. The public was informed of the plan's components such as land use, transportation, housing, and economic development elements to help the community understand the intentions and implications of the plan.

Guyton's Comprehensive Plan kickoff and first public hearing was held on October 4, 2022 at the Guyton Gymnasium. The public hearing was advertised in the local newspaper and City's social media page more than two weeks prior to the meeting. Representatives from the project team were also in attendance to answer questions from the community.

# STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Stakeholder committees are established to unite all parties with a vested interest in a project or initiative. The committee for this plan comprised representatives from various sectors, including government, business, community groups, and nonprofits. This inclusive setting allowed for a wide range of perspectives to be shared and integrated, promoting a more comprehensive approach. The committee was assembled with input from city officials, the City Council, and guidance from the project team, ensuring that representatives from diverse sectors were included to foster collaboration and inclusivity across the city.

## Meeting #1

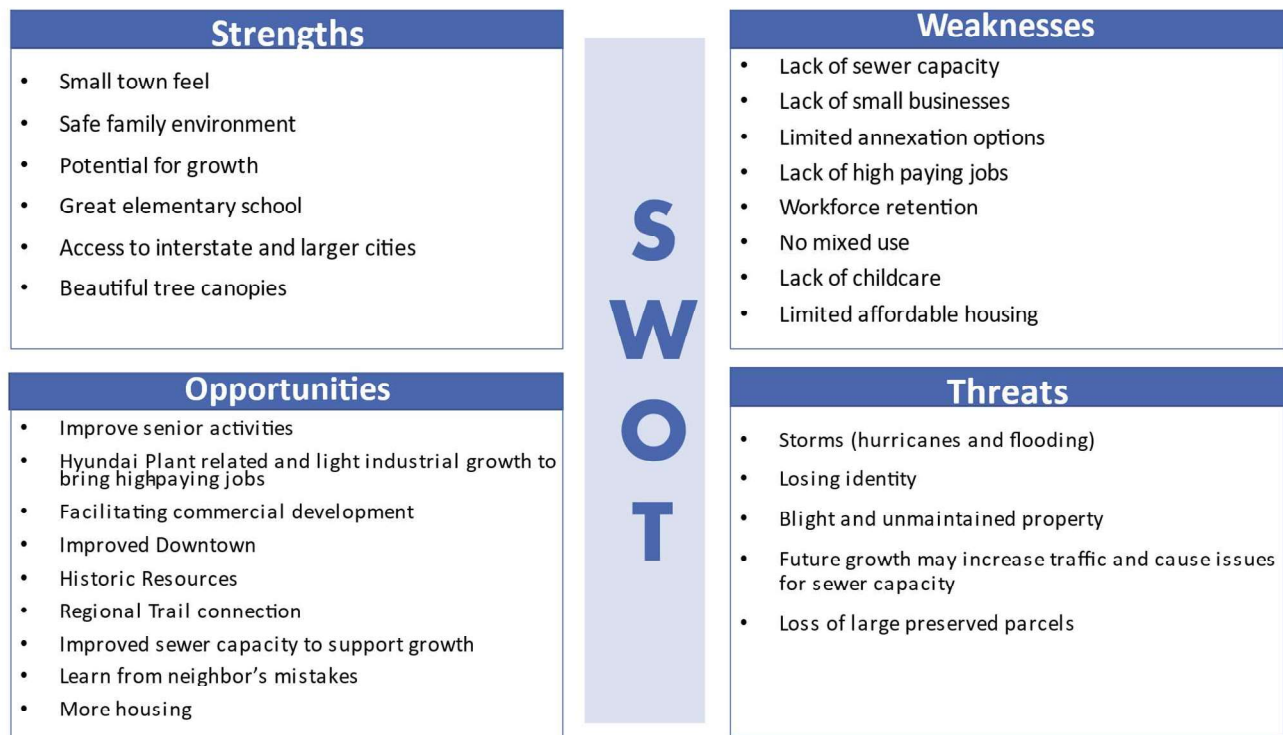
A Stakeholder Committee was assembled to provide guidance on the Comprehensive Planning process. This Committee was formed to represent a broad selection of interests of the City of Guyton. These representatives were invited to an initial meeting on November 14, 2022, at the Guyton Gym located at 505 Magnolia Street.

Once the group had introduced themselves, the meeting was used to present a broad selection of research into existing conditions and gather input on current needs within the City of Guyton. This overview from the stakeholders helped establish a common understanding of the current needs and conditions throughout the city.



## Meeting #2

A second round of engagement was held on Monday, May 22, 2023, at the Guyton Gym from 2:30 – 4:00pm. At this meeting, the planning team presented summary information about the plan and gathered input on Future Land Use map, Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, Needs and Opportunities, and general feedback. Some participants provided written comments and drawings for the Future Land Use area map changes which were used in analysis.



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

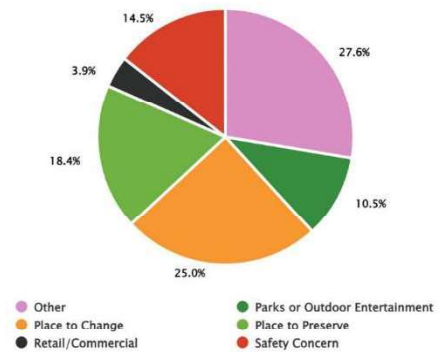
A round of community engagement was available throughout the Fall of 2022 including an in-person pop-event, online engagement, and a public open house. The online platform, Social Pinpoint, was utilized to host an online survey and interactive map activity.

## Map Activity

Participants were presented with a map and asked to place certain indicators on it to voice their vision for varying areas of the county. There were two sets of indicators: Change and Preserve; and Other input.

## Change & Preserve Activity

Change and Preserve included two pins. One was used to indicate areas that participants wanted to see preserved in the future. The other was used to indicate where participants saw opportunity for better development or community features. In the online activities, participants could also “like” or “dislike” markers placed by earlier participants. The map below shows the pins placed and a heatmap weighted by the likes added to those pins.



## Survey Activity

Participants in this round of public engagement were also asked their input with a 20 question series of “Big Ideas”. These Big Ideas helped shape the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that aligned with plan elements. Participants could chose a range of opinions from “Strongly Agree” through “No Opinion”.

## Pop-up Events

The first popup event was held at Sale on the Trail on Saturday, October 22, 2022. The project team gathered input from the community on current needs and what they would like to see changed or preserved throughout the city.

The second popup event was held during the City’s annual Summer Picnic on Saturday, July 15, 2023. The project team presented boards in an open-house style format with key findings and gathered input on recommendations and annexation.



## Public Open House

The Community Open House was held on November 14, 2022, at the Guyton Gymnasium. The meeting was to gather input from the community on existing needs, change/preserve in the community, and general information.



**Guyton Comprehensive Plan**

Get involved in the future of City of Guyton

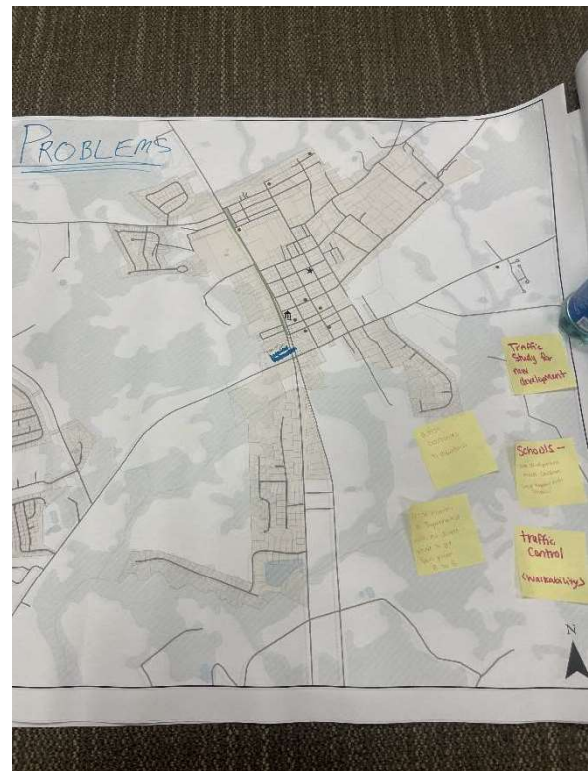
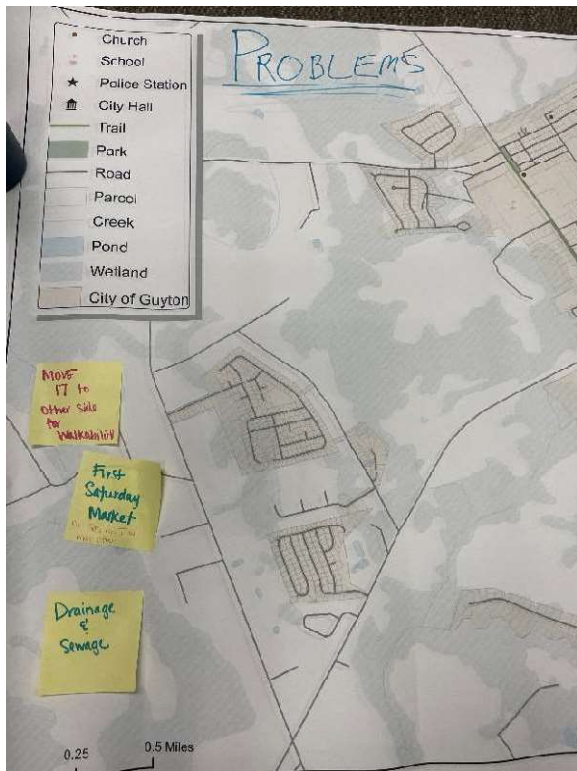
**Community Open House**

Please join us for a community open house to gather input for the City of Guyton's Comprehensive Plan. We will have information and staff available throughout the meeting. There will be no formal presentation, so you can stop in at any time and stay as long or as little as you like.

Monday, November 14, 2022, 6pm to 8pm  
Guyton Gymnasium  
505 Magnolia Street  
Guyton, GA 31312



<https://planningatpand.com/city-of-guyton-comprehensive-plan>





# 3

## NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES



The Needs and Opportunities section of a comprehensive plan is a critical component that identifies the current and future challenges (needs) facing a community, as well as the potential areas for growth and improvement (opportunities). This section serves as a foundation for developing goals, policies, and action plans to guide the community's development over the planning period.

### NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES BY ELEMENT

#### Housing

- Need to maximize the capabilities of code enforcement to enforce regulations.
- Need housing options for residents of varying socioeconomic backgrounds to include a mix of housing sizes, types, and price ranges within the city.
- Opportunity to increase property ownership rates, community appearance, and property values through codes and enforcement.
- Need to manage the building and maintenance of manufactured homes.
- Need for attainable housing in both the rental and ownership markets.

#### Land Use

- Need to ensure that all land use and development ordinances are accessible and implemented.

- Consider appropriate buffering requirement consistent with the size of any development that abuts areas proposed for unincorporated residential, agricultural, and commercial land use.
- Ensure that conservation and preservation are implemented alongside planning and promoting the development model for the City.
- There is a need to ensure that community values are reflected in development codes, particularly related to dark skies, signage, and development controls outside Downtown.
- Need to manage future growth and development. Implement Density Bonus – a zoning exception to allow for more housing units to be built on a given site to encourage the production of affordable housing.

## Economic Development

- People feel safe and appreciate being out of the hustle and bustle of more developed areas. There is a need to keep this small-town sense of place with nearby development pressure.
- Need to promote the revitalization of some parts of the community and improve aesthetics with the implementation of robust code enforcement and ordinances.
- Need to ensure future commercial development is aesthetically pleasing and fits with the desired character of the area and city. The City needs to update design guidelines and continue code enforcement.
- There is a need to balance between limiting density and development while allowing modern amenities, services, and conveniences that keep a small-town feel.
- Need to update city's welcome signs to create sense of place.
- Limited infrastructure may hinder the City's ability to attract development prospects that would be desirable for the community. It is needed to continue to expand sewer capacity.

## Transportation

- Roads need to have stormwater measures installed to prevent erosion.
- Sidewalks need improvement and maintenance.
- There are opportunities to develop bicycle and pedestrian corridors in desired locations.
- Transportation options needed for the disabled and elderly population.

## Community Facilities

- Need for small-town businesses such as a coffee shop, restaurants, doctor/dentist, bank, daycare, etc.
- Start an "adopted a street" program that provides an opportunity for citizen engagement in city upkeep.
- Create more accessible city services, such as a new building or programs for senior citizens.
- Need to have additional parks equipment, including inclusive playground equipment. Having at least one swing that is accessible for children using wheelchairs or with other physical needs would be a benefit. Workout equipment, such as a sit-up station, could also be an opportunity to bring fitness options to the community.
- Increase code enforcement especially as it relates to blighted housing and yard maintenance.
- A community center is desired for residents to gather.

## Natural and Cultural Resources

- Stormwater needs to be addressed proactively to reduce erosion and sediment and road contamination.
- Preserving the character of the community and promoting the small-town identity of the community are important values to residents.
- Accomplishing preservation and conservation goals should be a priority within the community.
- Litter needs to stay picked up to prevent pollution on land and water.
- Preserve the City's historic resources.

# POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION BY ELEMENT

## Housing

- Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging the development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood, instituting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds and coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.
- Enact and enforce proper code enforcement regarding property maintenance within the city.
- Increase the availability of affordable housing through incentives for developers, zoning changes, and supportive housing programs.
- Programs aimed at assisting first-time homebuyers with down payments and favorable loan terms can help more residents afford homes.

## Land Use

- Continue to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize sprawl by encouraging new development to locate to an area where infrastructure currently exists.
- Decisions on new development will contribute to, not take away from, our planned community's character and sense of place.
- Encourage development that is sensitive to the historic context and community sense of place.
- Support land uses that enhance housing and multi-modal options in the community.
- Periodically update the zoning ordinance and development regulations to ensure land uses meet community character goals.
- Utilize Character Area/Future Land Use Map for making development decisions.
- Utilize Historic District Design Guidelines.

## Economic Development

- Continue to honor and enhance the community's unique qualities by protecting and revitalizing historic areas, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting important scenic and natural features.
- Target reinvestment to declining neighborhoods/homes and vacant underutilized sites or building.
- Promote visual appeal and the unique character of the city in commercial or historic areas through design standards (such as an overlay zone).
- Consider access to housing and impacts on infrastructure, transportation, and natural resources when considering economic development projects.
- Work with the community to eliminate substandard or dilapidated housing.
- Encourage the development of small businesses that are suitable for the community. Attract light industrial and appropriate Hyundai plant-related development.
- Encourage the development of housing opportunities that create a balance of housing options, enable residents to live close to their place of employment, and have a mixture of housing types throughout the city.

## Transportation

- The City will address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities for all community residents by promoting alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and commuting or utilizing transit.

- Consider improvements to increase pedestrian and bicycle options and safety.
- Enhance the GA-119 corridor to include increased design, landscaping, signage, and other codes.
- Developers should build all roads to support their developments.

## Community Facilities

- The City will maximize opportunities to ensure that public space is well-maintained through litter control, managing vegetation, maintaining, and upgrading park equipment and space, and maintaining and improving gateway areas and signs.
- The City will make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities to minimize the need for costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- The City will create a Master Parks and Recreation Plan to maintain and upgrade parks and recreation facilities
- Coordinate provision of public facilities and services with land use planning.
- Work with the local school board to encourage school location decisions that support the community's overall growth and development plans.

## Natural and Cultural Resources

- Promote the protection, enhancement, and maintenance of trees and greenspace in public space and residential and commercial development.
- Support collaborative efforts to conserve and responsibly utilize natural and historic areas for recreational and tourism opportunities, such as trails and greenspace and maintaining a working relationship with Effingham County Historical Society.
- Explore tools to protect historic resources, such as voluntary incentives through the National Register of Historic Places.
- The City will continue to maintain its current recreation offerings, while looking for opportunities to expand recreation uses by developing new sites, if feasible.



# GOALS BY ELEMENT

The community goals outlined in the comprehensive plan reflect the collective vision and aspirations of the residents, aiming to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

## Housing

- Expand the availability and diversity of housing options to meet the needs of all community members while promoting high-quality, aesthetically pleasing residential developments that enhance the community's character and quality of life.

## Land Use

- Promote the efficient utilization of land to support sustainable growth, optimize infrastructure investments, and minimize environmental impacts.
- Ensure that land use patterns and developments reflect and enhance the community's desired character, cultural heritage, and aesthetic values.

## Economic Development

- Foster a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economy that supports job creation, enhances the tax base, and improves the quality of life for all residents.
- Cultivate a unique and authentic community identity that reflects local culture, heritage, and values, fostering pride among residents and attracting visitors.

## Transportation

- Ensure that the transportation system is designed, constructed, and maintained to prioritize the safety of all users, including motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- Develop an inclusive, multimodal transportation system that provides efficient, accessible, and affordable mobility options for residents of all ages, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

## Community Facilities

- Develop, enhance, and maintain a network of high-quality public spaces that are accessible to all community members, fostering social interaction, recreation, cultural expression, and environmental stewardship to improve the overall quality of life.

## Natural and Cultural Resources

- Conserve, promote, and protect environmental, natural, and historic resources to ensure that these assets are preserved for current residents and future generations, contributing to the overall quality of life and environmental health.



# 4

## POPULATION



The foundation of Guyton is in its residents and understanding the demographic makeup of the city is essential for effective planning and resource allocation. This chapter examines key demographic factors, including population growth, age distribution, racial and ethnic diversity, household characteristics, and socioeconomic indicators. This information is useful in estimating the City's public service needs for future population growth. This section details where Guyton is today and the demographic trends projected for the next thirty years, with some comparisons and context to better explain the data.

## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

### Total Population

Based on the 2020 U.S. Census, Guyton's population reached 2,289, marking a 35.9% increase from 1,684 residents in 2010. Located in Effingham County and part of the Savannah MSA, Guyton represents about 3.5% of the county's total population of 65,169. This positions Guyton as a relatively small yet significant part of the county's overall demographic landscape, emphasizing its role as a small city within a region experiencing consistent growth.

## Population Density

According to 2020 census data, Guyton covers an area of 3.22 square miles with a population density of 713 people per square mile, reflecting moderate growth and expansion in residential areas to the northwest and southeast. This density typifies the small-town atmosphere of Guyton, which is part of the expanding Savannah MSA.

While the population is spread throughout the city, population density is particularly dense in the neighborhoods of Mossy Hollow, Glenlea Crossing, Crossgate, Summer Place, and Del-A-Rae, with the highest density observed in Hidden Creek, located off SR 119/Springfield Avenue. The population density is illustrated on the map in Figure 2 and is primarily concentrated around its city center and along major transportation routes, notably near State Routes 17 and 119. These areas serve as the main arterial roads that facilitate movement and access throughout the city, contributing to a higher population density in their vicinity compared to more peripheral areas of the city. As Guyton is a small city, its residential and commercial areas are relatively close, with the downtown area likely being the most densely populated part of the city. This pattern of population distribution is typical for small towns and cities where the central areas around main streets and community services attract more residents and businesses, leading to higher density.

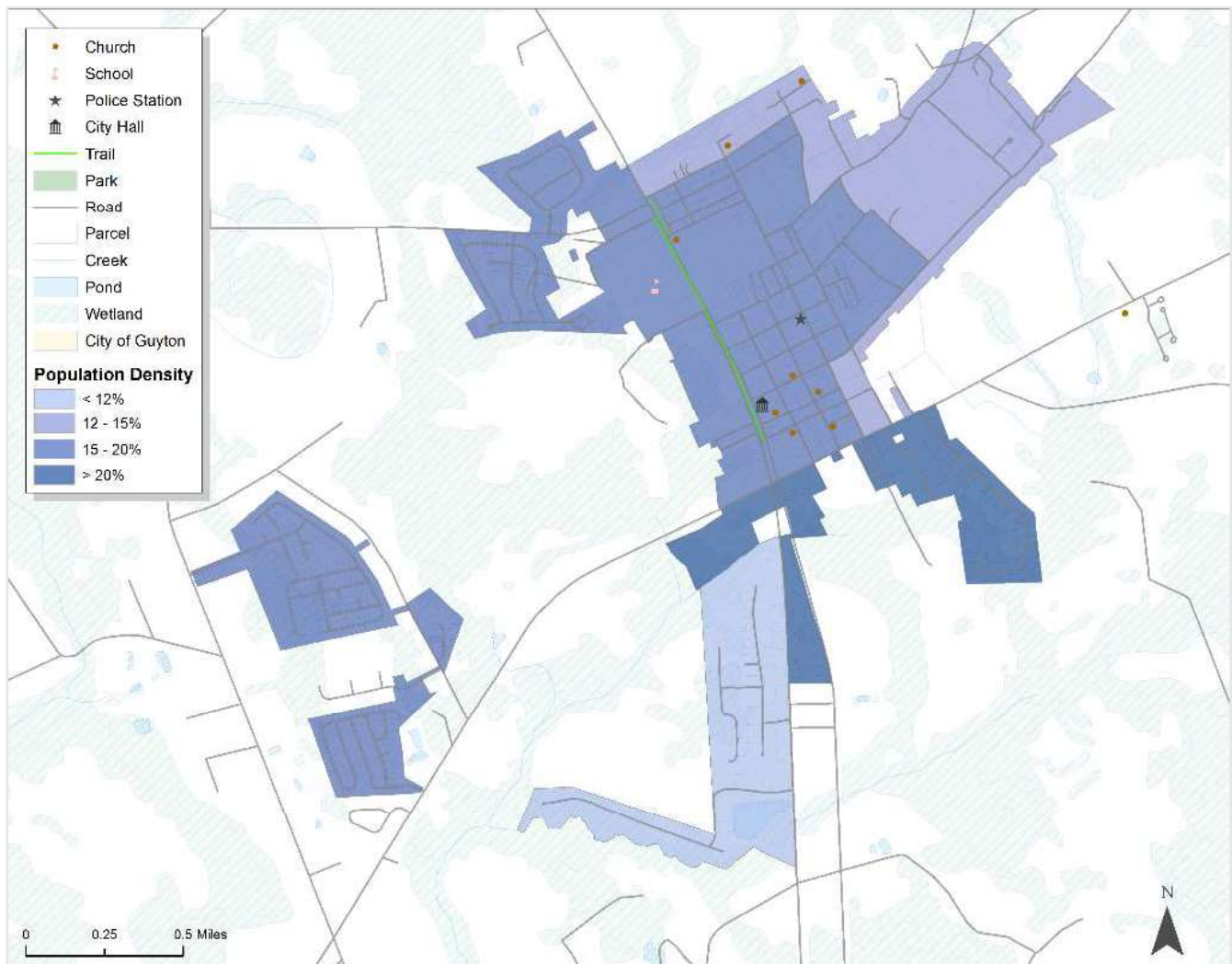


Figure 2. City of Guyton Population Density



## Population Change

From 2000 to 2020, Guyton saw its population grow significantly. The city's population was 1,092 in 2000 and rose to 2,289 by 2020, marking an increase of approximately 110% over two decades. This growth accelerated after 2010, with a notable 36% increase from 1,684 in 2010 to 2,289 in 2020, positioning Guyton as the fastest-growing municipality in Effingham County. The population continued to expand, reaching an estimated 3,123 by 2023, according to the American Community Survey, demonstrating a further increase of 10.5% since the 2020 census. This trend indicates that Guyton's growth has consistently outpaced that of Effingham County and the Savannah MSA, shown in Table 3. Factors contributing to this rapid growth include regional economic development and the expansion of the port in Savannah, enhancing local employment and living opportunities.

Year	Guyton		Effingham County		Savannah MSA	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2010	1,684	35.9%	50,513	23.2%	347,611	16.5%
2020	2,289		62,241		404,798	

Table 1. Population Change

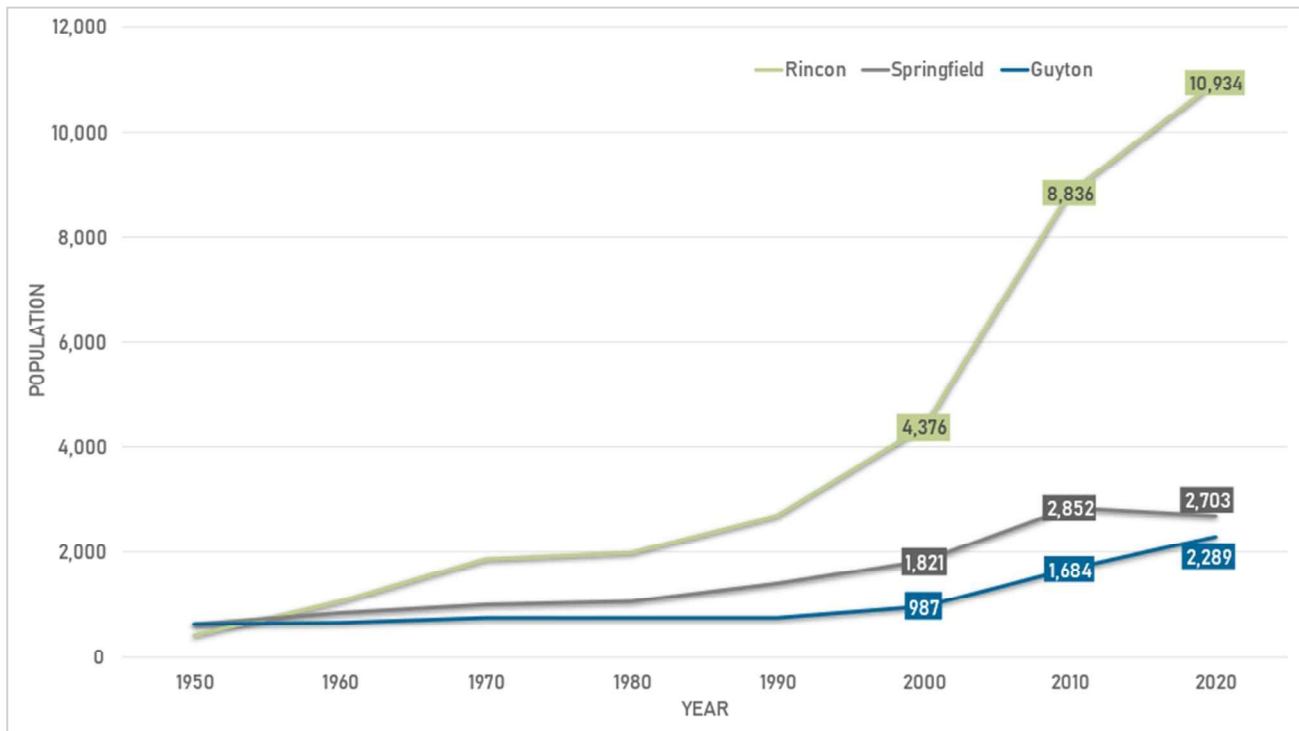


Table 2. Population Comparison – Guyton, Effingham County, Savannah MSA

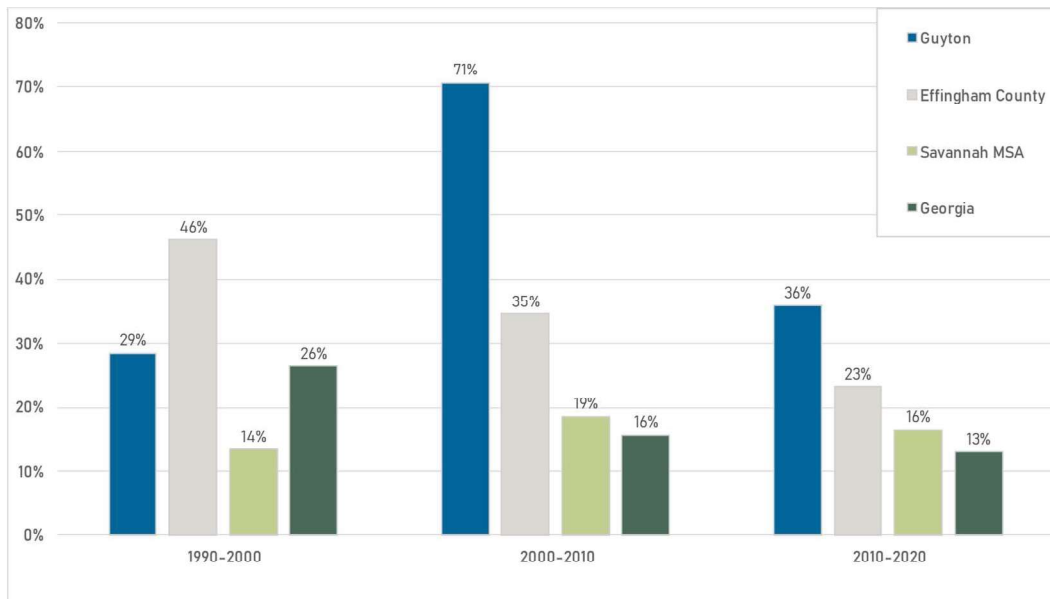


Table 3. Population Growth over Time

## Population Projection

Population projections are crucial for long-range planning as they estimate the future demands on a community's infrastructure and services based on expected growth. These projections are based on historical trends in Guyton and are essential for preparing for its future needs. Effingham County's population is anticipated to reach about 115,000 by 2050, according to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. These estimates use demographic methods that analyze past trends in fertility, migration, and aging.

With limited or no specific projection data available, extrapolated historical growth trends were analyzed and suggest that Guyton's population could potentially increase to over 5,700 by the year 2050. The forthcoming Hyundai Metaplant in nearby Bryan County is expected to significantly impact regional demographics, likely boosting Guyton's population growth in the coming years. The plant is projected to start production in late 2024 and will create over 8,500 jobs, which is expected to increase the demand for housing, services, and infrastructure in surrounding areas, including Guyton.

This large-scale industrial development could accelerate Guyton's population growth as workers might choose to live near their workplace. Additionally, local educational initiatives aimed at training for plant-related jobs indicate a deeper integration and impact on the local community and economy, potentially increasing Guyton's population beyond the initial projections of 5,700 by 2050.

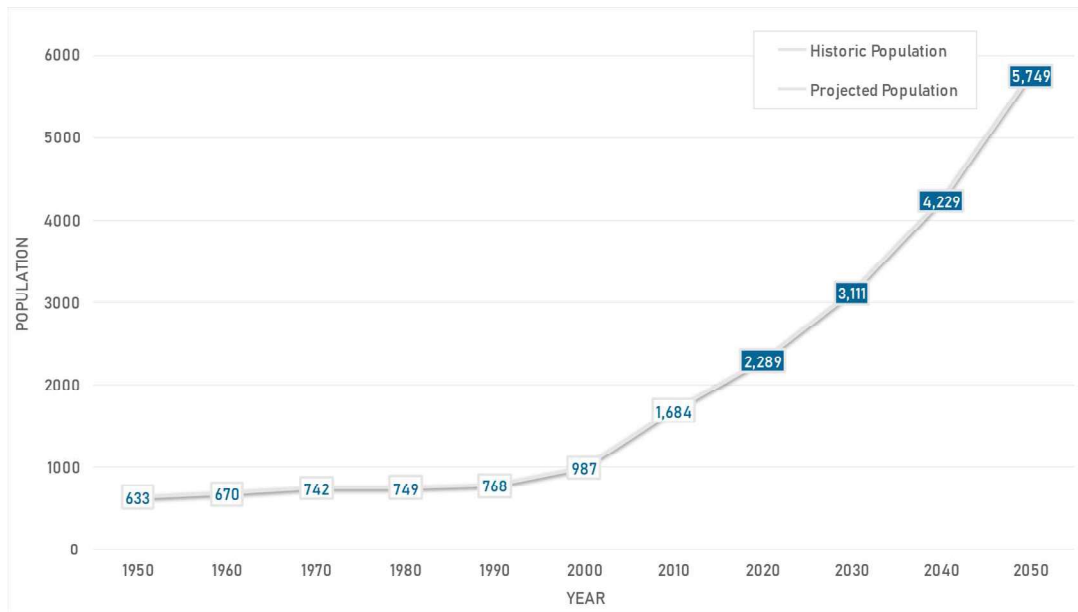


Table 4. Historic and Projected Population

## Demographic Profile

### Race and Ethnicity

Guyton's racial and ethnic makeup is complex and dynamic, reflecting a community rich in diversity. This diversity is vital to the city's cultural identity and influences many aspects of local life, from community programs to educational systems. Mirroring the broader trends seen in the Savannah MSA and Effingham County, the majority of Guyton's population, at 66.1%, identifies as White alone. Approximately 28.2% of the population identifies as Black or African American alone, 4.3% as Hispanic or Latino, and less than 1% as Asian alone. The White (non-Hispanic) population surpasses any other single racial or ethnic group by a factor of 1.29, making them the majority group in the city. Collectively, minority populations account for about 34% of Guyton's total population, marking a 6% decrease from 2010.

Despite the overall decline in the percentage of minority residents, U.S. Census data from 2010 to 2020 indicates significant growth in specific ethnic categories. The Hispanic population saw an increase of about 150%, while those classified under "Other - non-Hispanic" experienced a growth of approximately 430%, shown in Table 5. Hispanics or Latinos of any race constitute around 5.62% of the population, with those of Mexican origin being the most significant subset within this group. Other racial and ethnic minorities in Guyton include a small percentages of Asians, two or more races (multiracial individuals), and other groups, each making up less than 2% of the population.

In 2020, 98% of Guyton residents held a US citizenship, surpassing the national average of 93%. However, in 2019, the percentage of US citizens was approximately 99%, indicating a slight decline in the citizenship rate. This demographic mix reflects a community of significant diversity, contributing to the cultural fabric of Guyton.

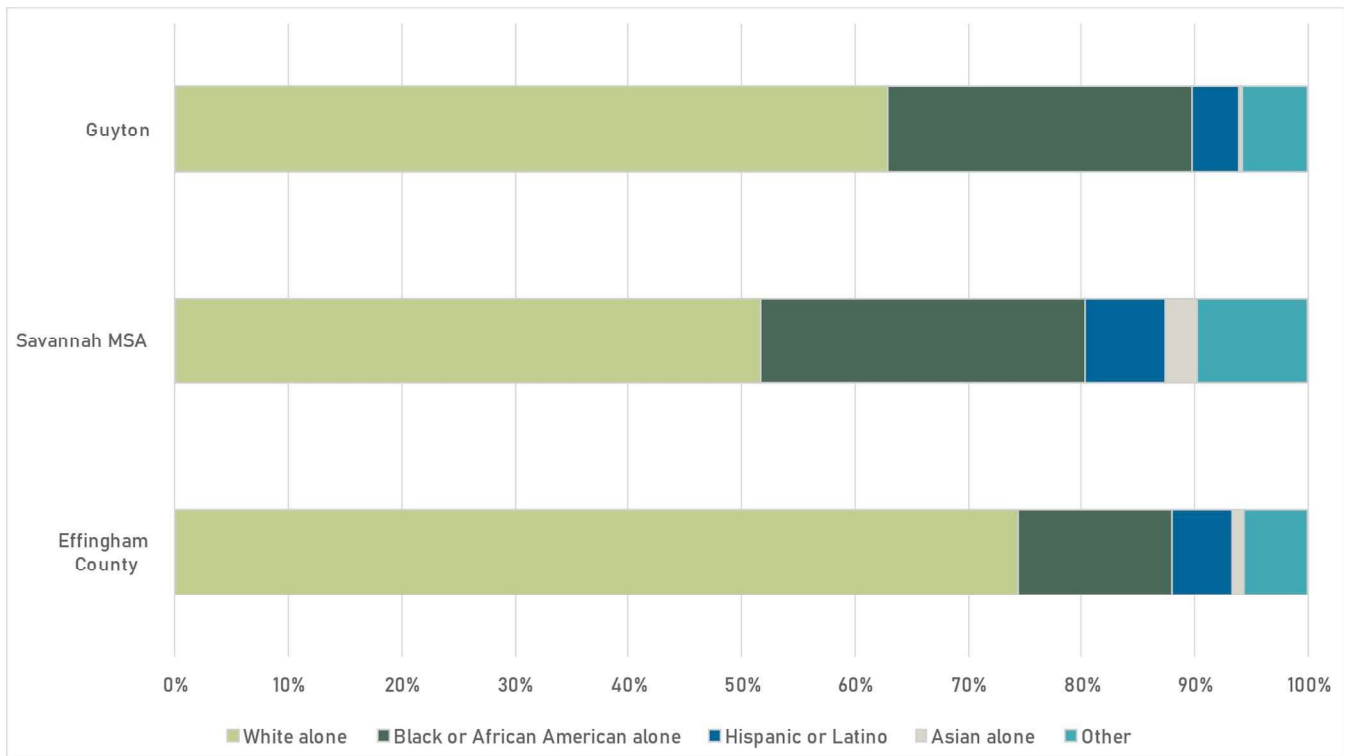


Table 5. Race and Ethnicity Breakdown

Race/Ethnicity	2000	2010	2020	% Growth (2000-2010)	% Growth (2010-2020)
White, non-Hispanic	547	1,015	1,440	86%	42%
Black, non-Hispanic	339	601	615	77%	2%
Asian, non-Hispanic	4	6	9	50%	50%
Other, non-Hispanic	15	25	132	67%	428%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1	2	8	100%	300%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0	0	-	-
Some Other Race alone	1	0	14	0%	1400%
Two or More Races	13	23	110	77%	37%
Hispanic	12	37	93	208%	151%

Table 6. Change by Race and Ethnicity

## Age Distribution

Guyton is a young city. The median age of residents in Guyton is 33.8 years. About 60% of the population is under 39 years old, which includes Millennial and Gen-Z generations. Young people (under 25) make up 37% of the population while working age adults make up 30% of the population. Prime working age population is adults between the ages of 25 and 54 and is typically the most economically productive demographic. On the other end, Guyton’s population that is at or near retirement age is relatively low, with about 13% of the population 60 years or older.

The nearby Hyundai Metaplant is expected to increase the number of working age adults and as a result, children, in the city. Guyton could see changes in its age distribution as families move in and grow their households in the city.

Cities around the state and nation are preparing for large aging populations; however, this is not a critical need for Guyton at this time. It will be important to begin a long-term strategy to accommodate Guyton’s young population as they age. The city should consider making improvements to its facilities and infrastructure to accommodate its young population. Table 7 shows the age distribution of Guyton in comparison to Effingham County and the state of Georgia.

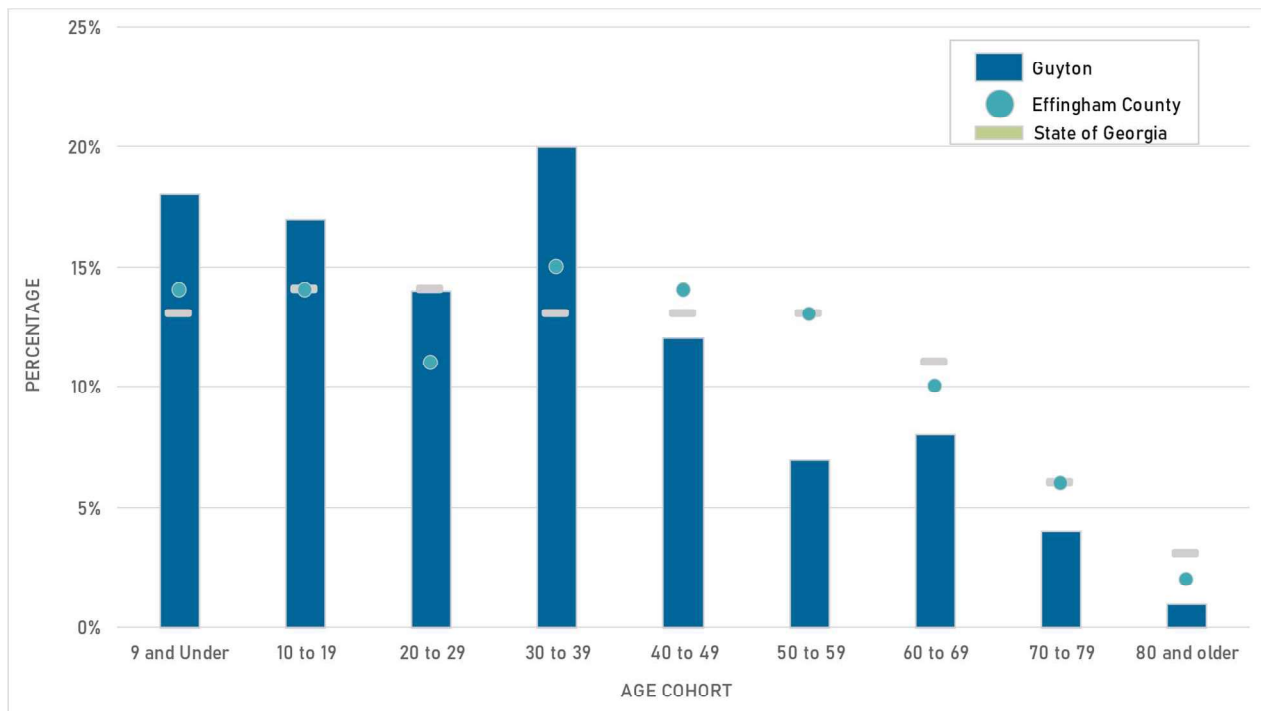


Table 7. Age Distribution of Guyton, Effingham County, and the state of Georgia

## Education Attainment

For individuals older than 25 years in Guyton, 85% are a high school graduate or higher and 18% have attained a post-secondary degree, either an associate degree, bachelor’s degree, or graduate or professional degree. Approximately 15% of the population did not complete high school. In comparison, 90% and 88% of the populations of Effingham County and the state of Georgia are a high school graduate or higher. Meanwhile, 33% and 41% have attained a post-secondary degree, respectively. Table 8 shows the educational attainment of the population of Guyton.

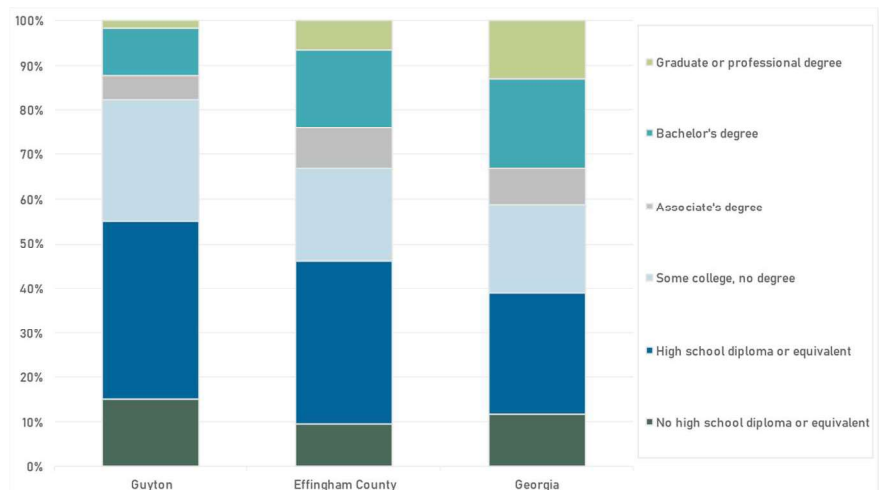


Table 8. Educational Attainment

## Zero-Vehicle Households

According to the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), less than 1% of households in Guyton lack access to a vehicle. Approximately 76% of Guyton residents have access to two or more vehicles. The map displayed on Figure 3 shows the propensity of households without access to a vehicle in Guyton. While a significant number of households have access to vehicles, it may not represent residents who chose not to drive or are unable to drive.

With limited mobility, getting around can be time consuming and difficult, and can restrict access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other essential services. The households that do not have a car are reliant on alternate modes of transportation which are not readily available in the city of Guyton.

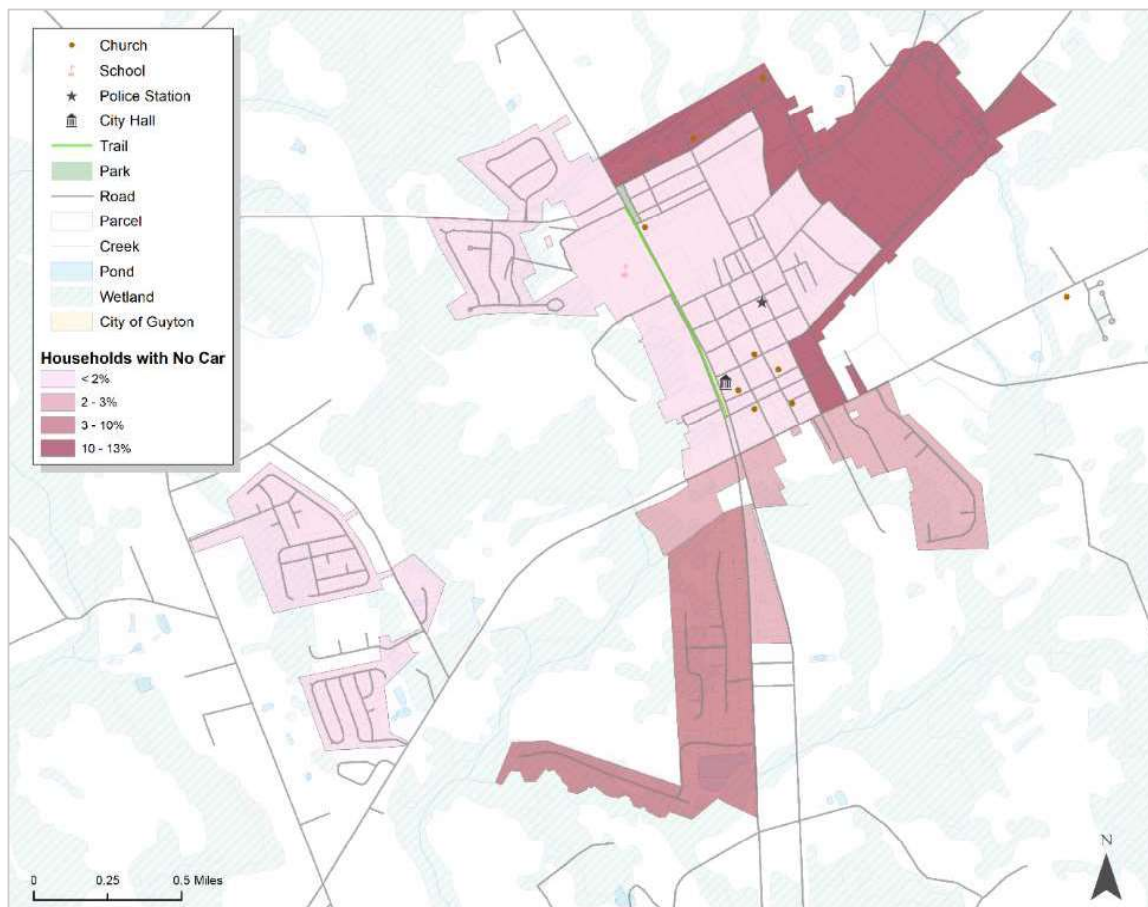


Figure 3. Households with No Car

## Median Household Income

Median household income is a key indicator of the standard of living in a community. It provides insight into the economic well-being of residents and helps compare living standards across different regions. It also acts as a gauge of economic health and prosperity, where higher median incomes typically correlate with enhanced access to education, healthcare, and other vital services. In Guyton, the median household income, according to 2020 US Census data, is \$75,625, which is above the median incomes of the Savannah Metro Area (\$70,705) and the state of Georgia overall (\$71,355).

Figure 4 shows varied geographical income distribution within Guyton: areas south of SR 119/Springfield Avenue, particularly along Central Avenue and Sand Hill Road, generally report higher incomes above the median. Conversely, regions north of SR 119/Springfield Avenue exhibit lower household incomes. Data reveals that about 41% of households earn less than \$49,999 annually, while 31% have incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Significantly, nearly 20% of households in Guyton live below the federal poverty level, according to 2021 ACS data and shown in Table 9.

These income statistics are vital for businesses and investors. Businesses utilize this data for market research, helping them understand community purchasing power and influencing decisions on where to establish new outlets, introduce products, or focus marketing strategies. Investors similarly leverage this information to identify promising markets, where rising median incomes indicate potential for increased consumer demand and economic stability, making these areas more attractive for investment opportunities.

Income Level	Number of Households	Percentage of Households
Less than \$5,000	36	5%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	2	0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	78	11%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	32	5%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	22	3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	61	9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	54	8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	115	16%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	107	15%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	137	19%
\$150,000 or more	70	10%

Table 10. Income Level by Household

Poverty Status	Number of Households	Percentage of Households
Below poverty level	128	18%
At or above poverty level	586	72%
<b>Total number of households</b>	<b>714</b>	

Table 9. Poverty Level by Household

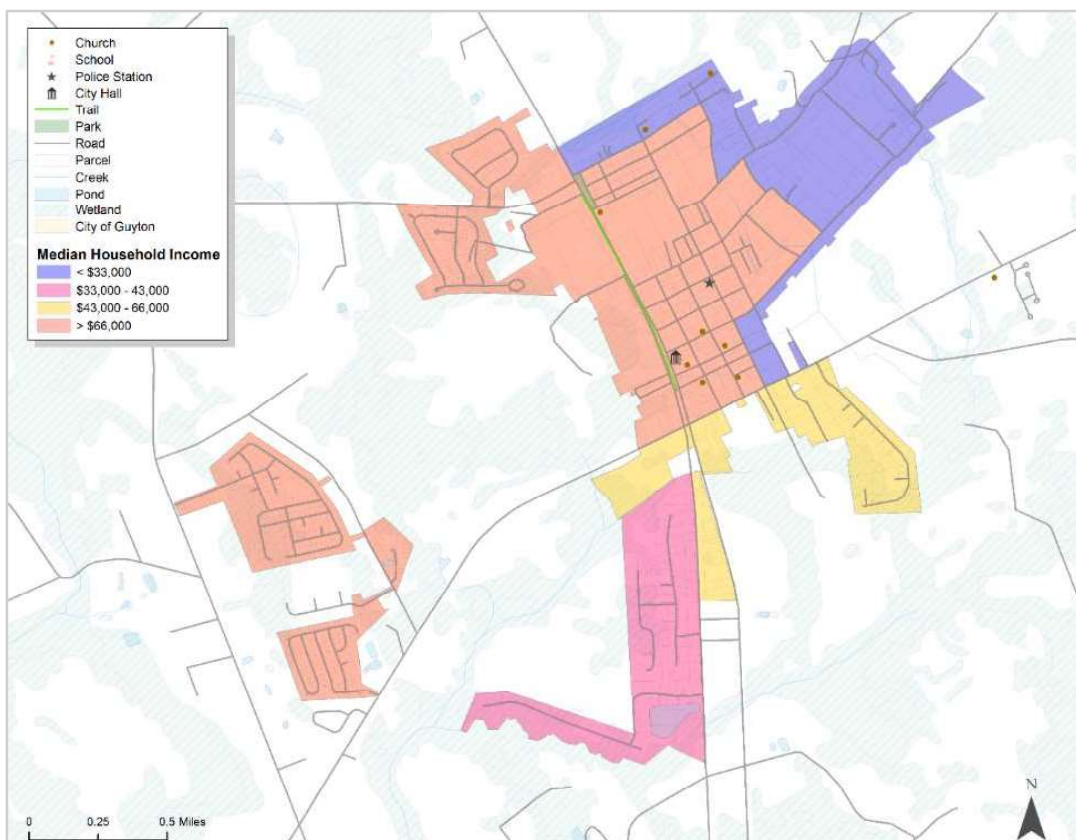


Figure 4. Median Household Income

# 5

## HOUSING

The Housing element guides the community in housing development, preservation, and new construction for future development. The quality, availability, and affordability of housing within an area are good indicators for understanding the community's marketability. Business and personal relocations also consider housing inventory and affordability as well as socio-economic shifts in the housing market.

### HOUSING

Housing is a basic need and one of the building blocks of neighborhoods. The type, value, age, quality, and tenure of housing units set the character of neighborhoods and play a significant role in attracting and maintaining residents and businesses. This section details the housing available in Guyton based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau. As the population grows in Guyton, so does the need for new housing. Strong housing elements call attention to local affordable housing needs, and they use policy and land-use tools to establish a work plan to address those needs. The rental market in Guyton is largely family-oriented, with many renters seeking properties with multiple bedrooms, larger living spaces, and access to good schools.

The development pattern in Guyton is characterized by low to medium density, which aligns with its small-town atmosphere. The spacing between homes and the presence of undeveloped land within residential areas contribute to a sense of openness and privacy. Newer subdivisions tend to follow this pattern, often incorporating green spaces, community parks, and other amenities that enhance living quality.

#### Housing Inventory

The housing inventory is an analysis of current housing stock by type, condition, and occupancy status and provides a comprehensive look at various aspects of housing in the area. This data includes statistics on home ownership versus renting, types of housing available, and the overall availability and characteristics of the housing



units within Guyton. Guyton features a mix of housing types, primarily consisting of single-family homes which dominate the residential landscape. These homes are often situated on larger lots, providing ample space for yards and gardens, which is typical of more rural settings. The area also includes some multi-family units such as duplexes and small apartment complexes, though these are less common and tend to be concentrated near the downtown or along major roads.

Figure 5. Housing Breakdown by Type



According to the 2021 ACS, there were 841 housing units in Guyton. The most prevalent type of housing unit in Guyton is single family detached home (75%) followed by mobile homes (24%). Cities with a high percentage of mobile homes often indicate a community with unique economic and social service needs. The presence of mobile homes can influence the overall property values in the area, often keeping them more moderate.

**Error! Reference source not found.** 5 shows the breakdown of housing types in Guyton. The distribution of housing types in Guyton is comparable to Effingham County. The most common size home is 3 bedrooms at 60.3% of housing units.

## Housing Occupancy

As shown in Figure 6, approximately 89% of all housing units in Guyton are owner-occupied, which is comparable to the Effingham County rate of approximately 93%. The average owner-occupied household consists of 3.27 people, while renter-occupied households average 2.98 people. Of the 520 owner-occupied housing units, 80% are estimated to have a mortgage, as depicted in Figure 7.

Figure 6. Housing Units by Number of Building Type



Many rental properties in Guyton are single-family homes, appealing to families and individuals seeking more space and privacy compared to typical apartment living. A significant portion of housing units in Guyton being owner-occupied reflects the city's appeal to those seeking long-term residence. The stability of homeownership contributes to a strong sense of community and investment in local affairs. The recent influx of new residents and the construction of new homes have increased the number of owner-occupied properties. This trend is driven by Guyton's attractive housing market, which offers modern amenities and a desirable living environment.



Figure 7. Housing Units by Number of Building Type

Rental properties in Guyton are in high demand, with low vacancy rates indicating a competitive rental market. Many new residents, particularly young professionals and those not ready to buy, are opting for rental homes. Both owner-occupied and rental properties have low vacancy rates, suggesting a healthy demand for housing. The limited availability of vacant homes indicates a tight market with strong competition for available properties.

## Housing Value

Housing values in Guyton reflect a dynamic real estate market characterized by steady growth and increased demand. As of 2023, the median home value in Guyton is approximately \$280,000, up from around \$220,000 in 2020, marking a 27% rise over three years. This increase is driven by factors such as a desirable location, quality of life, and community amenities. The average annual appreciation rate has grown from 5-6% in earlier years to 8% in 2023, indicating a strengthening market.

The average price per square foot for homes in Guyton is around \$150, providing insight into the market's pricing trends and facilitating comparisons of homes of different sizes. The healthy rate of home value appreciation, estimated at about 8% over the past year, underscores the robust demand for housing. Factors contributing to this trend include economic improvements, population growth, and a rising demand for suburban living. However, challenges related to affordability and inventory need to be addressed to sustain this growth.

The majority of the housing market in Guyton consists of single-family homes, which vary in size and style to cater to a range of preferences and budgets. Newly constructed homes and modern developments have significantly contributed to the overall increase in housing values.

At \$280,000, Guyton's median home value is slightly lower than the overall median home value in Effingham County, which stands at \$300,000. This suggests that housing in Guyton is generally more affordable compared to the broader county average. The county-wide appreciation rate is slightly lower at around 7%, indicating that Guyton's housing market is growing at a faster pace due to its increasing desirability and recent development trends.

Guyton's housing market benefits from its proximity to Savannah and its appeal as a quieter, more rural living environment compared to other parts of Effingham County. This contributes to its competitive home values and growth rate.

## Affordability

Home affordability in Guyton, GA, in 2023 presents a mixed scenario. With a median home value of \$280,000, homeownership can be challenging for some residents given median household incomes. Rental options provide a more affordable alternative for those not yet ready or able to purchase a home. The average rent for a single-family home in Guyton typically ranges from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per month, depending on the size, location, and amenities. Apartments and duplexes tend to be more affordable, with rents averaging between \$800 and \$1,200 per month. Compared to nearby urban areas like Savannah, Guyton's prices are generally more affordable, attracting those who work in the city but prefer a quieter, less expensive place to live. While generally more affordable than urban centers, rising prices in Guyton pose challenges for lower-income residents and those on fixed incomes. Efforts to maintain affordability and provide diverse housing options are crucial. As the city grows, strategic planning and development will be essential to ensure housing remains accessible to all residents.

### *Mortgage Payments and Affordability*

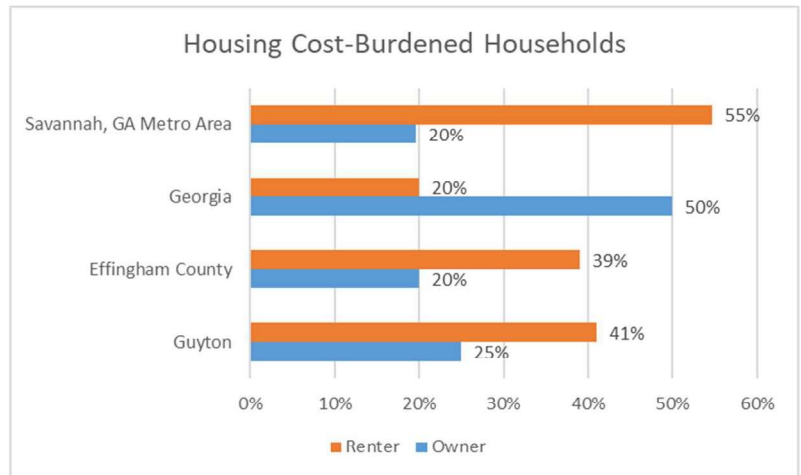
With prevailing mortgage rates in 2023, the monthly payment for a median-priced home in Guyton, assuming a 20% down payment and a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage, would be roughly \$1,500-\$1,700, including principal, interest, taxes, and insurance. A common measure of affordability is the ratio of median home price to median

household income. For Guyton, this ratio is approximately 3.73 (\$280,000 / \$75,000), suggesting that housing affordability may be challenging for some residents.

### Housing Cost Burden

Households spending more than 30% of their income on housing are considered cost burdened. For a household earning \$75,000 annually, this threshold is around \$1,875 per month. The median home in Guyton is close to this threshold, indicating potential affordability challenges for many households. Rising home values can particularly impact first-time homebuyers, making efforts to balance growth with affordable housing options crucial.

Figure 8. Housing Cost Burden in Guyton



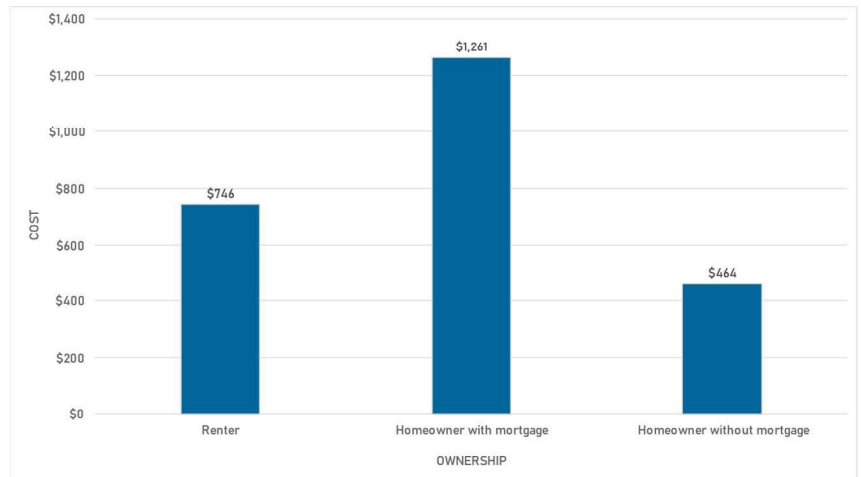
### Income and Housing Costs

The conventional public policy indicator of housing affordability in the United States is the percentage of income spent on housing. Although Guyton has a lower cost of living than Effingham County and the Savannah MSA as a whole, there are still housing affordability challenges. Expenditures exceeding 30 percent of household income historically indicate a housing affordability problem or excessive cost burden. Therefore, while homes in Guyton may be more affordable, the lower incomes of its residents translate into a higher rent burden.

### Market Dynamics

Limited housing inventory can drive up prices and increase competition among buyers. To maintain a balanced market, it is essential to address inventory shortages through new construction and smart growth strategies. Strategic planning and development, as highlighted by the median monthly housing cost by ownership and housing cost burden maps, are critical for understanding and improving housing affordability in Guyton.

Figure 9. Median Monthly Housing Cost by Home Ownership



The vacancy rate for rental properties in Guyton is relatively low, reflecting high demand and a competitive rental market. This trend is common in growing suburban areas where rental properties are in high demand, but supply is limited. Recent residential developments, including rental properties, have slightly increased the rental housing supply. These new developments aim to meet growing demand and offer more modern rental options.

With a median home value of \$280,000 in 2023 and significant appreciation in recent years, Guyton remains an attractive but increasingly competitive place to live. Efforts to address affordability through balanced growth, increased housing inventory, and targeted community initiatives are vital to ensuring that Guyton continues to provide accessible housing options for all its residents.

## Age of Housing Units

The age of housing units is a significant factor for historical value, preservation, and housing market dynamics. Aging housing stock is typically defined as houses built before 1980. In Guyton, the housing stock is relatively new. Nearly 20% of housing units were constructed in 2014 or later, reflecting a recent trend of new construction driven by growing popularity and demand for modern amenities. Less than 15% of the housing stock dates back to before 1980. These older homes contribute to the historical charm but may require more maintenance and updates to meet modern standards.

The largest percentage of housing units were built between 2000 and 2009, with an increase of 255 units or 37.7%. This period marked significant growth and development in the city. Guyton has consistently experienced growth in its housing market, with the majority of the stock (77%) being built after 1990. This indicates a relatively young housing market with many homes featuring contemporary designs and modern conveniences.

Table 11 illustrates the age distribution of housing units over various timeframes. This detailed breakdown underscores the city's ongoing development and the predominance of newer housing units.

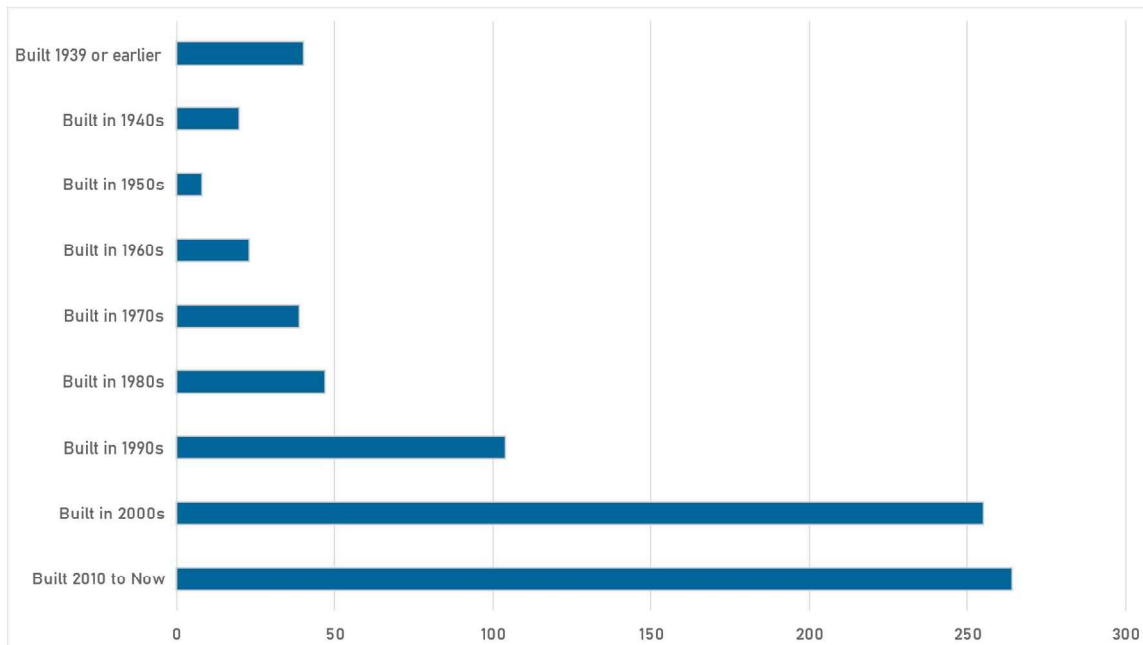


Table 11. Age of Housing Units by Timeframe

# 6 LAND USE

This section describes Guyton’s economic and cultural activities that are practiced at a particular place. It details how the people of Guyton have used and modified the land within the city limits to suit their needs. Ideally, new land uses should be consistent with the uses supported in the Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use map identifies the areas which show a common design element, form of development, intensity of use, and other factors that define the land use of an area. The land use section provides a snapshot of the city’s existing development patterns and proposed land use of Guyton’s future.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use categorizes the current utilization of land within a defined area, such as residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, or institutional purposes. This analysis serves as a baseline for understanding land activities distribution and informs future zoning decisions and development plans. It aids in assessing the suitability of current land uses and in planning for the necessary infrastructure, services, and regulations to support community goals and growth.

Table 12. Existing Land Use by Size

Existing Land Use	Acres	% of Total Acreage
Agricultural	1020.9	55.7%
Commercial	52.9	2.9%
Conservation/Recreation	19.3	1.1%
Residential	673.7	36.7%
Transportation/Utilities	23.1	1.3%
Undeveloped	44.0	2.4%
Total	1834.1	100%

Guyton, located 28 miles northwest of Savannah in western Effingham County and encompassing 3.22 square miles, displays a mix of residential, agricultural, and commercial uses. The majority of the land, representing 43% of the city, is used for agriculture, characterized by large, family-owned parcels that have been farmed for generations. This predominance of agricultural land use can limit urban development, restraining residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

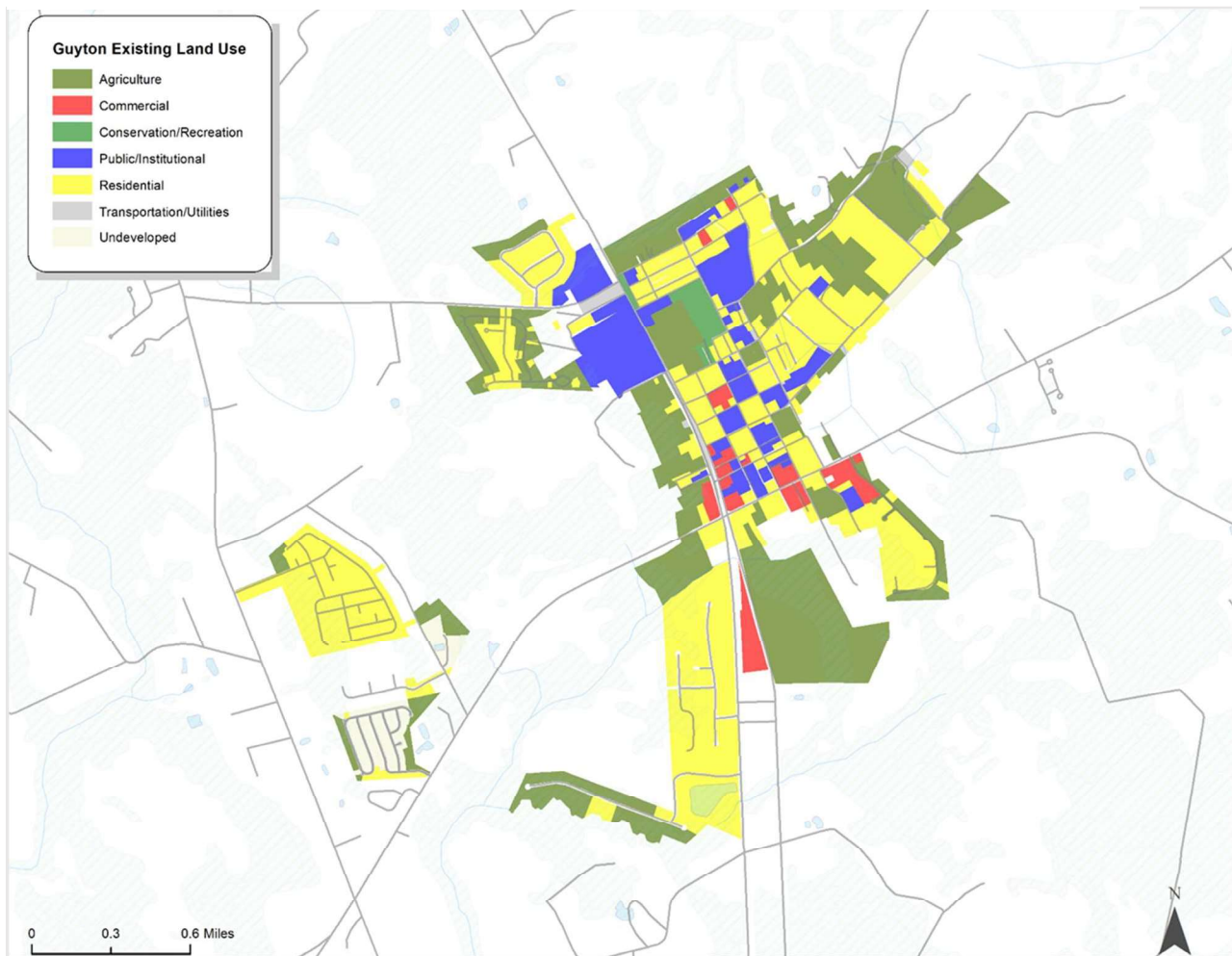
As Guyton continues to expand, balancing development with the preservation of its rural charm is a challenge. This includes managing infrastructure needs such as roads, water, and sewer systems to support new

developments without overwhelming existing services or altering the city’s character drastically. The city’s future growth is anticipated to include the development of currently undeveloped areas and annexation of additional land for development, as detailed in the Future Development Map.

Commercial areas in Guyton are concentrated around the main thoroughfares and the historic downtown area. This placement ensures easy access for residents and visitors and centralizes commerce in areas with existing infrastructure. These commercial zones are designed to be accessible from residential areas, enhancing convenience for shoppers and supporting local businesses. There are significant opportunities to boost economic vitality through thoughtful expansion and revitalization, particularly in the downtown area, which can attract more visitors and enhance community engagement.

The existing land use map, unlike zoning regulations, provides a detailed depiction of actual land uses as they appear on the ground, offering a more flexible and comprehensive view of the area's current development state. It captures existing usage patterns, including non-conforming uses that predate current zoning regulations. In contrast, the zoning map specifies the legal framework governing land use within designated zones, ensuring residential areas are protected from incompatible land uses.

Figure 9. Existing Land Use



## Land Use Categories

Each land use category serves a specific purpose and is carefully considered in the context of the overall needs and goals of the community. Effective land use planning ensures that all areas of a community are utilized efficiently and sustainably, balancing growth with quality of life.

### *Agriculture*

This land use category includes a wide array of agricultural activities such as farming, which involves fields, lots, pastures, specialty farms, and livestock production. It also covers areas used for commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting, catering to general agricultural purposes. Additionally, this category extends to land designated for both active and passive recreational activities. Land reserved for farming and related activities, including:

**Crop Production:** Fields used for growing grains, vegetables, or fruit.

**Livestock:** Areas designated for raising animals.

### *Commercial*

Commercial land use category is allocated for non-industrial business purposes, covering a variety of activities including retail sales, office spaces, service establishments, and entertainment venues, each categorized by different levels of intensity. Commercial operations within this category can either occupy standalone buildings or be clustered in centralized complexes such as shopping centers or office parks. This flexibility allows communities to distinguish between office uses and other commercial functions, like retail or entertainment, facilitating strategic planning and tailored development that adapts to changing urban dynamics. Commercial land use is designated for businesses that serve the community, including:

**Retail:** Shops, malls, and boutiques.

**Offices:** Business and corporate offices.

**Service Industry:** Hotels, restaurants, and bars.

### *Conservation/Recreation*

This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly owned or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreational centers, or similar uses. Land specifically set aside for environmental protection or public enjoyment that is not to be developed. This includes:

**Natural Reserves**

**Protected Habitats**

**Wetlands**

**Parks, Playgrounds, and Sports Facilities**

### *Industrial*

The industrial category is allocated for industrial activities, including manufacturing, processing plants, factories, warehousing, wholesale trade, mining, and mineral extraction. It covers areas essential for industrial operations, accommodating the dynamic nature of modern industrial activities within the designated zone. This category is used for areas involving manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution. It can be broken down into:

**Light Industrial:** Less intrusive manufacturing, often closer to urban areas.

**Heavy Industrial:** Larger scale facilities possibly causing significant environmental impact, typically located away from residential areas.

### *Mixed-Use*

Mixed-use category is subject to community discretion and, when employed, necessitates clear definitions. Mixed land use categories must specify the allowable types of land uses, the proportional distribution among these uses, and the permissible density for each. This detailed approach provides a transparent framework for blending different land uses effectively, fostering thoughtful and balanced development that aligns with the community's vision and goals. Such areas typically integrate residential, commercial, and sometimes industrial uses into a single zone, aiming to reduce transportation needs and foster a vibrant community atmosphere.

### *Public/Institutional*

Public/Institutional includes land designated for specific state, federal, or local government uses, as well as various institutional purposes. Within this category, you'll find complexes that accommodate government buildings, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, and other related facilities. This classification highlights the critical role public institutions play in serving the community and encompasses the wide array of facilities associated with governmental and institutional functions. This land use includes facilities that serve public or community needs, such as:

**Schools and Universities**

**Hospitals and Health Care Facilities**

**Government Buildings**

### *Residential*

Land designated for residential use is primarily intended for constructing single-family and multi-family dwellings, organized by different net densities. This land use category is protected from encroachment by industrial or other potentially disruptive uses to maintain the residential quality of the area. The goal is to preserve the area's residential nature, ensuring it remains a conducive and harmonious living environment for its residents. This category encompasses all types of housing, ranging from single-family homes to multi-family apartment complexes. Residential land use is often subdivided into further categories based on density:

**Low Density:** Typically includes single-family homes with larger lots.

**Medium Density:** Often includes townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings.

**High Density:** Generally, consists of high-rise apartments and condominiums.

### *Transportation/Utilities*

Transportation, Utilities, land use is designated for transportation and utilities uses. It accommodates the development of transportation infrastructure and public and private utilities, including but not limited to power lines, water and wastewater facilities, and electrical substations. The classification recognizes the critical role of this land in supporting essential services and utilities vital for the community's functioning and development. Includes facilities that support movement of goods and people:

**Roads and Highways**

**Railroads**

**Airports**

**Public Transit Systems**



## Undeveloped

Undeveloped land use refers to parcels of land within a community that have not been significantly modified by human activities such as construction or other forms of development. These areas are typically in their natural state or have been used for low-impact purposes such as agriculture or passive recreation. Undeveloped land is often characterized by native vegetation, wildlife habitats, and natural terrain without substantial infrastructure such as roads, utilities, or buildings. Significance of undeveloped land:

**Environmental Conservation:** Undeveloped land plays a crucial role in preserving natural habitats and biodiversity. It serves as a refuge for wildlife and maintains ecological balance.

**Resource Management:** These areas can be vital for resource conservation, serving as important catchments for water resources and acting as natural filters to improve air and water quality.

**Recreational Space:** Undeveloped land provides space for recreational activities such as hiking, bird watching, and other forms of eco-tourism, which require minimal alterations to the natural environment.

**Urban Buffering:** Undeveloped lands can act as buffers between different urban or suburban areas, helping to control urban sprawl and maintaining the distinct character of various communities.

## FUTURE LAND USE

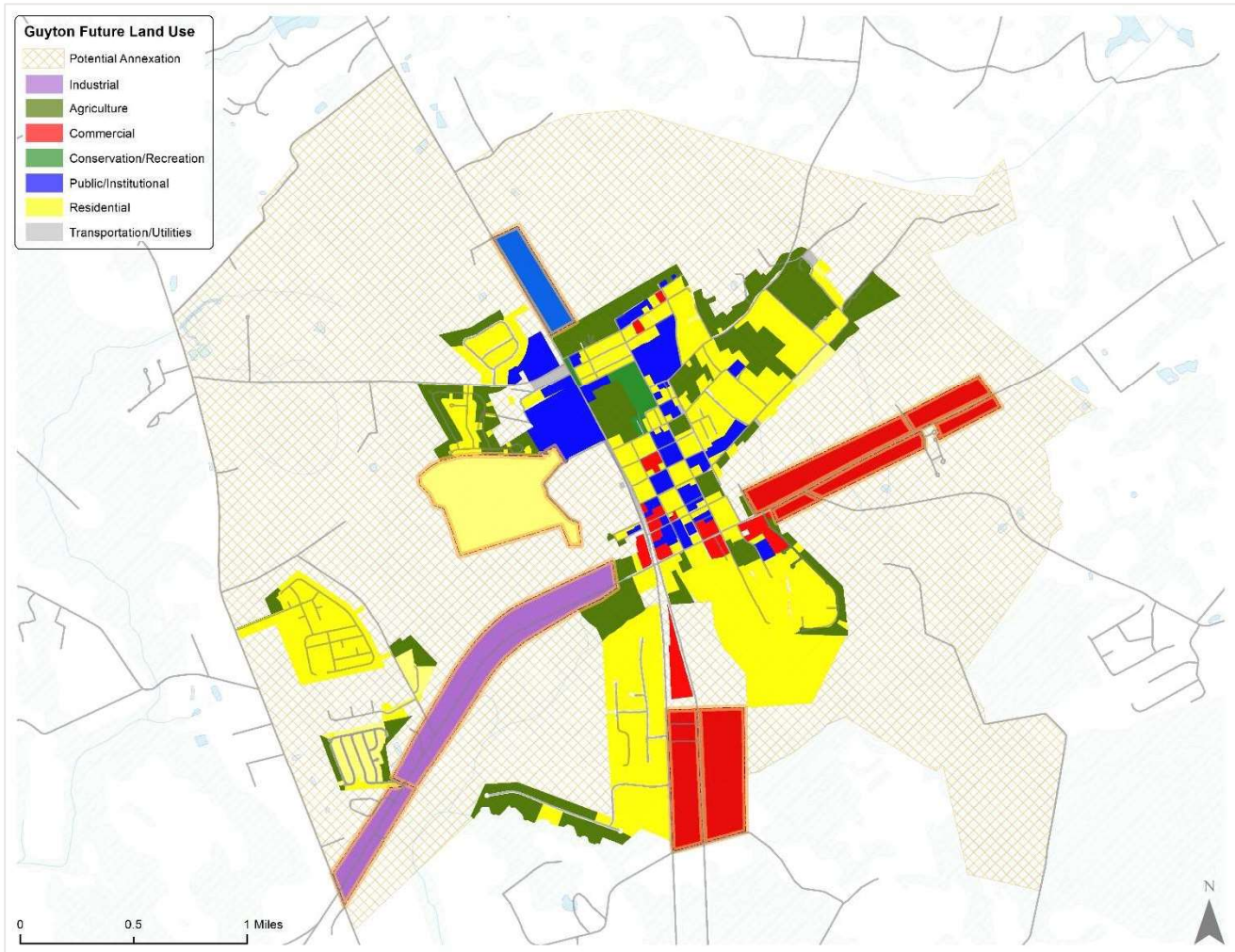
The Future Land Use Map offers a visual blueprint for the city of Guyton's future development, outlining the desired land uses within its boundaries. Serving as a foundational document, the Future Land Use Map, along with its associated Land Use Descriptions, provides essential guidance for prospective land development initiatives in Guyton. This strategic tool is crafted to offer a comprehensive vision for future growth while incorporating adaptability to meet evolving needs. The primary goal is to strike a balance between providing clear direction for overall development goals and allowing flexibility where necessary, ensuring the city's growth is guided and responsive to its unique characteristics.

Industrial land use in Guyton, though smaller in scale compared to residential and agricultural sectors, plays a critical role in the local economy. Industrial activities are strategically located in designated industrial parks or along major transportation routes to facilitate access and minimize impact on residential areas. This sector includes light manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution operations.

Table 13. Future Land Use

Future Land Use	Approximate Acres	Percentage of Total Acreage
Agricultural	1021	39%
Commercial	53	2%
Conservation/Recreation	19	1%
Residential	674	26%
Transportation/Utilities	23	1%
Undeveloped	44	2%
Proposed Commercial	245	9%
Proposed Industrial	351	13%
Proposed Public/Institutional	40	2%
Proposed Residential	131	5%
Total	2601	100%

Figure 10. Future Land Use



## Potential Annexation

Annexation is the process of incorporating property into city limits, serving as a primary means for cities to expand and strategically manage growth. This tool helps enhance service provision and boost economic development. By allowing cities to grow, annexation accommodates more intense development and provides property owners and citizens with the benefits of city services. Consequently, these efforts and improved service levels often increase the value of annexed properties.

Potential future annexation for Guyton is approximately 4,600 with 765 acres identified as:

- 245 acres - Proposed Commercial
- 350 acres - Proposed Industrial
- 40 acres - Proposed Public/Institutional
- 130 acres - Proposed Residential

A feasibility study would need to be completed to assess the financial, social, and environmental impacts of annexation before implementation. An evaluation of infrastructure needs, service capabilities, and economic benefits would also be needed.



The economic development element of a comprehensive plan focuses on strategies to enhance a community's economic vitality. It includes goals for job creation, business attraction and retention, infrastructure improvements, and workforce development. The plan typically outlines methods to foster a business-friendly environment, diversify the economy, and support sustainable growth. A focus in economic development gives residents access to personal wealth, increases the city's tax revenue, and encourages resilience by diversifying the local economic base.

## EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

Employment density measures job availability within a specific area, usually per square mile, highlighting the concentration of economic activity. High employment density typically signifies vibrant economic areas with diverse job opportunities, often found in urban centers or business districts. Conversely, low employment density may indicate a residential or rural setting with sparse job concentrations, influencing local economies and commuting needs.

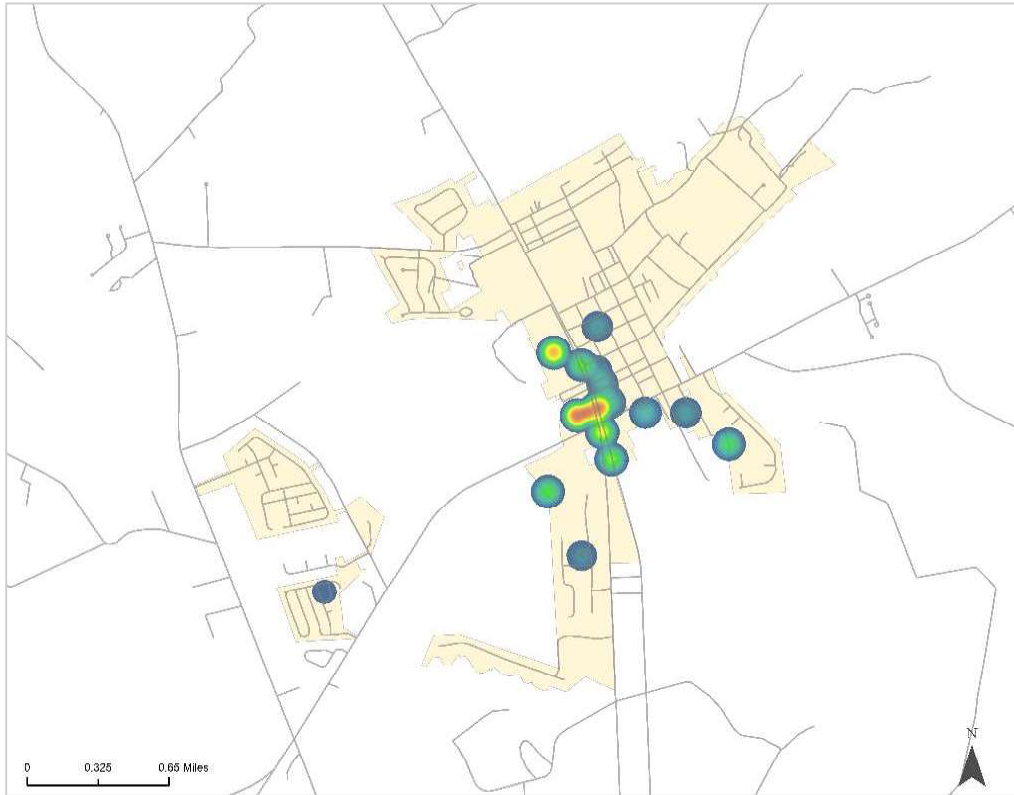
In Guyton the employment density is low, reflecting its small-town, rural nature with limited commercial and industrial activity. Jobs are primarily concentrated in Guyton's historic district and along major roads like SR 119/Springfield Avenue and SR 17/Central Boulevard. About 62.7% of Guyton's population, specifically those aged 18-64, are eligible for the workforce, with a participation rate of 67%. This is slightly higher than county and state levels. Management, business, science, and art occupations dominate, comprising 31% of jobs. The unemployment rate stands at 2.9%, comparable to the county and lower than the state average.

Guyton's employment structure supports a middle-class socioeconomic status, with a population density of 149 people per square mile and an employment growth conducive to community stability and development. While no single number captures all the nuances in the health of the labor market, the unemployment rate is considered

one of the most important economic indicators. The unemployment rate measures the share of workers in the labor force who do not currently have a job but are actively looking for work.

Table 14 provides economic census data for Guyton to benchmark itself against Effingham County and the State of Georgia. This benchmarking table can assist Guyton in assessing local performance and help establish community standards.

Figure 11. City of Guyton Job Density



OCCUPATION	City of Guyton	Effingham County	State of GA
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	30.9%	36.3%	41.5%
Service occupations	19.6%	17.0%	15.0%
Sales and office occupations	21.8%	22.9%	20.5%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	9.6%	10.3%	8.2%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	18.0%	13.5%	14.8%

Table 14. City of Guyton Occupation

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment by industry sectors serves as a snapshot of the economic health of a region by showing what sectors are growing or declining. Understanding the current industry mix can help in planning for economic diversification, reducing dependency on a single sector, and increasing resilience against economic downturns. Employment by industry data also aids in the formulation of policies aimed at industry support and development, including tax

incentives, subsidies, and regulations that can foster industry growth. Recognizing key industries is essential for developing targeted educational and training programs that align workforce skills with job market demands, a critical factor in reducing unemployment.

The economy of Guyton employs approximately 1,000 people with about 65% of residents aged 16 and over participating in the labor force. The largest employment sector in Guyton are Educational services, health care, and social assistance, which employ 22% of the workforce which is in line with regional averages. Manufacturing and retail trade are also significant, comprising nearly 29% of local industry, Table 14. This sectoral diversity supports a wide range of job opportunities, with manufacturing as a notable contributor, likely fulfilling both local and broader market needs. Guyton's balanced job market, featuring both traditional manufacturing and essential services like healthcare and retail, is vital for the community's daily life and overall welfare.

The distribution of jobs across these sectors reflects Guyton's industrial diversity and its capacity to support a range of employment opportunities. The job market in Guyton also reflects a balance between traditional sectors like manufacturing and the essential services provided by healthcare and retail, which are critical for daily life and the overall well-being of the community. A balanced local economy helps provides a variety of job opportunities for residents.

The highest paying industries in Guyton include Manufacturing, with average earnings of \$62,000, followed by Other Services Except Public Administration at \$56,250, and Construction at \$50,694.

INDUSTRY	City of Guyton	Effingham County	State of GA
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.7%	1.3%	0.9%
Construction	8.2%	7.0%	6.8%
Manufacturing	14.9%	13.2%	10.3%
Wholesale trade	5.5%	1.8%	2.5%
Retail trade	13.6%	18.5%	11.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	8.5%	9.4%	7.5%
Information	0.0%	0.4%	2.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3.4%	2.3%	6.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4.2%	8.4%	13.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	22.4%	21.3%	21.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	9.1%	6.7%	8.2%
Other services, except public administration	3.5%	5.6%	4.3%
Public administration	6.1%	4.1%	4.9%

Table 15. Employment by Industry

## COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

"Where Residents Work" and "Where Workers Live" are vital aspects that explore the geographical and demographic patterns of employment, offering a detailed view of commuting behaviors between home and work.

"Where Residents Work" details the physical locations or business districts where a city or region's residents are employed, shedding light on economic hubs and the flow of human capital across areas. This understanding helps identify major employment centers and informs transportation and urban planning.

Conversely, "Where Workers Live" focuses on the residential locations of individuals working in specific cities or business districts. This concept provides insights into residential patterns, housing market demands, and the socio-economic traits of the workforce, crucial for housing policy and local services planning.

Figure 11 illustrates where Guyton residents are employed, highlighting major job concentrations in Pooler and Savannah, with smaller hubs in Springfield, Rincon, and Statesboro. This indicates that many Guyton residents commute east and southeast along SR 21.

Figure 12 depicts the residential areas of individuals employed in Guyton, pinpointing Guyton itself and nearby areas like Springfield, Rincon, and north of Bloomingdale as key living spaces for these workers. This data is instrumental in developing targeted local development and infrastructure projects to support the workforce effectively.

Community dynamics are vital for attracting businesses and industries by demonstrating areas with substantial workforce potential or by emphasizing regions with convenient access to major employment centers. Aligning housing, transportation, and employment effectively ensures sustainable growth and supports the population's needs.

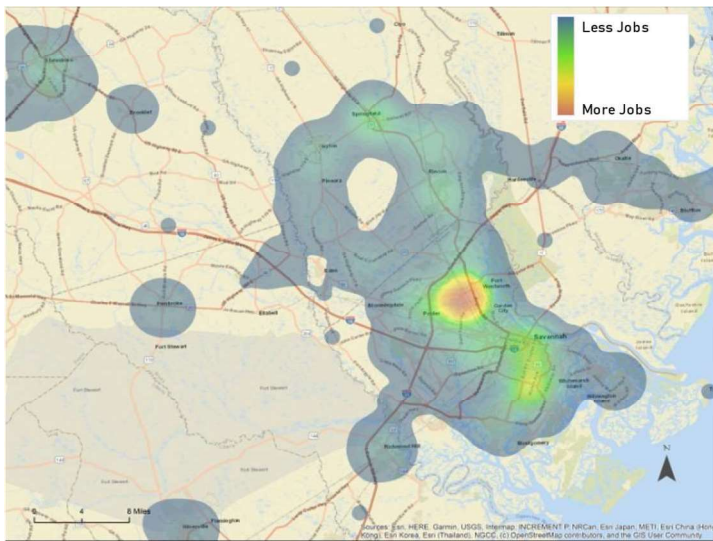


Figure 12. Where Residents Work

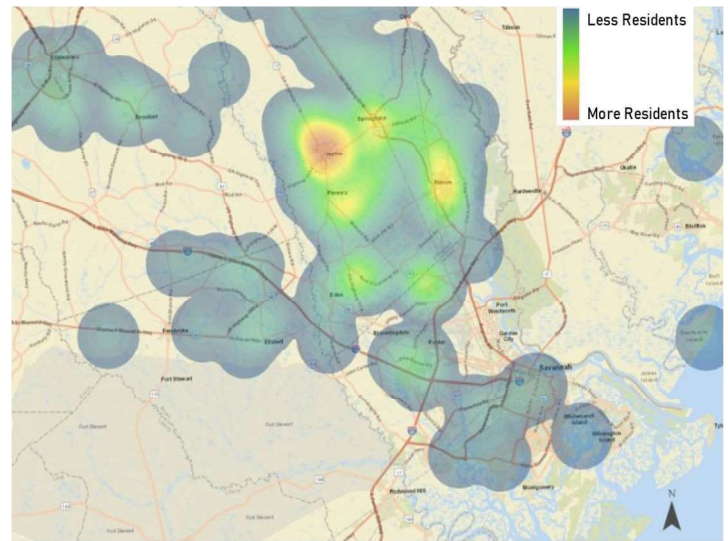


Figure 13. Where Workers Live

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Established on May 9, 2024, the Guyton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is dedicated to fostering economic growth and revitalizing the downtown area. Comprised of local business leaders, community members, and city officials, the DDA collaborates with the city government, local businesses, and community organizations to achieve its goals. The DDA includes a board of local taxpayers and business owners who serve staggered two-year terms as volunteers. The downtown district extends from the city limits on U.S. 17 north to south and Georgia 119 east to west. The downtown district, in particular, is the focal point for economic development, revitalization efforts, and community engagement initiatives led by the Guyton DDA. The key aspects of the DDA are economic growth, revitalization, and community engagement.

The DDA focuses on attracting new businesses, supporting existing ones, and creating job opportunities. It aims to improve infrastructure, restore historic buildings, and enhance the downtown's aesthetic appeal. The DDA organizes events, promotes local culture, and encourages public participation in downtown development. It provides resources, grants, loans, and technical assistance to local businesses while upgrading streetscapes, lighting, and public amenities. Additionally, the DDA preserves and repurposes historic buildings, promoting downtown Guyton as a desirable destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment.

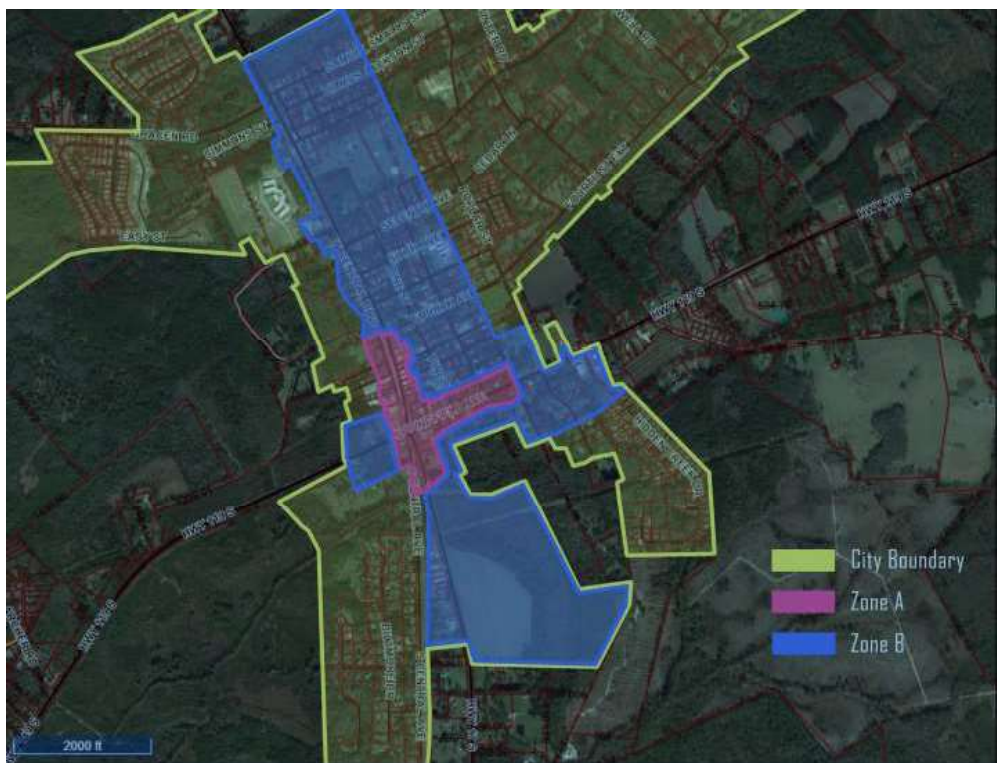
The DDA can accept grants and apply for loans, and it may receive Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax funds from the city. Additionally, the DDA can own property, lease it to local businesses, and use the rental income to fund other initiatives. Funds from local millage rates can also support the DDA's activities.

The Downtown Overlay District is superimposed over existing zoning districts. The special requirements of this district shall apply in addition to the requirements of the zoning district within which a specific property is located. Uses permitted within the Downtown Overlay District are those permitted in the underlying zoning district. If there is any conflict between this Downtown Overlay District and other parts of this Ordinance, the more stringent requirement shall govern. The Downtown Overlay District will not invalidate any current zoning requirement, but only provide additional requirements for those properties within it.

The boundary of the Downtown Overlay District shall be considered the area currently known as the Guyton Downtown Development Authority District. This area shall be separated into two Character Area Zones:

**Zone A: Historic City Center** is a concentration of historic commercial structures built prior to 1960. This area consists of mixed-use masonry buildings with decorative fenestration elements and minimal front setbacks as well as historic wood frame structures such as homes, churches and warehouses. New infill construction in this area should be complimentary to these existing structures and strive to blend seamlessly by making all efforts to match existing structures in scale, style and detail.

**Zone B: Commercial Downtown** areas outside of the Historic City Center where new development has occurred in recent decades and will continue to occur as the city grows. Commercial development in this area should be cohesive and complimentary to the established aesthetic of new commercial development in Guyton to further establish the sense of place while entering the city through the established gateway corridors. Infill Residential Development in this area should be complimentary to those properties within the vicinity and new residential development should be designed in such a way that pedestrian and vehicular connectivity are encouraged in ways that will not negatively impact existing traffic or circulation patterns.







Parker's  
CLUB REGULAR  
3.14<sup>9</sup>  
REGULAR  
3.19<sup>9</sup>  
DIESEL

YIELD

Parker's  
Cherry's  
FREE CARWASH  
EVERY DAY

YIELD

119

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# 8

## TRANSPORTATION



The Transportation element considers transportation facilities, including major road improvements, new road construction, transit projects or partnerships, pedestrian and bicycle projects, and other elements of a transportation network. Microtransit is also considered as transportation. The transportation element of a comprehensive plan outlines the development of a sustainable, efficient, and inclusive network that addresses the immediate and long-term transportation needs of the community.

The quality of a city's transportation system significantly impacts its residents' quality of life. Efficient transportation enables the smooth movement of goods and people, essential for a well-functioning urban environment. As Guyton grows, strategic transportation investments will be crucial to manage increased traffic and congestion effectively, ensuring safe, comfortable, and efficient transit throughout the city.

### TRANSPORTATION

Transportation in Guyton is characterized by its small-town infrastructure and connectivity primarily through roadways, with a heavy reliance on roadways and personal vehicles, and gradual developments toward enhancing connectivity and accessibility, reflecting the rural and residential nature of the area.

As the city boasts a large young population, a meager elderly population, and a diverse population in terms of income, multimodal transportation investments should be considered in order to serve a greater population and create more connections within the city and the region.

As Guyton's low density residential development style is likely to continue over the coming decades, there will be additional needs for new roadways and additional capacity on the existing network. Roads and bridges that connect subdivisions to state and/or city streets will be maintained.

#### Roadway Network

Guyton is primarily accessed through State Route 17 and State Route 119, which serve as vital conduits to nearby cities and towns. These major highways are essential for daily commutes to larger neighboring cities, such as

Savannah, and facilitate local traffic within Effingham County. The local road network links residential areas to commercial and public spaces, handling the moderate traffic volume effectively.

Guyton acts as a crucial node within the Effingham County transportation network, with road connections that provide seamless access to major highways and interstates. This strategic connectivity is important for supporting economic activities and is particularly important for residents who work in Savannah or other nearby metropolitan areas.

Guyton is located along SR 17/Central Boulevard, a collector roadway running northwest/southeast, and SR 119/Springfield Avenue, a minor arterial that cuts through the city in a northeast/southwest direction. These roads offer direct routes to US 21 and US 80, and indirect access to major interstates I-16 and I-95, enhancing the connectivity for all local roads within Guyton.

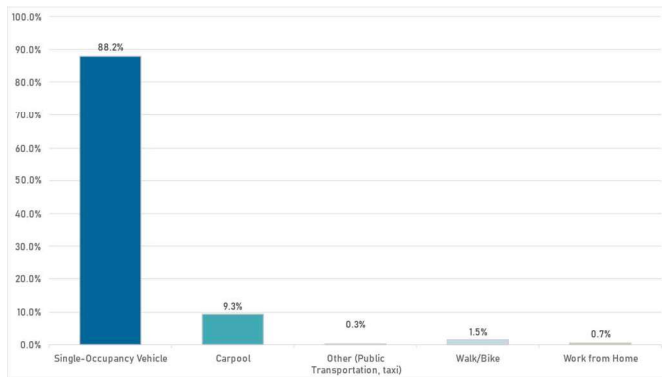


Table 17. Modes of Transportation

Table 16. Inflow/Outflow Commute Patterns

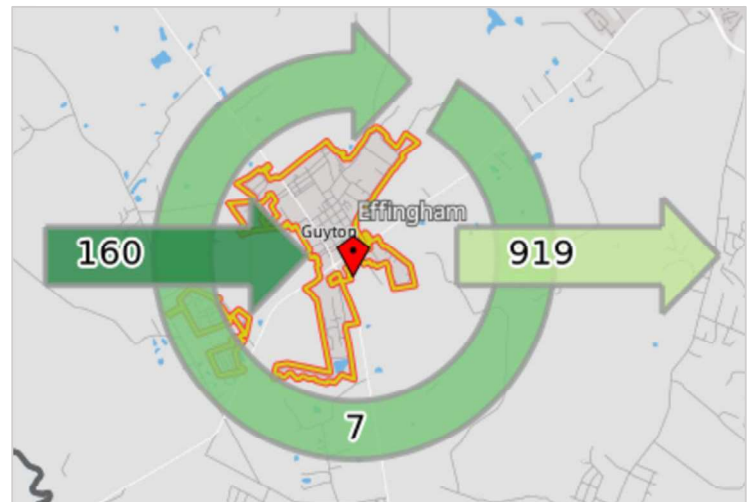
Inflow/Outflow	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	160	95.8%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	7	4.2%
<b>Total: Employed in the Selection Area</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100%</b>
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	919	99.2%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	7	0.8%
<b>Total: Living in the Selection Area</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Commuting Patterns

Understanding and improving commuting patterns in Guyton is essential for ensuring it remains a viable and attractive place for current and future residents, balancing small-town charm with access to broader economic opportunities.

Like many rural and small city areas, Guyton residents predominantly rely on cars for their daily commutes. The local infrastructure is predominantly designed to support vehicular traffic, with less emphasis on public transit, cycling, or pedestrian pathways. Motor vehicles are the primary mode of transportation, with single-occupant vehicles constituting 88% of the commuting choice, as shown in Table 17. This highlights a significant reliance on personal car use for transportation among the Guyton population.

Figure 11. Inflow/Outflow Commute Patterns



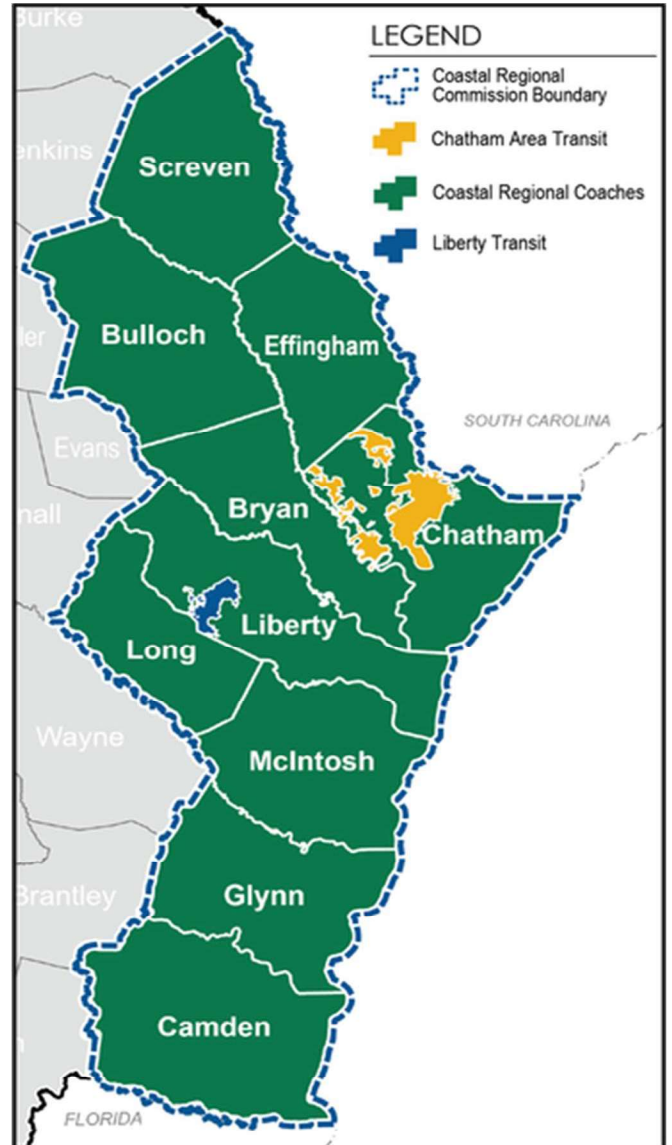
The general commuting trends for Guyton are shown in Table 16. According to 2020 Longitudinal Employment and Household Data (LEHD), of those employed in Guyton, only 7 employees also live in the city. Meanwhile, 160 Guyton employees live outside the city and 919 Guyton residents work elsewhere. Less than 1% of Guyton residents also work in the city illustrated by Inflow/Outflow Commute Patterns.

## Public Transit

While Guyton has limited public transportation options, it does have services like the Coastal Regional Coaches. This demand-responsive transport service offers an alternative to personal vehicle use, particularly benefiting those without access to cars, such as the elderly or individuals with disabilities. The Coastal Regional Coaches bus transit system provides an essential transportation service for residents of Guyton and Effingham County. Operating as a demand-responsive or dial-a-ride service, Coastal Regional Coaches requires passengers to schedule rides in advance, rather than providing fixed routes and schedules. This approach allows for greater flexibility and personalization, particularly benefiting areas with lower population density.

The buses are ADA-compliant, equipped with wheelchair lifts and securement areas, ensuring accessibility for passengers with disabilities. A diverse group of riders, including the elderly, disabled, those without personal vehicles, and individuals needing access to essential services like healthcare, education, shopping, and employment centers, rely on this service. Booking for rides typically needs to be done at least 24 hours in advance.

Given the limited public transit options in smaller, rural communities like Guyton, the Coastal Regional Coaches service is invaluable. It plays a pivotal role in the regional transportation framework, providing a necessary mobility solution that enhances residents' access to broader opportunities and services in Guyton and surrounding areas.



## Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

As Guyton continues to grow and as regional development progresses, there may be opportunities to improve local infrastructure. This could include enhancing road conditions, increasing safety measures, and potentially exploring options for more sustainable or alternative modes of transportation.

Bike and pedestrian infrastructure is somewhat limited. Guyton has existing sidewalks in the more populated areas, particularly around the main streets and near public spaces like schools, parks, and government buildings. These sidewalks provide safe pedestrian pathways for residents doing local errands or children going to school. Dedicated bike lanes are not extensively developed in Guyton. Cyclists often share the road with motor vehicles, which is common in rural areas where traffic is less dense. Key intersections are equipped with crosswalks and signage to enhance safety for pedestrians, although coverage may not be comprehensive across all areas of the city.



One of the main challenges is the lack of a connected network that fully links residential areas with key destinations like shops, schools, and workplaces. This can limit the practicality of walking or biking for everyday tasks. In areas without dedicated pathways, pedestrians and cyclists may feel less safe due to sharing the roads with vehicles. This is especially concerning on busier roads or during peak traffic times.

### Hi-Lo Trail

The Georgia Hi-Lo Trail is a planned multi-use trail system designed to connect Athens and Savannah, spanning the state of Georgia. In Guyton, the trail is a key component of the city's vision to enhance recreational opportunities, promote healthy lifestyles, and boost tourism and economic development. The trail integrates seamlessly with Guyton's existing infrastructure, attracting tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, which can increase business for local shops, restaurants, and services. It connects Guyton with other cities and towns along the route, creating a network of trails that enhances regional mobility and accessibility. Future phases may include additional amenities such as rest areas, signage, lighting, and enhanced landscaping to improve the trail experience.



The Georgia Hi-Lo Trail in Guyton represents a significant investment in the community's recreational infrastructure and quality of life. By providing a safe, scenic, and accessible route for outdoor activities, the trail supports the city's goals of promoting health, environmental sustainability, and economic growth.

### Rail and Freight

Although less prominent in daily commuter transportation, rail lines passing near or through Guyton facilitate freight transport, contributing to the local and regional economy. These facilities are crucial for industries requiring the shipment of large goods or materials that are impractical to transport by road.

### Current Transportation Plans

#### *Effingham County Transportation Master Plan*

Adopted in 2021, the Effingham County Transportation Master Plan (TMP) details the process used to identify both specific transportation projects and recommended policies within Effingham County including the cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield. These project and policy recommendations include 31 separate intersection projects, an expansion of the freight network, increased network including new routes, improved connectivity, and key bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting the cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield.

The plan also includes policy guides on expanding the roadway network, access management, roadway materials and elements, and transit. In Guyton, the plan proposes the projects shown in Table 19 .

### *City of Guyton Sidewalk Connectivity Improvements*

The city of Guyton has long aspired to enable its residents to walk conveniently from their homes to other residences, the downtown business district, the Guyton Walking Trail, Highland Park, and the local elementary school. While the city boasts several miles of sidewalks, there are substantial gaps in the network that compel pedestrians to walk on road shoulders or even on the road itself. This poses a significant safety risk, particularly for children and the elderly. To rectify this issue, the city of Guyton intends to install five 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk sections at strategic locations throughout the city. These five new sidewalk segments will effectively connect all major pedestrian access points, enhancing pedestrian mobility and safety. Once these improvements are completed, residents will be able to walk from most neighborhoods to downtown for shopping, to the proposed stores at Guyton Station, and to recreational areas like the Guyton Walking Trail, Highland Park, and the Guyton Elementary School. The estimated cost for surveying, engineering, construction, and contingencies for all five sidewalk additions is \$993,193 (2022).

### TSPLOST

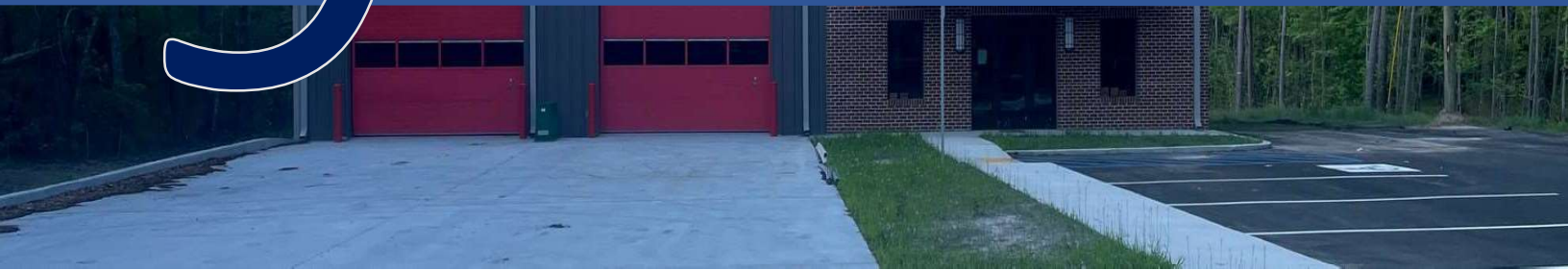
The Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) is a 1% sales tax collected for a specific program of transportation projects. TSPLOST funds can be spent only on transportation improvements, such as roads, bridges, sidewalks, bicycle paths, and other transportation-related purposes. TSPLOST is not a tax only for individuals, but also large businesses operating in the county, helping spread the expense of infrastructure rather than place that burden on property owners alone. Each city within Effingham County is responsible for creating their own project list. Guyton’s 2024 TSPLOST list includes:

- Street Resurfacing
- Trail Extension Phase 1
- Recreation Road Construction
- Streets and Lanes Equipment
- Transportation Drainage Improvements
- Pedestrian Improvements
- Engineering, Permitting, Surveying, & Testing

Project #	Project Name	Project Type	Extents
I-14	Bypass lane	Congestion-Focused Intersection Improvement	SR 119 and SR 17
I-34	Single-lane roundabout	Congestion-Focused Intersection Improvement	SR 119 and Little McCall Road
A-2	Hi-low trail	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility	SR 17 from M C Road to US 80

# 9

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES



The community facilities element of a comprehensive plan outlines the infrastructure, properties, and spaces operated for public benefit. This element encompasses seven crucial public functions: public safety, emergency services, education, parks and recreation, solid waste management, water supply, treatment, and distribution. It focuses on providing, maintaining, and enhancing the facilities that address the community's needs across educational, healthcare, recreational, and civic domains. This component ensures that these facilities adequately support current demands and are geared for future growth and improvements, contributing to the overall well-being and functionality of the community.

### MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Located at 310 Central Blvd, Guyton City Hall stands as a central hub in the community, serving as the main access point for information and inquiries related to local governance and community services. This crucial civic building hosts the city's key administrative roles, including the city manager, city clerk, clerk of court, water clerk, and public works personnel.

Guyton City Hall is integral to the city's urban planning and governance, inviting residents and stakeholders to interact with municipal operations during regular business hours. It plays a vital role in fostering community engagement and transparent governance, encouraging everyone to utilize the resources available at City Hall to enhance collaboration and connectivity in our vibrant urban environment.



## PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety in Guyton is managed through a blend of local law enforcement, fire services, and emergency medical services, all dedicated to maintaining community safety and security. The public safety departments in Guyton are proactive in their approach, engaging in various community education and outreach programs. These efforts are aimed at informing the public about safety practices, emergency preparedness, and crime prevention strategies.

The city ensures that public safety infrastructure, including communication systems and emergency vehicles, is well-maintained and updated as needed to meet the demands of effective emergency response.

### Policing

The Guyton Police Department is dedicated to ensuring a secure environment and enhancing the quality of life for both residents and visitors of Guyton. Anchored by their core values of PRIDE—Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Excellence—the department operates from its headquarters at 505 Magnolia Street. With a committed police force, the department undertakes a range of law enforcement and community policing duties within city limits. Key focus areas include crime prevention, traffic management, and cultivating strong community relations, all aimed at bolstering safety and building trust between the police force and the community.



### Fire Protection

The City of Guyton contracts with Effingham County to provide fire services within its city limits, utilizing the comprehensive resources of the Effingham County Fire and Rescue Department. This department operates 15 stations split between the North and South Divisions, staffed by five Staff Officers, 12 Shift Officers, and three Volunteer Officers. Recently, Effingham County Fire Rescue opened Station 13 just south of the roundabout on SR



119 in Guyton. This strategic location allows for rapid response capabilities in all directions. The station was relocated from its previous location at the old elementary school on Sixth Avenue.

The Guyton Fire Department, which is primarily volunteer based, is committed to protecting and enhancing the quality of life for all citizens and visitors through effective emergency management, natural or man-made. Their approach combines cost-efficient emergency response, stringent application of fire codes, and extensive public fire education to ensure community safety. The department's volunteers are well-trained to manage fire emergencies, rescue operations, and other hazardous situations, and they actively participate in fire prevention education to reduce risks and enhance safety awareness among the community.

## Health & Emergency Services

### *Emergency Medical Services (EMS)*

Emergency medical services (EMS) in Guyton are essential for managing medical emergencies and accidents, providing rapid response to life-threatening situations. These services are closely coordinated with nearby hospitals and medical facilities to ensure prompt and effective medical care.

Effingham County's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) oversees the provision of EMS in Guyton. Their primary mission is to deliver timely and appropriate pre-hospital medical treatment to those who are ill or injured. Effingham County's EMS Site 2, located in Guyton, serves as the principal agency for emergency response in the area. This local Emergency Services unit collaborates with federal, state, and county agencies to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies that significantly impact public safety or disrupt civil society. This includes responses to natural disasters, severe weather events, and situations of civil unrest, ensuring comprehensive support and safety for the community.

### *Hospital*

The city of Guyton does not have any hospitals within the city limits; however, there is a medical group practice called the Effingham Family Medicine at Guyton with private practitioners providing primary care. Residents typically rely on nearby medical facilities in Effingham County and the greater Savannah metropolitan area for comprehensive medical care.

Effingham Hospital and Care Center, located in Springfield, Effingham County, is the nearest hospital offering a range of medical services including emergency care, inpatient and outpatient services, surgical procedures, and specialized care. It is about a 15-minute drive from Guyton, making it a primary medical resource for the residents.

St. Joseph's/Candler Health System offers more specialized treatment options in Savannah. This health system provides extensive medical services, including specialty care in cardiology, oncology, orthopedics, and more comprehensive emergency services. Memorial Health University Medical Center, also located in Savannah, is part of the HCA Healthcare system and offers a high level of care with extensive facilities, including a Level 1 trauma center, pediatric care, high-tech surgical suites, and a wide range of specialty services.

For less critical health care needs, Guyton residents have access to several clinics and urgent care centers in nearby cities. These local clinics and Urgent Care Centers facilities provide convenient access for non-emergency situations and general healthcare services.

Given the distance to these larger medical centers, transportation is an important consideration. Local services and community initiatives often assist residents, particularly the elderly or those without personal transportation, in getting to and from medical appointments.

While Guyton itself may lack hospital facilities, the surrounding region supports the healthcare needs of its residents through a network of hospitals and health centers. This ensures that residents have access to necessary medical care within a reasonable distance.

### Emergency Management

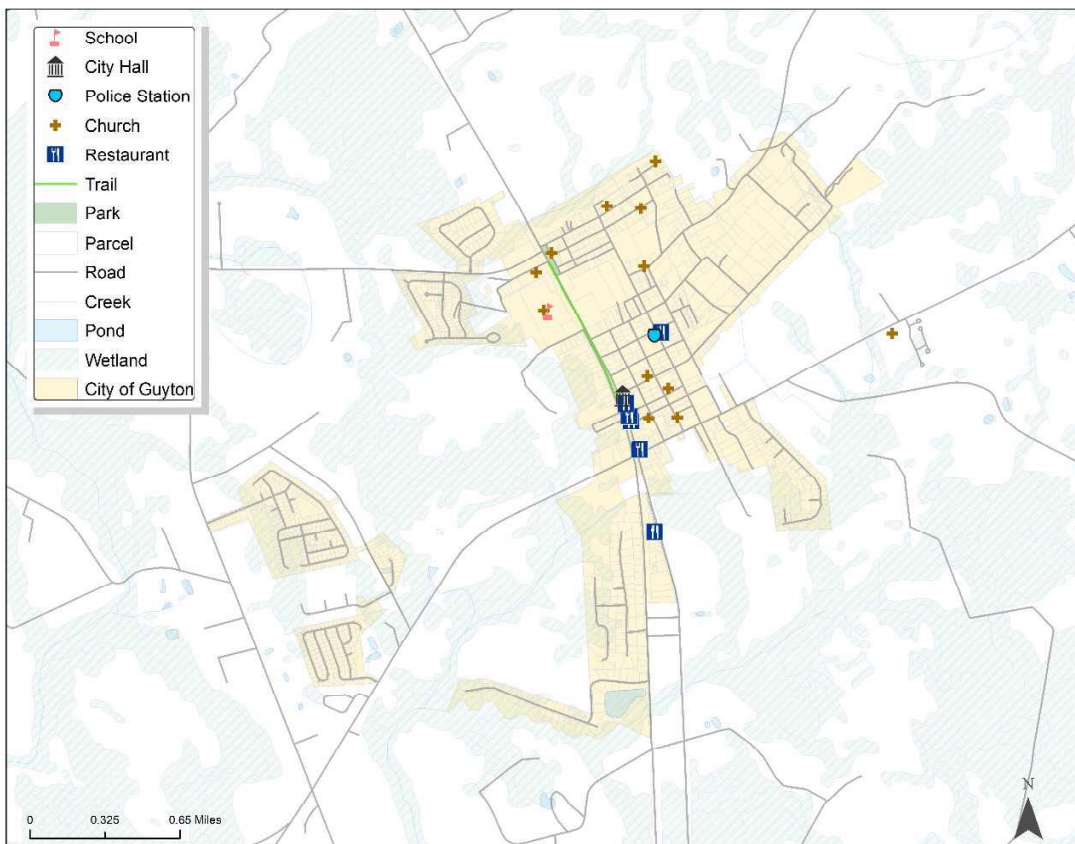
The Effingham County Emergency Management Agency has a *County-Wide Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Evacuation Plan* and a *County-Wide Multi-Jurisdictional Debris Management Plan*, and a *Community Wildfire Protection Plan*. While Guyton manages routine public safety operations, more extensive emergency management and response coordination are handled at the county level. This includes preparedness for natural disasters, such as hurricanes or severe storms, which might affect the area.

Guyton collaborates with the Effingham County EMA, which is responsible for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any natural or man-made disasters in the area. This includes developing emergency plans, conducting training and exercises, and managing resources during emergencies. Guyton, in conjunction with Effingham County, maintains updated emergency response plans that include evacuation routes, shelter information, and specific protocols for different types of emergencies such as hurricanes, floods, or fires.

For communication, Guyton employs multiple tools to alert residents about imminent or ongoing emergencies. This includes leveraging social media, local news outlets, and emergency alert systems that send instant messages to residents' phones and other devices. The city ensures that regular updates are provided to the community during and after emergencies via press releases, the city website, and community meetings. Additionally, Guyton capitalizes on a network of trained volunteers, including local fire and rescue personnel, to provide immediate on-ground assistance during emergencies.

In the event of larger-scale disasters, Guyton coordinates with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to access additional resources and funding necessary for comprehensive recovery efforts.

Figure 15. Community Facilities



# EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

## Public School District

Guyton is part of the Effingham County School District. The district includes Guyton Elementary School, a primary educational institution situated in Guyton, serving students from Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Guyton Elementary School is the sole public school within the city limits of Guyton and is recognized as one of the top public elementary schools in Effingham County. It boasts a student-teacher ratio of 14 to 1, with an enrollment of approximately 735 students. The curriculum is robust, adhering to Georgia state standards and covering essential academic subjects such as reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Additionally, the school enriches its curriculum with special subjects like art, music, and physical education to ensure a comprehensive educational experience.

Technology integration is a key focus at Guyton Elementary, with students having access to computers and various digital learning tools that enhance their learning experiences and promote innovative engagement. The school also offers a range of extracurricular activities and clubs, including a robotics club, student council, and environmental club, catering to diverse interests and contributing to well-rounded development.

Though not located within Guyton’s city limits, older students from Guyton attend Effingham County Middle School (ECMS) and Effingham County High School (ECHS), which serve the educational needs of middle and high school students in the area.

Overall, the schools serving Guyton are committed to providing high-quality education and extracurricular opportunities to foster academic excellence and personal growth among students.

## Libraries

Guyton does not have its own public library, but residents have access to comprehensive library services through the Effingham County library system. While there is no standalone library within the city limits of Guyton, the nearby Effingham County Public Library in Springfield serves as the primary resource for residents.



# PARKS AND RECREATION

Guyton’s approach to parks and recreation is outlined in its Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which serves as a strategic blueprint for developing and enhancing the community’s recreational facilities and green spaces. This plan is crucial in guiding the city’s efforts to provide quality recreational opportunities and improve residents’ quality of life. Key components of the plan include:

**Park Development and Upgrades:** The plan outlines strategies for the development of new parks and the upgrade of existing facilities to meet the growing needs of the community. This includes the installation of modern playground equipment, picnic areas, and sports facilities.

**Trail Systems:** Expanding and connecting trail systems to promote walking, biking, and other outdoor activities. Trails are designed to link different parts of the city, providing both recreational benefits and practical pedestrian routes.

**Recreational Programs:** Introduction or expansion of recreational programs tailored to various age groups and interests, ranging from sports leagues to arts and crafts classes, which are aimed at enhancing community participation and personal development.

**Green Space Conservation:** The plan includes measures to preserve and enhance green spaces within the city, ensuring they provide ecological benefits and serve as natural gathering spots for residents.

**Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Ensuring that all parks and recreational facilities are accessible to individuals of all abilities and ages is a priority. The plan addresses the need for inclusive design and adequate accessibility in all new and existing recreational spaces.

**Sustainable Practices:** Incorporating sustainable practices in the maintenance and development of parks to ensure environmental stewardship.

Guyton’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a comprehensive document that guides the city in creating a vibrant, active, and inclusive environment. By focusing on enhancing recreational facilities and programs, the plan supports the overall well-being of the community and fosters a connected and engaged populace.

## Municipal Parks and Playfields

While the city may not boast a vast number of parks, the available spaces are valued by the community. Guyton Old School Park serves as the central recreational facility in Guyton, equipped with playground equipment for children, picnic areas for families, and open spaces suitable for various outdoor activities.

A highlight of our recreational offerings is the Guyton Old School Park, situated adjacent to the historic Old Guyton School campus. This park provides a serene and welcoming environment for individuals and families alike. With well-maintained green spaces, walking trails, and leisure areas, the Guyton Old School Park is an ideal spot for relaxation, picnics, and outdoor activities. Additionally, Highland - Guyton Park boasts a basketball court, beautiful playground, and clean restrooms. Highland Park caters to a variety of interests and age groups.

## Trails

Guyton is actively working to improve and expand its bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, particularly focusing on the enhancement of existing trails such as the Guyton Main Street Rail-to-Trail project. This initiative is part of the larger Hi-Lo Trail network, which is designed to cater to both recreational and commuting needs, providing a picturesque route for walking, biking, and other non-motorized activities throughout the area.

Another popular trail in the city, The Guyton Walking Trail, offers a peaceful environment for walking, jogging, and experiencing local wildlife. These trails are great for those looking to enjoy the natural beauty of the Effingham County area.



## SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid waste management is a vital public service crucial for maintaining public health, environmental sustainability, and the cleanliness of the community. In Guyton, the city has contracted with Waste Pro to handle solid waste collection and recycling services. All residents within the city limits are mandated to utilize this garbage collection service. On designated garbage service days, most household trash and debris, when properly bundled and contained, can be conveniently disposed of at the curbside. This system ensures efficient waste management, supporting the city's efforts to keep its environment clean and sustainable.

### Solid Waste Treatment and Disposal

The solid waste collected in Guyton is transported to regional landfills equipped with advanced engineered containment systems designed to minimize environmental impacts. These systems effectively manage leachate and capture gases like methane, ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations to protect public health and the environment.

Guyton is proactive in promoting sustainable waste practices. The city implements educational programs aimed at reducing waste, properly sorting recyclables, and encouraging community involvement in sustainability initiatives.

To initiate new services, customers must complete a Water/Sewer/Sanitation Application and submit the necessary deposit amounts. Regarding waste collection:

**Trash Pickup:** Regular trash collection occurs every Monday.

**Recycling Pickup:** Recycling is collected every other Wednesday, fostering culture of recycling within the community.

**Yard Debris Removal:** Yard debris collection is scheduled as follows:

Tuesdays for residents east of Central Blvd.

Thursdays for residents west of Central Blvd.

Residents are required to place yard debris curbside by 8:00 AM on their designated pickup day. These structured services and guidelines ensure efficient waste management and contribute to the overall cleanliness and environmental responsibility of the community.

## Recycling

All residential customers within Guyton's city limits are required to participate in recycling collection. In partnership with Waste Pro, the city strongly promotes a culture of "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," aiming to integrate recycling seamlessly into daily routines through convenient curbside service. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to make recycling accessible and habitual for residents.

Waste Pro utilizes advanced sorting technologies at Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to safely and effectively process recyclables. The city is dedicated to ensuring that the recycling process is both efficient and environmentally friendly. Common recyclable materials include paper, cardboard, aluminum, steel, plastic containers, and newspapers. The city encourages recycling these materials to lessen the environmental impact of waste and foster sustainable practices.

Residents are urged to contact their local Waste Pro service facility for specific information on acceptable recyclable materials. This outreach is designed to enhance public awareness and promote a collaborative recycling effort between the community and waste management services. Through these initiatives, the city aims to cultivate a more sustainable and environmentally aware community, aligning with its vision of responsible waste management and resource conservation. Regular trash pickup is complemented by these recycling services to minimize landfill waste and encourage material reuse.

## WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

In Guyton, wastewater management is conducted with a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability and public health. Guyton's practices adhere strictly to both state and federal regulations, helping to prevent pollution and protect valuable water resources, thus reflecting the city's dedication to sustainable and responsible wastewater management.

Effingham County operates a Wastewater Reclamation Facility that features a non-discharging, tertiary treatment system. This advanced facility does not release treated wastewater into any natural water bodies like rivers, streams, lakes, or canals. Instead, the treated water is recycled and provided back to customers for uses such as irrigation and industrial applications. However, it is specifically advised against using this reclaimed water for children's sprinklers or wading pools, swimming pools, or for watering animals.

The quality of the re-use water is stringently monitored by state-certified operators to ensure it consistently meets the safety and quality standards set by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD). Monthly reports on

the re-use water quality are submitted to the EPD, underscoring the facility's commitment to compliance and transparency.

## Septic Tanks

Septic tanks are a widely used solution for wastewater management in Guyton particularly in the more rural and suburban areas where connection to a centralized municipal sewer system is not feasible. Homeowners in these areas typically manage and maintain their own septic systems. The local health departments and environmental agencies provide strict guidelines for the installation, maintenance, and inspection of these systems to ensure they operate safely and efficiently.

In Guyton, the Wastewater Reclamation Facility offers a limited service allowing Effingham County residents to dispose of domestic septic tank pump-outs. However, it's important to note that the facility does not accept port-a-potty waste. All dumps at this facility are closely monitored by water/sewer staff, and the presence of grease or any other objectionable materials in a load will lead to an immediate cessation of the dumping process. This strict supervision ensures that the facility maintains its operational integrity and complies with environmental standards.

Land use regulations in Guyton include specific considerations for properties with septic systems. Zoning laws dictate the minimum lot size required to accommodate a septic system, which can influence the density of development in certain areas. The need for septic systems can limit the potential for high-density development in certain areas of Guyton. Developers and homeowners must consider the capacity of the land to support a septic system, which includes soil suitability tests to ensure proper absorption and filtration.

Septic systems significantly influence land use in Guyton by dictating where and how development can occur. As Guyton grows, there may be initiatives to expand municipal sewer systems to more areas, which would significantly impact land use planning and development patterns.

## Sewer

In Guyton efforts to increase sewer capacity are underway with an upgrade to the existing spray field system, targeted for completion by May 2025. This initiative is a crucial part of the strategy to enhance its wastewater management infrastructure to support current and future growth. The primary goal of upgrading the spray field is to expand its capacity, enabling it to handle an additional approximately 185,000 gallons of treated wastewater per day. Current sewer capacity is around 70% which should be considered with any new development. A large manufacturing plant may not be suitable for Guyton due to the lack of sewer capacity.

As Guyton and the broader Effingham County region continue to experience significant growth, there is a push for taking a long-term view of wastewater management. Guyton should consider adopting a regional approach to wastewater management. This would involve utilizing existing facilities such as the Effingham County Wastewater Treatment Facility and the upcoming North Bryan Water Reclamation Facility, both of which are conveniently located near Guyton and within its service area. This approach aims to meet the anticipated growth in wastewater treatment needs without extensive new construction, thereby supporting sustainable development and economic growth in the region.

## WATER SUPPLY, TREATMENT, AND DISTRIBUTION

The water supply treatment and distribution system in Guyton is an essential part of the city's infrastructure, designed to provide a reliable and safe water supply for both residents and businesses. Guyton predominantly

relies on groundwater sourced from three strategically placed wells throughout the city. This groundwater comes from the Upper Floridian Aquifer, a reliable source that generally requires less processing than surface water, a common feature where surface water is less accessible.

## Treatment Facilities and Capacity

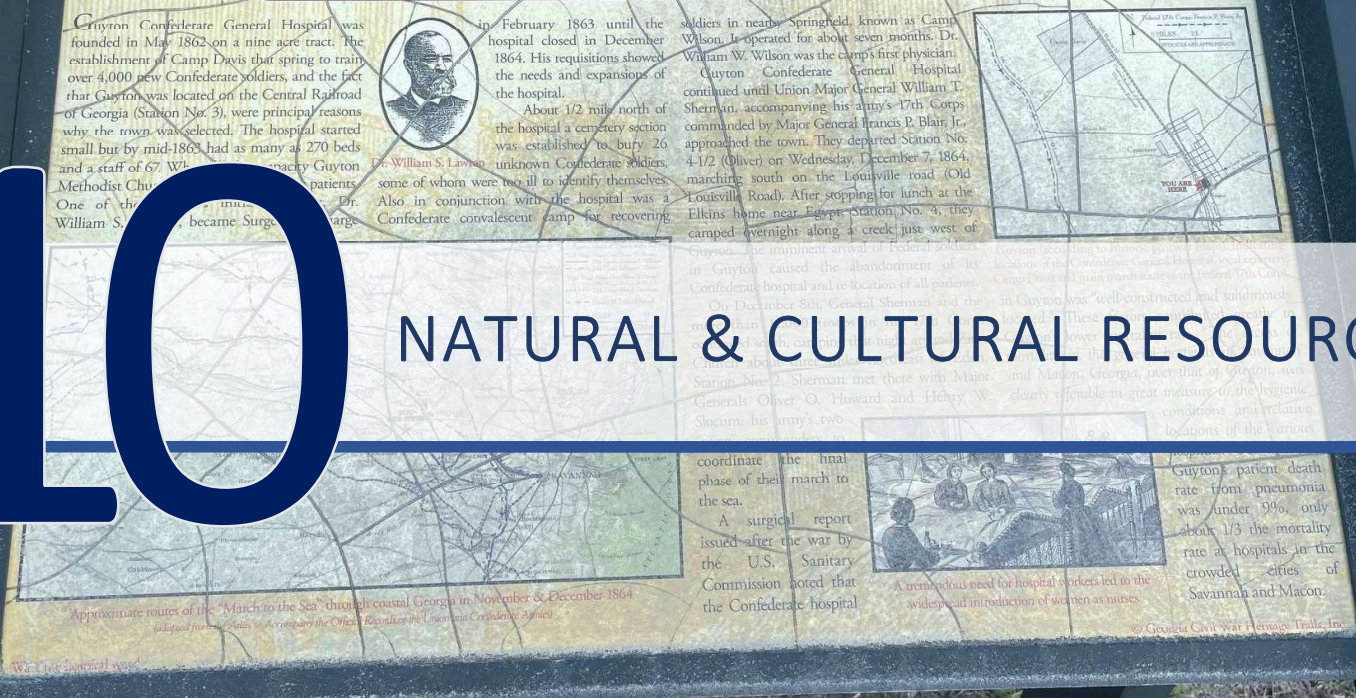
Guyton operates both a wastewater treatment plant and a water treatment facility, each employing advanced processes to ensure the safety and compliance of water handling. The wastewater treatment plant utilizes sophisticated treatment methods to remove contaminants from wastewater generated by residential, commercial, and industrial sources. The plant ensures that the treated water adheres to or surpasses environmental regulations prior to discharge, safeguarding local ecosystems.

The water treatment facility in Guyton is responsible for purifying groundwater and equipped with modern filtration systems to remove particulates and uses disinfection methods, primarily chlorination, to ensure the water is safe from microbiological contaminants. The water treatment facilities in Guyton are designed to handle a significant volume of water daily, though specific figures such as gallons per day are not detailed in the available data. One of the primary challenges is scaling the water treatment capacity to keep up with the rapid growth in the region. Guyton addresses this by planning incremental upgrades and exploring new water sources to supplement the existing supply.



# 10

## NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES



By safeguarding, upkeeping, and enhancing our natural resources, we can bolster various aspects of our community, including social, economic, and cultural dimensions. This entails offering up-to-date resource data and outlining objectives for their preservation and utilization. Natural resources significantly influence decisions regarding land use and zoning.

### HISTORY OF GUYTON

Guyton, Georgia, situated in Effingham County, has a rich history that dates back to the early 1800s. Originally inhabited by the Creek Native American tribes, the area began to attract settlers due to its fertile land and strategic location. The city was officially named after Archibald Guyton, a prominent local landowner who played a significant role in its early development.

The pivotal moment in Guyton's history came with the construction of the Central of Georgia Railway in the mid-19th century. This railway transformed Guyton into a central transportation hub, facilitating the movement of people and goods. The arrival of the railroad spurred economic growth, attracting businesses and contributing to the city's prosperity. Agriculture, particularly cotton farming, became the backbone of Guyton's economy, with the railway providing a vital link to larger markets.

The 20th century brought further changes to Guyton. The decline of the railroad's dominance and the advent of the automobile era shifted the economic landscape. Guyton adapted by diversifying its economy and improving local infrastructure. Schools, churches, and businesses flourished, and the city developed a reputation for its close-knit community and southern charm.

In recent decades, Guyton has seen a renewed interest in preserving its historical heritage. Efforts have been made to maintain and restore historical buildings, honoring the city's past while fostering a sense of community pride.



# HISTORICAL SITES AND STRUCTURES

## National Register of Historic Places

Guyton has several properties in the city listed on the National Register of Historic Places, highlighting their historical and architectural importance. This formal recognition comes after a thorough evaluation process that considers the site's historical, architectural, and cultural values. To be registered, sites must meet specific criteria such as age, integrity, and their significance in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

The Guyton Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, occupies a substantial part of the city. It includes 136 contributing buildings and one additional contributing structure, bounded by city limits to the east, south, and west, and by Alexander Avenue to the north. This 250-acre historic district showcases a rich collection of architectural styles from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including Victorian and Colonial Revival. The diverse array of residential homes, churches, and commercial buildings within the district highlights Guyton's architectural and historical evolution. The inclusion of the entire district on the National Register emphasizes Guyton's significant role in the region's history. The district's development reflects classic locational and community planning theories, illustrating its strategic proximity to Savannah and its historical function as an early "bedroom community" primarily serving commuter businessmen and professionals.

Old Guyton School is a prominent landmark within the Guyton Historic District, this structure served as an educational facility for many years and is a prime example of early 20th-century educational architecture. The building has been preserved and maintained, representing an important piece of Guyton's educational history.



Established in 1869, New Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church is a landmark of profound historical significance. Following the Civil War, former slaves built the church on Brogdon Street as a sanctuary for worship. Over the years, it has served as a vital hub for the African American community, providing spiritual guidance and acting as a gathering place for social and civil rights discussions during times of significant racial segregation and unrest. Architecturally, New Hope embodies characteristics typical of rural African American churches of its era, enhancing its historical and cultural importance. Its inclusion

in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 underlines its value as a historical asset, meriting preservation and scholarly attention. Remarkably, despite the passage of time and a few minor additions, the church remains largely unchanged. This enduring structure stands as a testament to the community's rich history and cultural heritage, continuing to reflect the struggles and achievements of the African American community in Guyton.

## Other Sites of Historical Significance

Sites that are informally recognized as historically significant, without formal registration, often lack legal protections. This can lead to their degradation or loss over time. Such sites are typically valued for their historical

associations with significant events, notable figures, or distinctive architectural features. They may be well-regarded locally or more widely acknowledged, but without formal protection, their preservation is uncertain.

Guyton Confederate Memorial Cemetery is a cemetery dedicated to Confederate soldiers from the Civil War, highlighting the city's involvement and historical context during that period. Zoller's House is a notable residence within the Guyton Historic District. This house is recognized for its architectural significance and the role it played in local history.

Although technically just outside Guyton, Lebanon Church and Cemetery site is closely tied to the city's history. The church and its associated cemetery are listed for their cultural significance and as a representation of the community's historical religious practices.

## CLIMATE

Guyton experiences a climate typical of the Southeastern United States, characterized by hot summers and mild winters. This subtropical climate makes it conducive to outdoor activities for much of the year.

During the summer months, temperatures are often hot and humid, with daytime highs frequently reaching into the upper 80s to mid-90s Fahrenheit (about 29-35°C). Nighttime temperatures usually drop to the 70s Fahrenheit (around 21-26°C). High humidity levels are typical, particularly in the summer, contributing to the "sticky" feel of the heat. Winters are generally mild, with daytime temperatures typically in the 50s and 60s Fahrenheit (about 10-20°C), and nighttime lows occasionally dropping to the 30s Fahrenheit (around 0-4°C). Snowfall is rare, but the area can experience frost during the colder months.

Guyton receives a significant amount of rainfall, distributed fairly evenly throughout the year, totaling about 45-50 inches annually. The area is prone to severe weather conditions, including thunderstorms and hurricanes, particularly during the hurricane season from June to November. While direct hurricane hits are infrequent, these storms can still bring significant rain and wind. Tornadoes, though not exceedingly common, do occur, particularly in the spring and early summer.

This climate profile highlights the seasonal variations and weather-related challenges in Guyton, emphasizing the need for preparedness during the hurricane season and the potential enjoyment of the outdoors during the milder parts of the year.

## HYDROLOGY

Hydrology is essential for understanding the flow and storage of water within a city, which is crucial for assessing flood risks, land development, and emergency and disaster preparedness. This information helps design effective drainage systems, establish flood plains, and implement zoning laws to minimize flood damage and protect residents. Understanding water flow patterns and the presence of water bodies is crucial for preserving natural habitats and maintaining biodiversity. Hydrology data helps cities protect wetlands, manage watersheds, and mitigate the impacts of urbanization on natural water systems.

Guyton's ecosystem significantly benefits from its wetlands, typical of the coastal plain region, which provide ecological, economic, and social advantages. The area hosts primarily freshwater marshes and swamps. Marshes, characterized by soft-stemmed vegetation adapted to saturated soil conditions, are crucial for water filtration and

flood control. Swamps, dominated by woody plants and trees such as cypress and tupelo, are found alongside rivers and streams and support a diverse range of wildlife.

While wetlands provide numerous ecological, economic, and environmental benefits, having a significant amount of wetlands, as seen in Guyton, can also pose some challenges. Wetlands are often protected by environmental regulations that restrict land development and use. This can limit opportunities for residential, commercial, and industrial expansion, potentially slowing economic growth in regions like Guyton that might otherwise benefit from such developments. Although wetlands naturally help to control flooding by absorbing excess water, areas close to wetlands can be prone to flooding, especially during heavy rains or storm surges. This can lead to damage to property and infrastructure and can be a persistent concern for residents living nearby. The presence of wetlands can complicate transportation and infrastructure development due to the soft, unstable ground and the need to minimize environmental impact. Building roads, bridges, and utilities may require special engineering solutions and environmental mitigation measures, increasing project costs and complexity. Properties near wetlands may have reduced values due to the perceived negatives such as pests and flooding risks. Additionally, insurance costs may be higher for these properties due to the increased risk of flood damage. For cities like Guyton, large areas of wetlands can constrain economic development by limiting available land for expansion and requiring extensive environmental assessments and permitting processes for new projects.

## Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land that channels rainfall, snowmelt, and runoff into a common body of water. The term “watershed” is often used interchangeably with “drainage basin”. Situated within the coastal plain landscape, Guyton features predominantly flat to gently rolling terrain. The local watershed is part of the larger Shrimp Creek Ogeechee River watershed, according to the Effingham County GIS mapping system and USGS data. This watershed encompasses a network of small streams and rivers that traverse and encircle Guyton, essential for the area's drainage system and significantly shaping the land-water interaction.

This watershed is crucial for managing stormwater and mitigating flooding, particularly during significant rainfall events. Strategies to enhance flood management include improving infrastructure and restoring natural floodplains, ensuring better handling of stormwater overflow.

Recognizing the boundaries of the Shrimp Creek Ogeechee River watershed is essential not only for environmental protection and habitat preservation but also for adhering to regulatory standards. This knowledge is instrumental in public health and safety efforts, aiding in the assessment of potential risks and educating the community on responsible water use. Integrating watershed considerations into comprehensive planning fosters long-term sustainability, enhances resilience to climate change, and cultivates a collective responsibility among residents and businesses for water conservation.

## WILDLIFE

Guyton is teeming with a variety of wildlife that inhabit its diverse landscapes, including forests, wetlands, and water bodies. Bird enthusiasts can spot eagles, hawks, owls, and a range of songbirds, making the region a haven for birdwatching. Residents and visitors might observe songbirds such as cardinals, blue jays, and various types of warblers throughout the year. The wetlands are especially important for waterfowl and wading birds, including herons, egrets, and occasionally, wood storks. During migration periods, the diversity of birds increases significantly.

The forests are home to mammals like white-tailed deer, raccoons, rabbits, and foxes. Smaller mammals like raccoons, opossums, and squirrels are ubiquitous in both rural and residential areas, often spotted foraging for food. The region also hosts several species of bats, which play a crucial role in controlling insect populations. Guyton's warm climate and abundant water sources make it an ideal habitat for a variety of reptiles and amphibians. Common reptiles include several species of snakes, both non-venomous and venomous, such as the eastern diamondback rattlesnake. Lizards, like the green anole, and turtles, such as the eastern box turtle, are also prevalent. Amphibians such as frogs and salamanders thrive in the moist environments of Guyton's wetlands and streams.



The streams and wetlands of Guyton support an array of aquatic life. Freshwater fish species, such as bass and catfish, are common in local rivers, making the area popular for fishing. The aquatic habitats also support various species of crayfish and other invertebrates, which are vital to the local food chain.

The city's meadows attract insects and butterflies, fostering a rich ecosystem. In the context of a comprehensive plan, it's important to consider and protect these diverse habitats through thoughtful land-use planning and conservation measures, ensuring the long-term well-being of the county's wildlife and natural resources.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Guyton is endowed with abundant natural resources that enrich its ecological diversity and enhance the quality of life for its residents. The city's environment is marked by a variety of ecosystems, including expansive woodlands and vital wetlands, which support a wide range of wildlife and contribute to local biodiversity.

Guyton is home to vast areas of mixed hardwoods and pine forests that not only provide critical habitats for diverse wildlife but also contribute to regional air and water quality. These forests are essential for maintaining biodiversity and serve as valuable sources for timber and other forest products.

The city is interspersed with numerous streams, rivers, and wetlands, which are integral to the hydrological system of the area. These water bodies are crucial for the city's water supply and also support a diverse aquatic ecosystem. They offer recreational activities such as fishing, boating, and wildlife observation, which are important for tourism and local recreation.

Guyton's wetlands are among its most valuable ecological assets. They provide critical services including water filtration, flood mitigation, and habitat for many species. Wetlands in Guyton include marshes and swamps, each supporting distinct communities of plants and animals and contributing to the overall health of the watershed.

The fertile soil of Guyton supports various agricultural activities. The area is known for its production of crops such as corn, soybeans, and other vegetables, which are vital to the local economy. The agricultural sector benefits from and also needs to manage carefully the region's natural soil fertility and water availability.

Guyton's natural landscapes offer abundant opportunities for outdoor activities, including hiking, birdwatching, and fishing. These activities not only support physical health and well-being but also draw tourists and bolster local businesses.

Moreover, the natural resources in Guyton are intertwined with environmental sustainability. Careful consideration and conservation of water sources, protection of green spaces, and responsible land-use planning are essential components of a comprehensive plan. This ensures the sustainable use of resources, minimizes environmental impact, and promotes resilience in the face of potential challenges, such as climate change.

Recognizing the importance of these natural resources, there are ongoing efforts in Guyton to conserve and sustainably manage its environmental assets. This includes protecting areas of ecological significance, restoring degraded habitats, and promoting practices that ensure the long-term health of the natural environment.



# 11

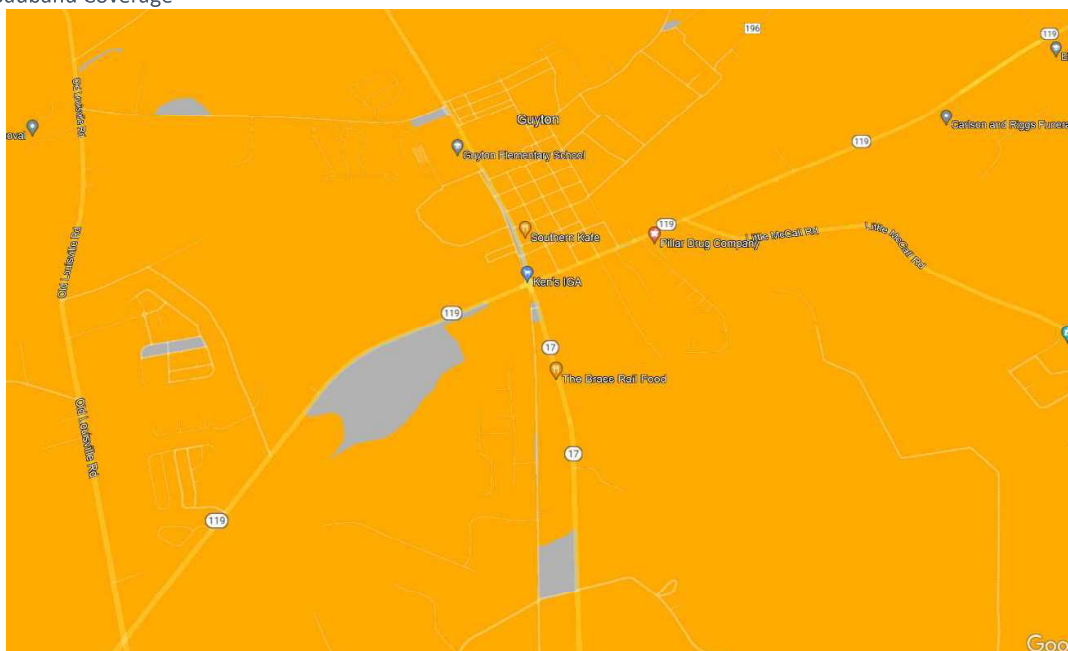
## BROADBAND

Starting in 2018, it became mandatory for all communities to incorporate a broadband component in their planning efforts. Emphasizing broadband access ensures that the community actively works towards making affordable and equitable internet services available to every resident.

### BROADBAND ACCESS

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) manages the Georgia Broadband Program, which monitors broadband accessibility for both residences and businesses throughout the state. Data obtained from the DCA and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) indicates 100% of locations in Guyton had access to broadband provider service and considered “served”.

Figure 12. Broadband Coverage



# 12

## COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

The last essential element of the comprehensive plan, known as the Community Work Program (CWP), is a critical component of a comprehensive plan that outlines specific tasks, projects, and initiatives to be undertaken to achieve the goals and objectives laid out in the plan. The CWP serves as a roadmap for local governments, providing a structured approach to development and improvement within a community. The CWP provides a structured framework that will help Guyton systematically approach the realization of the comprehensive plan. It ensures that all planned activities are aligned with the community's long-term goals.

### RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

The Record of Accomplishment is a dynamic tool that not only tracks the progress towards achieving the goals set in the plan but also fosters a culture of accountability, transparency, and continual improvement in urban planning and community development. This record is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of planning strategies, understanding the impacts on community development, and guiding future decision-making processes. As this plan is Guyton's first comprehensive plan, the city of Guyton's Record of Accomplishment is from the Effingham County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2020 – 2040.

### COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM (2024 - 2029)

The Community Work Program (CWP) is a targeted, short-term action plan to implement specific initiatives over a five-year period. This program outlines concrete steps, including the introduction of new ordinances, enhancements to administrative systems, community improvements, investments, and the establishment of financial arrangements or other related programs. Each planned action within the CWP includes a detailed timeline with a completion date, identifies the responsible party, and provides cost estimates and identified funding sources.

The CWP serves as a strategic framework for achieving the community's goals and brings the visions of the comprehensive plan to life. It features a summary of accomplishments achieved under the previous Comprehensive Plan and presents an updated list of priority projects for the next five years. These projects are clearly defined with assigned responsibilities and include strategies for securing necessary funding to ensure successful execution and completion.



Table 19. Record of Accomplishments

## Guyton Report of Accomplishments

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source					Explanation (if postponed or not accomplished)
				Completed	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished	
<b>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>								
Identify opportunities to expand services to areas outside the city	City	Staff time	General Fund		x			Continued in years 2027 and 2028 (see Work Program#1)
Update the zoning ordinance to support the master plan for the city and use it as a tool to implement the community vision	City	Staff time	General Fund		x			Continued in year 2025 (see Work Program #2)
Support Chamber and Development Authority to actively recruit retail commercial and light industrial to the city	City officials/ administration	Staff time	General Fund		x			Continued in years 2027, 2028, and 2029 (see Work Program #3)
Prepare workforce for desired jobs through appropriate high-school and vocational-technical school programs, including study opportunities	City, County, Schools, Savannah Technical College	TBD	General Fund, School Taxes, U.S. Dept. of Labor/ Commerce/ Agriculture		x			Continued in years 2025 and 2026 (see Work Program #4)
Encourage specialty and retail businesses to locate in City's commercial district	City, Chamber, Development Authority	Staff time	General Fund	x				
<b>PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE</b>								
Identify opportunities to expand/transition fire services to provide EMT/ paramedic/first responder medical service as well as fire services	City	\$215,000 annually	General Fund	x				
Provide effective police protection to residents to result in lower crime rates and increased commercial activity	City	\$250,000 annually	General Fund		x			Continued in years 2027 and 2028 (see Work Program #13)
<b>PUBLIC WORKS</b>								
Maintenance and expansion of public facilities	City	Staff time and undetermined	Water enterprise funds		x			Continued in year 2025 (see Work Program #9)
Continue to seek CDBG to extend wastewater treatment to those on septic systems	City	Staff & consultant time	General Fund, CDBG Funds, SPLOST, USDA Funds			x		Coordination and agreement with CDBG is still needed – Continued in years 2027 and 2028 (see Work Program #14)

## Guyton Report of Accomplishments

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source					Explanation (if postponed or not accomplished)
				Completed	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished	
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>								
Develop a capital improvement plan for water and sewer service	City	General Fund/DCA	General Fund/DCA	x				
Continue discussions with Springfield on a joint parks project that will connect various community attractions and promote preservation of open spaces	Guyton, Springfield, Effingham County	\$10,000 total	General Fund, Grants, DNR, Land trust organizations, Georgia Land Conservation Program, GDOT				x	After discussions with Springfield, this was determined to be No Longer Feasible
<b>HOUSING</b>								
Address blighted housing/areas by enforcing ordinances and encouraging restoration	City	Staff time	General Fund		x			Continued in year 2025 (see Work Program #20)
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>								
Continue to refine SDS agreements for equitable distribution of revenue	City and County	Staff and consultant time	General Fund	x				
Review previous SDS and compensation to identify shortfalls in funding from county	City and County	Staff and attorney time	General Fund				x	Lack of political will
<b>DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS</b>								
Return old school gym to functional and safe recreation resource	City	Undetermined	General Fund/SPLOST		x			Continued in year 2025 (see Work Program #11)
Expand greenspace and parkland in the city; preserve open space; implement set aside requirements for active recreation; expand walking and biking trails and connectivity through a trail network	City	Staff time/developer consideration	General Fund/developer costs		x			Continued in years 2025 and 2026 (see Work Program #26)
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>								
Support multi-use trails to be linked with neighboring communities, the region, or the state	Cities and County Staff	Staff time/undetermined	SPLOST		x			Continued in years 2026, 2027, and 2028 (see Work Program #27)
Promote alternative modes of transportation including the rural transit program and US Bike Route 1 and the Highway 119 Georgia Bike Route	City	Staff time	General Fund	x				

## Guyton Report of Accomplishments

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source					Explanation (if postponed or not accomplished)
				Completed	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished	
Maintain appropriate resurfacing schedule for municipal roadways	City	\$350,000 annually	General Fund, SPLOST, GDOT LMIG	x				Continued in years 2025 through 2027 (see Work Program #29)
<b>NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES</b>								
Preserve the rich history of the city by preserving historic structures and the local culture as a historic railroad town in an effort to draw on heritage tourism	City	Staff time	General Fund		x			Continued in years 2025, 2026, and 2027 (see Work Program #33)
<b>BROADBAND</b>								
Promote broadband as a selling point for new residential and commercial	City/broadband providers	Staff time	General Fund	x				

Table 20. 2024-2029 Community Work Program

### 2024 – 2029 Community Work Program

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated costs	Funding Source						Notes
				2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
1) Identify opportunities to expand services to areas outside the city	City	Staff time	General Fund			x	x		Continued from previous plan
2) Update the zoning ordinance to support the master plan for the city and use it as a tool to implement the community vision	City	Staff time	General Fund	x					Continued from previous plan
3) Support Chamber and Development Authority to actively recruit retail commercial and light industrial to the city	City officials/ administration	Staff time	General Fund			x	x	x	Continued from previous plan
4) Prepare workforce for desired jobs through appropriate high-school and vocational-technical school programs, including study opportunities	City, County, Schools, Savannah Technical College	TBD	General Fund, School Taxes, U.S. Dept. of Labor/ Commerce/ Agriculture	x	x				Continued from previous plan

## 2024 – 2029 Community Work Program

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated costs	Funding Source	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Notes
5) Encourage specialty and retail businesses to locate in City's commercial district	City, Chamber, Development Authority	Staff time	General Fund	X					
6) Expand the DDA's boundary to Magnolia Street	City/DDA	Staff time	NA				X		
7) Establish a Citywide Beautification Program	City/DDA	\$30,000	General Fund		X				
8) Provide/promote ongoing community events program to include cultural expos, festivals, concerts, and other attractions for locals and tourist.	City / Leisure Services	\$15,000	General Fund / Grants	X	X	X			
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>									
9) Develop a capital improvement plan for water and sewer service	City	General Fund/DCA	General Fund/DCA	X					Recategorized from previous Plan
10) Continue to expand recreation and senior activities	City / Guyton Family Y/ Churches	Staff time and undetermined	General Fund	X	X	X			
11) Continue work to return old school gym to functional and safe recreation resource	City	Undetermined	General Fund	X					Continued from previous plan
12) Renovate Old Guyton Elementary Facility to suit City Needs such as meeting space, multipurpose, Police, and Public Works	City	Staff time and undetermined	TBD			X			
13) Provide effective police protection to residents, encourage neighborhood watch by increasing officers 1-2 per year based on population	City	Market rate	General Fund			X	X		Updated from previous plan to reflect current needs
14) Continue to seek CDBG to extend wastewater treatment to those on septic systems	City / Consultant	Market Rate	General Fund			X	X		Recategorized from previous plan

## 2024 – 2029 Community Work Program

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated costs	Funding Source						Notes
				2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	
15) Seek Grants for homeowner rehabilitation	City / Consultant	TBD	TBD	X	X	X			
16) Build community support Free Little Library throughout the community	City	Staff Time	NA	X	X	X			
17) Provide stormwater Improvements throughout the City	City	\$100,000	SPLOST				X	X	
18) Complete and implement a Comprehensive Stormwater Plan for the Entire City	City	\$130,000 plus cost of improvements	SPLOST, Grants, TSPLOST			X	X		
19) Establish an Arts Council	City	\$4,000	General Fund/DDA/DCA/Grants			X			
20) Address blighted housing/areas by enforcing ordinances and encouraging restoration. Hire one dedicated enforcement officer.	City	Staff Time	General Fund	X					Updated from previous plan to reflect current needs
21) Review previous SDS and compensation to identify shortfalls in funding from county	City and County	Staff and attorney time	General Fund		X				Continued from previous plan
<b>Land Use</b>									
22) Update the city's sign regulations to promote historical character of the city	City	Staff time	NA		X				
23) Develop and adopt and impact fee program	City	Staff Time	NA		X	X			
24) Explore annexation to Old Louisville Rd, Gracen Rd, and Magnolia Pl	City	Staff time	NA		X	X	X		
25) Modify existing zoning and subdivision regulations as needed to address future development, public health, safety, and welfare	City	\$30,000	General Fund	X	X				Updated from previous plan to reflect current needs

## 2024 – 2029 Community Work Program

Brief Description	Responsible Party	Estimated costs	Funding Source	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Notes
26) Expand greenspace and parkland in the city; preserve open space; implement set aside requirements for active recreation; expand walking and biking trails and connectivity through a trail network	City	Staff time/ developer consideration	General Fund/ developer costs	X	X				Continued from previous plan
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>									
27) Support multi-use trails to be linked with neighboring communities, the region, or the state	Cities and County Staff	Staff time/ undetermined	TSPLOST		X	X	X		Continued from previous plan
28) Promote alternative modes of transportation including the rural transit program and US Bike Route 1 and the Highway 119 Georgia Bike Route	City	Staff time	General Fund	X	X	X			Recategorized from previous plan
29) Maintain appropriate resurfacing schedule for municipal roadways	City	\$350,000 annually (approx.)	General Fund, SPLOST, GDOT, LMIG	X	X	X			Continued from previous plan
30) Connect Sidewalks to reduce gaps by connecting existing sidewalks	City/GDOT	TBD	TAP Grant		X				
31) Improved pedestrian crossing across Central Blvd in Downtown	City/GDOT	TBD	General Fund/ TSPLOST				X	X	
32) Complete a review, update, and adoption of a Transportation Study	City/GDOT	TBD	General Fund/ TSPLOST	X	X				
<b>NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES</b>									
33) Preserve the rich history of the city by preserving historic assets in an effort to draw on tourism	City	Staff time	General Fund	X	X	X			Continued from previous plan
34) Create and adopt a tree preservation ordinance that preserves both single, unique specimen trees and stands of significant trees	City	Staff time	General Fund	X	X				
35) Create and adopt a historic preservation ordinance that preserves identified historical structures	City	Staff time	General Fund		X	X			
<b>BROADBAND</b>									
36) Offer free high-speed internet at City Hall and on the Guyton Main Street Rail Trail	City/broadband providers	Staff time	General Fund			X			

## **Appendix A: Public Engagement Documentation**





City of Guyton  
City Council Public Hearing and Workshop  
October 4, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP

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**Call to Order** – The City of Guyton Council held a Council Workshop on October 4, 2022 at the City of Guyton Gymnasium, 505 Magnolia Street in Guyton. This workshop was called to order by Mayor Russ Deen at approximately 7:00 p.m. Mayor Russ Deen, Mayor ProTem Michael Johnson, Councilmember Marshall Reiser, Councilmember Joseph Lee, and Councilmember Hursula Pelote were present at this meeting.

**Other Administrative Staff Present** – City Manager Meketa Brown and City Clerk Matthew Walker were present.

**Guest Present** - The guests sign-in sheets are filed in the office of the City Clerk.

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**Public Hearing and kick-off to update the City of Guyton Comprehensive Plan – City Manager Brown spoke regarding Comprehensive Plan. Theodore Hamby spoke regarding controlled growth.**

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**Topics for Discussion**

- a. Earth Day Festival – Effingham Georgia Green
  - b. Paint Water Tower downtown – Councilman Lee
  - c. Historical Commission Seat – Mr. Hamby
  - d. Open Discussion – Jeremiah Chancey
- 

**Dates to Remember**

- a. Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7:00pm – City Council Workshop, Guyton Gymnasium, 505 Magnolia Street, Guyton, GA 31312
  - b. Saturday, October 22, 2022 from 8:00am to 2:00pm – Guyton Fall Sale Along the Trail, Guyton Walking Trail, Guyton, GA 31312
  - c. Wednesday, October 26, 2022 from 1:00am to 6:00pm – American Red Cross Blood Drive, Guyton Gymnasium, 505 Magnolia Street, Guyton, GA 31312
  - d. Saturday, October 29, 2022 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm – Guyton Trick or Trail!, Guyton Walking Trail, Guyton, GA 31312
  - e. Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00pm – City Council Workshop, Guyton Gymnasium, 505 Magnolia Street, Guyton, GA 31312
  - f. Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 7:00pm – City Council Meeting, Guyton Gymnasium, 505 Magnolia Street, Guyton, GA 31312
-



**Consideration to adjourn-** Reiser made a motion to adjourn. Pelote seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

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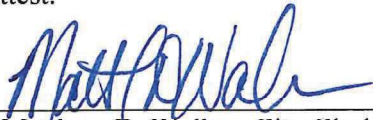
City of Guyton



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Russ Deen, Mayor

Attest:



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Matthew D. Walker, City Clerk



# CITY OF GUYTON



## Guyton City Council Public Hearing and Workshop

### Mayor, Council, and Staff Sign in Sheet

October 4, 2022

Meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Please sign in:

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DIXIE DIVA

# The folks who are proud of you

About a year ago, Tink and I were visiting our friends, Don and Debbie Reid, in Staunton, Virginia.

In their living room with the over-stuffed chairs and sofa, the four of us had settled into a long, easy conversation. The kind you have with people who are your kind. Don's phone beeped with a text. He checked it, took a moment to absorb it then softly said in that melodious voice, "It's from Davis."

Davis is their grandson who is amazing at anything he chooses to do. One night, he found a video and watched a pianist play an old song by the band Chicago. By the next day, he could play it just as well and, now, two



**RONDA RICH**  
Columnist

years later, he is being paid to play with his cousin at weddings and various other gigs. That day, though, Davis was responding to a text that Don had sent, congratulating him on a statewide baseball honor he'd received.

Don read it aloud. "I'm just glad that you're the ones who are proud of me," Don's eyes glistened. "That's a line from a song I wrote."

I thought I knew every Statler Brothers song recorded. "What song is that? I've never heard that line."

"It was an album cut. The song is called 'You Can't Go Home.'"

Later, I found the album, "Pictures of Moments to Remember" and listened to that song over and over. It talked of the people who had loved the young man and the advice, "Just do the right thing and you'll be proud, just wait and see." And, of course, concludes with the line that Davis had texted.

It happened that the album came up in my playlist one day while I was driving alone. Suddenly, it had new meaning to me. I'd just released a new mystery novel and introduced

the loveable, admirable character named Stella Bankwell. People talked about her so much that she had truly come alive and now I think of her as a real person.

When I introduced the book at a luncheon on Sea Island, in the audience sat my seventh-grade teacher, Mrs. Kathy Lovett. I told the story of how Mrs. Lovett had said, "Class, I have an essay I want to read. It's one of the most perfect stories I've ever read and I'd like you to view it as an example."

It was my essay and, truth be told, it was written in stone that day that I would be a writer. "I got an A+ and Mrs. Lovett rarely gave an A+." I looked over at her beaming self, and said, "Did you?" She shook

her head vigorously. At a football game, I ran into my niece who had been at a book event the previous day, "I AM SO PROUD OF YOU! I take you for granted but yesterday, I saw what you mean to people. One woman drove three hours to meet you."

Tink, my adoring (not an understatement!) husband, often takes me by the shoulders, looks at me with tears in his eyes and, choked up, says "I am so

proud of you. So proud." My home economics teacher, Jean Trotter, bought one of the first copies at the drugstore and announced, "I taught her how to knit. But I never thought she'd be famous. I'm so proud."

"You done good, cuz," my cousin, Vicki said, after reading it. "And Ralph and Bonelle would be, too." When she mentioned Mama and Daddy, my eyes pooled and a lump choked back my words.

To quote a poet friend: I'm just glad that those folks are proud of me.

*Ronda Rich is the author of the new novel Stella Bankwell Mystery. Visit www.rondarich.com to sign up for her free newsletter.*

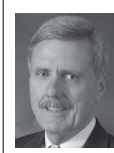
FROM THE GEORGIA CAPITOL

## Planning education reform in Georgia

What a week it's been at the Capitol! I'm thrilled to bring you up to speed on the latest developments from the 2024 Legislative Session.

I had the privilege of hosting a press conference alongside some esteemed colleagues from both the Senate and the House. Together, we unveiled our plans for education reform, a critical initiative for the future of Georgia.

Senate Bill 464, aptly named the "School Supplies for Teachers Act," mandates the establishment of a program by the State Board of Education to allocate funds for teachers to purchase essential



**BILLY HICKMAN**  
Columnist

school supplies online. Additionally, it calls for the implementation of a universal reading screener in every public school, a crucial step towards improving literacy rates across the state. This legislation is not just about supporting our educators and students; it's

about investing in Georgia's future. I want to extend my gratitude to my colleagues for their dedication to bringing forth such impactful legislation. I eagerly anticipate the passage of Senate Bill 464 and its subsequent signing by the Governor.

Switching gears, I'm pleased to announce that Governor Brian P. Kemp has signed SB 332 into law. This bill addresses legislative fixes necessary for the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifying Commission to commence operations. It's

a crucial step towards holding accountable those who shirk their duties to prosecute dangerous criminals. We cannot afford to let politically motivated agendas hinder the safety and well-being of our communities.

I'm also grateful for the opportunity to present my Workforce Development bill in the House Committee on Rules. Senate Bill 497 aims to expand high-demand apprenticeship programs, ensuring that Georgia's workforce remains competitive in today's thriving economy.

Additionally, I was proud to present Senate

Bill 384 to the House Committee on Rules. This measure positions Georgia as a model state for hiring individuals with disabilities in the workforce—a cause close to my heart.

Amidst the legislative hustle and bustle, I had the pleasure of hosting friends from back home, including the State Champion Southeast Bulloch Flag Football Team and students from gifted programs in Bulloch County. Their enthusiasm and energy remind me of the importance of our work in the Capitol.

As we near the end of the 2024 Legislative Session, it's essential to stay

focused on our goals. Remember, on March 28, we'll adjourn Sine Die until January 2025. Any bills not passed by then will need to restart the legislative process from scratch.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your continued support and prayers.

Your involvement makes a difference, and I'm committed to serving you to the best of my ability. Thank you, and God bless Georgia!

*Billy Hickman is the state senator for District 4, which includes Effingham County.*

LIVING WITH CHILDREN

## Parental overreaction more a problem than bullying

The principal of a middle school recently confided in me that "this bullying thing has gotten completely out of hand." He wasn't referring to bullying itself, although

that's certainly out of hand. Instead, he referred to the fact that many parents have become overly sensitized to the possibility that their kids might, at any moment, become bullied and overreact, therefore, to any indication that they have been.

"You wouldn't believe what parents think is bullying," he said, and went on to describe some examples. One involved a mother who complained that a boy had poured a small amount of dry snack mix down the back of her son's shirt. The mother was incensed and wanted the perpetrator subjected to waterboarding, or something along those lines. Said principal then went on to describe other instances of "bullying" that were not bullying at all, but



**JOHN ROSEMOND**  
Columnist

simply pranks. It might be helpful if everyone were able to agree on a rational definition of exactly what separates actual bullying from just normal childhood mischief. That lack of consensus may be, in fact, a major share of the problem. For example, the definition at StopBullying.gov proposes that bullying is "unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-age children that involves a power imbalance." That's the very sort of nebulous definition that fuels a mother's outrage at snack mix being poured down her son's shirt. I prefer something along the lines of the definition found on Wikipedia: "repeated, aggressive behavior intended to hurt another person physically or mentally." That captures

it nicely, I think. Note that the aggressive behavior in question is not incidental, but repeated. And it is done with the malicious intent to do harm, both physically and mentally, to another person. I would only add that an additional purpose is to keep the victim in a state of near constant fear. And by the way, I was the target of at least three bullies during my school years. I wish all they'd done was pour snack mix down my shirt on a daily basis.

Over the past few years, a good number of school officials have told me that the problem of parental overreaction has become bigger than the problem of actual bullying. Occasional teasing doesn't fit the definition proposed by Wikipedia and myself. Nor do one-time pranks like snack mix down the shirt, tripping, name-calling or any other form of mischief that might cause embarrassment but is not done with the deliberate intention of keeping another child in a near constant

state of fear. I was reminded of my conversation with the principal by an email recently received from the mother of a 21-month-old boy who, she claimed, had been bullied by a girl at his nursery school. The girl had pushed her son and grabbed a toy he had been playing with. Mom wanted me to recommend a book on bullies she could read to her little one.

First, that's not bullying. That's what toddlers occasionally do when they're put in groups. Second, the mother's overreaction, repeated over time, is likely to cause her son to become overly sensitive to any perceived slight, whether physical or verbal. Under the circumstances, he quickly could develop a

victim mentality and do himself more mental harm than a bully would ever be capable of doing.

Sometimes — just sometimes, mind you — adults would do well to say something along these lines to a complaining child: "If that's all you've got to complain about, then you live a very good life." Unfortunately, a principal or teacher can't say any-

thing along those lines these days without getting into hot water. A child's parents can say it, though, and sometimes — just sometimes, mind you — they should.

*Family psychologist John Rosemond answers parents' questions on his website at www.rosemond.com.*

### Notice of Public Hearing

The City of Guyton will hold a public hearing at Guyton City Hall — 310 Central Boulevard, Guyton, GA 31312 — on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. to receive public comments regarding the City of Guyton Comprehensive Plan.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor: Where is the silent majority? Why is this happening in Southeastern rural Georgia?

Is it the majority are giving out enough rope to hang the political rhetorical commentary by these groups, or have we just become totally indifferent having too much on our plate dealing with our own day-to-day world?

Too tired to fight a battle of ethics and morality at the end of the day.

The face of Effingham is shifting to far-right extremism. It's not going

well. Good people leaving positions due to their own free will; held up to wall of scrutiny and vicious lies, and "drain the swamp" idealism.

Does anyone take the time to realize this type of nonsense keeps good people away? It poisons the well, stains the job market with doubt, and affects quality of life for everyone. And in the-not-seen part, costing more money to place searches to bring in qualified candidates to hire who will ultimately go somewhere else that doesn't have the

money. And chalk it up to a life lesson.

As a lifelong conservative it's actually somewhat daunting; and ugly to witness such public displays of ignorance in local governments where rumors become fact and speculation becomes reality's voice.

Or just plain stupid stuff is spread like manure — costing the taxpayers money for lawyers' fees to achieve nothing other than personal agendas.

Mike Gerwig, Guyton

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